

Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council Action Plan 2023-25

Adopted by the Parish Council on 03/11/2022

Revisions approved on: N/A

Next review date: 02/11/2023

Introduction

This action plan sets out what Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council plan to do over the next two financial years.

The plan considers the issues facing us and our ability to respond with the resources available and how the Council will prioritise those resources.

This plan has been prepared and approved by your Parish Councillors, it will aid us as a planning tool and as a review process to measure our performance.

By publishing this action plan we can help those who live, work and visit the Parish see what we are doing on their behalf.

Context

This is our second action plan, through the Parish plan we can have shared vision and direction, protect what is important and consider new ways of getting things done.

Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council, as the first tier of local government is uniquely situated to provide the forum for understanding and supporting the needs of this community. The Council provides advocacy on behalf of its residents, liaises with other organisations (including Lichfield District Council & Staffordshire County Council) to bring in services or procure them itself. Day to day the Council seeks to find solutions for the community, looks for skills and volunteers to make improvements to our surroundings and promote a better quality of life for all.

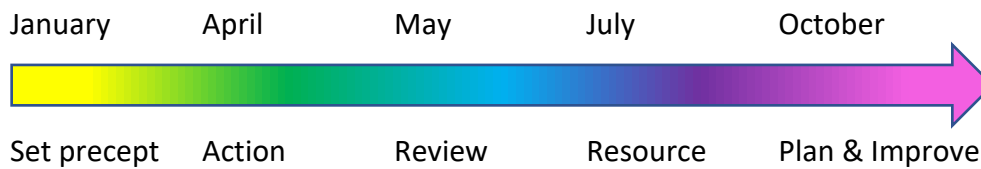
Basis of planning cycle

The Parish Council plan is a continuous system of gathering information, formulating actions, acting, measuring outcomes, and suggesting improvements.

Once specific actions are agreed to deliver this plan, they are entered onto the Actions Register which is monitored by the Council.

Key Dates

Our finances are almost entirely derived from raising a precept via the Council Tax system. This precept must be declared at the end of January each year to Lichfield District Council and therefore this plan will be drafted from October onwards each year allowing it to evolve as the budget is prepared for the final precept calculations.



What is a Parish Council?

A civil parish is an independent democratic unit for villages, smaller towns & suburbs of urban areas. Each Parish has a meeting of all its electors and where the electors exceed 200 have a Parish or Town Council. Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council have approximately 1000 electors however it is anticipated that this number will rise significantly within the lifetime of this action plan as residents move into the homes at Arkall Farm.

The Parish Council is a small local authority, its councillors are elected for four years at a time in the same way as other councils. By-elections may be held to fill vacancies between elections or members may be co-opted if no election is called.

The council is the corporation of its parish in Lichfield, and it covers the villages of Wigginton, Hopwas and Comberford. In May, each year the councillors choose a chairperson from their number. In Wigginton and Hopwas Parish there are 7 councillors who make up the Parish Council, which employs a part-time Clerk to manage administration.

Powers and Duties

Parish Councils have many powers and a handful of duties set out in legislation. A duty is something that a council must do, a power is something it may do if it so decides. A Parish Council cannot do anything that is not permitted in law.

What do we do?

The Parish Council acts as custodian to a number of assets within the villages including: Hopwas Playing Field and all play / sports equipment, park benches, litter/dog bins and fencing, Samuel Parkes VC War Memorial, 4 x Bus Shelters, 3 x Noticeboards, Laptop & printer. The Council is responsible for maintenance, repairs and insurance for these items and facilities.

Although Lichfield District Council is the Planning Authority, the Parish Council is consulted on each planning application made in the Parish and these are considered by councillors at each meeting and LDC are informed of their views.

At each meeting the Council discuss correspondence received from local organisations and residents, community issues are considered for example crime & safety, highways & traffic, speeding, maintenance in the public realm (which need reporting to the appropriate authorities) The Council can act as an advocate for residents, to communicate information

and as a liaison point for dealing with appropriate departments of other local authorities to ensure that views, comments and necessary actions are dealt with.

Accountability

You elect members every four years, the next time will be May 2023, there is currently a vacancy for a Parish Councillor on the Council, so if you live or work in the Parish (or within 3 miles) and would like to help make decisions to improve the wellbeing of the community then please contact clerk@wiggintonandhopwas-pc.gov.uk . The Parish Council are particularly underrepresented by Hopwas residents.

You are invited every May to attend the Annual Parish Meeting and say what you think. You are also entitled to attend the Parish Council Meetings on the first Thursday of every other month, a calendar of meetings is available on our website and noticeboards. At the Parish Council meetings you may listen to the business being discussed and may participate in the meeting in the allocated time for the public towards the start. The Accounts are audited each year and are published on the website, there is also a public inspection period for around 6 weeks in the summer which is displayed on the noticeboards and the website.

You can find more about what we do, how we do it and our meetings on the parish council website: www.wiggintonandhopwas-pc.gov.uk

What we achieved from the previous action plan (2020-2022)

Added – Grass cutting at St John’s Closed Churchyard and Wigginton War Memorial; Signage at Hopwas Playing Field, ‘Stop, Look, Listen’ & Do not climb notices at Nursery Lane. Grano dust areas behind play area gates at Hopwas Playing Field

Replaced - Wooden fencing at Hopwas Playing Field for steel bow-top fencing and safety gates, signage at Hopwas Playing Field and Comberford Millennium Green, larger ‘branded’ bin for play area, replenished bark surfaces at both play areas. Gates at Comberford Millennium Green.

Maintained – Removing overgrown vegetation on Tollgate Lane footpath, Spring rocker repair and re-paint of toddler climbing frame at Hopwas Playing Field. Play equipment repainted at Hopwas Playing Field. Comberford Millennium Green Trust refurbishment project completed, improving timber posts, play equipment and surfacing.

Published – A ‘new look’ Parish Council Newsletter / Booklet, communications via Parish Council Website and Social Media (Facebook / Twitter)

Recruited - Co-opted two new Parish Councillors, remaining casual vacancy advertised throughout parish. Increased Parish Clerk hours to twelve per week to enable Council to continue to operate effectively and in line with legislative requirements and recommended best practice.

Trained – Supported Clerk to complete CiLCA qualification; Councillors attended Exploring Chairmanship and other development training, Clerk attended CiLCA portfolio guidance training, planning and audit training.

Adopted – A new Parish Council logo. Community Infrastructure Levy Working Group. Policies: Risk management, Publication Scheme, Health and Safety Policy, Grant Awarding Policy, Scheme of delegation to the Clerk, Equality & Diversity Policy, Parish Council Action Plan, Working Parties Terms of Reference, Volunteer Policy.

Reviewed - Asset Register. Policies: Standing Orders, Financial regulations, Press and Media Policy, Disciplinary and Grievance Policy, Training Policy, Complaints Procedure.

Consulted on - the local plan review, school admissions, Rawlett School 6th Form, Coton Green Primary school expansion, Traffic Restriction Orders, Road name suggestions for the Arkall Farm Estate, Toucan crossing for Ashby Road, Canal Bridge Weight Restrictions, 5g mobile mast, Wigginton.

Considered - 65 planning applications.

What we want to do next

Objective	Action	Responsibility & Resources	Timescale
Governance			
Transparency Code compliancy	Publish Annual Governance Audit Review, end of year accounts, Expenditure over £100, agendas, minutes, and means of contacting the Council on the website and noticeboards (where applicable)	Clerk	Ongoing
Ensure council policies and procedures are reviewed and updated as necessary	Policies/procedures to be scheduled for review throughout the year as appropriate	Clerk and Parish Council – Document Review Tracker in place	Ongoing
Ensure that the Council meets Health and Safety requirements for its staff, councillors and public at events and activities.	Renew PC Insurance Risk Management Schedule – reviewed by Council annually	Clerk and Council	Annually
Ensure the council has access to professional guidance, advice, and training	Maintain subscriptions for Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) & Staffordshire Parish Councils Association (SPCA)	Clerk and Parish Council	Annually
Obtain an accreditation via the Local Council Award Scheme	Consider applying to the Local Council Award Scheme	Parish Council - file (nalc.gov.uk)	Jan/May/Sep 2023
Planning			
Consider all planning applications which fall within, and impact upon the Parish	Clerk to ensure all planning applications are referred to councillors and included on the agenda when possible. Clerk to seek time extensions from Lichfield District Council when necessary. Ensure that council's objections / comments are formerly reported to the planning authority in time.	Clerk and Parish Council	Ongoing

Infrastructure			
To update and maintain children's play equipment, as necessary.	Accrue funds to ensure equipment can be replaced or repaired as necessary Facilitate Comberford Millennium Green Trust to begin a renovation project	Parish Council	Ongoing
St John's (Closed) Churchyard – Maintain and ensure general upkeep of the area	Carry out risk assessments for visitors to the site. Ensure trees and hedges are maintained when required.	Clerk & Parish Council	Ongoing
Highways - To seek that parish infrastructure including, all roads, pavements, verges, trees and hedgerows are adequately managed and maintained	To report to Staffordshire County Council Highways all faults or repair needs, including potholes.	Clerk and Parish Council	Ongoing
To plan and spend Community Infrastructure Levy Funding within the given timescale.	To publicly consult and decide how to use CIL Funding to mitigate the impacts of local development	Parish Council – CIL Working Group	Ongoing
Public Rights of Way	To improve access to PRoW within the Parish collaborating with SCC PRoW team and landowners	Parish Council	Ongoing
Maintenance			
To consider and promote ways of reducing litter and dog mess	To ensure that sufficient litter and dog-mess bins are provided and emptied regularly. To display appropriate warning notices throughout the village. Seek the support and cooperation of residents and visitors in keeping the village clean.	Parish Council	Ongoing
To monitor and maintain defibrillators. Defib 1 – Red Lion, A51, Hopwas Defib 2 – Old Crown, Main Road, Wigginton	To carry out and record regular inspections on 'The Circuit' (90 days). To ensure that all consumables are replaced as and when necessary. Report any faults or interruption in provision.	Councillors responsible for checking the equipment and the Clerk.	Ongoing
To ensure that all council assets are maintained in a safe and proper manner.	To review and maintain asset register ensuring all assets are properly identified and listed. To carry out regular inspection of assets and undertake any maintenance required. To ensure insurance cover is adequate.	Clerk – Parish Online	Ongoing
Website, social media	Keep key documents updated, relevant news items to be added as required	Clerk	Ongoing
Community Engagement			
Support and promote groups and organisations within the Parish	Councillors where possible to attend organised events. To promote organised events through the website and social media	Clerk and Parish Council	Ongoing

To encourage County and District Councillor participation within the Parish	Invite District and County Councillors to parish council meetings and encourage participation at meetings	Clerk	Ongoing
Maintain and update village notice boards	Ensure that village notice boards are maintained and that literature displayed is current, relevant and well presented. Ensure that Council meeting agendas and other required notices, are displayed at appropriate dates and for appropriate periods.	Clerk	Ongoing
Website, social media	Encourage dialogue with residents and encourage participation at council meetings	Clerk	Ongoing
To engage with residents of the parish, ensuring the residents within the new housing estates are introduced to the Parish Council.	To explain what the Parish Council is, what we do & to get local people involved and seek candidates for the May 2023 elections	Councillors / Clerk	Ongoing
Training			
To encourage and support training and development opportunities for councillors	To notify and promote attendance at appropriate training courses for new and existing councillors to enable them to better assist the council in achieving its aims and objectives. To ensure sufficient funding is provided through the annual budget	All councillors, Clerk, SLCC and SPCA	Ongoing
To encourage and support training development opportunities for employees.	To support the Clerk in attendance at appropriate training courses to better assist the council in achieving aims and objectives. To ensure sufficient funding is provided through the annual budget.	All councillors, Clerk, SLCC and SALC training providers	Ongoing
To ensure induction awareness, training and development needs provided to volunteers.	To provide appropriate induction awareness to any volunteer carrying out activities on behalf of the council. Provide appropriate resources to enable task to be carried out safely and efficiently.	Clerk and Parish Council	As required