

# PEOPLE POWER PAYS OFF!

## Stockton Heath Library saved

We can now report for sure that The Borough Council is NOT going to close Warrington Libraries after all. The WBC Exec Board agreed in December to keep all the libraries open for the foreseeable future subject to robust business plans.

Over the past few months the Stockton Heath Library Working Group, Chaired by Lib Dem Councillor Sharon Harris has developed a strong business case for the library and secured financial backing from Stockton Heath, Appleton, Hatton and Walton Parish Councils.



The Borough Council is going to provide up to £1m to fund alterations and repairs to libraries across the Borough and an extra £150k, in the next financial year to increase the book stock to improve the service.

WBC is now setting up a Libraries Partnership Group to develop a new partnership strategy and set performance measures. Stockton Heath Working Group is requesting that one of its members sit on this to represent south Warrington



## Play area improvements



“It is exciting to see the new improved play area at Alexandra Park taking shape,” says Councillor Graham Welborn. “we’re told it will be open for use in the Spring. “Can’t wait to take my great grandson,” adds Peter.

## Changes at Sandy Lane Centre

Last year the Council axed the South Neighbourhood Board but we now have a small team dedicated to just the area south of the Ship Canal. This team is there to promote community schemes and events and is keen to help residents and groups in the area. They have already organised several events - an Easter Egg hunt on the Millennium Green is planned next. The team is based at Sandy Lane Centre. Meanwhile the Parish Council is preparing to move their office to the Library when alterations are complete.

## Development Plan

Everything is quiet at the moment on the Local Plan front, while Council Officers consider the 6000 responses from the public over their controversial PDO. We understand objection from Halton Borough Council has also upset their plans. Latest guess at when the draft plan will be published is now next winter!

The Council thought they could get this all sorted by February - so the size of the public response must have taken them by surprise. Should any Council be **so** out of touch with what local people feel and want?

Meanwhile, here in Warrington South the Parish Councils are working together to get a professional planning consultant and putting money aside for legal representation if this becomes necessary.

# FUND OUR NHS!

The NHS is at breaking point under the Conservative Government



The Liberal Democrats have a clear plan to provide the investment that is so desperately needed. By putting a penny on income tax, more money could be put straight into health and social care services to ensure people get high-quality care when they need it. **A penny on income**

**tax would raise an additional £6bn a year, £4bn of which would be spent on the NHS and £2bn on social care.**

## Concern about our Air Quality

The Borough Council is developing an 'Air Quality Action Plan' which was recently put out for consultation. This is an issue of concern in our village and Stockton Heath Parish Council has submitted a comprehensive response.

*Parish Chair Peter Walker reports.*

### Air quality in Stockton Heath must be monitored.

"We are very concerned that the area covered by the Council's plan appears not to extend much south of the Ship Canal. We know from past measurements that air quality in the village can be among the worst in Warrington when the swing bridge is closed and traffic is heavy.

We have asked for regular monitoring at Victoria Square, London Road near the swing bridge and outside our primary schools."

### The air quality Implications of further development

"The proposal in WBC's Preferred Development Option (PDO) for the Local Plan is for another 6,000 houses to be built south of our village. Existing traffic causes major congestion and air pollution in Stockton Heath and if projections for an extra 6,000 houses show pollution will be unacceptable, then no more development should be allowed."

### Pot holes make pollution worse

"Air pollution doesn't come just from vehicle exhausts. Brake, tyre and road wear produce particles which can be just as dangerous to health. Pot holes exacerbate the problem and we have asked for road repairs to be part of plan to improve air quality Pot holes are not just a safety risk they are a health hazard"

## Young cyclists putting themselves at risk

Cllr Graham Welborn has raised concerns about road safety and in particular worrying reports of youths recklessly riding towards on-coming vehicles.

"This practice is not confined to our area and seems to be 'copy-cat' behaviour," says Graham. "The Police are paying particular attention to this problem working with schools and leisure facilities and to let parents know about incidents as well as taking enforcement action. The Parish Council will be having a meeting with the Police and PCSOs not just to identify problems but to look at Youth provision in our area. The vast majority of our young people are great - working hard at school, enjoying their leisure time and growing up to be good citizens, they deserve the best."

## Dropped crossings

We have reported some roads where dropped crossings are needed to help people with mobility problems or baby buggies get across the road.

"This was raised with me by a wheel-chair user at one of our monthly street surgeries," says Parish Councillor Pam Todd. "Please let us know of any other places that are a problem so we can get them on the Council's list in time to be considered for action in the coming year."



Pam & Peter at street surgery

## Mill Lane path and steps resurfaced

The path and steps on Mill Lane Field leading down to the bridge across the stream were becoming worn and slippery in wet weather. The Parish took the opportunity of having a contractor nearby at Alexandra Park to get repairs done promptly. The part where no one claims ownership will be done as well as a safety measure.



## Improve our car park

We continue to press WBC to fund improvements to the Forge car park - resurfacing, the promised pedestrian path from Egerton Street and looking at options for enlargement onto rough land behind the Church. But WBC's only interest in our car park seems to be as a cash cow.

Car park charges in Stockton Heath and Lymm raised £65,000 in 2016-17 and at least as much this year. Some of this should be used for decent maintenance.



Council District Car Parks in north Warrington do not have charges.

## Genotaph project

Work is starting soon to structurally improve the riverbank and wall at the Warrington War Memorial where signs of movement are causing concern. Investigation is being carried out now and construction work is scheduled late next year.

## Grappenhall Road

The pavements on Grappenhall Road are a disgrace and yet they are not even on the Council's list to be considered for repair. "A lot of people walk down here," says Peter "and it is very difficult for anyone with mobility problems. We have once again suggested a resurfaced pathway down the middle wide enough for a mobility scooter or two people as a cheaper option. I am pleased, though, that our request for a pedestrian phase on the lights at Lumb Brook is now being looked into."

All our contact details are on the 2018 calendar enclosed