

	Meeting (No)	Community & Environment (5)
	Date	11 October 2022
	Document	Ref No
	Governance & Operations Manager's Report	CE5/55a

Marsh Dredging and Pond Creation

A CWaC invoice totalling £11,250 has been received and paid. This is the Neston Town Council contribution towards the cost of marsh dredging/pool creation which is being co-ordinated by CWaC as part of the Old Baths/Parkgate Ponds project. The breakdown and relevant minute references are:

£9,250 (approved by C&E on 04.05.22 - minute 180)

£2,000 (approved by Council on 26.07.22 - minute 54).

The Ropewalk Allotment Site

Drainage issues

Discussions are still continuing about the ongoing drainage issues at the Parkgate site. The gullies on the footways to the sewer are the responsibility of Highways and have been inspected and the surface water gully at the end of Brooklands Road has been programmed to be cleaned this month. We have established that the drainage line running along the footway (including the chambers) form part of the Welsh Water sewer main and are pursuing the matter further with the water company.

In terms of action that will need to be taken directly by Neston Town Council, it would appear that historically there was a drainage channel running the length of the site but that this has become filled in over the years. I have asked our horticultural contractor to advise on how this could be reinstated whilst minimising damage to existing planting and tenants are being kept informed of developments. The Committee will wish to take this potential work into account when considering the 23/24 budget request (see agenda item 62).

Water supply

We continue to pursue the issue of lack of water bills for The Ropewalk allotment site. We received written confirmation that United Utilities no longer bill business customers in this area and were advised to contact Water Plus as the allotment site was designated as business account. Water Plus have not been able to trace an account record. We are currently making enquiries with Water Plus to request billing from this point forward.

Christmas Lights 2022 (minute 37a, 07/07/22)

Five contractors were invited to quote to install the following decorations:

- Parkgate - tree at the Donkey Stand and garlands/festoons along The Parade,
- Market Square – functional test and time clock check of LEDs in planted tree,
- High Street – garlands (cross/wrap-around) along High Street and real tree at The Cross.

Additional costs include pre-installation site inspections, equipment testing and High Street anchor point testing.

Four contractors declined to quote. The quotation received was considered in liaison with the C&E Chair and the contract was awarded to Community Electrical Contractors. I later held a site meeting with the contractor and it was agreed that the Town Hall basement would be an appropriate location to store the Christmas decorations thereby reducing the contract cost by £400 (the Town Hall Manager was consulted prior to the site meeting). The annual charge for 2022 Christmas lights minus storage charges will be approximately £21,678.24+VAT – approximate because pre-installation inspections may result in additional costs for repairs etc and also there may be emergency call-out charges once the decorations are installed. Allowance has been made in the budget to cover any such eventualities.

The Christmas lights and trees will be installed in time for the switch-on event on Saturday 26 November. They will be lit from 4pm-11pm daily until 1 January and the contractor has been requested to remove all decorations by 6 January.

Under delegated authority a decision was taken to make a one-off payment to CWaC for 2022 only to utilise the control management system for High Street Christmas lights at a cost of £297.84+VAT (the cost comprises access to one collector @ £273 plus 23 Vizion Nodes at £1.08 per node). This will ensure a seamless service for 2022 and we can consider other possible options for 2023 onwards.

The MPAN/usage details have been updated and forwarded to CWaC and are ready for submission to the electricity supplier.

Local Heritage List

Updating of the list is moving forward and a potential 54 additional entries have been identified. Narratives for each entry are currently being researched and written and photographs taken. Once these details have been approved by the Conservation Officer, we will begin the process of writing to all relevant property owners and uploading the information onto the heritage database. The final stage of the project will be to ask residents if there are any additional entries that they would like to suggest. Residents will be able to submit their suggestions via a reply form on our website (paper copies will also be made available) and we will advertise on AMA/Neston Life app and noticeboards.

Remembrance Sunday (minute 47, 23/08/22)

The event application has been submitted to CWaC and approved. Premier Traffic Management have been appointed to create a road closure management scheme and the plan has been forwarded to CWaC. Over the coming week, the relevant organisations/households will be informed (eg emergency services, bus companies, shops/houses within the road closure area) and details confirmed with the co-ordinators identified in the risk assessment. Event details will be sent to AMA.

Signage

- Finger post sign at Station Road entrance to Wirral Way
- Free parking/EV charging/Friday market sign for Chester Road car park entrance

Replacement plates were ordered for the signs as agreed. There appears to be a problem with the fixings and additional fixings will be ordered once requirements are confirmed by Highways. I have made another request to Highways for an installation date.

Planning Appeal - 21/04782/FUL

An appeal has been made against the decision to refuse planning permission to 63 Badger Bait (change of use from betting shop to hot food takeaway). The Town Council's original comments have been forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate along with all other representations.

Planning Appeal - 19/02087/FUL

Brookmeadow, Church Lane (erection of retirement living accommodation (category II type) together with communal facilities, landscaping and car parking). This application was refused but we have been informed that the appeal has been allowed and planning permission has been granted.

Planning Appeal - 19/03423/OUT

An appeal has been made against the decision to refuse planning permission to Parkgate Nurseries, Boathouse Lane (outline application with all matters reserved for development of residential units). We have received confirmation that the Town Council's comments (copied below) were forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate along with all other representations.

2021 Neston Town Council objects to this application on the following grounds:

- 1. There has been a continuous record of refusal for development on this site since 1978 including refusal for installation of a mobile home, refusal for building of a detached dwelling and refusal for caravan storage. The Town Council hopes that CWaC will continue to be consistent in its attitude towards safeguarding the countryside, and that housing and inappropriate development such as the current application will not be permitted on Green Belt land.*
- 2. A local site (Moorside) has already been allocated for housing and the housing target has already been met.*
- 3. The development will have a detrimental impact on the Parkgate conservation area.*
- 4. Being adjacent to open land, development of the site will introduce light pollution to a relatively dark area.*
- 5. The location has been identified as a potential flood risk area.*
- 6. Any development at this location will increase the potential for further encroachment into the Green Belt.*
- 7. The site has never been a brownfield site, and the application therefore represents inappropriate development on Green Belt land which is contrary to Neston Neighbourhood Plan Policy NNDS1 and Policy STRAT 9 of the Local Plan. The application fails to meet the criteria for exception detailed in the National Planning Policy Framework.*

Audrey Duncan
Governance & Operation Manager