

Parkgate Society Community Spirit Update January 2017

A belated but heartfelt Happy New Year!

As you may have heard Cheshire Community Action (CCA) have informed us that the Community Pride competition will not be taking place in 2017. There will be a review of the competition over the next 12 months. Although the competition has been sponsored for many years by Essar Oil, it is financially unsustainable for CCA to run the competition in its present form, which is why the Board has taken the difficult decision to pause the competition for 12 months to carry out this much needed review. We hope that the review will come up with positive results and we can look forward to the re-launch next year. However this will not see us slowing down the work we have been doing over the past two years. Parkgate is really starting to look good these days and I am really delighted that so many people have complemented us on our efforts.

It may be a coincidence but I would like to think that our efforts to tidy up Parkgate have had the knock on effect to the owners of the properties on the Parade. It is so good to see that quite a few of the older buildings have had a lick of paint and some TLC. In the case of Sawyers Cottage and the cottages alongside re-rendering and painting has been the order of the day. I am also pleased to report that the plans to demolish White Cottage have been withdrawn and the cottage has now been sold and will be restored. Our thanks must go to all the property owners for their hard work and commitment to Parkgate.

Many of you have been asking about the state of the Ropewalk and if there is anything we can do to cut back the overgrown hedges. This has been the topic of numerous conversations and emails with Neston Town Council, Street scene, Cheshire West and Chester Council officers and the Rights of Way Officer. I have attended site visits with some of them and one of the stumbling blocks has always been ownership of the hedging. At long last I am happy to let you know that the ownership question has been resolved and CWaC are going to send out letters to the property owners requesting them to cut back their hedges. They will be given a timescale in which they need to complete the work which is normally 14 days from receipt of the letter. CWaC will then readdress the progress once the timescale has expired and see what (if anything) needs to be done.

Following the installation of the boat on the middle slip we have been in discussions with Cheshire West and Chester Council with regards to the top of the slip and footway. Funding has now been secured to remodel the top of the slipway, move the kerb, reinstate the footway (across the checked area) and install new bollards (of a similar style to the railings along the Parade). We hope to have an information board installed describing the fishing industry in Parkgate. The sandstone blocks will be removed, although a couple of them will be left in place as natural seating.

You may recall that in October, with help from the children at Parkgate Primary School and Cheshire West staff, we planted 4000 bulbs in and around the Ropewalk Car Park. Following on from this I was contacted by the Community Engagement Officer from CWaC and asked to be interviewed about Community Spirit for a film that had been commissioned for a "Celebration of Volunteers" event. As a part of this project I also invited the Head Teacher and a number of schoolchildren to be filmed litter picking on the Marsh and the completed film was shown at the event held at the Lion Salt works in Northwich a few weeks ago.

I am also pleased to report that we have been successful in a grant application made to Plus Dane for funding to enable us to purchase hanging baskets, planters and flowers to be placed in various locations in Parkgate. We are also going to purchase a wooden bench to be sited near the Old Quay (subject to approval from Neston Town Council). Two cast iron planters embossed with Parkgate have already been purchased and will be installed on Mostyn Square in the coming weeks.

David Johnson January 2017

These will form a part of **Parkgate in Bloom** which we will be working on this year. If there are any gardeners out there who would like to get involved with this please do get in touch with me.

Dates for your Dairy. On 22nd February, at 6.30, there will be another **Parkgate Forum** held at Neston Cricket club. Organised by our CWaC councillor, Martin Barker, you will have the opportunity to hear what is happening in Parkgate. (Poster attached).

On the weekend of 3-5th March there is a **Keep Britain Tidy Spring Clean event** that I have registered Parkgate Community Spirit with. I hope to organise this in a similar manner as last year's successful "Clean for the Queen" event. Posters will be going up shortly and nearer the date I will be contacting you with more details.

ParkgateFest will take place on the week end of 3rd and 4th of June 2017 in fields next to Marsh Nurseries on Boathouse Lane. Organised and run by local residents and traders, it will celebrate and promote the uniqueness and heritage of Parkgate – Cheshire's only coastal village – and its wonderful community, in a beautiful setting. A website containing information on the event, ticket sales etc. will be going live very shortly. Truly a weekend for all the family, it is envisaged that ParkgateFest will become an annual event, with proceeds supporting projects under the 'Vision for Parkgate' banner. With the large numbers of visitors expected we will be looking for volunteers to assist with car park marshalling and obviously litter picking throughout the site during the each day of the event. It promises to be a really wonderful event and I do hope you will be available to help support in any way you can.