

**WEST HALLAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF WEST HALLAM**

**HELD ON MONDAY 8 MAY 2017**

**IN THE POWTRELL COMMUNITY PAVILION, BEECH LANE, WEST HALLAM**

**PRESENT**

Cllr B P Broughton  
Cllr Mrs C Barnes.  
Cllr Mrs C Hart (Chair)

**Members of the Public:**

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr T Maclean, Cllr Mrs C Stephenson, Cllr Mrs H Chapman and Cllr Mrs B Harrison

2. **REPORTS**

- a) Cllr Mrs C Hart, presented a report as Chairman on behalf of West Hallam Parish Council.
- b) A report was presented by Cllr Mrs C Hart in her capacity as Ward Member for West Hallam/Dale Abbey and Portfolio Holder for Communities and Deputy Leader of Erewash Borough Council.
- c) Cllr Mrs C Hart also presented a report in her capacity of ward member for Breadsall/West Hallam on Derbyshire County Council.

3. **Reports from Other Organisations and Clubs in West Hallam**

- a) Mrs Kate Grice and Mrs Karen Bowmer presented a report on behalf of the Community Centre Pre-School.
- b) Mrs Jo Carpenter presented a report on behalf of the Village Hall Pre-School.
- c) On behalf of the Village Hall Committee, a report was given by Cllr B Broughton.

- d) On behalf of the Community Centre, a report was given by Councilor Mrs C Barnes
- e) Simon O'Connor the Chairman of West Hallam Junior Football gave a report on the activities of the Club.
- f) The Chairman presented reports on behalf of the West Hallam Well Dressings Committee, West Hallam White Rose Cricket Club, the Powtrel Pavilion and West Hallam Guides.

Copies of the written reports are attached to the minutes and will be shown on the Parish Council's website.

Cllr Mrs Hart thanked all organisations for their input this year.

5. **A Question and Answer Session for the electors of West Hallam**

There were no questions.

6. **Closure of Meeting**

The Chair, Cllr Mrs C Hart, thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.05pm.

# **ANNUAL REPORT – WEST HALLAM PARISH COUNCIL 16/17**

## **COUNCILLOR CAROL HART**

The year started with the Parish Council having to employ a new Parish Clerk, we had a Locum for a while and then offered the job to the Locum who initially accepted and then changed her mind, luckily a name came up and without going into a lot of detail Kate Sharpe is our new Clerk, as there were some problems to sort out we were lucky that Kate's husband was a qualified clerk and he very helpfully assisted Kate and the Parish Council for a few months to get everything running smoothly, Kate is proving a very enthusiastic and competent clerk and we hope she will be with West Hallam Parish Council for a long time to come.

We have also had one or two problems with councillors being able to attend meetings for various reasons and our Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Mrs. Chapman has been incapacitated for a few months but hopefully she is on the mend and she has been given special dispensation to cover the 6 month rule, Parish Councillors do not receive allowances and take on this responsibility because they want to put something back into their local community and thanks go to all of them for the work they do.

On to the various things that have taken place this year, many will remember it was the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday last year and the Parish Council purchased some commemorative medals for the children of the area, these were very well received and many parents purchased extra ones for their siblings who were not in the age group that we gave medals to. We have had quite a few requests for various trees across the Parish to be pruned and it was decided that we needed to do a new Tree Survey, this went out to tender, the contract was awarded and this survey has now been carried out, some works needed doing immediately, others works would be programmed into the next year or two. We also went out to tender for our Grounds Maintenance and changed our contractor from 6<sup>th</sup> April this year. The West Hallam Junior Football Club are trying to attract new teams and they have been working with us to try and improve the playing area at Beech Lane Recreation Ground, they have also had problems along with the West Hallam White Rose Cricket Club in storing equipment, they approached the Parish Council to see if we would support a container being situated at the rear of the Powtrell Pavilion, whilst a brick extension to the storage would be the better option no grant funding has been forthcoming so the Parish Council agreed to this suggestion, a planning application was forwarded to Erewash Borough Council and I am pleased to say that the application was successful, the Club have also managed to obtain a grant from EBC of £2,000 to put towards the purchase of the container, this should be in place shortly.

The Parish Council were successful in a bid to Tesco for a grant towards play equipment at Beech Lane, as some residents had shown an interest in working with the Parish Council to look for further funding to upgrade the play area it was suggested that a Friends of Beech Lane group should be set up, this has now happened and is moving forward with stage 1, this will involve using the Tesco grant money, £8K and £5K allocated from the Parish Council budget to purchase a couple of pieces of new equipment, further grants are being investigated to hopefully further enhance the area, residents are always welcome to join this group which meets usually monthly.

When we talk about grants it is pleasing to report that the Parish Council have supported grant bids to the Rural Communities Grant Scheme at Erewash Borough Council and the Village Hall and

Community Centre have both been successful, West Hallam White Rose Cricket Club have also been informed that although delayed their bid has been successful.

Last summer unfortunately due to circumstances beyond our control we had no Summer Play Scheme, to make up for this we did provide a play scheme over the recent Easter holidays, it was run by A M Sports, by all accounts and from feedback from parents this scheme was very well received, it was delivered over 4 days but numbers had to be limited because of the size of the Powtrell Pavilion as some indoor activities took place as well as outside ones. Because of the success the Parish Council are going to commission a Summer Play Scheme from the same company, because there will probably larger numbers wanting to take part Scargill School have been approached and they are willing to let us use their premises, details of this scheme will be coming out shortly, it will cover 2 weeks in August hopefully.

We continue to have 24/7 coverage on our CCTV cameras and several incidents that have occurred, mainly at the Community Centre have been helped by footage which the Police have found very useful, it not only vandalism that has occurred but an attack took place and again the cameras proved very useful, we seem to be having a spate of call outs to the Police due to possible drug taking in the area, again culprits have been apprehended.

Remembrance Sunday was very well attended again and it is great to see some of the residents of Bramble Lodge bringing along their poppy tribute for the Mapperley Plaque. The Christmas Light Switch On was again a very busy and successful event with not only the visit from Father Christmas but even some Disney characters, Minnie, Mickey, Olaf the Snowman and Princess Elsa.

We now have a new caretaker for the Powtrell Pavilion, Keith Holness, he started work just before Christmas and it has been a pretty hectic time for him, we have had boiler breakdowns, shutter problems and new users of the Pavilion, Keith has taken it all in his stride, we are in the process of obtaining quotes for a possible boiler repair or installing a new system and we have had the shutters on the main and emergency doors changed to electric, the shutters have been affective but they are very difficult to operate so having them changed has made a huge difference.

Just finally we have recently changed out banking arrangements to Unity Bank, it does mean that we can do transactions electronically, safeguarded by the clerk and two councillors needing to sign off cheques, it should speed payments up to our employees and service providers

## **Annual Report – Derbyshire County Council 2016/17**

### **Councillor Carol Hart**

This is my last report on my 4 year term representing the Breadsall/West Hallam ward which, of course, also covers Little Eaton, Morley, Stanley, Stanley Common and Dale Abbey at Derbyshire County Council. I have held the position of Shadow Cabinet Member of Public Health as well as being a member of the Scrutiny Committee for Places.

Again the main theme from the controlling Labour Group has been about austerity and a reduction in many of the services. However when there was talk of cutting the budget for the subsidised bus services, after doing some consultation, they changed their minds and extended the funding until October 2017, I think they were quite taken aback by the amount of responses to this consultation, it is a very difficult area, many of the subsidised bus services carry very few passengers but to the ones that use the service it is essential and a much needed service particularly in wards such as the one I represent which covers a wide rural area, we do have to still keep getting the message across how essential these services are and if they cannot be sustained looking at different ways of delivering a service, possibly using Community Transport more.

Although there have been several large extra grants from Government to help with potholes and improve the state of our roads and pavements there is still a lot more to do, communication would help, in some areas there is work being done on roads and pavements that do seem to be o.k. the theory is that if some surface work is done on reasonable roads and pavements it does extend their life by quite a lot, but because this message is not always conveyed to residents it appears sometimes to be a waste of money.

Speeding traffic and possible traffic calming measures is as always an ongoing problem, it has to be appreciated that the problems that occur in the parishes across the ward I represent are replicated right across Derbyshire but I realise that does not help concerned residents. Any measures to try to slow speeding drivers down are costly and not always effective, it does not matter how many measures are put in place you will always get the irresponsible few who will always break the rules, it does appear that CREST, the CCTV van deployed across the County are at least looking at new locations and the data received back from their monitoring should help when asking for more speed measures in the ward. I know several of the parishes in my ward would be willing to fund their own VAS signs but DCC have a policy of trying to remove as many signs on the roads and their argument for not supporting these signs is that too many on the roads and drivers get accustomed to them and ignore them.

There has been a lot of Government money put into providing high speed broadband across the County but unfortunately there is still a long way to go and again the service in the rural areas is very poor, we now have many people who are self-employed and work from home

and it is important that they have good broadband speeds, work is still ongoing but again frustration in lots of areas.

A new project has just started to change all of our street lighting to LED, this will save money but due to various circumstances the project was delayed by around 15 months, this has now started but I understand that the areas having these new lights are in the north of the County and Swadlincote in the south, the delay has caused real problems because the previous administration, of which I was a member, proceeded with the part night lighting scheme which sees some lights going out from midnight until around 6 a.m. in the morning, but we also made sure that all bulbs were replaced before their expiry date, unfortunately the bulbs are not now being replaced until they go out, there is then a delay in some circumstances up to 3 months to replace the bulbs, this means that if there are areas that have part night lighting and then the ones that should be on all night go out there is a black hole, not acceptable because of health and safety, hopefully as I say let us hope the new LED lighting is rolled out across the County as quickly as possible.

I have been pleased to help local organisations across the ward with my Community Capital Funding and I hope that these grants have been helpful for them to carry on their good work in our communities

Council Tax as you will know doubt know has gone up again this year, DCC by 2% plus 2% for ring fenced Adult Care, we are living longer thankfully but this of course puts real pressure on the budget.

I will finish on the Derbyshire picture with the good news that Ilkeston now has a new railway station, we started progress on this some 7 years ago, but with the very rare (although they seem to appear on every large project to hold matters up) great crested newts and various other problems the first train arrived at the new station on 12<sup>th</sup> April and was greeted by the local M.P. the British Legion and many schoolchildren along with a good number of residents.

Locally I have to admit the problems remain the same as in other years, it is very frustrating but I think we have to accept that some of the problems are practically impossible to sort out, going back a few years families were lucky to have 1 car, now it seems as though nearly every household has 2 or even more cars, sometimes in garages or driveways but very often parked on the road, in some ways it does perhaps slow traffic down but more often than not in certain areas it is causing real problems and, of course, we still have the problems with parking outside the school twice a day during the week and then most weekends cars parked in connection with either football or cricket. Both parents and the local football and cricket clubs have been asked to park in a considerate manner but it is difficult to enforce.

High Lane continues to be a problem both with speed and again congestion at the two major cross roads, there have been several accidents but unfortunately DCC will only look at possible intervention with possible VAS signs or other safety measures when there are statistics on serious accidents, unfortunately what most of us would consider serious does not always correspond with what the Police or DCC see or class as serious, many suggestions for trying to address this problem, particularly at Mapperley cross roads come

to nothing with a range of reasons about why nothing can be done, it is a real problem along the whole of High Lane with the area by the Newdigate Public House and the Millhouse cross roads being other major problem areas.

We do still have an evening bus service after lobbying for it to be re-instated after the company stopped the service, hopefully residents are using the service as much as possible as we need to use it or lose it, although with the change of administration at DCC one of our commitments in the manifesto was to maintain transport in the rural areas.

As the elections have now taken place at DCC I am pleased to say that I have been re-elected and look forward to serving the Parish of West Hallam for the next 4 years.

# **ANNUAL REPORT 16/17 – EREWASH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **COUNCILLOR CAROL HART**

I have held the same position at Erewash Borough Council as in previous years that of Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Communities, which covers a wide range of areas, Customer Services, Democratic Services, Civic Office, Community Safety, IT, Consultation, Partnerships, elections, homelessness and housing support amongst others.

As I am sure everyone is aware that finance from Government has gone down over the last few years but I am pleased to say that Erewash Borough Council is still debt free, we did manage to keep Council Tax at zero increase for a good few years but we have had to levy a rate over the last couple of years, this year we have asked for a £5 increase, 3.56%, we do only get an 11% share of Council Tax collected and Erewash residents pay just £4.50 a day for all the services that we provide.

Our Mayor for the last year has been Cllr. Abey Stevenson accompanied on nearly all occasions by his wife Anne who has been his Mayoress, his Deputy has been Cllr. Mary Hopkinson and it is expected that she will be taking on the office of Mayor for the forthcoming Civic year at the Annual Council meeting later in May.

Going back to finance and budgets our external auditors Ernst & Young have given Erewash a clean bill of health, saying that Erewash is performing well and provides Value for Money which is good to hear.

As there are pressures on budgets all departments are urged to look for external funding and our Culture and Leisure Department are excellent at this, they have managed to obtain large grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a lot of work to be carried out at Victoria Park in Ilkeston, putting in new gates, new pergola and most importantly completely renovating the band stand, they have tried to replicate the park as it was many, many years ago, unfortunately for all the good work as soon as the band stand was completed vandals smashed some of the panels up, mindless vandalism. The other large pot of funding was for the Erewash Museum, it is a very small museum but it constantly receives praise and awards, a new café area has been created and is run by the Friends of Erewash museum, it is well worth a visit

We continue to provide money for various grant schemes, there is the Rural Community Grant scheme, the Small Grants' Scheme and the Members scheme, so many local organisations and groups are run by volunteers and they very often struggle for money, a small grant can sometimes make a big difference to them and we need to support these volunteers.

Car park charges have gone up slightly but we do still provide some free car parking, we continue to fund Erewash in Bloom and I think it is something many of our residents and visitors appreciate.



There has been a lot of work recently for our Regeneration and Planning Department with the HS2 project and the Stanton site hopefully starting to move along. HS2 has caused many a difference of opinion but unfortunately Erewash does not have the power to decide whether it goes ahead or not but what we can do is to make sure that if it is going ahead that we make sure that any residents or businesses in Erewash that are affected get as much help from us as possible and working with the local Erewash M.P. Maggie Throup we have had many meetings with senior officials connected with HS2 to make sure they know of our concerns, there could be quite a few businesses affected and as you probably know Long Eaton, where the most impact will be felt, is the Upholstery capital not only of the Country but the world and the businesses affected want to keep Long Eaton in their address, and we will continue to work closely with anyone affected and ensure that fair compensation is offered.

We will continue to protect our budget whilst maintaining good services and as stated we are always looking at ways to save money that do not have a major impact on our residents, a big piece of work that is already happening is looking at different ways of delivering our Leisure services, currently we lose £2.2 million a year on our Leisure Services, Victoria Swimming Pool, West Park Leisure Centre, Rutland Sports Park, Pewitt Golf Course, we are looking at possible different ways of running these services, but there is a lot of work to be done before any decisions are made and we will always ensure we keep ownership of these properties.

Finally it is good to know that when we are presented with an up-date on our Compliments and Complaints procedures we have had some instances where compliments out score the complaints and when you think that usually residents only get in touch if they have a complaint such as a missed bin or similar it is rare that residents take the time to register something they are very happy with, so if you are pleased with a service please take time to register this, certainly when our flowers are at their best of our islands that is the time we get most compliments.

## **Powtrell Pavilion 2016/17**

### **Highlights**

Total income was just over £5,000 from hirings and bookings. This is the highest level it has been.

The main users were the West Hallam JFC, but two other football clubs also hire the facility, and between them they brought in £1,650.

Regular bookings include Yoga on Thursday evenings and Tai Chi on Wednesday evenings, with Toddlers on Friday mornings. We also have a new Yoga group on Tuesday evenings, and a Health Clinic has just started every second Thursday morning.

We also received almost £800 from the Parish Council hirings and our use as a Polling Station.

Sundry meetings and parties are very important to us, and they accounted for over £600 last year; we remain great value at just £10 per hour!

Our costs were higher than usual due to over £1,000 of repairs to the premises including the handrail outside and the purchase of new bolts. Overall, we made a small loss of £160.

The new regular bookings should mean that we return to making a small surplus in the current year, although as ever we are dependant upon the football club being able to play all its scheduled games on the pitches.

Jason Smith

Treasurer

## **West Hallam Annual Parish Meeting**

8 May 2017

### **Report of the Parish Council's Representative on the West Hallam Village Hall Charity Committee**

- 1 I am pleased to have continued to represent the Parish Council on the West Hallam Village Hall Charity for the past twelve months – I find it hard to believe myself, but it will in fact be ten years in August since I was first appointed as the Parish Council's representative on the Charity and it has been a privilege to be involved.
- 2 The charity's purpose is to administer the Village Hall as a community facility and to preserve the Grade II listed building for the future, and – as I have said in previous years - its very existence is down to an exceptionally committed and hard working group of people. An old building like this needs a lot of attention on an on-going basis and Committee members and other volunteers do a huge amount of unseen work to keep things running.
- 3 It is very easy for much of this to go virtually unnoticed, so I would just like to take a few moments to highlight some of the things that have been done over the past twelve months -
  - Through the support of the Parish Council a grant of £7500 was secured from Erewash Borough Council's Rural Communities Grant Scheme to assist with the purchase and installation of a new energy efficient central heating and water system and this work has been completed.
  - Improvements have been made to the lighting throughout the building and the electrical installation has been upgraded with improvements to wiring internally and externally.
  - The main hall was completely redecorated during last summer.
  - Further works to the roof and other repairs have been carried out to prevent water ingress and minimise the effects of rising damp.
  - Other maintenance work has been carried out by volunteers, including redecoration of the toilets.
  - The Granwood Floor in the main hall has been professionally refurbished.
  - As many of you may recall, repairs to the railings at the front of the building were necessary following substantial damage caused by a vehicle - but the cost of this work was covered by the car driver's insurance.
- 4 In terms of the future, considerable progress has been made with plans for an extension to accommodate a disabled toilet facility for wheelchair users and those with mobility issues. The proposed extension will also provide access via an

entrance with a level threshold. The Charity successfully applied to receive support and mentoring to develop this project through the Village SOS programme established by the Big Lottery Fund. Planning and listed building consent applications were submitted in June last year and approved received this March – and the results of a community survey are now being used to build up a well evidenced case to convince funders of the need for the project. Watch this space!

- 5 The Village Hall continues to play its part in popular community events including the annual Well Dressings and Christmas Lights and is itself an event promoter as part of the Live and Local rural arts touring programme.
- 6 The Committee's finances remain stable in terms of general running costs, but the big issue remains the long-term future of the building. Clearly implementation of the extension plans that I mentioned earlier will be dependent on attracting significant grant funding.
- 7 In her Annual Report to the Charity's AGM (which was for the year ended 31 December 2016) the Chair, Ann Ainsworth, acknowledged the continuing financial support of the Parish Council towards running costs.

Bruce Broughton  
8 May 2017

## **The Well Dressings Festival**

The Well Dressings Festival, held on 16 July 2016 was, again, a huge success with an estimated 1,000 people attending and opened by the chair of the Parish Council, Mrs Carol Hart.

There was a new entertaining group – the “Well Heeled Appalachian Dancers” and the children were entertained, free of charge, by Jeffrey Jumper, Face Painting, Hook a Duck and Jumping Clay.

Again, there was an Arts Market in the Village Hall yard about 20 charity stalls along the pedestrian area.

For the first time this year, the Committee organised a Prosecco Bar which was a huge success and a big fundraiser.

As always, the Scouts served tea/coffee in the Village Hall and raised a considerable amount of money for their cause.

On the Sunday afternoon after the festival a brass band played at the Village Hall which is booked and paid for by the West Hallam Parish Council. This event is well visited and appreciated by the parishioners.

Thanks are also going to Pete Lilley for organising the very popular Scare Crow Trail.

The Well Dressings Committee is very grateful for the generous financial support from the WHPC towards the expenses of this traditional festival.

Hilde Greenfield

## Girlguiding Report 2016-17

Girlguiding in West Hallam continues to flourish with 6 active groups catering for approximately 120 girls from 5 to 20 years of age. The groups participate to a variety of activities from handicrafts, cooking (indoor and outdoor), raising money for charities, badge work sports and outdoor pursuits. Most groups have joined in with district events Christmas Carol Service, swimming and trampolining which were thoroughly enjoyable. Several groups have been away with either sleepovers for Rainbows, Pack holidays for Brownies or camping for the older the Guides and Rangers. None of this would happen if it wasn't for the committed volunteers who give up their time and energies so willing to provide the girls with such fun and stimulating activities. As always this is where we help more volunteers are desperately needed if we are to continue giving the young girls of the village these experiences.

A. Arter

West Hallam Guide leader and Ilkeston West District Commissioner.

## **Annual report for West Hallam White Rose Cricket Club**

The cricket club used the facilities at Beech Lane last summer for 3rd XI fixtures.

They played in division 10S of the Derbyshire County Cricket League and managed to finish mid table despite often not being able to field complete teams.

The square was maintained by our own groundsmen, with yourselves being responsible for the outfield.

The main room was used for the provision of teas.

Fixtures have again been arranged on a similar basis for this season.

Annette Owen

Secretary

## **Annual Report of the Community Centre**

Despite the age of the building, which requires ongoing maintenance and upgrading, it has been another good year for the Community Centre. Most significant perhaps has been the installation of a lovely new kitchen.

Other improvements include:

- \* Installation of a hearing loop
- \* Smart lockable noticeboards
- \* New outside LED lighting
- \* Fibre optic broadband has made the CCTV cameras more effective and there haven't been any further reported incidents of fly tipping

The Community Centre committee would like to thank Erewash Council, the Parish Council and Powtrel for their continued support.

Usage of the centre is very good. Despite the Senior citizens relocating to a venue more suited to their needs it was offset by bookings from the football and cricket clubs over the winter months. Also there has been a new regular Sunday booking from a model aircraft club.

The ongoing saga of the lease and the solar panels was finally resolved, with Citisolar being identified as the owners of the solar panels.

Pre-school had requested the use of an area of the garden to extend children's environmental learning opportunities. This appears to be working very well.

Current initiatives to be finalised are:

- \* Outside eye catching new signage
- \* Following the break in in February new fire doors are to be installed. As the quote was in excess of £4,000 another quote is to be sought
- \* LED lighting in the sports hall

The financial position, under the very careful management of Roger Allen, is positive. He has successfully registered the Community Centre as a charity and can now secure gift aid status.

Finally, members of the committee and their partners, totalling twenty in all, attended the Chairman's dinner in April. This was an enjoyable evening at Antibos, and I hasten to add, was financed by the committee members themselves.

Councillor Mrs C Barnes



## The Community Pre-School

May 2017

It really *has* been another amazing year at the Community Pre-School 😊

I'll backtrack to the summer term of 2016 when we began plotting and planning for the new academic year and sent our leavers off onto the next big adventure after a well planned transition period. And let's not forget our summer trip to Gulliver's Kingdom in Matlock where we had a fabulous time...ice cream heavenly divine!

We greeted September with friends old and new, a fantastic new kitchen and a full register! We got out and about...catching the number 59 to Straws Bridge for a nature ramble, another trip on the 59 found us exploring the village and visiting all the local shops and calling on our friends at the Village Pre-School. The highlight were the cookies we bought at Brew and Bake...what a lovely community we live in.

We kicked off our Yuletide festivities with a visit to Bramble Lodge where we sang our favourite Christmas songs with the ladies and gentlemen who live there. Our Nativity up at St Wilfrid's was as wonderful as always and we finished with a party that had Geoffrey Jumper and Santa Claus as the guests of honour!

We've done lots of fundraising...for ourselves and local and national charities. We've taken part in many local events and are in the process of planning our Well Dressing and scarecrow.

We're extremely lucky to 'live' in such a versatile building...not only do we have our light and welcoming playroom but we have full use of the sports hall, our own enclosed playground, our exciting 'Secret Garden' and the fenced off grassed area behind the Community Centre. We've recently enhanced this by creating our own allotment where we have begun growing our own fruit and vegetables. This has created so many learning

opportunities...growing, composting, watering and recycling are just the tip of the iceberg.

Another enhancement to our provision is very 21<sup>st</sup> century...we're taking the children's learning journals to the next level by going digital! We've been piloting a tool called 'Tapestry' and we'll be going live in September!

On April 27<sup>th</sup> Ofsted came calling and although I can't divulge the grading until the report is published I can tell you that it went well.

The coming months bring many challenges and hurdles...new Government initiatives and more cuts in support from the County Council but we'll meet these obstacles with big smiles and cheerful optimism.

I myself will be retiring after 21 years at the nicest place in the whole world...and after over 33 years of working with the small people ☺ We've been organised and methodical as usual and the continuity and ethos of our pre-school won't be affected by this change.

None of the above would be possible without the children and families we work with or the Community Centre Committee who support us and are our best friends.

And of course there are the lovely pre-school ladies...Kate, Lesley, Karen, Katrina and Vikki who go over and above to make the Community Pre-school what it is today.

And here we are at the summer term of 2017...getting our leavers ready for school, getting our inbetweenies ready for more structured days, summer trips and celebrations, learning through play in the sunshine and winding it all up before we wind it all down and start all over again in September. Happy days!

Kate Grice ☺