



WICKERSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

3 YEAR BUSINESS PLAN

2018 – 2021



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1. **Background**

1.1 A Parish Council

A parish council is a civil local authority found in England and is the lowest, or first, tier of local government. They are elected corporate bodies, have variable tax raising powers, and are responsible for areas known as civil parishes.

1.2 Wickersley

EARLY HISTORY

Wickersley is one of the manors that are recorded as being completely waste and valueless. The manor had belonged to Halfdan and Aestan and there had been arable land for three plough teams. William I had given Wickersley to Roger de Busli and he in turn had granted it to his tenant Roger. In the late 14th century, Wickersley society was headed by John de Bossevell, franklin, and his wife Elizabeth who were assessed at 40d in the 1379 Poll Tax return. Just below them was John de Wykerslay, merchant, who paid 2s. Altogether there were 53 Wickersley people prosperous enough to pay the tax. The total population was probably c.90.

The family of de Wickersley descended from Richard fitzTurgis, one of the co-founders of Roche Abbey. In 1230 Robert de Wickersley gave the advowson of the parish church to Worksop Priory. In 1315 the lords of the manor of Wickersley were returned as Thomas de Wickersley, Jordan de Idle and Richard de Dred. By the 16th century the de Wickersleys were living at Broomhall, Sheffield. The male line of the de Wickersleys came to an end in 1528 with the death of Nicholas de Wickersley. The manor passed via his daughter Ellen to her husband Robert Swift jnr, son of Robert Swift of Rotherham. On his death in 1561 the Swift estates were partitioned between his three daughters, Wickersley being among the estates awarded to Frances who married Sir Francis Leake of Sutton. Leake sold Wickersley to Richard Smith of London in 1577. Over the next two centuries the lordship of the manor passed through a number of hands. By the 18th century the manor had passed into the hands of the Sylvester family. Later in the century Capt. Thomas Gilbert, William Bumford and Mrs Reve are recorded as holding Wickersley at various dates. George Rooke of Langham was lord of the manor in 1810. His daughter Charlotte married Rev. John Foster who was rector of Wickersley from 1804 until 1863. In 1841 the lordship passed to William Warde-Aldam family of Frickley Hall.

RECENT HISTORY

As early as 1903 Rotherham Rural District Council was proposing to introduce piped water to the village. This met with little support from the villagers who preferred their well water. The scheme was resurrected in 1910 and approved in 1912. Many villagers expressed their objection to the new mains water on the grounds that it "had no life in it". The parish council

supported Rotherham Corporation's scheme to run trolley buses to Maltby. When this service started in 1912 it greatly improved the public transport available to the villagers. In 1921 the parish council agreed to participate in the West Riding's scheme for village libraries. Gas lamps were introduced to Wickersley's streets in 1927.

The 1930s saw a great expansion in the village of Wickersley. In 1921 Hoe Lister had built himself a house on a plot of land overlooking Denes Plantation. In subsequent years he acquired other land in the area and began to build bungalows and houses, aided by a government subsidy of £100 per house and a loan from his employers. In the 1920s and 1930s he erected the Listerdale housing estate consisting of 650 semi-detached and 40 detached houses. As a result of this and other building, the population of the parish rose from 1,004 in 1921 to 1,809 in 1931 and 3,185 in 1951. Further housing was developed in the Northfield area from 1958 leading to population increase to 5,029 in 1961. The demand for services from the increased population led to the development of the Tanyard shopping centre on the main road in 1966. Continued development of the land around the village has seen the population rise to 6,819 in 1981 and 7390 in 1991.

(Taken from 'A Patchwork of Parishes' Parish Council's Centenary 1894-1994 Published by Archives and Local Studies Section, Rotherham Central Library 1997)

1.3 The Council

Wickersley Parish Council has sixteen Councillors. Elections took place for Councillors in 2015, eleven Councillors were elected to positions. Co-option took place for remaining posts and the Council currently has one vacancy.

Wickersley Parish Council serves the civil Parish of Wickersley, which has a population of around 8,000 people living in 3,400 residential properties. The Council has sixteen members, elected by residents, and represents the first tier of local government in Rotherham.

Council meetings are held in the Community Centre on Bawtry Road on the third Monday of each month at 7.00 pm, apart from the month of August. There is also a meeting of Parishioners (the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting) held in May each year. Other Public Meetings are held to discuss particular matters as and when they arise.

Parishioners are encouraged to attend Council Meetings and are permitted limited discussion. Notices of meetings are placed on Parish Notice Boards at the Tanyard Toilets and near the Mason's Arms.

The Parish Council duties and main responsibilities are:

- The ownership and/or the management of numerous facilities around Wickersley, for the benefit of residents, including: -

- Wickersley Community Centre and Library (set up in 2008 by the Parish Council and managed by Wickersley Community Centre Association on the Parish Councils behalf)
 - Wickersley Park Recreation Ground, off Warren Road
 - Bob Mason Recreation Ground (including management of the sports pavilion and football pitches), off Sorby Way
 - Wickersley Wood, off Wood Lane – for which we won a national award in 2005 for best kept woodland.
 - Wickersley Gorse, off Air Mount Close – Wickersley’s best kept secret – wood and gorse land with superb views over Sheffield
 - Wickersley Bowling Club, off Warren Road
 - Wickersley Allotments, off Second Lane
 - Winthrop Gardens, off Second Lane
 - Flower/shrub beds at numerous locations around Wickersley, including railing planters and hanging baskets on Bawtry Road
 - Tanyard Public Toilets, and the cleaning/gritting/sweeping of the Tanyard Shopping Centre grounds, on behalf of the owners
 - Maintaining 26 seating benches around the parish!
- Reviewing and commenting on planning applications within the Wickersley area
 - Organising regular events in Wickersley
 - Liaising with relevant authorities regarding infrastructure, policing, consultations and community issues to represent your views and get the best advantage for Wickersley
 - Engaging with all interested parties regarding the current and future shape of life in the local area

1.4 Overall Aims and Objectives

To serve the residents of Wickersley, providing, maintaining and improving facilities for residents use.

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose of the Business Plan

The Parish Council decided to produce the first business plan for a three year period from 2016. Each year the plan is reviewed to have subsequent editions. It is a statement of our vision for the parish and sets out the Councils purpose, objectives and key priorities for development; along with outlining how the Council works. There are a number of reasons why the plan has been developed at this stage.

Firstly as explained later in the plan the Council face a number of challenges over the next few years. Wickersley is a thriving and growing village; with high levels of planned housing development; the Council has a requirement to ensure the implications of this are responded to at a time of financial and budgetary constraint for all levels of local government.

Secondly the Council wish to communicate the plans for the next three years to residents of Wickersley; to give a clear understanding of how the Council works and the aims the Council wish to achieve during the three year period. There are some exciting developments planned and the business plan provides an opportunity for residents to comment on the plans and raise questions with regard to the Council's work.

Finally it is deemed good practice to plan ahead and there is an increased expectation on all Parish Councils to plan for at least a three year period.

The plan is a statement of the Parish Councils intentions over the next three years and will be subject to annual review each year.

2.2 Strategic Context

This plan has been developed in the context of a challenging environment for Wickersley Parish Council.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has recently completed its own strategic planning document which has a number of implications for Wickersley. The strategic plan envisages a relatively large increase in the size of the population of Wickersley reflecting the plans for a 6% increase in the number of houses, particularly in the South of the village. This will have implications directly for the Parish Council but will put added stress on the overall infrastructure; particularly schools and roads.

The Parish Council also faces a challenging financial scenario where the previous grant from RMBC of £17,344 has now been lost. The Council does not wish to increase the precept by more than 2% per annum due to the current economic climate. Other sources of income now form an essential part of the Councils plans, such as grants and community infrastructure levy.

Wickersley Parish Council are an ambitious Council and wish to both maintain current services along with developing new facilities. The three year plan allows a level of new developments which are summarised in section 4.

The Parish Council are committed to ensuring an appropriate response to the changing nature of Wickersley, both in terms of the impact of new housing developments, increasing population and the increase in popularity of the village as a leisure and shopping hub. The plan therefore ensures that, as far as the Council is able, these strategic risks are reviewed, managed and responded to.

2.3 Communication

The business plan will be widely published via the Council website, newsletter and through other community channels. The Council will promote its availability and seek feedback on the contents from within the community.

2.4 Governance

The Parish Council are responsible for complying with the governance and accountability requirements placed on local councils; the annual production of accounts and governance statement is the councils main way to comply with these requirements. These documents highlight how the Council's money has been spent and how the Council has complied with the governance requirements place upon us. Wickersley Parish Council comply with good governance requirements and work within an effective control environment which includes standing orders, the conduct of meetings, financial regulations and appropriate internal audit.

Wickersley Parish Council aims to be a professional and competent Parish Council which ensures sound financial management and is open and accountable in all the council does. The annual governance statements show that the council have met and continue to meet these aims and objectives.

2.5 Working with the Borough Council

The Parish Council recognise the strategic context outlined above requires a good working relationship with the Borough Council in terms of planning policies, understanding their plans for managing the impact of a growing village and making proposals on requirements and shared use of the Community Infrastructure Levy. One consideration to achieve this is the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Parish Council reviews all planning applications to provide feedback where appropriate to the Borough Council and present a local view. The Neighbourhood Plan will allow residents and the council to formulate a formal legal document to shape the future of the village. The plan will be a

statutory document to be adhered to for all planning applications in the village.

3. Committees

3.1 Overview

Wickersley Parish Council meeting is once per month as a full council. In addition separate Committees have been established to run specific areas of the Council in more detail. The main Committees are: -

- Events
- Environment
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Recreation Ground
- Planning
- Winthrop Gardens
- Woodland
- Wickersley Park Development
- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

3.2 Events Committee

Christmas Light Switch On

The Christmas light switch on first took place in November 2014, following its success in the initial year Wickersley Parish Council took the decision to have this as an annual event.

Gala

Wickersley Parish Council Gala is run every other year on Wickersley Park off Warren Road, Wickersley. The gala last took place in 2017 with the next Gala due in 2019.

3.3 Environment

The Environment Committee manage all areas of Wickersley not covered by other Committees. These include the flower beds and all gardening, Christmas lights and the Tanyard toilets.

The gardening contract was last approved for a three year period 2018 – 2021. The new contract will be out to tender in November 2020 in order to appoint the successful contractor for the period of 2021 – 2024.

In late 2015 the Council took over the Tanyard toilet lease from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. A full refurbishment of the toilets was carried out in 2017.

The Committee carried out a large increase in the number of Christmas lights installed in the village for the 2016 Christmas light switch on event. This was built on in 2017 adding more lights to the existing locations and considerations for further expansion continue.

3.4 Human Resources

The Human Resources Committee oversee the employees of the council along with consideration for training and management of new councillors.

2015 to 2017 brought several new councillors to the council, training has been provided to give overall knowledge to the councillors to enable them to undertake their duties and responsibilities. Further more formal training is being considered for 2018.

In 2014 a new Clerk was appointed to the Parish Council and training for ILCA has been completed and CILCA is being progressed.

3.5 Recreation Grounds

Within Wickersley there are two recreation grounds which are managed by the Recreation Grounds Committee, along with responsibility for the bowling club and allotments.

In 2016 the new grass cutting contract was approved for a three year period 2016 – 2019.

The Committee manage Bob Mason pavilion including the football facility which is provided to local teams. Future considerations are to look at upgrading the pavilion, consideration for all weather multi-purpose pitch. In 2016 a full upgrade took place for the bike track on-site.

The largest project is the re-design of Wickersley Park; which is now established as a separate committee to allow focus to the project.

3.6 Planning

The Planning Committee review conditions requested by Rotherham MBC on applications which the Council opposed which were subsequently granted by Rotherham MBC. The committee would then write to the Planning Enforcement to note any conditions contravened.

Wickersley Parish Council took the decision to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan in 2017 and a steering group for the plan was established in 2018.

3.7 Winthrop Gardens

In 2017 Wickersley Parish Council took the decision to change the name of the site to Winthrop Gardens. Wickersley Parish Council completed the purchase of Winthrop Gardens in early 2016; in order to keep the site as an

asset for the community and keep the gardens open for the enjoyment and utilisation of Wickersley people. The Parish Council wish to ensure long term benefit for the public wanting to enjoy nature therapy and access to this 'little gem' in our village. The Parish Council will be welcoming any help from volunteers over the coming years to make the park a success and maintain this asset for the village.

3.8 WCCA

WCCA – Wickersley Community Centre Association. Wickersley Parish Council has four elected Councillors whom sit on the Committee for WCCA along with four elected members of the public. WCCA is an arms-length organisation which currently is self-funding. Despite this the Council does need to keep consideration for any major works or issues which may arise within the premises. In addition Wickersley Parish Council have a PWLB loan which was used to build the Community Centre. This is currently being repaid on an agreed basis.

3.9 Woodland

Wickersley have two managed woodlands. Wickersley Wood off Wood Lane Wickersley and Wickersley Gorse which can be accessed via Air Mount Close Wickersley.

Along with the day to day running of the woodland; including removal of damaged or dangerous trees and management of bracken and saplings, the Committee developed long-term management plans for the woodland which were approved for a five year period in 2016 and 2017. The plans include details for coppicing works.

The Woodland Committee arrange many events throughout the year to encourage local people to use the woodland in the village. The Committee added a number of sculptures in Wickersley Wood during 2017 and 2018 and have consideration to add items over the coming years.

3.10 Wickersley Park Development

In 2017 the committee appointed a contractor to develop a plan for the development of the park. Once the plans have been received these will be reviewed by the committee and options put to the Parish Council regard proposed developments.

3.11 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

In 2017 Wickersley Parish Council took the decision to proceed with a neighbourhood plan. In 2018 the steering group for the development of the plan was formed and steps taken to put in place a specialist contractor to work with the steering group on the development of the plan. Grants are to be considered for the development of the plan; with a value committed in reserves as a contingency for a grant being un-successful.

3.12 Other Items

Wickersley Parish Council were successful in achieving foundation status in the Local Council Award Scheme. This status will then be reviewed once the Clerk has achieved CILCA.

4. Plans For The Next Three Years

4.1 Introduction

Section 2.2 outlines the financial challenges the Parish Council face; meaning the Council will see minimal increase in the recurrent income over the next three years. This will require the focus to be on maintaining rather than growing the services provided, which are funded from the annual precept. Despite this the Parish Council do have budget available for significant implementation of new projects and infrastructure schemes. These are to be implemented through a combination of reserves, grants and the annual budget. Several major programmes are to be implemented during the current business planning cycle, these are summarised below:-

4.2 Wickersley Park

The major project will be a five year programme of improvements to Wickersley Park. The Wickersley Park Development Committee have appointed a contractor to develop an overall plan; with their key focus being on a new entrance, improved pathways, a central hub, purchase and replacement of play equipment, enhanced sports facilities and improved floral and nature facilities, along with formalising the proposals for the former community centre site. Investment for the project will be £150,000 over a five year period; made from grants, reserves and annual budget.

4.3 Winthrop Gardens

Following the completion of the purchase of Winthrop Gardens the Parish Council have developed the park into a community facility which maintains the previous charities aims; whilst also developing the parks visitor facilities and use as a community hub and meetings venue. The committee plan to continue this development over coming years with consideration to make some of the temporary buildings into more long-term permanent solutions.

4.4 Other Improvements

Other smaller improvement programmes will be scheduled into the plans over the three year period, these plans will be agreed in detail on an annual basis.

4.5 2018 / 2019 Action Plan

The Council's overall action plan for 2018-19 is: -

To hold a variety of Community Events to include:-

- Wickersley Easter Hunt
- The Gorse Bluebell walk
- Himalayan Balsam Pulling
- Bracken pulling
- Teddy Bears Picnic
- Fungus Foray
- Halloween Lantern Walk
- Bat Event
- Wickersley Walks
- Wickersley Christmas light switch on 2018

To consider plans for the refurbishment of Wickersley Park

To continue the development and sustainability of Winthrop Gardens

To hold a Summer Sports Programme

To increase the Christmas Lights within the village

Endeavours to keep the street environment clean and welcoming

5. Finance

5.1 Overview

The Parish Council meet in January of every year to review and set the budget and precept for the forthcoming year. Initially in 2016 this process developed further to make a consideration for planning three years in advance. Once again in 2018 three years budget figures were presented to the Parish Council to allow for longer term planning. It is to be noted that the budget for future years are for reference and will be reviewed at the annual budget meeting each year.

5.2 Current budget 2018/19

The Parish Council set the 2018/2019 at its budget meeting on 22nd January 2018, this is summarised below: -

Income	£000
Precept	155
RMBC Grant	0
Bank Interest	1
Community Centre	27
Environment	4
Recreation Grounds	4
Wickersley Park Development	10
Neighbourhood Plan	9
Winthrop Gardens	27
Other income / grants	1
	238
Expenditure	
Administration	13
Salaries	60
Events	4

Winthrop Gardens surplus 16/17	£ 10,821.64 (£2500 allocated to solar)
Winthrop Gardens surplus 17/18	£ 2430.05
Football Bonds	£ 900.00
Supplement 18/19 Budget	£ 26,600.00
Neighbourhood Plan	£ 10,000.00

5.5 Forecast

The Parish Council considered future years budget at the 2018 budget meeting give a three year financial plan

5.6 Expected Expenditure

Expected expenditure has been forecast for the next three years. Expenditure for the development of a Neighbourhood Plan is based on securing a grant for the development.

Expected expenditure is to be considered in line with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council cuts and the possibility of requests for increased services from the Parish Council.

6 Summary

6.1 Executive Summary

Overall Wickersley Parish Council is an ambitious Council and all committees have plans and projects in mind for the forthcoming years. The Council has developed a three year plan which both maintains existing services and plans for a number of exciting developments; whilst at the same time maintaining prudent reserves and managing the impact of reduced income.

6.2 Review procedure

The Business Plan will be presented to the full Parish Council after an initial review by the Finance Committee. The plan will be reviewed at least annually by the Finance Committee and the full Parish Council.