



Delamere and Oakmere News

Number 28

July 2013



In this issue:

- **Official Opening of the Community Centre**
- **Proposed changes to parish boundaries**
- **Forest development proposals**

Forthcoming events***Church services*****St Peter's Church, Delamere**

Every Sunday at 8am	Holy Communion
On the first and third Sunday at 10.30am	Holy Communion
On the second Sunday at 10.30am	Family Service
On the fourth and fifth Sunday at 10.30am	Morning Worship
Evening Service in week two at 6.30pm	Holy Communion
Evening Service in week four at 6.30pm	Evening Prayer

Oakmere Methodist Church

The people of Oakmere Methodist Church meet together in the main church at 10.45am every Sunday morning for a service led by a Methodist Local Preacher or Minister. One service a month includes the sacrament of Holy Communion, led by a Minister (Presbyter).

Contacts: Anne or Eric Wright (01829 732950) or Rev Denise Harding (01928 733180, revdenise@btinternet.com).

Delamere and District Golden Club

September 4	Delamere Derby
September 18	Birthday lunch
October 2	Bingo - Yellow Day
October 16	Harvest Festival
October 30	Halloween Lunch
November 13	Coach Trip
November 27	Delamere School Children's Carols
December 11	Christmas Lunch with Carols

All ages welcome!

For all queries regarding events and membership please call the Secretary June Budd on 01606 888117

W.I.

September 10	Mr Hadfield	The origin of everyday sayings
October 8	Members	To be arranged
November 12	AGM	
December 10	Christmas party	

Meetings are held at 7.30pm, every second Tuesday in the month except for August, at Delamere Community Centre

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Wednesday	9am – 5pm
Thursday	9am – 5pm
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Saturday	Closed

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Dairy House Farm, Oakmere

Foreword

The cover picture for this issue is the view across the Cheshire Plain from 'Little Switzerland' in Willington. The view is particularly special at the moment, because it may not be a Delamere and Oakmere view for very much longer. The review of parish boundaries being conducted by Cheshire West and Chester Council has now reached the stage of issuing draft proposals. They suggest linking Willington to Kelsall, including the part that is now in Delamere. Other suggested changes include a similar link between Delamere and Oakmere. More details are inside, of what is being proposed, of possible alternatives, and of what will happen next. There will be more opportunities to give our views before any final decisions are made, so we are not saying goodbye to Little Switzerland just yet.

We devote quite a lot of space to an outline of the Forestry Commission's proposals for developments in the forest. These have now been submitted to Cheshire West and Chester Council for planning approval, so if we want to submit comments before a decision is made we need to move fast. Full details are on the CW&C website - to the tune of nearly 700 pages!

About the newsletter

Delamere and Oakmere News is published on a semi-regular basis three or four times a year. The next issue is planned for late autumn in the run up to Christmas.

Articles, ideas for articles, news of recent events or forthcoming ones, advertisements, photographs, and any other contributions relevant to Delamere and/or Oakmere are all very welcome (inclusion subject to editorial discretion).

The newsletter is available in **full colour** on the Delamere and Oakmere Community website. You can also get a PDF file of the colour version by email (contact us if you would like a copy).

do_newseditor@yahoo.co.uk
or ring Clive George on 01606 882183

Other items in this issue include the official opening of the newly refurbished Community Centre by the magnificently attired High Sheriff of Cheshire, Martin Beaumont, and Stephen O'Brien MP, captured on camera by Don McPherson. We also have a summary of what residents and local businesses have said in their responses to the questionnaires for Delamere's parish plan, news on mains gas and broadband, and an update on the registration of mineral rights by Crown Estates.

Contributions wanted!

Have you ever tried compiling a **crossword**? If you can find time to do one for D&O News many readers would love it, even if it isn't quite up to the standard of the *Times*. And how about a **quiz**? Or any **other ideas**? And please do keep sending us any of your **photos** that you would like to share with readers. Pictures of places or people in Delamere or Oakmere are particularly welcome, but if they are of people please get their permission first.

your local

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Call us for any further information or details.



Oakmere Cricket Club

Oakmere CC have Senior Mens, Juniors and Ladies teams playing over the weekend and mid-week matches.

Outdoor training continues as follows:

Senior Nets: Tuesdays from 6.30pm

Ladies Nets: Mondays from 6.30pm

If you are interested in playing please contact: secretary@oakmerecc.co.uk

Forthcoming events - spectators welcome!

Oakmere President's XI v Chairman's XI - Sunday 18th August

Ladies MCC v Cheshire Select - Friday 23rd August

Location: Overdale Lane, Oakmere, Northwich CW8 2EL

Website: www.oakmerecc.co.uk

Letter from the Rector

Easter 2013

Dear Friends

A big thank you to all those who so generously supported the Church Garden Party. It was a wonderful afternoon of fun and friendship and the weather was just the 'icing on the cake'. There was a wonderful 'community atmosphere' and it was good to see everyone coming together to enjoy the afternoon. Those who were involved in the planning and preparation had worked hard to ensure it was a happy, safe and enjoyable occasion.

At the Annual Meeting of the Community Centre Association last Monday, there were reports of how the DCA committee had worked hard to refurbish the centre and make it an outstanding venue for community activities in the future. The school has also been extended and renovated so that our children will be educated in premises appropriate for the 21st century. All these memorable events are the result of people within our local community working together.

I remember my mother telling me about the news on 3rd June 1953 – with the papers full of

pictures of the Queen's Coronation the headlines shouted 'All this and Everest too!' After this last week I want to shout 'All this – and Wimbledon too!' (As I am writing this before the cricket hopefully we will be able to add 'and The Ashes'!)

The psalmist many centuries ago wrote in Psalm 133 'How good and pleasant it is when people live together in unity! For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.' The psalmist knew that there is no 'I' in team! It is in working together that we are blessed.

We warmly invite you to worship with us at St Peter's, each Sunday there are services at 8am and 10.30am and on the 2nd and 4th Sunday at 6.30pm. On the 2nd Sunday of each month at 10.30am, we have a service for all the family.

Do contact me by telephone or email if you would like me to visit or pray for you.

Brian joins me in sending good wishes and blessings

Elaine Ollman

Reverend Elaine Ollman
The Rectory
Chester Road
Delamere, CW8 2HS

DELAMERE STORES

13 Station Road, Delamere, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 2HU

Tel: 01606 882226

A traditional village store offering an extensive range of fresh produce (much of it locally grown), wines and beers.

The store has a wide selection of delicatessen products, an in-store bakery, and a full menu of fresh hand-made sandwiches which are prepared as you wait.

Come and visit us.

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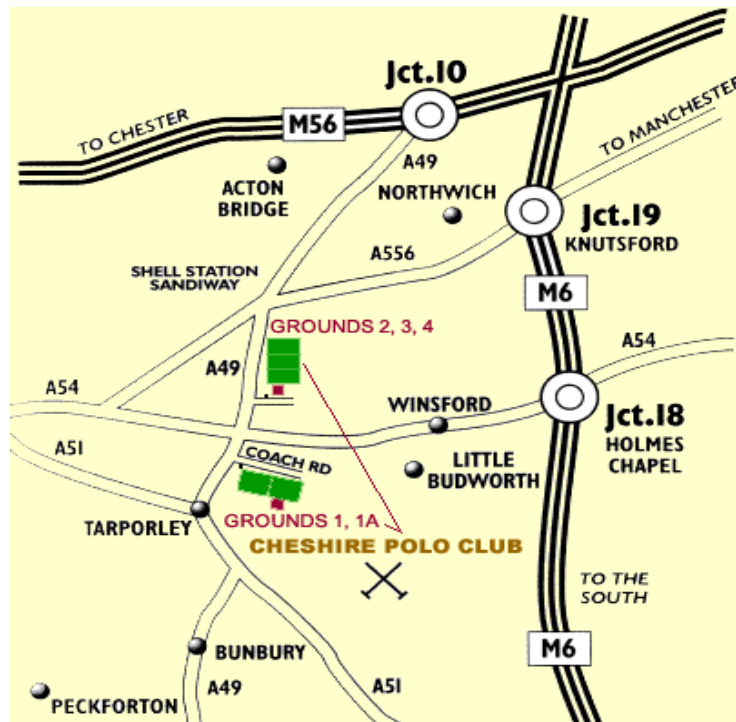
Mon – Fri 6.30am – 7.00pm

Sat 6.30am – 7.00pm

Sun 7.00am – 5.00pm



CHESHIRE POLO CLUB



Cheshire Polo Club – Grounds Off A49 Forest Road, Tarporley, Cheshire

Nos. 1 & 1a Grounds are accessed via Coach Road

SAT NAV CW6 9DT

Nos. 2, 3 & 4 Grounds and Marquee are accessed via Longstone Lane

SAT NAV CW6 9ES

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Come and watch some great polo every weekend from 12.30 p.m. – entry is free. A small charge of £10 per car will be made to non-members on certain tournament days. Bring the family and a picnic and make a day of it, or maybe you would prefer to become a Cheshire Day Member at a cost of just £5 per person and take advantage of the facilities of our clubhouse or members' marquee. Catering facilities are available every weekend.

For all enquiries about fixtures and joining the Club please contact
Cheshire Polo Club, The Polo Office, Edge House, Smithy Bank, Acton, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5

8LF. Tel: 01270 611100 or Email: info@cheshirepoloclub.co.uk

Website: www.cheshirepoloclub.com

For all Marketing, Sponsorship or Events please contact Mark Cramb

Tel: 07944 578754 or Email: mark@cheshirepoloclub.co.uk



Community Centre News

At last! After all the planning, all the effort of raising the funds, all the hassle of the building work, and all the trials and tribulations of getting it finished, we now have a fully-functional good-as-new up-to-date Community Centre. Many, many thanks to everyone involved in making it happen.

The refurbished Centre was officially opened on July 12th by Martin Beaumont, High Sheriff of Cheshire, and Stephen O'Brien MP, Member of Parliament for Eddisbury. Many thanks to them for taking such an interest and giving us so much of their time.

The refurbished centre has a brand new kitchen, brand new toilets (including a modern accessible one), new fire escape doors, a new fire alarm system, a high security access control system, new central heating boiler and controls, security gates for the oil tank, an updated electrical system and energy-saving cavity wall and loft insulation.

Now that we've got it, let's use it. See below for some of the things that are going on.

Photos by Don McPherson



No, you're not late



Albert gives thanks for the new floor drying out in time



Yvonne and Evelyn relax at last - while Paula spots another item for her to-do list



Stephen O'Brien wonders if he's under-dressed



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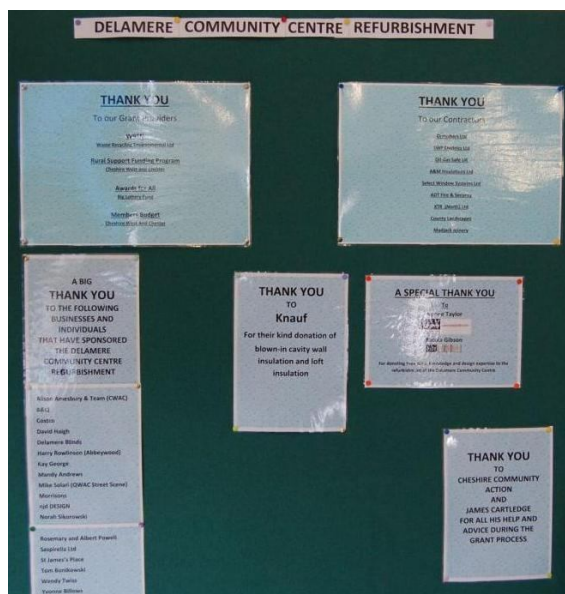
Quick on the draw - don't argue with our MP when the Sheriff's about



Stephen O'Brien congratulates the local community



Martin Beaumont declares the Centre open



A big thank-you to all our sponsors

DELAMERE BOWLS CLUB WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

All abilities – we run teams from Super League to low level evening and afternoon teams.

Practice/friendly games when green not being used for matches.

A sport for all ages – some have been known to play for 80 years.

Fresh air – gentle exercise – activates the brain – meet new friends.

Because players send their bowls alternately you're active in the game from start to finish unlike other sports where you can watch your opponent score for half an hour.

Competitive subscription (£3 less if already a member of another D.C.A. section)

Juniors (under 18) £5, Adults £22, Seniors £18, 80+ years £17.

For more information contact Gerald Merry
07860 733388 or Mavis Bradburne 01928
571674

Volunteering Opportunities

The Delamere Community Association Committee needs additional Committee Members and supporters to help manage the Delamere Community Centre in providing recreational opportunities and other events. If you would like further information please contact Paula Cockcroft (01606 889741) or Yvonne Billows (01606 888303).

INDOOR BOWLS

starts on October 7th (first Monday of October)
and every Monday thereafter

7.30pm to 9.30pm

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(men and women)**

Wednesdays 10-11am throughout the
year

at Delamere Community Centre

led by

Mike or Richard from *Action for Life*

Comfortable casual clothing and
footwear

Just turn up, you'll be welcome

***Delamere Community Association
"100 Club"***

The "100 Club" is a very simple and fun way for the Delamere Community Association and its Members to fund-raise for the Community Centre, whilst at the same time giving you the chance to win cash prizes during four "normal draws" in the year. There will also be a further draw for "non-winning numbers" at the end of the year. Seize the chance to win cash prizes and support your local Community Centre, both at the same time, all for the sum of £12 for a number. A total of £700 is repaid in prize money throughout the year.

If you are interested in supporting your local Community Association further by becoming a member, or would like further details, please contact Evelyn MacPherson on 01606 301762.

Delamere Community Centre Car Park

Due to the high volume of cars, vans, HGVs and cars towing caravans, using the Community Centre car park for u-turns and as a meeting place, the DCA Committee has had no alternative but to erect a sign stating that the car park is private for patrons only and no u-turns. *This does not include patrons and local residents using the Delamere Stores.* However we must insist that no HGVs, casual users or towed caravans use the car park as this is

having a detrimental effect on the car park surface.

Delamere Post Office Services

***Community Centre
Delamere***

The service is provided as an "outreach" Post Office on Wednesdays and Fridays. You can post parcels, buy stamps, draw cash from your bank account (free of charge), and use other Post Office services.

Opening hours:

Wednesdays 9.30am to 2pm

Fridays 9.30am to 1pm

Telephone:

During PO hours: 07763 254163

At other times: 01565 723712

Regular events

Bingo!

Badminton

Bridge and Whist

Billiards and Snooker

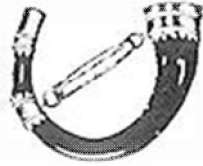
Bowls

Dancing

and more...

***Community Centre activities and
contacts***

Booking Secretary	01606 882114
Badminton (Tues 10 - 12am)	01606 883027
Badminton (Thurs evening)	01606 882708
Billiards/Snooker	01606 889741
Bingo (Sat 7.30)	01606 853861
Prize Bingo (4 th Tues of month)	01606 853861
Bowls (outdoor)	01606 889174
Bowls (indoor)	01829 760420
Bridge (Mon)	01606 882003
Bridge (Wed 7 - 10pm)	01606 888391
Dancing	01606 889411
Golden Club	01606 888117
Guides	01928 789010
Over 60 Keep Fit (Wed)	01606 882183
Whist (Thurs pm)	01606 888889
Whist (Fri pm)	01606 888889
WI (2 nd Tues of month)	01606 889174



Delamere Community Centre

Registered Charity no 504881

5 Station Road, Delamere CW8 2HU

“Quiz Night”

On

Friday 6th September

Doors open 7.15 - Quiz starts at 7.45

Quiz Master Steve Lacey

Tickets are £6 per person

Includes quiz, buffet, complimentary tea, coffee & squash. You can bring your own alcoholic drinks/glasses if you prefer.

Quiz teams of between 4 – 6 people.

If there are not 4 of you please do come along as you can still be part of a team.

Prizes for the winning team

Raffle & ‘Roll the Coin’ Whisky game



Further information can be obtained from:

Mrs Paula Cockroft 01606 889741 email: paulacockcroft@yahoo.com

Mrs Yvonne Billows 01606 888303 email: yvonnebillows@btinternet.com

Parish Council news

Delamere Parish Council Chairman's Letter

The Chairman's letter in the previous edition remarked that we had had an unusually quiet period from the parish council viewpoint. Well, as we move in to, a hoped for, summer, things are starting to warm up.

The main issue on the agenda remains the Local Governance Review of proposed Town/Parish council boundary changes. Since the last publication there has been a further questionnaire seeking views. Some initial proposals have been set out by Cheshire West and Chester, which would protect Delamere and Oakmere's individuality as parishes, but bring them under one overall council's administration. However, as yet, no decisions have been made as to what will eventually be put forward for discussion in the final round of public consultation later this year.

The anticipated planning application for the Forestry Commission redevelopment of the Linmere visitors centre and Delamere Forest cabin development has now been received and was discussed in the July parish meeting. Along with Oakmere parish council, with whom we now have regular joint meetings, we had signalled to both the Forestry Commission and Cheshire West and Chester our significant interest in reviewing the plans for this development, and particularly the traffic management plan associated with it.

Finally we are well on track towards our aim of producing a Parish plan for Delamere. The Parish Plan team are doing excellent work in connecting with households and businesses in the parish to understand what they enjoy about the parish, but also their concerns and aspirations. Having had a really good response to the questionnaires issued, they are currently identifying the key points raised which will eventually become the key developmental areas we can focus on within the parish plan.

You can keep up with these developments through attending our parish council meetings, or reviewing the minutes available on both the Delamere and Oakmere website or parish notice boards.

Harry Tonge
Chair, Delamere Parish Council.

Oakmere Parish Council Chairman's Letter

Hello, my name is Bill McGibbon and I am the Chair of Oakmere Parish Council (OPC) until next May. I would like to say thank you to Tony Overland the outgoing chair for his enthusiasm and commitment over the last 12 months. I am just discovering how much work Tony has done over this period!

I would also like to thank our outgoing Parish Clerk, Amanda Jackson for her dedication and commitment, during a very busy period.

Joanne Monks has been appointed Oakmere's new Parish Clerk and I welcome her on behalf of Oakmere Parish Council and the residents of Oakmere. Joanne is already Parish Clerk to Delamere and comes to us with a background in local government.

As many of you will be aware, from two rounds of questionnaires from CW&C, there is a Community Governance Review taking place on some parish councils in our area. A report has been issued of draft proposals and the main item, which affects Oakmere, is that the parish should be "grouped" with Delamere under a single parish council. The report, which also makes proposals about boundary changes, can be accessed for a limited period on the Delamere and Oakmere Community website in the Latest News column and in the Oakmere Parish Council/ Notice Board page.

I would like to draw your attention to the Oakmere Community Led Planning Framework Autumn 2012, which was issued in February 2013. After resolving some technical difficulties, the issued version of this document can now be accessed on the D&O website under Oakmere Parish Council/ Planning Framework. Captured in this document is the combined vision of Oakmere over the next ten to fifteen years provided by parishioners. OPC would like to give our warm thanks to those who gave up their time to contribute their views and ideas.

The £6,000 Special Expenses Levy for the play area in Waste Lane, was charged on Oakmere residents by CW&C again this year, despite a recommendation from the CW&C Scrutiny Committee that it should be scrapped. OPC feels it cannot move on a decision to lease the play area until the future of the levy is finally determined.

The Wainhomes Four Oaks site next to the Courthouse on Chester Road, now has a mains gas supply. Fulcrum Utility Services, who



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installed the gas pipe, will shortly be contacting the residents in the wider area around Four Oaks to explain how they can access the new natural gas supply.

Connecting Cheshire Partnership held a launch event at Oulton Park recently. After a two year phase of planning and applying for grants they are now moving into the implementation phase with BT as their preferred partner. In April 2013 Connecting Cheshire agreed a £28.5m contract with BT to deliver Fibre Broadband to over 80,000 premises in rural areas of Cheshire. Register your demand for Superfast Broadband, using the link on the D&O Website.

OPC have planted a tree in commemoration of the Queen's Jubilee. The tree is an Oak and has been planted on the corner of Hogshead Lane and the A556, on a green triangle of grass. Below the surface grass, the site turned out to be full of building rubble. A one hour job, turned into three hours of backbreaking toil, removing rubble and adding top soil, to give the sapling a chance to grow. Thank you to the landowner for accepting the rubble and providing us with topsoil. The intention is to provide a plaque in the next year or so, when the tree has established itself.

Bill McGibbon
Chair, Oakmere Parish Council

The website

You may have noticed that new items of interest are appearing on the Delamere and Oakmere Community website much more regularly than before. This is thanks to Bernie Holmes, who responded to our call in the last issue for a volunteer to take on the task of webmaster. Bernie has mastered the technicalities in next to no time, and is providing a great service for the website committee (who retain overall responsibility on behalf of the DCA and the two Parish Councils). He can be contacted on do_webmaster2@yahoo.co.uk or 01606 301434.

<http://www.delamereandoakmere.co.uk>

Delamere parish plan

Many thanks from the Delamere Parish Plan Steering Group to all of you who completed the questionnaires (one for Delamere residents, the other for local businesses). The information

and ideas you provided will be key to producing a meaningful plan for the community.

Household survey

A total of 439 residents' questionnaires were delivered to households throughout the Parish and 158 were returned. The response rate of 36% compares very well with similar Parish surveys.

The Parish Plan, when published, will provide details of the complete results from the returned questionnaires, but in the interim the following gives a flavour of the contents. The pointers simply reflect the responses to the specific questions in the survey, and do not at this stage reflect the many additional comments made by individuals. There are no major surprises:

- Most residents are happy living in the Parish and do so primarily because of the rural environment
- Housing development within the Parish seems to be cause for concern with most respondents, and although small infill sites may receive some support, developments in excess of 5 houses would not
- Houses catering specifically for the elderly would find significant support, and so would low impact recreational facilities
- Housing development and possible changes to planning laws are seen as the major potential threats to the area
- A significant number of households think more should be done to protect local wildlife and habitats
- Speeding traffic and litter are the main forms of local concern
- Whilst all forms of transport are used by residents, most use private cars as their primary means and as a consequence most people do not have any difficulty in accessing doctors and such like
- The Abbey Arms road junction is the biggest area of road safety concern and most people are also unhappy with the condition of local highways and pavements
- The newsletter is significantly the primary source of local information for most Parish households
- Although a small majority don't think the Community Centre caters for all age groups, most think that it should be the social centre or village 'hub'

- There seems to be support for a number of possible new initiatives at the Community Centre and the information will be passed on to the respective governing body for consideration
- Most people think that the facilities currently available for visitors to the area are adequate
- Although burglary was seen as the biggest concern for residents, in general most did not have any significant concerns regarding living in the parish.

Business survey

Who responded

Questionnaires were distributed to 61 businesses in Delamere, Oakmere and the immediate surroundings. The response rate was even better than for the household questionnaire, with 26 returned (47%). Those who took the time to complete the survey were mainly employers, who in turn were roughly split between farming/agriculture and the service industry (retail, tourism, catering). Businesses tended to be relatively young, with the majority ten years old or less. The reasons for businesses setting up in the local area seemed unclear. Many cited “historic” reasons; others the “local environment”.

The local workforce

As you might expect from these industries, the local workforce is evenly split between part-time and full-time staff. What’s interesting is the fact that the workforce isn’t, in fact, immediately local. Most staff travel to work, a point underlined by the fact that employers find it hard to recruit locally, mainly due to the local population lacking relevant skills or because of poor transport links.

The wider environment

The countryside was of great importance to all but one of the respondents. Traffic, roads and poor transport links, however, were viewed as the most problematic aspect of the wider business environment, probably as these issues would deter potential customers, make it harder to retain staff, limit the size and type of residential communities and make operational management less efficient (harder to make or receive deliveries, for example).

Business support

Local planning doesn’t appear to be a concern, and there is a desire for more information about energy saving/recycling from about half of those questioned – so a possible “quick win” as this is something that is relatively easy to provide. Levels of crime are very low and locals feel well supported by the police – this is a real plus point and something that should be emphasized if the area was to be marketed to potential new businesses.

Most businesses found it relatively easy to find premises, and the majority didn’t think they would need additional premises over the next 3-5 years. Yet despite this, the majority thought it would be difficult to find suitable business premises.

How do people find out about things?

As with most communities, word of mouth is key to sharing information and finding out what’s happening. The local paper is also a useful means of reaching people, and there was great enthusiasm for the idea of creating a local business directory.

Tom Esser and Colin Stubbs
Delamere Parish Plan Steering Group

Delamere parish plan community meeting



***Your Parish
Needs You***

The next big step in developing the Parish Plan will be an open meeting at which the findings of the surveys will be discussed, and everyone will be able to air their views on what issues should be tackled in the Plan. The meeting will be in the Community Centre on **Wednesday 25 September**. Make a note of this in your diaries, and keep an eye open for more details.



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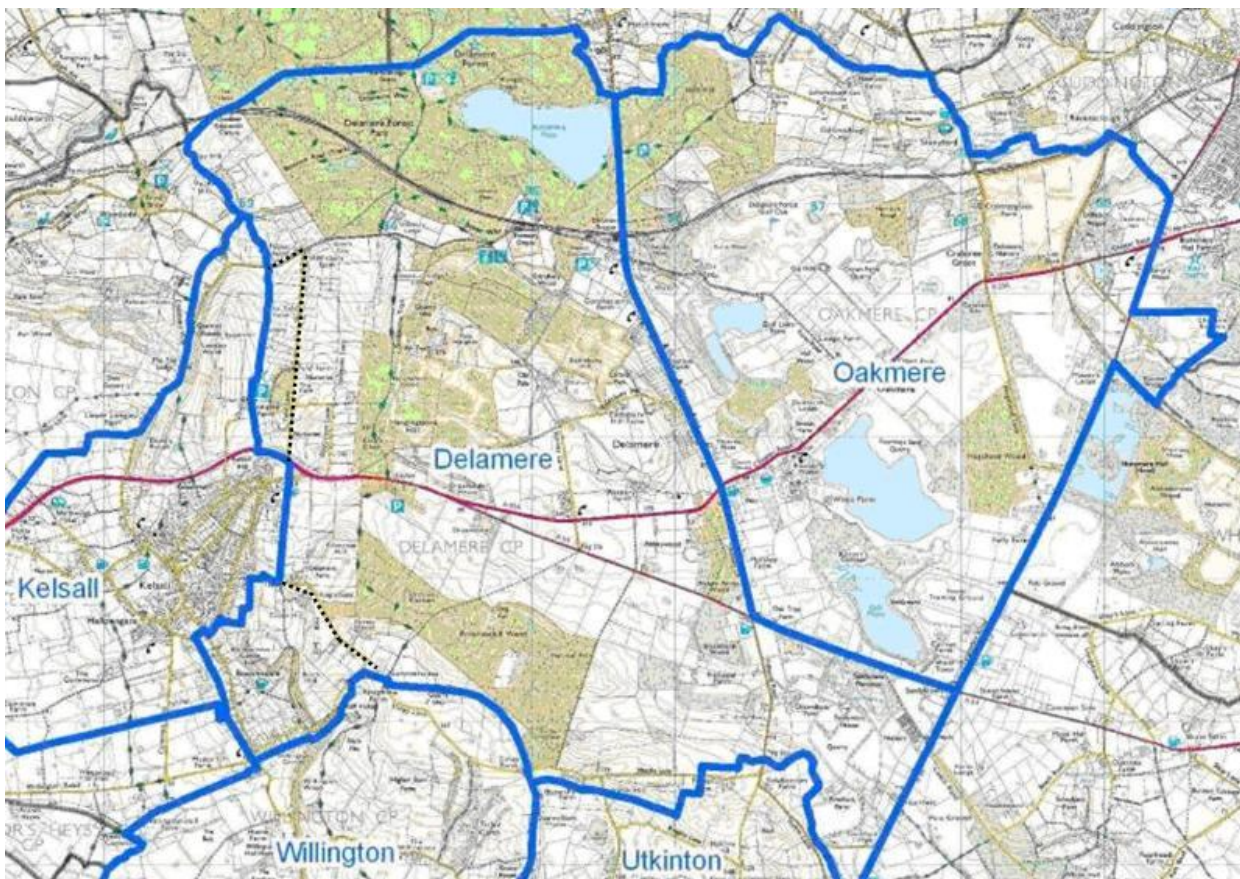
Review of Parish Boundaries

The review being undertaken by Cheshire West and Chester Council has taken another step since the last issue. Following the second round of public consultation, a report was presented to the CW&C Review Committee in June, setting out draft proposals. These are:

- Properties to the west of Yeld Lane would move from Delamere to Kelsall.
- The Delamere part of Willington would combine with the rest of Willington, along with properties that are currently in Tarvin.
- The expanded parish of Willington would retain its identity but have a common Parish Council with Kelsall. The common council would have eight representatives from Kelsall and one from Willington.
- Delamere and Oakmere would retain their separate identities but have a common

parish council. The common council would have eight representatives from Delamere and six from Oakmere.

We were highly critical of CW&C's first round of consultation, and are happy to say that the second was a lot better. The draft proposals do seem to have been influenced by the views expressed by residents, but they are not cast in stone. We have been told by CW&C that various alternatives would be possible, in terms of both the location of the boundaries and the identities of the parishes. These could address some of the problems that might arise with the current draft proposals. For example, the current proposal is for a boundary running down Yeld Lane, so that properties on one side of the road would be in Kelsall while those on the other side would stay in Delamere. To address this, the boundary could be moved eastwards, so as to lie, for example, on or near the Sandstone Trail.



Proposed new parish boundaries - the dotted lines along Yeld Lane and Waste Lane

Meanwhile, although the current proposal preserves the identities of the existing parishes, it could prove divisive in terms of representation on the common councils. If the residents of Delamere and Oakmere prefer, they could become a single parish whose councillors

are all elected by all the residents and represent them all, rather than having some councillors representing Delamere residents and others representing Oakmere residents. Similarly, Willington could merge with Kelsall, instead having just one councillor on a common council.

Alternatively, if residents prefer it, the newly expanded parish of Willington could stay separate and have its own parish council.

The June meeting of the CW&C Review Committee failed to agree on whether to adopt the proposals as their draft recommendations, and deferred a decision to the next meeting (due on August 14). Once the Committee has reached agreement, their draft recommendations will be published, comments will be invited, and open Parish Meetings will be held in each of the affected parishes. No changes can take place unless they are agreed by residents at those Parish Meetings. Further developments will be reported in the next issue. In the meantime, keep your eyes open for any announcements from CW&C.

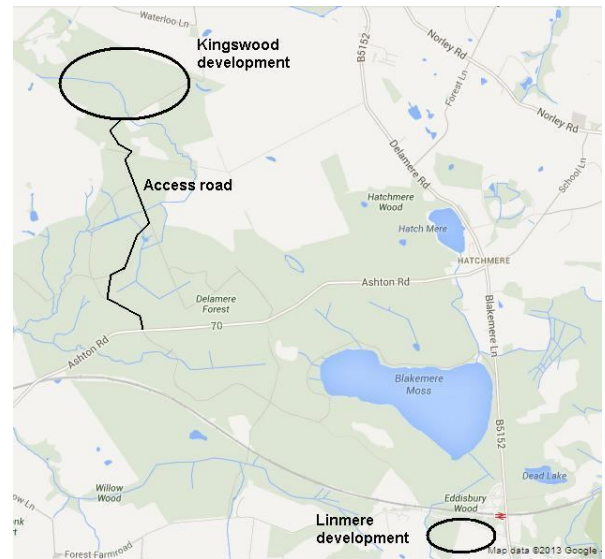
Forest development plans

The Forestry Commission has now submitted its planning application for major developments in the forest, after last year's public consultation. The proposals have caused quite a stir, particularly among our neighbours in Manley, where the biggest part of the development would take place. This is for building 78 holiday lodges at Kingswood, in the northern part of the forest. The other main proposals are for a new visitor centre at Linmere and changes to the access road from the station. All the details are on the Cheshire West and Chester website, but **be warned** - there are over 50 separate documents, amounting to nearly 700 pages, not including public comments, of which there are more than 100 so far. Most of the documents can be downloaded, but **be warned about that too**. At the broadband speeds that we get in most of Delamere and Oakmere (see separate article) the download time alone amounts to well over two hours. And that's before you've even started reading anything! If you want to explore beyond the summary presented here, start with the key documents listed at the end of the article.

There two distinct components of the proposal, one for the holiday lodges at Kingswood, and the other for the developments around Linmere. The Forestry Commission has combined them into a single planning application because it needs the income from the Kingswood part in order to pay for the Linmere part.

The 78 holiday lodges, each with its own parking spaces, would be scattered among the

trees across most of the area of Kingswood. Access would be via the existing forest track running south to Ashton Road.



Location of proposed developments

The site would remain open to general access, including on the public rights of way that run through and around it. Of the 78 lodges 7 would be "gold standard" single bedroom, 32 two-bedroom, 31 three-bedroom, and 8 four-bedroom. The four-bedroom lodges would all be two-storey, four of them with tree-houses. A shop would be incorporated into the reception building selling typical self-catering requirements, together with coffee, snacks and alcoholic beverages.

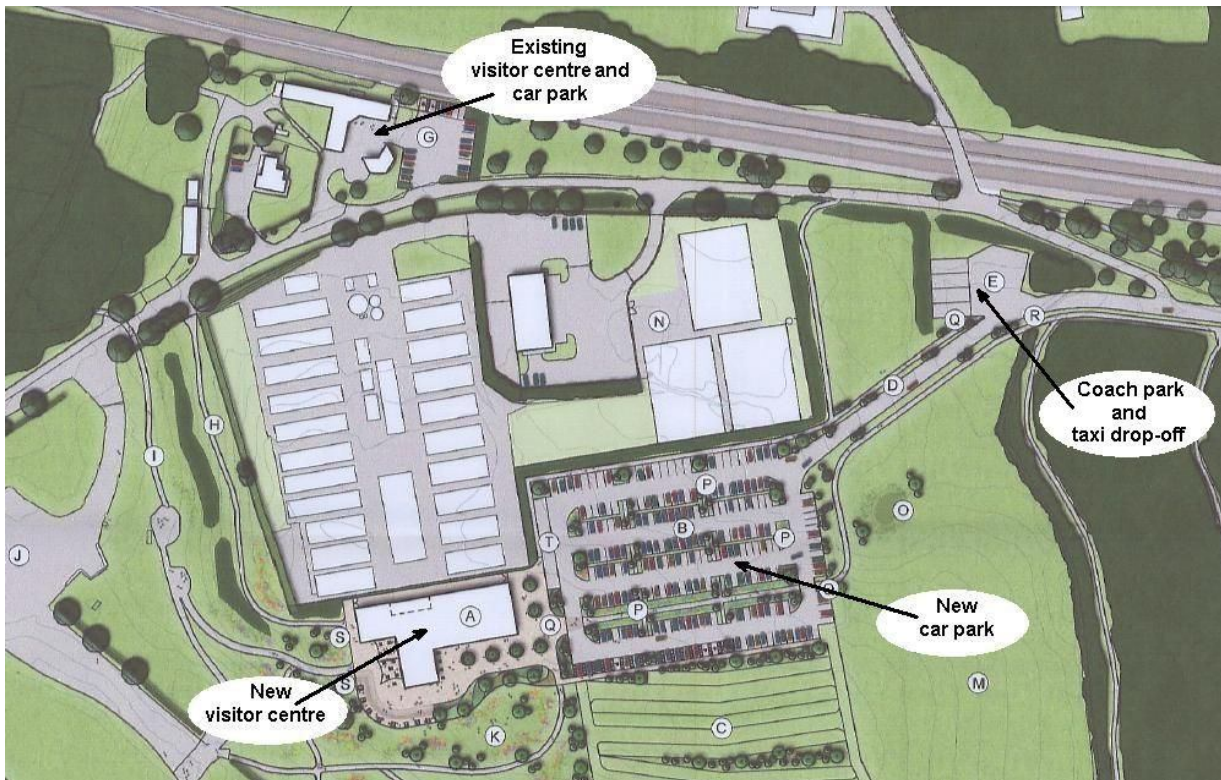


Aerial view of Kingswood with lodges superimposed

At Linmere the Forestry Commission polytunnels would be relocated to make space for a new visitor centre and car park. The visitor centre would be about four times the size of the present one, consisting mainly of a much bigger café and replacements for the existing meeting-room/classroom and bicycle hire shop. It would also include improved toilet facilities and an information area. The existing visitor centre would be converted into Forestry Commission

offices, served by the existing car park. One of the documents says that the existing offices

would be demolished, but the plans show them still in place, along with the associated car park.



New visitor centre and car park at Linmere

The new public car park would have 275 spaces compared with the current 80, plus a separate coach park and taxi drop-off area. The access road would be widened to allow continuous two way traffic, with dedicated lanes for left turn and right turn at the junction with Station Road. The speed limit would be raised from 15 mph to a mixture of 20 mph and 30 mph.

Both developments would be in the Green Belt, where planning permission is severely restricted. The Forestry Commission argues that this doesn't affect the Linmere proposal, since the land is already developed and no new uses are proposed. However, it acknowledges that the Kingswood proposal is for new development, which is not permitted in the Green Belt except under 'very special circumstances'. The very special circumstances identified by the Forestry Commission are that a guaranteed income from the 78 holiday lodges is needed to secure other investment for the remainder of the proposal, and to provide the security of a sustainable income to manage the forest for future generations.

The public comments that have been registered with Cheshire West and Chester Council fall sharply into two camps, one strongly supportive, the other strongly opposed. Much of the

support relates to the expected benefit to local businesses and the creation of new jobs. Much of the opposition relates to the transformation of Kingswood from being one of the quietest areas of the forest to one of the busiest, plus the introduction of traffic through the forest to Kingswood and the changes to the Linmere access road. Two other factors are worth noting. Firstly, the trees in Kingswood are mainly Corsican pine grown for timber production, which are due to be clear felled in 2022. Under the holiday lodge proposal Kingswood would be managed for continuous cover, using methods that encourage natural regeneration of native species. Secondly, if CW&C were to approve the proposal, they are expected to require that money be set aside to remedy the traffic problems and pedestrian safety concerns that have arisen following previous recreational developments in the forest.

The official deadline for public comments was set as 25 July, but we understand that all comments received before the planning decision is made will be taken into account. This will probably not be before the end of August, so whether you want to lend support, register an objection, or suggest a change to any of the details, there is still time.

The protest campaign being organised by Manley residents (<http://cadd.me.uk>) aims to **“Defend Delamere Forest”**. The Forestry Commission’s stated aim of ensuring the forest’s sustainability for future generations, loosely translated, means - **“Defend Delamere Forest”**. Simple, isn’t it?

Planning documents

The full set of documents is available on the Cheshire West and Chester website at:

<http://pa.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyVal=MOL9OBTE03A00>

Click on “Documents”, “View associated documents”, and use the arrows to browse through the list. The key documents are the Planning Statement (in three parts) and the two Site Layout Plans (Visitor Hub Masterplan and Forest wide Masterplan).

Minerals rights

In issue 26 we took a look at the letters many residents had received from the Land Registry, informing them that ‘The Queen’s Most Excellent Majesty’ had applied for registration of mines and minerals under their land. Since then there have been a few developments.

At least one resident has lodged a formal objection, with no success so far. In another case the deeds of the property include a copy of a 1930 conveyance which suggests that the mineral rights do not belong to the Crown, but to Salt Union Ltd, who operate the Winsford salt works. This may make little difference to residents, but it reveals an interesting turn in the story. The conveyance says that, for the sum of £71,030, the third Baron Delamere sold (to Salt Union) the rights to all the mines and minerals, except gravel, sand and ‘like substances’, within and under Over, Weaverham, Marton, Hartford, Delamere, Davenham, Eaton and Moulton. This would appear to blow a big hole in the Crown’s claim to the rights, but Land Registry are undeterred. They say that the 1930 conveyance means nothing, because it doesn’t prove that the third Baron Delamere actually owned the rights that he sold for £71,030. Are they accusing the good Baron of fraud?

Meanwhile, we noted in the previous article that, whoever owns the rights to the minerals, there is little chance of them ever getting planning permission to work them under residential property. This would probably be

true for anything that requires surface working, but what about natural gas? There has been a lot of media excitement recently about proposals for hydraulic fracturing (‘fracking’) to extract shale gas from under Lancashire and Cheshire. In the previous article we concluded that the Crown is merely taking action to preserve the rights it has had for the past two hundred years. This may well be true. However, with the prospect of a whole new North Sea under Cheshire, it could just be that the value of those rights has suddenly shot up. Small wonder that Crown Estates are so determined to keep them.

Mains gas at Four Oaks - and beyond?

Residents moving into the new Four Oaks housing development will be able to access the first mains gas supply in Oakmere. Wainhomes has invested over half a million pounds in the new gas pipeline from Sandiway, which will offer other local residents the opportunity to extend the network and receive natural gas. Fulcrum Utility Services, the provider that installed the new pipeline, have told us that they will shortly be contacting the wider area around Four Oaks to explain how residents can access the new natural gas supply. This could be substantially cheaper than oil or LPG, as well as being a cleaner fuel.



Bill McGibbon with Oakmere’s first mains gas powered cup of tea - brewed by Gaynor Sands of Wainhomes and Robin Rees of Fulcrum

Oakmere Parish Council worked closely with Wainhomes during the design stages of the project. Bill McGibbon, Chairman of the PC, reports that the company was happy to incorporate the Council’s design suggestions as well as making its significant investment in mains gas.

Four Oaks at Oakmere

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Wainhomes are offering a variety of schemes to help potential new residents at Four Oaks, including part-exchange and help-to-buy on selected plots. Details are available from the sales & marketing suite on Chester Road, which is open Thursday to Monday between 10am and 5pm (until 7pm on Thursdays).

We don't yet know how any extension to the gas pipeline will be funded, or how much it will cost to connect to it, but more information will be coming from Fulcrum soon.

Poetry corner - young at heart

Another Golden poem from Mrs Thelma Ashbrook.

LIFE'S LITTLE PROBLEMS

Can't open jars of jam at all my fingers just won't cope, and when it come to tins of fruit I haven't got a hope.

The days marked on my tablets are printed far to small. Took Saturday's on Monday, couldn't see the things at all.

When it comes to going dancing I think I've had my day, last time I tried a tango my stick got in the way.

I switched the telly on last night for a good old bodice ripper. It got me so exited I poured custard on my kipper.

I had my eye on a nice old man while in the pension queue, I smiled at him, he smiled at me, a match just made for two.

I thought "just play your cards right you'll be playing dating games", but something came between us - perhaps our zimmer frames.

So I'll stick to writing poems, sometimes lunch round at the pub, but I do enjoy my Wednesdays when I'm at the Golden Club.

Championing faster broadband

In D&O News issue 26 we outlined the Government's proposals for improving Broadband speeds all over the country, and warned that unless we demonstrate our need, Delamere and Oakmere could be last on the list or get left out altogether. The Connecting Cheshire Partnership has identified around 100 'digital champions' who are working in their communities to help promote local interests, and we are delighted to announce that Dr Bob Clipperton has agreed to take on this role for Delamere and Oakmere. Dr Clipperton will be setting up a working group in association with

the Delamere Parish Plan Steering Group and their counterparts in Oakmere to help ensure that the necessary actions are taken.

To put the situation into context, data transfer speeds in much of Delamere and Oakmere are in the lowest 5% of the whole country. The basic problem is that the telephone network is based largely on copper wiring. To speed up the service this needs to be replaced by fibre optic cables between the telephone exchange (Sandiway for 01606 numbers, Kelsall for 01829 numbers) and the roadside cabinets to which individual properties are connected.

Recently, Connecting Cheshire announced that BT OpenReach has been chosen to survey the work needed in the local area to upgrade. If we just let them get on with it, we may be left at the bottom the Cheshire Rural area list rather than go to the top. If you would like to join the working group contact Dr Clipperton (RClipp1764@aol.com, 01606 883027) or Jane Lowthion, Secretary of the Parish Plan Steering Group (jane.lowthion@btinternet.com, 01829 751454). Other than that, the most important action to take at the moment is to 'register a demand' on the Connecting Cheshire website, since **priority will be given to those areas with the most registrations**. If you have not already registered, take a look at the leaflet distributed with this issue, go to

www.ConnectingCheshire.org.uk

and do it now!

For those on Facebook...

To complement the newsletter and the community website, Nicola Gibson has started a **Delamere and Oakmere Facebook group**. The idea is to talk about upcoming events, items for sale, local businesses etc. If you are a Facebook user and would like to join in, go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/389577814488267/> to sign up.

Meanwhile, **Nick Tomlin Cars** in Oakmere have also joined Facebook, to keep customers and potential customers up to date with the servicing side of the business. Each month they will be doing different special offers, along with a Car of the Week, and the regular collection and drop off service that means you don't need to leave the house to get the car serviced. Go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/NickTomlinCars>



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