**Communication on the Armitage with Handsacre War Memorial**

For some years now, there have been concerns raised about the deteriorating condition of the War Memorial, and also for the safety of attendees at the annual Armistice Parade. In general, the location has been shown to be less than satisfactory, and with the increasing number of attendees at the annual event, the Parish Council is taking action to address bot of these points. There is no realistic way of preventing the flow of traffic through the village whilst commemoration takes place.

As a Parish Council, we have been engaging regularly with a recommended Architectural practice, highly experienced in the aspects of public safety in landscaped environments, and monuments restoration. We have had meetings with them, and we have agreed a proposed plan to both redesign the general layout of the memorial site, and the refurbishment of the monument itself. This work is subject to Lichfield District Council planning approval, but we have agreement in principle to proceed, and the costs will be provided to the Parish Council. All relevant bodies have been consulted, and their input and acceptance of designs and changes are of critical importance to the redevelopment of the proposed design.

This communication is intended to share the new design with the wider community and participant groups, and to share the wider impact of these changes during the construction phase. In all aspects of this process, we have sought to minimise the public impact where practicable, and to ensure that the design meets the necessary guidelines in term of public safety. These changes are long overdue, but they represent an opportunity to protect the War Memorial, change the look and feel of the centre of the village, and develop an open space that can be utilised to the benefit of the wider community, faith groups and the public generally.

The major changes are as follows:

1. The War Memorial will be temporarily disassembled to facilitate full refurbishment and protection measures that will protect and extend the lifespan of this historic monument.
2. The location will be remodelled sensitively, to include an open area and permanent seating that can be used by the community, whilst making the area easier to maintain and manage going forward.
3. The memorial position will remain unchanged, but to ensure the safety of attendees at the annual Armistice Day commemoration, the memorial and the centre piece will be rotated through 180 degrees to face inwards to an open space. Additional height will be added, and permanent chain retainers installed for the protection of wreaths and poppies or small wooden crosses.
4. It is intended to resurface the existing car park, so as to allow attendees to gather there. A removable flagpole will be positioned in such a way that a shadow will be cast across the War Memorial on the 11th hour of the 11th day of November, sunshine permitting.
5. There will be a large circular motif set into the surface of the new hard landscape, that allows for additional calendarised markers to be permanently added, so other events (for example VE day) can be commemorated.
6. There will be a minor change to the layout of the car parking spaces, to better locate the new disabled location, but one space will unfortunately be lost to accommodate the circular motif and the permanent seating plans.
7. The vegetation will be partially removed, but trees and some shrubbery will be maintained.
8. If approved, there will be a power connection made available should the village want to install a Christmas Tree during the festive period.

The design layout is added below.

We will keep the public informed of changes and any restrictions to parking, to allow for annual Armistice Day remembrance or for construction work to proceed, will be posted on the Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council website and on the Parish Notice Board.