

## **Responses to the Parish Council letter to residents about the Wendy Kaill bequest and proposed bandstand**

I am writing to support the proposal of the building of a band stand. There are many things this money could be spent on, but I think it's important that the money is spent on something that Wendy and Hope would have approved of. I have spoken to Sally Huband, who knew them both well, who tells me that a bandstand is what they would have wanted.

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With regard to the letter published in the Plumpton & East Chilmington News of April 2017 we should like to make the following comments on the actual process of reviewing the proposal.

For the Parish Council to seek input from all residents is to be expected, but nonetheless welcomed. However, in this instance the time available for response has been so short (once the parish magazine had been delivered and then read as far as the final entry, it is less than two weeks) we believe there to be a reasonable likelihood that some well-intended responses will be abandoned or will miss the deadline. For our part, with a number of significant current demands on our time, we have been unable to formulate our response by the date requested.

We believe that the process would have been more effective with a wider, at least 28 day, window for the replies.

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Whilst acknowledging that a Bandstand would fulfil the brief as set out by the Parish Council. I feel that the reasons given justifying the decision are not at all convincing.

- The village green will be no more attractive with a structure tucked away in one corner to enhance ones enjoyment of an open space.
- There has not been a village day on the green since 2010, mainly due to apathy of people coming forward to support the last organising committee. Weddings are normally private affairs and I cannot recall any use of the green for performance other than 'The Rude Mechanical Theatre Co.'
- If a shelter is required for children waiting for the school bus, why not provide a bus shelter rather than an open structure which would provide minimal, if any, protection from driving rain.
- The young usually do not want to be organised in any way; so the hope that they will use it, when they have not been consulted is improbable, especially in such a public place
- The proposed structure is no bigger in diameter than two people standing with their arms outstretched, so the idea that it would provide a meeting place for groups including disabled, when there are no other facilities available in the location is optimistic.

I, therefore, do not feel that this proposal is in the best interests of the Village.

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I wanted to voice my support for using the bequest to establish a bandstand in the Village Green.

We live on Plumpton Lane, just down from the railway station, and come into the village every day. We sometimes go to events at the Village Hall.

The village green is in a great location but, in my view, it's not very well utilised and a bandstand would make it more of a social centre of the village.

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With reference to the idea of a bandstand on the village green we think it is a good idea, we lived next door to Wendy and Hope and both enjoyed music with Hope being a very competent pianist. I hope this helps with the decision on the memorial

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After reading the parish magazine, I thought I would quickly drop you a line to say I am in favour of the bandstand on the village green.

When travelling around the country, my husband and I have come across villages with bandstands and have always found them to be a lovely heart to their communities. When commenting to the local residents how much we enjoyed seeing them, they have always replied very positively.

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I refer to the recent letter sent to me regarding the proposed Bandstand to be erected on the Village Green. Although I am not wishing to oppose this project I wish to make a number of observations which I hope will be considered by the Parish Council prior to any further decisions being made.

I have not previously corresponded regarding this project as I understand no location had been decided for The Bandstand so no comment could be made regarding this aspect until now.

As I live directly opposite, the location will have the greatest impact on my house so I would make the following observations which I hope will have your consideration;

1. The Bandstand should be positioned to the western side of the Willows or nearer the centre/ southern side of the Village Green and not near the main road. There is an added danger of passing traffic, this is the most narrow part of Station Road with parked cars on Station Road most of the day and night an added hazard. Any possible noise from The Bandstand would not be such an issue.
2. To the east side of the Willows (the main road side) this area is prone to flooding in the winter. There is a slope from the road to the Willows so this could affect any construction.
3. A site meeting/ discussion with those house owners who will be most affected by this project in order to reach a joint agreement that will suit all parties.

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May I firstly say that the open letter is very balanced in its approach and fairly represents the situation in which the Council finds itself. It is disappointing that the issue has not moved forward more quickly as undoubtedly, leaving matters floating as this has been, causes more problems than it solves.

As Chairman when the bequest was notified to the Council, I felt duty bound to ensure that the funds were used in a way which (i) bore some resemblance to the desires of the donor and (ii) met the needs of the village at the time and for the future. As the Council correctly states in its open letter, to allow the funds to be spent on temporary maintenance, repairs or similar would not have met wither of these aims. The working party spent a lot of time examining various options and consulting closely with the Estate representative. The pavilion on the green was chosen as the best outcome.

The Council should now move forward to close this matter, reporting back on the consultation now under way and installing the pavilion, should that be the outcome of the consultation, as quickly as possible. This will be some two years or more since the bequest was made. One thing I am sure of is that the village could not, at this point, be said to have done its best to pay due respect to Wendy's memory. Given the extraordinary generosity of the bequest, we must not now fail in our duty to do so.

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I am writing in response to the request for comments in relation to the plan to erect a bandstand with the funds provided through the Wendy Kaill bequest.

I am not at all in favour of this plan, and think it a waste of precious resources. I don't believe that a compelling case was ever made for this project, and I encourage the council to take the opportunity to stop it once and for all.

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I strongly support this, for the reasons set out in your circular. I also believe that the proposals reflect the interests of the two ladies during their lifetimes, in a way that other projects discussed are unlikely to. It is appropriate that all bequests should be applied with this consideration very much in mind.

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Further to the request in April's parish magazine for comments on the decision to use the very generous bequest made by Wendy Kail and Hope Good - I would like to say that I think the idea of using this money to create a permanent memorial in the form of a bandstand on the village green sounds very pleasant and sensible.

The five reasons given for reaching this decision, together with the obvious care and attention which has gone towards siting and design, should make this an amenity which will be appreciated by village residents and visitors for many years in the future.

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We refer to the letter, dated 20 March, from Plumpton Parish Council regarding the proposed bandstand for the village green.

As residents of Station Road close to the village green, the proposal gives us a number of concerns and we wish to object to the erection of said bandstand.

Our concerns include but are not limited to the following points.

(i) the letter is the first formal notice given to us and other affected residents of the project and seemingly comes at a late stage after a considerable amount of work has been conducted on the project without any significant public visibility.

(ii) the letter gives only a very limited period for comment and, thus, significantly reduces the opportunity for all residents to either reject or support the proposal.

(iii) there is no evidence that any business plan, environmental impact assessment or risk assessment has been conducted.

(iv) no details of building design have been given or anything other than a very brief description of the proposed siting. There is also no evidence that any consideration has been given for future maintenance or cleaning etc.

(v) there is no evidence of a proven need for any such bandstand or of anything other than a passing hope that any musical use will be obtained. This would seem to be at variance with the stated aims of the bequest.

(vi) it seems that the main proposed use will be as a gathering place for the young. If that is the case, then it should be clearly spelled out with the actions to prevent "anti-social behaviour" addressed. The suggestion in the letter that such behaviour will be diminished is far from convincing especially as vandalism etc., in the village seems to occur mainly after dark when the site will not be "in full public view." Additionally, even before the reductions in local policing occurred, experience has shown that an emergency call for police can take at least 40 minutes before an officer can attend; far too long for any meaningful assistance.

In closing may we say that we are left with an uneasy feeling that the proposal for the bandstand has not been handled with the high standards that we have come to expect and appreciate from the Parish Council who handle what must be, at times, a thankless and unappreciated task. Nevertheless, should the proposal go ahead it may well be met by legal challenge which will, no doubt, require full disclosure of the Council's actions.

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I have lived in and around Plumpton since the early 50s. There has never been anywhere to meet informally in the village except in our own homes.

The possibility of a bandstand situated halfway down our long, long road from the Plough to the Half Moon seems a brilliant idea. Some people may think it odd, or unsuitable, but I trust the Parish Council will give it fair wind.

There will be fixed benches surrounding the proposed bandstand so no muddy feet. As a venue for entertainment, bands, choirs and other musical groups on tour would visit us, and our local schools give concerts there. Marriages could be celebrated in its panoply. We have several well-known artists in the village and sister parishes, so small displays of their work could be shown which, combined with the Hall, a Great Festival, including the talents of the Plumpton Players and the Pantomime Society, could become a regular event.

A small marquee for teas and coffees etcetera, and our richly provisioned nearby village shop, furnish everything for picnics.

If I may, I would urge the Parish Council to give the proposed bandstand concept sympathetic consideration. I knew Wendy and Hope. Both loved children. They loved the theatre. They had no interest in sport.

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Although the bandstand seems a good idea, I am concerned about vandalism to such a structure.

As Hope especially enjoyed playing the piano, the village Hall is in need of a decent piano (not electronic)!!

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We would like to add our names to the suggestion for a good piano (not electronic) if there is enough money left in the kitty. Hope was a very keen pianist herself.

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Am absolutely in favour of a bandstand on the village green. It will be a great asset to the village with its good looks and various uses. Be brave and go ahead with it.

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I would like to take up the invitation to contribute my views about the proposed bandstand – which are in essence that I think it would **not** be an appropriate use of such a generous bequest.

Beyond the fact that Plumpton doesn't actually have a band to play on any stand, nor any history of outdoor musical events, at least not in the centre of the village, the creation of such a building is bound to interfere with the flexibility of using the green for other events, including the annual visit of the Rude Mechanicals.

I'm afraid that I don't share the view that it would be an ideal venue for the youth of the village to gather – that's what happened in the early days of the Village Hall when the exterior was lit, and I am very much aware of the problems that ensued from bad behaviour. The events of last Friday night around the tennis courts and Ferrings Lake, and several other evenings last summer and autumn, can show that problems can follow on from youths finding a reason to visit the village, and I think it would be foolish to do anything that adds to the attraction.

I'm sure that a much more appropriate use can be found as a lasting benefit to the village – we have a very active indoor bowls club, would they like a permanent outdoor artificial rink, or could the money be used to help improve the Pavilion, or the training facilities for the football or cricket teams? I'm sure that there can be ways of encouraging more productive and active pastimes, and music has plenty of outlets through the open mic nights and other events. As the Secretary of the East Chilmington Fishing Club I'd even suggest that the money could be used to buy Ferrings Lake and its immediate environs from Antonia Price – thus securing access to a great natural facility for all the village for ever.

I firmly believe that a bandstand would be a waste of a generous donation and a liability for the future. I also believe that had the proposal been more widely notified and communicated within the village there would be a majority who would share my view, and I'd also suggest it would be very dangerous to let the project go ahead until more open consultation has taken place.

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I am writing to you very reluctantly re the proposed installation of a bandstand on the Village Green. I say reluctantly because I know that you and Sue have put a lot of thought and effort into this project and have strong feelings that this is the right thing to do. I must confess that that I do have quite a few reservations about the idea. Not least of these is that that I think the Village Green (never a large Village Green) is already looking somewhat cluttered with all the additional trees that have been planted and a bandstand will reduce the space still further. In addition with an increasing population I think that more events will be staged on the Playing Fields rather than the Village Green. I also think it is likely to cause difficulty if used as a place to congregate in the evenings.

I was speaking to someone recently who had, what I thought, was a very good idea and one that I believe both Wendy and Hope would approve. This is to use the money to buy musical instruments that can be lent to people interested in learning to play an instrument. It would be set up a bit like a lending library and would, of course, need someone to run it but I would think that both our Village School and Chailey would be pleased to support such a scheme.