



The Civil Parish of

# Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe

**Welcome to the annual report issued by Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe Parish Council to keep you, the Parish residents, informed about the work of the Parish Council.**

Chairman's Annual Report for 2016/17  
Cllr Colin Smith

This year we took the decision to separate the formal 'Annual Parish Council Meeting' from the 'Annual Parish Meeting' (to be known henceforth as the 'Annual Parish Assembly') by holding the two events on separate dates. Both meetings are legal procedural requirements, but whereas the Annual Parish Council Meeting is the equivalent of the Parish Council's AGM, the purpose of the Assembly is for the community to discuss "Parish Affairs" (issues or topics that specifically affect the parish) and is an effective forum for the Parish Council to engage with local residents, to answer questions and for community organisations to publicly report on their activities and set out their plans for the future.

2016/17 has been another very busy year for the Parish Council, as we have worked to keep abreast of developments at District Council level, particularly in respect of the evolving Local Plan, whilst at the same time bringing a greater degree of structure to what seems to be an ever-growing agenda at the parish level.

During the year we have made good progress in formalizing the policy and objectives, which guide the Parish Council work. Details on individual areas are documented separately. It is nonetheless important for me to report on a number of specific

developments during the year.

## VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

We have introduced a formal logging system through which items requiring attention are recorded and monitored. Since in many cases we are dependent upon external agencies to perform maintenance work, this has proved an invaluable mechanism for following up on outstanding works. Councillor Kirkwood has taken on responsibility for keeping the log current and maintaining contact with WCC and WDC as well as other public bodies.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The PC policy on community engagement has been formalized in line with national guidelines, providing a clear statement of how the PC works to develop the parish for the benefit of the residents, fostering public engagement in community activities.

A good example of this is the Annual Parish Fête. Born out of the success of the "Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration" in June 2016, a mutual decision was taken by the PCC, Leek

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Wootton Sports Club and the Parish Council to establish the event as an annual Parish Summer Fête. This year's event will be held on 10th June on the Recreation Ground.

### GRANT AWARDS

Parish Council resources are limited but the decision was taken in March to introduce a scheme for awarding small grants to parish organizations or groups to support projects which benefit the entire community. Initial grants will be small, but as the population of the parish grows, it is hoped that there will be greater scope for making such awards.

### FINANCE AND

#### INCREASE IN THE PRECEPT

In setting the budget for the 2017/18 financial year, the Parish Council decided to increase the precept to £20 for Band D properties. Although this represents an increase of 33% this is primarily to counteract the loss of half of the grant from WDC for 'Concurrent Services'. It also brings our parish precept more in line with those of neighbouring parishes, some of which generate far higher levels of annual funding to cover a smaller population.

### PROJECTS AND PLANNING

As part of our ongoing effort to maintain the appearance of the parish, we have decided to replace all of the dog waste bins in Leek Wootton. Litter bins are now designated for combined general and dog waste and are emptied on a regular cycle by WDC. Many of the existing bins are old, in poor repair and often too small. New, larger, combined bins have been ordered and these will be installed during the coming summer.

The Parish Council is engaged with the Trustees of the War Memorial Recreation Ground and the Village Hall Committee to improve the access and car parking at the Village Hall. This project has been complicated by the need to obtain approvals from WCC Highways, in respect of the access, and WDC Planning regarding the detailed planning consent required in the Conservation Area. This has unfortunately limited the way in which the project has and will be approached. We will nevertheless endeavour to provide a solution that meets the requirements of these planning bodies, whilst improving the

existing arrangements.

In the longer term, grant funding will be sought for extension and full resurfacing of the car park.

### NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Work on preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) has necessarily followed the timetable for approval of the WDC Local Plan. The latter has been the subject of substantial modification, consultation and detailed hearings before a government inspector during 2016 but, at the time of writing, is drawing close to the point of acceptance.

Since the NDP must necessarily be "in conformity" with the WDC Local Plan, we have had to follow the same timetable as well as making adjustments to ensure that our own plan is sound and acceptable.

The final document is almost complete and this will be tabled for approval by the Parish Council in June. There then follows a further process of consultation and inspection before an eventual referendum. Once accepted, the NDP will sit alongside the Local Plan with the backing of legislation as a significant control over future development.

### THANKS

My thanks in the first instance to my fellow parish councillors for their individual personal efforts and support.

We are also well supported by our representatives from the District and County Councils, but perhaps none more so than our recently retired County Councillor, Jose Compton, who has not only worked tirelessly on our behalf, but has also helped on many occasions to secure grant aid for the many and various projects undertaken within the parish over the years.

A particular thank you also to Helen Eldridge, our Parish Clerk, who has done much to bring a greater degree of order to the administration of the parish as we need to respond to the requirements for greater transparency and control.

Finally, it is important for me to note that in addition to the work of the Parish Council, there are those who contribute significantly

through their efforts to the positive development of our community.

I wish to recognise two individuals in particular: Jean Singleton, whose charity work has earned her the much deserved

honour of the British Empire Medal (BEM) and, Sue Patterson, retiring headmistress of Leek Wootton School, whose efforts have done much to boost the reputation of the parish as a desirable place to live.

## Financial Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2016

Helen Eldridge, Clerk

The Parish Council's income in 2016/17 (ignoring all grant income) was £10,813 and VAT was reclaimed for £713.76, bringing the total available income to £11,526.76.

There were no unexpected expenditures during 2016/17. Clerk and Councillors' Training expenses were higher than the previous year, with a new Clerk and Councillor requiring training. A contribution was made towards Leek Wootton History Group's purchase of Sir Wathen Waller's Photograph Album, as well as the usual grants made to All Saints' Churchyard, Leek Wootton Link and Leek Wootton Sports Club. It also undertook to make up the balance of the Layby Improvement project.

During 2016/17 there were three projects at various stages of development, which raised an additional income of £9,520, which breaks down as follows:

- **Neighbourhood Plan:** A new grant of £3,150 was awarded by the Community Development Foundation (GroundworkUK) and £670 was reclaimed in VAT. As reported in my 2015/16 report, £4,061.15 of GroundworkUK grants was brought forward into 2016/17. Following an extension to the grant period, £1,760 of unspent grant money was returned to the awarding body. However, we were successful in being awarded a new grant (see above), of which £32.86 remained in the account to be repaid to the awarding body at the end of the grant period and this amount is carried forward to 2017/18.
- **Layby Improvement:** £3,000 was awarded from Warwickshire County Council's Designated Transport Budget towards the improvement works to the layby, which was supplemented by donations totalling £1,700. The final cost of the project was £4,872.99 and the balance of £172.99

was paid by the Parish Council.

- **Bin Replacement:** A grant of £1,000 was awarded by Warwick Rural West Community Forum toward the replacement of dog waste bins around Leek Wootton. Due to issues surrounding the style of the new bins requiring approval by Warwick District Council and Veolia (WDC's contractors), the ordering of the new bins has been delayed until 2017/18, so this amount is being carried forward.

The apparent overspend of £3,288.22 due to GroundworkUK was anticipated and grant money was held over from 2015/16 to meet this anticipated expense. The Parish Council's sole business income over expenditure (discounting all projects) was £200.07.

In August 2016 we were notified that Warwick District Council was reviewing its support to Parish and Town Councils and a consultation was carried out over the summer break. The proposal was approved by WDC and it will cut its Concurrent Services Grant by 50% for 2017/18 and remove it completely in 2018/19. The Concurrent Services Grant has traditionally covered the various costs for parish maintenance and removal of this grant would reduce the Parish Council's income significantly and mean that it could not maintain its current level of services. It was therefore decided that the Parish Council would increase the Precept by 33% to cover this loss, as mentioned in the Chairman's Report.

*This year's Annual Audit return for 2016/17 has been completed and returned to the auditors. Notices informing the public of their rights to view the accounts were displayed as instructed.*

# Parish Profile

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**Parliamentary Constituency:** Kenilworth and Southam  
**County Council Ward:** Cubbington & Leek Wootton  
**District Council Ward:** Arden

## Description of the Parish

The Parish includes the village of Leek Wootton and the communities at Hill Wootton, Chesford Grange, Guy's Cliffe, North Woodloes, plus outlying properties. The boundary extends from the River Avon in the east to the outskirts of Warwick and Kenilworth to south and north and the Wedgnock and Goodrest areas to the west. There is a total population of approximately 1,100, occupying some 400 properties.

## Parish Electorate

804 names appear on the Register of Electors for 2017.

## Parish Councillors

There are eight Parish Councillors who are elected every four years, and are volunteers. The Councillors for 2017/18 are:

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<b>Chairman</b> Cllr Colin Smith	1 Home Farm	512815	colin.smith@laceysmith.co.uk
<b>Vice Chairman</b> Cllr Richard Coates	Westside Hill Wootton Rd	856223	coatesrich@hotmail.com
Cllr Dennis Eassom	42 Tidmarsh Road	854208	d.eassom27@btinternet.com
Cllr Paul Eldridge	30 Hill Wootton Road	854347	paul@eldridgeuk.org
Cllr Jim Kirkwood	34 Woodcote Lane	852444	jp.kirkwood@btinternet.com
Cllr Keith Knott	4 The Meadows	859725	knottallen@onetel.com
Cllr Alan Moore	Hill Wootton Farm	852603	
Cllr Peter Tunkle	85 Warwick Road	511879	petertunkle@ymail.com
<b>Clerk</b> Helen Eldridge	1 Anchor Cottages Warwick Road	853841	clerk@leekwootton.org.uk
<b>County Councillor</b> Cllr Wallace Redford	The Cottage, Main Street, Eathorpe	632384 / 07774 332160	CllrRedford@warwickshire.gov.uk
<b>District Councillor</b> Cllr Susan Gallagher	Apple Tree Cottage Haseley Knob	484654	Susan.Gallagher@warwickdc.gov.uk
<b>District Councillor</b> Cllr Peter Whiting	5 Moss Grove Kenilwoth	07802 796436	Peter.Whiting@warwickdc.gov.uk

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## Meetings

The Parish Council meets on the second Tuesday of each month, except in August and December, in the Committee Room at the Village Hall. Dates and agendas are posted on notice boards, and published on the website.

The public are welcome to attend and an opportunity to put forward any matters of concern is provided.

**For further information about the work of the Parish Council, please see our website:**

**[www.leekwootton.org.uk](http://www.leekwootton.org.uk)**