



The Civil Parish of

# Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe

## ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 2018

Tuesday, 1 May 2018 at 7:30pm

Leek Wootton Village Hall

# Reports 2017/18

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## **Chairman's Report 2017/18**

Councillor Colin Smith

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The work of the Parish Council continues to be ever more complicated, reflecting the developing nature of both our local environment and the push towards devolution of activities to the local level.

The best example of this is our Neighbourhood Plan (NP), which seeks to give the community a greater say in the future development of the Parish.

After a long and sometimes tortuous process, the NP has now successfully passed the public consultation and examination stages and, at the time of writing, is awaiting the public Referendum on its acceptance, to be held on Thursday, 3 May 2018.

As I reported last year, the NP has necessarily followed the timetable of the Warwick District Council Local Plan, which although originally submitted in January 2015, did not reach final adoption until September 2017.

In our own case the NP has also been complicated by the future plans for the redevelopment of Woodcote. The Police have oscillated over their plans for several years and this has influenced the progress of the NP preparation, but it now seems that they will bring forward an outline planning application for the site later this year.

This again highlights the importance of a positive vote for the NP at the forthcoming Referendum. When the NP is "made", its policies will become part of the official planning policy of WDC, alongside the Local Plan. It will also mean that the Parish will attract a higher percentage (25%) of the future 'Community Infrastructure Levy', payable by developers on all new housing developments.

This money, when it becomes available, can be used within the Parish to implement specific infrastructure improvements, including those already identified within the NP.

### VILLAGE PROJECTS AND MAINTENANCE

A good, albeit small, example of a project financed and implemented by the Parish Council during the last year has been the replacement of the dog-waste and litter bins, located around Leek Wootton village. The replacements were grant aided and the installation works carried out by members of the Parish Council.

As we look to future possible projects of a similar nature, the Parish Council aims to create a "task force" of volunteers to assist with the planning and possible implementation.

As mentioned in my last report and at a more significant level, the Parish Council has recently submitted plans to WDC for the redesign and expansion of the Village Hall and Recreation Ground car park. Although the main access is difficult, the revised layout will improve the flow into and out of the parking area as well as providing for "overflow" parking at the edge of the playing fields. Once planning approval is received, the Parish Council will make efforts to obtain grant funding so that the changes can be made as soon as possible.

Speeding and traffic management through Leek Wootton village is a perennial complaint. The Police recently carried out a monitoring exercise but the results led to their conclusion that speeding on Warwick Road is at an acceptable level. This is not the opinion of the Parish Council and, indeed, many residents. We will therefore continue to pursue the matter and potential traffic calming measures with both the Police and the County Highways Department. In parallel with this effort, the Parish Council is currently conducting a survey of residents to ascertain preferences across the range of possible traffic management solutions.

### FINANCE AND THE PRECEPT

The Parish Council continues to operate within the parameters of the annual precept, maintaining a small reserve for unforeseen events and potential additional costs such as elections.

We have once again been forced to increase the annual precept in order to counteract the removal of the WDC grant for 'Concurrent Services'. This is, in effect, a transfer of funding from the District Council's general Council Tax to the local, parish level. There is nevertheless the expectation that the Parish Council will shoulder more in the way of local spending and can rely less on support from the District.

As reported last year, the precept level is in line with the funding levels of similar parishes within Warwick District and, in a number of cases, rather lower.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The annual Parish Summer Fête, staged jointly by the PCC, the Leek Wootton Sports Club and the Parish Council, has now become a fixture. This year's event will be held on Saturday, 16 June on the Recreation Ground.

Planning is also under way for commemoration of the ending of the First World War. This will take the form of the lighting of a beacon on Sunday, 11 November. More details of this will follow in the *Leek Wootton Link* in due course.

### THANKS

My thanks, once again, to my fellow parish councillors for their continued support and efforts, especially the engineers and operatives of the bin replacement gang. Their personal contribution has saved the council a great deal of expenditure on external contractors.

I also wish to thank the representatives of the District and County Councils, who regularly attend our meetings, offering insight to policies and actions at their respective levels of local government, as well as facilitating specific meetings with officials when necessary.

Special thanks are also due to Helen Eldridge, our Parish Clerk, who continues to devote a great deal of her personal time to the Parish, on top of her official duties. The administration of parish business is increasingly encumbered by rules and regulations as well as the complexity of reporting. Helen has embraced these needs very effectively and the management of the parish council's activities and records reflect this.

## Draft Financial Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

Helen Eldridge, Responsible Financial Officer

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This is a draft report, due to the accounts being subject to approval by the internal auditor.

The Parish Council's gross income in 2017/18 was £15,792 and expenditure was £15,270.

The precept income, which is the core income of the Parish Council, was £10,675. In addition, a grant for Concurrent Services of £1,350 was received. This grant was in the process of being phased out and was 50% of the previous amount. The only unexpected expenditure was incurred when a tree fell down on the boundary of the playground, which required clearing and repairs to the fence at £450. This was fully covered by the 'General Maintenance' and a specific 'Contingency' in the budget.

The Community Grant Fund received no applications in 2017/18, but grants were made to All Saints' Churchyard, Leek Wootton Link and Leek Wootton Sports Club, with the churchyard and sports club both receiving an increase to previous grants.

During 2017/18 there were three projects at various stages of development, which raised an income of £2,161 in addition to the precept, which breaks down as follows:

- Neighbourhood Plan: As stated in my 2016/17 report, £32.86 of GroundworkUK grants remained in the account to be repaid to the awarding body at the end of the grant period and this amount was carried forward and returned to the awarding body in April 2017. A final grant of £1,819 was awarded by the Community Development Foundation (GroundworkUK). This was requested in February to pay for work on the Neighbourhood Plan following the Examiner's modifications, publicity expenses and a final public meeting, held in March. £1691 was spent in this period and the remainder was carried forward into 2018/19 to complete the NP Referendum process.
- Bin Replacement: In 2016/17 a grant of £1,000 was awarded by Warwick Rural West Community Forum toward the replacement of dog waste bins around Leek Wootton. This was carried forward into 2017/18. Seven small post-mounted dog waste bins were replaced with floor standing dual use bins, as per WDC standards. The whole grant was spent and the balance paid by the Parish Council. The total cost of the project was £1,648 (ex VAT)
- Transparency Fund: The Council applied to Warwickshire and West Midlands Association of Local Councils to its Transparency Fund to assist smaller local councils with complying with transparency legislation, which is now compulsory. It was successful in its application for £342 towards office equipment and software to ensure it can post required material to its website. This amount was carried forward into 2018/19.

The only other income to the funds was the refund of VAT, to which the council is entitled, and £69 Council Tax Reduction Grant.

In conclusion the Parish Council's income over expenditure stands at £522.

In 2018/19 the Concurrent Grant will be completely removed and the Parish Council has adjusted its precept to take this into account and provide it with the financial resources to continue its work. As a result the Council will maintain its current level of funding, with some freedom to be proactive in its spending for the improvement of the community.

**Warwickshire County Council: Cubbington & Leek Wootton Ward**Councillor Wallace Redford

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There have been a number of issues within the parish that have been brought to my attention.

SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL

This was very much an issue that raised a lot of concern amongst parents. With the help of parents the WCC proposals were withdrawn.

I shall continue to monitor this matter.

SPEEDING WARWICK ROAD

This has been a long standing area of concern by residents and the Parish Council. A speed check was carried out by WCC resulting in no evidence of speeding which would need changing of the current speed restrictions.

The Parish Council were not satisfied with the results, in particular felt they had been taken in the wrong place. As a result they arranged their own speed survey, as of yet I have not received the survey results but will present them to WCC when received.

VILLAGE HALL SIGN

A request from the Parish Council for a "No Right Turn" into the village hall from the Warwick road has been installed

ROAD SAFETY, GUYS CLIFFE/SAXON MILL

Arrangements have been made for the jetting of the drains at this point I am also in discussion with road safety officers regarding the signage on the A429 at this point.

## **Warwick District Council: Arden Ward**

Councillors Mrs Susan Gallagher and Mr Peter Whiting

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### SUMMARY

The priority of the Conservative group that controls Warwick District Council has been to continue to provide high quality services, improving them where possible, despite the continued downward pressure on the financial support provided from central government to local government in general, and district councils in particular. As is hopefully apparent from what follows, we are working hard to achieve this on a number of major projects.

### FINANCE AND THE RUCIS SCHEME

Despite this financial pressure, the Council recently approved the new rates of council tax for the 2018/19 financial year with only a £5 annual increase on the WDC share of a band D property. If our Parish Precepts are included, Warwick District is in the bottom quartile of all English district councils for its council tax charges.

As finance portfolio holder, Peter has worked hard to ensure that the RUCIS scheme remains available despite the need to economise where possible. This scheme provides funds for a wide variety of local capital projects, and many organisations within Arden ward have benefited from it. We encourage you to continue to publicise this scheme.

### LEISURE

When she was Leisure portfolio holder, Sue began the process of outsourcing the management of our leisure centres. The new operator is now in place, and we are also approaching the end of a major capital investment programme in Leamington and Warwick; work is beginning to determine what investment is required in Kenilworth. The benefits of these changes are already apparent in terms of increased usage, and the outsourced contract will see a service that cost local taxpayers several hundred thousand pounds each year transformed into one that will deliver annual income of over a million pounds.

### HQ RELOCATION

Warwick District Council currently occupies two buildings - it uses the Town Hall for public meetings, while officers are based in Riverside House, originally designed to house the Leamington Building Society. The use of two buildings is inevitably inefficient, while Riverside House is significantly too big for the council, and would require a multi-million investment to bring it back to an acceptable standard. The Council has therefore made the decision to relocate to new offices that will be built on the site of the current Covent Garden car park. This will see the Riverside House site developed for housing, to fund the building of the new council offices. The multi-storey car park at Covent Garden will be replaced and enlarged, and the spending power of council employees will be moved much closer to the centre of the town.

### EUROPA WAY

Work is underway that will see this site to the south of Warwick transformed to include housing, commercial buildings, and a new community sports stadium. This latter element would provide a new home for Leamington Football Club, and in turn free up their current Harbury Lane site. This is a complex scheme that involves the close co-operation of many parties, with Warwick District Council co-ordinating.

### FLY TIPPING

The Council has for some time had in place arrangements with its waste management contractors to provide a rapid response to clean up reported incidents of fly tipping, and this appears to work well. In order to dissuade persistent fly tippers, in late 2017 the Council formed a partnership with Rugby Borough Council to increase enforcement action. Considerable investigative work is required to bring successful fly tipping prosecutions, and RBC has a team with a proven track record in this area. Residents should continue to report any issues, but should not search for or disturb potential evidence themselves.

### GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES

Work continues to identify one or more suitable sites. The new portfolio holder for this area has launched an appeal to Parish Councils to encourage co-operation on the subject, but the topic remains extremely politically challenging. This is despite the fact that bringing one or more sites into operation would greatly reduce or eliminate the problems of illegal encampments that have affected Warwick District and its neighbours over the recent past. The one site under active consideration is the Harbury Lane site currently occupied by Leamington Town Football Club. Assuming the development of a new sports stadium at Europa Way progresses as planned, then this site would become available and is considered suitable. However, this will take several years, and work continues to identify other possible sites.

## **1<sup>st</sup> Leek Wootton (All Saints') Brownies**

Dawn Johnson, Brown Owl

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Some of the highlights over the past year have been, raising money for MacMillan with a Dress up and Dance night, entered the Christmas Tree festival, made flowers from recycled plastic bags and attending the Priory District Sports day with Brownies and Guides from Kenilworth. However, I think if you asked the Brownies, they would say that enjoyed the Chip Shop survey we did in February 2018. The Brownies went to 3 chip shops in Kenilworth and decided that Alfie Grimshaws' was the best. Of course, the Brownies had to taste lots of chips before making the decision!

The Brownies enjoyed their first Pack Holiday, thanks to Hazel Turner completing her Staying Away badge. Our theme for the holiday was Christmas (in June) and was very tiring but thoroughly enjoyed by the girls and leaders. We are planning a sleepover for 2018. Our Young Leaders are Emma Campbell and Lucy Hancock, who both joined us to complete their Duke of Edinburgh award, but decided to stay with us. Our numbers have increased as we now have 20 Brownies.

We also took part in Church parades including St Georges Day Parade, Mothering Sunday, Uniformed parade, harvest festival and Remembrance Parade.

Badges our brownies have achieved over the year include, Toymaker, Changemaker (produced by Hazel Turner to help raise money for her Moot Scout trip to Iceland), Stargazer and World Thinking Day.

We are all looking forward to the following year.

## **1<sup>st</sup> Leek Wootton Scout Group**

No report received

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## **All Saints' Church, Leek Wootton**

Rev Jim Perryman, Priest-in-Charge

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Our third NCD Church Survey reiterated our need to concentrate on the quality of Passionate Spirituality. Despite our efforts over the intervening period, this remains in our own opinion the area which is most holding back our growth as disciples and in general church health. Overall, however, the survey was encouraging in that it suggested that the excellent work which we undertook to improve our church health between the 2014 and 2016 surveys has become firmly embedded as part of our ethos. The difficulty generally found with the quality of Passionate Spirituality, which is probably the case for us too, is that this involves a far greater element of PERSONAL investment rather than being something which can be easily worked on through church structures or leadership. It offers us all the question, "Do I genuinely want to grow?" I hope that, in the coming year, we will see greater evidence of a high proportion of us saying, "Yes" to that. The Away Day at the end of March was a very positive experience and those who came made a significant step on this journey.

I am very grateful to those who give such great support to the life of the church through very willing and regular voluntary service in many areas which is often taken for granted. It is a sad fact, however, that some valued areas of our work – especially areas which actively reach out to the wider community – are under serious threat due to a lack of volunteers, especially those willing to take a lead in organising. Messy Church and the Holiday Bible Club are among these, as are some of the monthly Church Teas in the summer. Numbers offering their services in roles such as sidesman, lesson reader, after-service refreshments servers and church cleaning team members are falling – meaning that the task is becoming harder for those who remain and those who organise the rotas. The flower team is always looking for new members and, as Graham reports elsewhere, the choir is no more apart from at Christmas. The PCC has struggled this year due to there being three vacancies, coupled with some other members having situations which meant that they were rarely, if ever, able to attend the actual meetings. So often, it falls to those who are already heavily involved in other areas to take on more than they should, and much time is invested in trying to encourage others to offer assistance. We are in urgent need of finding a new Parish Safeguarding Officer, and I would be delighted to receive an unsolicited offer from someone in the fellowship who has some experience in this area and who would be willing to apply for the role (subject, naturally, to safeguarding procedures!). Add to this the increasing lack of regular attendance for times of worship and

teaching, and all this is evidence that our survey results are extremely accurate. A desire to serve, rather than to be served, is a mark of growth as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

As a parish church, we will continue to encourage, and seek to equip, people of all ages to grow in their faith and deepen their relationship with the triune God, in the firm belief that 'life in all its fullness' can be found nowhere else.

During the year since the last APCM, four young children were baptised at All Saints, and there also four marriages. Four funerals took place in church, and two at the crematorium, one of which was followed later by a memorial service in church.

In addition to my part-time parish duties (40% stipend), I continue to serve as a member of the Diocesan Synod and as vice-chair of Churches Together in Kenilworth & District. I also work part-time (15 hours a week) as Seasonal Mission Manager for the Intercontinental Church Society, based in Coventry and am grateful for the understanding shown where my responsibilities for guiding mission in other parts of Europe may lead to my absence from the Parish for short periods.

Jonathan Kingston and Nigel Stallard, Churchwardens

#### Statutory – Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church

The Churchwardens have examined the Terrier and completed the Log Book for 2017/2018. There have been no changes to the furnishings and fittings during the year.

#### Church

Services, including 8 am services and midweek communion services twice a month and messy church 4 times a year have been maintained. Numbers attending are similar to last year, though a reduction in the number of children attending has led to cancellation of the twice-monthly children's groups on a number of Sundays. A church Awayday in March provided an opportunity to focus on prayer, hope and joy as identified as areas for growth in the church survey in October.

The excellent link between Church and School has continued, with children from the school particularly involved in the Carol Service and as usual visiting the church for their Easter service.

#### Church Building

Short-term repairs were made to the church heating system, enabling us to heat the church over the Christmas period. Other than this, there has been relatively little maintenance work on the church building this year. More work is likely to be needed next year, both on longer-term modification of the heating and following the quinquennial survey.

#### Open church and visitors' experience

The church continues to be open daily and the visitors' book records many visitors both from within the village and in some cases much further afield, who have clearly appreciated the tranquillity and beauty of the building and churchyard. A grant from the Duchess Dudley trust has enabled us to present information for visitors on the Christian faith, the church and its history in a poster and computer based display at the back of the church.

#### Churchyard

Although there has been relatively little 'major' work in the churchyard this year, much continuing maintenance has been undertaken, and the churchyard is looking well-kept and attractive.

The Churchwardens would like to express their thanks to all the volunteers who continue to maintain the churchyard, clean the church, decorate the church with flowers, provide refreshments etc. and include also the choir, organists, bell ringers, sidesmen, intercessors and communion assistants. They would also like to particularly thank our vicar, Jim and our Reader Audrey.

Eileen Clayton, PCC Secretary

Six PCC meetings were held during the past year. Vacancies still exist and it is important that these are filled soon. The lack of volunteers is disappointing, but we are very grateful to everyone who do give their time freely, in particular our hard-working church wardens who take on any task with gusto! In the meantime, the existing members of the PCC will continue with the stewardship and well-being of All Saints. Please consider if you are able to contribute in any small way.

The new VISITOR'S EXPERIENCE produced with the expertise of Helen Eldridge has proved a great success, and the digitising of old parish registers now in progress will add more information.



Over the past year Safeguarding procedures and Training have been on going, unfortunately Lyndsay Wager is unable to continue as safeguarding officer, we thank her for all the work she has carried out in this role.

The annual village fete now held on the Recreation Ground is proving very successful, and likely to become an annual fixture. However, church teas are a cause for concern, fresh ideas and help are needed if they are to continue.

All Saints is now registered as an Eco Church.

Work parties to keep the churchyard neat and tidy are arranged regularly - volunteers are always welcome. The OCTOBER CHURCH SURVEY RESULTS have been analysed- details were available to all, and efforts to act on the recommendations continue. The previous survey in 2016 resulted in the away day to Berkswell Church in March 2017 which proved a success, and another one planned for 24th March at Budbrooke Church has also proved a great help in fulfilling some of the aims of this survey, and of becoming an inclusive welcoming church.

Obviously from the above comments MORE help would be welcome. If anyone can spare some time to join the PCC, and contribute to the administration of All Saints' please get in touch.

Mark Sayers, Treasurer to the PCC

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The financial statement attached herewith was presented to the PCC on Wednesday, 14th March 2018 and accepted as a true record of its financial dealings for the year ended 31st December 2017.

In 2017, in addition to planned giving and open plate collections, we have received many substantial Donations from Families and Charities, making for an increase in our end of year result.

My first year as treasurer has given myself a wider awareness of the future financial issues, so during 2018, I hope to introduce both savings and improved investments from the £56K balance taken into 2018.

There were nine funerals and 2 wedding services held at All Saints', along with Internment of Ashes and other events. This has been a major facture to our income for 2017.

In 2017 charitable donations were made to Akany Avoko, Madagascar; Barnabas Fund; Churches together in Kenilworth and District; International Church Society; Kenilworth Youth for Christ; Agapé France; St Chad's, Wood End; Friends of the Holy Land; The Royal British Legion; and Ifakara Bakery Project.

Although the year end statement records an increase, this is not a true result, as during 2017 we changed our insurance payments to Monthly debit, plus, outstanding invoice not received in 2017. The true picture of simple income to expenditure would have resulted in a deficit of approx. £2k.

The Total Parish Share paid to the Coventry Diocese was £38,900. This being an increase from the previous year of £37,701, however, 2018 Parish share has been revalued along with other Kenilworth Deanery Churches, with the result that our 2018 Parish Share payment will now be £32,000.

Our planned Giving scheme has seen a reduction, with only one new member, although many existing members have increased their giving during the latter part of 2017. We must all consider and encourage where possible a major improvement in this vital income for our Church.

## **All Saints' Church of England Academy Leek Wootton**

Jim Perryman, ex-officio Foundation Governor

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It has been a very busy Year for All Saints' CofE Primary School. Sue Patterson, head teacher for 17 years, announced her retirement – initially for July 2017, but ultimately at the end of December.

Sue's devotion to the school and, for the last four years, to the Green Leek Federation (Burton Green School and Leek Wootton School) has seen it, and countless children, flourish and grow over the years. A fitting finale was the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) report, which came following the inspection of All Saints' School in October. The inspector wrote, "Insightful, astute and inspirational Christian leadership by the headteacher, who is motivated by her own personal faith, provides a vision which is instrumental in the creation of a distinctively Christian school, where all pupils flourish and reach their potential." The school was rated 'Outstanding' as it had been on the previous occasion in 2012.

However, the task of replacing such a loved and respected head was never going to be easy. The first round of interviews led to a decision not to appoint any of the applicants. Sue kindly offered to delay her retirement until Christmas to enable the Governors to have more time. Even then, the second attempt didn't get us anywhere but, in God's perfect timing, the right person became available to the right time and we

were delighted to make the appointment in December of Andrew Morris, who was available to start in January 2018.

The other major event of the past year has been the move of the schools of the Green Leek Federation to becoming Academies, within the Diocese of Coventry Multi-Academy Trust (DMAT). This is an exciting move which offers huge benefits to both the schools, which will remain as a Federation, in a whole host of ways. In particular, the Academies will have the freedom to innovate and improve the pupil experience, curriculum and performance levels, while the DMAT will provide dedicated school improvement support and opportunities for shared development and working within a family of other like-minded schools in the Coventry Diocese. This approach has been recognised by Ofsted as strength for all the academies within the DMAT.

One impact of academisation is in the makeup of the Governing Body. This will remain a single body of Governors for the two academies of the Federation, but there are now fewer 'Foundation Governors', who are those put forward by the PCCs, as with the greater Diocesan oversight, the Christian foundation of the school is assured. In the future, All Saints Church PCC will recommend one, rather than three, people to the Diocesan Board of Education to be appointed as a Foundation Governor. The two parishes with oversight of Burton Green (St Nicholas, Kenilworth and St John the Baptist, Westwood Heath) will also recommend one. In addition, one of the three incumbents will serve as an ex-officio Foundation Governor. I will continue to fill this role for the initial 4-year term of office.

[Andrew Morris now picks up the story.]

Andrew Morris, Executive Head of the Green Leek Foundation

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Since joining the school in January, I have been very impressed with the quality of teaching and learning, the lovely atmosphere and the committed staff and governors. The school is a buzz of excitement with purposeful learning which is underpinned with very high levels of expectations (both in terms of behaviour and academic achievements).

The curriculum within All Saints' Academy continues to be creative and well balanced with lovely opportunities for the children to experience 'Super Learning' days within subjects such as Science and Design technology (ones that I know of since joining!). It is so nice to see these opportunities developed within our school as these opportunities will feed the children's love of learning.

On the 1 March 2018, All Saints CofE Primary School became an academy. For the children the day continued as normal! As an academy within the DMAT our future is looking bright. We have increased opportunities to develop our ways of working and more opportunities (and challenges) to ensure we are on the cutting edge of making our school the best it can be.

We are very excited that, on the 24 April, the Academy will be officially opened by the Bishop who will be officially sending us on this journey.

## **Cancer Research UK, Leek Wootton Committee**

Shirley Calvert, Secretary

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We have had another successful year of fundraising from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. During this period we raised £6,287.36 which has been sent to Cancer Research UK.

The year began in April with a Quiz Night at the Sports Club, organised by Norman Rogers in aid of Cancer Research UK, which raised £500. In November Norman very kindly organised a second Quiz Night for us and this raised £374. We are very grateful to Norman for holding these Quiz Nights and for the generosity of everyone who were present on either of these occasions.

In June we had a stall with a Children's Tombola at the Summer Fête, which made £137.

At the beginning of July we held an Italian Summer Supper in the Village Hall, which was a most enjoyable evening and raised £1,567.

In November we held a Ukulele Evening at the Sports Club. This was a departure from our usual fundraising activities, but proved to be an extremely successful and fun evening. The band and their singers were brilliant. We had a buffet supper during the interval and during the second half many people decided to get up and dance along to the music. This event raised £563.

In February we held our annual Skittles Challenge, with a fish and chip supper during the interval. Once again this was a fun evening for teams who took part and for anyone watching. The fish and chips during

the interval were also most enjoyable. This evening raised £480.85.

Our fundraising year ended at the beginning of March with the now legendary Jean and Jim's Big Breakfast held at the Sports Club. The day began at 7.00 am with Committee members making their way through the snow and somewhat nervously started to prepare food. We need not have worried and before long people began to arrive. From then on it was extremely busy and did not slow down until well after 1.00 pm, with the last breakfasts being served at around 1.45 pm. By then Committee members and our many helpers were exhausted, but extremely happy that so many people did not let our wonderful winter weather keep them away. There were some of our breakfast regulars who found it impossible to get through the snow, but still supported us by sending donations, for which we are most grateful. Our thanks must go to Jean and Jim for their continued generosity in providing all the food, plus the large number of people who came along for breakfast. Jean informs us that over 200 breakfasts were served and we made over £2,000.

In addition to the Committee's fundraising events for the past year, we received £500 from Mark Gregory, who lives in Woodcote Lane, following the sale of plants and also £186.59 collected by the Aqua Fit class at The Warwickshire. These generous donations are included in the total amount sent to Cancer Research UK at the beginning of this report.

We very much appreciate the support we receive from within the village and surrounding areas. Without this support we could not continue to hold our events and we look forward to another year of successful fundraising.

### **Guy's Cliffe Tours/Events**

No report received

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### **Kenilworth District Committee of the NSPCC**

Mary Robins, Chairman and Midlands Divisional Vice-President

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I am frequently amazed, but encouraged by the amount of funds raised by our small Committee. Seven volunteers at the moment, which is good, but we have been down to as few as three members in the past.

The Kenilworth District covers the town and all areas around it. Many fundraising events take place here in Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe and this year we have held a coffee morning, served Hot Chocolate at Hilary Farm Christmas Tree sales and sold cakes at the Leek Wootton Fête. Every year we provide Marshals for the *Two Castles Run*, when it comes through Leek Wootton, for which each volunteer receives a donation towards the NSPCC, and we serve tea and cakes monthly for Charles Hanson's valuation days at St Francis of Assisi in Kenilworth and at Alveston. Our total averages at **£5,000** each year.

Taking part in events put on by others here in Kenilworth and Coventry (the Committee there has been disbanded) seems to be the best way forward to raise money for the NSPCC and all the work that needs to be done to protect children. ChildLine is now a massive part of the NSPCC and it is very difficult keeping the lines open and answered for every child. So long may the fundraising continue.

### **Leek Wootton & District Horticultural Society**

Brian Melling, Chairman

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Our programme of events again proved popular with yet another successful year and the splendid support from the local community continues.

The Annual Outing, on 4 June took us to Ashwood Nurseries near Kidderminster, organized as usual by Tom and Margaret Powell. As reported at the last AGM this was the last occasion that Tom and Margaret would be organizing the annual trip with responsibility passing to Steph and Rob Jones. Tom and Margaret have produced some memorable outings over the years and they deserved our heartfelt thanks.

The Annual Show, held on 19 August was another successful event. Committee, families and friends all helped to make it a wonderful afternoon for visitors from the village and beyond. The Minibeasts Roadshow with exhibits from all over the world proved to be a great draw. In terms of awards, The Banksian medal was won by Ron Guest and the Jim Perkins Salver went to Rob Cheetham. A new award for 2017 the Gillitt Salver, presented in memory of past President Audrey Gillitt by her family, was won by Marie Jane Roberts. Income was slightly down on previous years, but we maintain a healthy financial position. Strong support

continues from local businesses in the form of prizes for the raffle and we are grateful for that support.

A tree was planted on 18 November in the Memorial Garden area in memory of Audrey Gillitt and the event was supported by members of Audrey's family and friends. For those of you who wish to see the tree, it is marked with a plaque and is protected by a wooden surround

In financial terms our healthy position provides opportunities to celebrate the 150 years anniversary of the Annual Show in August.

We must express our sadness and sympathy for the passing of John Mitchell who served on the Committee for many years and was also a keen exhibiter at the show as well as running the skittles competition.

So, looking forward with notes for your diary in 2018

The Outing this year will be at Coton Manor Gardens in Northamptonshire on Sunday 9 June with a coffee stop at Kilworth Hotel and Theatre. The outing is now being organized by Steph and Rob Jones with full details being on the website. Secretary Mary Murdoch is managing the bookings.

The Annual Show will be held on Saturday 18 August. There will as usual be stalls and teas along with entertainment for the children and young at heart. Photographic categories will be 'Celebrations' and 'Animals'. Angela Guest will be orchestrating the event, as she has successfully achieved over many years. You will hopefully be aware that 2018 marks the 150th Anniversary of the show and you can view the originating article from the Leamington Spa Courier dated 1 August 1868 on our website. We are currently examining ways of celebrating the occasion. Invitations have been sent to all groups and societies in the village to enter an exhibit of flowers for which there will be a special award for the winning entry. The planting of trees and shrubs will also be undertaken. Details of all the intended arrangements will be published in the LINK magazine.

The Society website continues to attract support from far and wide. The web site can be accessed at [www.leekwoottonandhorticulturalsociety.co.uk](http://www.leekwoottonandhorticulturalsociety.co.uk). You can also contact the Society via [lwhsociety@gmail.com](mailto:lwhsociety@gmail.com). It is worth having a look at all the information, including photographs that make up the content.

My thanks to all who have supported the Society over the past 12 months especially the members of the Committee who have given unstinting support. Special thanks are due to our Secretary Mary Murdoch for her boundless energy, Christine Hurcomb as Treasurer, Angela Guest as reported above, Tom and Margaret as our very able tour guides and to Steph Jones who has assisted with meeting minute taking and production.

It is sad, but inevitable, that committee members reach the point where they feel it necessary to retire from their roles. Margaret Powell has decided to step down after 50 years work on the Committee. Her presence and contribution will be missed Margaret was presented with a bouquet of flowers as a measure of congratulations for her service.

Our constitution provides for a committee of 16 members, including the Officers, and we are currently at 14 members.

Anyone interested in joining should contact Mary Murdoch or Brian Melling and we will be pleased to talk them.

## **Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe, Haseley & Wroxall and Old Milverton Conservative Association**

Mary Robins, Secretary

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In the last twelve months Councillor Jose Compton has retired and her role taken by Councillor Wallace Redford.

The committee in Leek Wootton has continued to organise fund raising events. A coffee morning was held by Margaret Powell and a drinks and canape social event by Jill and Roger Wigglesworth. County Council elections were held last year and leaflets had been distributed around the village and outlying areas beforehand by members.

More recently the Annual General Meeting was held in February, following which planning for more fundraising was put in place.

## **Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Summer Fête Committee**

No report received

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## **Leek Wootton History Group**

Lesley Eldridge, Secretary/Treasurer

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The History Group continues to work with the Friends of the Ack-Ack Battery at Goodrest (FAAB@GRF), but ill health amongst that group, as well as poor weather has meant that there have been no Open Gate days or other events since autumn 2016.

Pupils from All Saints' Primary School have visited the site on an annual basis for several years and in late 2017 pupils were also transported from a Kenilworth primary school to support their studies of WWII. The staff present on the day indicated that they would like to see the visit become a regular event in the school diary.

An appeal made via WCC Archaeological Information and Advice (AIA) to Historic England regarding national designation of the Goodrest site has proved unsuccessful. There was a major review of C20 defences undertaken in 1998 as part of the Monuments Protection Programme, which the History Group was advised looked "... to the survival and quality of the remains; the degree to which a site characterised its class; rarity; diversity of features within a site; group value including tactical and strategic relationships and historical association with a particular event of national significance. The gun battery at Goodrest Farm was assessed against these criteria and was not amongst the 60 selected for national designation."

Just one talk about Doreen's Diary has been given during the year, to a Supper Club in North Warwickshire and the Group had a presence at the Summer Fête.

Images from the Waller photograph album were made available to Dr Christine Hodgetts, who had been commissioned to produce a report on locally listed historic parks and gardens, including Woodcote, to provide information for Warwick District Council regarding proposed housing allocation within the Warwick Local Plan.

A member of the History Group was commissioned by the PCC of All Saints' Church to create a 'Visitor Experience' for display when the church is open for visitors and was able to use History Group resources during research for the on-screen presentation as well as for printed images.

## **Leek Wootton Link**

Lesley Eldridge, Co-Editor

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The Leek Wootton Link is published by the PCC of All Saints' Parish Church ten times a year (double issues July/August and December/January) and is distributed to every household and business property in the Civil Parish and the Ecclesiastical Parish where boundaries differ. Some copies are also sent/delivered to, for example, past residents and other people who have asked to be kept informed about the community.

The magazine has been developed to be available for information and news from across the community, i.e. parish organisations, charity committees and individuals, and the Parish Council makes a grant to the PCC to support its requirement to disseminate its news and advice to every property in the Civil Parish.

The balance of the costs of production and delivery are met from advertising revenue and by voluntary donations from recipients, but the latter have been declining over the last few years. The work of the editorial team and of all who are involved in the distribution of just over 500 copies of The Link is undertaken voluntarily.

**Leek Wootton Sports Club**

No report received

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**Leek Wootton Village Hall Ltd**

Ian Watson, Chairman

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It has been another very busy year for the village hall with John Steen undertaking the duties of Company Secretary and Dennis Eassom keeping the finances under control as the Honorary Treasurer. Sigrun Fewtrill has continued to help us keep a strong set of regular and one-off bookings. The cleaning of the hall has continued to be undertaken by outside contractors and supervised by Mary Robbins. The maintenance of the hall has been a challenge with Tom Powell retiring, but we have managed, again with the commitment of Dennis Eassom, in keeping all the systems functioning. However, we need to find a better way of addressing small attendance requirements. Matt Roberts retired from the committee earlier in the year and we thank him for his involvement and input while on the committee. Thanks to those who assisted Ros Commander to make arrangements for the functions we had in the last year and particularly those who helped out on the nights in making them so successful. We have been focusing on the requirements for a new car park and drainage, which will be developed further during the next year.

The continuing challenge is the maintenance and care of the Village Hall going forward. Finally, thanks to the whole committee (and their relatives) for their continued enthusiasm and commitment to keep the village hall functioning for the benefit of local organizations and other users.

**Leek Wootton War Memorial Recreation Ground**

Richard Coates, Chairman of the Board of Trustees

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Trustees continue to oversee the development of this special space at the heart of the Leek Wootton community. The Village Hall and Sports Club are popular and well used assets and continue to provide a small rental income for the Recreation Ground Trustees.

One major development in the near future will be the redevelopment and expansion of the Village Hall carpark. The present situation is not fit for purpose and plans are in hand to reconfigure the entry point as well as the size of the carpark in order to cope with ever increasing demand.

**Leek Wootton Women's Institute**

Genevieve Wilson, President

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Leek Wootton WI is a thriving unit with over 50 members, most of whom attend meetings in the village hall on the third Tuesday of each month, with the exception of August. During the year we devote nine meetings to hear from speakers on a variety of topics; some funny, some informative, but all are generally interesting! Our speakers over the past year have included 'Mildred Bruce' (aka Paula Cornwell) who shared amusing anecdotes about this pioneering rally driver. We learnt about the history of corsages from Catherine Wickens, who showed us how to make one of our own; we enjoyed the highlights of Coventry history from Peter Walters, and learnt the delicate and tricky art of belly dancing from Michaella Double.

On a more serious note the WI is an important campaigning body so each year a number of Resolutions are put forward to be voted on by members. The May meeting is devoted to focussing on the chosen campaigns for the year. In 2017 for example, our mandates were 'Keep microplastic fibres out of our oceans' and 'Alleviate loneliness'.

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without a Christmas party, so each December we decorate the hall, play seasonal games, sing a few carols and enjoy a lovely Christmas meal.

The Warwickshire Federation are also very active and organise an annual quiz and darts competition, plus numerous outings and courses for members to enjoy. Some members also attend courses run by the National Federation at Denman College near Oxford.

As a village WI we have groups to reflect our interests, so there is a monthly craft group held at the village hall on the first Monday of each month, plus an active book club, and we often have organised walks and outings to local theatres and restaurants. We very much enjoy looking after the small WI garden in the centre of the village, which provides an opportunity for a 'weed and natter'.

We regularly have visitors to our meetings who often comment on how welcome they feel, and admire the facilities in our village hall. We're proud to be part of the community in Leek Wootton and happily support and participate in village activities such as the Parish Summer Fête and the many events at the Sports Club.

### **The Leigh Educational Foundation**

Richard Coates, Chairman of the Board of Trustees

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The Leigh Educational Foundation continues to work for young people under 25 years old in Leek Wootton, Stoneleigh, Ashow and Burton Green. It provides financial support and assistance for school/educational trips both home and abroad; school uniform and equipment; university, college and training expenses; grants to schools, teams and youth groups of all kinds.

The Foundation has a dedicated team of Trustees who meet four times a year and who awarded over £37,000 to such causes in the year 2017/18.

During the past year the Foundation has set up its own website [leigheducationalfoundation.org.uk](http://leigheducationalfoundation.org.uk).

Applicants can now find application forms to fill in online but must print these off and post them to the clerk to the Trustees. Alternatively the clerk can still be contacted by phone and asked to post out application forms. James Johnson (t: 01926 419300 / e: [admin@leigheducationalfoundation.org.uk](mailto:admin@leigheducationalfoundation.org.uk))

The Foundation has seen the retirement in the past year of two long serving Trustees from Ashow - David Clark and Diana Holt. They have been replaced by new volunteers Sarah Williams and Philip Jones.

### **Macmillan Cancer Support, Leek Wootton**

No report received

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### **Mothers' Union, All Saints' Branch**

Janet Jackson, Correspondent

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MU is amongst one of the most effective and wide-spread women's groups in the world and has a long history of transforming communities in this country and in developing countries by working to empower women and girls, bring peace and reconciliation and uphold values of family life through raising awareness of issues and campaigning at national and international level for governments to put family policy at the heart of their agendas.

It seeks to nurture relationships that are loving, faithful and respectful, supports parents as they develop the faith life of their child, raises funds and offers practical support, prayer and friendship. Mothers' Union members throughout the world touched the lives of over two-thirds of a million people, including 1000,000 in Britain and Ireland.

16 branch members supported the work of MU through annual subscriptions. Jan's Open Studios raffle was for 'Away From It All holidays' helping needy families and donations went to the 'Relief Work Fund' for when communities call for help.

Items were taken to the 'Coffee Tots' Drop in Centre in Coventry and the Mothering Sunday 'Make a Mother's Day' appeal helping mothers in need was promoted. 'families first' the faith and family magazine by MU distributed and monthly updates from central MU forwarded. At the Marriage Preparation Day each couple was given a goody bag of gifts and mementos.

Locally there was the 'Saltmine Theatre' production 'Chosen' presenting the moving story of the life of Mary Sumner who founded MU by championing the importance of parenthood, faith in God, compassion and women in community.

There was also the Diocesan Lady Day Service, Members Evening, Members Day and the Advent Service. Our monthly meetings topics, led by Joy Morgan, focussed on the Mission and Message of MU with regular reviews and a prayer in Link Magazine. A warm welcome was given for all to attend and invitations for young adults in particular to come forward with ideas for MU locally.

We looked at Mothers of Every Kind, International Women's Day (March), The Challenges of Eastertide, International Day of Families (May), Good Parenting and Grand-parenting and the sun shone for our summer lunch.

As our school became part of the Community of the Cross of Nails (CCN) at the All Saints Together Service, members supported as MU is also a partner of CCN.

Further topics were Diversity in the film 'Victoria and Abdul' at the time of the 16 Days Activism Against Gender Based Violence we focussed on this and Domestic Violence.

Our Festive meal was during January so busy mums had more time to gather.

For more information about the aims and work of Mothers' Union locally, nationally and internationally see [www.mothersunioncoventry.org.uk](http://www.mothersunioncoventry.org.uk) and [www.mothersunion.org](http://www.mothersunion.org) and there is an MU Basket in church with resources which you may find helpful.

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

No report received

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### **Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team, Warwick Rural West**

No report received

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### **Tower Bellringers**

Mark Sayers, Tower Captain & Ringing Teacher

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We now have 15 registered Coventry Diocesan Guild ringers for Sunday service and all other occasions.

We continue to teach new ringers every Tuesday afternoon and the 4th Saturday morning in each Month.

The simulator is now working on all six bells, which enables the teaching to be completed without any external noise.

Our tower bells have become one of only two teaching centres in the Coventry and Warwickshire area.

We wish to encourage all residents in the area to come along and enjoy the opportunity of learning the ancient art of church Bell ringing, under the control of approved ringing teachers.