



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 2017/18

CLlr Colin Smith

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, 3rd 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.

PARISH 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

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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.

UPDATE:

The Neighbourhood Development Plan was adopted by Warwick District Council on 4 May 2018 following a very positive endorsement at the referendum.

Financial Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

Helen Eldridge, Clerk to the Parish Council

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 covered by the General Maintenance and Maintenance 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. £1,691 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.

Parish Profile

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

807 names appear on the Register of Electors for 2018.

Parish Councillors

There are eight Parish Councillors who are elected every four years, and are volunteers. The Councillors for 2018/19 are:

Chairman Cllr Colin Smith	1 Home Farm	512815	cllrsmith@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Vice Chairman Cllr Richard Coates	Westside Hill Wootton Rd	856223	cllrcoates@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr Dennis Eassom	42 Tidmarsh Road	854208	cllreassom@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr Paul Eldridge	30 Hill Wootton Road	854347	cllreldridge@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr Jim Kirkwood	34 Woodcote Lane	852444	cllrkirkwood@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr Keith Knott	4 The Meadows	859725	cllrknott@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr Alan Moore	Hill Wootton Farm	852603	
Cllr Peter Tunkle	85 Warwick Road	511879	cllrtunkle@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Clerk Helen Eldridge	1 Anchor Cottages Warwick Road	853841	clerk@leekwootton.org.uk clerk@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
County Councillor Cllr Wallace Redford	The Cottage, Main Street, Eathorpe	632384 / 07774 332160	CllrRedford@warwickshire.gov.uk
District Councillor Cllr Susan Gallagher	Apple Tree Cottage Haseley Knob	484654	Susan.Gallagher@warwickdc.gov.uk
District Councillor Cllr Peter Whiting	5 Moss Grove Kenilwoth	07802 796436	Peter.Whiting@warwickdc.gov.uk

Meetings

The Parish Council meets on the first Tuesday of each month, except in August and December, 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