

Parish Profile

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

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

798 names appear on the current Register of Electors.

Parish Councillors

There are eight seats on the Parish Council. Councillors are elected every four years, and are volunteers. Councillors for 2021/22 are:

Chairman Cllr Richard Coates	Westside Hill Wootton Road	856223	cllrcoates@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Vice Chairman Cllr Paul Eldridge	30 Hill Wootton Road	854347	cllreldridge@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr Stephanie Allison	Setter's Corner 21 Waller Close	07814 875931	cllrallison@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr David Elsy	Hill Farm Hill Wootton	07528 526621	cllrelsy@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 Joy Maisey	Stud Farm Hill Wootton	07827 778663	cllrmaisey@lwandgc-parishcouncil.co.uk
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
Parliament Jeremy Wright MP	Jubilee House, Smalley Place, Kenilworth	853650	Jeremy.wright.mp@parliament.uk Jeremy@jeremywright.org.uk
County Council Cllr Wallace Redford	The Cottage, Main Street, Eathorpe	632384 / 07774 332160	CllrRedford@warwickshire.gov.uk
District Council Cllr Pam Redford	The Cottage, Main Street, Eathorpe	632384	Pam.Redford@warwickdc.gov.uk
District Council Cllr Trevor Wright	30 Courthouse Croft, Kenilworth	851184 / 07802 317489	Trevor.Wright@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



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 2020/21

Cllr Richard Coates

I never dreamt that I would be remotely reading out a second Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Assembly. I can remember last year's one at the start of the pandemic being quite matter of fact in that we would hopefully be out of it by the autumn ... some hope that!

This past year has been a strange, weird time that's thrown all the ordinary norms of life out of the window and brought in a new pattern of masks, social distancing and remote meetings. But at last we are beginning to see real hope ahead and that is thanks to the resilience and relentless stoicism of the majority of Britain's population coupled with the desire to do what's right for both self and community.

With this year's report I could just have said – *"Lockdown – nothing much happened – move on!"* But that would be entirely wrong. If the pandemic did anything positive it was surely to witness the coming together of our community as a whole and I cannot thank you all enough for what you have done over the past year. To start with the idea of voluntary street champions was quickly embraced and any number of WhatsApp and informal email and phone contact groups were set up providing much needed information and support. Invaluable help and acts of kindness were given to our vulnerable residents with food and pharmacy pickups alongside gardening and maintenance tasks. Many more of us discovered the joys of online supermarket deliveries and we supported local businesses like

Farmers Fayre in Stoneleigh, Chase Lane and Joe Richards in Kenilworth and our own Sean's takeaways at The Anchor.

With all gyms and organised sports closed for much of the past year we have all found the joys of walking and cycling to be the next best thing and the back lanes from Hill Wootton to Beausale and Honiley have never seen such activity. Walkers have roamed byways they never knew existed and farmers generally turned a blind eye to the ever widening footpaths across their land. I want to thank The Warwickshire Golf & Country Club which allowed so many to exercise on their fairways and I note that 'wild swimming' in the Avon near The Saxon Mill provided a bracing experience for many enthusiasts a lot harder than me!

Our organised communal events were obviously curtailed but that didn't stop informal get togethers. VE stay at home day in our front gardens and on driveways was a huge success as was the impressive turnout in clapping for the NHS on Thursday evenings. Vicar Jim's remote services provided a strong message of faith and hope for all in these troubled times and residents lining our streets to pay their respects for a loved

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Bulletin...

one's funeral showed the depth of our feeling and friendship. On a forward looking note it's the Platinum Anniversary of the Queen's reign next year and together with the rest of the country we will be organising a whole community event over that weekend 3rd, 4th and 5th June to make up for all we have had to cancel this year so please keep an eye open for details.

The Parish Council continued its work throughout the past year and were able to hold meetings remotely just as we are this evening. We mourned the deaths of our past Chairman Colin Smith and long term councillor Alan Moore but welcomed two new Councillors Stephanie Allison and David Elsy who were co-opted to the team. The election process provided a fine selection of candidates and my thanks to all of them who showed a real interest in the Parish Council and what it does. In November 2020 Councillor interests were reviewed and sub groups established and it's hoped that some of these groups will encourage ordinary residents to join in with their contributions. The Environment sub group is already underway with events planned for 2021.

The Playground remained closed for lockdown 1 but re-opened for lockdown 2 with COVID safe rules in place. Following a user survey a new trampoline was installed, which has proved extremely popular, and a new cradle seat has been attached to the infant swings. The Council has also made repairs to the bus shelter roof, erected new Parish Council Noticeboards and, together with the Trustees of the Recreation Ground, removed a number of dangerous trees overhanging the road below the Memorial Stone. After further flooding episodes we successfully engaged Severn Trent to survey and jet all their foul and fresh water sewers in Leek Wootton resulting in a much improved situation. Highway and signage issues were generally quickly addressed and the Council hopes its mutually beneficial relationship with County Highways will continue. I have to commend the District Council too for its quick and efficient reaction in clearing up the mess left by fly tippers.

As far as ongoing projects are concerned

We now know there is a preferred bidder in place to develop housing in parts of Police Headquarters. The Police and the Planning Department at Warwick District Council are aware that there has to be an agreed Masterplan in place for the whole site before

any work can begin. We anticipate the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner will be pushing this forward.

The Recreation Ground car park project is also once again moving forward with Warwick District Council's capital grant RUCIS fund up and running again. The Council will be applying for the maximum £30,000 of matched funding in due course.

A Community Speedwatch Group which is resident run, has been set up and should shortly be back in training with the Police to try and reduce traffic speeds on our roads.

The Council has resolved to engage the Community Payback team to tackle the overgrown hedge alongside the school boundary. This is one of a number of sites in our area where no-one is claiming responsibility for maintenance.

Our own LW&GC Community Grant Fund failed to attract any bidders last year. We are not sure if this was out of disinterest or simply not knowing it was there? We will try and publicise it better this year.

Finally, I wish to pass on my sincere thanks to the dedicated group of people who form our Parish Council. As Chairman I have enjoyed being both supported and led by these enthusiastic volunteers who have the interests and wellbeing of the community close to their hearts. I include in this gratitude our District and County Councillors who have shown by their timely actions, advice and support that Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe is important to them too. Last but not least singular praise must be directed to our Clerk, Helen Eldridge who has been the rock around which so many extraordinary things have swirled this past year. When the pandemic lockdown struck she truly showed her mettle, quickly developing the idea of street champions and establishing lines of communication for residents. She was at the centre of our community wide COVID planning, providing important information for residents whilst seamlessly managing to move us onto remote meetings to boot. All this on top of her usual Parish Council duties - astonishing - and I can't thank her enough.

So onwards and upwards as my wife likes to say and I sincerely thank you the residents of our parish who have put your trust in us. Here's hoping for a brighter future in every way as we emerge from this trouble and I can assure you we will continue to serve you in the best way we can.

Financial Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

Helen Eldridge, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Parish Council's gross income in 2020/21 was £21,863 and expenditure was £22,106.

The Precept income, which is the core income of the Parish Council, was £18,331.

The Financial Year 2020/21 was dominated by the Coronavirus pandemic and planned expenditure was disrupted.

The COVID-19 response within the community was excellent, with volunteers taking on Street Champion roles, and coordination being organised via email, WhatsApp and a central team advertising telephone numbers in noticeboards and the *Leek Wootton Link*. There was little expenditure to facilitate these activities and we were able to respond and 'signpost' people to the help that they required. Thank you to all the volunteers and organisations that have assisted these efforts.

The Annual Parish Assembly and VE Day 75 celebrations were both cancelled.

The Council's major project, in its preparatory stages, was the Leek Wootton War Memorial Recreation Ground Car Park, which is in need of significant improvement. Planning permission was in place, but only a single funding source was available for car park projects, Warwick District Council's Rural & Urban Capital Improvements Scheme [RUCIS]. However, grants from this scheme are conditional on match-funding by the applicant, so the Council had agreed to apply for a Public Works Loans Board loan for the balance. This was to be repaid over future years and the Precept was increased sufficiently to facilitate repayments. The application was planned for 2020, but RUCIS was withdrawn in Spring 2020, with monies being redirected for vital COVID-19 response. The Council therefore postponed its plans to apply for the loan and the portion of the precept designated for repayments, £1,900, was ring-fenced, pending commencement of the project.

A new company took on the grounds maintenance contract in March 2020, which has increased the expenditure in this area, but the contract includes several communal areas outside of the children's playground and the Council is pleased with the service that has been provided throughout the year.

In addition to regular general maintenance, the Council agreed to support the Leek Wootton War Memorial Recreation Ground and Leek Wootton Village Hall to have vital tree works

carried out to the area above the northbound bus stop and on the embankment to Warwick Road. After a number of years of little maintenance to these areas there were dead trees and large self-seeded trees causing concern for public safety. The Council paid £1,000 towards the costs and received donations of £1,360 in addition, from the other respective organisations.

The Council has in place a Community Grant Fund for organisations to apply to for small grants. It is in contact with a number of organisations about possible future applications, but none were made during 2020/21, due to most organisations being dormant or near-dormant for much of the year. As usual, a grant was made to the *Leek Wootton Link*, which the Council supports to ensure it is delivered to every household in the parish to regularly share PC information.

In the Financial Report of 2019/20 the Council reported an underspend of £2,702. This was combined with 2020/21 funding allocated to Assets and underspends on Events and Grants to invest in a new piece of play equipment for the children's playground. Following an online survey of users, it was decided to install an in-ground trampoline, which can be used by all ages and even wheelchair users and which is proving a popular new addition.

On 1 April 2020 there was one active project fund:

LW&GC Parish Summer Fête:

The Parish Summer Fête 2020 was due to take place on 8 May as a VE75 celebration. This was cancelled, although many parts of the community came together to hold Stay at Home Street Parties. The Council supported these events, along with the Summer Fête Committee, with a community art competition and prizes at a cost of £46. Donations received totalled £41. The balance of the Fête Fund brought forward from 2019/20 was £25 and on 31 March 2021 the balance of the fund was £20.

The only other income to the Council was the recovery of VAT, to which the Council is entitled.

In conclusion the Parish Council's expenditure over income for 2020/21 stands at £243 and along with the Council's reserve funds, the balance at 31 March 2021 was £7,799.