



# Community Engagement Strategy

Adopted: 14 March 2017

## Aims and Objectives

---

To develop:

- A vibrant and engaged community that understands the value a Parish Council can offer
- A community that uses the Council to help develop the parish for the benefit of residents
- A community that is proud of its parish and actively works to foster pride through involvement in parish development

We deliver on our aims through:

- Support for community facilities
- Two-way communication with residents
- Actively encouraging and supporting community involvement
- Partnership and working
- An engaged group of elected Council members

## The community and its facilities

---

The parish of Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe comprises the village of Leek Wootton and surrounding areas of Guy's Cliffe, Hill Wootton, Chesford, Goodrest, North Woodloes, Middle Woodloes and Wedgnock. There are around 1017<sup>1</sup> residents.

Some demographic information is in the Appendix to this Statement.

Community facilities include:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • All Saints' Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School in Leek Wootton  |   |
| • A Village Hall in Leek Wootton used by local organisations and private hirers   | Leek Wootton Village Hall Ltd                       |
| • A Sports Club in Leek Wootton including a Cricket Club (junior and senior), Football Club (junior and senior), Crib & Dominoes Club and Pool Club | Leek Wootton Sports Club                            |
| • A Recreation Ground in Leek Wootton   | Leek Wootton War Memorial Recreation Ground [Trust] |
| • All Saints' Church and churchyard   | Church of England                                   |
| • A Children's Playground in Leek Wootton   | LW&GC Parish Council                                |
| • Several official recreational footpaths and bridleways including a section of the Centenary Way footpath  |   |
| • A bus service through Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe   | Stagecoach  |
| • 2x commercial units in Leek Wootton (currently trading as a kitchen showroom and a health/beauty therapist)                                       | Privately owned                                     |
| • 2x public houses (The Anchor Inn, Leek Wootton and The Saxon Mill, Guy's Cliffe)  | Privately owned                                     |
| • A hotel   | Privately owned                                     |
| • A commercial Golf & Country Club (also offering hotel accommodation)  | Privately owned                                     |
| • A caravan/motorhome sales dealership  | Privately owned                                     |

---

<sup>1</sup> See Neighbourhood Statistics ([www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk))

At its widest the community comprises:

- All those living in, working in and visiting the parish or using its facilities
- Businesses and employers in the parish
- Voluntary organisations working for the benefit of the community

## Provision of information to the community

---

Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council provides information to the community in the following ways:

- There is a website (<https://leekwoottonandguyscliffeparish.gov.uk>) which includes:
  - A front page with a description of the parish and its electorate
  - Information about forthcoming meetings, active planning applications and other news of interest to the community
  - Minutes and agendas of all Council and committee meetings for the past two years and supporting documents
  - Information about payments over £500
  - A copy of the latest Annual Report, including financial information
  - Contact details for all Councillors and the Clerk
  - A Calendar of meetings
  - A copy of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
  - A copy of the Council's Complaints Procedure
  - A copy of the Council's Freedom of Information Scheme
  - Links to the County Council, District Council and local MP's website and other sites of interest
- The Parish Council supports a **Community Hubsite** ([www.leekwoottonandguyscliffe.org.uk](http://www.leekwoottonandguyscliffe.org.uk)) which is owned and run by the local history group and includes information about the history of the parish and community organisations
- The Parish Council makes use of **Facebook** and the Clerk has posting/Admin rights to:
  - the Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Facebook Page ([www.facebook.com/LWandGC](http://www.facebook.com/LWandGC))
  - the Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Locals Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LWandGCLocals>)
- The Parish Council makes use of the local parish magazine (**Leek Wootton Link**) publishing a letter in every issue. The magazine is owned by the Church, but the Parish Council supports it as a community magazine and ensures it is distributed to every household in the Parish (with the exception of those that opt out).
- Agendas and forthcoming meetings are displayed on the **Parish Council noticeboards** in Leek Wootton and Hill Wootton
- The **Annual Report** is published in May and is made available in hard copy at the Annual Parish Assembly, Annual Parish Council Meeting, by request and in the Annual Parish Bulletin, which is distributed to all households
- Hard copies of minutes and supporting documents are available on request
- More detailed financial information is available on request

## Opportunities for community involvement

---

Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council encourages the involvement of residents and community organisations in its activities, in particular:

- A period during every Council meeting is set aside for public participation, which enables residents and representatives of community organisations to speak and ask questions
- All residents have the opportunity to request items for inclusion on the Annual Parish Assembly agenda

- All residents have the opportunity to speak and ask questions at the Annual Parish Assembly
- Community organisations can be asked to make a report, presentation and/or have a display stand at the Annual Parish Assembly
- There is a 'contact us' page on the Parish Council website
- Contact details for the Council and for individual Councillors are prominently displayed on Parish Council noticeboards and the Parish Council website

Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council encourages active citizens that are engaged in delivering a vibrant community through:

- Financial support for organisations working for the benefit of the community in Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe and named surrounding area
- Provision of recreational facilities for all sections of the community: children's playground
- Financial support for sports and recreation clubs providing opportunities for young people in the community

## Involvement in partnerships

---

Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council is represented on:

- The Trustees of Leek Wootton War Memorial Recreation Ground
- Leek Wootton Sports Club
- Leek Wootton Village Hall

The Parish Council also works in close partnership with:

- Leek Wootton Link: the Parish Council makes a financial contribution to the running costs of the parish magazine and distributes by post to outlying properties within the Civil Parish boundary
- Leek Wootton Sports Club/Leek Wootton War Memorial Recreation Ground: the Parish Council makes a financial contribution to the maintenance of the recreation ground area (non-sports field areas) by the Sports Club
- All Saints' Churchyard, Leek Wootton: the Parish Council makes a financial contribution to the maintenance of the graveyard

Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council also works in partnership with Warwickshire County Council and Warwick District Council, for example by providing 7x dog waste and litter bins around Leek Wootton.

## Role of Council members and officers

---

Members of Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council:

- Attend Council and committee meetings where there is opportunity for public participation
- Discuss all business at Council and committee meetings in public unless there is good reason to exclude the public by reason of the confidential nature of the business
- Represent the Council on community organisations (above)
- Are available to be contacted by residents and community organisations

The Clerk of Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council:

- Receives letters, phone calls, emails and website comments and passes them on to members as appropriate
- Keeps the website and noticeboards up to date, in particular publicising matters of community interest
- Provides information to members of the public under the Freedom of Information Act

## Specific areas for community involvement

---

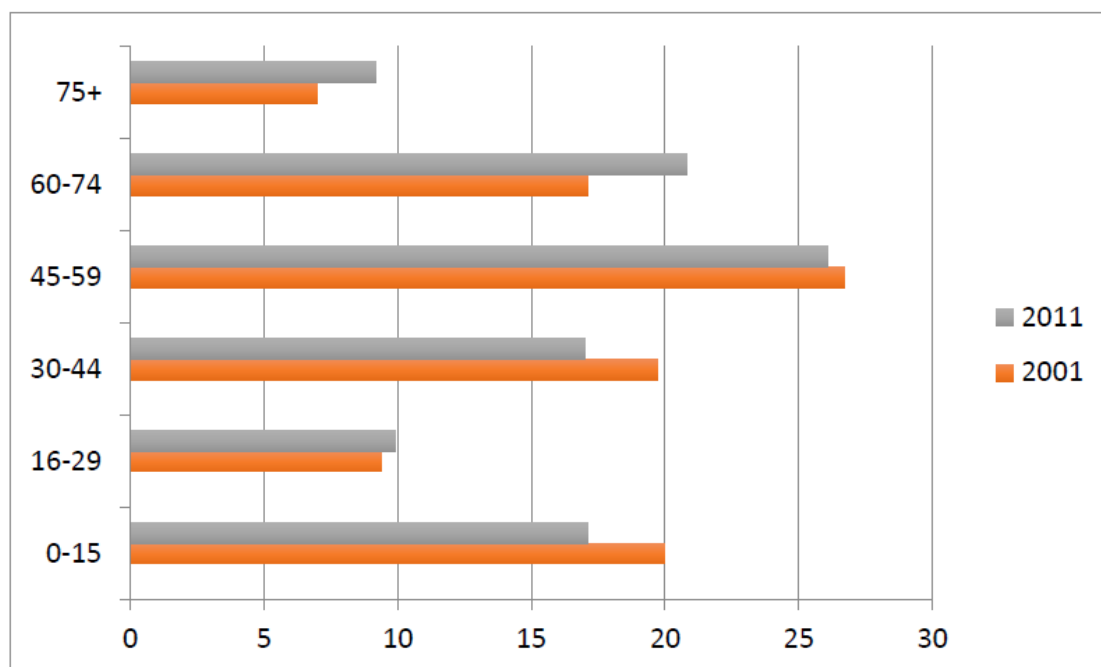
Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council will consult fully on major projects, in particular:

- Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Development of potential new community, sports and/or recreational facilities
- Participatory budgeting

## Appendix: A portrait of Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe

Extracted from Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Draft Neighbourhood Plan (August 2016)

1. The Parish of Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe includes the 'estate' village of Leek Wootton and the communities of Hill Wootton (a former farming hamlet), Chesford Grange, the previously separate Parish of Guy's Cliffe, North Woodloes and several outlying properties. The boundary of the parish extends from the River Avon in the east to the outskirts of Warwick and Kenilworth to south and north and the Wedgenock and Goodrest areas to the west. The parish extends across some 1100 hectares and covers an extensive rural area, which incorporates various outlying agricultural and ex-agricultural developments.
2. The village of Leek Wootton is the main settlement in the parish and is located about 2.5 miles to the south of Kenilworth. There are a good range of public services and facilities, including a primary school, Village Hall, place of worship and a public house. The village has good accessibility to public transport with buses running broadly hourly and with a 15 minute travel time to Warwick.
3. The 2015 Electoral Register shows a total of 392 dwellings within the parish. In 2011 the population of the then parish was 1017<sup>2</sup>. The parish has an older population profile than Warwick District as a whole and England, with 19.8% aged over 65 years compared to 16.7% in Warwick District and 16.4% in England, and a higher proportion of residents who are economically active (75.2% compared to 64.8% and 62.1% respectively). This 'Age Profile' analysis derived from the 2011 Census is very telling. It not only confirms that the population is on average older than Warwick District as a whole, but that over the last ten years, there has been a distinct upward trend in the ageing process. Between 2001 and 2011 the under 45's age groups fell by 5.1% whereas the population of over 45's grew by 5.3%. In 2011 more than 56% of the population was over the age of 45 years. Continued ageing over the next ten years will obviously change the profile of the parish and the demands upon services and infrastructure.



**Age Profile, Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe Parish 2001 - 2011**

4. The parish is relatively prosperous and has a proportionately higher number of residents with professional occupations than district and national averages. 19.6% of 16-74 year olds are Managers, Directors and Senior Officials compared to 12.8% in Warwick District and 10.9% in England.

<sup>2</sup> See Neighbourhood Statistics ([www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk))

5. In terms of tenure, a very high proportion of households live in owned outright accommodation (51.0% compared to 32.6% in Warwick District and 30.6% in England). A slightly higher proportion have a mortgage; 36.3% compared to 34% in the District and 32.8% in England. A relatively few households live in social rented housing from the local authority (3.2% compared to 9.1% in Warwick District and 9.4% in England) and only 6.6% rent privately compared to 16.7% in Warwick District and 15.4% in England.
6. Within the parish there are a number of businesses, generally in the leisure sector, including The Chesford Grange Hotel (QH) with conference and function facilities and a leisure suite; The Saxon Mill, a large and popular restaurant/public house with conference and function facilities; The Warwickshire Golf and Country Club with a number of golf courses and the club house providing conference, exhibition and function facilities. There is also a popular leisure centre with hotel facilities currently under construction.
7. To the north west of the village there is a substantial area of woodland, known as "The Lunch". This is currently part of the Woodcote Estate and originally formed part of a wooded backdrop to the formal gardens of the listed manor house. When the house was occupied as a dwelling the woodland was properly managed and areas were planted as both a source of fuel and for commercial use as telegraph poles and pit-props. However, the woods have been badly neglected since 1948 when the estate was sold to the County Council and it now needs a complete management plan to reinstate areas and to preserve the indigenous trees.
8. The Parish Council has been instrumental in achieving designation of the site as a local wildlife site and provisional agreement was obtained from the Warwickshire Police, who currently own the estate, to transfer "The Lunch" to public ownership as amenity land. With a change of advisers to the Police, this agreement inevitably, now will be subject to review.
9. Under the provisional agreement there may have been opportunities to develop a project with Warwickshire College to introduce proper woodland management as part of their arboriculture teaching programme. The eventual aim would have been to restore public access, constructing a series of woodland walks to link into the 'Jubilee Way' footpath network.
10. The Lunch is an important heritage and wildlife asset that helps to preserve the Green Belt by providing a natural buffer between Leek Wootton and Kenilworth.
11. On the northern edge of Leek Wootton there is a substantial caravan and mobile home business (Broad Lane Leisure) with both van and outdoor accessory sales and maintenance facilities. Towards the south western edge of the parish is an outdoor activity centre (Adventure Sports) offering a wide range of outdoor adventure pursuits and in the heart of the parish a private equestrian centre (proprietors Liz and Ted Edgar).
12. Currently, the Warwickshire Police Authority occupies a major property, although there are plans for this to be vacated.
13. The Parish Church of All Saints sits high on the western side of Warwick Road towards the south end of the village. A church has existed on this site since the 12th Century. The Medieval church was demolished in 1789 and the original building of the existing church was completed in 1790. It has been extended and altered over the ensuing years to create the building that exists today.
14. There is a public house/restaurant (The Anchor Inn) in the heart of the village of Leek Wootton, a shop, which is currently being converted into a kitchen showroom and a 'well-being clinic'.
15. Close to the centre of the village of Leek Wootton is the War Memorial Recreation Ground of 2.5 hectares owned by locally appointed Trustees on behalf of the residents of the parish with a Village Hall, Sports Club and Children's Playground.
16. Most of the open area of the parish is farmed either by resident farmers or by contractors with both arable and pasture land for sheep and cattle grazing and livery.

17. All these businesses provide employment opportunities for a number of local residents although the majority of the working age population commute to their places of work outside of the parish in nearby towns and cities like Coventry and Birmingham and even to London.
18. There are numerous less obvious businesses operating from within residential properties in the parish, ranging from tradesmen through art studios and IT experts to other more specialised trades.
19. Finally, there is a primary school in Leek Wootton, which provides for parish children and the wider community as well as employment for a number of parish residents.
20. Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe is, as has been stated earlier, very much a rural parish, the majority of the area being agricultural in nature with both arable and animal grazing use of the land. There are therefore many miles of hedges separating the fields with the abundance of wildlife these contain. There is also a network of footpaths, including The Centenary Way, providing public access to the countryside.
21. A significant area to the western side of the parish is occupied by the golf courses of The Warwickshire, which whilst being extensively managed, still provide a natural landscape for wildlife and the facility of public footpaths.
22. Much of the eastern boundary of the parish is formed by the River Avon, which obviously provides riverside habitat for wildlife. Much of its length is not accessible to the public, but there are facilities at Guy's Cliffe to access the river and cross-over out of the parish to walk its banks and to fish.
23. Within the parish are two Locally Listed Historic Parks and Gardens. One is a Pinetum in the grounds of The Warwickshire planted by an original owner of Wootton Court (now The Hayes), which contains a wide range of trees and shrubs. The other is the grounds of Woodcote (the Police HQ), which contain the gardens of the house with lakes and woods. Running from the western part of the parish, via one of the golf courses and the Woodcote lakes, through the heart of the parish just to the north of Leek Wootton, is Cuttlebrook or Cattlebrook a stream which finally flows into the River Avon close to Chesford Grange. Parts of this stream are accessible to the public.
24. To the south-eastern corner of the parish is Blacklow Hill a wooded area, which again provides a haven for wildlife and wonderful displays of snowdrops and bluebells at the appropriate seasons. The significant monument of Gaveston's Cross, where Piers Gaveston was brutally beheaded, is located here. This area is not readily accessible to the public as it is surrounded by farmland with no footpath.
25. The very western edge of the parish was, many centuries ago, part of the Deer Park to Warwick Castle although it is now largely farmed. On the eastern edge of this area is an extensively wooded area which contains, at least in part, the Adventure Sports facilities referred to earlier. Whilst the current use is unlikely to be conducive to wildlife habitat the area will still provide the natural habitat wild life needs, even if somewhat disturbed by the activities taking place.