



# Rural Review

The Newsletter of Wem Rural Parish Council  
Issue 9 November 2013

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## Rural Review

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## WELCOME...

to this bumper 9th newsletter for the Wem Rural Community. One of the reasons for the bigger edition is that there are community achievements to celebrate. Firstly, the publication of the Wem Rural Community Plan. To the small band of residents who persevered and produced this Plan - a big thank you. Secondly, thank you to Len Staines for leading the Wem Rural Responders project. It is great news that the Automated External Defibrillators are now on order. Thirdly, congratulations to Newtown CofE Primary School. At the time of writing it is understood that the School has come through their Ofsted inspection with many improvements being recorded. Well done to all at the school!

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and welcome suggestions for articles and feedback. Let any of your Councillors know your comments.

Peter Broomhall, Chair Wem Rural Parish Council



## The Wem Rural Community Plan is born!

The parish council is delighted to announce the publication and adoption of the new Wem Rural Community Plan!

March 2010 saw the conception of the Community Plan by a dedicated team of parishioners (including 2 Wem Rural parish councillors). Public information events were held and 3 separate questionnaires compiled. These were hand delivered to every household and business in the parish. The responses were then carefully collated and analysed (259 individual responses to the adult residents' survey, 15 responses from local businesses and 274 responses to the children's survey) and future actions highlighted to address issues which will improve our community for the benefit of all.

The Parish Council will be reviewing the list of future actions and discussing the best way forward for each project. These will include...(continued overleaf)

## Wem Rural Community Plan cont.

**Access to information in Wem Rural**  
**Crime and Safety**  
**Business Focus**  
**Planning**  
**Litter and Fly-tipping**  
**Renewable energies**  
**Leisure activities**  
**Highways issues**

Some of these issues will require discussions between the parish council and other bodies to find

solutions and pass on information to parishioners. Other projects e.g. footpaths, wildlife, etc. could involve the community and the parish council encourages parishioners to volunteer their services to get involved and take things forward.

Copies of the Wem Rural Community Plan can be found in the Wem, Whitchurch and Mobile Libraries.

The document is also available to read on the parish council's own website [www.wemrural.org.uk](http://www.wemrural.org.uk).

# Farming Community urged to **SEE TRACK, THINK TRAIN** on level crossings

There are 1,200 level crossings across the country. 7 of these are in Wem Rural Parish:

**Coton** (public footpath crossing)  
**Creamore Farm** (private user-worked crossing with telephone)  
**Gregory's** (private user-worked crossing)  
**Lyons Wood Farm** (private user-worked crossing with telephone)  
**Prees** (Public Highway automated barrier)  
**Tilley Green** (public footpath crossing)  
**Upper Lacon** (public footpath crossing)

In the last five years there have been 543 incidents at 'User Worked Crossings' (UWC) (the kind often operated by farmers) including 66 'near misses'. Between January 2007 and June 2012, three people have sadly died while using level crossings in Wales, the Network Rail area which includes Shropshire.

Now Network Rail hopes a new campaign will make farmers more aware that they should treat level crossings as they would a busy road, even in quiet rural areas, and that the powerful message "See Track, Think Train" will raise awareness that paying attention to warning signs can save your life.

While fatalities at level crossings are at a low,

there have been four vehicle collisions in the last 12 months at UWCs on the Wales route. Tracey Young, Network Rail community safety manager for the Wales route, said: "Network Rail and the NFU are both concerned about the welfare of the agricultural professionals that use level crossings. Work is ongoing to improve railway safety at level crossings which includes modifying, upgrading and closing crossings where possible."

Network Rail says farming communities will stay safe if they adhere to the following advice:

1. **ALWAYS use crossing telephones where provided**
2. **Follow the signaller's instructions**
3. **Always be vigilant**
4. **Make sure livestock is under control**
5. **Don't rely on train timetables - there is always the chance of a charter or engineering train passing when you least expect it**

Please visit <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/level-crossings/types-of-level-crossing/footpath-crossings/> for more information and guidance on how to use level crossings safely.





# HEDGE TO HEDGE



The HEDGE TO HEDGE project aims to change the way Shropshire Council's Highways maintenance department and their contractors work. It applies to pothole repair, patching, iron works, footpath works, fixing signs, removal of litter, fly tips, broken kerb stones, cutting back vegetation etc.

Shropshire Council hopes to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness by using

trained gangs who will "find and fix" defects between the hedges on all roads in the parish on an on-going rotational basis.

If you are concerned about potholes, overgrown hedges, or any other road maintenance issues, please either contact Shropshire Council's customer service line directly (details on page 7 under CONTACT) or the Parish Clerk.

## 15 minutes FREE PARKING

In an effort to boost high street trade Shropshire Council has introduced a very welcome "grace period" of 15 minutes for designated pay-and-display bays at all council-owned car parks and on-street parking bays.

**From 20 May 2013 this has meant that you do not need to buy a ticket if you are only parking for 15 minutes to pop into your local shop or post office.**

For more information including where the grace period does **NOT** apply (e.g. Raven Meadows Multi-Storey car park in Shrewsbury or any restricted parking areas such as loading bays and double-yellow lines) go to:  
[www.shropshire.gov.uk/news/2013/05/free-parking-grace-period-to-be-introduced-by-council/](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/news/2013/05/free-parking-grace-period-to-be-introduced-by-council/)

## « GRANTS »

**Grants have been awarded by Wem Rural Parish Council to assist the following community groups who applied for help with their work:**

- Edstaston Village Hall
- Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery, Wem
- Newtown Community & Recreation Association (NCRA)
- The Parish Church of King Charles the Martyr, Newtown
- Wem Town Hall Community Trust Ltd
- 1st Wem Scout Group

## WEM LOCALITY WORKING

### Working together for better services

Shropshire Council is working with the Parish and Town Councils, other partner organisations and the local community to explore different ways of designing and delivering services in Wem and the surrounding area. The aim is to ensure that services don't cost more than they should, are delivered by the best people to do the job and support local jobs and economic growth.

Consultation events with residents were held in August and results supported a review of services related to supporting local businesses, improving employment prospects, sustaining and developing community facilities and supporting people to age well.

It is planned to trial new ways of working from the autumn to see how changes can enhance what is already happening in the community. As part of this work there may be possibilities for local business people to become 'mentors' working with unemployed people and for senior citizens to share their experiences of the support offered to them locally. If you would like to get involved or for more information please contact Sue Thomas, 01939 237453 or email [sue.j.thomas@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:sue.j.thomas@shropshire.gov.uk)

# Safer Neighbourhood Policing

## by Sgt. Claire Greenaway

"You may have seen recent media coverage about the way West Mercia Police have responded to reductions in budgets across the force area. Savings have been identified and made, but front line Policing and around-the-clock response has not been affected.

Officers are now required to be either on patrol or at incidents for the vast proportion of their shift within a set area. Officers can now be seen regularly parked up at hi-visibility locations with a laptop-type piece of equipment which allows access to all of the administration functions they would previously have had to return to the Police Station to do. This creates wider coverage and quicker response times to incidents.

My area of Policing is Safer Neighbourhood Policing. We deal with all "quality of life" issues from anti-social behaviour to supporting vulnerable individuals within our community. The Safer Neighbourhood Team for Wem and surrounding areas now comprises PC David Carpenter (whom many residents will know) and whose wealth of knowledge we are exceptionally lucky to retain. Also part of the team are PCSO Liam Heathcote, PCSO Will Tyler and PCSO Angela

Newson, all of whom bring superb skills to the team.

**We can be contacted via telephone (101), via email [whitchurch.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:whitchurch.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk) or via Twitter [www.twitter.com/NorthShropCops](http://www.twitter.com/NorthShropCops).**

The team is presently working towards a whole host of priorities, issues the public have advised or consulted with us about. We work to the motto 'You Said, We Did' and I would encourage any member of the public to make contact with us about any matters that they feel affect their lives or the lives of others.

The team has access to a whole host of partnership agencies which means if we cannot resolve issues using our own powers and procedures, we will consult with others to ensure the matter is addressed. So my plea to our community is to keep talking to us - it is extremely important that the community remains an extension of our eyes and ears and helps us gather intelligence around community issues that we can utilise and take action on.

I very much look forward to meeting the wider community in the near future."

## Soulton Road Affordable Housing UPDATE

New members appointed to the Soulton Road Community-Led Housing Project Steering Group are Mrs Connie Granger (Mayor of Wem Town Council) and parish councillors Pete Broomhall, Bev Horsley and Bob Parsons. We are very keen to involve 2 representatives from the community in the on-going stewardship of this project. If you are interested in joining the Steering Group please contact the Parish Clerk.

At a recent meeting of the Steering Group the representative from Severnside Housing, Helen

Pugh, reported that planning approval had been recommended subject to the necessary legal agreements being in place.

There will be 23 new houses:

Discounted rent: 3 x 2 bed/3 person bungalows (63.3m<sup>2</sup>), 9 x 2 bed/4 person houses (81.6m<sup>2</sup>) and 5 x 3 bed/5 person houses (91.4m<sup>2</sup>)

Shared ownership: 2 x 2 bed/4 person houses (74.5m<sup>2</sup>), 2 x 3 bed/5 person houses (85m<sup>2</sup>) and 2 x 3 bed/5 person houses (91.4m<sup>2</sup>).

Families with a local connection to the Wem Rural Parish will be given priority to rent/own these properties.

Subject to key planning conditions being satisfied, work is expected to commence in early February 2014 with an estimated 12 months build time. The site layout during the build period will be planned to reduce disturbance to neighbours to a minimum.

Once work commences the shared ownership properties will be marketed through Monks in Wem and consultation events will be held for the discounted rent properties.



## WemRural Responders

**GOOD NEWS!** Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are now on order for Wem Rural and Wem Town.

In September, at two training sessions provided by West Midlands Ambulance Service, volunteers were shown how to use the AEDs. Although there are some simple rules to follow, it is not a difficult task to help save a life in the event of a cardiac arrest.

The Wem Rural unit will be set up at Robinson and Young's garage and the Wem Town AED at Wem Co-Op. We are very grateful for the continued help and encouragement from WMAS, Myddle Heartbeat and Clun Valley AED, as well as funding from Shropshire Community Council, LJC, and The Wemian.

It is hoped that a further unit can be placed in the northern area of Wem Rural (e.g. Edstaston) but this would require more funding, and more volunteers.

Although a number of volunteers have already come forward, more responders are needed for both regions. More (FREE) training is planned and even if you can only spare a small amount of time you will be welcome and could quite easily make a difference to someone's (and their family and friends') life.

**WRR** Len Staines 01939 234415, l.staines@virgin.net

**Wem Town** Anne Turner 01939 236683, pannjeda@supanet.com

# FOCUS ON: WEM MOSS

## Looking after our snakes and spiders

It is not unusual to hear of threats to wildlife, but in a number of ways efforts are made to conserve our species as well. For example, hedge cutting is banned during the nesting season, and some of you will know that environmental issues have to be taken into account in planning applications - rural sites have to be checked for bats and newts.

But these are not the only species to be considered in (or preferably out of!) the conservation cauldron. Parishioners may not be aware that within Wem Rural Parish, in the north-west corner near Northwood, is a National Nature Reserve, owned and managed by Shropshire Wildlife Trust, appropriately named Wem Moss.

One of the UK's largest spiders, the Raft Spider, is found there because of the special conditions it is adapted to, hunting its prey on the surface of the pools. On the drier parts, care has to be taken not to disturb Adders.

Wem Moss is an outstanding example of a lowland raised bog, the habitat being home to a number of other interesting and rare species, including water vole, and plants such as sundews, bog asphodel, bog myrtle, and bog rosemary (culinary use of the latter is NOT recommended!)

The moss is a fragment separated by agricultural development from the Fenn's, Whixall and Bettisfield Moss National Nature Reserve, which is also the subject of much conservation activity.

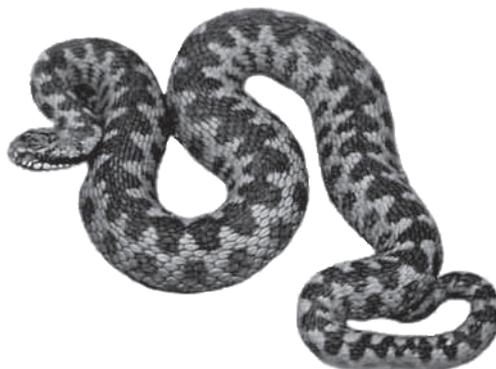


However, although "our" moss has the same conditions, it has a completely different atmosphere from the others, and is well worth a visit. As it says on the SWT website:

"This is as ancient a piece of wilderness as you will find in Shropshire, a miraculous relic circled with trees beyond which the modern world gets on with intensive agricultural production"

If you have access to the internet, as well as finding more information on the SWT website, you will also discover that there are other reserves bordering our Parish.

And if you want to get more involved, support and funding for projects is available through community grants, the Community Officer is Luke Neal of Shropshire Wildlife Trust - 01743 284275 or [luken@shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:luken@shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk)



# LEST WE FORGET...



## WW1 COMMEMORATION

On 4 August 1914 Britain went to war - a war like no other the world had seen. Next year will be the centenary of WW1 and Wem Rural Parish Council is joining with the Town Council, British Legions and the Wem Civic Society to organise events to mark the occasion.

### Can you help?

The Civic Society's project 'Swords and Ploughshares' includes research into the people listed as casualties in WW1 and related theatres of battle. They are also interested in the stories about those who survived the war. In August there will be an exhibition in the Town Hall. Do you have any item or artefact that you are willing to lend to the exhibition? For more information contact the Civic Society on 01939 235443 or visit [www.wemlocal.org.uk](http://www.wemlocal.org.uk)



## SPREADING THE WORD

### A new notice board for Barkers Green

Those of you who have passed through Barkers Green recently, or stopped at the Builders' Merchant there, will have seen that a new Wem Rural Parish Council notice board has been installed.

Following the Council's initiative to increase the number of information points within the Parish, Jewson's of Barkers Green volunteered to provide the timber free of charge for a notice board opposite their entrance.

Paul Tarr, Manager, said "we are pleased to have the opportunity to make a contribution to support the local community". The Parish Council is also grateful to Highways Department for installing the notice board.

# Your Parish Councillors

Wem Rural now has its full complement of parish councillors (contact details can be found on the back page)

**Wem ward** Peter Broomhall, Peter Marsh, Len Staines, Tim Wilton-Morgan and Fiona Ford

**Edstaston ward** Jon Murgatroyd, Bev Horsley, Liz Vernon, Pete Slack and Lorraine Pugh

**Newtown ward** Bob Parsons and Bev Gee

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## Edstaston Village Hall

Wem Rural Parish Council is now the Custodian Trustee and had registered the village hall with the Land Registry ensuring it remains a community asset.

A committee of volunteers deals with the everyday running of the village hall - maintenance, bookings, etc. and also organises a number of fundraising events a year. These are always fantastic fun and well-attended. Our most recent event was a sell-out talk and slideshow by Steve Leonard the vet and TV presenter. Other recent events have included a Ceilidh, Indoor curling, Skittles, Sumo wrestling, Alternative Burns and Irish nights. Look out for posters advertising future events on the Parish Council and Village Hall notice boards. A facebook page and website are planned.

If you would like to join the village hall committee please contact Bev Horsley on 01939 232956 or Elaine Brown 01939 232881.

## THE WEMIAN

Wem's popular free quarterly magazine  
The Wemian is now available to read  
online.

[www.thewemian.co.uk](http://www.thewemian.co.uk)

Autumn issue out now!

They also have an facebook page  
[www.facebook.com/wemian.wemian](http://www.facebook.com/wemian.wemian)

## CONTACTS

Shropshire Council customer services  
Telephone 0345 678 9006

or Email  
[customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk)

To report any problems including:

**Potholes**  
**Overgrown verges and hedges**  
**Litter problems and fly tipping**  
**Dead animal on road**  
**Vandalism or Anti-Social behaviour**  
**Dog Warden: report a stray or lost dog**  
**Low supplies in salt/grit bins**

When ice or snow is predicted, you can follow [@ShropCouncil](https://twitter.com/ShropCouncil) on Twitter for live updates on when and where the gritters are out in Shropshire.

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## WILL YOU BE WARM THIS WINTER?

**Government grants are available for:**

- Insulation measures for the home**
- Repair or replacement of older heating boilers**

To see if you qualify contact [eco@mea](mailto:eco@mea) or telephone 0800 1123 743

(This project is run by the Marches Energy Agency)

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## RURAL WATCH

To find out more about this scheme contact the local policing team Telephone 101, via email [whitchurch.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:whitchurch.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk) or via Twitter [www.twitter.com/NorthShropCops](http://www.twitter.com/NorthShropCops).



# Wem Rural Parish Council

[www.wemrural.org.uk](http://www.wemrural.org.uk)

## PARISH COUNCILLORS

12 Councillors represent the 3 wards

### EDSTASTON

Liz Vernon	01939 234896	The Park, Edstaston, Wem SY4 5RF
Lorraine Pugh	01948 710280	Oakwood Grange, Northwood SY4 5NP
Jon Murgatroyd	01939 234384	Grange Farm, Poolhead, Wem SY4 5QY
Bev Horsley	01939 232956	Ryebank Farmhouse, near Wem SY4 5RA
Pete Slack	01939 236990	Fairview, 7 Paddol Green, Wem SY4 5QZ

### NEWTOWN

Bob Parsons	01939 234434	The Chapel, Poolhead, Wem SY4 5UH
Bev Gee	01939 233120	Holly Bank, Foxholes, Wem SY4 5UJ

### WEM

Peter Broomhall	01939 232573	3 Swains Close, Wem SY4 5NZ
Peter Marsh	01939 232498	Aston Hall, Wem SY4 5JQ
Fiona Ford	01939 234358	Gwiwer Barn, Woodhouse Farm, Shawbury Road, Wem SY4 5PF
Len Staines	01939 234415	The Hawthorns, Barkers Green, Wem SY4 5JW
Tim Wilton-Morgan	01939 235703	Palms Hill House, Palms Hill, Wem SY4 5PQ

Councillors invite members of their ward to contact them to discuss any issues or matters of concern.

You can also contact the Parish Clerk, Carole Warner, Orchard Cottage, Rowe Lane, Welshampton, SY12 0QB 01948 710672 or email [wemruralpc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wemruralpc@hotmail.co.uk)

### SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Tuesday  
3 December 2013

Tuesday  
7 January 2014

Tuesday  
4 February 2014

Tuesday  
4 March 2014

Tuesday  
1 April 2014

## M E E T I N G S

Wem Rural Parish Council meetings are held at 7pm on the first Tuesday of the month in the Council Chamber, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem. Occasionally there may be a guest speaker in which case the meeting will start at an earlier time to allow time before public statements at 7pm.

The Parish Council occasionally holds Planning Meetings to consider planning applications when the time stipulated for response to Shropshire Council (21 days) does not allow them to be held over to the monthly Council meeting.

Agendas for all meetings are available on the website and are placed on notice boards around the Parish at least 3 days before the meeting.

Members of the community are welcome to attend all meetings and there is time set by at the start to allow you to address the Council.

This newsletter can be made available in large print and audio tape. Please call 01948 710672 for further details.



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