



Rural Review

The Newsletter of Wem Rural Parish Council
Issue 18 November 2016

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WELCOME

to the latest edition of the 'Rural Review'. I hope you will find the articles and action updates contained within this document useful.

Some good news to share with you! After a few years of negotiation with Shropshire Council to change the name of the 'Wem Ward' (which sits to the south of the parish) we are pleased to announce that Shropshire Council has completed its review of our request and this ward has been re-named 'Roden Ward'.

A request! One topic that has become an issue this year is the growth of hedges and the impact it has had on visibility when driving along roads and lanes. We have had many comments about this issue and I would like to take this opportunity to politely remind all landowners that they have a legal responsibility to keep trees and hedges from overhanging and/or obstructing visibility on a public road.

Please help us! The primary reason the Rural Review is posted to every household and business within the Parish is to ensure that we keep in regular contact with you and update you on changes and key issues that apply to the local area. However, there are occasions when more urgent information needs to be shared with you. To help us communicate this information as quickly as possible we are setting up an email notification list solely for this purpose. If you would like to join this list please email the Clerk, and include your name and postal address, and we will add you to the list. Be assured that the 'Rural Review' will continue to be posted to all properties on a quarterly basis. If you do have any questions or comments regarding our local parish that you would like to discuss please do not hesitate to contact one of your local councillors or the parish clerk.

Finally, as this is the last 'Rural Review' update before the festive period I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Parish Council to wish you and your families a happy Christmas and a prosperous and healthy 2017!

Jon Murgatroyd, Chair, Wem Rural Parish Council

Kissing Allowed in Wem Rural!

Parishioners had drawn attention to the dilapidated and potentially dangerous state of the stile at the bottom of Weir Lane, making access for humans (and their dogs) difficult when getting to and from town via the footpath and footbridge over the River Roden.

We are pleased to say that the stile has been replaced by a kissing gate, making passage much easier for walkers. It is a fortuitous coincidence that the new gate is right next to the River Roden, which now gives its name to the newly renamed Roden Ward. Also the footpath alongside the Roden has been cleared making it easier to see the bank.

Many thanks to Shropshire Council's Outdoor Recreation Team and to the property holder for arranging this.



Rural Review

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WHY BECOME A PARISH COUNCILLOR?

Every 4 years, all County, Town and Parish Councillors must step down from their roles and all residents have the opportunity to consider standing as a Councillor. This 4 yearly event is called a 'normal election' and will take place next May.

Being a councillor is a rewarding form of public service that puts you in a unique position where you can make decisions about local issues and improve the quality of life for people within the Parish. It gives you the opportunity to help your local community and be part of a dedicated team influencing and providing key services for your area.

You may wonder why people put themselves forward. We asked the Parish Council's newest and one of the longest serving Councillors to explain:

Cllr Gillian Coleman said "I have lived in Coton since 2006 and ran my business in Wellington from 1998 and retired in 2015 with my son taking over. I was selected as Conservative Councillor to Wellington Town Council representing my ward of Dothill in 2006 and ran an active campaign knocking on every door! I feel very strongly that local issues must be aired democratically to give a voice to the community that may not otherwise be heard. On a more down to earth level I feel that being involved in our

Parish Council Wem Rural, is better than standing on the side line."

Cllr Len Staines added: "Our family moved from Shrewsbury to Barkers Green in August 1986, so I've lived here for over 30 years. I can't remember exactly when I joined the Parish Council, but it wasn't that long before I started to complain to my local Parish Councillor, the late Arthur Ward, about the traffic going through Barkers Green! Arthur said that if I wanted to get involved I should be on the Parish Council, and when I put myself forward for co-option for a casual vacancy – I was rejected! However, I got on at the next proper election. In the following years I soon got to know many of the residents of Barkers Green and Aston, and found myself being asked to support them over the many and varied issues that concerned them. Frequent topics relate to highways and planning, not always resulting in success, but whatever the outcome it seems to act as a catalyst to try to succeed with the next issue."

If you are interested in knowing more about the role of Councillor and the Parish Council please contact any Councillor or the Clerk. Contact details are on the back page.

Annual Grant Scheme

Wem Rural Parish Council awards grants on an annual basis to voluntary organisations and community groups. The paramount concern of the Council is that any grant application is beneficial to residents of the parish. This year's deadline is 20 January 2017

All applications will be considered on their individual merits. The final decision on assessment of applications and the level of any grant offered lies with Wem Rural Parish Council.

Local voluntary organisations, community groups and sports/recreational clubs can apply. All must be non-commercial, have a constitution, set of rules or documented aims and objectives and have a bank account with at least two signatures. Individuals may apply for grants if submitted by an organisation to which they belong. The organisation is responsible for ensuring the grant is used for the purpose for which it was granted.

Grants can be used for capital projects or for revenue purposes but only for the purpose specified in the application.

It's never too late for a challenge!

As banks close and services disappear from villages and towns, people of all ages are left without face-to-face communication. Instead they will have to write, telephone or use the internet to deal with daily tasks.

GOAL (Getting Older Adults on Line), based in Wem and formed in 2013, has helped more than 100 people over 55 to get online. Sessions are free and it is mostly one to one tuition. GOAL is a recognised Centre for 'Learn My Way' which provides free and valuable internet sessions online.

GOAL computer training runs on Tuesdays between 09.30 and 13.00, with lessons lasting one hour, (maximum of 4 people a session) and Fridays from 11.30 to 12.30. There are no set number of sessions to worry about - participants decide when they feel confident enough to manage without support.

Please ring Phil Moyse on [01939 233533](tel:01939233533) if you are interested in developing your skills in the world of technology.

Wem Rural's Rarest Resident

Readers may recall that Wem Moss, within our Rural Parish, was the destination of our Cycle Safari a couple of years ago. It is east of Northwood, is part of The Fenn's, Whixall, Bettisfield, Wem & Cadney Moss Complex which forms Britain's third largest lowland raised bog and it is large enough to be visible from space.

Due to the nature of the habitat, the moss complex contains a number of nationally important plants and animals that exist in the conditions it creates. One of these is the Argent and Sable moth (*Rheumaptera hastata*). Its caterpillar can be found on short, shrubby Birch found on the margins of the mosses. Interestingly, in our Wem Moss, larvae are also found on Bog Myrtle. They are difficult to find because to hide from predators (and moth hunters!), they enclose themselves inside a compartment of spun and folded leaves. The adult moth is about the size of a Common Blue butterfly, and flies in sunshine from mid-May to early July.

The particular interest in this moth lies in the fact that it used to be fairly widespread, but since the beginning of this century has declined significantly, and has become very rare in England and Wales, with the Meres and Mosses being one of its few remaining strongholds. The reasons for the decline are not properly understood but is thought to be caused partly by mild winters, the pupae need to be kept cold over winter.

For this reason Meres and Mosses called in the services of Dave Green, a professional entomologist, to survey our mosses to confirm the current status of the moth during this year. He was assisted by a number of volunteers, and the project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. As a result of diligent searching, a total of 16 adults and, subsequently, 8 larvae, were found. Bearing in mind the area of all the mosses, it was impossible to survey the whole reserve, so this figure will not be the total of individuals present. It was also noted that the adult flying season was later than expected. Dave suggested that the edge areas of the mosses, adjacent to the surrounding taller trees, are more important to the moth, and that management would encourage its continuation in low population years.

Why take the trouble to carry out studies like this? By focusing on monitoring key critical species such as this moth, and trying to maintain conditions for its continued survival, at the same time we are conserving many other plants and animals that are unique to the raised bog habitat. In this case, young Birch is important for other butterflies and moths also found in the survey, some of which are also rare. Also, conserving plants and animals at the base of the food chain ensures conditions for those higher up to thrive as well. Without the conservation of the mosses a haven for wildlife and an important ecosystem contributing to the beauty and diversity of our rural environment would be lost.

Thanks to Dave for the photo and help with writing this report.

Cllr Len Staines

Community Grants for conservation projects in the whole of the Meres and Mosses area are also available, for community groups who wish to conserve, enhance, access, explain and celebrate their local landscape. A wide range of activities are acceptable, with some form of matched funding. For more details the website is:

<http://www.themeressandmosses.co.uk/page/44/community-grants.htm>

or speak to Luke Neal, Community Officer, 01743 284275

luken@shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk





Wem Rural Parish Council

www.wemrural-pc.gov.uk

PARISH COUNCILLORS

12 Councillors represent the 3 wards

EDSTASTON

Liz Vernon	01939 234896	The Park, Edstaston, Wem, SY4 5RF
Gillian Coleman	01948 880944	Coton Grove, Coton, Whitchurch, SY13 2PQ
Jon Murgatroyd	01939 234384	Grange Farm, Poolhead, Wem, SY4 5QY
Bob Parsons	01939 23443	The Chapel, Poolhead, Wem SY4 5UH
Pete Slack	01939 236990	Fairview, 7 Paddol Green, Wem , SY4 5QZ

NEWTOWN

Geoff Glover	01939 233357	The Old Stables, 1 The Barns, The Lowe, Wem, SY4 5UE
Trevor Hayward	01939 233400	Oakhurst, The Lowe, Wem, SY4 5UE

RODEN

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 clerk@wemrural-pc.gov.uk

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Tuesday
6 December 2016

Tuesday
3 January 2017

Tuesday
7 February 2017

Tuesday
7 March 2017

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 Roden Suite, 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 Extraordinary 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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