



Rural Review

The Newsletter of Wem Rural Parish Council
Issue 29 Autumn 2 2019

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WELCOME

to the second Autumn edition of the Rural Review — we have so much to tell you that we are publishing 2 editions of the newsletter this quarter.

Following from the success of Wem Rural Parish Council in being awarded the Local Council's Accreditation Gold Award, Carole and I attended the Shire Hall for the presentation of the certificate from Ann Hartley, Shropshire Council's Chairman. At our last WRPC meeting it was agreed to display this in Edstaston Village Hall – our only Community hall in the parish.

Jon Murgatroyd, who served on the Parish Council for over 12 years and two years as the Chair has moved from our Parish and has decided to stand down as Councillor. This is very sad for us. Jon helped in the creation of the 2014 Community Plan and has been a wonderful Councillor with excellent knowledge to share with us. We thank him and wish him all the best in his new home. We now have two vacancies for councillors in the Roden Ward and the Edstaston Ward. If you are interested then please contact Carole Warner, our clerk. Serving as a parish councillor is not all about attending meetings; it is an opportunity to get out there and meet and talk with people in our community.

Wem Rural Parish Council has been successful in its application to the Lottery Fund for three defibrillators and a training package. Carole is busy talking with owners of buildings where these can be located. Someone close to you, or even yourself might need a defibrillator one day so this is a worthy activity for our Parish Council.

Liz Vernon,
Chair, Wem Rural Parish Council

SmartWater Kits Now Available!

Saturday 21 September was the launch of the Police, SmartWater and Parish Council's initiative "We Don't Buy Crime". Residents from all over the Parish came to Edstaston Village Hall to collect and register their free SmartWater kit.

To remind you...

SmartWater is a sophisticated security system that protects property, deters thieves and helps the police to convict criminals. It can be directly applied to valuables or it can be used to spray criminals committing a crime.

SmartWater contains a unique forensic code that is registered to an address or location. Anything marked can be traced back to where it came from, allowing the police to identify stolen property and link criminals to crime scenes.

SmartWater is almost invisible in natural light but glows brightly under ultraviolet (UV) light.

Contact your Parish Councillor and collect your FREE SmartWater kit. If sufficient kits are distributed, the Police will contribute to their cost.

Councillors, Police and a resident at the SmartWater launch



Rural Review

is produced by
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For further
information
please contact
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clerk@wemrural-pc.gov.uk
www.wemrural-pc.gov.uk

Community Round Up

Wem Rural Community Plan

One of the main projects the Parish Council has worked on this year is the re-refresh of the Community Plan. Earlier this year the Council consulted all households in the Parish on how it had achieved in fulfilling the 2014 Plan and its proposed objectives for the next 5 years.

The results have been collated and presented in a single document, Wem Rural Community Plan 2019 and can be viewed on the website: <https://www.wemrural-pc.gov.uk/wem-rural-community-plan/>

Northwood Community Speed Watch

Following the appeal in the last Rural Review, 13 volunteers have come forward for training so to be part of the Northwood scheme. The Police have also agreed locations in the village where speed checks will be carried out. All we are waiting for is for a trainer and equipment to be allocated.

Thank you to the 13 who have come forward and it's not too late to join them!

Community Grants

Every year the Parish Council put aside an amount of funds to help local community groups. There are an agreed criteria and application form which can be obtained from the Clerk. Completed applications must be submitted by 15 December and will be considered at the January Parish Council meeting.

All applications will be considered on their individual merits.

Last Ditch Attempt To Save Wem Moss!

Regular readers of this Parish Newsletter may recall that we are fortunate enough to have in our Parish one of the country's rarest wildlife habitats, Wem Moss, which is part of The Fenn's, Whixall, Bettisfield, Wem & Cadney Moss Complex (The Marches Mosses). Wem Rural Parish Councillors were invited to see how the BogLIFE project was being managed locally.

Wem Moss is managed by Natural England and Shropshire Wildlife Trust and is separated from the rest of the complex by farmland. Together, the Marches Mosses form Britain's third largest lowland raised bog, is a Ramsar site of international nature importance for several plant and animal species and is large enough to be visible from space. As well as importance as a wildlife habitat, maintaining peat bogs offers a primary approach to climate change mitigation as they can lock up vast quantities of carbon. So not just one, but two important reasons for saving the Mosses.



Photo: Recently created bund

The Wem Moss is a Raised Bog, meaning it is dome-shaped, and it consists of peat made up of Sphagnum moss and other moisture-loving plants that has built up continually since the last Ice Age 12,000 years ago.

However, along with the other areas of the Marches Mosses, it is subject to a number of environmental threats. The key threat is the gradual drying out of the bog and the consequent loss of habitat; this can be seen by the rise of heath plants such as purple moor grass, birch and ling heather, and the decline of Sphagnum moss, which both requires and preserves the wetter conditions as its spongy form holds water. Another bog plant previously present in large numbers, the Sundew, seems to be almost absent from Wem Moss.

In the recent past, piles have been sunk into the peat to stop water percolating away, but now a new technique is being implemented. Bunding consists of creating a series of

interlocking low ridges, formed from the peat itself. Although only 10 or 15 cm high, these ridges – the bunds – form a cellular network of relatively impervious barriers that retain water to form lagoons in which the moss can regenerate thus restoring the rehydration and raising of the bog.



Photo: Monthly monitoring of atmospheric ammonia confirms a rise in levels

But water reduction is not the only reason for changes in the Mosses. Bog plants survive best in acidic, low nutrient conditions but we are experiencing rising ammonia levels in the local atmosphere and that is both neutralising and adding nutrients to the moss as it rains, further impeding the growth of Sphagnum and other bog plants. However, the signs are looking good for our wilderness area; in the areas where bunding was carried out last year there are already signs of returning wildlife typical of wetter moss, including Sphagnum moss itself and species such as dragonflies, Curlew and Lapwing.



Photo: Established bund showing water retention

WRPC are very grateful for the time and effort Natural England's Manor House team put in to explain everything in such detail. For further information on the Wem Moss BogLIFE project and the other mosses in the National Nature Reserve, visit <https://bit.ly/2p1d5j1>

Wem Town and Wem Rural Round Up

Climate Emergency Wem Area Forum

Following a very successful open meeting held at the Butler Sports Centre on 16 October when over 70 people attended to hear presentations from the Town Council, Thomas Adams students and others. It was agreed a follow up meeting would be held in November to look at how to tackle climate change at a local level. If you would like to be involved or added to the mailing list please contact the Wem Town Council Clerk: infor@wem.gov.uk or 01939 232733.

VE Day May 2020 Commemoration and Celebrations

Next year will commemorate and celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. A further meeting to discuss arrangements to agree Wem area's tribute is being held on 18 November at 7pm at the Roden Suite, Edinburgh House. You are very welcome to attend.

Wem Christmas Lights & Festival Friday 6 December

This year's event will be on a Victorian theme. The evening includes: shops open late, street stalls, craft stalls, festive music, lantern parade, Wem Rotary Santa and sleigh, Shrewsbury's Town Crier, reindeer with sleigh, Wem Snow Queen, Mayor and Mayoress of Wem and a prize draw. Light switch on by comedian Greg Davies. See you there from 5pm!!



Wem Rural Parish Council

www.wemrural-pc.gov.uk
www.facebook.com/wemruralPC

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
3 December 2019

Tuesday
7 January 2020

Tuesday
4 February 2020

Tuesday
3 March 2020

PARISH COUNCILLORS

12 Councillors represent the 3 wards

EDSTASTON

Liz Vernon	01939 234896	The Park, Edstaston, Wem, SY4 5RF
Ruth Williams	01939 233389	Pool Cottage, Poolhead, Wem SY4 5QY
Vacancy		
Huw Edwards	07834 252412	Bank House Farm, Paddol Green, Wem, SY4 5QZ
Pete Slack	01939 236990	Fairview, 7 Paddol Green, Wem, SY4 5QZ

NEWTOWN

Julia Goode	07971 102569	3 Oakhurst Villas, Newtown, SY4 5NT
Stella Whyte	01948 710302	Grange Villa, Northwood, Wem, SY4 5NP

RODEN

Peter Broomhall	01939 232573	3 Swains Close, Wem, SY4 5NZ
Peter Marsh	01939 232498	Aston Hall, Wem, SY4 5JQ
Vacancy		
Len Staines	01939 234415	The Hawthorns, Barkers Green, Wem, SY4 5JW
Tim Wilton-Morgan	01939 235703	Palms Hill House, Palms Hill, Wem, SY4 5PQ

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. The Parish Council occasionally holds Extraordinary Meetings to consider planning applications when the time stipulated for response to Shropshire Council (31 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.



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