



Rural Review

The Newsletter of Wem Rural Parish Council
Issue 32 Autumn 2020

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REGISTRATION ANNUAL
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Rural Review

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WELCOME....

Comments such as 'Aren't we so lucky?!' are too many to count. Indeed, Wem Rural has had a lovely summer and Nature's Store has been very kind. There seemed to be a brief respite when we were able to expand our social bubbles and we have all adapted to social distancing, sanitizing and face masks. Unfortunately, we are now reducing social circulation again to stay safe and try to avoid local restrictions. It is disconcerting to hear of cases in nearby areas and some people are finding it tough. Our local schools are doing a wonderful job - the children have commenced their learning and feel more secure seeing their teachers and friends again, even if their environment is different. Retail and hospitality businesses continue to suffer so don't forget to support them. The Council understands there will be a pop-up farm shop on Sunday 1st November, 11am - 2pm at The Nest Cafe in Wem under the banner 'Cuckoos@The Nest'. BUY LOCAL!

Walkers and cyclists are still visiting our area. As a cyclist myself, I am always relieved when hedges are cut. I have invested in new high visibility clothing to ensure motorists see me on the narrow lanes. BE SEEN! I do try to give people a wave or shout a 'Hello'. As I am writing today, I have travelled roads in Northwood and Edstaston and experienced torrential rain and floods across the roads. It is often difficult to judge how deep floods might be, so drivers need to be cautious. Everyone needs to take care as our roads get wetter and possibly muddy. I know farmers and contractors are always trying to work with the weather, or fighting it!! The maize harvest is approaching and it will be helpful to all if the mud is removed from the roads as soon as possible. We would encourage farmers and contractors to keep the lanes clear, at the very least, at the end of each day.

Last year Wem Rural Parish Council had a big push to distribute Smart Water to identify our valuables. You will soon notice new signs 'We Don't Buy Crime!' These are being erected on the routes entering our three wards, Edstaston, Newtown and Roden.

When I wrote the introduction to the last Rural Review, Wem Rural Parish Councillors had not been able to meet. Like many other organisations, we are now meeting via Zoom. It was daunting at first but we have adapted! ADAPT AND THRIVE!

Liz Vernon,
Chair, Wem Rural Parish Council

Electoral Registration Annual Canvass 2020

Message from the Elections Team, Shropshire Council:

It's that time of year again when residents living in the Shropshire Council area will receive a communication either by email or in paper format asking them to check and update information that appears on the electoral register for their address. The form ensures that Shropshire Council can keep the electoral register up-to-date and identify any residents who are not registered so that they can be encouraged to do so.

If you're not currently registered, your name will not appear in the messages Shropshire Council send. If you need to register, the easiest way is online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote, or the Council will send you information explaining how to do this in the post.

Community Round Up

Northwood Community Speed Watch

We reported last edition that the Community Speed Watch team were taking a break due to COVID-19. We are pleased to report this edition that they are back in action. The Group are always looking out for new recruits. If you are interested, in the first instance please contact the Clerk.

How does it work?

At specified safe locations, volunteers monitor the speed of passing vehicles with a hand-held speed detection device. Offending vehicles' details are recorded on a log sheet, including the names and signatures of the volunteers witnessing the offence and other key information. The aim is NOT to catch as many speeding drivers as possible. It aims to encourage motorists to drive at a safe and appropriate speed, reduce speed in areas of concern, re-educate drivers about the dangers of speeding and address concerns from local residents about cars speeding through their communities.

Community Grants

Every year the Parish Council puts aside an amount of funds to help local community groups. There are agreed criteria and an application form which can be obtained from the Clerk. Completed applications must be submitted by 20 November and will be considered at the December Parish Council meeting.

All applications will be considered on their individual merits.

what3words

Just over 80% of services in the UK now use what3words, but not everyone knows how to use it. All you need to do is download the what3words app on your phone in case you need to call 999.

You can find a full list of those services that accept what3words here: <https://what3words.com/news/emergency/three-words-for-a-faster-emergency-response>.

Wem Area Climate Forum Update

As was reported in the previous Rural Review, under all the current circumstances, the group has had to lower its sights on what can be achieved in comparison with the ideas put forward at the beginning of the year at public meetings.

However, some actions/events are taking place, based around trying to encourage more uptake of local produce and reducing food miles, and with developing a more pleasant and healthy environment.

Climate Forum members provided a stall at the annual event, the WEM HARVEST MARKET, on Saturday 26 September 9-1. In Wem Town Hall, Jubilee Square, and Wem Youth Club, with the emphasis on local produce. This proved to be very successful, at least one stall sold out to cries of "who's eaten all the pies?!" The Forum is looking to contribute to other similar events and initiatives in the future.

The other main Forum activity is to work on surveying footpaths in and around Wem, working towards improving our environment and its consequences in enhancing well-being and reducing carbon emissions, the latter by also identifying places where trees can be conserved or planted.

Members are getting on with investigating public footpaths in and around Wem and a P3 GROUP is being formed. Areas are being identified to be shared between different members. Initially footpaths are being checked for footpath signs, and for the state of the path and any overgrown sections. Wem area residents are very welcome to volunteer.

A reminder that P3 is the Parish Paths Partnership, which is the Outdoor Partnerships scheme run by Shropshire Council in conjunction with local groups of volunteers. If anyone is interested in becoming involved in this, or any other aspect of the Forum, please contact the Climate Forum leader, Malcolm Adkins at mal10@mac.com, 07979 784967.

Information about P3 can be found on <http://www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk/volunteering-outdoors/parish-paths-partnership-and-wardens/>

Although outdoor events such as footpath surveys are still possible, these are subject to Covid rules in place at the time of the event.

Free Energy Advice

The Keep Shropshire Warm service continues to support residents across Shropshire, by offering free and impartial support to residents. Many of us will be spending more time at home as autumn and winter approaches – and using more energy at the same time!

If you're struggling or worried about higher bills or feel like you may struggle to pay your energy bills due to a change in your circumstances – the Keep Shropshire Warm team could help. They can check bills and tariffs, speak to suppliers on your behalf and help access grants and discounts.

Call Keep Shropshire Warm on **0800 112 3743** or email advice@mea.org.uk. The scheme is backed by Shropshire Council and is managed by Shrewsbury based energy charity, Marches Energy Agency.

Broadband in Wem Rural

Extra funding to help rural premises benefit from a faster broadband connection is now available in Shropshire. The Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme is part of the Government's the strategic objective of increasing gigabit-capable coverage across the UK.

Shropshire Council has made up to £1 million of additional funding available to 'top-up' the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme, in partnership with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

For homes, the maximum funding per voucher will be £4,000, thanks to an extra £2,500 per voucher from Shropshire Council. Eligible businesses can receive an additional £3,500, bringing the maximum funding per voucher to £7,000. To qualify for the scheme, residents/businesses must be located in a rural area and be unable to get broadband speeds of 100Mbps.

The Parish Council has registered as a Community Leader with Openreach and will coordinate the application. If you would like to apply for a voucher, please email your name, address and postcode to the Clerk, The more people join in the Community Partnership the greater the chance of covering the fixed costs

A few Q&As

Q. What happens if it costs more than the value of the voucher to provide premises with a gigabit-capable broadband connection?

A. Any additional cost must be covered by the applicants and/or the broadband infrastructure supplier.

Q. Can I apply as a single premise (residential or business)?

A. No. Although, in this instance, we'd urge you to contact Connecting Shropshire for a discussion for us to explore potential solutions.

Q. Why do groups of 2 or more premises need to be included in a group scheme?

A. This stipulation has been set by DCMS in order to make the work better value for money. The more premises covered in the scheme, the more chance that the fixed costs can be covered by the value of the voucher.

Q. When does the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme end?

A. March 2021. All vouchers must be applied for by 31 March 2021, after which date the supplier have up to 12 months to provide the connection to the applicants.

Q. What happens when the money allocated by Shropshire Council to top-up the scheme runs out?

A. The top-up funding will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Having said that, it's unlikely that the funding will be used up before the current scheme closes to application on 31 March 2021.

Q. Are there any other Top-up schemes already live?

A. Yes, there are several already live and around 10 more due to go live in September 2020.

Once the Council has submitted all the addresses Openreach will confirm the scope of the project, work through some initial checks to provide a ballpark cost for providing a new fibre infrastructure for the community so we can decide whether it is possible to proceed to the next step. This may take up to 3 weeks from submission.

If you are interested in joining the Community Fibre Project please contact the Clerk by 31 October — don't delay!

A new grant to help Shropshire residents affected by COVID-19

Shropshire Council has been allocated a 'Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies' to support people who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to COVID-19.

If someone you know finds it difficult to pay for some of their essential costs due to COVID-19, or you know someone who has become homeless or is concerned about losing their home, they can call Shropshire Council us on 0345 678 9078. Shropshire Council will go through an initial application with them to establish their circumstances and will advise them of any other information they need to provide for the Council to consider their application. The request will then be passed to a specialist adviser who will discuss the application with them. When the Council has all the information it needs, a decision will be made on whether an award can be made and they will advise the person how the award will be made.

Shropshire Council is able to accept applications with immediate effect. Please note that this is limited funding and once spent, the Council will no longer be able to provide assistance from this grant funding so please don't delay.

If you have any queries regarding this grant, please contact Shropshire Council on 0345 678 9078.

Further information is available on Gov.UK



HM Government



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

NEWTOWN



EDSTASTON

RODEN

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

PARISH COUNCILLORS

12 Councillors represent the 3 wards

EDSTASTON

Huw Edwards	07834 252412	Bank House Farm, Paddol Green, Wem, SY4 5QZ
Glynis Nicholls	01939 234371	Pool Head Farm, Pool Head, Wem, SY4 5QY
Pete Slack	01939 236990	Fairview, 7 Paddol Green, Wem, SY4 5QZ
Liz Vernon	01939 234896	The Park, Edstaston, Wem, SY4 5RF
Ruth Williams	01939 233389	Pool Cottage, Pool Head, Wem SY4 5QY

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

Covid-19 Helpline and on-line information

For non-medical support and enquires call direct Covid-19 Helpline 0345 6789028 or email customerfirst@shropshire.gov.uk

On the Shropshire Council website, there is a wide range of information available to help you support the people in your neighbourhoods and beyond. Find the full range of information through this link: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/information-for-the-public/>

M E E T I N G S

The Parish Council normally meet on the first Tuesday of the month . Please refer to the Council's website.

Agendas for all meetings are available on the website 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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LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD