



# Rural Review

The Newsletter of Wem Rural Parish Council  
Issue 35 Autumn 2021

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## Rural Review

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## WELCOME....

to the latest issue of Rural Review. It's hard to believe that Autumn is upon us and I don't know where the time has gone. Being a local councilor is an extremely rewarding, interesting and exciting opportunity and over the last few months we have all been very busy working to improve and enhance the local community.

Wem Rural Parish Council is a Quality Gold standard council and that reflects in the projects we have been working on and those detailed in our action plan. We have allocated community grants to a number of local initiatives, including Newtown NCRA., and the parish council is also looking at investigating the need for new facilities locally to promote social interaction, sport and leisure.

Another really exciting initiative that the parish council has started has been in relation to improving further the Broadband and Mobile Phone infrastructure. We are part of a working group looking to bring superfast fibre broadband to more areas in our rural community. We are doing this by working with Connecting Shropshire, Openreach and Airband exploring the feasibility of a Gigabit Community Project. After a very slow start, Openreach has identified potential areas and are now in the process of assessing the cost of installation, ready for the parish council to review.

We have also been working very closely with the Highways department at Shropshire Council and our clerk is part of a very active working group to address the concerns residents have expressed about the state of the roads across the Shropshire Council area. It is possible the parish will be chosen to trial some new approaches to highway maintenance. Road safety has also been an issue raised by local residents and as a parish council we have undertaken surveys of the type and volume of traffic in the Quina Brook area and are about to do something similar along Ossage Lane.

Concerns expressed about rural crime are being actively pursued by the parish council and we are working in conjunction with the police and other services to promote the various "Alert" & "Watch" services and the Police and Communities Together (PACT) initiative. Our local police are invited to monthly council meetings and we are due to meet with West Mercia's Police and Crime Commissioner and the area inspector to discuss local issues.

We are also extremely proud to be part of the Wem Economic Forum and the Wem Area Climate Forum, working with local residents and businesses to reduce the local impact of climate change.

We have some councilor vacancies at the present and I hope the brief projects outlined above show the very real difference being a local councilor can make. Having achieved Quality Gold standard reflects the hard work and dedication our clerk and the rest of the councilors have made over many months whilst contending with local, county, country and global challenges. If you think you may be interested in such a role and make a difference then please contact our parish clerk or myself.

**Ruth Williams,**  
**Chairperson,**  
**Wem Rural Parish Council**



## Community Transport Post-Covid: North Salop Wheelers



Following the enforced stoppage of community transport services under Covid restrictions, both Phoebe Ashton and John Harrison - the guiding lights of North Salop Wheelers which they co-founded some eighteen years ago - have decided it is a good moment for them to retire. Community transport in the North Shropshire area is thus in urgent need of new energies. In September, Shropshire Councillor, Edward Towers, convened in Wem a meeting of interested parties which in turn instigated a Covid-delayed NSW AGM in early October. A new organising committee was formed: Cllr Andrew Everett and Dr Robin Nelson were voted in as new Chair and Secretary respectively, and Phoebe Ashton and Caroline Turver agreed to continue serving for an interim period, as Treasurer and Facebook co-ordinator respectively. Four of the passenger representatives were also confirmed as Committee members: Mavis Hards (Ightfield); Audrey Hardwick (Prees); Andy Jones (Whitchurch) Janet Nowill (Coton). A strong feeling was expressed at both meetings that there is now - and will be in future - a need for community transport in the North Shropshire area.

The committee is mandated in the first instance to revive and sustain the current provision of North Salop Wheelers, in particular the regular market services to Market Drayton (Wed); Wem (Thurs) and Whitchurch (Friday). It aims also to sustain its contribution to Shropshire's Voluntary Car Service which provides transport for people with special requirements. Working with Shropshire Council Community Transport Services and the Shropshire Community Transport Consortium amongst other partners, the Committee is also mandated modestly to build the service in line with the government's "Bus Back Better" national bus strategy. For example, Cheswardine Parish Council has expressed a wish to be included. The idea is that volunteer-run community transport services might co-ordinate with an improved, commercially-run, national bus service to make for better provision overall. Shropshire Council recently conducted an online survey about the strategy which received an unusually large response - indicating the level of local concern. The national strategy includes "a rural mobility fund" to which Shropshire Council might bid. So, there is much to be done by many people and organisations in the forthcoming months.

North Salop Wheelers is run largely on a volunteer basis, drawing upon professional services only where necessary to comply with the law and with DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency) regulations and protocols. Particularly at this moment of transition, it would welcome additional volunteers to come forward. Drivers require no formal training though they must be medically fit to drive in accordance with DVLA requirements. Besides drivers, NSW would welcome volunteer assistance with administration (e.g. accountancy/ insurance, publicity), or with advice on logistics, vehicles and their maintenance. If you are interested in registering as a volunteer or expressing a view, please contact Cllr Andy Everett at Wem Town Council in the first instance.

Dr Robin Nelson

## The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations June 2022

In 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, seventy years of service, having acceded to the throne on 6th February 1952 when Her Majesty was 25 years old.

An extended bank holiday, from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June, will provide an opportunity for people to celebrate the historic milestone. For Wem Town and Wem Rural a committee has been set up and will meet regularly to discuss all the events planned. Details at present are as follows:

**Thursday 2 June** – Lighting of the beacon on the Recreational Ground, Wem. Times to be confirmed.

**Friday 3 June** – Specific events for children's groups of all ages. Hopefully finishing with a disco to be held Friday evening in Wem Town Hall subject to their agreement.

**Saturday 4 June** – Party in the Park (Recreational Ground, Wem) afternoon/evening.  
Bring your own Picnic (chairs etc). Musical

entertainment, various stalls, small fairground. Hog Roast, burger bar, licensed bar and other refreshments.

**Sunday 5 June** – Church service at St. Peter & St. Paul's Church, Wem and possible parade along Wem High Street.

There is no budget for these events so funding will need to be raised through donations, grants and sponsorships as had happened previously at the 'successful' Queens Jubilee and Silver Jubilee.

If you would like to donate, or sponsor to help finance the event, please contact Peter Broomhall 07885 837606.

**The next committee meeting is on Tuesday 23 November 2021 at 7.15pm at the Wem Conservative Club, Noble Street, Wem**

Everyone will be welcome. Please come along and give your views and any help with arrangements.



Newtown Community and Recreation Association

## Newtown Community and Recreation Assoc

### Au revoir!

Back in July, Andy Black, Chairman on Newtown Community Recreation Association, presented Andrew Hodson, Headteacher at Newtown School with a decanter to thank him for his unstinting help and support of NCRA.



Andrew has retired from his post after many years. He was an exceptional Headteacher and will be greatly missed. During some turbulent times, Andrew has remained steadfast in his support of the plans NCRA has to extend the car park, in the interests of safety.

NCRA would like to wish Andrew much happiness in the next chapter of his life. We also look forward to working with Ben Crompton, the new Headteacher.

### Newtown Defibrillator



Newtown now proudly boasts a snazzy ex-telephone box, which has been converted to house a defibrillator. It is anticipated that a course on how to use the Defibrillator will be available in the not too distant future.

The contractor has done a first rate job and many local residents have commented on how nice it is to see it has had some much needed TLC.



### NCRA – update

The committee is back in action again. Having achieved so much in regards to the play-park we are regrouping to discuss the next stage of improvements.

NCRA are hoping for many new members to sign up to the 100 Club. With a number of children having left the school, NCRA are keen to get word of the 100 Club to new pupils parents and extended family.

All members of the Association would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to everyone who has so kindly and generously supported this Charity. It is very much appreciated.

## Find out your own CO2e Pawprint

People often ask, Can one person really make a difference to climate change? There is an opinion that if everyone made small changes to their CO2 emissions it would help nationally and subsequently globally.

There are many websites and applications that can help individuals assess their CO2e and one easy application is Pawprint. You are asked to complete a questionnaire and you are given your Pawprint score, an estimate of the CO2e you are generating annually. By completing actions, challenges and creating new habits you can reduce your Pawprint score.

[www.pawprint.eco](http://www.pawprint.eco) and [www.pawprint.eco/pawprint-app](http://www.pawprint.eco/pawprint-app)

## 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 Friday 26 November and will be considered at the December Parish Council meeting.

All applications will be considered on their individual merits.

## Seasonal Reminders

### Flash Flooding

It was so encouraging to see many landowners dig out ditches in the Spring and remove debris following the flooding problems experienced by some last winter.

Check **NOW** before the land gets too wet. Are your ditches clear? Were the roads near you flooded last year? Can you improve the situation before this winter?

### Helping all our Road Users

**Cyclists killed on British roads increased 40% in 2020 (Department for Transport)**

#### What can cyclists do to help?

Cycling has become increasingly popular on the Wem Rural roads in the past two years.

Cyclists (and walkers and horse riders) can wear high visibility clothing. Cyclists can help even further by using flashing lights. Keep ears open for traffic noise.

Black or dark clothing is less easily spotted in the long shadows of tall hedges.

#### What can drivers do to help?

Drivers on our rural roads need to be vigilant and drive so they can stop suddenly. This means reduced speed! Narrow roads and concealed bends need full attention.

#### What can landowners and farmers do?

It is hedge cutting time now (September to March). Are your hedges tall? Are your hedges obstructive? Do they overhang the road? Is there a verge so that a cyclist or a walker or a rider can escape from oncoming vehicles?





Progress on the Edstaston Village Hall extension project has felt frustratingly slow at times, mostly due to the effects of the pandemic. However, in July the gable window and bifold doors were finally installed and the boarding removed between the main hall and the extension - what a transformation! The light absolutely floods in!

In August the floor was levelled, September saw the plastering finished and the community was able to get painting. The new kitchen arrives this week and we're ready for flooring and the long-awaited automatic entrance door should be installed within the next two weeks. Work on the patio and outdoor space is ongoing.

Edstaston Village Hall has continued to be used throughout the building work (following the government's Covid guidelines). Committee members and helpers have taken on the role of cleaning and tidying - we are so lucky to have such a dedicated community! A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who has helped.

For more information on this project please follow on our Facebook page @edstastonvillagehall or our website [www.edstaston.org.uk](http://www.edstaston.org.uk).



## Buy-a-leaf

RAISING FUNDS  
FOR EDSTASTON  
VILLAGE HALL



Instead of a traditional Buy-a-Brick fundraiser, we have a unique opportunity for the community to BUY-A-LEAF to celebrate Edstaston Village Hall, the hard work that has already gone into this project and its future in our lovely community.

As you can see from the photographs the extension features a high vaulted ceiling with views across the fields and deserves a stunning statement chandelier. We were surprised to find that Wem Rural has its very own Contemporary Chandelier Company in Tilley! Their iconic installations can be found around the world and owner/designer Iestyn Davies has generously given us a way to afford a unique "FALLING LEAVES CHANDELIER" for our tiny budget. He will supply all the hand-crafted leaves and the rest of the components to assemble the chandelier and with his expert tuition we will put it all together!

Please support this community project by making a donation to the Edstaston Village Hall Extension Project.

We are asking for a donation of £20 per leaf. BY CASH OR CHEQUE (Edstaston Village Hall) to Anna Thomas, Treasurer Edstaston Village Hall, Field House Edstaston SY4 5RF or by BACS to Edstaston Village Hall Account 67187856 Sort code 089299 with your name and LEAF as a reference.





## More Kissing in Wem Rural!

You may recall that a while ago a kissing gate was installed at the end of Weir Lane, to the footpath that runs alongside the River Roden. We are pleased to report that the recently formed Parish Paths Partnership (P3) group for Wem Area, working with Shropshire Council's Outdoor Partnership Service, have installed not one, but two, more gates nearby!

The gates are located from a short distance down Weir Lane, providing easy access to the footpath across pastureland, leading to the sharp corner by properties in Barkers Green. As such the path provides a short cut which also avoids a stretch of the road which is difficult for pedestrians.



### Wem Area P3 Group

Wem Area P3 Group is delighted that these gates are the very first ones they have been involved in installing since their recent formation. Thanks to local residents for raising the need for new gates, to the landowner for allowing access to the land, and to the Outdoor Partnership Service for providing the gates, and labour along with the P3 Group.

The Wem Area P3 group has been revived recently as an initiative of the Wem Area Climate Forum, which hopes to see footpaths not only maintaining health and wellbeing, but becoming corridors for wildlife and biodiversity in our highly cultivated landscape.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/359156252584793/?ref=share>



If you would like to volunteer with the group, or to report a path in need of improvement, organisers Edwin Hargraves and John Dinsdale can be contacted via the Wem Town Council website.

Find out more about Wem Area Climate Forum:  
<https://wemclimateforum.wixsite.com/wac>



# VCH Shropshire



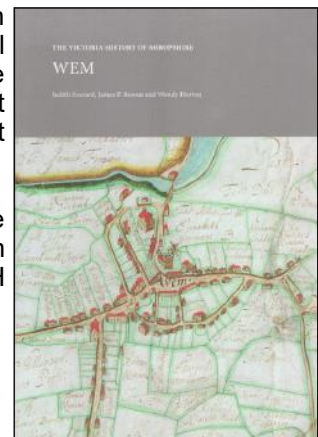
Many readers will have been at the launch at the end of 2019 of our history of Wem, and they will have heard us say that that our work on the history of the townships of Wem Rural was well advanced. Of course none of us envisaged that a new disease would sweep the world in the following months. The disruption to our work is of no great consequence compared to the suffering that COVID has caused but the closure of libraries and archives forced us to cease work. We are delighted to announce that the draft histories of eight of the Wem townships (Aston, Horton, Lowe and Ditches, Newtown, Northwood, Sleaf, Tilley and Wolverley) together with an introduction are now available to read or download on our website. We say drafts because they lack illustrations and maps. And we welcome your comments and corrections. Edstaston and Coton, Lacon and Saulton remain to be done.

Given that all but one of these townships lacked a previous history, I hope you will agree that this represents a prodigious effort by Dr Judith Everard. Wendy Horton contributed the accounts of buildings.

Our focus has switched from Wem for the time being but we hope to return in the not too distant future to complete our work. We are slowly gathering material on Edstaston at the moment. And we will like to do Whixall as well to complete this corner of the county. As we receive no public funding, we need the support of our readers. If you have profited from reading the Wem history or the draft text, we hope that you will consider making a donation to advance our work.

For the moment, do enjoy the texts we have published; do let us have corrections and amendments. And if you haven't already bought the Wem history, copies are available in the Wem bookshop or direct from VCH Shropshire through our website.

Richard Hoyle  
Chair, VCH Shropshire  
[www.vchshropshire.org](http://www.vchshropshire.org)



## New Shropshire Local Mobile service brings support closer to rural communities

Following the successful launch of Shropshire Local Ludlow, Shropshire Local is now adding a mobile service to rural communities across the county. Shropshire Local Mobile utilises some of the existing mobile library bus routes and will stop at locations across rural Shropshire. The trial scheme plans to extend to more locations in the near future and follows the opening of the Shropshire Local Ludlow.

The mobile service will provide access to more remote and rural parts of the county without libraries or similar facilities, where residents may otherwise struggle to connect to council services. Shropshire Local Mobile aim to make the council more accessible to people, and make it easier for those in rural communities to find out more about local support services and how best to access them.

Friendly and experienced team members will be on hand to provide a listening ear, advice and information to residents. Staff will talk to people about how people can access services from the council and other organisations, and can also offer advice on how to access these online.



## Northwood Community Speed Watch

After a break enforced by Covid-19, the Northwood Community Speed Watch team are back in action. They are looking for more volunteers — do you live in or near Northwood and could help?

### How does Community Speed Watch work?

At agreed, safe locations, volunteers monitor the speed of passing vehicles with a hand-held speed detection device. Vehicles driving in excess of the speed limit are recorded on a log sheet and are passed to the Police. The aim is NOT to catch as many speeding drivers as possible but to encourage motorists to drive at a safe and appropriate speed.

If you are interested in helping Northwood Community Speed Watch Group please contact the Clerk. Contact details are on the back page.

## WRPC Budget 2022/23

Parish councils are responsible for managing their own budgets which is financed through the precept and collected as part of your Council Tax. The Parish Council will be discussing the Budget for financial year 2022/23 over the next couple of months with the budget and precept being agreed at the January meeting.

Do you have an opinion on what services or projects the Parish Council should be providing?

What other areas should the Parish Council should be considering?

Please pass your comments and / or suggestions to your local ward councillor or the clerk. We are keen to reflect the community's wishes.

## Defibrillators in Wem Rural

The Parish Council has installed 4 defibrillators in the parish and we are often asked how they are looked after. The Council funded them with a grant from the National Lottery and works in partnership with Community Heartbeat Trust (CHT) with the on-going management. CHT is a charity whose aims are to help and support communities in the correct provision of defibrillators, but in sustainable, resilient and governance led manner. The defibrillators are located at Edstaston Village Hall, The Bull and Dog at Coton, Newtown telephone kiosk, and The Horse and Jockey at Northwood.

CHT ensured the Council obtained the correct defibrillator equipment for its location and task and conforms to the various legislative requirements, such as disability laws. They also review and ensure the storage cabinets meet the right requirements for the need, this means storage that will minimise condensation, is heated with the right type of heater, conforms to health and safety, as well as electrical safety requirements, and meets disability recommendations. Suitable cabinets are branded as meeting the 'ShockBox' standard.

CHT were the originators of the use of telephone kiosks for defibrillator use and now have around 1,000 sites using kiosks. They are the partner organisation to BT and the only approved installer from BT (despite what some organisations claim).



All defibrillators are registered onto the WebNos Governance system which ensures the local ambulance service is aware of the location and status.

There are a number of videos on the CHT website which explains their work, basic life support and how to use a defibrillator.

[www.communityheartbeat.org.uk/tv](http://www.communityheartbeat.org.uk/tv)



## Replacement of railway bridge Mill Street, Wem



Network Rail will be carrying out to replace the railway bridge above Mill Street in Wem later this year. This work will help to ensure reliable journeys for rail passengers and road users for many more years to come.

### When will the work take place?

We will be setting up our site compound in mid-November in the field alongside the railway behind Grange Park Hawk Plant Limited, with the bulk of the work being carried out on weekends and during the night time in December, and follow up work in early January 2022.

The core work will be carried out **from 11pm on Friday 24 December to 4am on Wednesday 29 December** when our staff will be working 24 hours a day, as no trains will be running.

### Mill Street – Temporary road closure

For safety reasons, Network Rail will need to temporarily close the section of Mill Street underneath the rail bridge from Saturday 4 to Wednesday 29 December. Working with Shropshire Council, there will be a fully signposted diversionary route in place along the B5063/Shawbury Road, A49 and B5065/Soulton Road.

During the core work (from 11pm on Friday 24 December to 4am on Wednesday 29 December), in addition to the road closure underneath the bridge on Mill Street, there will be a single lane closure and traffic lights in place at the roundabout between the B4576 and the B5063 as well as a full road closure of the roundabout for 15 minutes on Sunday 26 December, whilst we lift the new bridge into place.

Network Rail will maintain pedestrian access underneath the bridge as much as possible while they are not working on it.

### Changes to rail services

Buses will replace trains for passengers between Shrewsbury and Crewe on 27 and 28 December. Please see [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) for more information.

### Contact us

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions or concerns about the work taking place, please call our 24-hour National Helpline on: 03457 11 41 41 or visit [www.networkrail.co.uk/contactus](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/contactus).

Tamison Painter  
Community Relations Manager  
Network Rail Wales and Borders

## Shropshire Rural Communities Charity

Shropshire Rural Communities Charity (RCC) is committed to making life better for people. Below are two services they offer to help with this winter's challenges

### Bulk oil buying scheme

The scheme started in September 2011 and is now the largest scheme in Shropshire.

With a support network of 30 local volunteer coordinators RCC make ordering oil hassle free and better value for money. Once a month they collate oil orders from right across Shropshire on a specified date. They then contact the oil companies to ask for their best price for a bulk order (typically 100,000 litres a month).

All you need to do is join, send RCC an order then sit back and wait for the price and supplier info. You will then pay the supplier direct following your oil delivery.

### Free energy saving advice

Energy price hikes and a rise in the energy price cap mean that households are more at risk of not being able to heat their homes this winter.

As part of the Big Energy Saving Network, RCC's energy champion Nickie Long is offering free and impartial advice via a pre-booked telephone or Zoom call to anyone who is looking to save money on their energy bills or who is generally struggling to heat their home.

RCC can help with:

- ♦ hints and tips on how to save energy in your home, and
- ♦ where you can access support you may be entitled

to, such as the Warm Home Discount scheme, Priority Services Register and The Green Homes Grant.

If you are interested in booking a free advice session with Nickie, contact RCC using their contact form on the website and they will be in touch within three working days to arrange a convenient time. [www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk/individuals/free-energy-saving-advice](http://www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk/individuals/free-energy-saving-advice)

You will also receive a free energy pack with information toolkit to help keep your home warm this winter.

If you have any queries or questions, please call RCC on 01743 360641.



NEW TOWN



ED STASTON

RODEN

# Wem Rural Parish Council

[www.wemrural-pc.gov.uk](http://www.wemrural-pc.gov.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/wemruralPC](https://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](mailto:clerk@wemrural-pc.gov.uk)

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## PARISH COUNCILLORS

12 Councillors represent the 3 wards

### EDSTASTON

Huw Edwards	07834 252412	Bank House Farm, Paddol Green, Wem, SY4 5QZ
Vacancy		
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 231565	Tilleycroft, 77 Roden Grove, Wem, SY4 5HJ
Peter Marsh	01939 232498	Aston Hall, Wem, SY4 5JQ
Vacancy		
Len Staines	01939 234415	The Hawthorns, Barkers Green, Wem, SY4 5JW
Vacancy		

## M E E T I N G S

The Parish Council normally meet on the first Tuesday of the month at Edstaston Village Hall at 7pm . 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