



Wem Rural Parish Council

Business Plan 2021 – 2025

The Parish was formed in 1900 when the original large Wem Parish was divided into two, separating the now Wem Rural Parish from the more urban Wem Town Parish which lies at its centre. The parish of Wem Rural consists of several small hamlets joined together by a network of mostly minor roads, which meander their way through the district.

There are three 'Wards' (or districts) that make up Wem Rural Parish:

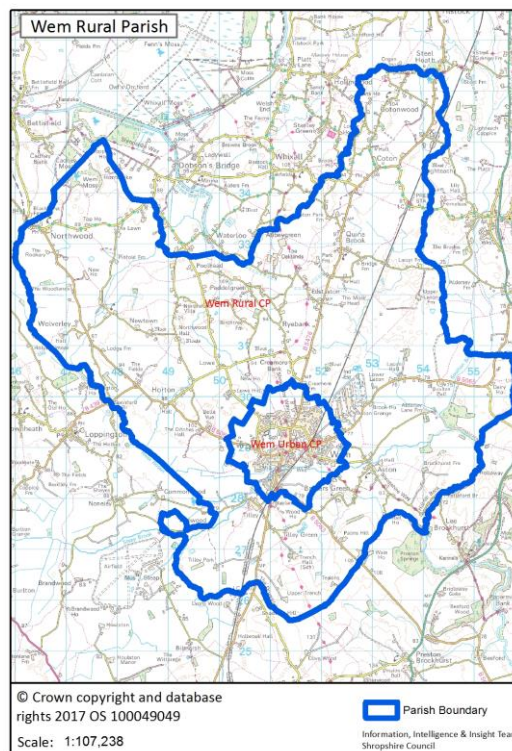
Edstaston Ward to the north and north east of Wem town – containing the hamlets of Coton, Cottonwood, Creamore Bank, Edstaston, Paddolgreen, Quina Brook and Ryebank.

Newtown Ward to the north and north west of Wem town – containing the hamlets of Newtown, Northwood, Poolhead and Wolverley.

Roden Ward to the west, south and east of Wem town – containing the hamlets of Aston, Barkers Green, Horton, Lacon, Lowe, Palms Hill, Tilley and Trench.

This Business Plan builds on the Community Plan 2019 and the on-going requirements for maintenance of Parish infrastructure and assets.

This Business Plan adopted by the Parish Council at its meeting on 6 July 2021 will allow the Parish Council to make key decisions with its resources to achieve its objective to improve the quality of life of Parish residents.



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Introduction

What is a Council Business Plan?

It is a statement of the Council's vision for the Parish, its **purpose, values, objectives** and **key priorities**.

It is not intended to be a traditional 'Parish Plan' which sets out aims and ambitions that are delivered by the community and partners as a whole. Rather it is a document that sets out what Wem Rural Parish Council itself can achieve, either directly or by trying to increase its influence on the relevant delivery body, such as Shropshire Council or West Mercia Police.

The aim of the Business Plan is to give Wem Rural Parish residents a clear understanding of what the Parish Council is trying to achieve and how it intends to deliver this. It details what the Parish Council intends to focus on over the next four years. The Business Plan will be used each year to plan activities and set the budget for the coming year.

Why has the Parish Council decided to produce a Business Plan?

Having an agreed strategy will provide a framework for the Parish Council to work within, enabling it to operate in a more consistent and co-ordinated way. The on-going development of the Business Plan will be based on community engagement and involvement which will allow the Parish Council will become more confident and proactive in its decision-making.

At the same time, the Business Plan will help the local community to have a better understanding of what the Parish Council does and also to clarify what it doesn't do; in other words, to explain what issues fall under the responsibility of other delivery bodies such as Shropshire Council, National Health Service or the West Mercia Police.

It is a 'live' document which the Parish Council will update regularly, enabling it to track and monitor its progress against the key priorities. Because the Business Plan will be publicly available, residents will also be able to monitor progress.

Community Involvement in the Business Plan process

To ensure that the Business Plan truly represents the Parish's best interests, the Parish Council will invite the local community to participate in its development. While there has been similar consultation in the Parish in the past this was felt to be out of date for the purpose of on-going development a Parish Council Business Plan.

Monitoring the Business Plan

Evaluating progress against the list of activities which make up the 'Action Plan' will take place at Parish Council meetings. It will consider the Business Plan themes and will seek to understand the progress made, where further work is needed and if there are any blockages to progress. The whole Business Plan will be reviewed annually and updated to keep the document relevant and up-to-date.

The Business Plan will be available on the Council website.

Our Business Plan will continue to be the main way of telling you what we are doing to meet the needs of the community. It's a two-way conversation. Please tell us what you think about it. We welcome your comments. If you require any further information that would help you understand what we are trying to achieve, please let us know. We can also provide additional information on the issues raised in the Plan.

It is our intention to review the Business Plan regularly, publish progress and make any changes considered necessary as a result.

Theme 1 Parish Council Governance

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED ¹
To improve communication between the Parish Council and residents and businesses	1.1 Continue to review and improve website	On-going	
	1.2 Continue with a Parish newsletter	On-going	Yes
	1.3 Review use of social media	On-going	
	1.4 Maintain links with local press	On-going	
	1.5 Summary of meeting decisions / initiatives on website	On-going	
	1.6 Continue with an Annual Report	Annually	Yes
	1.7 Consider Councillor Surgeries	Medium term	Possible
To improve effectiveness of Parish Council	2.1 Review training needs of both Councillors and Clerk annually	Annually	Yes
	2.2 Maintain Local Council Awards Scheme standards.	On-going	
	2.3 Carry out annual performance review of Council and Clerk	Council 2 yearly Clerk annually	
To ensure Council delivers value for money	3.1 Regular review of expenditure against Budget	On-going	
	3.2 Review of ways of working	2 yearly	
To increase influence / coordination in matters that impact on Parish	4.1 Invite representatives of outside agencies to address the Council on key matters of interest (both to Council meetings and round table discussions)	On-going	
	4.2 Appoint representatives to appropriate external agencies and committees	On-going	
	4.3 Attend relevant conferences and meetings	On-going	Yes
To ensure Council's assets are adequately maintained	5.1 Produce and action maintenance plan.	Medium term	Yes
To increase impact of Community Grant Scheme	6.1 Continue to fund Community Grant Scheme	Annually	Yes
	6.2 Increase active promotion of the Community Grant Scheme.	Short term	
	6.3 Review impact of Grants provided	Annually	

¹ Specific Budget Headings not Clerk's time
WRPC Business Plan 2021 – 2025 (0422)

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED ¹
	and review Policy		

Theme 2 Leisure and Community

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To support and work with Edstaston Village Hall Management Committee regarding the maintenance and development of facilities for the benefit of parishioners.	1.1 Work with Edstaston Village Hall Management Committee to apply for grants to upgrade building.	On-going	
	1.2 Ensure the Committee provides feedback and identify where Council assistance could be used.	On-going	
To investigate need for new facilities to promote social interaction, sport and leisure.	2.1 Consult with the community to identify any evidence of demand and interest and pursued if supported.	Medium term	Possible
	2.2 Investigate the need of permanent playing areas which are open to all.	Short Term	Possible
	2.3 Install seating/picnic tables at 'stopping off' points for walkers and visitors.	Long term	Yes
To support existing community groups and work with existing communities and new housing developments to become part of the same 'community'.	3.1 Work with Shropshire Council, community groups and other bodies to promote activities.	On-going	
To consult with the community to identify local needs and views which can be addressed by constructive council action.	4.1 Consult and engage with the community paying particular attention to the diversity of the community.	On-going	
To ensure Broadband and Mobile Phone infrastructure is of a level to enable the community to fully access these services.	5.1 Lobby Shropshire Council and other bodies to ensure all avenues to improve services are investigated and actioned.	On-going	

Theme 3 Parish Appearance, Environment, Public Services and Safety

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To keep roads and lanes clean for the enjoyment of parishioners and visitors.	1.1 Signpost reporting of problem areas of dog fouling to Dog Warden.	On-going	
	1.2 Encourage parishioners to report incidents of littering and fly-tipping to Shropshire Council	On-going	
	1.3 Publicise enforcement penalties	On-going	

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
	1.4 Work with community groups to carry out litter picks.	On-going	
To understand, celebrate and protect the local landscape and have a say in its future management.	2.1 Work with Shropshire Council, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and other bodies to run a series of projects to document the heritage of the area and instigate local management plans	Medium term	Possible
	2.2 Work with partners to investigate whether additional planting of native trees/shrubs would be of benefit to wildlife and preserve the landscape.	Long term	Possible
	2.3 Work with land and property owners to encourage regular maintenance to keep hedges, verges, trees and waterways in good order.	Long term	
	2.4 Pursue links with regional, national and international bodies which are concerned with the natural environment and heritage.	Long term	
To preserve settlements' rural identity.	3.1 Provide signage that depicts the heritage, history and culture of the villages they represent.	Medium term	Yes
To reduce crime and to help parishioners and businesses feel better protected against crime.	4.1 Work in conjunction with the police and other services to promote the various 'Alert' and 'Watch' services, and the Police and Communities Together (PACT) initiative.	Short term	
	4.2 Continue to work with West Mercia Police to share information on local crime and safety issues. This includes inviting the Local Neighbourhood Team to monthly Council meetings when appropriate and forwarding any enquiries and concerns to them.	On-going	
To ensure in a diverse and rural parish, local solutions to emergencies are in place to support county and national plans.	5.1 Support and work with local Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Groups to maintain the presence of this service.	On-going	
To improve local infrastructure.	6.1 Improvements to Prees Station car park	Medium Term	
	6.2 Newtown Car Park	Short Term	Yes
To identify and improve poor land drainage.	7.1 Review areas of concerns from both residents and businesses and work with Shropshire Council to seek	Short Term	

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
	solutions.		
To lead the community on issues related to the environment and climate change	8.1 Work with local groups	Short Term	
	8.2 Investigate ways of reducing carbon emissions on a household basis.	Short Term	

Theme 4 Highways, Transport and Access

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To address highways concerns of residents and businesses and seek solutions.	1.1 Work with Shropshire Council to understand planned highways maintenance works.	On-going	
	1.2 Work with Shropshire Council to identify critical areas for winter gritting.	On-going	
	1.3 Forward any complaints about highways maintenance to Shropshire Council	On-going	
	1.4 Identify redundant and poorly maintained road markings and signage and report to Shropshire Council	Short Term	
	1.5 Identify road safety issues and gather evidence for West Mercia Police PCC grant application	Short Term	
To seek solutions to speeding traffic	2.1 Report specific incidents to the Police and Shropshire Council.	On-going	
	2.2 Review areas of concern in the parish and work with Shropshire Council and Police to seek solutions	On-going	
	2.3 Investigate support to setting up Community Speed Watch groups	Medium term	
	2.4 Investigate/monitor local and county groups (eg Shropshire Council Agricultural Reference Group)	Short Term	
To ensure parishioners do not experience 'rural isolation' and to maximise existing transport arrangements.	3.1 Promote existing Community Transport Schemes.	Short term	Possible
	3.2 Work with Shropshire Council to investigate options available with existing arrangements.	Medium term	
To maintain access to the countryside	4.1 Monitor and support where appropriate Parish Path Partnership Group	On-going	Possible
	4.2 Work with Shropshire Council to ensure full access is maintained.	On-going	

Theme 5 Economy and Tourism

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To improve coordination between Parish businesses and Parish Council.	1.1 Improve liaison with local businesses	Medium term	
	1.2 Encourage and facilitate coordinated initiatives.	Medium term	
	1.3 To work with all public access building owners, businesses and committees to seek the provision of additional public services.	Medium term	
To encourage economic development.	2.1 Work with Shropshire Council Wem Economic Forum, businesses and other partners to encourage development.	Short term	Possible
To consider options for proactively targeting specific new businesses which meet the needs of local residents and support the economic sustainability of the Parish.	3.1 Work with Shropshire Council, businesses and other partners to consider options	Medium term	Possible
To improve information and promotion of local facilities, services, activities and landmarks to encourage local tourism	4.1 Work with local businesses and groups to investigate the possibility of producing a local visitor offer which describes the variety of facilities and services available in the Parish and to consider the best ways to promote.	Long term	Possible
	4.2 Create a series of visitor itineraries relating to local landscape, villages and surrounding countryside.	Medium term	Possible
	4.3 Promote on the Parish website.	Medium term	

Theme 6 Housing and Health

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To continue to comment on all key strategic planning documents and consultations that affect the Parish ensuring the Parish Council's knowledge and understanding of the local context is taken into account in decisions.	1.1 Work with Shropshire Council and other partners to ensure documents and consultations are fully understood.	On-going	
	1.2 Ensure residents are consulted to ensure parishioners views are known.	On-going	
To encourage local residents to participate in any strategic planning consultations which	2.1 Publicise consultation through the Council's communication methods.	On-going	

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
impact the Parish.			
To review the way in which the Parish Council considers and makes responses on planning applications.	3.1 Review training needs of Councillors.	On-going	Possible
	3.2 Ensure responses are robust and clear.	On-going	
To retains quality health and social care services	4.1 Work in partnership with the relevant statutory and voluntary bodies, groups and agencies to ensure health and social care services meet residents' needs and expectations.	On-going	

Budget Implications

ACTION	2022/23		2023/24		2024/2025	
	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE
Theme 1						
1.2 Continue with a Parish newsletter		Newsletter budget of £3,000		Newsletter budget of £3,250		Newsletter budget of £3,500
1.7 Continue with an Annual Report		Within newsletter budget of £3,000		Within newsletter budget of £3,250		Within newsletter budget of £3,500
1.8 Consider Councillor Surgeries				To be assessed		
2.1 Review training needs of both Councillors and Clerk		Training budget of £350		Training budget of £500		Training budget of £700
4.3 Attend relevant conferences and meetings		Within training budget of £350		Within training budget of £500		Within training budget of £700
5.1 Produce and action maintenance plan.				To be assessed		
6.1 Continue to fund Community Grant Scheme		£4,000		£4,500		£5,000
Theme Total		£7,350		£8,250		£9,200
Theme 2						
2.1 Consult with the community to identify any evidence of demand and interest and pursued if supported.				To be assessed		
2.2 Investigate the need of permanent playing areas which are open to all.		To be assessed				

ACTION	2022/23		2023/24		2024/2025	
	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE
2.3 Install seating/picnic tables at 'stopping off' points for walkers and visitors.					To be assessed	
Theme Total						
Theme 3						
2.1 Work with Shropshire Council, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and other bodies to run a series of projects to document the heritage of the area and instigate local management plans			To be assessed			
2.2 Work with partners to investigate whether additional planting of native trees/shrubs would be of benefit to wildlife and preserve the landscape.						To be assessed
3.1 Provide signage that depicts the heritage, history and culture of the villages they represent.			To be assessed			
6.2 Newtown Car Park	To be assessed					
8.2 Investigate ways of reducing carbon emissions on a household basis.		To be assessed				
Theme Total						
Theme 4						
3.1 Promote existing Community Transport Schemes.	To be assessed					
4.1 Monitor and support where appropriate Parish Path Partnership Group	To be assessed					
Theme Total						
Theme 5						
2.1 Work with Shropshire Council Wem Economic Forum, businesses and other partners to encourage development.	To be assessed					
3.1 Work with Shropshire Council, businesses and other partners to consider options			To be assessed			
4.1 Work with local businesses and groups to investigate the possibility of producing a local					To be assessed	

ACTION	2022/23		2023/24		2024/2025	
	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE
visitor offer which describes the variety of facilities and services available in the Parish and to consider the best ways to promote.						
4.2 Create a series of visitor itineraries relating to local landscape, villages and surrounding countryside.			To be assessed			
Theme Total						
Theme 6						
3.1 Review training needs of Councillors.		Within training budget of £350		Within training budget of £400		Within training budget of £550
Theme Total						
Total		£7,350		£8,250		£9,200