



Rural Review

The Newsletter of Wem Rural Parish Council
Issue 38 Autumn 2022 UPDATED

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Rural Review

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WELCOME.... to the Autumn issue of Rural Review.

My name is Huw Edwards and it is my honour to have been elected as Chair of the Wem Rural Parish Council. I've lived near Wem for 7 years having moved here from rural East Sussex. I've served as a parish Councillor for the last 3 years. As you'll see from the articles below, we are always keen to be involved in supporting our community, whether it's the Newtown School Car Park Extension, the expansion of Edstaston Village Hall and many smaller projects besides.

As the first level of government our role is to represent you and use the resources at our disposal to ensure that we do all we can to improve the things that are most important to you. Everyone is welcome to come to our monthly meetings, just to listen or to have your say on a topic that's important to you. Details are available on our website and agendas are posted on local notice boards a week before each meeting. Come along, you might even want to join us. It's not quite as funny as the parish council meetings on the Vicar of Dibley but we try our best. Enjoy this issue, there are interesting articles on a variety of local and national topics.

Huw Edwards
Chair, Wem Rural Parish Council



Hedges, Ditches and Trees!

Last year we reminded you about hedge cutting and ditch cleaning. It is that time of year again! It has been good to see Shropshire Council Drainage Team carrying out work to clear ditches but we know there is more to do. Landowners need to check the ditches too.

We didn't say anything about trees last year! We had some awful storms in Autumn 2021 and trees fell into roads. This is very dangerous and can disrupt travel. It is also very expensive to remove a fallen tree on the road in a hurry. Much better to check your trees now. Are any of your trees looking dangerous? Are they overhanging roads?

WRPC Budget 2023/24

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 2023/24 over the next couple of months with the budget and precept 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. We are keen to reflect the community's wishes.

Newtown Car Park Extension

Work on Phase 1 of the extension to the car park in Newtown began in earnest on the 25th July. You may recall experiencing somewhat of a heatwave over the following few weeks!

Wem Rural Parish Council is delighted to have played such a significant role in aiding this much needed project get off the ground. The Council has supported the need for such an extension since 2010 and we are grateful to the Newtown Community and Recreation Association for all the immense hard work that has gone into this worthy project: Carrie Harper, Jeff Davies, Laura Parry-Jones and the then Chairman, Andy Black, who was project manager, to name just a few members of the Committee.

Andy attended the site on a daily basis and spent a considerable part of the summer holidays slogging away at whatever was called for. There was a fabulous team of volunteers and we also extend our thanks to them: Ben, Mike, George, Simon, Mr Bellingham and Mark Goode.

Along with Edstaston Village Hall, these are assets to the community. The Parish Council looks forward to the implementation of the next phases.

Cllr Julia Goode

Wem Rural Parish Council appointed member NCRA Management Committee



Worried about rising energy bills? You are not alone!

You are not alone if the energy price cap increase announcement on 1 October has left you worried about paying your bills this winter.

Working together with local charities, Shropshire Council and key organisations across the county are supporting residents through these challenging times. In partnership with Marches Energy Agency, Shropshire Council's team, Keep Shropshire Warm, is offering free home MOTs to help people save money on their bills this winter.

As part of the energy MOT, one of the friendly Keep Shropshire Warm advisors will inspect your home for any 'major faults' and 'advisories', check your energy usage and offer solutions before the colder months arrive.

They will also fit free, low-cost energy saving measures and answer any questions you have – big or small. You will then receive a copy of your MOT with suggestions of what to do next. To book a free home energy MOT, call 0800 112 3743.

Visit the cost of living help page – [shropshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help](https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help)

More information

The cost of living advice and support is a partnership between Shropshire Council, Citizens Advice Shropshire, Marches Energy Agency, Shropshire Food Poverty Alliance, Age UK and Shropshire Mental Health Support.

Keep Shropshire Warm is a partnership between Shropshire Council and Marches Energy Agency. The scheme provides free and impartial energy advice to local residents through an advice line, home visits and community events, as well as funding for energy efficiency measures.

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Newtown Church of England Primary School

In September 2021, I was appointed as the new headteacher of Newtown Church of England Primary School. When appointed, I was determined to keep everything that makes the rural school so special but was determined to enhance the education of the children from our local community and surrounding areas.

With the fantastic support of staff, we have worked hard on updating and developing the curriculum whilst looking deeper into the values and vision of our school and what we wanted it to be moving forwards. A great deal of work was completed and continues to be done in order to offer those who attend the best possible education.

The three pillars which must work in unison to support our children are the staff, parents and community and with this in mind, the school is keen to continue developing links with the local community and seeing the school as a source of pride for those who live locally.

Anchored in the Christian faith, we have a school to be proud of and a vision for the future which is exciting and inspiring.

***Growing together in strength, love and wisdom, we shine.
"Let your light shine" Matthew 5:16***

'Let your light shine' encapsulates the school's commitment to provide an enriching education which is deep and broad. Pupils will be equipped for life in all its fullness through our Christian values of strength, love and wisdom.

Learning will be a journey of fun and adventure, broadening the horizons of our pupils and inspiring them to be the best they can be. Within a nurturing environment, we will support our pupils to give them the strength to flourish as confident, resilient and independent members of society.

Christian character illuminates all aspects of school life, where everyone is understood and valued. At the heart of our safe and inclusive schools, pupils will be kind, patient and respectful - developing a love of one another, a love of learning and a love of life itself.

The aspirational curriculum will foster curious and creative thinkers, who will be encouraged to maximise every opportunity and be proud of their achievements. Pupils will find joy in seeking knowledge and learning new skills, as they grow together on their journey through childhood.

Our school is forward-thinking and outward-looking. We will continuously improve and evolve together, in order to inspire pupils who leave our schools feeling excited and ready for the future.

If you are interested in learning more about the school, please visit our website www.newtowncofeprimary.co.uk or alternatively contact the office on admin@newtown.shropshire.sch.uk to arrange a visit.

Mr Ben Crompton
Executive Headteacher



Wem Rural Parish Council, along with other organisations, contributed to funds to extend and improve Edstaston Village Hall. Phase 1 - the new entrance lobby and hall extension with bifold doors opening to a new patio and outside amenity space, as well as a new accessible WC and baby changing facilities and a new kitchen - is complete. Applications for grants for Phase 2 (the stage extension on the opposite end of the hall) will begin as soon as we have the necessary building estimate information.

FURTHER PROGRESS

After all the planning and excitement of the Edstaston Village Hall relaunch party on Saturday 18th June there was still work to be done to get the hall, and particularly the outside space, ready to be fully used by the community.

On the first of July, after much raking and rolling, grass seed (supplied by Spunhill Ltd) was finally sown by willing volunteers...and then the great heat of the summer arrived! Through careful watering and daily monitoring the grass (and weeds!) began to grow until the weeds were actually sheltering the new grass from the fierce sun!

By the end of July, the "croquet lawn" (as it is now known) was ready for its first trim.

And look at it now... Huge thanks to all the Vernon family for their ongoing care with regular mowing and strimming. **We would like to recruit volunteers for a rota of grass mowing. If you are able to help out please contact any committee member.**

NEXT STEPS

Piles of planings have already been delivered to make the car park extension useable - this will be done as soon as volunteers/contractors are able to spare the time.

New PIR outside lights have now been installed by the excellent Hunter Lloyd Ltd - thanks to Charles Forrester for his very kind donation.



NEWS

- Edstaston Village Hall has been chosen to be part of the next round of the Co-op Local Community Fund. The proceeds will fund new café tables and chairs suitable for indoor and outdoor use to replace the square heavy tables that have been used in the hall since the 1970s.
To help us earn the funding we need **YOUR** help. If you shop at the Co-op (not the Midcounties Co-op in Wem or Shawbury - these aren't part of the scheme), please choose Edstaston Village Hall as your local cause (from 24th October). You'll need to join the Co-op if you aren't already a member (www.co-op.co.uk) and when you sign in there is an opportunity to choose a local cause. Closest Co-op shops to Edstaston are in Ellesmere, Malpas and Bomere Heath as well as Co-op Funeralcare in Shrewsbury. Anything you spend will help us earn funds for our cause.
- Members of the committee were invited to share our Edstaston Village Hall project at the Shropshire Village Halls Conference (held by Community Resource, a Shropshire charity committed to supporting Shropshire communities).
Bev and Liz talked through our experiences renovating Edstaston Village Hall with the help of the community – from initial plans, securing funding, the build process and the big reveal (with some celebrity support!). There was a lot of praise and positive feedback and our story is going to be used as a successful case study for the charity's annual review.



You can see a copy of our presentation slides online here:

<https://www.community-resource.org.uk/assets/downloads/vhconference2022presentations/edstastonvillagehallpresentation.pdf>

Or email evh@ryebank.co.uk and we will send you a pdf copy of the presentation.

Edstaston Village Hall has seen bookings flourish and the improvements at the hall have been very well received by users. Bookings include baby massage sessions, dance/band practice days, Parish Council meetings, Village Hall committee meetings, funeral wake, training sessions, the annual Edstaston Church Harvest Supper, Edstaston and Coton WI meeting, a WI Art Class, a 30th birthday, a Quiz night held by the Edstaston Village Hall committee, other private meetings, children's birthday parties and christenings, and a Mini-Beer Festival/Open Mic with Edstaston Church.

A Community Coffee morning in mid-January with table tennis, dominoes, crafty/knitting nattering, children's board games attracted a lovely crowd (see below). We plan to make this a regular event (every 2 months to start) with different activities e.g. table top sale, outdoor games in summer, craft workshops - let us know if you have any other activity suggestions.



If you are interested in joining the Edstaston Village Hall committee or helping out occasionally as a volunteer please contact any committee member or email evh@ryebank.co.uk.

We are starting to apply for funding for Phase 2 of the Edstaston Village Hall community-led extension project. This involves a much simpler extension on the opposite side of the hall to create a stage area with changing rooms/storage on either side.

We are looking for tenders from local builders so if you would like to view the plans please contact Bev or Liz - evh@ryebank.co.uk.



Introducing Shropshire Councillor Peter Broomhall

My name is Cllr Peter Broomhall, I was elected in May 2021 as a Conservative Councillor to represent Wem Division which covers Wem, Wem Rural and Whixall. This is a two-member ward the other councillor being Edward Towers (Independent) who I work closely with on matters that involve the community.

Shropshire Council comprises of 74 Councillors 41 Conservatives 14 Lib Dems 10 Labour 4 Green 4 Independents and 1 Non-Affiliated Independent. The Council is run by the Cabinet which is made up of 9 Conservative Councillors one of whom is the leader the other eight members are appointed by the leader. The Cabinet is part of the council which is responsible for most day-to-day decisions.

When I was elected in the Conservative Manifesto it stated, if we were elected, we would put an extra £40 million in the highways budget over four years. There has been £62 million put into the budget and I think after 18 months we are seeing a vast improvement on our road networks around the county but still more improvements are needed.

The roads have had a lot of patching work done to them; this process is carried out before a road is surface dressed the following year.

The new recycling bins for plastics bottles and tins will be arriving in the next few weeks, if you have requested one you will receive one. Those people that have not gone online to request a bin can still do so by going to,

www.Shropshire.gov.uk/requestmixedrecyclingbin) or you can ring Shropshire council on 0345678900 or 03456789007.

There will be a second phase where residents who have missed requesting a bin can do so now because remember, you do not automatically get a new bin - if you have not requested one you will not receive one.

Edward and I fought very hard to bring The Shropshire Local Mobile Services (Blue Bus) to Wem. Originally, Wem was not allocated any slots for the Bus to come to Wem. After lobbying the officer in charge we had two slots over the summer very well attended. If you need any more information, go to [www.https://Shropshire.gov.uk/customerservices/Shropshire-local-mobile](https://Shropshire.gov.uk/customerservices/Shropshire-local-mobile)

I sit on two committees at Shropshire Council. The strategic licensing committee and Peoples Overview Scrutiny committee. Also, Full Council where Cabinet decisions are discussed and voted on.

If you need any help with Shropshire Council matters don't hesitate to get in touch.

Email peter.broomhall@shropshire.gov.uk
Phone 07885837606

Did you know that you can report local problems such as pot holes, litter, street lights on the Fix My Street app? Find out more at www.fixmystreet.com



FixMyStreet

A Third Rare Moth in Wem Rural!

Previous issues of Rural Review have reported on Argent and Sable at Wem Moss, and Small Eggar in hedgerows. Now we can add the Clifden Nonpareil, AKA Blue Underwing, *Catocala fraxini*, which has turned up in a moth trap in Barkers Green. The photo shows the actual specimen, but when it is disturbed it reveals beautifully coloured blue on its hind wings – photo from a book, in this case it flew off before the hind wings could be photographed!



What makes it special is that it used to be a rare resident in the south of England until around 100 years ago, but seemed to become extinct. In view of this, the identification was checked and confirmed by Moth Recorders in Shropshire. One replied: "Clifden Nonpareil is undergoing an amazing expansion northwards from initial colonisation in Sussex and Dorset in about 2000. West Midlands Moths (westmidlandsmoths.co.uk) gives an idea of how it's heading north at the moment. The map only shows records up until 2020 but there's nothing so far in your part of the world."



Another Recorder reported for this year: "Although there are about half a dozen or so this year from South Shropshire, there aren't any recorded from this end of the County."

Readers may wish to speculate on the recent recovery and likely change of status from immigrant to resident of this lovely moth, but the likely explanation seems to be climate change. Keep reading Rural Review for future reports on the ups and downs of Moths!

Cllr Len Staines

WACA – Wem Area Climate Action

You may notice that we have dropped the last word – “Forum” – because we want to reinforce the notion of Action, rather than imply that we only have meetings. Yes, we do meet once a month, and it was at recent ones that we were thinking about what more we can do practically.

At the first meetings a few years ago a large group formed and met in Edinburgh House, and Wem Sports and Social Club, but which has reduced to a small number. As well as lockdown, another reason might be that the task of reducing global emissions is too big for Wem to achieve? Or do we feel that we have all got the message? Maybe, but surely there is something more we can all do?

So there are several projects under way, some of them outlined in a previous edition of Rural Review, now updated and covering three main areas:

Food: WACA have participated in Wem’s biannual markets, offering recipes, encouraging reducing meat and dairy consumption whilst at the same time supporting organic farming and climate-friendly farming practices. A long-term ambition is for WACA to work with local producers to set up a community farm shop in Wem.

Green Spaces: We have explored with Wem Town Council ways to develop green spaces, for example by reducing mowing in a few areas, and adopting an area in Barleyfields to establish a wildflower meadow.

Some members have received training from Shropshire Wildlife Trust to assess biodiversity in some areas around the town. A Parish Paths Partnership has been set up, and with the help of Shropshire Council’s Outdoor Partnership is active in clearing paths, and replacing stiles and kissing gates.

Built Environment. WACA is working with the Council and other organisations such as the Civic Society to encourage use of sustainable materials and energy conservation. Surveying of existing buildings continues with a view to recommending appropriate improved insulation, particularly within the Conservation Area.

In addition, WACA recently attended the Volunteer Evening at Wem Town Hall to encourage more participation. We are working with Zero Carbon Shropshire, seeking guidance on any other actions we can take, influencing local politicians, and on working towards acquiring Charity Status.

What Can You Do?

To carry out these very worthwhile local activities we would very much welcome more supporters. So please can you help to make a difference to strengthen our membership? New or returning participants very welcome. The Leader of WACA is Malcolm Adkins, and he can be contacted by email at: mal10@mac.com. The Group also has a website, <https://wemclimateforum.wixsite.com/wacf>, which has a lot more information about the group, and information on how to - **Think Global, Act Local**

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 17th March 2023 and will be considered at the April 2023 Parish Council meeting.

All applications will be considered on their individual merits.

northsalopwheelers.co.uk

NS Wheelers Community Bus, styled as ‘Wheelers’, have launched a new website. Have a look at it, we think you’ll find it very user friendly. Obviously a lot of work has gone on behind the scenes to produce this

The Wheelers are still looking for more/new drivers to help develop this voluntary community service. If you or anyone you know are interested in volunteering please get in touch with the Wheelers through the website.

<https://www.northshropshirewheelers.co.uk/>

World’s Biggest Coffee Morning

On 1st October, Wem Rural Parish Councillor Julia Goode hosted a coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

Cllr Goode reports, “I was delighted by the number who attended from Newtown and my fellow Councillors from WRPC and we even had some friends from Wem join us. We raised a significant sum for this important charity. A special thank you to Jan Kirk, who so kindly donated many of her beautiful hand made cards, which were sold and boosted the final total.”

See you all again next year!

Pictured here are Cllrs Stella Whyte, Len Staines, Julia Goode and Liz Vernon.



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 us:

Parish Clerk:

Carole Warner,
Orchard Cottage,
Rowe Lane,
Welshampton, SY12 0QB
01948 710672
or email
clerk@wemrural-pc.gov.uk

Deputy Clerk:

Helen McCabe
Tel: 07720 854185
Email:
deputyclerk@wemrural-pc.gov.uk
www.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
William Minty	07762 478353	Low Pond Farm, Lowe, Wem, SY4 5UE
Pete Slack	01939 236990	Fairview, 7 Paddol Green, Wem, SY4 5QZ
Liz Vernon	01939 234896	The Park, Edstaston, Wem, SY4 5RF
Vacancy		

NEWTOWN

Julia Goode	07971 102569	3 Oakhurst Villas, Newtown, SY4 5NT
Vacancy		

RODEN

Peter Broomhall	01939 231565	Tilleycroft, 77 Roden Grove, Wem, SY4 5HJ
Andrew Matthews	07929 783456	1 Pym's Cottages, Lowe Hill, Wem, SY4 5UD
Denise Morgan	01939 233906	4 Locksmith Cottage, Tilley, Wem, SY4 5HE
Jordan Page	07508 270009	2 Tilley Green, Wem, SY4 5PL
Len Staines	01939 234415	The Hawthorns, Barkers Green, Wem, SY4 5JW

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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