

# **SHREWLEY PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL ASSEMBLY**

## **THURSDAY 20TH MAY 2021**

### **PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – CLLR ROBERT WESBURY**

Due to Covid restrictions on public meetings, all Parish Council meetings this year have been held remotely by Zoom. The PC currently has a vacancy and if you are interested, please contact any Parish Councillor or the Clerk for more information.

Shrewley Parish is in the Green Belt and new development must meet the requirements of both the National Planning Policy Framework and the Warwick District (WDC) Local Plan. The PC, as a statutory consultee on Planning Applications, has commented on over 15 applications during the year and represented residents twice at WDC Planning Committee.

Following concerns from residents over the safety of pedestrians on Station Road where there is no footway, the PC has arranged for 'No Footway' warning signs to be installed in the approaches to the canal/rail bridges.

The gates planned for the entrances to Shrewley Common have been delayed by Brexit problems and will be installed in the near future.

We have been pressing for Warwickshire County Council for over a year to replace the Vehicle Activated Speed sign outside Barn Close Nurseries, which was demolished in a road traffic accident. We have now been advised that the delay is caused by Covid work restrictions and by the Insurers requiring more details. We still have no firm date for the work.

We still have a number of unresolved problems on our footpaths, some dating back 3 years. These are mainly stiles which need repairing or replacing.

Following difficulties which people had locating the continuation of the canal towpath, new directional signage has now been installed on Shrewley Common.

The PC made grants over the year to the Ferncumbe Youth Club and Hatton Church. However, we found that our BACS payments to the Village Hall of our £1000 grant and £160 room meeting hire payment in May 2019 and a further £160 meeting room hire fee in May 2020 had been intercepted by fraudsters. The Bank refunded the last payment but the previous £1160 was outside their 12 months timeframe for reimbursement. The fraud has been reported to the Police who propose no further action due to the time which has elapsed before the fraud was identified.

Our thanks again to Roly Robinson and Keith Duffell for maintaining the village greens in Shrewley Common and Little Shrewley over the past year.

County Councillor Les Caborn will not be standing for re-election in May after 16 years of service and I would like to thank him for his support and assistance to the Parish Council over many years and wish him well for the future.

Finally, my thanks to our Clerk, all Councillors and members of our local organisations for their efforts and support over the year and their contribution to our community.

## **SHREWLEY PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REPORT – Clerk**

The 2020/21 Budget set by Shrewley Parish Council was £7,655 and has remained nearly the same for 2021/22 at £7,903.

The Parish Council donated £2,000 towards the cost of the installation of the children's playground behind the Village Hall. The Shrewley Parish Parents Group have been very successful in raising funds and have created a wonderful playground that will be a benefit to the community for years to come.

The Parish Council also donated a £1000 to the Village Hall towards the costs to repair loose plaster and redecorate the entrance hall and committee room. Unfortunately, it was discovered that a previous grant payment made to the Village Hall in May 2019 had been paid to a fraudulent bank account. The Parish Council has put extra security measures in place to ensure that this type of fraud cannot happen again.

We are no longer budgeting for election costs as the Reserve Account has a balance of £3500. The precept equates to the equivalent of £31.28 for a Band G household. 2020/21 ends with a healthy balance of over £5100, which includes £124 for Friends of Hatton Station.

All Parish financial information is available on the Parish Council page at [www.shrewley.org](http://www.shrewley.org).

## **WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR LES CABORN**

This report is dominated by the year of covid and its effect on the council and the citizens we serve. In October 2019 WCC embarked on replacing all IT with Microsoft Pro 365 computer systems for all staff and councillors as part of our transformation programme. This proved to be timely as when Covid struck we were immediately able to allow all staff to work from home. This meant as well as giving at times 24/7 support on Covid, the day job was able to carry on. All staff not only worked on their usual role but on other roles to deliver our Covid response.

Public Health lead on our Covid response being granted Beacon Status and mentioned for our vaccine success on a ministerial broadcast. We established infection control teams for South Warwickshire, Rugby and North Warwickshire, these teams working with boroughs and districts. These teams offered advice to businesses, care homes and schools etc.

Adult Social Care and commissioning has been commended by care homes for its excellent support including PPE from our own warehouse and prompt passporting of funds for care coming from central government. It also worked with all hospitals to minimise delays in hospital discharge for all needing support ensuring no one stayed in hospital longer than needed.

WCCs Test and Trace has helped keep positive rates down and our 6 testing sites and outbreak pop up sites have delivered 155000 tests and continue to do so.

To plan and deliver our WCC future and Covid recovery, 3 documents have been produced and are publicly available

- 1 the Council recovery plan
- 2 the Director of Public Health's annual report
- 3 the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Boards Strategy 2021 - 2026

These concentrate on recovery for business, mental health, and inequalities of race, finance, education and health across all our communities.

As part of this recovery, we have launched a Property Company to build property including housing and maximise our return for the taxpayer on property disposal. We have also established our Recovery Investment Company to support business recovery and business start-ups to preserve and create jobs. £2.4 m has been invested in Mental Health with focus on young people and Dementia.

As portfolio holder, Chair of HWBB, and chair of the Covid members engagement board, I have been involved on behalf of WCC with all Health partners and WDC to deliver our Covid response and the change in the Health system with the introduction of one Clinical commissioning Group and the progress of the National Scheme to move to an Integrated Care System for Warwickshire which sets in statute that all responsible for delivering care and health at any point to you will work together.

I have worked with parishes to produce road Safety Schemes although some are yet to be delivered but all funds are secured.

Finally, this is my last report to you as County Councillor as I retire at the May 6th election. It has been a pleasure to serve as your County Councillor for the past 16 years and I wish you all well for the future.

Thank you for your support and friendship.

## **WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCILLORS John Cooke, Richard Hales and George Illingworth**

Clearly, as with all similar organisations, this has been a challenging year for the Warwick District Council.

Your District Councillors have been able to take part in your Parish Council meetings held remotely and have dealt with a number of issues in the Parish.

All the Warwick District Council meetings including Committees have had to be held remotely and showing them live on the Council YouTube site has meant that more of the public have seen them than when they were in Leamington Town Hall. The public have been able to take part in Council, Planning, Regulatory and Licensing Committees under modified arrangements so local democracy has been maintained. Unlike some other local authorities which extended the period of office, the Chairman of the Council, Cllr George Illingworth, handed over the role in a virtual Annual Meeting last May. His successor has unfortunately had a virtual year.

Many of the services of the Council, such as collecting waste and recycling, have been maintained without pause during the year and credit is due to the teams who have adapted to the situation. Most of the office-based staff have been working from home and departments such as planning and enforcement have faced many difficulties, but all functions and services have been maintained.

A number of staff volunteered to move to the shielding hub when it was setup by the County and have ensured that people were looked after and received food and other essentials. In particular the homeless have been taken off the streets wherever possible.

From various Covid support schemes the District Council has distributed Restart Grants to date totalling £7,423,388 to 945 businesses and Additional Restriction Grants totalling £3,659,000 to 1,668 businesses severely impacted by the restrictions. This includes businesses and organisations in the Shrewley area including hospitality venues and village halls. The finance team have made great efforts to get the money to where it is needed and as a result we are one of the best performing local authorities distributing a very high percentage of the available money. Credit is due to Cllr Richard Hales as Portfolio Holder for Finance and Deputy Leader of the Council.

The Council has not only faced increased costs in these conditions but also a reduction in income from areas such as car parks and business rates. However, as part of our commitment to the Climate Emergency we are allocating £500,000 into an account to support projects such as renewable energy, including wind farms, as well lending to healthcare providers in the most economically disadvantaged areas.

Whilst we have agreed a balanced budget for next year the future is still uncertain and finances will need to be tightly managed. One way we are intending to contain costs is by closer working with Stratford on Avon District Council. We are already sharing senior officers and we are now investigating a possible merger into a Super District. Work is already underway on a combined South Warwickshire Local Plan where Cllr John Cooke plays a leading role as Portfolio Holder for Development.

## **HATTON COMBINED CHARITIES – SHEILA LIGHT**

The Hatton Joint Charities include: The Charity of Catherine Throckmorton founded before 1652, The Charity of Jane Baker founded in 1849, The Charity of Jane Norcliffe founded in 1897, The William Edwards Coat and Gown Charity founded in 1818, together with a bequest made by Mr Butler Miles. The first four charities were “combined” in 1909, and the Butler-Miles bequest added later.

50% of the income from the Throckmorton Charity is required to be used for the upkeep of the fabric of Hatton Church - the incumbent rector becomes a trustee upon appointment.

The remainder of the income is used for the elderly in need and apprentices needing tools for their trade; also included are study books for students. In 2011 some modifications were made to bring the schedule up to date; these included updating some wording (e.g. to replace “help with coal” to “help with fuel”) and the removal of a fixed age limit for educational grants. The trustees will also be happy to consider requests for some immediate short-term assistance. Last year an amount in the region of £1,000 was distributed in the parish of Shrewley.

Only those who are resident in the parishes of Beausale, Hatton, Haseley and Shrewley are eligible to benefit from these charities. The Trustees are always pleased to hear from anyone who might be in need.

Since the last report, two trustees have retired: Gill Ward, who retired after many years valuable service, and whose place has been taken by Sally Lowe, and Sheila Light, your correspondent, who will be replaced by Zara Hadfield.

It is not always easy for the trustees to be aware of people who could benefit from this charity, and to this end we are printing leaflets to be displayed in public meeting places. There is also an advertisement each month in the Ferncumbe News giving more details. If you are aware of someone who could benefit, or if you yourself could do with help, and meet the criteria set out above, do please get in touch.

## **THE CONNIE NEWTON TRUST – ROBERT WESBURY**

The Trust provides assistance for persons over the age of 45 who live or have lived within Shrewley and neighbouring parishes and are suffering financial hardship.

The Trust has had no meetings over the last year and made no grants.

Unfortunately, after many years as a Trustee, Joyce Wright sadly passed away recently.

If you feel that there is someone who could benefit, please contact a local Trustee in confidence (Monica Sparks, Norman Winnett, Sylvia Green, Kemble Everitt or Robert Wesbury). Their contact details are available on the Parish notice boards and on the Parish website [www.shrewley.org](http://www.shrewley.org).

## **SHREWLEY WOMENS INSTITUTE – BEVERLEY BAKER**

It has been a very different year for Shrewley WI, like other organisations due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Our last live meeting in the village hall was March 2020 when the ladies made spring bonnets, so an entertaining happy afternoon.

We did manage to meet as two groups in September hosted by The Durham Ox when our members were able to mix and chat.

Since March 2020 our normal monthly newsletter has increased to twice monthly, sent out via email and posted to those who do not have access to a computer which has kept everyone in touch.

We contacted all our members in advance of our due date annual meeting with all the relevant information and asking for their proxy to enable the committee to hold the meeting. We managed this one day before the November lockdown.

From December the institute took on a Zoom contract enabling the committee to meet and those who were able to join us for an informal meeting. Since then, we now meet twice a month with “volunteer” speakers from within the group or family members. This has included plant care, aromatherapy massage, cookery demonstration and reflexology so far.

We now have established a regular pattern with 50% of our members able to participate on screen and we have dates to carry us through until June as we hope to be able to meet in July.

## **LITTLE SHREWLEY TELEPHONE KIOSK – LINDA WESBURY**

Following the decommissioning and subsequent purchase of the Little Shrewley telephone kiosk by Shrewley Parish Council in 2017, the kiosk is being maintained by a number of residents who regularly clean it inside and out, and cut back vegetation to ensure the phone box is well kept. It was decorated with a wreath at Christmas and remains a focal point of the village.

## VILLAGE HALL - DAVID LAWRIE

Apart from sporadic flower arranging and Pilates classes, the pandemic has prevented other use except for the regular coaching classes for children.

Shrewley Parents' Group has been remarkably successful in raising promises of funds to construct a play area in the field at the back of the Hall and it is currently amassing the last funds needed to enable them to begin the project early next year.

General maintenance of the hall now includes particular attention to sanitation to remain within the safety guidelines for Covid-19, and recently to keep the storm guttering clear.

The Hall's annual general meeting was held by "Zoom" on 24<sup>th</sup> September, "hosted" by Sheona Alemi, and with only two other participants who could be counted as members of the public.

The accounts were approved, and a vote of thanks was given to Darrell Mottram for preparing them, and Linda Wesbury for auditing them.

The management committee officers were re-elected unanimously, and the representative members confirmed, with the exception of the Garden Society, who have not yet nominated a representative to replace David Howell who retired early in 2020.

David Lawrie was again re-elected as Chairman.

Pandemic restrictions have precluded any activity of the Social Club apart from occasional socially-distanced committee meetings for holding purposes.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH – RACHEL HOULT



The joint Hatton Station and Shrewley Neighbourhood Watch is a voluntary organisation committed to working with residents and family, friends, and neighbours, to provide information and coordination in support of a safe and secure environment for individuals and communities within the area and giving a voice to local residents on the issues that matter to our community.

We work closely with the Parish Council, the local Warwickshire Rural West Police Team, and sister schemes in neighbouring village communities to focus on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, and advising on practical ways to improve our protection and safety for greater security in our homes and communities.

### Action Plan for 2020/21

Our local NW scheme is active and steadily growing in membership, even if these difficult times have limited the amount of face-to-face contact with our members. We have a new Local Organiser (Rachel Hoult who has taken over from Mark Beaglehole) and a small band of Co-ordinators spread around the two main villages and nearby areas. Their role is to provide points of contact for communication with the NW scheme and our Police contacts – ensuring new residents moving into the area are invited to join, disseminating information about crimes which have taken place in the area, and focusing on matters of crime prevention.

During the year we will be inviting existing members to promote the scheme with their neighbours and get them signed up for our email alerts. The past year has been challenging with the Covid situation, but hopefully in this next year we will be able to be more actively visible within the community.

Both nationally and locally, the Police are using email and new technology to establish a wider and more inclusive support network, to collectively meet emerging challenges such as 'County Lines' activity and urban crime spreading into soft rural areas. Fraud and crime alerts, and practical support information about crime prevention will continue to be distributed regularly, to keep everyone aware of current issues like internet scams and telephone-based fraud, burglary, car crime and thefts from sheds and outbuildings, so we can all take action to help ourselves and our neighbours to avoid becoming victims!

### **Join our Neighbourhood Watch and Be Informed!**

To get yourself on the distribution for email crime and fraud alerts, please contact your NW Local Organiser – email: [rachelhoul7@gmail.com](mailto:rachelhoul7@gmail.com) - including your postcode and house number so we can put you in touch with your local NW Coordinator, and to ensure you receive the appropriate crime alerts for your location.

### **SHREWLEY PARISH PARENTS – ELIZA GAFFNEY**

Shrewley Parish Parents (SPP) is pleased to report that the playground behind the Shrewley Village Hall is now complete. It is expected to open its gates in the next week or so, with the timescale being dependent on the grass being ready.

The full cost of the design and installation of the playground was just under £32k. SPP secured the funds from a mix of organisations, including Warwick District Council, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Norton Foundation, Asda, the National Lottery, Shrewley Parish Council as well as from the wider community via the various events we have run over the past five years. Fundraising efforts to cover the costs of groundwork and surfacing were hampered somewhat by the Covid 19 pandemic, but we managed to secure the assistance of Barn Close Nurseries to help with this and to convene a group of volunteers to clear the site, make it ready for installation, and spread top soil and lay turf post installation. Around 20 people from across the community got involved in this work.

An independent safety inspection has been undertaken on the site and the inspectors were content that the equipment has been correctly installed and the site is safe to play on. SPP took the decision to delay opening slightly to ensure the grass has bedded in properly before we welcome people in. SPP is now liaising with the playground design company, Proludic, to fully understand the required maintenance of the site. We are also putting plans in place for regular inspection of the equipment and have formed a group of volunteers who will help with this.

SPP is represented on the Village Hall management committee and report progress there on a regular basis. We hope to arrange a more formal opening of the playground in the coming months. As ever, we are keen for ideas, input and extra pairs of hands to get involved in this community space.

We would like to extend our thanks to the Parish Council and the Shrewley community for their ongoing support of this project and we hope we have delivered a safe, welcoming and exciting place for families in the community to enjoy.

For further information please email [shrewleyparents@gmail.com](mailto:shrewleyparents@gmail.com).

## **FRIENDS OF HATTON STATION – PAUL TILLEY**

The work on the Station planters and wild flower border has been restricted by the Covid lockdown; Network Rail and Severn Trent work and the weather. So all in all there is not a lot to report.

Both planters are now showing their age and significant remedial work is now required.

Severn Trent have finally bitten the bullet and renewed the sewage pipe that runs the length of Station Drive. Network Rail have resurfaced the old car park and put in much needed drainage to prevent flooding of the three houses.

Passenger numbers have reduced significantly during the pandemic and as lockdown measures are eased there is very little sign of any increase.

Chiltern Railways has not been able to refurbish/renew the platform shelters although some remedial work has taken place on the footbridge.

We said a fond farewell to Mark Beaglehole, one of our stalwarts, during the year, and four more residents have joined us.

Julie Singleton –Tasker, Heart of England Community Rail Partnership, continues to support our work and has highlighted grant opportunities to help us fund the much needed work on the planters.

***Finally if anyone living in Hatton Station would like to join us, please contact Paul Tilley 07773416819 or [ptilley17@btinternet.com](mailto:ptilley17@btinternet.com). Your help, particularly with summer watering, would be much appreciated.***



## HATTON STATION TELEPHONE BOX

"After the painting of the Hatton Station phone box in early summer 2018, successful fundraising (via pub quizzes, sale of produce and BBQ evenings) and some very kind donations meant that the tired perspex windows in the phone box could be replaced. With the glazing kit collected and fitted by some willing volunteers, the change of the windows also meant that the previous "trial" bookshelves needed to be removed.

In summer 2020 the old shelves were replaced by a custom-made, Scandinavian-style L-shaped unit, again a result of the efforts of some of our ever-resourceful volunteers. The new shelving quickly got re-stocked with a range of reading material, covering fiction and non-fiction for various ages and tastes. We also have occasional sharing of seasonal surplus produce in a basket, plus more recently a selection of DVDs has been added to the library. We do ask that people keep an eye on the library from time to time, also that if someone arrives to drop off more books and finds the shelves are already full, not to leave the books on the floor to get damp and damaged. In the great toilet-paper shortage of spring 2020, one kindly person even dropped off a couple of spare loo rolls; a testament to the support we offer each other (and perhaps the desire not to see the paper from the books re-purposed in a way the authors never intended?!)

Through some social media networking (an active WhatsApp group with over 50 participants), further crowd-funding by Sheona Alemi from Hatton Station residents in late 2020 and a very kind donation from Barn Close Nursery meant that for the first time, Hatton Station had its own illuminated Christmas tree. We now have a mounting-point in the ground ready for another tree later this year, so with some replacement batteries for the lights will have something to look forward to when the festive season comes."

**Will Morley-Brown**

