

Report of the Wrockwardine Parish Council to the Annual Parish Meeting Thursday 27 April 2006

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to review the work of the Parish Council. All Parish Council and Committee meetings are open to the public, although generally not to speak. The Council always welcomes parishioners at its meetings.

I would like to extend my personal thanks to all Members of the Council who have worked so hard this year on behalf of the community to achieve as much as we have. It is sometimes forgotten that Wrockwardine Parish Councillors carry out their duties voluntarily, giving freely of not only their time, but often of their own resources too, in order to properly represent the inhabitants and to bring about the decisions of the Council.

Further, I am confident that the Council as a whole would join me in thanking our Clerk, who has patiently listened to our debates and guided us through the business of another year.

The Council held two special Council meetings during the year; the first with the new management of Leaton Quarry and the second with our new MP Mark Pritchard. Arising from the meeting with Leaton Quarry owners, a formal Liaison Group has been established which will meet generally about twice a year.

- *Development Plan 2005/2008*

The Council has adopted its Development Plan for the years 2005/2008. The purpose of this Plan is to set out the aims of the Council over that period. Whilst not all the items in the plan may be achieved in the time scale, or indeed at all, it is an indication to the community of those things which the Council is trying to achieve. The Council consulted widely with the Parish through the Parish Scene magazine before adoption of the plan.

The Council has already achieved some of the aims set out in the plan.

- *The New War Memorial*

The new Owners of Leaton Quarry, Ennstone Johnston Ltd have agreed to donate a substantial piece of local quarry stone and to build the plinth on which it is to sit, as a war memorial for the Parish. This scheme is now well underway and it is planned that the memorial, which will stand on The Green in Wrockwardine, will be in place in time for Remembrance Sunday this year.

- *Youth Play Provision at Ringers Way Playing Fields, Admaston*

Once more, this proposal by the Borough Council has been met with mixed views within the community and within the Parish Council. Last year, the Beanhill Valley was identified as a suitable site for this facility but there simply was not enough money available from English Partnerships [the Government's land agency in Telford] to meet the cost of re-laying the overhead power cables under ground.

The Project Steering Group on which the Parish Council is represented looked at several alternative sites from which Ringers Way emerged as the one which met most criteria. The Steering Group will continue to oversee the project through the planning application and, if approved, construction stages.

- *The Parish Scene Magazine*

The magazine, which is published twice yearly, continues to be very well received and residents have welcomed the efforts made by the Council to keep them effectively informed. The publication is funded by the Parish Council and is delivered to each household in the Parish.

- *Police Liaison*

The local beat manager, WPC MacPherson, attends each Parish Council meeting and keeps Members informed upon policing issues which affect the Parish. The Community Support Officers continue to play an increasingly important role and the Council takes every opportunity to work closely with the police. [Please see WPC Judith MacPherson's report on the Agenda].

- *Traffic calming*

The Council has continued to try to make Telford and Wrekin Borough understand the traffic problems which this Parish faces every day. The traffic calming scheme for Shawbirch Road and Station Road in Admaston, which carry over 10,000 vehicles per day, has still not been fully implemented. As a result, the Parish Council has lodged a formal complaint against the Borough under the Parish Charter Partnership Agreement. That process is still being pursued.

- *Allscott Industrial Estate*

This area remains a highly contentious issue within the Parish. For some it is a place of work and a source of business; for others it is a severe blight brought about by the number and size of the HGVs which serve it. The Council remains committed to trying to find a solution which does not endanger the jobs which the businesses provide, nor simply moves the very real problem of the lorries from one part of the Parish to another.

The future of the sugar beet factory remains uncertain and the Parish Council will expect to be closely involved in any redevelopment proposals which come before the Borough.

- *St. Peter's Church*

St Peter's Church is a Grade 1 Listed Building; the only Grade 1 in the Parish and the Council has continued to give grant aid support for the lighting of the church and the grass cutting of the churchyard; features which benefit the whole community. Further funding for repairs to this important building would be a matter for consideration by the Council at its Grant meetings.

- *Admaston House*

The Council has continued to recognise that Admaston House is a valuable asset to the community and has sought to work with the Trustees where it is able to do so for the wider community benefit.

- *Street Lighting*

One of the biggest items of expenditure each year for the Council is the cost of electricity, maintenance and replacement for the footway and street lighting in the Parish. The Borough Council is responsible for most of the street lights but not all of them and the Parish Council, which itself is a Lighting Authority, pays for the upkeep of the rest.

The budget provision for 2006/2007 is £6,500. The Parish Council has continued its negotiations with the Borough in an attempt to adopt as many lights as possible so that the overall cost to the Council Tax payers for lighting is not unnecessarily increased by the lights being retained by the Borough when they ought more properly to be run and maintained by the Parish.

In this context, the Parish Council has once more negotiated a very advantageous supply and maintenance contract with the power supplier.

- *Public Open Space and Play Areas*

The Council has continued to seek to acquire areas of public open space from the Borough and from English Partnerships [EP] in order to preserve these green spaces into the future. In particular, the Council is currently negotiating with EP to acquire the field adjacent to Whiteway Drive in Bratton.

The Council is also negotiating with the Borough to acquire, at no purchase cost, the children's play area at Walcot and Burnell Road. This will allow greater opportunities for the prompt maintenance of the play equipment and for it to be included in the annual ROSPA check which is carried out on behalf of the Parish Council.

- *Finger posts*

The cleaning, renovation and where necessary, replacement of these very individual signs is being gradually carried out within budget.

- *Public Seats*

The Greenwood Trust has continued to make new seats for the use of people within the Parish and these have been placed at Beanhill, Bratton, Wrockwardine Playing Fields and The Green at Wrockwardine. Further seats are on order for delivery fairly soon and will be placed on Long Yard Meadow.

- *Bus shelters*

The Parish Council now owns eight bus shelters across its area, having at last acquired the refurbished Admaston shelter. All the shelters are cleaned and maintained on a 6-week cycle. A new shelter has been ordered and will be placed in Shawbirch Road just below the entrance to Admaston Spa.

- *Miscellaneous*

The Council continues to incur expense on behalf of the community through:

- *its contribution to the North Telford Public Paths Partnership [NTPP];*
- *maintenance of appropriate insurance cover;*
- *the administrative costs of running a local authority including the professional services of its Clerk;*

The Council has continued to carefully monitor all planning, licensing and public entertainment license applications in the Parish and made representations where appropriate. The Council has also responded to Central Government on consultation issues.

During the year ahead, the Council's work will continue to be guided by the Development Plan. In addition, it will respond to and deal with those issues which come before it.

2006/2007 will also be the final year of this particular Council, as local elections will take place in 2007, traditionally in May, when all ten seats on the Council are contested.

The Parish Council remains very proud of how much it has achieved in recent years and with your support hopes to continue to improve the community in which we live in whatever way it can.

*Kenneth JS Ballantyne
Chairman*

27 April 2006