

WOLVEY PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2007/ 2008

This annual report is prepared on behalf of Wolvey Parish Council and is a synopsis of the report presented to the Annual Parish Meeting on 24th April, 2008. Its aim is to provide a brief summary of some of the Parish Council's activities for the year

Parish Council meetings are held at 7.45pm on the third Monday of each month in the back room of Wolvey Village Hall. Local electors are welcome to attend to make comments or express views on matters being considered by the Council.

Chairman's Report

This year has been my second full year as Chairman of the Parish Council. I would like to thank Councillor Hilliard for standing in for me when I was ill. I would also like to thank the rest of the Councillors for their hard work over the year. We spent last year engulfed in Rules and Regulations but this year we have been far more productive and increasingly more efficient. That first year was time well spent.

The first subject to speak about is the Clerk. I would like to thank Margaret for all her hard work and commitment. The village does not appreciate how they struck gold when she took the job.

The Council has been working on several village projects and initiatives during the year.

The Parish Plan Steering Group has been working throughout the year to complete this very important project. The questionnaire was distributed around the village and a magnificent 85% were returned. Since then the group have worked hard to interpret the information and we will soon be seeing the results of their efforts.

I would like to thank Councillor Kuncewicz and the Steering Group for their hard work and staying power in striving to complete this mammoth task. The Council would also like to take the opportunity to thank the villagers who responded, and also the volunteers that helped deliver and collect the questionnaires.

The new Environmental Group have planted bulbs on the sand banks and sited a multitude of Bird boxes around the village. The planters that were in evidence in the Square last summer will be supplemented with an abundance of hanging baskets this year and the village gateways will be adorned with displays. The group has all sorts of ideas and the village will be a much brighter place to live when they are fully up and running.

The Neighbourhood Watch group are in the early stages of setting up. Thank you to Jon Wiggins, David Alford, Sheila Clews and Sid Hindmarsh for taking on the co-ordinators roles.

The first issue of the new **Parish Council newsletter** was circulated in March. Again, thank you to Councillor Kuncewicz and her team of volunteers.

The Old Cricket Field Wetland Reserve is a topic that leads to much debate in and around the village; you might like to know that the Parish Council is no different. I would like to thank Councillors Hindmarsh and Slee for their efforts on this subject. The Nature Reserve is a tremendous asset to the village but the Council is aware that it needs to do more to get it right. We have applications for grants being considered at present and this will be at the top of the things to do list for the next 12 months

We did enter the **Best Kept Village Competition** again, but due to unforeseen circumstances our entry was not accepted. Our entry into the Calor Village of the Year competition was accepted, however, and we finished first in the Community Life Category for Warwickshire, for which we received a certificate.

The 2007 Christmas Tree was a huge success. The tree, professionally grown and installed, was outstanding and all 1600 lights were used to illuminate it. The finished result was uplifting. The switch-on was well supported with a massive turn-out, and a thoroughly enjoyable evening was had by all. It is hoped that this event, and the community spirit generated will continue for many years to come.

The Wolvey Website has continued to develop over the year, and increased Parish Council activity with the Parish Plan and Newsletter has raised its profile. Thanks to Councillor Hilliard for overseeing this project.

A new **Bus Shelter** in the Square and three new **benches** have recently been sited around the village, and we will soon be having a new larger notice board in the same place as the old one. The Council has taken the **responsibility for all the mowing** round the village from Borough and County Council control and has employed a contractor to do the job. The money to pay for this initiative will be reimbursed by Rugby and Warwickshire Councils.

In consultation with Warwickshire County Council, the **Traffic Calming** scheme outside the school will soon be underway and the Parish Council will soon start to look at updating the village **Street Lighting**.

The Council had the usual amount of **Planning** issues. We get our largest audiences when we have a contentious one, and we have had a couple of them again this year. This part of Council work is very frustrating. Hopefully, once the Parish Plan is in place this part will become much easier.

There has been the usual topics that are never far from the agenda; one of these is **Dog fouling**. We have provided several dog bins and thankfully the majority of dog owners do use them. Perhaps we will need to take a stronger line against the persistent offenders in future.

Ethical Framework: The Council meets all the necessary regulations and procedures introduced by the new ethical framework under the Local Government Act 2000 governing the functions of local councils. This year all Councillors agreed to abide by the new Code of Conduct and re-affirmed their statements under the Register of Financial and Other Interests

New Council: After the uncontested Parish Council election in May there will be a new Parish Council. Councillor Hindmarsh is not standing for re-election. The Council would like to thank him for his many years of service on the Council. He has been a hard working dedicated member of the council and his contributions will be missed by all the councillors. However, he will be continuing his good work around the village by serving on the Environmental and Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

After the uncontested election in May the members of Wolvey Parish Council will be:

John Hawkins (Chairman)	01455 220484
Bob Hilliard (Vice- Chairman)	01455 220631
Ruth Buswell	01455 221324
Roy Elliott	01455 220491
Bozena Kuncewicz	01455 220771
Ben Kerrell- Vaughan	01455 882868
Jon Slee	01455 220322

Councillor John Hawkins (Chairman)

Finance Report and Regulatory Procedures

The precept for the year 2007 - 2008 was £21,000
During the year to 31st March 2008 the total expenditure was £24,034

The revenue budget is the amount of money necessary for the Parish Council to carry out its statutory requirements. This includes expenses such as insurance, auditors' fees, salaries, training and administration costs. The total of the revenue budget for this year was £7166

The street lights in Wolvey are owned and maintained by Wolvey Parish Council. The costs of maintenance and electricity accounted for £3230
Unfortunately, due to increases in both energy and maintenance charges this is expected to increase significantly next year.

This year saw the first expenditure towards the production of a Parish Plan. The amount spent so far is £3893.

Under local council regulations, the Council continues to use its powers to support local groups and organisations. A total of £6800 has been given as donations/ grants to organisations within the parish and to charities. These included:

£400 to the Air Ambulance
£25.00 to Rugby Citizens Advice Bureau
£25.00 to Vitalise
£200 each to the Wolvey Brownies, Baby & Toddler Group and the Junior Cricket Club
£300 to Wolvey Pre-school
£650 to Baptist Chapel and
£2000 to Wolvey Church to assist with the maintenance of their burial grounds
£1200 to Village Hall and
£1600 to the Playing Fields to assist with their ongoing maintenance costs

The Council's annual accounts are made available for public inspection and submitted for internal and external audit within the timescale and requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003. The Audit Commission has appointed Clement Keys as the external auditor for this year.

For the year ended March 31st 2007, Clement Keys verified and endorsed the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts and Statement of Assurance and provided a signed audit certificate and opinion. These documents were published on the village notice board.

Proper governance of the budget is maintained throughout the year to ensure work is managed effectively. Costs are kept to a minimum and reserves are within recommended parameters. However as a result of an increase in activity, of wishes expressed in the Parish Plan appraisal, and of the expected increases in costs of energy and maintenance in the coming year, the Council decided to increase the annual precept for the year 2008/ 09. For 2008-09 the total payment towards the parish council for a band D property is £60.77. This equates to a total of £1.17 per week.

A fuller summary of expected expenses for 2008/09 is available on the Parish Council website www.wolvey.org

Margaret Cartwright (Clerk/ Responsible Financial Officer)

24th April, 2008

