

WOLVEY PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

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 29th April, 2009. 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.

The parish council also holds a councillor surgery on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 - 8.30pm in the village hall.

Parish Council members are:	John Hawkins (Chairman)	01455 220482
	Ruth Buswell	01455 221324
	Roy Elliott	01455 220491
	Ben Kerrell-Vaughan	01455 882868
	Bozena Kuncewicz	01455 220771
	Jon Slee	01455 220322
	Ron Podesta	01455 220608

Full contact details are available on the village notice board and on the Parish Council website

The parish council has been working on several projects and initiatives during the year.

The **Wolvey Parish Plan** is now completed. It took much longer than anyone anticipated and the council thanks everyone who helped in producing and distributing the document. But the process is far from finished. The Parish Council now has an action plan that reflects the wishes of the residents and gives it a well informed direction for the future development of this community.

The **Neighbourhood Watch** group are going from strength to strength and the village will get great benefit from this initiative.

The **Wolvey Environment Group** aims to sustain and enhance the environment we live in and has had a large impact on the surrounding area. We have a unique wetland area in Wolvey and now the boardwalk is completed it is accessible for many more people to enjoy. There are many delightful things to see, from a large selection of insects and butterflies and newts to a mother duck with 12 ducklings.

A bird survey is being carried out in the reserve and also an amphibian recording exercise to log and hopefully preserve our native wildlife. Group members are undertaking courses at Brandon Marsh Nature Reserve to add to their knowledge.

In other areas of the village improvements have been made, with more planting in the village square and by the bus shelter. Planters are in place at the village gateways and, shortly the summer baskets will be completed and placed to enhance the village square further. The snowdrops planted at Temple Hill were fantastic this year and more bulbs were added, so next years show should be even better.

There are many plans for the future. The wetland management plan is completed and ready to implement. This will be ongoing in the future. A walking group has been

set up and whilst enjoying a walk, notice is taken of repairs needed of stiles & fences. Also a signage survey around the village has been implemented.

The **Boardwalk** that has been erected by the team of volunteers is excellent and will be much used and appreciated for many years to come.

We entered several Village competitions again this year, and we were very successful, winning the following categories:

Warwickshire's best Village for the Environment 2008

Warwickshire's Best Village for Communication 2008

Warwickshire's Second Best Village overall

For all this we were awarded prize money of £550

We also won the Large Villages category of the Warwickshire Calor Village of the Year competition

In the Rugby in Bloom competition we came second in the Environment category (for the wetland) and we won Gold in the Communities category for the village square

The **website** (www.wolvey.org) is now well established and remains an important part of the communication process in and around the village. The Council are currently in the process of improving and modernising it.

The Parish Council **newsletter** is also an important part of that process. As a direct result of the Action Plan the Parish Council published its first, quarterly newsletter in the Spring of 2008. The newsletter is free and is delivered by a band of local volunteers to all of the households in the Parish. It has proved a valuable tool in raising the profile of the Parish Council and informing the local community about the role of the Council and its activities.

The **Christmas tree** was again magnificent and the council thanks all the volunteers for making the "switch-on" evening a great success

Last year the Parish Council took over responsibility for **mowing the grass** areas around the village. Despite a few teething problems, on the whole it was a success. A few changes have been made for this year which, hopefully, will provide a much better service.

The council is in the process of replacing out of date and soon to be illegal mercury **street lights**. We will be starting with Fernhill Way, Bracken Drive and Brookfield Drive in the near future.

After installing a **new bus shelter** in the square last year, we have been awarded a grant to replace the one in Bazzard Road.

The council has also employed an **odd job person** to carry out several tasks in and around the village.

Wolvey Parish Council is very pleased to report that in February 2009 it received the award of **Quality Parish Council**. The Quality Parish Council scheme provides a benchmark of best practice and demonstrates to the community that the council is effective and properly managed. In order to achieve Quality Status, parish and town councils must demonstrate that they have reached the standard required by passing several tests.

The application involved the production of a portfolio of evidence and attending an interview with an accreditation panel. This panel were very impressed with all the

work the parish council has been doing to represent the residents of Wolvey, and they were unanimous in their decision to approve Wolvey Parish Council's application.

After last years substantial increase in the precept, the Council made a conscious effort not to do the same this year, and whilst still offering support to all the various projects and benefactors in and around the village, we have also looked after the Council Tax payers pockets.

Finance Report for year and regulatory procedures

The precept for the year 2008 - 2009 was £30,000

Other receipts amounted to £ 47413

The total expenditure for the year was £66642

There was an increase in receipts was due to a substantial increase in activity of the parish council and an unusual number of successful applications for grants, including:

- a) £10000 from BBC Breathing Places – for provision of a boardwalk at the Wetland Reserve
- b) £10000 from Rugby Borough Council Rural Development Fund (also for the boardwalk)
- c) £582 from Heart of England Community Fund- towards printing of the Wolvey Parish Plan
- d) £1577 from Rugby Borough Council for electrical maintenance of the Playing Fields pavilion
- e) £2450 from Warwickshire County Council to set up a Community First Responder scheme
- f) £6409 from Warwickshire County Council to purchase a new bus shelter
- g) £1551 from Rugby Borough Council and £350 from Warwickshire County Council as the parish council has taken responsibility for cutting grass verges
- h) £3742 under section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 for the provision of three new benches and a public notice board
- i) Donations of £550 from local residents for hanging baskets and planters

The total expenditure increased from £19737 in 2007-08 to £66642 in 2008-09. This is because there was significant capital expenditure during the year. This included £25690 to construct a boardwalk through the Old Cricket Field Wetland Reserve.

Also purchased were a replacement bus shelter, three new benches and a new notice board, for a combined total of £11,021. Payments in the accounts also included the replacement of electrics at the playing fields pavilion, the printing of the parish plan, the production of a new parish newsletter, parish council elections, and additional costs of training and administration towards the attainment of Quality Parish Council status

This year saw the successful completion of the Parish Plan. Expenses for the year, including printing of the booklet, amounted to £1335

The revenue budget is the amount of money necessary for the Parish Council to carry out its statutory requirements. In other words it is the amount of money required for the Parish Council to function lawfully.

The total of the revenue budget for the year was £7952

The street lights in Wolvey are owned and maintained by Wolvey Parish Council. The costs of maintenance and electricity accounted for £4094.

Due to expected increases in energy costs (and it's responsibility to the environment) the parish council has begun a programme of gradual upgrading of streetlights to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency and reduce costs in the future.

For the first time, the parish council undertook the responsibility for cutting the grass verges in and around the village at a cost of £1400 (which was more than offset by funding obtained from Rugby Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council)

A total of £7528 was given as donations/ grants to organisations within the parish and to charities.

These included:

£690 to the Air Ambulance (which includes donations of £190) made at the Christmas tree switch-on evening)

£25.00 to Rugby Citizens Advice Bureau

£25.00 to Vitalise

£300 each to the Wolvey Brownies, Baby & Toddler Group and the Junior Cricket Club

£200 to the new Wolvey Scouts group

£350 to Wolvey Pre-school

£2000 to Wolvey Church and

£650 to Baptist Chapel to assist with the maintenance of their burial grounds

Plus an additional £350 for the Baptist Chapel organ refurbishment

£1500 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 appointed Clement Keys as the external auditor for this year.

For the year ended 31st March 2008, 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 and the parish council website.

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.

As a result of an increase in activity, of wishes expressed in the Parish Plan and of the expected increases in costs of energy, the annual precept was increased for the year 2008-09. However, with regard to the current economic climate, the parish council decided to freeze the precept for the year 2009-10 and to pay any increased expenditure from funds held in reserve.

Councillor John Hawkins (Chairman)

Margaret Cartwright (Proper Officer/ Responsible Financial Officer)

29th April, 2009