

# Annual Parish Assembly

Parishioners of Wotton-under-Edge are invited to  
the Civic Centre, Wotton-under-Edge  
Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017, at 7pm

*Cllr Paul Smith*  
Mayor of Wotton

## Agenda

- 1) Welcome, Introductions & receive absence apologies from Councillors
- 2) Adoption of Previous Minutes of Annual Parish Assembly of 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 & any Matters Arising from those Minutes
- 3) Brief Report from the Mayor Cllr Paul Smith (5 mins)
- 4) Brief reports from Town Council Committee Chairs (15mins total):
  - Planning (Cllr T Luker)
  - Footpaths (Cllr R Claydon)
  - Allotments (Cllr P Barton)
  - Regeneration (Cllr A Kendall)
- 5) Receive brief updates from Council supported organisations (20 mins in total):
  - Wotton Youth Partnership
  - Wotton Library
  - Wotton in Bloom
  - Wotton Swimming pool
  - Wotton Community Sports Foundation
  - Synwell Playing Fields Committee
  - Wotton Heritage Centre
- 6) Brief report from Cllr Dr JE Cordwell on County Council matters (3 mins)
- 7) Brief report from a District Councillor on District Council matters (3 mins)
- 8) Any brief questions or comments from the Public on Town Affairs before Parishioners are invited to meet Councillors & staff and share a glass.....!



WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL





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**(DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED) MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY**

**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 at 7pm in the Civic Centre**



**Present:** Councillors P Smith (Mayor), R Claydon, John Cordwell, N Clement, K Collins, T Luker, A Wilkinson, P Smith, P Barton, A Kendall, N Pinnegar, L Farmer.

In Attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey & all council staff Members of the Public 22

- 1) **Welcome, Introductions & receive apologies** Apologies for absence received from Cllr June Cordwell. A two minute silence was held for the bombing victims today in Brussels.
- 2) **Adoption of Previous Minutes** of Annual Parish Assembly of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015 & any Matters Arising from those Minutes. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve the Minutes as presented, all in favour.
- 3) **Guest speaker; SDC Public Space Manager, Mr Carlos Novoth.** Mr Novoth was welcomed and introduced the new waste and recycling measures to be rolled out over the next 8 months across the district including in Wotton after much analysis & consultation. Emphasis is on trying to change behaviour and attitudes towards waste and redirect from landfill, which costs £104 per ton (36,000 tons went to landfill last year as opposed to 11,000 tons recycled). Not much fly tipping has been seen from the introduction of bulky waste charges last September; links to furniture recycling projects have been emphasized. The garden waste scheme operates currently but is not available to all yet. Veolia's contract will terminate in June and Ubico (a public consortium) will start in July, operating from a recently purchased Gossington depot. Mr Novoth showed a new small food waste receptacle/kitchen caddy and a larger grey 25L bin for outside which residents will receive in the autumn inside their wheelie bins. For those on difficult access roads who receive bags, these will now be beige instead of black. Collections will start November with alternate weeks for normal refuse and weekly for recyclables. Operators work on a 4 day week therefore bank holidays should have virtually no impact, although collection day itself may change. A question enquired about the Javelin Park Incinerator, however this is a County Council issue and the SDC officer could not answer, however stressed that SDC measures hoped to reduce products for the incinerator. Another question concerned hazards on narrow pavements from waste bags, however this is difficult for SDC to address and residents should be careful to place bags/receptacles where appropriate. Mr Novoth was thanks for his presentation. All information is on the SDC website.
- 4) **Brief Report from the Mayor:** Cllr Paul Smith.

The Mayor said that the Council had seen a busy year, thanked the staff for all their hard work, welcomed the new caretaker, and congratulated the Deputy Clerk on exam success. New councillors of Lucy Farmer, Nicholas Pinnegar and Alastair Kendall were welcomed. The new Town Council website is now live, with much praise received. The Chipping Club Room has been taken over by the Town Trust with a number of changes made such

heating and safety improvements, and an interconnecting door to the youth centre in order to increase youth sessions. The youth services contract has been renegotiated for a further 3 years. The new Community Plan is being printed this week after much local consultation after being updated from 2005. The Tolsey Clock underwent extensive repairs late Spring 2015. The Town Council was awarded Foundation Status under the Local Council Award Scheme – and the next level of Quality Status is being applied for this week. Extra financial and council support for the Heritage Centre will allow it to prosper going forward and will see it also become a visitor information centre welcoming tourists from the adjacent car park. The Town Council has been approached by a developer investigating land behind the fire station for a new town car park – with a small amount of housing, and the Town Council has given support in principle for the new car park and awaits the planning application in due course, in addition to public consultation events. The Precept for 2016/17 will be £270,746 a rise of 2.4% - the increase largely attributable to SDC withdrawing subsidy grants to all parish and town councils, however actual council tax bills will show a fall of 0.2% due to new housing numbers. More financial data is available in the accompanying annual parish booklet, also on the website. The Town Council continues to give financial support for other services such as Synwell Playing Fields, Citizens Advice Bureau, Wotton Swimming Pool, the Youth Centre and Wotton Library.

5) **Annual Police Report** for 2015/16. No member of Police present, however a report is in the written booklet provided.

6) Reports from Town Council Committee Chairs:

- **Planning:** Cllr Terry Luker. The report in the booklet shows Council activity in responding to planning applications.
  - **Footpaths:** Cllr Paul Smith. In addition to the booklet report, the Council is continuing its rolling survey of all footpaths, 4 new Scotts Pines have been planted at the Clump by the Cotswold Wardens, who have also rebuilt walls at Holywell Leaze, and plan an outdoor classroom of stone. A walking festival in town is planned if enough volunteers become involved.
  - **Allotments:** Cllr Paul Barton. New water regulations are being investigated regarding New Rd site with a seminar soon to consider options. Path safety and stabilization will also be considered. 6 plots are currently vacant out of 76 with a waiting list in operation. Cllr Barton spoke humorously of the virtues of fruit and vegetable gardening.
  - **Regeneration Partnership:** Cllr Roger Claydon. A large portion of time was taken up producing the updated Community Plan (public members of the group were thanked for their input) and its priorities were explained as many initiatives aimed at increasing tourism. Over the year, St Mary's churchyard received clearance work by the Clerk and volunteers along with Cotswold Wardens, also with significant stone wall repairs. The Wotton in Bloom baskets were once again marvelous. The farmers market is suffering falls in numbers thus subsidy is increasing and improvement initiatives are being considered. The Town Hall teas raised over £9000 for good causes and Janet Walshe was thanked for its continued organization.
- 7) Receive brief updates from Council supported organisations
- **Wotton Youth Liaison Group** Katie Elliott. YLG was set up originally as a forum to network & exchange ideas for all youth provision in the town and is now going back to its

roots to reconnect with all organisations. The Youth Centre is benefiting from its expansion recently with its new table tennis table, beanbags, pool table repaired, new wifi and enlarged space. A summer activity programme is being planned to connect up many organization in town and for youth activities in general over summer months. A new youth shelter location is being considered – possibly near the fire station or at the WCSF site. The Youth Centre will be open at the Clubs and Group Fair on 30<sup>th</sup> April at the Town Hall for all to visit and see the centre.

- **Wotton Library.** No attendee, however a written report provided in booklet.
- **Wotton in Bloom.** No attendee, however a written report provided in booklet.
- **Wotton Swimming Pool:** Alan George spoke of the continued success of the Pool due to a large group of dedicated volunteer helpers and its trained and paid lifeguards. The pool has seen a year of consolidation with attendee numbers slightly down. Improvements to areas such as changing rooms will be done in small stages rather than a massive knock down and rebuild, eg extending to the rear with a veranda. Grants will need to be applied for eg for a new heating system using solar energy which will reduce running costs.
- **Wotton Community Sports Foundation:** Barnaby Beere The site's sports facilities continue to be so well used that there are now fixture clashes it is so popular! The new skatepark opened last spring, and the new access path has now received planning permission with the funds of £95,000 needed almost raised. 5000 trees have been planted with a community orchard of 37 fruit trees. Future plans include a memory walk and a sensory garden in order to broaden appeal away from just being a sporting site. Two containers will replace the stone barn for storage. The partnership with KLB School to run the sport centre was a challenging operation but appears to be running smoothly and startup costs have been covered. Plans also involve 2 bmx tracks, changing rooms, a playground and a 5000k run jogging trail. A 'man shed' is planned – 'last of the summer wine' images portrayed space for older chaps with a place to potter....! Also more tree planting is planned with some black poplars to commemorate World War 1.

The Gazette was thanked for regular positive coverage, and the Town Council also for its continued financial and community support. An artist vision for the site was prepared and will be sent to the Town Council for display on the website.

- **Synwell Playing Fields Committee.** A new management committee has only just been elected and is still learning its role. A report on activities over the past year is in the booklet.
- **Wotton Heritage Centre.** Jeff Walshe outlined the establishment of the centre 22 years ago and its financial difficulties 2 years ago when legacies ran out. Grants have helped survival to a certain extent for capital items but are scarcer for running costs. Closure was likely until a financial and physical agreement was reached with the Town Council to safeguard its future, but still in collaboration with volunteers to run this important town facility. A new Visitor Information Centre will build on the services of the One Stop Shop and offer different opening hours, and aim to increase the use of social media. More volunteers are coming forward and one of the aims is to record current social history for generations in the future to have a record of 'today'.

**The Recreational Trust** – was set up in the 1970's as an umbrella organisation for town clubs and groups to obtain an official status to aid funding. With the cinema ownership transfer and a revitalized managing committee, a new Constitution is being adopted and

some funding will be available for town groups and clubs – grant forms and parameters are being developed.

- 8) **County Council:** Cllr Dr JE Cordwell outlined various initiatives and activities from a county perspective over the past year. The budget increase was approved at +3.99% after public consultation, including 2% for health/social care. Increase to a Band D taxpayer is £43.51 p.a. An extra £2m will be spent on road maintenance. Each County Cllr will also have a budget of £30,000 to be spent their areas – ideas/request to him as soon as possible please. County Council meetings are now webcast and available to view online. Two magistrates courts are closing with the only one now in Cheltenham, a large distance from Wotton. A new LED streetlighting contract has been awarded. A new transport plan has shortlisted Charfield railway station for re-opening but not until 2029! The problems on costings for the Javelin Park incinerator project were explained - contact him for more details. Devolution plans for the county are proceeding, although the costs involved in renegotiating the many & varied service contracts have not been factored in.

The booklet contains a more detailed county report, and an even more in depth report is available on the website or by contacting Dr JE Cordwell directly.

- 9) **District Council:** District Cllr Ken Tucker gave a brief update in addition to the written report. The Dryleaze Court social housing left hand side building will be demolished and replaced as it does not conform to modern standards and cannot easily be modified. Synwell residents have been supported regarding the Full Moon application to demolish and build houses on its site – a business plan by residents for the pub's re-use is awaited over the 6 month delay period granted. District Councillor boundary changes now include Stinchcombe to this Warded area. Overall SDC budget rise agreed of +1.99%, above this level would trigger a referendum which would cost 0.3% of it. Cllr Tucker was thanked by the Synwell community for his efforts regarding the Full Moon application.

10) **Comments from the Public on Town Affairs.** Mr R Allway expressed displeasure at the possibility of land being built on behind the fire station. Although a car park is needed, the view of houses from the southern approach would forever spoil the image of the town. Mrs R MacInnes requested that more shrubs be considered for planting along Marchesi Walk.

***The Assembly concluded at 8.35pm where Parishioners were invited to share refreshments with Councillors and staff***

Signed ..... Date .....

Chairman & Town Mayor

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

As your Mayor I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to the 2017 Annual Parish Assembly and hope you will all take part in the assembly tonight.



To commence, I would like to thank the Clerk and staff who have worked hard during the year, not only because of the busy year we have had, but also for their advice in keeping us all on the straight and narrow in accordance with statutory and other requirements.

Next I would like to thank our Councillors who freely give their time to attend sometimes lengthy meetings and for their time given to various projects that have been carried out over the year. In the last year we bid farewell to Cllr Kate Collins and welcomed Cllr Andra Proctor.

Thirdly, I would like to thank the Chairs of Committees and their Committee members, together with working groups, which in many cases are made up of not just Councillors but also co-opted residents, who not only attend meetings, but do a great deal of work outside of the committee.

The Town Council continues to provide significant financial support to the swimming pool. Significant financial support, from the Town Council, is also provided to run the Youth Centre, which with a grant from the Police Crime Commissioner's fund is giving three sessions per week.

As was mentioned at last year's meeting the Town Council was awarded the NALC Foundation Level Award.. We have since gained the Silver award and may now attempt the Quality Gold Award which is the highest level. Also since last year's meeting, the Council via a small working group from the Town Regeneration Committee, has completed the new Community Plan, which is published on the Town Council web site [www.wotton-under-edge.com](http://www.wotton-under-edge.com) This is well worth reading as it shows the direction the Town Council will be moving in to meet the recommendations within the report.

The Heritage Centre has been granted additional support for its operations from the Town Council since income does not support its running costs. Also the Heritage Centre is in negotiations with the Town Trust on a new lease for its present building, for its continuation for the future.

I trust that residents and visitors to the town are enjoying the newly landscaped area in Rope Walk which was financed by a grant of £7000. Stroud District Council is also due to carry out improvements to the Rope Walk toilets which they manage.

The Town Council has supported a Wotton Walking Festival which is being organized by a group of Town Councillors and residents. Twelve walks will take place between 5<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> May. Programmes are available in the One Stop Shop and various places in the Town. It is planned that the Walking Festival will be an annual event.

This year's Annual Parish Assembly has a similar format to last year. Committee Chairmen will report and there will be an opportunity for all to meet with Councillors on a less formal basis at the end of the meeting. We hope that this will provide for a rewarding interchange of views and ideas. We will do our best to answer questions that arise, but please be understanding if we are not able to respond directly at the meeting.

*Cllr Paul Smith, TOWN MAYOR AND CHAIRMAN*

**WOTTON-UNDER EDGE TOWN COUNCIL UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS**

Accounts Heading	2016/2017	2015/2016
<b>INCOME</b>		
Rent, Lettings, Interest, Fees etc	£57,683	£53,122
Precept	£270,746	£264,373 <i>2.4% increase</i>
Local Council Tax Support Grant	£0	£13,872
	<b>£328,429</b>	<b>£331,367</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Allotments	£2,649	£682
Town Regeneration	£9,332	£10,489
Civic Centre	£22,777	£25,525
Old Town Toilets	£5,283	£5,828
Youth Projects	£18,656	£12,935 <i>£4000 grant-funded projects</i>
Cemetery/Churchyard	£11,391	£12,441
Library	£2,700	£2,700
Grants	£1,065	£1,066
Swimming Pool	£28,000	£28,000
Synwell Playing Field	£2,700	£2,700
Heritage Centre	£3,400	£0
CCTV	£1,892	£1,535
Wages - buildings and facilities	£36,669	£28,862 <i>2016/17-added wage previously in C/Centre heading</i>
Chipping Clubroom	£0	£5,416
T.Hall Capital Expenditure	£2,000	£4,000
Footpaths & Holywell	£0	£386
From Earmarked Funds	£15,412	£16,680
<i>Sub-total</i>	<b>£163,926</b>	<b>£159,245</b>
Amenities and Other	£27,847	£21,333 <i>2016/17-grant funded £6350 for Rope Walk project</i>
Administration & Office incl. Salaries	£110,825	£104,090 <i>1% salaries increase &amp; ill retirmt insurance cover</i>
Contingency	£0	£1,322 <i>C/Centre emergency evac. Chair</i>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£302,598</b>	<b>£285,990</b> <i>up 6%</i>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£328,429</b>	<b>£331,367</b> <i>minus 1%</i>

**GRANTS AND SUPPORT TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

Recipient	FY 2016/17	FY 2015/16
Synwell Playing Field	£2,700	£2,700
CAB (plus free use of premises/photocopier)	£230	£178
County Air Ambulance	£150	£150
Chamber of Trade (xmas event & leaflets)	£300	£400
Insight Gloucestershire	£0	£100
Tabernacle Grasscutting	£260	£195
Heritage Centre	£3,400	£0
Wotton in Bloom	£1,900	£1,650
Swimming Pool	£28,000	£28,000
Library (and exterior maintenance)	£2,700	£2,700
Traders - Xmas Trees & Shop Window Competition	£615	£605
Blues Festival (SDC Funded)	£0	£300
Open Gardens Event (SDC Funded)	£300	£0
Wotton Community Sports Foundation (safe path)	£5,000	£0
Victim Support/Glos Chest Fund/Cobalt	£125	£0
Walking Festival	£850	£0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£46,530</b>	<b>£36,978</b>
<b>Town Council Support to W-U-E Town Trust:</b>		
	<b>FY 2016/17</b>	<b>FY 2015/16</b>
Public Works Loan (Repairs to Arts Centre Floor)	£3,918	£4,015
Town Hall (from earmarked funds)	£2,000	£5,520 <i>New boiler</i>
Chipping Clubroom(Building & heating works/legal fees)	£0	£8,136
Town Hall Rebuild Permanent Endowment	£2,000	£2,000 <i>Charity Commission requirement</i>
Support for Loss of Rent	£4,700	£4,700 <i>(Youth Centre, Chipping Car Park)</i>
Heritage Centre Maintenance	£2,321	£0 <i>From reserves</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£14,939</b>	<b>£24,371</b>

## One Stop Shop Statistic Trends 2017

There was an 8% overall increase in enquiries dealt with at the One Stop Shop in 2016, compared with the previous year.

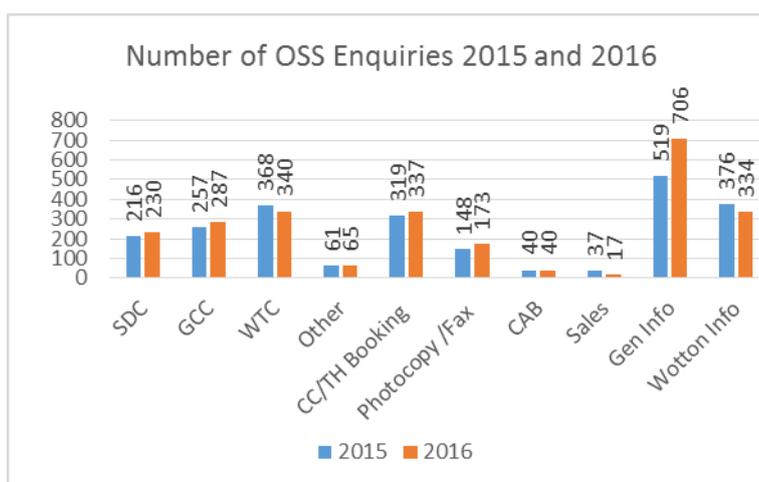
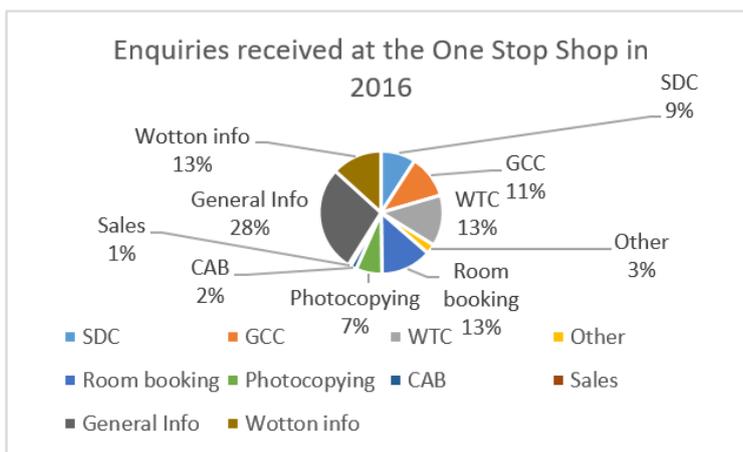
Enquiries in most areas increased during 2016. Although there was a slight reduction in enquiries about Wotton Town Council issues and local information, room booking enquiries and related issues increased due to new regular bookings and greater usage of the Youth Centre and Chipping Clubroom. Overall, WTC, room booking matters and requests for local information accounted for 39% of issues dealt with.

There were a higher number of SDC related enquiries, probably due to the introduction of the new refuse and recycling service. Similarly, the number of GCC issues increased predominantly due to reports of highways related issues.

There was also an exceptional demand for information on bus services and timetables following changes to bus services in September 2016 leading to a 36% rise in the General Information category.

Enquiries peaked from September to November due to:

- the number of enquiries received for information on bus services and timetables;
- the introduction of the new refuse and recycling service; and
- changes to the collection of allotment rents from April to October, resulting in renewal and payment enquiries and the allocation of vacant allotments to new tenants.



One Stop Shop Statistics 2016

Month	SDC	GCC	WTC	Other	CC/TH Booking	Photocopy /Fax	CAB	Sales	Gen Info	Wotton Info	Totals
Jan	19	24	14	2	22	24	3	0	53	28	189
Feb	14	44	26	4	34	18	3	0	42	29	214
March	23	26	46	6	30	14	7	2	41	41	236
April	18	26	31	9	23	13	5	0	38	34	197
May	15	14	28	4	22	14	5	0	28	22	152
June	21	25	45	6	27	19	3	0	56	32	234
July	21	25	24	6	33	7	3	0	39	33	191
Aug	17	17	24	6	22	15	4	2	114	34	255
Sept	16	23	17	5	32	12	1	1	125	27	259
Oct	18	27	49	11	25	12	0	5	41	24	212
Nov	31	22	27	4	43	16	3	4	102	22	274

One Stop Shop Statistics 2015

Month	SDC	GCC	WTC	Other	CC/TH Booking	Photocopy /Fax	CAB	Sales	Gen Info	Wotton Info	Totals
Jan	15	21	68	5	27	21	9	4	45	30	245
Feb	13	46	20	3	28	21	4	1	45	30	211
March	12	20	53	6	30	12	2	1	31	23	190
April	23	13	50	9	26	14	1	1	42	21	200
May	24	13	42	4	36	12	2	1	51	23	208
June	18	14	22	6	32	3	2		30	34	161
July	23	12	20	3	19	10	2	3	26	36	154
Aug	17	19	20	6	16	12	1	1	42	36	170
Sept	16	27	14	8	38	10	4		38	48	203
Oct	24	25	21	4	34	14	7	4	71	43	247
Nov	22	37	28	5	28	17	5	13	75	41	271
Dec	9	10	10	2	5	2	1	8	23	11	81
<b>Totals 2015</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>2,341</b>
Totals 2014	258	271	371	44	355	262	72	25	532	477	2,667

## Wotton Under Edge and Area Policing Team

*Police Sergeant 1754 Simon Davey*

*Police Constable 2327 Matt Firth*

*PCSO 9222 Mark Lifton*

*Contact details for the above are available at the Police Information Point in the town library.*



**Sgt 251754  
Simon  
Davey**



**PC 252327  
Matt  
Firth**



**PCSO 249222  
Mark  
Lifton**

Local officers are available to carry out crime prevention surveys in the local community. These are especially beneficial for elderly / vulnerable persons living in the community. Please do spread the word – contact us on 101 and we will happily arrange a visit. We are able to put people in contact with various organisations, such as Village Agents and Mears, who are able to help out vulnerable people at home and provide free items to assist in crime prevention, such as

- Shed alarms
- “No Cold Callers” stickers
- Personal attack / help alarms

Unfortunately due to various reasons the above team is somewhat depleted and have not been spending a lot of time in the Wotton area. On a plus note though we have a large number of new police officers being trained up at Headquarters. A number of these will be stationed in the Stroud / Dursley area which will hopefully ease the pressure and allow us to focus more on Neighbourhood Policing.

### Wotton Under Edge Priorities Report for March 2016 to March 2017.

#### **1. Reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour in and around Wotton Under Edge**

During the Autumn and early Winter of 2016 PCSO Lifton carried out a large amount of foot patrol in areas of concern – notably the Library, the disused park at Pitman Place and the site of the former Full Moon pub. He worked in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Warden Rachel Pratt and the issue appears to have improved.

The continued locking of the gates at Symn Lane Park is still being effective in reducing the number of calls to this location. Officers do still carry out patrols in this area as well as the Chipping Car Park.

Increased patrols have been carried out around the Library in Wotton and have led to a reduction in the number of calls received to police. Most calls are in relation to anti-social behaviour (ASB) where youths congregate at the rear or front of the library at night time. Officers are informed of any other issues whilst visiting the Library Police Information Point during the day.

The long promised CCTV system was installed in North Nibley to deter any ASB and this appears to have been a success with no further incidents reported.

Police have worked with the Stroud District Council housing department recently to remove a problem tenant in Wotton. Numerous ASB related calls had been received since the person moved into the area, and since they have been moved on the calls to that location have ceased.

A property on Wortley Road had concerns in relation to ASB and patrols have been carried out by Police and Stroud District Council. A survey was passed to nearby residents to see how the issue was. Police have put in place Anti-Social Behaviour signs are in situ and there have not been any calls for some time.

## **2 Address community concerns of speeding, parking, antisocial use of motor vehicles and to promote the education of young drivers in safe driving.**

Officers of the Special Constabulary, led by Special Chief Inspector Steve Lindsay and Special Sergeant Andy Staples have been taking the lead on this priority. They continue to be active in the Wotton Under Edge area – you may well have seen them out and about in their speed camera and ANPR equipped van.

When resources and time allows, officers have been conducting speed checks along various roads in the area. These have not just been neighbourhood officers, but response officers from Dursley as well. Speed checks have been carried out on New Road, Wickwar Road and Synwell Lane.

Concerns were raised by residents in Gloucester Road, WUE of vehicle speed prior to entering the 50MPH as you leave the town. Police put a M500 speed collator in situ and the results were passed onto those concerned. Another set of surveys are to be carried out by Highways soon.

Proactive patrols have been carried out by PC Firth from intelligence about drivers driving under the influence of drugs. Drivers have been stopped and due to the circumstances the driver has carried out a drug roadside test. This has resulted in the test coming back positive and the driver being arrested for drug driving. We have had two such occurrences recently – one of which resulted in an arrest no more than half an hour after the intelligence was received.

A Section 59 ASB driving notice was given to a driver who was driving anti-socially in KLB car park. The occupant was seen on CCTV and was issued the notice at their home address. If another notice is issued within 6 months the vehicle can be seized from the driver.

We as police are limited as to what we can do in relation to parking issues. This is a matter that should be dealt with by Council Parking Enforcement Officers, who I see have been proactively targeting Wotton recently.

We have recently run a “Drive for Life” event at KLB School engaging with the 6<sup>th</sup> form students and promoting the road safety message. The event was well received by students, staff and parents and was deemed a success. The event was run in conjunction with the Road Safety Partnership, Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service and South Western Ambulance Service.

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Potters Pond Development. Finally completed, after some small adjustments to the footbridge and entrance road.

Fountain Crescent site. Still no decision on any development at the moment by SDC.

Holywell Farm and Land behind the Fire Station. Two major developments. The community was overwhelmed with views, with strong objections against Holywell and many views both for and against the latter.



Community Infrastructure Levy "CIL" mostly replaces S106 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. 15% of the total CIL collected for development is paid to the town council from SDC as the collecting authority. However this rises to 25% if the town has a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### **The Town Council was consulted by SDC on 98 planning applications**

<i>Town Council Recommendation</i>	<i>District Council Decisions</i>	<i>Number</i>
Support	Permission/Consent	42
Object	Withdrawn	2
Object	Permission	13
Object	Awaiting Decision	8
Object	Refusal	4
Comment Only	Permission/Consent	18
Support	Refusal	1
Comment Only	Refusal	1
Support	Awaiting Decision	7
Comment Only	Awaiting Decision	2



*Cllr Terry Luker  
Chairman Planning Committee*

## FOOTPATHS

### PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND AMENITY AREAS COMMITTEE

This year the Committee welcomed two new co-opted members of the public, Karen Bailey and Pauline McGuinness and said farewell to Joan Deveney who had been a member for many years.



Members of the committee decided in June 2016 to initiate its periodic review of the Parish's public rights of way and hope to complete the exercise in April 2017. Also, in response to an action arising from the 2016 Community Plan update, members have started a survey of the town's footways and pavements to identify problem areas. The Committee welcomes reports on any footpath/footway problems from members of the community.

The Committee also maintains oversight of the town's Holywell Leaze amenity area. It is hoped that the Cotswold Wardens, with financial support from the town council, will shortly be undertaking repairs to the old mill wall and also installing a stone circle seating area.



Some members of the Committee are helping to organise Wotton's first Walking Festival which will take place between 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> May 2017 with a selection of walks of various lengths planned around the town and its surroundings. The Town Council and Chamber of Trade have provided financial support to get this initiative underway. More details can be found on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/WottonWalkingFestival](http://www.facebook.com/WottonWalkingFestival)) or Twitter (Twitter@WottonWalkingFest).

The 2017/2018 budget for the Committee is £500.



*Hollywell Leaze picnic area*

*Clr R Claydon*



## Allotments Committee Report



**New Road** allotments has a total of forty two plots with just two full plots and one half plot still available.

The much needed shoring up of paths at New Road has been done by Mr Howse. We would like to thank him for disassembling, transporting and storing the wood used in the shoring up in order to keep overall costs very low. Also another thank you to Mr Jones of Knapp Rd allotments for being instrumental in supplying the wood used. (Nice community spirit)

The gradient at the main entrance was surveyed by Chairman Paul Smith to reduce the gradient but any improvements are being put on the back burner because of cost and other complications, however using the other gate may be easier for some.

A posh new notice board has been installed for New Road too, so gradually things are coming together to improve the site.

**Knapp Road** consists of thirty five plots with just two half plots available.

After speaking to some of those who rent allotments at Knapp Rd it has been decided to leave the bramble patches because of the wild life it encourages, not forgetting bird nesting season.

Thank you to Mr Wilson and Mr Morrow ( have to be careful with Jim's surname) for judging best allotments at Knapp Rd

There is a new inspection system that will result in less plots covered in weeds and improve things in general. On this subject I am often wandering around the allotments so please do approach me if you have any suggestions or input regarding improving things.

This brings me on to asking for both allotment sites to form a committee because you would receive many benefits. If anyone is interested please contact the Town Council and or also chat among yourselves about doing so....

Apologies to all for some things not happening sooner, like the rubbish skips, the reason being a key member of the Town Council staff regarding allotments has been on extended sick leave. However hopefully a normal service will be resumed soon.

So - if you are interested in renting an allotment and obtaining the many benefits of health both physical and mental, lovely fresh produce to eat plus making new friends then contact the Town Council.

*Regards Cllr Paul Barton*



## **Town Regeneration Partnership - Annual Report March 2017**

The Town Regeneration Partnership exists to represent those who have an interest in Wotton-under-Edge and its future. It is a partnership between the Town Council and members of community organisations in the town.



**Budget:** The Town Regeneration budget for FY17/18 is £5000, providing support for the Farmers Market, Wotton in Bloom, Flower Baskets, Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum, Christmas Trees, and Christmas Shop Window Prizes.

**Community Plan:** Following the publication of the Community Plan, members of the Regeneration Partnership, along with other councillors and community representatives, have been working on the action plan to ensure that activity arising from the plan is monitored and new activity is encouraged.

At each of the Partnership meetings two of the action points form the focus of the agenda and will ensure that the whole action plan is reviewed and updated in just over a year

1. Need for a diverse selection of shops and reduction in number of vacant premises.
2. Improve condition of verges, pavements and footways.
3. Promote tourism.
4. Provide more parking in the town at no extra cost to residents.
5. Improve public toilets.
6. Improve footpaths and open spaces including Holywell, churchyard, cemetery and allotments.
7. Promote arts, entertainments and festivals.
8. Expand youth facilities and activities.
9. Promote and encourage a welcoming and “inclusive” community.
10. Improve traffic management.

**Festivals:** Grants have been given to Under the Edge Arts for the Blues Festival which will continue in future under a newly formed charity; the new Wotton Walking Festival and to the Wotton Open Gardens and Sculpture Trail from In Our Towns funding.

**Wotton in Bloom:** The baskets have once again been superb and stayed up into October.

**Farmers Market:** There has been a continued decline in the number of stalls and, as a result, Town Council subsidy has increased. An aspiration to encourage a monthly general outdoor market was declared, however this is dependent on provision of increased parking for the town.

**Town Hall Teas:** The Council makes the Town Hall available free to community groups on Sundays for Town Hall Teas. In the last year, Town Hall Teas raised over £9000 for good causes and continues to be very well subscribed.

**The Heritage Centre:** Under a grant agreement with the Town Council, the Heritage Centre has become a Visitor Information Centre. Council funding has helped secure the future of the Centre.

**Christmas Trees:** Once again the installation of the trees and lighting was undertaken by the Chamber of Trade with financial support to traders of £430 from the Town Council.

**Tourism:** Members of the partnership are actively involved in the formation of a new tourism group to promote tourism in the area between the Cotswolds and the Severn.

**Dementia Friendly Town:** Work has begun to raise awareness of the issues faced by those with dementia, with the intention of Wotton becoming a recognised Dementia Friendly town.

***Cllr Alastair Kendall- Chairman Town Regeneration Partnership***

## Wotton Youth Partnership

### Report on our work: April 2016- March 2017

During the last year, Wotton Youth Partnership has provided funding and helped to promote and support a wide variety of activities for young people in the town. Our work has included:

- Subsidising a programme of sporting activities for children and young people at Sport Wotton during the 2016 summer holidays (with thanks to John Cordwell and the GCC Children's Activity Fund, Sam Failes, Sharron Bates and the team at Sport Wotton),
- Gathering information and publishing a brochure promoting the many and various activities on offer across the town during the 2016 summer holidays (with thanks to Moira Buist and Wotton Directory and all of the activity providers who submitted information),
- Helping to fund the new shelter at Wotton Community PARC (with thanks to the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire's Fund and WCSF),
- Helping to fund youth work sessions at the Youth Centre (with thanks to Wotton Town Council and Stroud District Youth Council),
- Helping to fund a residential training event for young volunteers from the Youth Centre (with thanks to Youth & Community Services and Stroud District Youth Council),
- Helping to set up Wotton Heritage Project - a film-based story-gathering activity where young people are invited to interview and film members of the community talking about their memories and experiences of life in the town (with thanks to Councillors Paul Barton and Terry Luker, Jeff Walshe and Wotton Heritage Centre, KLB school and Stroud District Youth Council),
- Helping to fund a graffiti project at Under the Edge Arts,
- Beginning a conversation to explore how Wotton might become the first 'Mental Health Champion Town' and gathering information about all of the many services on offer to young people who are experiencing mental health challenges (with thanks to Wotton Recreational Trust, June Cordwell, Jess Jenkins, Mary Cook and the Time Out group and a wide variety of local community members and organisations with an interest in the subject of mental health),
- Working in partnership with the Lions to promote the activities and award schemes they offer,
- Offering funding to the Bearlands Development group who are working to create a new playground space for younger children,
- Facilitating a collaborative process, based on graphic ideas drawn from members of the Youth Centre and Councillor Andra Proctor, to help create a sign outside the Youth Centre (pending approval from Stroud District Council).

Partnership working is increasingly at the heart of what we are aiming to do and, to reflect that, we have now changed our name from Wotton Youth Liaison Group to Wotton Youth Partnership. We would like to thank all those who have worked with us over the last twelve months, through attending meetings, collaborating on activities and providing us with grant funding. In November the group will be looking to appoint a new Chair. To find out more about getting involved, please contact Katie Elliott at [mail@katieelliott.com](mailto:mail@katieelliott.com) or call 07790 635378. Thank you!



## Wotton Library 2016-17

### Children at the Library

We had a successful Summer Reading Challenge this year with record numbers of children signing up. The theme was 'The Big Friendly Read' based around the works of children's author Roald Dahl, which proved very popular. Some of the crafts on offer were making 'Fantastic Mr Fox masks and finger puppets' and 'BFG ears and Twit beards'.

In October we had a visit from the Up the Road theatre group who performed 'Bardolph's Box' a medley of Shakespeare plays to a captivated year 4 audience from Bluecoat School

At Christmas there was a Christmas Craft corner for children to create something glittery whilst their parents browsed. We also had a workshop making Christmas 'Rockpets'. The children took these home for Christmas however these two were left behind, which may explain why they are looking a little glum.

As well as our seasonal activities we offer Baby Bounce and Rhyme a nursery rhyme singalong which is regularly attended by groups of up to 21 babies.



Our Story time has now moved to an afternoon after school slot and is steadily gaining in popularity with groups of between 5 and 8 children coming along.

### People with mobility difficulties

Our monthly Library Club for people who can't normally get to the library has some spaces. So if you know of anyone who has difficulty getting out & about then please get in touch with us (01453 842115). We offer free transport & tea & biscuits.

### Volunteers

We are grateful to all our volunteers who help to run the library and offer a huge variety of skills, including help with IT, these 'Computer Buddy' sessions can be booked in advance at the library. This year we have also been joined by two young volunteers who are working towards their Duke of Edinburgh award and have found the library an ideal place to learn new skills.



### Opening times

Monday		Closed
Tuesday	10:00 am - 01:00 pm	02:00 pm - 06:00 pm
Wednesday	10:00 am - 01:00 pm	02:00 pm - 05:00 pm
Thursday		Closed
Friday	10:00 am - 01:00 pm	02:00 pm - 05:00 pm
Saturday	09:30 am - 12:30 pm	
Sunday		Closed

[wottonunderedgelibrary@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:wottonunderedgelibrary@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

## WOTTON IN BLOOM 2016

Another fabulous year for Wotton in Bloom! We put up 142 troughs and baskets in the main streets of Wotton, and raised in excess of £10,000 to pay for it all. That is a lot of money, and this is how it's done:

**WHO ARE WE?** A group of local residents who get together every year. Our objective is "to enhance the environment of the main streets of Wotton-under-Edge by provision of floral planting in the form of hanging baskets, troughs and tubs." We all donate our time, resources and expertise to ensure the continued success of Wotton in Bloom.



**WHY DO WE DO IT?** We all love our beautiful town and are thankful to live here. We want to make Wotton even more attractive for residents and visitors. We also want to celebrate the great community spirit that exists in Wotton and benefits us all.

**HOW DO WE DO IT?** We are a legally constituted and independent organisation affiliated to Wotton Recreational Trust, whose registered charity number we are allowed to use. Our constitution states that "the provision of floral planting.....shall be funded by donation or subscription .....from local traders, groups and organisations, members of the public and other funding bodies where appropriate".

**WHO PAYS FOR IT ALL?** In 2016 Wotton in Bloom put up 142 troughs and baskets, and each one cost £80 to make, put up, feed and water from late May until early October. We charged the traders and residents of the main streets £40 per baskets or trough, and we fundraised for the rest of the cost. We also fundraised to pay for full insurance cover and the maintenance work. As it is such a public project we are very aware of our health and safety responsibilities and employ a local professional to undertake maintenance work when needed, including weight checking every single bracket before it is used.

**HOW DO WE FUNDRAISE?** Local residents, visitors, clubs, societies, organisations, businesses, raffles, street collections, collecting boxes in pubs and shops. Everyone is encouraged to support Wotton in Bloom as everyone benefits from it. In 2016 our major supporters were Wotton Town Council, Wotton Chamber of Trade, The Falcon Steakhouse, Clarence Court residents, Oakleaze, Bear Street Garage and Waitrose at Chipping Sodbury. Other donors are too numerous to mention, but we would like to thank everyone who joined in to make Wotton in Bloom the success that it has become.



*Sue Hunt, Wotton in Bloom (Chair)*

## 2016 Season WOTTON POOL

I am very pleased to report that we have enjoyed a successful season, and again I am grateful for the support I have seen coming to the pool from dozens of kindly and generous people giving their time, money, effort and skills to help with the running and the development of the facility. We have also enjoyed the benefit of a core of dedicated and professional employees providing the operational support needed to run the pool day-to-day.

Last summer's season was one of steady operation with attention moving towards the site development plans (see below). The organisation has become mature and the stability has helped to operate the pool safely and successfully. Once again we were delighted to retain the entire management team and the successful mix of sessions (public, lanes, parent and child, families, ladies therapeutic, adult general swim). We continued to offer private bookings and the school use and swimming lessons. These offers are economical, well attended and greatly appreciated by families in the area. The use of the pool during public sessions was 33% higher than last year and this was probably associated with the far better summer weather than previously.

Continuing with last year's successful experience we got the pool ready in advance of the swimming season and used it to train the cadre of lifeguards. This is also a significant contribution to the social, educational and personal development we provide to Wotton youth. We had a useful quota of freshly trained-and-tested supervisors to get the season going, along with the group of lifeguards who we trained last year and remained in the town - many go away to college/university each year.

As with previous years we arranged a public meeting to inform and consult the public of Wotton who pay via council tax for us to run the facility; this was attended by 17 people. We have continued to operate in accord with the keynotes we defined for the facility last year, namely: **safe, high quality, indefinitely ongoing, low maintenance, community enterprise and fun for all.**

**Development project** of remedial work and improvements.

1. replacement of decayed lower parts of the building
2. replacement of external cladding with new cedar cladding
3. replacement of asbestos cement roof, with a composite roof ready to accept a solar water heating system.
4. extension of roof area at south end (overlooking the Severn vale) to provide a small sheltered veranda area (for after-party gathering and for non-swimming people to sit and await swimmers)
5. landscaping of the area beyond the veranda
6. replacement of drains at rear of building
7. internal refurbishment and creation of a reception kiosk



This winter/spring we have completed 1, 2 and 6 (the remedial work, re-cladding of the building and the replacement of the foul drains — that used to block regularly) using much volunteer effort and money from reserves and savings. We are now making grant bids to finance items 3, 4 and 5.

## Wotton Community Sports Foundation - Report April 2017

Another eventful year for our charity, and we're again very pleased with the progress we've made.

The main highlight for the year has to be the successful opening of the safe access path in November 2016. This project was delivered by WCSF in only 2 years from start to finish, and involved obtaining planning permission, negotiating a lease with the adjacent landowner, undertaking a formal tendering process, managing the construction and not forgetting raising over £100,000. The path was completed to a very high standard, and is already being well used by skaters and riders to access the skatepark, runners and walkers using the new jogging trail, plus KLBS pupils who can now do cross-country running around a safe but challenging course adjacent to their site. Our estimate is that this will lead directly to an additional 8,000 visits to our site this year just for the existing facilities, which is a fantastic increase.



The list of groups, organisations and individuals who supported the path with donations and help shows what a diverse community we are now able to serve – it's a great example of a "bridging" activity that brings together peoples from different backgrounds and interests, and builds deep and lasting links within our community. I must especially thank the Barnwood Trust for their ongoing support and interest in our charity, without which we would not have been able to deliver the path in such a short timescale.

The other increase in usage comes from the parkrun events that started in October 2016 and are held every Saturday morning on the site. The group organising this event are very keen, and the event has been well-supported with runners and joggers of all abilities participating and an average turnout of 90 even in the coldest and wettest part of the year. The fastest runners complete the 5km course in under 20 minutes (the course record stands at 16:41), with participants still being cheered in at around 50 minutes at most events. Total distance run so far is over 5,500 person-km after only 10 events.

We also hosted the third round of the Gloucestershire Cross Country running series in December, which was attended by 188 competitive runners and organised by Dursley Running Club, many of whose members are also keen parkrun runners and organisers.

The Astro and 3G pitches continue to be well-used, with a wide variety of groups benefitting from the floodlit all weather surfaces. We're now in our fourth season of operation, and it's really gratifying to see so many clubs and teams from the local area using the pitches. Special praise for Wotton Hockey Club for their league successes and growing their membership so well – Wotton has become a centre of excellence for the sport!

Given our previous estimates of the number of users of the sports pitches, and adding the new parkrun, skatepark and general walkers / joggers leads to an overall estimate of around 120,000 visits per year in total. This is an astonishing figure – to put it into context, this is around one eighth the number of annual visitors to the Eden Project in Cornwall. We feel justifiably proud of our achievements in creating such a popular sports and recreation hub.



Still on the site, we planted our 5,000<sup>th</sup> sapling in November; the tree planting sessions continue to be popular, and a walk around the site shows how the trees planted in previous years are getting established. Furthermore, the fruit trees seem to be settling in well, a subset of them even bearing fruit last Autumn.

The purchase of a tractor in May 2016 has given us some self-

sufficiency with maintenance tasks – it was largely due to this new equipment that we have been able to create the jogging trail around the PARC, and keep our site in a generally tidier state. We were also able to help the Wotton Rugby Club with their installation of a permanent electrical connection to allow them to power their floodlighting, which we hope has helped their training through this winter season.

As a follow on from the path construction, a covered seating area has been built by the skatepark. We hope to add further seating around the site in the coming 12 months, there has been considerable interest already from various groups and organisations in sponsoring benches.

Looking ahead, we hope that we'll be well on the way to creating our BMX dirt track in the coming year, as well as making further progress towards constructing the memory walk, play area, full size artificial pitch and changing rooms on the site; we hope that the full-size 3G pitch will act as a focus for Wotton Rovers Football Club to grow their membership further, providing an all-weather surface for teams to play matches as they outgrow the existing 3G training pitch. In terms of events, we're looking forward to the first Party In The PARC in mid-June, which we hope will become both a popular recurring event and a successful fundraiser for WCSF.

The Sport Wotton joint venture with KLBS to run the combined facilities has been much improved this year, delivering improved usage and revenue across all the facilities, with expectations for further gains in the coming year. Whilst our income position remains challenging in some areas, we now have a clear picture of where costs and revenue arise, and have allocated effort accordingly. For comparison, many sports facilities exist only due to subsidy from their local council - to be in the position where we are generating sufficient revenue to cover our operating costs, and just needing to secure further funds to underpin the long-term replacement of our pitch surfaces is a great achievement. Our special thanks to the Sport Wotton staff and to the KLBS management and site support staff for their commitment to providing facilities for community use, and working with us to host a variety of activities and events on our combined sites.

Looking back at what we've achieved as an organisation since the "dark days" of 2011/12 when any construction seemed like a distant dream, the changes that we have brought about are outstanding, not just in terms of physical facilities, but in forging links and working in cooperation with so many different groups and organisations. All this has only been possible with lots of effort from many people, and there will a continued need for such input if we are to achieve further development of the site and growth in its use.

As ever, we are very grateful for the continuing support from the Wotton Town Council and the multitude of other local groups and organisations that have provided much needed support.

**We look forward to another fantastic year of sport and recreation in Wotton!**

## **SYNWELL PLAYING FIELD Registered Charity No. 301658**

### **Report to the Town Council 2016 – 2017 (our 85<sup>th</sup> Year!)**

In March 2016 a new and enthusiastic committee was formed ensuring that for the foreseeable future Synwell Playing Field will remain a well used community owned asset.



The committee raised a considerable amount of money through Tesco Bags of Help, Wotton Recreational Trust, the Sympathy Lodge and the Gloucestershire Lodge of Agriculture and we are very grateful to all these organisations. The committee itself also raised money through Town Hall Teas, the Charities Fair and a fundraising event on the field in July. It also runs a monthly lottery which raises approx. £100 per month. The money raised has been used to; replace the four toddler swing seats, purchase two new pieces of play equipment, an Abu Dhabi (a small climbing frame/slide for young children) and a four

child Ladybird Roundabout/Springer (to be installed shortly). The very well used Witches Hat/Hanging Scales has been temporarily taken out of use whilst we wait for the ropes and seats to be replaced, this will be happening very soon.

We would like to thank Wotton Town Council for their support during the year helping the new Committee to settle in and find its feet. We would particularly like to thank the Town Clerk for all her help and advice.

The field was used in summer 2016 for a fund raising event by Meningitis Now and the Wotton Baptist Church for a play scheme and barbecue. The committee continues to look at ways to open up the field to other users during the summer months.

The football pitch underwent its annual remedial work in June 2016. Wotton Rovers continue to use the field weekly during the winter, both the senior and junior teams (under 14s and under 18s) playing 35 matches last season. An updating of the changing rooms has begun. The ceilings have been replastered and will soon be painted. The aging water heater is no longer either efficient or cost effective so it will shortly be replaced.

A survey carried out in September 2016 by G.P.F.A. reported that the Playing Field Pitch, the Site and Ancillary Facilities and the Playground Facilities were rated as Good.

A notice board has been built and installed near the Club to advertise field events, and the field's profile has been raised on Facebook.

We are now turning our attention to the 14s – 17s age groups and hope to provide them with some kind of outdoor fitness equipment. This age group regularly use the field but presently their needs are not well catered for.

In March 2017 the committee, through Fields in Trust, began the process of negotiating a new 20 year lease with the Pavilion Sports and Social Club. As mentioned previously 2017 is the field's 85<sup>th</sup> year and the committee has great plans to celebrate this milestone over the weekend of 8/9/10 September. The committee looks forward to celebrating with the local community in September and meeting the challenges that the next year will bring.

***Anne Hartley, Secretary***



## Wotton under Edge Historical Society Museum & Heritage Centre

The Chipping, Wotton under Edge, Gloucestershire, GL12 7AD

Telephone: 01453 521541

Facebook: Wotton Heritage Centre

Email: wuehistsoc@gmail.com

Website: [www.wottonheritage.com](http://www.wottonheritage.com)

### Wotton under Edge Historical Society, Museum and Heritage Centre -2016/17.

The Wotton Heritage Centre management team carried forward the agreement made with the support of the Town Council in 2015/16 to develop the Heritage Centre.

The Historical Society pushed forward with conservation projects while developing the front of the building into a Visitor Information centre. With longer opening hours (now just over 4000 man-hours in total for the year) and new signage to attract visitors, numbers doubled in the year 2016 to 6000 tourists and residents.

2016 was a very successful year with three exhibitions:

- 1) Artists in the Archive
- 2) Churches and Churchmen
- 3) Wotton on the Map

In 2017 we are currently showing Trades and Traders.



We updated the external signage and introduced modern, well-lit and more accessible display cabinets and book cases. All funded by bequests, donations, grants and fundraising activities by our members. These were from raffles in The Swan Hotel, Town Hall Teas and increased income from the updated shop (also modernised). Conservation has been considerably improved by the acquisition of new storage boxes and materials by a grant and our own funds. This will continue through 2017.

The storage of Data on Adlib (database) has improved using a dedicated committee member who attended a course in early 2017 to further enhance activity in this area.

We have been working with Dursley Historical Society to recover thousands of photographic negatives from the Gazette archives. Rescued from destruction, these are stored in two locations. We sent a team last year to join a large group of volunteers and will do so again in 2017. We managed to recover thousands of negatives relating to Wotton and district, now scanned by our Curator. These are now ready to be sorted and acquisitioned. There are many more to come.

We have taken on a new project via the Wotton Youth Partnership to record on film people in their later years and this will become fully active later in 2017 after school exams. All this activity has led to increased footfall in the Centre and raising its profile in the Town. We continue to work successfully with the One-Stop-Shop and have built good relationships with;

- a) the Cotswold group of Tourist Information Managers
- b) the Tourism Network set up by Dursley Town Council to cover the Cotswold Severn Vale.

We have attended meetings with these organisations in order to raise the profile of Wotton on the Tourist Trail. Dursley is investing considerable time and money into this, involving parish councillors, business operators and accommodation suppliers from surrounding villages and Towns.

Funding activities continue as we investigate all the opportunities available.

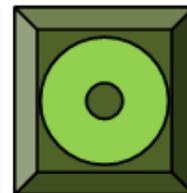
We have to find the majority of our running costs as well as achieve conservation objectives in the coming year. We have every confidence we can achieve this and at the same time make further improvements.

Jeff Walshe, Heritage Centre Committee. <http://www.wottonheritage.com>



## Wotton-under-Edge & District Community Recreational Trust

Registered Charity No. 289185



### Report from Wotton under Edge & District Recreational Trust-2016/17.

In 2016 following the AGM, the Recreational Trust Members continued the process of updating and regulating its activities following the cash injection from the Cinema in March 2016. The first act in the new financial year was to introduce Trustee Liability Insurance before processing applications for funding. The Trustees on the Committee are made up of five Town Councillors and four members of the public.

Affiliated groups and other local organisations were invited to apply for match-funding in accordance with the new constitution from April 2016. Applications were received throughout the year for grants from the limited funds available. Grants were awarded to the following organisations.

**2016-3.1 :Wotton Historical Society** - £970 towards a budget of £3, 491.05p for phase two of cabinet replacements in the Museum.

**2016-3.2 :1st Wotton Scouts Group:** - £1000 towards a budget of £2,100.00p to provide benches around the campfire at Conygres Camp site.

**2016-3.3: Wotton Under the Edge Arts Project:** - £1000 towards a budget of £9,447.00p to set up the first Wotton Blues Festival.

**2016-3.4 :Wotton Youth Liaison Group:** - £1000 towards a budget of £3,000.00p to provide a Therapeutic Counsellor for one to one sessions with young people.

**2016-3.5 :Wotton Community Sports Foundation:** - £1000 towards a budget of £95,000 to provide a safe off-road footpath for access to a skate park and other amenities along New Road.

**2016-4.1 :Synwell Playing Field Association** - £998 towards a budget of £1,960 for replacement Springers (play equipment for small children).

**2016-4.2 :Bearlands Play Area Association** - £1000 towards a budget of £25,000 to provide a play-area in Bearlands.

**2017-1.1 :Wotton Arts Association** - £1000 towards a budget of £4,879 for a Wotton under Edge Arts Festival.

**2017-1.2 :Wotton Silver Band** - £1000 towards the purchase of Timpani Drums at a total cost of £2000.

Other applications were received at the beginning of 2017 and these are being processed in the new financial year. During the year several affiliated groups left the Trust and were replaced by others. All the details are available in the minutes of the quarterly meetings. The constitution regulates the way funding is distributed and is intended to stimulate new activities in the Town. Applications for match-funding new projects and require some fund raising activities to take place. The applicants must be constituted; the Trust does not fund the running costs of organisations preferring Projects with legacy aspirations. We welcome new applications for the period 2017/18 and donations to our investment fund.

*Jeff Walshe/Chair – WRT*

*jeffwalshe@gmail.com*

## **Background to the Recreational Trust...**

*In the 1970s local residents mounted a campaign to develop part of the land in Drylease into a Bowls Club. The public raised the required funds and help was sought from the Town Council and District Council (who owned the land). This resulted in a sale of "Bowling Green" land from SDC to Wotton Town Council (WTC) for £25,500 including covenant 6, which stated that the land was only to be used as bowling green. In 1984 the Town Council created the **Wotton under Edge and District Recreational Trust** to manage the assets under a **Declaration of Trust** document dated 1984. The original four Trustees handed over responsibility to the Management Committee once the Trust had been set up and registered with the Charity Commission.*

*The Bowls Club is run as an autonomous group under the terms of two documents:*

- i) **Agreement between the Recreational Trust and Trustees of the Bowls Club-2003***
- ii) **Licence between the Recreational Trust and Trustees of the Bowls Club-2003***

*The Recreational Trust also manages the recreational area named as Streamsfield on behalf of the owners – The Town Council.*

*In 2003 the Recreational Trust expanded its umbrella activities by affiliating organisations with low financial turnover. This enabled those organisations to use the Charity number in their fundraising activities. When any organisation grew to a size where they could be self-sufficient, they left the Recreational Trust and set up independently.*

*The Trust has been supported with income from modest affiliation fees (since 2003) and the Cinema since 2006. There have been many recipients throughout Wotton as the Trust addressed requests for financial help for a variety of projects. All accounts are registered with the Charity Commission.*



# Wotton Outreach Report 2016-17

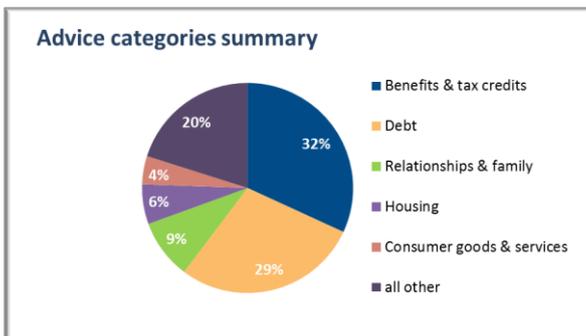
Citizens Advice Stroud District is a local charity that helps people resolve their legal, money, and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice and by working to influence social policy both locally and nationally.

Throughout the past year residents of Wotton-under-Edge have continued to benefit from our advice services, which they can access in a number of ways:

- Face to face at our Wotton Outreach on Tuesdays between 10am – 1pm
- Via our Freephone telephone helpline on 0808 800 0510 at other times
- Email advice via our website [www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk) where there is also a wealth of online information.

Our service is provided a team of highly trained and experienced volunteer advisers, most of whom bring a wealth of experience from previous careers.

During 2016-17 we helped **289** people from our weekly outreach in Wotton, which accounted for 3% of our total work in the Stroud District. We have noticed that the complexity of each clients' problems has increased in recent years so most cases take longer to resolve. **57%** of the people using the Wotton Outreach were disabled or had long term health problems. This reflects the fact that the most common enquiry area has been Benefits Advice, particularly relating to disability benefits.

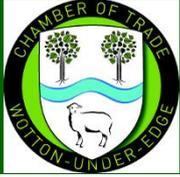


Some of the issues residents have had problems with in Wotton includes:

- Loss of local services in particular banks
- The high costs of private rented accommodation in the area compare to the maximum amount that can be claimed as housing benefit
- Financial difficulties due to changes to eligibility for some welfare benefits, particularly disability benefits, or delays / errors in the processing of claims.

Overall, prior to receiving advice 85% of clients said that their problem was significantly or completely affecting their life and this had reduced to only 48% after receiving advice. Nearly all clients have also reported an increase in their confidence and skills to resolve their own problems in the future as well as reduced stress, anxiety and depression.

The Wotton outreach service has been provided by a small team of highly experienced volunteer advisers, to whom we are very grateful. We are also grateful, once again, to Wotton Town Council for its support which enables us to have an on-the-ground presence in the Town, making sure that advice is accessible to those that need it most.



2016 saw the town's business community continuing to try and ride out the same issues bedeviling most small traders in the rest of the country. Sadly, some businesses are no longer with us whilst, on a brighter note, others have joined us and one or two have even relocated to larger premises. However, this has all been overshadowed by the Chamber's efforts to secure more car parking for the town and once again it was a year for grabbing headlines in the Gazette: many unfortunately for the wrong reasons.

Wotton and its community has suffered for decades from a shortage of parking. At the Chamber's 2016 AGM in February exciting new plans were unveiled to double the town's parking. It was a deal in which the Chamber's President Alex Wilkinson played a major part in setting up; one which proposed ten residential properties and, much more importantly, a 96 space 'long stay' car park with extra provision for the parking of two coaches.



**Town will 'die' unless parking problems fixed**

The intention was and still is to hand over the freehold of the carpark to the town for nothing: a move which would enable the Chipping Car Park to become 'short stay'. It would be nice to report that plans are progressing well and that the town's business future is to be made more secure by providing more badly needed facilities



**Appeal for calm over plans after reports of abuse**

for the shopping fraternity: both local and those visiting the town.

However, the Chamber wishes to record its general dismay and regret at the lack of support it has received from Wotton's Town Council. Initially the Council was behind the scheme, going into writing as it did with a letter of support in principle. Indeed, at least one of the Chamber's members considered the Council's notional support when he made a large investment decision in his business. Then, despite the fact that little had changed by the time that a formal planning application was made, the Town Council performed a breath-taking U-turn when the time came for the plans to be 'debated' formally.

The word 'debated' is in quotes here as, in reality, there was very little engagement in discussion: there seeming to have been considerable collusion between several of the Councilors. It was more of a 'fait accompli' where they had already decided the outcome well before the meeting was held. Therefore the meeting itself was a waste of time where clearly they were just going through the motions. What gives this even more credence is the fact that the Council's own report which clearly showed the need for more parking was very nearly suppressed had it not been for the Mayor's casting vote to publish.

The Chamber wishes it to be a matter of public record that it sincerely regrets the general lack of support that it has received from the Town Council and cannot understand its reasons for striking a potentially serious blow to the town's prosperity. Furthermore, it should be noted that some Chamber members and other supporters of the car park have been subjected to a raft of abuse, on occasions amounting to libelous comments. It is shameful that in the 21st century some people are incapable of at least recognising another's right to a different opinion. Today, from the Chamber's point of view, it looks like a town which badly needs a new direction.

On a much happier note, the Chamber's association with the Wotton in Bloom project, now in its eighth year, continues. 2017 promises to be another year when a record numbers of hanging baskets is on the cards. It is a fact that this highly successful and popular project attracts visitors to the town.

The Chamber is pleased to have been associated with the Wotton Blues Festival. This was a great success and we will continue to offer our support. We would like to thank the organisers of Christmas Under The Edge: another very successful event which the Chamber supported and facilitated with the putting up of the Christmas trees.

The Chamber is keen to support new initiatives which bring more visitors to our town in addition to enriching the lives of our local people. One such new event in 2017 is The Party in the PARC which will be a gathering of local bands on the playing fields at the bottom of New Road on June 17th. The aim is to raise funds for the Wotton Community Sports Foundation and the Chamber has offered some financial assistance to its organisers.

And what of the future year? The Chamber is still of the opinion that a new car park is required for the town whether it is behind the Fire Station or somewhere else and will continue to work towards that aim despite opposition. Let's hope that the Blues Festival and the Party in the PARC become as successful as Wotton In Bloom and continue for many years.

*WCOT April 2017*

## Report on County Council Matters

### To Wotton Town Council Annual Assembly

*This very brief report was written before the County Council elections. Further details and an update can be provided at the meeting.*



#### **County Council Membership 2016/17**

Throughout last year the council remained a minority Conservative administration with the Liberal Democrats as the main opposition party.

#### **My roles on the County Council**

I was elected Chair of the Planning Committee for the year, relinquishing my position as Shadow Cabinet member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure. I continued as my group's lead member on a number of other committees.

#### **County Council Budget 2017/18**

Liberal Democrats put forward amendments to the proposed Conservative budget totalling an extra £6.09M by drawing down on various reserves held by the County Council and thus not requiring any further increase in council tax over the original Conservative budget.

After a lengthy adjournment, the Conservatives proposed an amendment to their own budget incorporating very similar proposals to the Liberal Democrat ones but with some differences in the way it would be allocated.

The resultant budget reinstated the 2016/17 Highways Local funding at £30k per councillor, and the lengthsman funding at £0.5M for the county. The £100k to assist making Traffic Regulation Orders was also reinstated. Both groups' proposals added £4M to the highways' budget. There were also additions to the funding of services to children and young people and to adults.

At the end of the meeting the increase in the council tax precept therefore remained at 1.99% plus an additional 2% adult social care levy permitted by the Government. This increased the county council share of council tax at Band D by £45.25 to £1179.26.

Since the County Council meeting, the Chancellor's budget statement included additional funding for adult social care. For Gloucestershire, this would be £10.6M in 2017/18. The conditions attached to this funding are not yet known!

#### **Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)**

A few days before the budget meeting the Gloucestershire PCC announced that he was withdrawing from the Road Safety Partnership because of year-on-year Conservative reductions in the County Council's contribution towards running it. He has not provided any hard cash to it.

The Government are encouraging PCCs to take over their local Fire & Rescue Service. County councillors are strongly opposed to this. The Home Office has given the county's PCC £100k to investigate the merits of this. The decision will be made by an independent person appointed by the Home Secretary...

The Chief Constable retired in April. The PCC decided to leave the post vacant for the time being and it seems nothing can be done about that. The Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel in their scrutiny role will be seeking to understand the thinking behind this

#### **National Funding Formula for schools**

The Government undertook a major consultation on the introduction of a national funding formula for mainstream schools from 2018/19. This ended in March. There has been considerable opposition to the proposals.

Overall, Gloucestershire would drop 10 places down the funding league table from 102<sup>nd</sup> to 112<sup>th</sup> place. The average funding per pupil in Gloucestershire would be £4344 compared to £6582 in Tower Hamlets.

The proposals favour smaller primary schools. In my Division, the Blue Coat C of E Primary School would lose £29k and the British School would gain £2k. All the other primary schools gain to varying extents. Katharine Lady Berkeley's School, would lose £117k, the second biggest loss in Gloucestershire.

### **Highways Local Funding**

Last year I was able to include a contribution to carriageway patching at the junction of Cherry Orchard with Synwell Lane, and in Wortley, and weed spraying. Sadly, many things that Amey organises don't seem to go right first time.

The county elections have caused a delay in committing this year's funding.

### **Amey Highways contract**

Amey's 5-year contract ends in April 2019. Given the complexity of retendering such a large contract a decision is due to be taken by the council's new Cabinet in June/July this year, either to retender or to extend the current contract by two to three years.

The low satisfaction levels of the service were raised as an issue in a motion to the full council. The parish council satisfaction survey, originally due to be issued last December was later delayed until after the elections. The previous parish council survey received a satisfaction level of just 2.41/5.00.

It was argued at a scrutiny committee meeting that this was a routine annual survey and would not form part of the consideration on whether to extend Amey's contract. I disagreed. At the March county council meeting a Liberal Democrat motion requiring consultation with parish, town and district councils regarding the highways contract received unanimous support.

### **Children's Activity Fund**

This fund is continuing this year at the current £5k per year per county councillor. During the last financial year, I was able to support taster badminton sessions at KLB school for primary school children across my Division and further outdoor facilities at both of Wotton's primary schools.

### **Highlights from County Council Meetings**

Apart from the budget, the full council has dealt with numerous matters, usually as a result of motions raised by councillors. Very briefly these included the slow issuing of death certificates, poor waste recycling rates, the state of the roads, increased hate crime, bus services, A & E waiting times, better NHS and Care Services' funding, ambulance response times, and students' mental health problems.

### **Street Lighting**

The contract to convert the county's 55,000 street lights to LEDs is running ahead of schedule and work in Wotton started in March.

### **Bus Service changes (Wotton, Nibley, Stinchcombe)**

A new number 60 bus started running from Thornbury to Gloucester, via Kingswood, Wotton, Stinchcombe, North Nibley, Cam & Dursley Station and Dursley five times a day.

Mike's Travel number 201 continued to run between Thornbury and Gloucester, despite withdrawal of the subsidy.

*County Cllr Dr JE John Cordwell*

# Stroud District Councillors' Report

## Waste and recycling



Big changes to waste collection were introduced across Stroud District in November 2016. The new food waste collection is proving popular and the scheme has in just a few months *almost doubled* recycling rates and *halved* the amount of rubbish that is sent to landfill. Some initial teething problems with residents' rubbish and recycling collections have now been resolved.

## Young people

The District Council has agreed to part-fund the redevelopment of the Bearlands Play Area in Wotton. Match funding is being sought by the Bearlands Play Area Association to redesign the site and purchase new play equipment. Improvements to the Bearlands estate have also been agreed by the Housing Committee. The district council continues to support



youth work and this year

developed a new strategy for young people.



## Older people

In June 2016 the Council approved recommendations of the **Sheltered Modernisation Programme** to review the Council's sheltered housing stock. Properties have been assessed and those that can be updated will be

modernised to make them more pleasant and accessible for tenants. In Wotton the Drylease Court site will be sold for redevelopment - but Drylease House and Drylease Court bungalows will not be affected. District Councillors have been working closely with Council officers to ensure that the small number of remaining Drylease Court tenants are comfortably rehoused in the local area, with support provided for their move, new home and compensation for the disturbance. A **new strategy** for older peoples health and housing including support for dementia friendly towns, was also agreed.

Wotton ward district councillors have been involved in many other issues including: a new report on the **future of Town Centres** in the District, supporting the upgrade of **Rope Walk toilets**, improving the council's engagement with tenants through the appointment of two new **Tenant Representatives** to the Housing Committee, dealing with local **road safety concerns** and defending the **Local Plan** which has been challenged by housing developers.



District Councillors:

Ken Tucker, Catherine Braun, George Butcher

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***We hope you have enjoyed reading these reports  
If you have any comments,  
or require further information, please contact:  
[www.wotton-under-edge.com](http://www.wotton-under-edge.com)***



# **WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE** **TOWN COUNCIL**



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