

Annual Parish Assembly

Wednesday 28th April 6:30pm

All Parishioners are cordially invited to this Assembly to talk to Councillors.

Due to COVID restrictions this meeting will be held remotely [Click here to join the meeting](#)

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| 6:30 to 7:00 | WELCOME |
| 7:00 to 7:05
on | Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly meeting held 13 th May 2019, |
| 7.05 to 7.30 | Brief reports from the Mayor and organisations including:
Wotton Swimming Pool
Wotton in Bloom
Wotton Community Sports Foundation
Wotton Heritage Centre
Recreational Trust
Planning Committee
Allotments Partnership
Gloucestershire County Council
Stroud District Council |
| 7.30 to 8:00 | INFORMAL SESSION – Questions, comments, feedback
<i>(Council is also happy to receive any questions in advance which can be answered at this meeting)</i> |

Close of Meeting

Cllr Roger Claydon, Mayor, Wotton-under-Edge Town Council, 20th April 2021



WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY
Held on Monday 13th May 2019, at 7pm in the Civic Centre



Present: Cllrs, P Smith (Mayor), R Claydon (Deputy Mayor), P Barton, John Cordwell, June Cordwell, T Luker, M Short, J Turner, N Pinnegar, R Hale, D Thomas.

District Cllrs K Tucker, Ms C Braun.

In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey & Administrator Mrs D Hyam Members of the Public 11

1) **Welcome** The Mayor Welcomed members of the public and introduced the new SDC Chief Executive Kathy O'Leary as guest speaker.

2) **Ms O'Leary outlined her aims for the future of Stroud District Council.**

- County, District and Local Town and Parish Councils must collaborate and work together to achieve value for money. It is important for her to visit towns and villages in the district to listen to local communities to establish what can be achieved.
- There is an impression that Wotton feels forgotten by the District Council along with others. However future emphasis will be less on Stroud as it is important to build relationships with the wider Town and Parish Council communities.
- Over the next five years the Council will struggle to meet costs with the reduction in funding from Central Government. SDC has been financially secure but this has been due to using reserves to balance accounts. It will be important for the District Council to be self-sufficient for a stable future; things will thus need to be done differently to achieve this.
- In future non statutory services will be at risk. Youth services that were cut by GCC have proved to be successful with alternative support, such as the Youth Centre in Wotton (funded and managed by the Town Council). Cuts could also represent opportunities: e.g.SDC may look at introducing agency services for the residents such as a handyman service so that residents can find reliable tradesmen to carry out maintenance. This would use knowledge available at Council level and generate much needed revenue.

The Following Questions were raised by the Public

UTEA. Concern was raised by a resident regarding the inequality of arts funding across the district, e.g funding of £2,500 on a 3 year programme and would this support continue in light of the housing developments in Charfield and Kingswood?

Other ways of funding may have to be considered, such as a possible lottery for good causes. This will be presented to Councillors as there are various safeguards to consider.

Decline in High Streets. Concern was raised regarding empty shops etc. Many businesses are struggling due to rents and taxes. It is important to offer a wider experience than just 'retail' to attract customers to the High Streets, such as cafés, restaurants and markets.

SDC Carbon Neutral by 2030. Cllr D Thomas asked how this can be achieved.

SDC are looking at ways to change the car fleet to electric or dual fuel vehicles. There will be a lot of research into the positioning of charging points and how cars perform in hilly districts. A report will be submitted on 6th June outlining proposals to the Environment Committee,

Communication between SDC and WTC. Cllr M Short raised concerns that in some cases work had started on projects and applications before notification was received by WTC, such as the bin shelters at Bearlands where no consultation took place.

It was noted that communication need to be improved and this is being looked into.

Local transport for elderly people in the area. Concern was raised regarding access to services such as the Memory Group that meet in Wotton. Residents from outlying villages have to rely on volunteers, family or friends to give them lifts due to poor public transport.

As budgets are being squeezed rural transport is a big issue and ways of using community schemes and other solutions are being investigated.

2) **Adoption of Previous Minutes** of the Annual Parish Assembly of 23rd April 2018 and any matters arising from those minutes. It was proposed by Cllr R Hale and seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve the Minutes as presented, all in favour.

3) **Brief Report from the Mayor** Cllr Paul Smith

The Mayor thanked the Town Clerk and staff for their hard work during a very difficult time due to reduced resources caused by various absences. He thanked Councillors for their support with taking on some projects to assist staff and he also thanked members of the committees and co-opted members for their support over the last year. He had nothing further to add to the extensive report in the booklet.

4) **Brief Reports from Town Council Committee Chairs.**

Planning (Cllr R Claydon)

The report in the booklet outlined the number of significant applications received and Cllr Claydon highlighted the following;

- Garages at Mount Pleasant. WTC objected to this application and was not informed of the application going to the DCC therefore was unable to raise further objections.
- Land North of Holywell. WTC objected to this application; it was refused by the Planning Authority.
- Garages at Berkeley Close. Following local resident concerns, WTC objected to this application.
- Dryleaze Court. WTC supported this application and suggested changes to the plan.
- District Local Plan 2020-2030 SDC is required to provide 12,800 new homes, including provision for Gloucester City. The emerging strategy envisaged major developments at Sharpness and Wisloe but no significant development was planned for Wotton. Public consultation on the final proposal will take place in the Autumn.

Footpaths (Cllr R Claydon)

Cllr Claydon thanked members of the committee for their work over the past year. The report in the booklet included the following points:

- The committee surveyed over 70 footways and problems were reported to GCC.
- Wotton is to become part of the "Cotswold Gateway Project" the Cotswold Conservation Board will be installing noticeboards and markers for several routes will be installed by local volunteers.
- Wotton Walking Festival was held recently and has been very successful attracting more walkers to the town.

Allotments (Cllr P Barton)

Nothing further to add to the written report provided in the booklet.

Regeneration (Cllr A Wilkinson)

No report available and Cllr A Wilkinson was not present at the meeting.

Wotton Youth Partnership (Cllr June Cordwell)

Nothing further to add to the written report in booklet.

Wotton Library No attendee, however a written report provided in the booklet.

Wotton in Bloom (Mrs J Tebb) A written report provided in the booklet.

Wotton Pool No attendee, however a written report provided in the booklet.

Wotton Community Sports Foundation No attendee, however a written report provided in the booklet.

Synwell Playing Field (Mrs A Hartley) A written report provided in the booklet.

Heritage Centre (Mrs J Walshe) A written report provided in the booklet. Mrs Walshe highlighted that visitor numbers have increased, but she was disappointed that SDC now has no tourism officers or any tourism promotion initiatives. It was pointed out that the Heritage Centre does not get any funding from SDC but is very gratefully supported by WTC.

Wotton-under-Edge & District Community Recreational Trust (Mrs J Walshe)

A written report provided in the booklet. Beaumont le Roger will soon join as an affiliated group.

County Council Matters (Cllr John Cordwell)

A written report was provided & County Cllr John Cordwell highlighted the following points;

- It was noted that there has been an average of 35% cost increase in tenders from local bus operators to retain the existing service provision.
- The conversion of street lighting to LED in Wotton will continue until the end of July.
- Last year councillors were allocated £30k over three years to support local projects. Allocations to date include a total of £6.36k to the two primary schools in Wotton.
- This year resurfacing work is planned for Synwell Lane.
- Safety concerns have been raised regarding the queuing traffic at the recycling centre at Horsley which can at times back out along the B4058 to the junction with the road leading to Cockadilly.

District Council Matters (District Cllr C Braun & Cllr K Tucker) Written report provided in booklet.

7) Questionnaire Results (Cllr R Claydon gave a Power Point presentation)

From the results, the Town Council has agreed that the way forward would be to proceed with Old Town Toilets and commission architect plans. Funding will be from Council Reserves, SDC grant of £40k and a Public Works loan. The area would accommodate a unisex modular toilet plus outside seating in a small Remembrance Garden. The Town Market would be pursued when the new Symn Lane car park is available. The OK Path lighting requires further analysis to ascertain real need and if it becomes part - it may become part of the "Greenway" lighting would probably be provided by this project. Views had also been expressed by residents that WTC should not be expected to fund the whole of the lighting cost and which could lead to alternative funding sources would need to be explored.

8) Public Forum

Old Town Toilets

- It was suggested that local architects might give services at a reduced rate?
- A request for a dementia friendly toilet design was made.
- It is important to include baby changing facilities.

Ok Path KLB

- It would be beneficial to conduct a survey of the students at KLB to ascertain support for the project.
- There was strong feeling that GCC should contribute to the project rather than WTC.
- It was noted that residents (not just pupils) from Kingswood and Wotton use the path between the two communities regularly in daylight but not at night due to the lack of lighting.
- It was suggested that the new Head Teacher Mr T Rand be approached to discuss the project.

The Assembly Concluded at 8.45pm

Signed..... Date.....
Chairman & Town Mayor

MAYOR'S REPORT – APRIL 2021

Due to the pandemic, the Annual Parish Assembly was not held last year, although an Annual Report was produced and is available to those who would like a copy. This year the Assembly will be held remotely, hopefully for the first and last time!

The Coronavirus emergency has affected all our normal activities and the Town Council is no exception. Local elections were cancelled last year and like many organisations we have had to meet remotely. Our buildings and facilities have been closed to the public for most of the last year but are now re-opening in accordance with the Government's "roadmap out of lockdown". Visitors to the Civic Centre will find the One-Stop Shop in its new location near the main entrance, now fitted with automatic sliding doors. Local Youth work, funded by the Town Council, has continued throughout the lockdown periods and thanks go to The Door, our service provider, for their responsiveness as Covid regulations have continued to change.

In my last report, I expressed my appreciation for those who have helped the community during the pandemic and I'd like to add my thanks to those manning the local vaccination centre at Vale Hospital. Also, the good work of Wotton Action Mutual Aid volunteer group has continued to provide support to local vulnerable people over a long period and the group is now exploring opportunities for co-ordinating local volunteer effort across a range of activities. Also due thanks are our local traders and businesses who have continued to provide essential services to residents. As we move forward it will be important than ever to give custom to our high street shops and help sustain them in this difficult financial climate. I'd also like to thank the Wotton-in-Bloom team for brightening up the town in these difficult times.

Although the Council has been meeting remotely, we have maintained a busy programme of work. A major and expensive activity which is just starting is the refurbishment of the Town Hall exterior, where significant repair work is needed on the gables. This will be funded from reserves and a new public works loan. As part of its climate change initiative, the Council has allowed the Wotton Climate Action Network to plant a small woodland at Knapp Field, action has been taken to improve the thermal efficiency of Council buildings and we have installed LED lights in the Civic Centre Car Park. Other work has included re-organising the office space to allow the old One-Stop-Shop to be let commercially – providing a useful rental income – and upgrades to the Council's computer system to improve reliability, security and remote working. The Town Council also organised last year's restricted Remembrance Sunday commemoration and will be working with the Royal British Legion and other interested parties to develop a new approach for this year.

Many residents will be aware that groundwork has started on the Symn Lane car park and housing development. I know there are mixed views within the community about this. The Town Council agreed some while ago that it would take on management responsibility for the car park, once it has been built, to ensure the best outcome for the town. In so doing we will be able to operate it as a free to use facility and, with an eye to the future, will be installing a number of electric vehicle chargers for residents to use. We have already held one meeting with the new developer and will continue these on a regular basis so that we can deal promptly with any issues and update the community on progress.

We have set the precept for Financial Year 2021/2022 at £328,027, an increase of just under £9,000 (2.8%). £7,000 of this increase is required to service public works loan payments for repairs to the Town Hall and the planned re-build of the Old Town Toilets.

The Council's long-serving Town Clerk, Sue Bailey, left the Council in January to take up a new appointment on the South Coast and we wish her well. Our new Clerk, Andrea Durn, joined us in March and is already getting to grips with her new position. We also welcomed Karen Wilson in August in a new role as Assistant Clerk and my thanks go also to Yasmin Milsom, Deputy Clerk, who acted as Clerk until Andrea's arrival.

During the year we lost two Councillors. Sadly, Sally Smith passed away in July and Steve Wood resigned in November. Following an uncontested election, the Council has been left with four vacancies and it is hoped that at least some of these will be filled by co-option at May's Council meeting. You may have seen some of our posters encouraging members of the community to volunteer and stand for election as a Town Councillor. Anyone interested should contact the Town Clerk for more information.

In my report last year, I mentioned the then retiring Councillors. Unfortunately I forgot to include Paul Smith, who resigned in May 2019 for health reasons, after 15 years of service. Paul served twice as Mayor during his time on the Council and was also a District Councillor for many years. My sincere apologies go to Paul for this omission.

Roger Claydon OBE, Mayor and Chairman, Wotton-under-Edge Town Council

Objectives for 2021-2022

- Work with the developer and SDC to develop a detailed management plan for the new Symn Lane car park.
- Secure grants and contract for the installation of up to eight Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points in the new car park once it has been handed over to the Council. We would like these to be powered by a solar canopy, if full grant funding can be secured.
- Complete refurbishment of gables and West elevation of the Town Hall. Continue to explore grants and public works loan to support the refurbishment programme.
- Continue to explore climate change initiatives, including the possibility of installing heat pumps and solar panels on council buildings if full grant funding can be secured.
- Undertake an independent review of Council staffing and review structure with new Clerk.
- Establish requirements for the future four year survey of Council trees.
- Establish requirements for the follow-on Open Spaces contract and re-tender.
- Complete the Cotswold Gateway project using volunteers as needed to mark routes.
- Prepare a new Service Level Agreement to extend youth services provision until September 2022.

- Secure a public works loan and planning permission and commence Old Town Toilets rebuild.
- Develop plans for a new expanded town market, to commence once the new Symn Lane car park is available (subject to developer timescales).
- Continue with training programme for the new staff team and also encourage councillors to attend training.
- Commence new footpaths and footway surveys once Covid regulations allow.
- Encourage new councillor volunteers from the community to stand in the May 2021 elections.

Planning Committee

The Town Council's Planning Committee considers planning applications within the parish and makes recommendations to the Planning Authority (Stroud District Council (SDC)). The Planning Authority (either the Development Control Committee (DCC) or Planning Officers) make the Final Decision on whether to permit or refuse planning applications.

All meetings were done via Zoom/Teams.

Significant Planning Applications

Over the past year, the Council Planning Committee has considered the following significant planning applications:

Garages, Mount Pleasant

This application proposed demolition of the Mount Pleasant garages and replacing them with five dwellings. Building has now commenced

Dryleaze Court

This application proposed the demolition of existing social housing buildings and replacing them with 22 dwellings. The building has now commenced

Land South of the Chipping

This application proposed 12 new houses and an 80 space car park with parking for two coaches. This was finally given permission by SDC in August 2019 and three follow-on applications for discharge of planning conditions are still under consideration. Work has just begun, although planning has gone in for the removal of affordable housing.

Field at Coombe-Agricultural Storage

Appeal was allowed and a lawful development certificate has been issued.

Play Area-Pitman Place

Planning for Erection of 3 dwelling has gone in, with comments planning authority must satisfy itself that the footpath running between the houses will not result in a continuance of antisocial behaviour problems affecting the site.

Council suggests that EV charging points be added to the parking provision.

Renishaw Plc, New Mills

Expansion of Renishaw to include a building with office and car parking, with associated infrastructure, application permitted, first applied November 2018.

Councillor Nicholas Pinnegar, Chairman, Planning Committee

ALLOTMENTS

All 42 full plots at New Rd allotments and 35 full plots at Knapp Road are now taken, and we now hold a waiting list for prospective tenants.

New Road

The fence has been fixed that runs alongside the footpath, with the work being carried out by the Town Council's Buildings and Amenities Manager and Caretaker.

We are looking into providing a skip for New Rd allotments in the near future. We encourage tenants to use it to get rid of any rubbish, including old carpets, as they are toxic for the soil. However, there are some items such as tyres which are not permitted in the skip.

A few months ago, the hedge dividing the allotment site was trimmed.

Knapp Road

A skip was provided a while ago and it was a huge success ending up full to the brim, so well-done to tenants for responding so well.

Plots 22a and 23a are now a tree and seedling nursery for WCAN. (Wotton Climate Action Network)

The Town Council's Buildings and Amenities Manager and Caretaker recently repaired a water leak along with the water stop cock surround which was found damaged.

We plan to survey the paths on both allotment sites and intend to put it on the Town Councils agenda to improve their condition.

Since the pandemic, people have come to appreciate the simple pleasures in life resulting in a huge upsurge in demand for allotments.

So, we welcome new tenants many of whom perhaps never would have considered taking on an allotment, thinking it the reserve of pensioners.

Children are welcome, but please keep them under supervision and remember it is not a playground. Having said that, your family will find the well-being benefits of fresh air, exercise, and the joy of fresh produce. Pulling a carrot, picking a homegrown tomato, no shop bought produce has the flavour or hold the vitamins like freshly picked produce.

Tenants are urged to join in the next meeting of the Allotment Partnership, the date, time, and method will be announced as the lockdown eases.

Regarding the problem with discarded empty beer bottles on plots at Knapp Road, the matter was reported to SDC Neighbourhood Warden and as a result both him and the community police are monitoring the area.

The Allotments Partnership would like to thank the Town Council staff for all their support and hard work especially the Administrator who many of you tenants already know.

Allotments Partnership Chairman. Cllr Paul Barton.

Wotton Youth Partnership Report – April 2021

Wotton Youth Partnership has continued to hold regular meetings over the past year, though like many other groups, we have been using zoom. It is going to be good when we can all have face to face meetings again.

We made a number of donations to local projects during the year, including:

- Costs of setting up a new “Junior” Park Run at Wotton Community PARC - £500
- New basketball hoops for Synwell Playing Field Association £359

Synwell Playing Field Association were unable to raise sufficient funds for the proposed new Multi Use Games Area so returned a grant of £500 which WYP had previously provided towards this project. Instead, the Playing Field Association is cleaning and improving “the wall” which is much used by young people for ball games.

The WYP is currently supporting two other projects: an Intergenerational History Project – which is recording the local stories of older people in Wotton, and a Mental Health Project to support young people. We were grateful to receive a grant from the Mercer’s Company towards the Intergenerational History project, and we look forward to seeing the results of the filming. We hope this will be completed in 2021, as the Covid restrictions are lifted.

Our meetings are attended by representatives from Youth Groups including The Door (which provides Youth Services in Wotton) and Stroud District Council (which runs Wotton Youth Forum and the District’s Youth Council). We are keen to ensure that our group meets the needs of young people.

Wotton Youth Forum members and WYP Committee members continue to raise concerns about the state of the OK footpath and the lack of street lighting. Over the past year, the hedge has been cut back and litter cleared by volunteers. Options for solar lighting for the path are being explored with Gloucestershire County Council and Wotton Town Council.

At our AGM in April 2021 we elected two new officers, as June Cordwell, stepped down from the Committee and from her role as Chair, after many years of supporting youth projects in the Town. The Committee thanked June for all her work, and also thanked Henrietta Goodall, who steps down as Secretary but will be remaining as a Committee member.

The new Committee is keen to continue WYP’s work over the next year to provide funding for projects which support young people in the local area. We intend to develop a survey and engagement plan to find out the priorities of young people themselves, and we continue work to link with existing youth services and activities and to develop a new website.

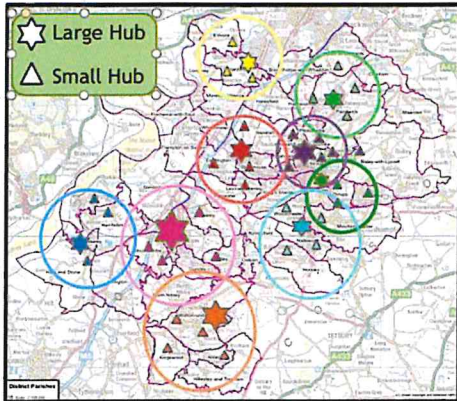
Jonathan Turner, Secretary

Catherine Braun, Interim Chair

Pat Comer, Treasurer

Stroud District Councillors' Report 2021

Covid Relief for Businesses SDC's Revenue and Benefits team have worked hard throughout the year to make sure grants have been paid to many qualifying businesses and organisations who needed support during the pandemic. Up to 21 April 2021, Business Grant payments of over £11 million, Discretionary Grants of over £1 million and grant payments under the Small Business and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Funds over £25 million were awarded.



Map of potential community hubs

Community support SDC has supported county wide efforts to help communities through the pandemic. The Community Resilience Grant Fund, (funded by SDC and GCC) distributed grants of over £69,000 to 76 Covid-19 community groups. Building on the incredible mutual aid response and recognising the need for ongoing community support in the recovery from Coronavirus, SDC is now supporting the development of new community hubs to help connect people with local services on a more sustainable basis. The new Community Wellbeing Grant scheme is supporting this work as well as other projects and organisations across the District.

Carbon Neutral 2030 Strategy and Plan SDC has adopted a detailed plan to deliver on the ambitious targets to make the whole district carbon neutral by 2030. The Council will act as *exemplar, enabler and encourager* to deliver change and support local businesses, organisations and residents to respond to the climate and ecological emergency. The final plan resulted from a community consultation and is based on seven themes of Built Environment, Energy, Natural Environment, Mobility, Economy, Waste, and Community. <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/2030-strategy-limiting-adapting-recovering-and-responding-in-a-changing-climate>



New energy efficient Council homes Following changes to Government policy, SDC has been able to continue its council house building programme – with the 36 new homes planned for Nailsworth, Minchinhampton and Eastington. at a cost of £5.3 million of which eleven will be for older people – all will be built to meet the highest energy efficiency rating – which will help to keep bills low for tenants.



Waste and Recycling Building on a successful partnership and award winning service, SDC's waste and recycling partner Ubico will continue to collect all the household rubbish, recycling, food and garden waste for another 5 years, alongside delivery of street cleaning and grounds maintenance.

Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy SDC is working with local communities to ensure everyone has access to good quality leisure opportunities and undertook a Leisure and Wellbeing Survey in Jan 2021 to find out what, where and how people use leisure facilities across the district. The Leisure Review will continue in 2021.

District Councillors:



Ken Tucker, Catherine Braun, George James

**Report on County Council Matters to Wotton-under-Edge
Annual Parish Assembly 28th April 2021
John Cordwell**

County Council

Conservatives retained their overall majority with Liberal Democrats the largest opposition party. The Covid-19 lockdown means that the by-election to fill a vacancy has not taken place and will now be part of May's all-out election.

Coronavirus, Covid-19

In mid-March 2020, all County Council meetings were cancelled until further notice, which turned out to be the entire year. From June onwards they resumed virtually using Webex. The council has been putting out daily briefings and advice on the situation and has been helping in many other ways.

My roles on the County Council

My committee memberships remained unchanged. During the year I have been Vice-Chairman of the Environment Scrutiny Committee, of the Planning Committee, and of the Commons & Rights of Way Committee. I am my group's lead member on the Traffic Regulations Orders committee having stood down last year as vice-chairman. I have continued as a member of Gloucestershire's Local Access Forum.

I have been my group's representative on a Road Safety Cabinet Panel. There had been concern from councillors on the level of involvement of the council in local road safety matters. This is reported back to the Cabinet last month and I questioned how the recommendations would allow the county's own road safety liaison groups to continue. It seems to depend on who is in charge after the elections.

I am one of the county's two representatives on the Berkeley (Nuclear) Site Stakeholder Group. This recently received a report on a bid being made to develop nuclear fusion based on Berkeley and Oldbury. More widely I have continued as a representative on South West Councils and its Resources and Management Committee, and on the Severn Estuary Partnership.

County Council budget 2021/22

The approved County Council revenue budget totals £483.008 million. The County precept entails an overall increase of 4.75% on Council Tax. This consists of a 1.99% Council Tax increase plus a 2.76% Adult Social Care Levy. The latter will raise an additional £8.753 million for Adult Social Care services. This equates to a Band D Council Tax precept of £1,409.22 in 2021/22 compared to £1,345.32 in 2020/21 – an increase of £63.90 per annum.

The budget debate saw successful amendments tabled by the Liberal Democrats totalling £1.3 million mostly from contingency reserves held by the council and not affecting the precept.

These changes included:

- an increase of the originally proposed £10k per county division in the Highways Local funding to £20k, giving communities a greater say over how their highways money is spent, including on road safety schemes*;
- a £100k fund to create 20mph speed zones in neighbourhoods across the county;
- £100k to expand school streets schemes to the Cotswolds, Stroud and Forest of Dean which have not benefitted from the pilot schemes. These prohibit vehicles using roads outside schools at the beginning and end of the school day and

- almost £70k on removing barriers to mobility, helping to find solutions to transport issues faced by people with a wide range of disabilities, such as more wheelchair space on buses, more provision of dropped kerbs, removing barriers to cycling and assisting use of mobility scooters.
- £100k to support children's development in their first 1000 days so they are ready for school;
- £100k to support children at risk of exclusion and help them reintegrate into school;
- £265k consisting of £5k allocated to each county councillor for a Covid Community Recovery Fund and
- £33k to cancel a proposed 3% increase in residents parking permits.

* The original Lib Dem amendment was to increase the Highways Local budget to £30k per councillor. Whilst only £20k was achieved at the February budget meeting, at the March meeting of the council's Cabinet they announced that they had found the money to increase this to £30k per councillor!

Motions at County Council meetings during the year This is necessarily a very brief description but indicates the range of subjects covered.

The motions debated during the year and the outcomes were:

Fast tracked introduction of "school streets" schemes, (Lib Dem). Such schemes are included in statutory guidance issued by the Government Transport Secretary. Clearly there are many schools where that is not be possible, but a requirement not to allow engines to idle outside schools could be introduced. Conservative members took some persuading on this, but later in the year three trial schools were selected. As you will note from earlier in my report, this year's budget meeting includes funding has been agreed to extend this to a scheme in each of the remaining three districts.

Celebrating Gloucestershire Volunteers (Lib Dem/Labour) It was unanimously agreed that as the lead authority in the county, the County Council will establish a series of events to recognise and celebrate the exceptional efforts of residents and public servants, and to establish permanent memorials to acknowledge both the volunteers and the tragic loss of so many members of our community.

Climate Change (Labour/Green) After amendments, it was agreed unanimously that a report to Council should be made after its consideration by the Environment Scrutiny Committee on what lessons the Council has learnt during Covid-19 that it can apply to its policies and practices to meet our climate change targets and produce a cleaner, greener post-Covid County.

Establishment of a local contact tracing system to stop Covid-19 (Green)

This was lost through concern at the number of council staff and financial support that would be needed.

Promoting Cycleways (Labour)

It was pointed out that the Council did not have the power to carry out the motion as originally worded. It was amended to call for the Cabinet member to provide the resources for this and agreed unanimously,

Restoring our Rivers (Lib Dem)

There was concern over the amount of pollution in the county's rivers. After some debate, the Conservatives moved the referral of this motion to the Environment Scrutiny Committee and that was the outcome. On a previous occasion, this delayed a motion from being considered for around two years. As vice-chair of the Environment Scrutiny Committee I called for it to be on the agenda

soon. As a result, an extra meeting of the committee was held resulting in agreement for a short duration task group is to start work soon, taking evidence from a wide range of organisations.

Public Health England (Lib Dem)

This motion asked the County Council to note with dismay the Government's intention to dismantle Public Health England at a time when the ONS estimates that around 3000 people are still being infected with Covid-19 every day and to write to the Secretary of State for Health to express this grave concern and to reiterate the need for a thorough and transparent enquiry into why the UK has one of the highest Covid-19 mortality rates in the world. It also asked for the 25% cut in the public health budget in England compared to 2015 to be reinstated. The Conservatives voted against the motion, so it was lost.

Rainbow flag crossing (Labour)

Again, the Conservatives used their majority to refer the motion, this time to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Whilst several such crossings now exist in other parts of the country, they are not formal road crossings such as zebra crossings, which would give rise to safety issues. It has been suggested they could be put in pedestrian areas.

Highways trees maintenance (Lib Dem)

The motion said that the workforce to ensure such trees receive proper maintenance is inadequate to keep them healthy and safe and a positive addition to their neighbourhoods. It called for the cabinet member to prepare a report on how the County can significantly increase the total number of highway network trees. The Conservatives used their majority to vote it down.

'Planning for the Future' White Paper (Lib Dem)

The motion noted that the proposals in this White Paper would radically alter the existing planning system for all seven of Gloucestershire's principal councils. It had been opposed by the all-party Local Government Association, currently Conservative-led, along with many other interest groups. It called on the council to ask the Chief Executive and County Council leader to write to the county's six MPs to raise strong opposition to the proposed changes in the White Paper when it comes before parliament.

The Conservatives amended the proposal, to say there were areas where the White Paper "might be improved" and claiming that the White Paper would address the housing waiting lists. This was won by the Conservatives with all other councillors opposing.

Child food poverty (Lib Dem)

The motion said it believed that it is shameful that children still go hungry in the UK. It commended the initiative of Marcus Rashford whose successful campaign on school holiday hunger has led to a taskforce being formed with some of the UK's leading food retailers and charities to help reduce child food poverty.

The motion noted that this taskforce has called upon the government to fund three policy recommendations from the National Food Strategy to end child food poverty for good:

The wording that followed, calling on the Government to immediately fund these recommendations and to chastise the county's MPs for the way they voted on this was deleted by a Conservative amendment whose majority ensured it won.

Equalities (Labour)

Called on the council to undertaking an equalities audit when services are designed and commissioned to remove access barriers for all groups. Also, to ensure that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people* are always short listed and interviewed when middle and senior management vacancies occur.

*In speaking to this the proposer added in "who have appropriate qualifications".

A supportive Conservative procedural motion referred this to the council's Equalities Working Group to ensure the legality of the proposal.

Special Schools (Conservative)

To note the valuable role these schools play and the capital investment being made into them. Electioneering, it went on to refer to "the misguided actions of previous councils in seeking their closure". This refers to a situation 20 years' ago when it was felt that more children in special schools would be better placed in mainstream schools and the numbers in special schools were decreasing. The vote was won, with many abstentions.

Response to Covid-19 pandemic (Conservative)

This thanked the NHS teams leading on vaccination in the county, and the firefighters, other council staff and volunteers who support them, for their exceptional work in delivering the vaccine across our county.

Words were added by a Lib Dem amendment and agreed by the Conservatives to support the campaign to increase the proposed one per cent pay rise for frontline workers and calling on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to follow the recommendations given by the NHS pay review body instead. The amended motion was passed unanimously.

Social care funding (Lib Dem)

This noted that next year, at £157 million, adult social care is the single largest item of county council expenditure and represents nearly one third of all spend and will increase. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated many of these problems.

The Conservative Government pledged that it would act on adult social care funding and committed to publishing a Green Paper on this in the 2017 Spring Budget. This has still not been published despite many subsequent promises that it was about to appear.

It asked the Council to write to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, expressing the Council's extreme frustration that the Government has failed to produce any long-term plan for a system creaking under unsustainable pressure and asking them to urgently publish the social care green paper, and to include a proper consultation on funding options. This motion fell with most Conservatives voting against.

Household Recycling Centres (HRCs)

These have remained open through much of the pandemic with a booking system. The Pyke Quarry HRC has been subject to longer waiting times for an appointment than the other four in the county. One reason for this has been a large number of no-shows. The booking system is to be improved to allow residents to change their booking time rather than simply not using it.

Rail Services

A rail scheme from Bristol northwards, MetroWest Phase 2 was initially to turn back at Yate to free up passenger capacity on the Bristol - Gloucester line. The intention is now for trains to continue to Gloucester. This service is expected to start in May 2022. In addition, Charfield station now seems likely to reopen in a few years' time.

Growing Our Communities Fund

This started in the 2018/19 financial year and amounted to £30k allocated to each county councillor over the three years then remaining for this council's term of office. The whole of my £30k has been awarded. Recent items have been:

- £1500 towards North Nibley shop refurbishment
- £4986 towards Stinchcombe Village Hall car park extension
- £836 for community play at the Blue Coat School
- £3000 for lighting at Conygres for the Wotton Scout Group

£1335 towards the Berkeley Green Parkrun
£2200 towards a Wotton Junior Parkrun
£5000 for preparatory work for Town Hall repairs
£5000 to Stone with Woodford School for playground enhancements

Highways Local

The £25k available to me during the year included spending on:
carriageway patching on the A4135 at Bowcott;
footway resurfacing on the A38 near All Saints Church in Stone;
carriageway patching in Church Street and School Road, Wotton;
siding work at Tait's Hill, Stinchcombe;
and signing and lining in North Nibley and in Potters Pond, Wotton.

Finally

After a record continuous 40 years as a Gloucestershire county councillor, I am stepping down this May. It has been an immense privilege to serve the residents both of Gloucestershire and far beyond, but particularly all those in this county division. The opportunities I have had, the experiences I have gained and the people I have met have made it an outstanding journey.

John Cordwell

WOTTON SWIMMING POOL

We made huge investments over the winter — over £100k using grants from Sport England, the Ibstock Enover Trust and lots of local help (the Triathlon, Heaven of the South, an inheritance and lots of others). We got the pool tiled beautifully by Rio Pools and totally refurbished the interior of the changing rooms. But that left us very short of cash reserves, so when Coronavirus came along and stopped us opening we wondered how we would cope through the summer.

From April we kept the pool in a state of readiness to open — chlorinated and warm with the solar heating we installed a few seasons ago — and watched GOV.UK for news on the changing restrictions. Then on 15 July, 5 days after Boris said outdoor pools could open, we welcomed our first swimmers (well ahead of many other pools in the area).

To keep people safe we only allowed single households or groups of up to 10 people (in a single party) to use the pool. People had to pay by card in advance (to avoid cash handling) and to have a soapy shower on site before and after the swim. Also, it was beach-style outdoor changing with one disinfected toilet available should an urgent need arise.

We started off offering 6 sessions a day at the just-break-even, rock-bottom price of £30 for an hour. We kept the price low because we wanted people, who may not be able to afford the normal hire fee of £60, to still have a reasonable chance of a swim — especially if they can find a few friends to share the cost.

And Wow! Was it popular!

Before long we were up to 12 sessions a day (9 at weekends) and the website was locked solid with people trying to get sessions. It was like getting Glastonbury tickets... we were selling out a week of sessions in less than 10 minutes!

People were coming from all over Gloucestershire and north Bristol for a swim at Wotton — so to be fair to the people of Wotton, Kingswood, Alderley and Tresham, who pay council tax to support the routine operation of the pool -- we restricted the first 15 minutes of booking to people with a GL12 post code. But even so there were still lots of local people who wanted a swim and unfortunately couldn't get a booking.

And the pool was astonishingly easy to run. People swim with their household or a group of people they know — so they feel totally safe. The lifeguards find the swim easy to supervise and the water-conditioning plant copes with the steady bather load very readily.

Wotton, Charfield & Kingswood Greenway Group

Report for Wotton Town Council, April 2021



The Greenway Group has a vision for a safe, traffic-free shared use path to connect our local communities.

Route Design Study

In March 2020, the Greenway Group appointed Sustrans to deliver a detailed route design study, following an initial feasibility study which reported in 2019. The study is progressing well, and the Sustrans Project Manager has met with local stakeholders and landowners to discuss route options. Fortnightly project meetings are held with the Greenway Group project management team.

The next step, for spring/summer 2021, is to complete a topographical survey and to agree Heads of Terms with landowners for confirmed sections of the route. We hope to be able to confirm the final route later this year.



A greenway in Tyneside (Chris Foster, Sustrans)

Fundraising

Thanks to the generous support of Wotton Town Council, other local councils, private and charitable organisations, the Greenway Group has raised £41,000 to cover the cost of the route design study and associated surveys.

Working with local councils

The Greenway Steering Group continues to meet quarterly, and brings together representatives from Wotton Town Council, Kingswood Parish Council, Charfield Parish Council, Gloucestershire County Council, South Gloucestershire Council, Stroud District Council, members of the Greenway Group and other stakeholders. The Steering Group's role is to monitor progress with the route design study and to ensure that the Greenway is considered in the development of local plans, transport strategies and other initiatives.

Over the past year, the Greenway Group has engaged positively with consultations on strategic and transport planning and has kept the Charfield Station project team informed of developments, which link to their plans to reopen the station in 2024. We're delighted that the greenway is now referenced as a priority local scheme in the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan.

Community engagement

The Greenway Group enjoys strong local support and interest in our regular posts on social media. We continue to keep all relevant local organisations informed of developments – including Wotton Community Sports Foundation, Katharine Lady Berkeley's School and Renishaw.

Alex King, Chair, Moira Buist, Secretary, Catherine Braun, Treasurer
wckgreenway@gmail.com www.facebook.com/wckgreenwaygroup

TOWN MEETING REPORT 2020/21

WOTTON in BLOOM 2020

Wotton in Bloom held our AGM & first meeting in February 2020, making plans for the coming year. By March everything had changed, it looked as if we wouldn't be able to go ahead. This left a problem, the plants had been ordered by Wotton Farm Shop in November 2019, and by late March were well on their way to planting size.

Paul Grimes offered to take the plants off our hands, and to sell hanging baskets at the Farm Shop. We knew by then how difficult life was getting for local traders, and how uncertain everything was, so we decided to do it ourselves by either finding a way for Wotton in Bloom to go ahead or selling the baskets ourselves.

When the lockdown restrictions were slightly eased in May we dared to feel a little optimistic. We had a greenhouse full of blooms, the brackets had been safety checked & necessary work completed, our watering contractor was on standby. We began to consider how we could put up the baskets in Wotton, & how we could fundraise for it.

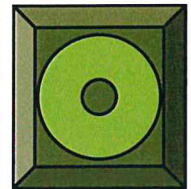
Risk assessment helped us devise a plan to put the baskets up that was both safe & practical. In early June with few people around & lots of parking space, it took 4 hours for 7 people to put up 150 hanging baskets and troughs. We usually have a minimum of 12 people and no distancing, it was very tense and really exhausting, but we were so proud of the difference that it made to the Town.

In previous years Wotton in Bloom takes advance orders and payments for baskets. Obviously this couldn't be done this year so we launched a Wotton Wide Appeal to fundraise:

- Every shop, office & house on the main streets was given a letter
- We launched a Just Giving page via our Facebook page
- The Appeal was publicised in the Gazette, in the Wotton Times & the Directory, on BBC Radio Gloucestershire & on our own Edge Radio
- We sent letters to every business, Club & Society in Wotton

The results of our Appeal exceeded our expectations. As ever with fundraising there is no certainty just a lot of hope and good will! We were fortunate to have some reserves that allowed us to top up the amount raised and the Town Council contribution to the watering, so were able to meet all of our commitments. This has enabled us to order the plants for 2021, when we will see what Coronavirus throws at us.

Sue Hunt



Report from Wotton under Edge & District Recreational Trust-2020/21.

Despite the difficulties encountered due to the Covid 19 pandemic in the 2020/21 period, the Recreational Trust Members continued to support the Bowls Club and other affiliated organisations to the Charity.

Our last full meeting was held in January 2020 and since then we have engaged with all the affiliated groups each quarter via email. Voting on any motions also taken online.

April 2020 General Meeting 2020-2 Report monitors activities from the affiliated groups and a proposal that we should cap the number of affiliated groups to twelve at the AGM coming up.

July 2020 AGM was delayed until August in the hope that we may be able to meet face-to-face. Sadly, this was not to be and so business was conducted via email. The Agenda for this event contained a series of proposals which the voting members of the committee (Trustees) voted via email. All the details are contained in the report including re-election of Trustees, the capping of affiliated members to twelve in a change to the constitution. Comprehensive reports were included from all of the affiliated groups.

July 2020 General Meeting 2020-3 (also delayed until August) was in fact cancelled as there was no other business to conduct over and above the AGM.

Oct 2020 General Meeting 2020-4 was cancelled and replaced by email communication and voting. On this occasion no reports were submitted by affiliated groups as activity from all quarters was minimal. The Trust did receive a request for £500 match-funding from Wotton Rovers Juniors and this was approved in the weeks leading up to the meeting by Trustees.

Jan 2021 General Meeting 2021-1 was cancelled and replaced by email communication. All active affiliated groups submitted reports, and these were recorded in the overall meeting report. All accounts were delivered on time which enabled submission to the Charity Commission on time this year.

Reports on all the meetings above are available from the Recreational Trust on request.

There was some concern from the Bowls Club over land adjacent to the Green as housing development started later in the year. The Trust, working with the Town Council met with the developer at several stages to alleviate any concerns. The Trust still has some concerns over the parking issue and is working with the Bowls Club to ensure security of spaces is not compromised.



Wotton-under-Edge Bowls Club

The affiliated groups operating under the umbrella of the Trust as 31st March 2021 are:

Bowls Club	Streamsfield
Wotton & District Silver Band	Wotton-in-Bloom
Wotton Arts Association*	Wotton Rovers Junior Section
Wotton Youth Liaison Group	Wotton Blues Festival
Bearlands Play Area Association*	Wotton, Charfield and Kingsway Greenway Group
Beaumont le Roger Twinning Society	Wotton Area Climate Action Group

*Leaving at the end of March 2021

Wotton Arts Association have merged with Under the Edge Arts after 50 years of operation.

Bearlands Play Area Association have completed their project and are stepping down.

The affiliated groups all reported throughout the year and submitted accounts which we consolidated into a document submitted to the Charity Commission after a review by Burton Sweet accountants.

As we close this report in March of 2021, we see some light at the end of the tunnel and look forward to a better year ahead.

Jeff Walshe/Chair – Wotton under Edge & District Recreational Trust

jeffwalshe@gmail.com

Background.

In the 1970s local residents mounted a campaign to develop part of the land in Dryleaze 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-2017**
- ii) **Licence between the Recreational Trust and Trustees of the Bowls Club-2017**

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 (run by the community between 2006 and 2014). 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 under Edge Historical Society Museum & Heritage Centre

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

Registered Charity No: 291936

Telephone: 01453 521541

Email: wuehistoc@gmail.com

Facebook: [Wotton Heritage Centre](#)

Website: www.wottonheritage.com



March 2021 Report to Members, Friends and Volunteers.

Introduction: This is our second "Postcard" to Members, Friends and Volunteers. (We are still developing the format). The idea is to keep you informed of our activities in the Heritage Centre.

We continue to remain closed to the public and maintaining operations behind the scenes on a part-time basis. We are now looking to re-open around mid-summer. Exact dates are to be decided and dependent on government guidelines.

The details of how we initially operate is to be debated. Thoughts and things to consider:

- a) Revised opening days/hours.
- b) Visitor Information Centre opens first, followed by the Museum a month later.
- c) Initial opening times operated by committee members.
- d) Introduction of electronic payment system.

Reg Clarke - Chairman:

As you may know (and are probably fed up with) the ongoing saga of my house move, matters came to a head on 5th February and I moved, with daughter Victoria moving on 12th.

It is with some relief that I can write and say that the end of the tunnel is almost in sight. We plan to make a number of changes to the house which will happen over the next few months but the basic task of getting the new house reasonably set up is nearing completion. Moving two houses within the space of seven days, is not a task for the faint hearted or those of a lazy disposition.



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On more serious matters, I am acutely aware that I have devoted little time to the Centre over the last two months but have kept abreast of our activities through Jeff's comprehensive emails, and others have also kept their noses to the grindstone to keep things moving. Dave Cowell has kept going on the audit of the 'Bisley' cabinets and this is nearing completion; I hope to conclude my efforts on this next week. At the same time Elaine has overseen the conservation of the Tubbs Lewis Samples book, probably the largest individual conservation project over the last few years. The book is well worth a look, and we can feel confident that it will stay well preserved for future generations. The project has been funded by Elaine in memory of her late husband John White, an active supporter of the museum for many years.

So, what does the future hold? My email discussions with Helen (SW Fed) have focused on the need to resolve the situation left by Dave Baird and Alexia Clark leaving our circle. We will have to take a decision to appoint a new curator, and a mentor, and on this Helen has offered to assist in the process; this will be our main item when we finally meet in person (subject to covid rules).

It has been a strange and difficult year for everyone, but we are fortunate in being in the voluntary sector where support, both financial and human, is available.

Jeff Walshe – Secretary

Activity continues behind closed doors on top of answering a continual flow of enquires and emails from interested parties. The Town Council have offered to upgrade the Heritage Centres emergency lighting, an offer we accepted gratefully.

In the Heritage Centre we have continued to make space and relocate boxed items within specific rooms. Accessibility will be important when we re-open which means reducing the height of the storage and bringing heavy boxes down to a manageable level. We will need to adapt the shelving and bring in additional hardware. We have applied for a grant to cover some of the costs of new shelves/brackets for this. I am still working on ideas as to how we upgrade the storage areas to make the centre as efficient as possible and will present these in due course.

Janet has replaced all the old A4 files in the front "library" section with new Blue files. I have provided new printed splines for these, updating some of the titles in the process. It is apparent that there is work needed to consolidate the content and update these files. This is work we can carry out over a longer period after considering what members of the public would get out of looking through them.



Janet has replaced all the old files with new ones, ready for our visitors later in the year. The content of the files will be tidied up in the weeks to come.



Thanks to Haidee Jackson we have been awarded £800 from Persimmons Homes towards a 5-drawer cabinet for storing maps we still have rolled-up in boxes.

*Matt Bigwood is continuing to collect photographs for Wotton during the pandemic, a photographic record of this last year. He has agreed to supply photographs for the 2022 Wotton—under-Edge calendar and I will be working on the design during the Spring.

The search for information on former resident and writer Sophie Brzeska is still on hold though I have started to re-contact academics who are also interested in her life story.



Wotton Town Council



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The recent history of the Cinema progresses well. The documentation is now in three lever-arch files plus the original history file. All these now need consolidating. The large number of computer files and photographs need to be added into the records.

On the Facebook-page we have shown KLB Sporting heroes over the last 10 weeks and now we have started showing digitally re-scanned photographs and postcards. In the last 28 days we have reached 5,991 people of whom 2,459 engaged in viewing photographs and information posted on the page.

Accreditation, Curator and Mentor:

As Reg indicated, at some point in the future we must deal with our position on these three topics. Accreditation has resolved itself in the short-term as our membership has now been extended a further year due to the Covid situation. While we do not now have to consider re-applying for Accreditation immediately, it seems we have to consider engaging a new Mentor to oversee our current membership. Reg has been in discussion with Helen at the (SW Fed) and we will decide at our first face to face meeting where to go from here. As for the vacant position of Curator on our committee, it seems unlikely that anyone will want to take that on as a full-blown employment role due to the workload involved. It might be that we consider filling the role in an Honorary capacity with a limited scope as an officer on the committee with limited responsibility for maintaining the collection artefacts and assembling exhibitions.

Jim Barrett: Treasurer

Income is due from Calendar sales plus a few shop sales made over the last year. Our thanks to Dave Cowell for managing online sales. The Accounts for 2020 are now in Draft format and under review by the Chair and Secretary before release to the committee.

Haidee Jackson- Grant Funding

Work completed since the last meeting: I have only recently started conservation work after a break in the Heritage Centre. With Elaine's guidance, I have been putting in date order all the information in Gordon Phillips' collection of Arts Festival correspondence, programmes, and press cuttings from 1971 - 1976. And ensuring they are all in the new individual archival sleeves. There is much more to do in this wonderful archive.

Elaine has ideas for an exhibition displaying items from the collection of textiles. Every textile has been cleaned, therefore available to be displayed, some with photographs showing the people who wore the items of clothing. It would be an opportunity to display the Conservac and its uses, "A before and after cleaning" demonstration.

I have been successful in obtaining a grant this month, we have been awarded £800 from Persimmons Homes towards a 5-drawer map cabinet. This will be purchased shortly, and we will be able to store many of the old maps currently stored in tubes and boxes.

I have applied for three grants, two were unsuccessful and one is pending a decision.

Janet Walshe-Vice Chair & Fundraising

My summary of the OK Fund footpath project from the minutes of meetings has now been typed-up and I am sorting photographs for the record to be made ready for accessioning. I have assembled paperwork, photographs, and information on the "We Love Wotton" day held in 2009. This will be made ready for access by the public sometime this summer. The body of which is the mounting of 500 postcards written by residents and their children into folders for easy access. Jill Stubbs helped at an early stage in assembling the cards in order.



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In the Heritage Centre, I replaced all the old battered A4 files (almost 100) with new ones and recorded their titles. Jeff converted the paper splines into nice new green ones. We have started to consolidate them into groups where appropriate.

I have been reviewing the stock we have for the shop and started to put things on shelves. There are things we have had for a long time and not sold; I propose to put these out at reduced "sale" prices. I will be looking at purchasing new stock ready for opening. We have large quantities of the new Wotton Tourist map ready for distribution around the Cotswold towns. These will go out when we know their Tourist Information Centres open to the public.

Elaine White

1. Pest control. Through the cold weather there have been few insects in the centre. We have had a small number of spiders, tiny flies, woodlice and 2 houseflies. We have signed up for another 3 months in the Pest Control Project to monitor the insects as they start waking up in the warmer weather.

2. The large collection, 50 years' worth, from Gordon Phillips on the Arts festival is being sorted into files by Haidee ready for accession. What an amazing collection for our archives.

3. The KLB boxes in DC14 have all been audited and are ready for ad-lib. To complete this audit gives a lot of satisfaction when so much work has been done by so many. Thanks to June, Haidee and Jill.

4. The Tubbs Lewis elastic sample book has been returned after being conserved by Moira Buick, book and paper conservator. She has done an amazing job and the book will continue for many years to come. This was my request to be carried out and paid for in memory of John White who worked tirelessly for the centre.

Displays

I think it is time to consider what we would like to use for our opening display in the centre. Preparation could then start on collecting ideas and finding the objects needed. I have some ideas, has anyone else got ideas to mull over?

I would like to start sorting out the main hall ready for the future opening, but this really needs people to meet to discuss the problems. There is no storage for the conservation equipment now. Maybe we can use some drawers in the new map chest when it arrives! The pile of non-accessioned items needs working on. It is a slow process and needs some enquiries on the system to check that things are not in the collection already. This holds me back as I cannot search the system. Working together would help to get this work done, but when?



This is how the Tubbs Lewis book looked before the restoration. We will be publishing details of the restored version in the weeks ahead. Elaine is at present preparing the correct storage facility for the book.



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June Cordwell

The Friends of the Heritage Center
Little to report as activity now slowed due to Covid.

Jill Stubbs

Along with volunteer Ann Jones, Jill has continued to collect data from the Scrap Books which are still growing in number, thanks to the efforts of Emma Jordan who has been collecting newspaper cuttings and magazine features for some years now. Jill has also been assisting Janet in collating information for the "We Love Wotton" files.

Ann Falcon-Uff

Ann continues to collect data from the archives of the Dramatic Society. An important project with a mass of information available to collate.

Date of the next committee meeting Thursday 15th April 2021 at 14.30 (Venue TBA).
The venue under current rules will have to be for 6 people and held outdoors.



A new information map has been added to the outside of the building for the residents and visitors to Wotton. We are now considered as a Gateway to the Cotswolds. Showing local walks and points of interest this is a valuable addition to providing local information.



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HERITAGE CENTRE – ACTION LIST – March 2021

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	ACTIVITY	INTERIM POSITION	COMPLETED
4	Undertake a user's/non-users survey	New Year 2021 -refer to item 5	
5	Review our policies in line with Spectrum 5 changes	revisit alongside item 28 below - ongoing	
9	Review and re-organise the office, kitchen, Research room, Storeroom.	Assessment ongoing-report due in March/April.	
15	Review the library storage area for better use of the space.	Refurbishment and under investigation. Ongoing	
16	Disposal of duplicate artefacts.	Duplicates being held in temporary storage -will be disposed of under Spectrum procedures. Assessment on hold.	
17	Create e-mail protocol	In Hand	
28	Re-Accreditation preparations. Mentor engagement	Review all documents, our date is now July 2022 (postponed by Arts Council once again).	
29	Post implementation review of IT infrastructure	arrange date	
35	Timeline development	Add new data/investigate printing copies for selling and schools -Jeff	
37	Adlib Access program 1) local	Investigate cost then funding	On Hold
37	Adlib Access program 2) online	Investigate cost then funding	On Hold
38	Gift Aid	Investigate how we may use it	
43	Sell old projector and fittings	Jeff to organise	
44	Generate new Walking Leaflets	Jeff to organise.	
46	Mount the Dyson Vac on to a wall		
48	Fire Station History Board	Jeff to prepare-commenced.	
51	Scrapbook Data Collection	Jill and Ann Jones are working on Scrapbooks -ongoing	
52	Wotton Dramatic Society Data Collection & Accession	Started by Ann Falcon-Uff -work ongoing.	
53	Refurbishment project evaluation	Jeff clearing hardware ready for assessment to make space.	
55	"Life in Lockdown: a record of Wotton-under-Edge in 2020"	Matt Bigwood-second phase extended to early 2021 -ongoing.	
56	Museum Audit – Reg	Ongoing	
57	Wotton Arts Association-History	Accreditation work in progress	
58	OK Fund Footpath	Assembly of data & photos	
59	Cinema History	Assembly of data & photos	
60	We Love Wotton	Assembly of data & photos	
61	A4 Folder Library re-alignment	Assimilation under way	
62	Bank Signatories revised	Jim Barrett to investigate	
63	Curator position	To be discussed	
64	Purchase 5-drawer map chest		
65	Prepare a 3-year plan		
66	Electronic Payment System - investigate		

Jeff Walshe, Secretary (28/03/2021)



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Wotton under Edge Historical Society Museum & Heritage Centre

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Wotton under Edge Historical Society, Museum and Heritage Centre -2020/21.

In 2020, the Wotton Heritage Centre temporarily closed its doors to the public on March 23rd along with much of the country due to the Coronavirus Covid 19 pandemic. We have been closed for the entire year as almost all of our volunteers are over 70 and have been in the vulnerable category.

Up until the date of closure, we held the exhibition "Let's Go Shopping" organised by our Curator David Baird. When the pandemic struck, it seemed at first like a major problem in our development. We had reached a crucial stage in the assembly of the Adlib database and relocation of artefacts around the building. Over the year we have used the time available as an opportunity to take further stock of what we have in the Museum collection and how we might make better use of the space.

Over the year and when the rules allowed, the Trustees on the committee have been spending time in the Heritage Centre or organising information at home.

Large amounts of documents found in corners and boxes and not accessioned have been separated out. Once the committee can all gather together, these items will be examined to see if they are worthy of keeping. Also separated out have been fragmented quantities of conservation materials and stationery. These will be filtered and stored in central locations once we have made the space.

The Tubbs Lewis sample book, one of our most prized artefacts has been fully restored. Organised and paid for by Trustee Elaine White in memory of her late husband John, this treasured book will go on display in 2021 along with an exhibition showing some newly found items and records.

Overall, despite the pandemic, there has been a large amount of work achieved in 2020 and this is recorded in minutes/reports assembled every six weeks via online email events, instead of face-to-face meetings. This included the AGM, where all Trustees re-affirmed their commitment for another year. A new Trustee arrived and late in 2020, our Curator David Baird retired. His replacement is under review as is our continued accreditation which has once again been delayed by the Arts Council until 2022.

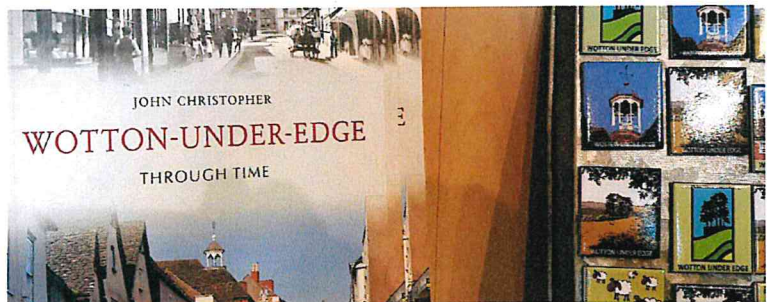
We applied for and received a grant of £10,000 from the UK Government via Stroud District Council. A lifeline for our organisation as our income was severely diminished over the year. We were grateful to receive a grant from the Town Council, an essential component in our sustainability. Fundraising events have not been possible, Town Hall Teas suspended, and government rules applied everywhere. Through the year we applied for and received grants for capital equipment. A conservation Vacuum Cleaner used to clean all of our textile artefacts and new (second) Map Chest to store large artefacts and conservation materials.

Sadly, we had to cancel all our lectures this year, although we took the opportunity to reaffirm our Membership and Friends who look likely to be merged in 2022. We deferred payment of any membership fees for this year as we deferred sponsorship fees for the Wotton Calendar. Taking into account the enormous support we have had from everyone in the past and hopefully again in the future.

We have made some attempts at collecting data on the effects of the Pandemic on Wotton-under-Edge with limited success. Photographer Matthew Bigwood has agreed to provide us with a collection of photographs taken over the year but attempts at assembling written essays has had limited response.

The Visitor Information Centre remains mothballed although we have distributed many copies of the new Tourist Town Map via shops and a distribution box attached to the front of the building.

We remain closed until at least late June when the visitor centre will open, followed a month later by the museum. It has been a challenging year and we look forward to resuming our mission to display the history of Wotton and promote the modern Wotton-under-Edge to visitors from home and away.



By Jeff Walshe, Historical Society/Heritage Centre Committee.

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WOTTON AREA CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK (WACAN)

- Tree planting - thousands of saplings planted, new community woodland, tree nursery
- Litter picking activities (with 'Great Wotton Tidy-Up' group)
- Local businesses have pledged to offer refills and reduce single use plastic, earning them a 'Plastic Champion' badge from *Surfer's Against Sewage*
- Helped set up a 'Slow Ways' walking group
- Informative public meetings – generally monthly (or every other month) and attended by between 20 and 50 people
- Many public events, including carbon footprint popup shop, seed gathering walk, pre-loved clothes exchange, plastic-free picnic, eBike trial, zero waste Christmas workshop
- Overall we've engaged with hundreds of people from age 3 to 90+
- We have twelve members in our core team (who help organise all events etc),
- Over 500 supporters on social media (FB: 579; Instagram: 178)
- 205 subscribers to our monthly newsletter
- We network with other CAN groups within Stroud District to share ideas, knowledge and make efficiencies
- We have raised circa £400 through various fundraising events
- We have been successful in a larger funding bid from Renishaw which will help us with many more projects including water monitoring