



Lilleshall & Donnington Parish Council

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Annual Report 2005 – 2006

Chairman's Report



I have pleasure in presenting my annual report in what has been another successful year for the Parish Council. I would like to thank each and every member of the Council for their time spent serving the community and making my task as Chairman that much easier and enjoyable. I would also like to thank those that supported me by attending the Civic Services held at St Matthew's Church, Donnington to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War 2 and at St Michael's Church, Lilleshall to commemorate St George's Day.

Whilst undertaking the rôle of Chairman to this Parish Council I was extremely pleased to see the support that ABRO Donnington received in its victorious fight against the proposed loss of jobs and thank all those that took part in the process.

The Parish Council, together with the Borough Council, Wrekin Housing Trust and Bromford Christian Housing Association raised £60,000 to install the new "Puffin" Crossing on Wellington Road, Donnington. Other highlights of my year have included switching on the Christmas Lights with Mrs S Brazier (hopefully we can keep on increasing the number of these festive lights around the Parish), judging the Parish Council garden competition and judging at the horticultural show recently held at Turreff Hall.

During the past year the various committees have continued their important work for the parish and these are reported on later.

In December the Clerk became the first in Telford to attain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA). The next achievement that the Parish Council wishes to aim for is "Quality Status". Part of the criteria for this is to have a qualified Clerk (which it now has) and it is required to have a Parish Plan. The parishioners' participation by providing comments, views and suggestions to improve services and structure of the villages/towns will be paramount in the compilation of this document. Further information regarding this will be made available once the project is up and running.

The issue of Lilleshall being included as a "key settlement" in the Borough Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) is still being contested and is a high priority with parishioners and Councillors alike.

I would like to take this opportunity in wishing the new Chair the very best in their Term of Office and thank the Clerk and all the staff for their hard work and help throughout the year.



Halls and Environment Committee

Chair Ms Cindy Mason, Vice-Chair Phil Norton, Andrew Baker, Mrs Veronica Brown, Brian Green, Mrs Pat Green, Mrs Rose Gregory, Graham Platt, Keith Watkins.

The Halls and Environment Committee administers all buildings, bus shelters, street lights, benches and land owned by the Parish Council. Its aim is to ensure the efficient and effective management of those resources and make recommendations to full Council as appropriate. The Committee met six times during the year.



As this Committee deals with the maintenance and upkeep of the Parish Council's assets, a brief description follows of selected items of work and events that occurred throughout the parish during 2005/2006:

Brands Meadow Play Area

The Parish Council formed a partnership with the Beth Johnson Housing Association and Brands Meadow Residents Association to provide goal ends at the play area and to maintain the land. Hopefully, in the near future a small play park will be created for younger children together with a BMX bike track. The Parish Council has already carried out some tree works at this location and the wood was chipped and laid as a path through the wood to simulate a bike track. Regular updates on the proposed projects will be contained in the Parish Newsletter.

Grass Cutting

The Estate Manager continued to maintain the grass cutting to a high standard on land owned by the Parish Council and in the closed areas of the churchyards at St Matthew's Church and St Michael's Church. This year a new ride on mower had to be purchased due to the old mower catching fire. Thankfully, the Estate Manager was not hurt during this.

Bus Shelters

The renovation of the bus shelters was completed last year in Lilleshall and now the Parish Council is concentrating on those in Donnington. This project will carry on over the years until all shelters owned by the Parish Council (all the Brick Shelters) have been restored to a high standard.

Operation Clean Sweep

The Parish Council together with the Police, Wrekin Housing Trust, The Borough Council and Neighbourhood Co-ordinator successfully carried out another "Operation Clean Sweep" around Donnington. Each member of the partnership concentrated on their own specific roles with the police targeting vehicles and crime, the Housing Association ensuring that gardens were tidied and rubbish removed and the Parish Council removed graffiti. All this was organised through the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator, Fiona Moore.



Garden Competition

This year there were more entrants to the Garden Competition, noticeably children. It was very successful and thanks goes to all those that took part. The Parish Council is holding a competition again in July 2006 and entry forms will be included in the Parish Newsletter.

Pictured are the Chairman with last years overall winner Mr Ted Lowe from Donnington who is receiving the Rose Bowl and the winners in the Children's Category Miss Emily and Sophie McKeivitt.



Their brother Joshua who also helped was too shy to have his photo taken. They are receiving a trophy purchased by Mrs Pat Green especially for this category.

Grass Verges

The majority of the grass verges in Turreff Avenue and Baldwin Webb Avenue have now been replaced with tarmac. It is hoped that those that have not yet been done will have the necessary work carried out on them this year.



Church Light, St Michael's Church, Lilleshall

A new light has been erected outside the entrance doors to St Michael's Church at a cost of £570. Thanks go to Councillor Andrew Baker who was very active in the installation process of this light.

Extension to Turreff Hall

Due to the popularity of Turreff Hall with groups and clubs the Parish Council decided that an extension was required to store all their equipment as well as the machinery and files belonging to the Council. A Capital Fund had been set up to finance this project and plans have now been approved. It is hoped that the work will start shortly with minimum disruption to the daily running of the Hall and close neighbours.

Footpath, Bretton Park

The Parish Council is still negotiating with the Borough Council and owners of the site for the re-opening of the footpath at Bretton Park, Muxton. Thanks must go to Mr Ken Trumper who is actively pursuing this matter and providing the Parish Council with information relevant to this cause.

Muxton

Work on the land opposite Muxton Primary School has been completed with the addition of wild flower beds and benches.

One that got away

It had been suggested that hanging baskets be placed on the Parade this spring. However, the cost of purchasing and maintaining them came as a bit of a shock and in the pursuit of Best Value, the Council could not justify the expense so, unfortunately, there will not be any flowers on show this spring.

Planning Committee

*Chair Brian Green,
Vice-Chair Keith Watkins,
Andrew Baker,
Mrs Rose Gregory,
Phil Norton, Rodney Pitt,
Mike Skelton, Mrs Viv Verster.*



The Parish Council is a statutory consultant on planning applications. This means that it has the right and responsibility to give an opinion on all applications made to the Borough of Telford and Wrekin that occur within its parish boundaries.

Planning Committee meetings are scheduled as and when the Clerk and Chair of Planning consider necessary. It is left to their discretion whether or not to call a planning committee meeting when there are a large number of applications to consider. Otherwise the Clerk places planning applications on the agendas of the next available Council or committee meetings for discussion. This is to enable the Parish Council to respond within the time limit of two weeks given by the Borough Council. The Planning Committee met nine times during the year 1st April 2005 and 31st March 2006.

The Committee's objective is to make every effort to ensure that decisions on all planning matters and other matters referred to the committee balance the wishes of the applicants against the effect of the plan on other residents of the parish and the character of immediate surrounding areas whilst preserving conservation areas, Green Belt and local amenities.

From April 2005 to March 2006 the Council received a total of 104 planning applications for discussion and comments. These were made up as follows: Donnington 49 applications; Lilleshall 25 applications; Muxton 30 applications

The majority of applications received were for single or two storey extensions to dwellings and for the erection of conservatories. Larger developments discussed included applications at Church Walk, Donnington Drive, Winifred's Drive and Station Road in Donnington together with an application for 185 dwellings at Marshbrook Way, Muxton.

One planning application which is still under discussion and proving controversial is the proposal for a new medical centre to be built at School Road, Donnington. The Council's decisions regarding all applications can be found on its website www.ldpc.org or can be obtained from the Clerk at the Parish Office.

Mineral Development Plan Committee

*Chair Rodney Pitt, Vice-Chair Mrs Viv Verster,
A Baker, Mrs Rose Gregory,
P Norton, John Thompson.
Co-opted Member Mr R France.*



This Committee was recently set up to ensure that any response from the Parish Council regarding the Local Development Framework (LDF) Minerals – Options and Issues would be made after a thorough examination of all items listed in this document. One option contained in the document which caused major concern was that land at Muxton had once again been highlighted as having potential for fireclay and coal. As this Parish Council, MP's and the local residents had previously successfully fought an application for open cast mining at this location, concerns were that further applications would be made in the future.

At the meeting the Councillors co-opted Mr R France on to the Committee as he had been very active against the previous application for mining and it was thought that his special knowledge would be extremely useful during discussions. Also, Mr Dave Coxill (Minerals and Waste Officer, Borough of Telford and Wrekin) attended the meeting and proved very knowledgeable in his field of work. After lengthy discussions the Committee was able to respond to the Borough Council with its preferred options listed in the document which can be found in the Minutes from this meeting.

The Parish Council would like to thank Mr R France and Mr D Coxill for the expertise they provided and help in enabling the Committee to ensure which options are the best ones for this parish.

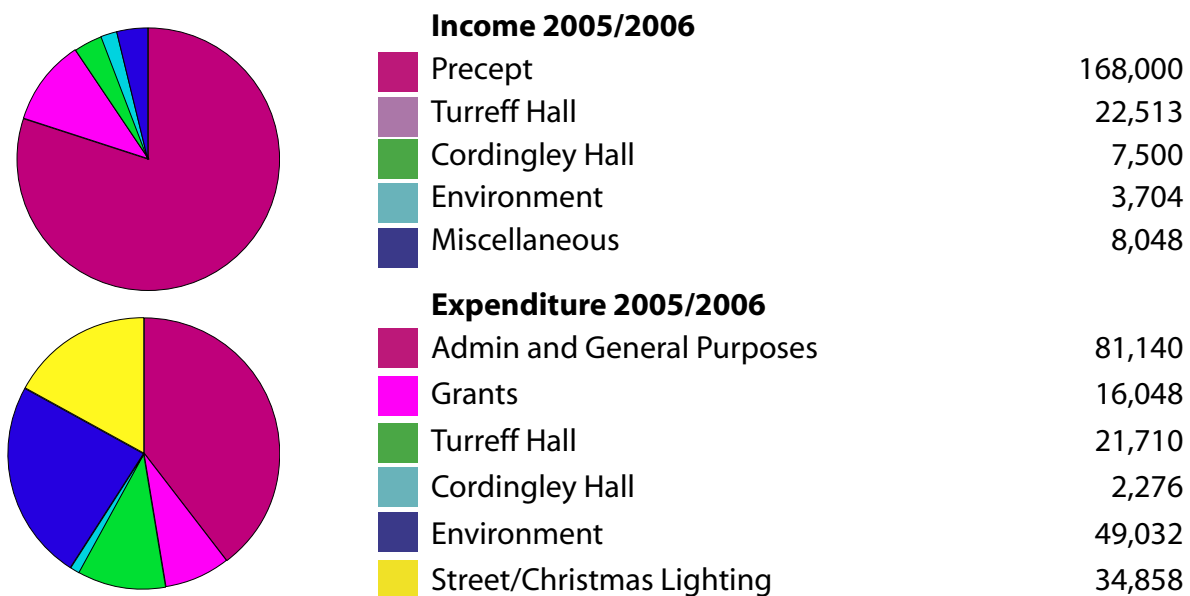
Finance Committee

Chair Mrs Liz Clare, Vice-Chair Clive Mason, Andrew Baker, Mrs Rose Gregory, Phil Norton, Rodney Pitt, Mike Skelton, Mrs Viv Verster.



The Finance Committee monitors, oversees and reviews all matters relating to Council finances and its use of resources. It ensures the efficient and effective management of those resources and makes recommendations to full Council as appropriate. During the year 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006 the Committee met a total of 5 times.

The Council's precept for 2005/2006 was set at £168,000. This meant a cost of £39.95 to each household within the Parish as part of the Council Tax. This figure is set according to the number of Band "D" properties in the parish which is given at 4,205.20.



The Parish Council was successful in its application to the Awards for All Lottery Scheme and managed to obtain £2,763 to purchase colour CCTV Cameras to be installed at Turreff Hall and to improve lighting around the building.

It purchased 30 Neighbourhood Watch Signs at a discounted price of £165 and these are distributed to Neighbourhood Watch Schemes upon request around the parish.

Grants totalling £16,048 were awarded to 35 groups and organisations that benefit the inhabitants within the Parish. Most notably, the Parish Council sponsored the Donnington Beat Manager's Vehicle and helped Lilleshall Memorial Hall with its maintenance and improvements to its facilities. For the third year running the Council provided vouchers at Christmas for the pensioners residing in the parish which appear to be increasing in popularity every year. Last Christmas 1,018 pensioners claimed their vouchers.

Once again, the Parish Council successfully passed its Annual Audit Report which is made available to the public every year. Notices of when the accounts are available for inspection are displayed at the Parish Office and in the local press.

The Parish Council is determined to ensure that "Best Value" is provided to the residents and electorate of Donnington, Lilleshall and Muxton.

Assets Sub-Committee

Assets is a Sub-Committee of the Halls and Environment Committee.

The Sub-Committee's objective is to monitor and review the condition and value of all the assets owned by this Parish Council. It is to ensure that staff and members of the Council have the necessary equipment to carry out their tasks in a safe and efficient manner.

The assets held by the Parish Council are as follows:

Fixed Assets Est. Value (£) as at April 2005

Turreff Hall	336,884.62
Cordingley Hall	571,517.38
Talbot Centre	37,049.56
21 x Bus Shelters	21,255.00
Benches	1,000.00
518 x Street Lights	

Land

Land opposite Muxton Primary School, Marshbrook Way, Muxton

Brands Meadow Play area and woods, Muxton
Land to left of Muxton Primary School (looking at school), Marshbrook Way, Muxton

Land to rear of Saltwell's Drive through to play area next to St John's Church, Saltwell's Drive, Muxton

There are, however, various covenants restricting the sale of the buildings and land and values given are for Insurance purposes.

Plant

All the various equipment held by the Parish Council to carry out its duties in and around the Parish has a total value of just under £30,000.

The Parish Council made one major purchase this year which was a new Stiga ride-on mower. This was due to the fact that the previous mower accidentally caught fire. It was financed by the Capital Fund set up to replace the mower and money received from the Insurance Company.

Staff and Personnel

Sub-Committee

Staff and Personnel is a Sub-Committee of the Finance Committee. Membership consists of no more than seven members of the Council (Chair & Vice-Chair included). This is to ensure that any redress against this sub-committee will be dealt with on a non-bias basis. Staff and Personnel Sub-Committee meetings are scheduled as and when the Clerk and Chair consider necessary. The Sub-Committee's objective is to ensure that any issues relating to the staff and personnel of the Parish Council are dealt with fairly and legally. Staff salaries will be discussed as and when necessary and any recommendations will be reported to and ratified at the next available full Council meeting.

The function of this Sub-Committee is to:

- a. Review recommendations for salary increases (with the Clerk for other staff) and make recommendations to full Council.
- b. Manage any staff complaints, disputes or grievances and report their decision to full Council.
- c. Oversee all aspects of the employment process from the initial investigation into whether a suggested position is necessary through the formulation of a person and job specification, interviews, and finally to the offer of employment to the chosen individual after ratification by full Council.
- d. Monitor and develop members of staff and review their training needs in relation to their posts.
- e. Ensure matters relating to health, safety and welfare are reviewed regularly and that staff working environments adhere to Health and Safety in the workplace.
- f. Consult on general staff matters.

During 2005/2006 the Committee discussed the new Profiles of Parish Councils issued by the National Association of Local Councils. It presented its findings and recommendations to the full Council who ratified these and instructed the Clerk to implement them.



Parish Councillors

Lilleshall Ward

Andrew Baker
Graham Platt
Michael J Skelton

Donnington Ward

Elizabeth A Clare
Brian H Green
Patricia A Green
Cindy Mason
Clive Mason
John Thompson

Muxton Ward

Veronica J Brown
Rose Gregory
Phil Norton
Rodney Pitt
Viv Verster
Keith Watkins

The photograph is of the Canal Basin, Granville Country Park