

Lilleshall, Donnington & Muxton Parish Council

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Annual Report 2011 – 2012



Chairman's Report

The May election 2011 saw seven new Councillors elected to this Parish Council. They were Councillors Mark Bolam, Mrs Carol Baker, Mrs Pam Millard, Mrs Lisa Dugmore, Nigel Dugmore, Jeremy Haigh and Adrian Lawrence. I have enjoyed working with them over the last 10 months and look forward to the contribution they can bring to discussions at the Parish Council meetings. At the same time I would like to thank Mrs Rose Gregory, John Hockin, Mrs Brenda Mason, Graham Platt, John Thompson and Keith Watkins for the work and contribution that they did whilst Councillors and wish them well for the future.

This Parish Council held its first ever Christmas Festival in December 2011 to celebrate the switching on of its Christmas lights. I am delighted that it was such a great success and would like to thank all those that helped organise it and contribute to it. The Parish Council had its own Tombola stall at the event and I am pleased to say that it raised £100.65 which went to my chosen charity, the Severn Hospice Telford.

It is not often that a Parish or Town Council can boast of providing a new allotment site for its residents but I am extremely proud of the fact that last year saw the opening of two sites by this Parish Council, one in Lilleshall and one in Donnington providing 62 plots in total of various sizes. Grants totalling £30,000 were successfully obtained to help offset the cost of setting them up.

This year saw the appointment of Christobel Cousins as Head Teacher of Lilleshall Primary School and I would like to welcome her to the area. I would also like to congratulate all the pupils, head teacher and staff at Lilleshall and Muxton Primary Schools in achieving 1st and 2nd place respectively in the latest Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) for the Borough of Telford & Wrekin as well as Donnington Wood Infants School for receiving the Most Improved Persistent Absence Trophy as it has considerably

reduced the number of children being absent from school.

On 4th March 2012 I held a Civic Service at St Matthew's Church, Donnington. The service went extremely well and I would like to thank all



those that attended especially Lord and Lady Grocott, The Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin, representatives from 83 St George's Squadron Air Training Corps and the Chairmen of adjoining Parish/Town Councils. I would also like to thank Reverend Paula Smith and her team of staff at the Church who helped make it a most enjoyable morning together with those that provided the refreshments after the Service at the Lifelong Learning Centre. The collection was split between the Church and, again, my chosen charity the Severn Hospice Telford.

Community Engagement Meetings (CEM): I am delighted to see that the CEM's in Muxton are still well attended and also pleased that the number of issues being raised at these meetings has dropped. My thanks go to CSO Wayne Jervis who has continued to attend these on behalf of the Police since the departure of PC Duncan White to live a new life in France. I, and the Parish Council, look forward to working with his recently appointed replacement WPC Vicky Mansell. However, due to virtually non attendance of residents at the meetings in Donnington, it has been decided to cancel the evening CEM's but to continue with the Donnington Partnership lunches at which residents can raise any issues they may have with those officers from the Police, Telford & Wrekin Council, the Parish Council and the Wrekin Housing Trust. The Parish Council also continued to help financially support the local Donnington Beat Managers Vehicle and I would like to thank WPC Nikki Scott and her local policing team, CSO Amanda Hall and John Bowen for all their hard work.

I am pleased to say that a new children's play area has been created on Donnington

Recreation Ground and that it has maintained the strong links this area had with mining through its design. Recently a new skate park has been built which is proving so popular that skaters are coming from as far afield as London. It has already had great reviews in the national skateboarder's magazines and can even be seen on YouTube.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome all new residents into the parish especially those in the new development, Regents Crescent in Muxton.

Funding was obtained from the Community Foundation for Shropshire and Telford for the Parish Council to employ a Youth Project Development Worker. I am delighted to welcome Jessica onto our team and look forward to working with her in the future.

I would like to thank all the Councillors, the Parish Clerk Ralph Morgan and all the staff, Angela (Assistant Clerk), Derek (Estate Manager) and Helen (Caretaker) for their support and hard work throughout the year.

Annual Report 2011 – 2012

The May elections saw each Parish Ward contested resulting in the election of seven new Councillors. There are not many Parish/Town Councils that can boast of having a 100% elected membership. Donnington saw one new Councillor elected, Lilleshall two and Muxton four.

The Council has dealt with a number of events and issues this past year a brief summary of which is as follows:

Allotments

Work preparing the Lilleshall allotment site was completed in May and plot holders immediately began the difficult task of working their plots. In a short space of time an allotment committee was formed and together with the Parish Council soon identified and resolved the teething problems expected of any new site. Work is still ongoing to improve the site which, in such a short space of time, is proving to be a great asset for this Council and the plot holders.

The work preparing Donnington allotments was completed in September and opened to plot holders at the beginning of October. It is hoped that an allotment committee can be set up here also to help the Parish Council manage the site and deal with any issues that may arise.

Lilleshall allotment committee held a Christmas Party at Lilleshall Memorial Hall at which plot holders from both sites attended and had a thoroughly enjoyable night.

Grants totalling £30,000 were successfully obtained from the National Lottery Awards for All and the Community Foundation for Shropshire and Telford to help finance the creation of both sites.

Christmas festival 2011



The first ever Christmas Festival held by this Parish Council to celebrate the switching on of its Christmas lights was an outstanding success. The Parish Council would like to thank everyone that attended and participated in making the event the success it was. Children from local primary schools joined together in singing carols as well as Newport Brass Band, Hadley Steel Band and stalls offering various fayre. Father Christmas visited and the Christmas Lights were switched on by characters from Oakengates Theatre. Paul Shuttleworth compered the evening as well as providing music between performers. The event was opened by the Chair Councillor Mrs Pat Green and Mr George Whyte who was recently awarded the Freedom of The Borough by Telford & Wrekin Council. It is planned to hold the event again this year. The Christmas Festival helped raise £100.65 which went to the Chair's Charity the Severn Hospice Telford.

The Pensioners Christmas Vouchers again proved to be popular with 964 £5 vouchers given to those that were 65 years of age and over that reside within the parish.

Path at Saltwell's Drive, Muxton

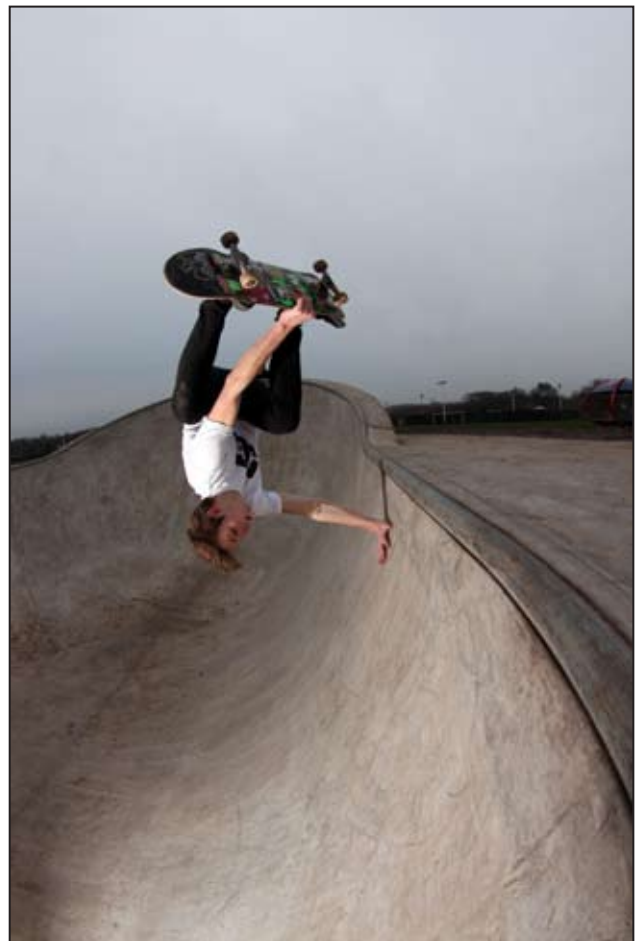
In response to a request made regarding the reinstatement of a path on land between Thornton Park Avenue and Saltwell's Drive, Muxton, this Parish Council agreed to cost share the project with Telford & Wrekin Council. The path leads through onto Telford & Wrekin land adjacent to St John's Church and therefore the Parish Council made a contribution of a quarter of the total price as the path on Parish Council land is approximately ¼ of the total length. The cost to the Parish Council was £800.

Internet Banking

This Parish Council is now able to access its bank accounts via the internet. The accounts have been set up so that they can be viewed only, as current legislation dictates that Parish/Town Councils are not legally allowed to carry out any financial transactions via this media. The Government is currently investigating the best way in which legislation can be created to allow Parish/Town Councils to use this method in which to manage its accounts whilst

maintaining the necessary safeguards required when dealing with public money.

Skatepark, Donnington Recreation Ground



Shropshire's newest and best skatepark was officially opened on 13th February 2012. Featuring Shropshire's only freeflow skate bowl, the new skatepark contains a 1.2m Quarter pipe with 1.8m tombstone, flat bank, wedge bank, hubba ledge and handrail, pole jam, grind block, double set stair set and Shropshire's only concrete bowl (2m deep with clam shell and 2 hips). The new skate park is attracting pro skaters / riders from across the country and has received great reviews in all the skater's magazines and can even be viewed on You Tube. Councillors attended the official opening of the skate park on Donnington Recreation Ground. The Parish Council would like to thank Derek Owen from Telford & Wrekin Council for all the hard work in obtaining funding for this and time spent consulting with various organisations and skaters regarding its design.

A new ball court has also been built on Donnington Recreation Ground.

Parish Council Newsletter

The Parish Council has changed the way in which future newsletters will be made available. Newsletters will still be available to be viewed via the Parish Councils website www.ldmpc.org but will not be delivered to every household within the parish. Instead, newsletters will be placed in the library, dentists, medical centres, community halls, churches, schools, post office, Lifelong Learning Centre and the Parish Council office. Should any resident wish to have a hard copy of the newsletter then this can be obtained by contacting the Parish Clerk on 608001. It is estimated that the Parish Council will save approximately £5,000 over a year using this method.

Talbot Centre Tennis Courts



Floodlights have now been installed at the tennis courts in Lilleshall. An opening ceremony was held on 23rd February 2012 to celebrate this event. Thanks must go to Lilleshall Village Tennis Club for raising the funds to purchase and have them installed.

Councillor Surgeries

Over the last number of years attendance at the Councillor Surgeries run by this Parish Council has been extremely poor. This may be due to modern communication methods whereby the electorate can contact the Parish Council through email or via its web-site. As a result, this Council will no longer be holding Councillor Surgeries.

Veolia Composting Facility

The Parish Council originally objected to this at its Planning Committee meeting held on 6th June

2011 and again raised concerns when given a presentation by Veolia at its full Council meeting on 5th September 2011. These comments were submitted to the planning officer Telford & Wrekin Council for this application. Having just spoken to the planning department they have confirmed that no decision has been made yet as more technical information has been requested from them which has not yet been received and still waiting for the results of consultation with the environment agency. It is expected to go to T&Wr plans board in the spring.

Conclusion of Audit

The Parish Council's Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2011 has been concluded and signed off by the auditors Mazars LLP who had thanked the Council for the way in which its accounts had been presented.

Bus Shelter, St George's Road

A new bus shelter has been installed on St George's Road, near to the "Four Ways" junction opposite the brick bus shelter. This is as a result of requests received from local residents.

Public Toilets, Hawthorn Road

This Parish Council is currently having negotiations with Telford & Wrekin Council with regard to the refurbishment of the public toilets on Hawthorn Road, Donnington. Both authorities are working hard to obtain funding to carry out the extensive work required and it is hoped that work will begin in the future.

Youth Project Development Worker

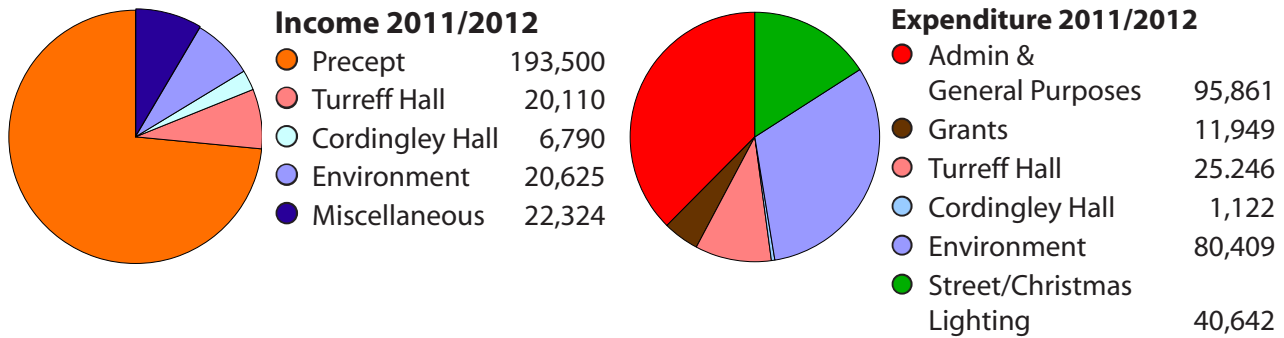
This Parish Council has recently employed a Project worker whose aim is to establish a youth forum so that the voices of young people can be heard. The project worker also aims to increase awareness of available activities and increase membership of those groups/organisations currently providing activities within the area.

Grit Bins, Muxton

Grit Bins have been purchased and installed at strategic locations around Muxton funded by Telford & Wrekin Council's "Your Money, Your Projects" Scheme. Thanks goes to Councillor Nigel Dugmore for his work in achieving this.

Finance

The Council's precept for 2011/2012 was set at £193,500 (an increase on the previous year). This meant a cost of £43.61 an increase of 97p on Band D equivalent houses within the Parish as part of the Council Tax. This figure was set according to the number of Band "D" properties in the parish which was given at 4436.60.



Grants totalling £11,949 were awarded to 20 groups and organisations that benefit the inhabitants within the Parish.

The Parish Council, working in partnership with Asda and the Wrekin Housing Trust, has again jointly sponsored the Donnington Police Beat Managers Vehicle.

The Parish Council has received its Annual Return for the year ended 2011 back from its Auditors, Mazars LLP based in Southampton which, once again, has been successfully signed off. Notices of when the accounts are available for inspection are displayed at the Parish Office and in the local press.

For the ninth year running the Council has provided vouchers at Christmas for the pensioners residing in the parish which continues to increase in popularity every year. Last Christmas (2011) 964 pensioners claimed their vouchers.

The Parish Council recently decided to have a Financial Scrutiny Committee whose objective is to monitor, oversee and review all matters relating to Council finances and its use of resources and to ensure the efficient and effective management of those resources and make recommendations to full Council as appropriate.

Allotments - Before & After



Staff & Personnel Committee

Committee Members: M Bolam, Mrs L M Dugmore, N Dugmore, J Lavery, A Lawrence, C Mason, P Norton.

Its membership consists of no more than seven members of the Council (Vice-Chair only included). This is to ensure that any redress against this committee will be dealt with on a non bias basis headed by the Chair of the Parish Council. Members are selected at the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council.

Staff and Personnel Committee meetings are scheduled as and when the Clerk and Chair consider necessary, lasting no longer than two hours.

The Committee's objective is to ensure that any issues relating to the staff and personnel of this 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 the Staff and Personnel 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 in fact 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.*

Planning Committee



Committee Members: Chair P Norton, Vice-Chair A Baker, Mrs C A Baker, M Bolam, B Green, A Lawrence, C Mason, Mrs E P Millard.

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 full Council meeting 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 eight times during the year 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2012.

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 2011 to March 2012 the Council received a total of 82 planning applications for discussion and comments, up 8 on last year. These were made up as follows:

Donnington 44 applications (up 3 from last year)

Lilleshall 18 applications (up 1 from last year)

Muxton 20 applications (up 4 from last year)

Whilst the majority of applications received were for single or two storey extensions to dwellings there were some applications of specific interest.

Donnington

Allotments at The Fields

A composting facility on land adjacent to Woodhouse Farm; A Residential Development off St Matthew's Road and the demolition of Rainbow's End flats and shops; A residential development of approximately 25 houses on the site of the Coddon Club; A skate park on Donnington Recreation Ground; A recently approved replacement farm shop at Wyevale Garden Centre; The demolition of the existing medical centre and the erection of a new two storey medical practice.

Lilleshall: The proposed development by Shropshire Homes at Hill Farm.

The Council's decisions regarding all applications can be found on its website www.ldmpc.org or can be obtained from the Clerk at the Parish Office.

Parish Council Assets

The assets held by the Parish Council are as follows:

Fixed Assets	Estimated Value (£) as at March 2012
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Turreff Hall	422,010.92
Cordingley Hall	715,932.29
Talbot Centre	46,411.48
Street Furniture:	27,879.78
Also 24 x Bus Shelters, Benches, 653 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.

Land for allotments adjacent to 78 Wellington Road, Lilleshall.

There are, however, various covenants restricting the sale of the buildings and land and values given are as per Insurance policy.

Parish Councillors

Lilleshall Ward



Andrew Baker



Carol Baker



Pam Millard

Donnington Ward



Mark Bolam



Elizabeth A Clare



Brian H Green



Patricia A Green



Jim Lavery



Clive Mason

Muxton Ward



Veronica J Brown



Lisa M Dugmore



Nigel A Dugmore



Jeremy Haigh



Adrian Lawrence



Phil Norton

Parish Personnel March 2012

Clerk:	Ralph Morgan	Assistant Clerk:	Angela Jordan
Estate Manager:	Derek White	Caretaker:	Helen Whitehouse

All can be contacted at the Parish Office in Turreff Hall, Turreff Avenue, Donnington.

Telephone: 01952 608001 Email: clerk@ldmpc.org Website: www.ldmpc.org

The Parish Council website is proving to be a great success. All Agendas and Minutes of meetings are published together with a list of Councillors, activities for young and old and links into the history of Donnington, Lilleshall and Muxton.