

CLEE ST MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

From: The Clerk, Clee St Margaret P.C., The Old Post Office, Clee St Margaret, Craven Arms SY7 9DT.

Chair's Report 2020

The Parish Council

During 2019/20 the members of the Parish Council were

Mr. Mike Hardingham (Chair)	Mrs. Tamsin Osler (Vice Chair)	
Mr. John Heighway	Mr. David Palmer	Mr. Bob Day
Mr. Paul Blewitt	Mrs. Shalynn Pearson	

Mrs. Joan Palmer is Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. Many thanks to Jon Kail who is our internal auditor. Official communications to the Council, or request for items to be discussed by the Council, should be made to the Clerk by e-mail or post. Members of the Parish are always welcome to contact councillors if they wish to have matters raised in the Council on their behalf.

The Parish Council meets at least six times a year, and all members of the Parish are legally entitled (and welcome) to attend to observe our proceedings. Minutes are posted on the main notice board in the centre of the village, and are published on the Community Website (www.clee.org.uk). If you are one of the few people for whom we do not have e-mail contact details, please email us at clee.org.uk@gmail.com, so that we can keep you updated.

At present Council Meetings have been suspended due to the Coronavirus situation. In the meantime, important and urgent issues are dealt with by the clerk after consultation with councillors by e-mail. Government has suspended the statutory requirements to have our Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting during the month of May.

Finance

Details of the 2019/20 accounts will be available at the Annual Parish Meeting, when we finally hold it. In the meantime, any interested parishioner can contact the clerk to request a copy.

Our income was £19,894, and our expenditure was £18,619. The major components of our income are the NATS mast rental (£6,691) and investment income (£6,798); the major items of expenditure were the Arbor Vitae Survey and Mapping of the Common (£6,768, of which approximately two-thirds was refunded to us by RPA and HMRC), and maintenance of the common (£5,656, defrayed by a refund of around £900 in VAT and a contribution of £950 from the Commoners Association).

Cash at the bank at the year-end was £22,820 and our Long-Term Assets have a year-end value of £220,744, including our investment portfolio in Hargreaves Lansdown, which fluctuates in value and was depressed at the year-end (£108,660) due to stock market volatility. During the year the portfolio yielded around 4.8% income.

Our budget for next year has expenditure of £12,625 and predicted income of £13,000. We are unlikely to ask for a Parish Precept (the local component of council tax) in the foreseeable future. Suggestions will be invited at the meeting for local charities which should receive support from the Council this year.

**Clerk: Mrs. Joan Palmer, The Old Post Office, Clee St Margaret, Craven Arms, SY7 9DT.
Tel/Fax: 01584 823421. E-mail: joan.palmer4@btinternet.com**

CLEE ST MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

From: The Clerk, Clee St Margaret P.C., The Old Post Office, Clee St Margaret, Craven Arms SY7 9DT.

Other Parish Council Business – main points

Village Roads: We continue to press Shropshire Council Roads Department to clear blocked road drains and deal with potholes, particularly on the road out through Cold Weston.

Broadband: Fibre will be extended to some further parts of the village (the area between Field House, Carpenters Cottage, and Rose Cottage) in the early summer of 2020.

Environmental Scheme :

The Parish Council supported the efforts of the major graziers to enter into an environmental scheme for Clee Liberty from January 2020, which would have involved them removing half of their sheep from the Common in the summer, and almost all in the winter. This would have resulted in no supplementary feeding taking place on the Common. A sizeable majority of the Commoners supported the scheme, but a few, with significant grazing rights, did not. In view of this the major graziers are not proceeding with the scheme at this point, but a scheme for 2021 and beyond is under consideration.

The Common: The Council applied for an EIA Screening Decision to cover its annual bracken maintenance work. Natural England agreed to most of the proposals but insisted on various conditions which the Council found unacceptable. The Council therefore appealed the decision, and awaits a determination from DEFRA, which has been delayed due to Coronavirus. In the meantime, the maintenance work for 2019, mainly crushing, took place as planned, and similarly the 2020 work will take place as planned.

The Council undertook some repair and replacement work at the Yeld Gate to improve the fencing, the drainage, and to tidy up the access.

The Council supported a successful application by The Sands to the Planning Inspectorate to partially stone their access track.

Common Cause Project:

Phase 1 of the Common Cause Project was completed in November and the final steering meeting took place on Clee Liberty, hosted by the Council. The funding for the Delivery Phase has been secured but has been delayed due to Coronavirus. We expect to receive some bracken control equipment from this fund.

Planning: There have been several applications in the last year, including approvals in principle for two affordable houses. Details can be found on the “Planning Tracker” section of the Council Website (www.clee.org.uk).

Website: Thanks are due to Karen Slater, our volunteer website manager, for maintaining the Council website (www.clee.org.uk). Thanks also to Ruby Reseigh for the Clee Pigeon Parish Newsletter (from the website or rbyreseigh@gmail.com).

Rights of Way: For the record: we last renewed our Statutory Declaration regarding Public Rights of Way across the Common in late 2015; we will need to do it again before 2026.

Mike Hardingham, Chairman, May 2020

**Clerk: Mrs. Joan Palmer, The Old Post Office, Clee St Margaret, Craven Arms, SY7 9DT.
Tel/Fax: 01584 823421. E-mail: joan.palmer4@btinternet.com**