

CLEE ST MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

Chair's Report 2021

The Parish Council and Forthcoming Elections

During 2020/21 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.

In normal times, the Parish Council meets at least six times a year, although during the last year we have met just three times (August, September, and November), and Annual Parish Meeting did not happen last May (it is not yet clear when the next one will be). 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 the clerk, so that we can keep in touch.

Parish Council elections for Shropshire will be held in May, when all councillors step down but can put themselves forward for re-election. Councillors Bob Day and Paul Blewitt from Cockshutford are not seeking re-election, and we thank them for their contribution to the council over the last few years. The remainder of the council (Mike Hardingham, John Heighway, Tamsin Osler, David Palmer and Shalynn Pearson) are standing for re-election, joined (so far) by Alison Austin from the centre of the village, Scarlet Penn from Cold Weston, and Helen Robinson from Cockshutford. More candidates are of course welcome and if you are interested in standing please contact the clerk for forms or assistance, or Google "Shropshire Parish Council Elections" to read all the information and download the forms yourself, but you need to do this soon (before Easter). The clerk will assist with any queries.

Finance

A summary sheet of the 2020/21 accounts is attached for those interested. The figures are technically provisional at this point but are expected to be unchanged at the year-end date (31 March). Fully detailed accounts will be available upon request from the clerk.

Our budget for next year has expenditure of £11,625 and predicted income of £13,850, which is similar to the actual expenditure and income this year. We are unlikely to ask for a Parish Precept (the local component of council tax) in the foreseeable future.

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.

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Broadband: Full Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) was made available last year to the area between Field House, Carpenters Cottage, and Rose Cottage.

The Common: The Council won its appeal against Natural England's insistence that the bracken and gorse management on the common should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. Maintenance work therefore continues as normal, with an objective of preventing the bracken spreading further, and preventing new gorse areas being established. Historic England had asked us to clear gorse from Nordy Bank and this work is in progress.

The track to Thornwell, via The Sands, is now being used on a regular basis as the property has been sold and is being used as a permanent dwelling for the first time for many decades. This has caused major damage to the surface of the track and the owner of Thornwell is organising repair.

A further attempt was made to persuade all commoners to support the major graziers in establishing an environmental scheme. This was unsuccessful and it is very unlikely that the common will be part of a scheme in the foreseeable future.

The Parish Council received 200 trees from The Woodland Trust. These have been planted on the common, with volunteer effort from the Commoners Association and the residents in the Yeld area.

We are currently dealing with the Land Registry over a dispute about the boundary of the Common at Patch Cottage.

At Cockshutford, we are currently effecting repairs to fencing on the common, and some tree trimming has been carried out where the common meets the road.

We are negotiating with Yew Tree Cottage in relation to vehicular access to the rear of the property.

NATS: Every 5 years we negotiate an RPI-based uplift of the rental payment for the mast, this is under way and we have proposed 12.3%, in line with ONS figures.

Common Cause Project:

Phase 2 (the Delivery Phase) of the Common Cause Project is now getting under way. We expect to receive some bracken control equipment from this fund.

Planning: There have been several applications in the last year. 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 [rubyreseigh@gmail.com](mailto: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, March 2021