



Lapley, Stretton
& Wheaton Aston
Parish Council

News & Views

Winter 2015/16

Christmas Lights Despite The Weather!



Thank you to everyone who braved the wet and windy weather to come out to celebrate the switching on of Wheaton Aston's Christmas lights on 28th November. Despite the wind and rain over 500 people came out. Thank you to all of our stall holders who held onto their gazebos whilst they sold their wares.

Thank you also to our performers who made sure that the show went on. You were fantastic! We are very grateful to our Village Orderly and councillors for volunteering as stewards and Afeb Ltd staff for volunteering to put up the tree.

Not only did local residents enjoy the evening but so too did our MP, Jeremy Lefroy. After switching on the lights, Jeremy and his wife watched our performers and visited stalls in the square, church and village hall.

What did you think of the lights, sound and snow? We will be reviewing the event so if you have any comments or ideas on how it could be improved, please call 01785 841639 or email office@wheatonastonparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Voluntary Car Scheme

The Brewwood and District Voluntary Car Scheme organises lifts for local villagers, usually the elderly or housebound, who have no transport of their own but need to get to doctors surgeries, clinics or hospital appointments.

Could you help? Could you spare a few hours a week or even a month?

You really can contribute as little or as much as you like, on whatever days of the week that suit you or simply subject to your availability at a given time. Please give it some thought – all travelling expenses are refunded and you may be surprised to find just how enjoyable it is.

Please phone 01902 851786 between 9.30am – 12.30pm weekdays for more information.

Improved Office Facilities

The Parish Council is moving its office from St Mary's First School to the Business Hub based at South Staffordshire Council in Codsall. The move involves the Parish Council's administration function only and contact with the Parish Council Manager will be unchanged. Official travel to and from Codsall by councillors will be limited to essential meetings only. Monthly Parish Council and other meetings will continue to be held within the parish as normal.

Using this new location will substantially reduce our annual office rental costs, significantly improve efficiency and offer enhanced access by the Parish Council Manager to District Council staff, police, voluntary groups and other organisations. Importantly, it will also help the Parish Council to meet its legal responsibilities as an employer of a lone worker.

The success of the move will be monitored by the council during the coming year as a part of its consideration of where, in the long term, its office space should be best located.

We do not anticipate that residents will notice any practical change as a result of this re-location.

Parish Council Meetings

Please see below for the dates of forthcoming Parish Council meetings:

- 4th February (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 3rd March (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 7th April (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 5th May (Stretton Lodge Nursery)
- 2nd June (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 7th July (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 1st September (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 6th October (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 3rd November (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 8th December (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)
- 5th January 2017 (Wheaton Aston Village Hall)

All meetings begin at 7.30pm with public participation, where members of the public have the opportunity to ask questions of the council and raise issues. After this they may stay and observe the rest of the meeting. Why not come and see your Parish Council in action?

A Busy Year Ahead

In preparation for a busy year, the Parish Council has set its budget for 2016/17. Councillors have carefully reviewed all areas of expenditure taking into account:

- An expanding administrative workload
- New legislation and statutory responsibilities
- Essential maintenance work
- Modest improvements around the parish
- Safe play facilities
- Traditional display of Christmas lights
- Support for local organisations
- Areas where we can save money

Over the past decade the parish council has taken on 3 play areas, a skate park and bus shelter. Some are now in need of significant repair, all require maintenance, insurance, repair, inspection and management. The parish council also owns several pieces of land and over 100 trees which are in need of essential work. In order to properly maintain its own land and facilities, the council has decided to greatly reduce the amount it spends maintaining the parish's churchyards. Small donations will be made in 2016/17 with a view to withdrawing funding completely in 2017/18. Grass cutting of the new cemetery in Lapley will continue.

The parish council is looking to make some modest improvements to enhance life in the parish. Lapley Green will be neatened up, the noticeboard replaced and the telephone box will be repainted and fitted with a defibrillator.

In Wheaton Aston, the parish council has agreed to adopt the new war memorial, replace some play equipment at Primrose Bank Play Area, install planters at the 3 entrances to Wheaton Aston and install a replacement bus shelter on High Street..

The parish council knows how important our local organisations are to everyone living in the parish and has decided to contribute to Wheaton Aston Community First Responders' much needed new vehicle, as well as the carnival committee and the Voluntary Car Service which many residents rely on to get to doctor and hospital appointments.

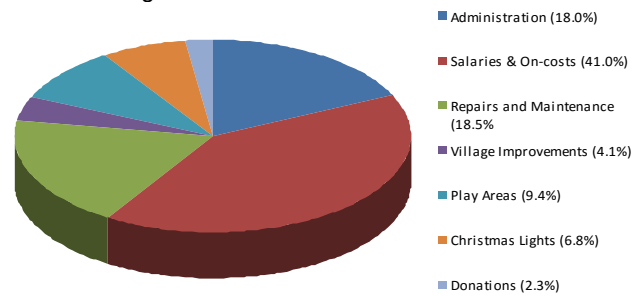
The traditional Christmas lights and the switch on will continue. Savings have been made wherever possible with care taken to ensure that no noticeable change will be seen by residents or visitors. Expenditure on Christmas lights would be much higher if it weren't for the grants received by county and district councillors and the voluntary contributions by staff, councillors and local companies.

Administration and staffing always forms the major component of our annual budget. Compliance with new legislative changes inevitably involves increased work and we have now reached a point where this can no longer be absorbed as part of the Parish council manager's contracted hours. The parish council has decided to provide some part-time administrative support.

Some of the council's IT equipment has reached the end of its useful life and is in need of replacement. Additional IT facilities are also needed to support an additional employee. The new IT system will be more secure and support the parish council to comply with the Data Protection Act.

These new administrative and staffing costs will be offset to some degree by the financial savings we are making through the relocation of the administrative office to improved facilities at the South Staffordshire Business Hub. In 2016/17 Administration will form 59% of our budget compared with 55% for 2015/16.

How does this affect the 2016 budget? Despite making some important savings we have been obliged to increase our budget in order to maintain our present level of service whilst adding some modest improvements for the benefit of our three villages.



What does this actually mean in financial terms? The parish council tax element for a Band D household will be £114.36 for the year, which is an additional £2.45 per month or 57p per week.

For £2.20 per week (Band D household) in 2016/17 your parish council will provide the following:

- ✓ Primrose Bank Play Area
- ✓ Marston Road Field Play Area
- ✓ Broadholes Lane Nature Garden
- ✓ Skate Park
- ✓ Youth Shelter
- ✓ Football Pitches
- ✓ Dog Walk
- ✓ Bus Shelter, Stretton
- ✓ Bus Shelter, Wheaton Aston (Planned for 2016/17)
- ✓ Dog Poop Bags
- ✓ Lapley Green
- ✓ Badgers End (At the end of Broadholes Lane)
- ✓ 3 Notice Boards (One planned for 2016/17)
- ✓ Numerous Benches & Bins
- ✓ Wheaton Aston Car Park
- ✓ Christmas Lights
- ✓ BKV Competition Entry for Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton Aston
- ✓ Wheaton Aston War Memorial
- ✓ Defibrillators (Planned for 2016/17)
- ✓ Over 100 Trees
- ✓ Planting/Watering of Tubs, Planters & Baskets at:
 - School Lane, Stretton
 - War Memorial, Lapley
 - Village Entrances, Lapley
 - Village Green, Wheaton Aston
 - Car Park, Wheaton Aston
 - Village Hall, Wheaton Aston
 - Village Entrances, Wheaton Aston (Planned for 2016/17)
- ✓ Litter Picking (All Three Villages)
- ✓ A Village Orderly (to carry out maintenance work)
- ✓ Financial Support for Local Community Groups
- ✓ Quarterly Newsletter
- ✓ Website
- ✓ Information on Social Media
- ✓ Representation of local views on planning applications
- ✓ Representation of the interests of the parish by networking with other organisations and attending external meetings
- ✓ Promotion of the parish by attendance at civic/ceremonial events across the county and obtaining press coverage.

Parish councillors hope that residents will feel that this gives excellent value for money and they look forward to continuing to provide our community with a quality service throughout the coming year.

Could You Serve Your Community?



Could you join Wheaton Aston Community First Responders as a volunteer responder, or help them in other ways? They're a small team and are always looking for new members, both as active responders and as supporters to help with things like publicity and fundraising.

Training as a volunteer responder works in progressive stages, and is run by West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS FT. Initial training is held over a series of weekends and teaches volunteers to understand and deal with life-threatening emergencies, including controlling severe bleeding and using oxygen therapy and automated external defibrillators.

If you're ready to apply for a volunteer Community First Responder role now, whether it's for here or elsewhere in Staffordshire, go to NHS Jobs (www.jobs.nhs.uk) and search using reference '217-VNCFR20-15-16'. You won't be asked for any minimum time commitment, they're grateful for whatever you can give (as are your neighbours!).

If you want to know more about what's involved before applying, or think you can help as a non-clinical supporter, contact them for a chat. Telephone 07971 191786.

You really could make a difference as significant as saving someone's life.

News & Views

If you would like to submit an article to be included in News & Views, please email it in a word document, with pictures if possible to office@wheatonastonparishcouncil.gov.uk.

The deadlines for the next issues are as follows:

Issue	Deadline	Delivery
Spring	25 th March	w/c 11 th April
Summer	24 th June	w/c 11 th July
Autumn	23 rd September	w/c 10 th October
Winter	30 th December	w/c 16 th January (2017)

Reaching Far and Wide

Do you know someone who might like to receive News & Views electronically? Perhaps someone who used to live in the parish but has moved away. If they email office@wheatonastonparishcouncil.gov.uk we could send them electronic copies of News & Views to keep them up-to-date with the latest news.

Brewood Library

Monday:	Closed
Tuesday:	9.00am - 1.00pm / 2.00pm - 7.00pm
Wednesday:	9.00am - 1.00pm / 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Thursday:	9.00am - 1.00pm / 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Friday:	9.00am - 1.00pm / 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Saturday:	9.30am - 1.00pm
Sunday:	Closed

Call 01902 850087 for more details

Your Lunch Club Needs You!



The Monday Lunch Club for the older members of the two parishes is in crisis due to a shortage of volunteer helpers.

Volunteers are needed between 10.00am and 2.30pm one Monday in four to: Lay tables; make tea or coffee; help plate up meals and wash up.

You will not be expected to cook.

If you feel you would like to help, you are welcome to go along any Monday between the above times to see how the club is organised.

If the club are unable to find volunteers, they will reluctantly have to consider closing one of the Monday meetings, which would be a real shame as many elderly residents will miss out on a social day with good food and good company.

If you can help, please get in touch with Pat Horton 840675 or Angie Hassall 841024.

Mobile Library Service

Wheaton Aston

1 February, 22 February, 14 March, 4 April

Hartley Arms	10.00am -11.25am
St. Mary's Church	11.30am -12.40pm
Old School Court	12.45pm - 1.15pm
Ivetsey Close	2.05pm - 2.30pm
St. Mary's First School	2.35pm - 4.00pm

Lapley

3 February, 24 February, 16 March, 6 April

Bickford Close	1.25pm – 2.10pm
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Please note that the routes may change in April. Check out www.staffordshire.gov.uk/libraries for more information

Are you online?

The Parish Council's website can be visited at www.wheatonastonparishcouncil.gov.uk for agendas, minutes, financial information, councillor contact details, policies and procedures.

The Parish Council is also active on social media. If you're on Facebook or twitter please like or follow us for the latest information on council business and other useful articles.



Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton
Aston Parish Council



@WAstonParish

News From The Church

All Saints and St. Mary's churches would like to thank everyone who supported the Christmas Lights Fair, the Blue Christmas service and the First School's competition to design the Church Christmas card for 2015. They would also like to thank those of you who donated Christmas Shoeboxes or items/cash towards filling one, Your generosity will be greatly appreciated by those in need.

In January we said goodbye to Peter and Celia Smith who have been part of our village and church for many years. We would like to thank them both for all that they have given to the community and wish them well in their new home.

The Youth Drop In at St. Mary's, for teenagers 11-16 years old has been really well supported. It is open every Wednesday evening from 7-9pm during the winter months, except during holiday times, offering tea and coffee, board games, craft activities and computer area, as well as a warm place to sit and chat with friends.

Lapley Church Restoration Fund's next event will be a Burns Lunch on 31st January at 1pm in Wheaton Aston Village Hall, tickets available from Margaret Holmes, 840241, Margaret Kelly, 840562 or Janet Fox 840334.

On February 21st there will be a Tractor Road Run from Longnor Hall Farm. Enter your tractor and/or come and see them. Details from Barbara Holt on 840258. Proceeds will be shared by LRCF and Wheaton Aston First Responders.

If your New Year resolution is to take more exercise, remember the Monthly Walk on the second Tuesday of every month (walking boots or stout shoes needed) or Short Walks on hard surfaces/pavements every second and fourth Tuesday. All walks start from St. Mary's church at 10.00am, and tea/coffee and cake is available at the end of the walks.

Tuesday 9th February is Shrove Tuesday, or Pancake Day, and Lent begins the following day when there will a service of Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes at 7.30pm in St. Mary's Church. Lent groups will take place on Wednesday Lunchtimes after the Drop In from 12.30-2.30pm, and on Wednesday & Thursday evenings. All are welcome, please sign the lists at the back of church if you wish to join in.

There will also be soup and bread lunches during Lent from 12.00-12.30pm after the Wednesday Drop In, in aid of Christian Aid. Everyone is welcome at the Lent Lunches, after which you may stay for the Study group if you wish.

Mothering Sunday is on 6th March when we celebrate motherhood in all its forms - not just those who have children, but also those who 'look out' for those around them who might need a helping hand. Why not bring to your mum to church on her special day?

Messy Church will be opening its doors again on Good Friday, 25th March, in the morning and in the afternoon there will be Stations of the Cross.

Easter Sunday will be celebrated in both of our churches, with Services of Holy Communion at 9.00am in All Saints' and 10.30am at St. Mary's.

Don't forget the Drop In every Wednesday morning from 10.00am-12 noon in St. Mary's Church for a chat and a cuppa. Internet access is available as well as on Tuesdays, with church computers and help always on hand for both beginners and those needing help with a computer problem.

For more information about any services, events or other matters please contact Revd. Rachel Dale on 01785 840395 rachel.livesey@googlemail.com

Your Council

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First Response 0800 1313 126
firstr@staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire Police
Emergencies / crime in progress 999
Non-urgent 101
Terrorism Hotline 0800 789321
www.staffordshirepolice.org.uk

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111
www.crimestoppers-uk.org