

CHURCHILL AND BLAKEDOWN PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

We again have pleasure in reporting the activities of your Parish Council over the past year.

Another year of 'Covid' restrictions and again we thank our Clerk Angela Preece for her excellent work and support in making life easy, especially in running 'Zoom' meetings during the Pandemic situation. We would also thank our fellow Councillors for their assistance and time given in achieving the Councils aims.

Unfortunately, we have lost our Council Clerk, the dynamo that has held us together and a fount of information over the past several years. We are extremely grateful for Angela assistance, not only the day-to-day administrative work, but also the help and guidance on the ever-changing Rules and Legislation. We wish her well on her 'retirement' and the chance to enjoy her dogs. We have been fortunate to gain the services of Alison Cartwright as our new Clerk. Alison has settled in well despite a turbulent period in our current administration.

We have regained ex Councillors Sue Fowler and Roger Shade by Co-Option and we have also Co-Opted Bryony Hayward (Daughter of Pauline) as a new Councillor. The period has seen the resignations of Chairman Richard Benney, although he has now been Co-Opted back as a Councillor, and Vice Chairman Paul Mellor.

Our Neighbourhood Plan, adopted by the District Council in July 2017 and incorporated into the Wyre Forest Local Plan, has given due weight on planning decisions within the Parish to great effect. Changes in the Local Plan dictate a review and update of our NP and, now COVID 19 restrictions have been removed, we will consider setting up a committee for this important task.

The Parish Council's major concerns to the Revised Local Plan leading to an Inspector's Enquiry, resulted in WFDC having to initiate revisions which have now been adopted. We have regrettably lost the 'Green Belt' area off Station Drive, which is now earmarked for housing and, potentially a car park. The Station Yard Car Park (in the revised plan) is currently the subject of a formal Planning application for which the Parish Council will attempt to achieve some mitigation for residents living local to the development.

The lack of Highway provisions to developments that border our Parish, in particular the Lea Castle site and Husum Way, will add predictions that traffic will use our back lanes as a 'rat run' to access Blakedown Station and the A456. The Council are continuing to lobby Officers from Worcestershire County Highways and Wyre Forest District Council Planning.

The effects of Covid 19 covered part of the last year restricting the Council's activities to a certain extent and our Meetings were held using 'Zoom'. Meetings have now reverted to the conventional open to the public meetings.

Our Shoppers Car Park. The Parish Council has conducted surveys together with discussions with key affected people and, whilst the response was not overwhelming, the majority wanted the Car Park under our control. The Council have been negotiating with WFDC over the last few months to purchase the site for £1.00. The Parish Council took into consideration the survey results, representations and having due regard to our undertaking to work within the guidelines of the Neighbourhood Plan, decided to proceed with the purchase subject to due diligence.

The Parish Council continues to fulfil the promises we made to you last year. A second village gateway is being contemplated for Ismere, giving pleasure to motorists entering or passing through.

The Council, in partnership with the Police, have provided 'Smartwater' kits free of charge, this has proved an effective deterrent to theft. Kits are still available, please contact the Parish Council.

The Council is encouraged by the interest our District and County Councillors Marcus Hart, Ian Hardiman and Lisa Jones have shown in attempting to resolve problems and would express our appreciation for their financial support for some of our projects, which we hope will continue.

We have appointed a new grass cutting contractor with initial results looking good. Bin emptying work is continuing, hopefully to your satisfaction. Our appointed Lengthsman has continued to prove an asset to the community.

In the last financial year, one grant application was received by the Parish plus a donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

The Council, as a result of the Localism Act 2011, is required to have certain adopted policies in place. We updated our Financial Regulations and introduced a Grievance Policy and a Complaints Procedure in 2019 and 2018 respectively.

Ex-Councillor Gary James' work to develop a more user-friendly Parish Council website to enable the Parish Council to comply with the Transparency Regulations which set out the information which should be published, including financial information, the annual financial return, a list of Councillors and their responsibilities plus minutes, agendas, and papers of formal meetings, has continued. There will soon be a Publication Scheme which sets out the type of information available to you and how you can obtain it, together with links to local organisations and facilities.



Richard Benney- Parish Council Chairman 2021-22

10th May 2022



Brian Hession - Parish Council Chairman 2021-22

10th May 2022

**CHURCHILL AND BLAKEDOWN PARISH COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/22
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT**

	<u>2020/21</u>	<u>2021/22</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>RECEIPTS</u>		
Bank Interest	7	3
Precept	27,973	28,080
<u>WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL INCOME:</u>		
Litter Contract	2,000	2,000
Grass cutting	630	646
<u>WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL INCOME:</u>		
Verge Cutting Grant	352	359
Lengthsman Grant	1,080	2,235
<u>OTHER INCOME:</u>		
Recharges from Villages Trust	3,065	1,947
Grant received from Cllr Hart	220	-
HMRC VAT CLAIM (PRIOR YR)	3,664	5,823
	<u>38,991</u>	<u>41,093</u>
<u>EXPENSES:</u>		
<u>STAFFING COSTS:</u>		
Staff Costs	7,806	7,762
HMRC	1,355	1,831
	<u>9,161</u>	<u>9,593</u>
<u>OVERHEAD COSTS:</u>		
Administration expenses	1,349	2,090
VAT paid 2020/21	5,820	2,704
Bank Charges	72	72
Chairman's Allowance (S137)	-	126
Subscriptions	1,170	1,205
Audit Fees	320	410
Insurance	1,188	1,222
Donations	400	400
Grants	756	300
Uncontested Election Fees	-	-
Training	70	555
Room Hire	50	150
Newsletter and Annual Report	1,340	839
RBL Poppy Appeal	100	100
IT	635	60
Professional Fees	15,740	-
	<u>29,009</u>	<u>10,234</u>

	<u>2020/21</u>	<u>2021/22</u>
	£	£
<u>Maintenance</u>		
Lengthsman	1,215	2,100
WFDC Contract Litter and Bins	5,983	6,826
WFDC & WCC Contract Grass	954	990
Additional Grounds Maintenance/Handyman	1,179	315
RoSPA Inspection	114	114
Street Lighting Energy	878	1,505
Street Light Maintenance	120	673
Defib maintenance	-	514
	<u>10,443</u>	<u>13,037</u>
<u>Parish Projects</u>		
Planters	499	360
Grit & Waste Bins	40	1,322
Village Gateways	2,160	-
Legal fees: car park acquisition £1 WFDC		873
Defib replacement - excess insurance	-	250
	<u>2,699</u>	<u>2,805</u>
Signal Box (to be recharged)	897	1,051
Signal Box VAT recovered	720	125
	<u>1,617</u>	<u>1,176</u>
Total Expenses	<u>52,928</u>	<u>36,845</u>
Net inflow/outflow		<u>4,248</u>
Annual Governance Statement:		
Opening Balance	45,907	31,970
Closing Balance	<u>31,970</u>	<u>36,218</u>

Please note these accounts are pending audit by PKF Littlejohn.

Clerk to the Parish Council: Alison Cartwright, 8 Stroat Close, Droitwich, Worcestershire WR9 7FH.

Telephone: 01905 776284

Email: churchillandblakedownclerk@gmail.com

Website: www.parish-council.com/ChurchillandBlakedown