



The Newsletter for residents of Audlem and District

Summer 2020

Audlem Parish Council Chairman's Report 2019 -2020

This is my first report as Chairman of the Parish Council. In May 2019 Frances Mary Christie, Kate Down and David Siddorns stepped down after many years of service and I took the position of Chairman. Suzie Warren rejoined, and Ralph Warburton, George McLaren-Brown and Pat Salt were co-opted as Councillors.

The Parish Council also realigned its structures so that there are now five working groups reporting to the main Parish Council:

- Finance Sub-Committee - Chair - vacant
- Internal Working Group – Chair Councillor Steve Boyes
- Turnpike Field & Playing Field Working Group - Chair Councillor Steve Boyes
- Community, Business, Tourism & Employment Working Group - Chair Councillor Ralph Warburton
- Housing, Planning, Highways, Environment & Assets Working Group - Chair Councillor Lynette Hopkins.

Turnpike Field

The Turnpike Field Working Group comprising five Councillors and five co-opted members of the village community has met every month and progressed various initiatives on the field. We thank all of the Working Group for their commitment, enthusiasm and effort.

This past year has seen the undertaking of an ecology survey by Cheshire Wildlife Trust and the Parish Council installing two ponds on the field to provide wildlife havens for various creatures, particularly great crested newts which are a protected species. Bird and bat boxes have been installed on trees in the field to encourage these creatures to take up residence in our lovely village. Picnic tables have also been installed for residents to enjoy. Two new litter and dog waste bins are now positioned at the entrance on Shropshire Street and by Grays Bridge.

Plans for a green 40-space car park continue to be developed and the next stage in the process will be a pre-planning application submission to Cheshire East Borough Council. This will help to define the requirements of the detailed submission that is needed for the one-acre car park to help alleviate the problem of parking in the village.

We have had tree surgeons tend to the trees, ensuring they are in optimum health and made safe for residents using the field. An annual maintenance and enhancement plan has been prepared setting out a calendar of work so we can proactively manage the field going forward.

Playing Field

Residents will recall that the Parish Council has been in discussions with Cheshire East Borough Council for a number of years to take on the lease for the playing field and adjacent children's play area. It is hoped that the transfer of the lease will take place later on this year.

Grants

The Parish Council has financially supported various clubs and committees this year. Audlem Scouts purchased new camping equipment with their £670 grant. ADAS kept our village looking pretty by planting flower bulbs and bought Christmas trees with their £1,500 grant. ADAPT installed new bike racks with their £500 grant. £1,250 helped the Music and Arts Festival put on last year's event. Audlem Football Club received £1,000 and Audlem Saints Football Club received £560 to help fund new equipment. £300 was awarded to TAVA (Touring and Visiting Arts) to host two professional arts events in Audlem and organise workshops for children. Finally, Audlem Cricket Club was granted £1,500 towards their new pavilion.

Working Closely with the Community

The community working group led by Councillor Ralph Warburton is working to strengthen bonds with all village groups/committees and establish close working relationships with the Parish Council to help deliver benefits and improvements to our community.

Highways and Planning

Numerous planning applications, highways and flooding issues have been reviewed and commented on by the Parish Council. The Parish Council have purchased a speed gun and are supporting a new speed watch scheme run by residents in the village.

I would particularly like to thank Cllr Lynette Hopkins for her valuable work with local residents across many parts of Audlem, liaising with Cheshire East Council and working closely with Ward Councillor Rachel Bailey to help alleviate the problems of flooding.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the opening of the proposed office base in the public hall and the start date of the new Assistant Clerk have been delayed.

The Parish Council have worked closely with Audlem and District Community Action (ADCA) and local businesses like The Lord Combermere to help them provide vital support to Audlem's residents at this difficult time.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for their support and also wish to thank our Clerk Bee for her help and guidance throughout the year.

Steve Boyes

An up-to-date list of our Councillors can be found here <https://audlempc.audlem.org/councillors.html>

The next meetings will be Monday 15th June, Monday 13th July, there is no meeting in August and then it will be Monday 7th September.

Community Spirit Offers Hope During Lockdown

The virus has shown us that, in a global crisis, the scale for action is local and Audlem's Parish Council, businesses and residents have truly galvanised to provide vital support to its residents. Businesses have shown they have big hearts, with The Lord Combermere pub becoming a busy community hub. It has been an immense help, liaising with local charity ADCA to get food delivered to the community. There is also a pop-up shop and a special take away menu is available for home delivery. Williams of Audlem rapidly expanded their home newspaper deliveries, increased running errands for elderly and isolating customers and put up a banner to thank NHS workers. They also ran a raffle to raise money for the church and the prizes were elusive toilet rolls which resulted in £180 raised over a matter of five days.



Local butcher Oxtail & Trotter is whizzing around twice a week making home deliveries of meat and vegetables. The team at Boots pharmacy have worked deep into the evening to manage the influx of extra prescriptions and have supported patients brilliantly throughout.

Our local churches are working together, supporting villagers through a live service on Zoom and offering pastoral support to the community. St James' continues its weekly Praise and Play fun online through Facebook Live and the Methodist Church has also set up a reflection line.

Clients might not be sitting in the hairdresser chair but Braids Hairdressers have also been calling their customers for regular chats to cheer them up during the lockdown. Audlem's residents are hugely grateful to live in a village that has always been full of community spirit and one that has come together in such a tremendous way during these challenging times.

Support Provided by Audlem & District Community Action (ADCA)

These are challenging times for everyone and our marvellous community has rallied round to support each other. ADCA's Coronavirus Home Support Service has played a small part in this, alongside other groups, family and friends, by delivering shopping, prescriptions and other practical help including telephone befriending to over 250 people in the first seven weeks of lockdown. We've also extended our catchment area and are working in partnership with Wrenbury Together to better cover our rural area. Please ring on 07984 785907 if you need our help (or email adca.audlem@gmail.com). Our phone line is open between 9am and 12pm on Monday to Saturday. Outside these hours you can leave a message.

ADCA is very grateful for the support and help we've received from Audlem Parish Council, Cheshire East Council, The Lord Combermere, Audlem Charity Shop, Audlem Public Hall, Audlem Medical Practice, Boots Chemists, Audlem Co-op, Oxtail and Trotter Butchers, Brambles Cook Shop, Overwater Wheelyboat Services, Tech Media and other groups and local churches. We particularly want to thank more than 60 new volunteers who have come forward to work with us in recent weeks.

During May 2020 we decided to relaunch our Medical Transport Service, in response to the government's decision to reopen the NHS for non-Covid-19 health emergency treatments. There has been an immediate demand for this service. To observe social distancing requirements and hygiene protocols, we are using the local Wheelybus and larger cars to safely transport patients to the local GP practice, clinics and to hospital appointments. If you need to get to a health appointment but are having difficulty with transport then please contact us to see if we can assist you.



For medical transport help - call at any time on 07984 785907 and leave a message with details and we will get back to you. Please give us plenty of notice. People are asked to make a donation to help cover the costs.

As it is likely that social distancing will be required for a while yet, ADCA will need to continue providing practical support to people at home, as well as individual befriending. This support includes helping carers who are particularly affected by being unable to enjoy breaks from caring. We are also planning for the time when we may be able, gradually, to open up our day clubs, lunch clubs, carers' groups and coffee mornings, perhaps for smaller numbers of people at each session but with more sessions taking place. We will also almost certainly need to continue with our home support services.

ADCA would welcome people's thoughts and views on how best we can provide our services into the future. Please let us know your ideas by ringing us on 07984 785907, email: adca.audlem@gmail.com or write: ADCA, Audlem Public Hall Annexe, Cheshire Street, Audlem CW3 0AH.

ADCA would also like to thank those who have sent individual donations as well as the following organisations that have provided us with grant aid: Audlem Charity Shop, Cheshire East Council, Steve Morgan Foundation, Cheshire Community Foundation, Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Serco Foundation, Charities Aid Foundation, Awards for All Lottery Fund and M&S Community Fund.

A Big Thank You from Lyme Wood Grange

Lyme Wood Grange Retirement Living would like to say a Big Thank You to Ralph Warburton and Molly Hodges for the help they have given us over the weeks of isolation, keeping us well supplied with food etc. We hope they like the scarecrows.



History Shorts

In normal circumstances we would be reporting on our last three meetings which were to cover topics such as Thomas Becket; Manchester's anti-Suffragists; and Andrew Fuller Chater, Rector of Nantwich and his role in the 1849 cholera epidemic. How timely the last subject would have been!

The summer's trips should have been a guided walk around Whitchurch and a visit to Norton Priory, near Runcorn. As with the talks, we hope that the trips are merely postponed and will take place in the not-too-distant future.

In this time of social distancing which, for many people, means unprecedented physical and social isolation, we've stayed in contact with members through emailing weekly "History Shorts". These are short pieces in which our contributors describe an item, a place, a person or an event that has made an impact on them. The range of topics, from Leonardo da Vinci to counterfeiters in a remote Pennine village has been amazing! We're delighted that these have also been published on Audlem Online.

Audlem Charity Shop

Sadly, Audlem Charity Shop remains closed for the foreseeable future. Our charities are obviously losing the benefit of our donations at present. We had hoped to exceed our £30,000 of donations in 2021 but it is looking less and less likely. But, we live in hope! We are so looking forward to re-opening at some point and are very keen to welcome back our very loyal customers and hopefully to meet many new customers. Our continued thanks goes to all the support we receive from our customers.

VE Day Celebrations

On 8th May ADCA had planned a special celebration lunch in Audlem Public Hall to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day, which most of ADCA's members witnessed during their childhood. Obviously, these plans were scuppered when the lockdown was announced but, nothing daunted, ADCA delivered to the homes of all of their members a special "VE Day afternoon tea" of sandwiches, sausage roll, crisps and a dessert. Members also received some soup generously donated by Allan and Jo Brown from The Lord Combermere, whose chefs prepared all the food for over 60 people. Members also received a Union Jack flag and hat to help them to join in with the celebrations and make it a truly memorable day, despite the restrictions.



Secure Cycle Parking

In March secure cycle parking arrived in Audlem when two cycle racks were installed by Boots in The Square, with two more to follow by the Co-op. Four cycles can be parked at each location. ADAPT's Transport Group hopes the secure parking will encourage more travel in the village by bike, and thanks Audlem Parish Council and Cheshire East Highways for supporting this project. The Cycling For All Around Audlem leaflet and map has been updated and will be available, free, from the usual outlets when open again.

ADAPT's Food Group looks forward to being able to open the Saturday stall at the Lord Combermere car park again and will keep everyone informed via Audlem Online.

Olly's Story

Seven-year-old Audlem Beaver Olly sat eating his breakfast one morning a few weeks ago, listening to the news on breakfast TV, which was all about how hard NHS staff have been working to keep us safe. Olly was very quiet for a while, most unusual for him. "I want to help the NHS" he piped up. "I can ride my bike and collect some money" and so began Olly's quest. Olly challenged himself to ride a seven mile loop each day. He started that day and rode that loop every day since. Olly is too young to set up a Just Giving page, so one was set up for him. Olly decided he would like to raise £500 but as this newsletter went to press, Olly had raised a massive £1920. Oliver has been awarded a District Commissioner's Commendation and Cheshire County Scouts are to enter Oliver's name onto the Cheshire Scout Heroes website. Olly would be so grateful if you could make even a small donation: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/melissa-robinson3>

The Lion's Progress

The renovation work started in the autumn. The building regulation documents were approved and the contractors came on site to undertake Phase 1 of the redevelopment. A new water treatment plant had to be fitted to comply with current drainage regulations. Inside, ceilings were removed and this highlighted the need for additional support to stabilise the structure before work could proceed on the roof and extension.

Whilst fully complying with the Covid-19 restrictions the contractors have put in a great number of supporting steels. We are most grateful to them for this work and their commitment. The building is now structurally safe.

All this takes time and a lot of money! Currently fund-raising opportunities are limited but we have raised half a million pounds and we aim to raise at least another £100,000 to open the doors and give the community the pub it deserves. www.whitelionhankelow.com

Audlem Methodist Church

March began so well for us. Our production of the musical "Annie Junior" had delighted a full church, the Ecumenical Sunday Lent Soup Lunches with donations to charities were halfway through, and the Police Band Concert and Easter Workshop Day for two local schools were about to happen. Then of course everything suddenly was called to a halt!

The coronavirus emergency has closed our buildings, but we have been continuing to provide pastoral and prayer support. Our minister continues to be available on 07929 708976 or email revgwindon@gmail.com, and he has set up a Reflection Line number 01270 323610, with a message changed twice a week.

Ecumenical Zoom Services have been set up by Rev Helen Chantry at 10.30am on Sunday mornings, involving participation from all churches. Passcodes and ID are available, as are service sheets. As for everyone else, the telephone is a blessing, and we have set up a fortnightly Church Newsletter, using email wherever possible but also a printed copy delivered to those without this facility.

It may be that by mid-summer we shall be able to open our churches again, with certain restrictions, but whatever is happening if you would like our prayer, support or help at this time please contact our minister.

Audlem Cricket Club

The enforced late start to the new cricket season has allowed the club to complete its programme of a long-awaited upgrade to facilities to prepare for the new adventure into the North Staffs and South Cheshire Cricket League after competing for many seasons in the Cheshire Leagues. The decision was made to switch leagues with the intention of attracting more village-based players (especially juniors).

The improvements have been carried out with generous financial help from the Parish Council through the Small Grants Scheme which has enabled us to improve our changing rooms, showers, toilets, tea-room and players' lounge. Repairs have also been completed on the external structure and roof to give the building a new lease of life.

Last season saw the reintroduction of Sunday friendly fixtures at Audlem CC which proved to be a great success. We hope that at least some part of the season can be salvaged; the ground has been prepared and kept in order, ready for any resumption as soon as we get the go-ahead.

The club was also looking to reintroduce the old village Knock-out which ran successfully for many years; if anyone is interested please contact us with your ideas. We are very keen to form closer links with the village and surrounding areas so please get in touch with us if you fancy turning out for a game or just coming along to watch. Everyone will be made very welcome. Our contact details can be found on audlem.play-cricket.com The ground is at The Gorse Croft, Bunsley Bank, Audlem, Cheshire, CW3 0HS.



Pansies, Hyacinths and Purple Tulips

In the spring the beautiful pansies, hyacinths and purple tulips have brightened the village during these difficult times, however, since the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, ADAS has had to cancel or reschedule all events for the spring and summer. After consultation with the Charity Commission, the AGM was cancelled and existing officers and committee members will continue for the foreseeable future.

Plans for summer planting had to be abandoned although we are constantly assessing the situation and hope to perform some summer planting, probably limited to the centre of the village.

The Committee has decided that this year's subscription envelope drop will not take place due to the lockdown - also we appreciate that many households are suffering financially. Should you wish to contribute there is a collecting tin in Williams Newsagents or donate online using the link <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/8379> Please remember to donate with gift aid if you are eligible.

Future plans include: the renovation of the St James' flowerbed and the installation of two benches adjacent to the Co-op which have been funded by the Co-operative Community fund

Thanks also to our many volunteers - if you would like to be involved with our projects please contact us at adascontact@gmail.com.

