

GPC **Gretton Parish Council** **Newsletter October 2021**

Bringing the Community Together

You are invited to...

*... a **free entry** family fun event for all the village on October 9th to celebrate the community spirit which was so evident during the pandemic.*



Over 35 people gathered on 6 September to plan and volunteer for this event which will include a wide range of entertainment.

Full details of the event can be found inside on pages 4 and 5

The Pandemic has been an extremely tough time for us all but as one business guru said, "In times of adversity and change, we really discover who we are and what we're made of." I think this is very applicable to our community. Pre-Covid it was all too easy to be too busy to really appreciate what we have, our community, neighbours, family, local businesses etc. The Pandemic brought clarity to what was important and gave us time to focus on it. The neighbourly support we witnessed in the village was tremendous with the Gretton Help Force providing support in a variety of ways and all of us taking time to check-in on each other. I think that many of us now want to keep some of these positives going.

We already have a vibrant and engaged community in some quarters, but there is potential to grow involvement, expand the types of activities held and further benefit both our village and community.

We have some strong groups in the Gretton Village Association, the Parish Council, the School, the Church and the Tower Trust and we now intend to work even more closely, to broaden engagement, listen to what the community wants and deliver. Over the coming months we intend to start to hold a few events and hopefully develop a calendar of activity to both enhance our village and build on the sense of community. Your active involvement is welcome!

Mark Oliver

Your two new Parish Councillors

Councillors Terry Nixon and Linda Clifford have left the village to move to Cheshire. The Council has co-opted two new Councillors who will serve, initially, until the next Parish Council election in 2023

Andrew Stewart

I've lived in Gretton for 13 years now, those of you who walk round they area will probably know my family and I for our Alpacas that live in the field behind us on Greenway Lane. I was born and bred in Winchcombe and my wife Laura grew up in Gretton. Her parents Neil and Christine Vickery still live in the village. We love Gretton and are keen to do our bit to help bring the



community together and make it a great place to live.

Mark Oliver

My wife Rachel and I have lived in Working Lane for approaching ten years and our two girls both enjoyed their time at the Primary School. Having recently retired I am keen to give something back to the community, strengthen community engagement and ensure we have a voice in the future of our village. I can be found walking the dogs around the village so please stop me for a chat!



Parish Council News

Our Local Councils, Tewkesbury Borough and Gloucestershire County Councils, paused their work during the pandemic as people were diverted onto essential Covid-19 tasks or working from home, and the councils concentrated on keeping the most vital services running. This in turn slowed down our work although we supported Gretton Help force initiatives and took time to listen to you through the village survey. Now we are hopefully near the end of the pandemic we are working closely with these councils and getting planned improvements in place.

Traffic

Traffic volumes have returned to near pre-Covid levels and speeding issues are once more apparent in the village. We have purchased a new and better speed indicating device which is permanently installed at the Winchcombe entrance to the village.



The old sign is now resident in Gretton Fields. We are still planning to install a gateway at the Alderton end of the village and will be seeking financial support for this.

The Bus Shelter

People are beginning to use our bus shelter again to access public transport. It has however been used as a dumping ground for various waste including dog bags and has had to be cleared out twice by voluntary effort.

The shelter exists for the comfort of passengers so please keep it tidy and put dog waste in the bins which are provided around the village.

Dog Bins installed

Nuisance from dog waste did not figure highly in the village survey, but as the pandemic has progressed it has become more of an annoyance to more people.



One is at the top of Greenway Lane

The other is opposite Church Row by the footpath at Marlborough Farm.

The Parish Council has had two new dog bins installed at known trouble spots for dog waste.

Please use them.



The Horse Chestnut tree is in distress

The beautiful Horse Chestnut tree in the centre of the village is showing signs of decay. A couple of years ago it dropped a large branch damaging the gates and walls of two neighbouring houses. Now another branch has fallen and there is evidence of leaf miner on one side, which is not fatal.

The tree may be the responsibility of the County Council but they have not admitted ownership.

In consultation with neighbours the Parish Council arranged for expert advice so that the tree can be preserved but any dangers to the public removed. This may involve some pruning and shaping work.

Our priority will be to maintain this tree for its significant visual and wildlife benefits to the village. This will be done in consultation with the Borough Trees Officer. We will seek financial support from the County Council in view of the location of the tree on a County maintained verge.



Parish Council News

The Parish Council encourages voluntary engagement by residents with working groups having been formed for traffic, flooding, neighbourhood planning and now community development. Here Geoff Hanson feeds back from the group tasked with looking at how Gretton can influence planning and community issues over the next few years.

Possible Gretton Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

Background.

Parishes are encouraged to establish NDPs, to give them more influence in how their villages are developed.

A NDP is a formally adopted document, and so must be developed using a pre-defined process and addressing prescribed topics. This usually requires external advisors involving significant community engagement and consultation, prior to its adoption by Tewksbury BC. The process is likely to take about 2 years. The focus tends to be on land-use and planning, but there is some scope to extend to wider community issues.

Gretton does not have an NDP, and so we asked the question, as part of a village consultation (in Autumn 2020).

Outcome

The view of the Steering Team was not to go-ahead with an NDP now. It was agreed that we should establish a Parish Plan, to help village organisations and the Parish Council, guide and focus future activity. It is also hoped that it will further develop a sense of community, addressing many wider community concerns, as well as issues such as planning, environment, traffic, parking, flooding, and village facilities.

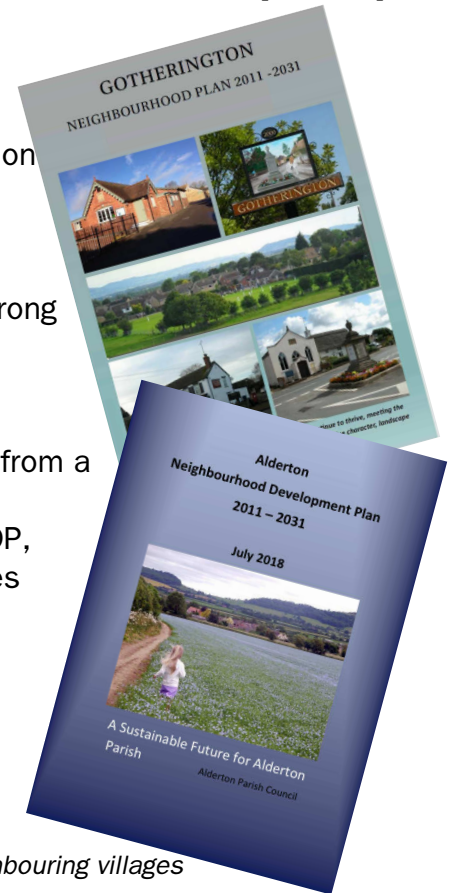
Although not with the rigour and authority of a NDP, it can be structured to suit our needs, is easily updatable and can be formatted so that it can form part of a NDP, should we decide to go-head with this later.

Of the 244 questionnaires delivered, 63 people replied on this topic. Of the 52 who thought it was a good idea, some offered to help; these were contacted, and a 14 strong Steering Team was formed.

This team met to discuss :-

- What it wanted to achieve from a village plan
- The pros and cons of a NDP, experience from other villages and alternatives
- Advice from Tewksbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire Rural Community Council

NDPs from larger neighbouring villages



The next step is for the Parish Council to discuss, and kick-off the Parish Plan activity, which we would hope to be completed within 12 months.

At that point, we could then re-consider a NDP, building on our Parish Plan experience and when we have more confidence in the value of NDPs, particularly regarding the TBC housing land supply situation and possible changes in Government policy.

Thank you to the Steering Team, for its efforts to-date. If anyone would like to be involved, please contact any member of GPC. A more detailed report is on the GPC website.

Geoff Hanson



The parish plan of 2006 was based on the results of the first parish survey.

Community Pages

applerockgretton@gmail.com'."/>

9th Oct
3PM -
UNTIL LATE

**GRETTON
APPLE
ROCK**

**BRING
YOUR OWN
APPLES!!**

**GRETTON
VILLAGE HALL
& PARK**
(ample parking
available)

**FREE ENTRY • APPLE PRESSING • BBQ & BAR
BOUNCY CASTLE • FAMILY FUN* • LIVE MUSIC****

.....

The Gretton Parish Council, Village Association and Friends of Gretton School would like to invite members of its community for a day of family fun, laughter & entertainment!
Got some apples? Bring them! Join us for some apple pressing and cider making!!

.....

*** FAMILY FUN INCLUDING BOUNCY CASTLE, A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AND
GAMES FOR ALL AGES **LIVE MUSIC FROM THE APPLE MASHERS!**

Please RSVP to applerockgretton@gmail.com

Community Pages

Re-energising the Community: Apple Rock

A common theme in many conversations in the village is “how do we do more as a community.” Good things do happen but it is often the same faces with the wider village either not aware or involved. With the strength of community seen during the lock-downs we see a strong desire to keep the momentum going to get to know each other better, support each other and have some fun.

We believe a good first step is to get the village together and have some fun. Apple Rock is a traditional village event that has been run by Nick Sharman. The timing of the event provides an opportunity not to be missed and so we propose to build on the normal day by providing entertainment for all of the village.

Mark Oliver and Andrew Steward held a very well supported gathering on 6th September to share ideas and solicit support. The evening was a great success with the 35 people present and many other who could not be there expressing enthusiastic support to put on a

memorable event on the 9th October. The expanded Apple Rock has the active support of the Parish Council, Gretton Village Association and Friends of Gretton School.



Mark and Andrew at the planning event

The proposal is to have a village celebration with attractions to suit all. In the afternoon there will be a number of activities for children and adults alike including a bouncy castle, there will be a traditional apple press where villages can bring their apples for pressing and there will be a range of refreshments including BBQ, bar, teas, coffees and cake throughout the day.

We will have music throughout the day and as we get into the evening the “Apple Mashers” will provide the

entertainment. Apple Rock will be held in and around the Village Hall and Playing Field with activities running from 3.00 until late on Saturday 9th October and will be free to enter. It is hoped that all Gretton residents can attend.

We see Apple Rock as a start. Suggestions are already being made for a calendar events and activities throughout the year. The Advent Windows have previously been a great success and a Christmas/New Year party is being considered. Please bring your ideas along to Apple Rock for discussion.

Finally, although developing a social agenda is important it will also help in increasing engagement in village planning matters. You will see throughout the Newsletter a breadth of things happening and with the work about to start on a Parish Plan it is really important that we understand the views of the village to ensure our future plans address the communities needs.

Please catch Mark Oliver to discuss more.

CPRE Stone Stiles Project

Gretton is the proud possessor of a historic stone stile on the footpath to Stanley Pontlarge. A CPRE project to identify and log all the stone stiles in Gloucestershire has identified over 800 previously unrecorded examples.



The project is now looking for confident volunteers who can enter the data, supplied by the coordinator, into Excel spreadsheets. The information includes: - Location of stile, map reference, type, which parish, condition of stile - in use and if not alternative in situ, where path goes

to and from, and additional information such as age or local history. The project is one step away from producing an interactive map App.

To help please contact Peter Wilson by emailing: peter.wilson@woodchestervalleyvillage.co.uk or Hugh Tarran on h.tarran@tiscali.co.uk

Give us a call – we’re still here to help

Call us on 01452 527202

Or email info@gloscab.org.uk

We have suspended all drop-in services but we are currently giving advice by either phone or email

We provide advice on many issues including employment, housing, debt and benefits

For further information please go to <http://gloscab.org.uk/>

**citizens
advice**

**North and West
Gloucestershire**

Community Pages



Rewilded Churchyard, All Hallows Devon

Churchyard Rewilding

A project is being proposed to rewild part of Christchurch graveyard. The area proposed to re-wild is a clear area on the north side of the church where there are no gravestones and the north boundary with plantings for berries for birds. Bughotels could be made too.

The project is to be a community project so will need voluntary support. It is hoped that children and the school could become involved, as well as community volunteers.

The programme will involve initial preparation of the site and a sowing of yellow rattle that helps suppress grass growth this Autumn and the planting of Spring bulbs. Next March wild flowers will be sown and hopefully trees and shrubs planted. This will help to make good the loss of dangerous trees on the boundary. The results will come to fruition in a year or two.

If there is enough Community support work will start this October. To help please contact Gwyneth Cocks gam.c@btinternet.com

War memorial

The War Memorial which is owned by the Parish Council was maintained by Councillor Linda Clifford who has now left the village.

A budget has been made available for maintenance of the planting and we thank Christine Vickery who is coordinating volunteers to undertake appropriate planting for the autumn.



If you would like to be involved, please contact Christine.

Cotswold Voluntary Wardens

Gretton sits in the North of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The 790 square miles of the AONB are managed by the Cotswold Conservation Board whose aims are enacted by the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens.

Parish Wardens are the local “eyes and ears” of the Voluntary Wardens. They patrol and maintain rights of way and report any problems such as broken stiles, overgrown or blocked footpaths. They also liaise with the Parish Council, local landowners, and public Rights of Way on all matters concerning footpaths, bridleways, stiles and gates etc.

The Gretton Wardens are supported by the Winchcombe Work Party who are out every Thursday tackling more significant jobs including path and tree clearance, stile and gate repairs and even stone walling. Locally, Gretton has benefited from several path and tree clearing actions in recent months to keep our splendid countryside open to all.

The Gretton Parish Warden is Jean Booth. Jean can be contacted on grettonparishwarden@gmail.com

Alderton Allotments

Various sized plots with reasonable rents are available now. The waiting list and applications are open to both the residents of Alderton and the surrounding Villages, including Gretton.

For further information please contact

Tamsin James
Clerk to Alderton Parish Council
01684 290392 or
tamsin.james1@btinternet.com

Community Pages

Village Events

1-3 October - Winchcombe Walking Festival

9 October - Apple Rock.

Free entry to family fun from 3.00pm onwards, Playing Field and Village Hall.

October various dates - rewilding in the Churchyard - volunteers welcome.

10 November - Parish Council.

Meet in public at 7.00pm Village Hall. All residents welcome.

14 November - Remembrance Sunday

Through December - Advent Windows

12 January - Parish Council.

Meet in public at 7.00pm Village Hall. All residents welcome.

The Gretton Parish Council Newsletter is published twice a year. The Community pages are open to groups in Gretton and Gretton Fields to post information and events. We welcome your feedback on this newsletter. To input into future editions please contact John Hurley (editor) at: johnhurley@argonet.co.uk

Village Hall and Field

The GVA (Gretton Village Association) is pleased to report that the Hall is back in action and that bookings are improving. Over the past 18 months, the Hall has had its floor re-surfaced, new heating installed (with thanks to Greenfields Trust) and some redecoration.

Please see the website for booking details

Following feedback from users and the last questionnaire, GVA is now considering plans to improve access to the field (particularly disabled, pushchairs etc) and to improve the play facilities.

In addition, we are looking at providing some limited extra parking. There is some S106 funding available (from the Spitfire development),



which TBC has specifically allocated for this.

The GVA is currently drawing up plans, so that different options can be considered in consultation with the Village, neighbours and those who use the Hall and Field. This will then be followed by discussions with planning authorities and other funding providers.

GRETTON TOWER TRUST



The repair of the Tower roof and weather vane in Autumn 2020 has allowed the return of a steady stream of villagers and walkers to visit and school activities to resume.

Gretton Tower Trust are now the official owners of the Tower, and the small green area which was the footprint of the old Church, on behalf of the village,

Covid restrictions have prevented much further progress on the fund raising which is needed for the outstanding items of work to complete the project.

These include replacement of the gate, an interpretation board, signage, a bench and perimeter wall repair.

To help the project to completion each of these would make an affordable single sponsorship donation.

Alternatively any smaller donations are gratefully received towards the general upkeep and running costs of this successful project. Gifts can be made by bank transfer to:
*Gretton Tower Trust, Lloyds Bank
Cheltenham Sort Code: 30-91-87
Account : 66921668*

Parish Council News

While we try to work closely with higher tier authorities and statutory undertakings they are not always as responsive as we would wish. Covid has further slowed matters. John Hurley reports that progress on dealing with the causes of the flooding last Christmas and the missing pavement has been agonisingly slow.

Flooding Frustration

The downpour on 23rd December last year flooded seven houses in Gretton Fields and Gretton village threatening others in the parish with inundation. This may become a more frequent problem as result of climate change and the incapacity of existing drainage.

The Parish Council compiled a report on the incidence of flooding and maps of problem areas in **January**. These were submitted to the responsible local authorities, Gloucestershire County Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council.

The report identified problems of riparian responsibilities and poor local authority maintenance with ditches, gulleys, culverts and grips in poor condition. It requested help for the Parish Council to combat problems through coordinated local authority action and some local voluntary input.



Eventually we secured a meeting with the County Council flood section in **May** which Councillors Hurley and Hanson attended with Bob Roberts. Of the other invited attendees, only Severn Trent showed up. Neither County Highways nor Tewkesbury Borough Council came.

The County Council promised some help for problems in Gretton Village, but considered that the issues in Gretton Fields required larger scale flood management measures which were currently unlikely to be a priority.

The Parish Council asked County Councillor David Gray to help get things moving in **July**, but we are currently only slightly further forward in contacting riparian owners and have yet to agree a coordinated maintenance programme from the relevant authorities.

A recent inspection has shown the maintenance problems have deteriorated further. The Parish Council is continuing to take action until issues are resolved.



Bugatti Footpath Delays

The creation of a pavement was a condition of planning permission for the Bugatti development. However the approval to create the footpath and provide a dropped kerb for the entry to the houses has been sitting at County

Highways for two years despite representations by us and Tewkesbury Borough Council. The need to protect parents and children going to school is paramount and we have raised this matter yet again.

Gas works (almost) concluded

The replacement of the gas mains in Gretton to eliminate water in the mains, is now complete. Road disruption in the area will continue for some time as work in nearby areas and Gotherington is undertaken.

We were disappointed that assurances given to the Parish Council by the contractors that complete closures would be for a short time only were not honoured

on the ground, and that road closures for safety reasons continued for far longer than the works actually justified.

The need for the work is not in doubt. The photograph is an example of the condition of the existing Gas pipes!

The only reason there wasn't a massive leak from this pipe under Greenway Lane was because it was buried in clay.



Contact your Councillors

John Hurley - Chair	Geoff Hanson - V. Chair	Richard Green	Mark Oliver	Andrew Steward
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