

# GPC Gretton Parish Council Newsletter December 2022

## Merry Christmas Gretton

### A busy year in pictures



### Village events and improvements in 2022 working together with



Christ Church  
Gretton



Cotswold Voluntary  
Wardens

Gretton  
Tower Trust





# Parish Council News

## From the Chair

Our thanks for all he contributed to the Council and village events, and farewell to Andrew Steward who has now stepped down from the Council. However we are very pleased to welcome David Butcher. David is a relative newcomer to the Village but has already initiated the launch of the new web-site, which we hope will be able to provide a valuable link to all village activities, messages and information.

As reported in the last Newsletter, John Hurley stepped down as Chair in May, after 7-years' service. John's wise and knowledgeable leadership has been really appreciated and he will be greatly missed.

The baton has been passed to me, and I will do my best to continue the good work. John leaves the Council in May '23, so we'll be looking for new members. We'd particularly welcome anyone from a more diverse background (location or demography). It's not a life sentence, but it is a great opportunity to do your part, to help keep Gretton a great place to live.

### Next year's Council budget and goals

The Council is funded by a small allocation from our Council Tax - the 'precept'. Next year (April '23 - '24), in recognition of the pressure on household budgets, we will freeze this precept.

However, this will still allow us to do useful work, continuing our key themes, identified from the last village questionnaire; - Improving communications across the community; maintaining and improving the Playing Field; addressing traffic concerns and improving the Gretton environment - keeping it rural, greener and safe.

## Looking back at 2022 - and forward to 23

*Since the last issue we have continued working with other authorities and village groups to improve the village environment and amenities and to revitalise the social life of the village in the aftermath of Covid. This work will continue into next year.*

*John Hurley reports.*

### A better looking Gretton

There have been a number of initiatives by the Parish Council and our community partners to improve the village environment.

On p3 Dick Green reports our improvements to the village green.

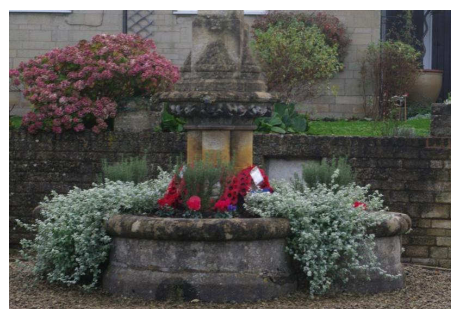
The Church wildflower meadow has had a successful first year and there are plans to extend it.

The Tower Trust has made access to the Tower safer by with the installation of a new gate p7.

On p8 Mark Oliver reports on the work of the Cotswold Wardens

who have been busy repairing paths and styles.

The war memorial has been very well maintained by Chris Vickery and helpers.



Selective environmental updates around the village next year will include replacement litter bins.

### Building Community

The two big social events this year, the Jubilee celebrations and Apple Rock were both a great success. Full reports are on p6.

The Gretton Village Association committee has been renewed, with ambitious plans for the improvement of the playing field reported on p5.

We will all continue to collaborate on further village festivals next year. (p5)



### Road safety

The speedwatch initiative has revealed the high number of motorists breaking the speed limit as Mark Oliver reports on p3 opposite. The parish council will continue to invest in the new road safety measures he outlines, with County Council help.

New dustbin stickers to discourage speeding are available from councillors if you would like to help slow traffic on the main road.



After two years of lobbying by the Parish Council and the School the footpath outside the old Bugatti Inn has, at last, been installed although concerns remain about the height of the kerb. We will monitor.

# Parish Council News

## Contact your Parish Council team



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## Traffic Safety - combating excessive speeds in Gretton

Keeping our residents and visitors safe is of the utmost importance and continues to be a key focus for the Parish Council. A number of initiatives are underway:

- **Community Speedwatch.** The team of volunteers can be regularly seen monitoring traffic through the village. Around half of all traffic continues to exceed the speed limit and around 10% of traffic exceeds 35 mph. The team work closely with the Police and so far 110 people have received a warning letter or visit from the Police. The Police inform us that the majority of "offenders" are local residents so please help make Gretton a safer place by slowing down.

- **Improved Signage.** In conjunction with Community Speedwatch we now have some "wheelie bin" speed reminders available so please ask for one. We have also requested refreshed road markings at the village entrances and are working to install a village gateway at the Alderton approach.

- Finally, the vehicle activated speed indicator at the Winchcombe entrance continues to be effective and we are now investigating another device for use elsewhere in the village. There is also a device in Gretton Fields

Dialogue is underway with Gloucestershire County Council to improve the Redwood Close Junction and in particular its proximity to the change in speed limit.



Our Community Speedwatch team is always looking for more volunteers so please get in touch. Contact Mark Oliver [mark@grettonnpc-glos.org.uk](mailto:mark@grettonnpc-glos.org.uk)

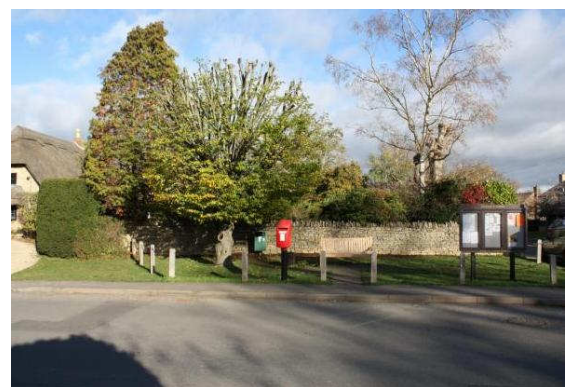
*Mark Oliver*

## Environmental improvement - enhancing the village

The Parish Council has carried out improvements to the village green. The Hornbeam tree has been pruned to make it more in scale with the space. The Coronation bench and the notice board have both been replaced. The Gloucestershire County Council Build Back Better fund co-funded the bench.

Coronation plaques for the Queen and new King will be fitted to the new bench. The notice board celebrates the Queen's platinum Jubilee. The larger board provides 3 sections for GPC, village community and general notices.

The area of wildflower sowing on half of the village green was not well received by residents and has now been returned to mown grass. There is the



possibility of creating a wildflower area on the bank in front of Barn Close. In view of the reaction to the village green sowing, we would like to canvass village opinions on this possibility.

Please send any comments to [dick@grettonnpc-glos.org.uk](mailto:dick@grettonnpc-glos.org.uk)

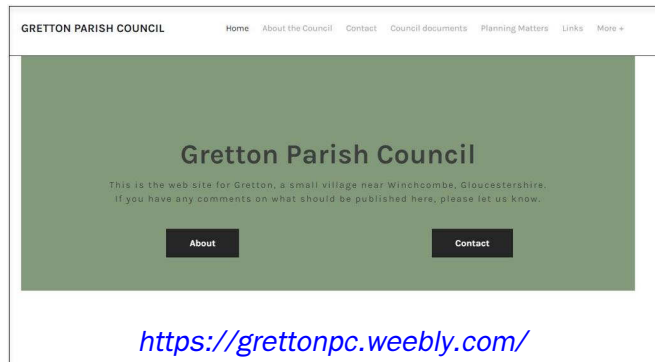
*Dick Green*



# Parish Council News

## Communications

The Parish Council strives to inform residents of news or issues that are relevant. Getting messages out to the necessary people is a challenge as people use different methods to receive information. We have investigated best practice and have agreed a three-pronged approach of our Website, Facebook and an improved three section noticeboard (see p3) to provide space to share different types of information.



<https://grettonpc.weebly.com/>

**Website:** The Gretton Parish Council website has been refreshed with a view to improve usability, currency and maintenance. All of the previous content remains but a new template provides an updated look and feel. Please check it out, bookmark it and return regularly as we will be adding and merging content from related sources over the next few months. Your feedback and input is greatly appreciated, as are contributions. In particular, we are looking to replace the title banner with an image of the village.

If you have a picture that you feel is suitable to be the face of the webpage please contact councillor Butcher [david@grettonpc-glos.org.uk](mailto:david@grettonpc-glos.org.uk)

Dave Butcher

**Facebook:** Research shows that Facebook has maximum reach in communities such as ours. We have introduced a new Facebook Page "Gretton Village Notices" which will act as a virtual noticeboard to share important information. The aim is to increase awareness, support residents and facilitate greater engagement. The page will share news and point to the website when things that may be of interest are available. The page can be followed by individuals or groups and therefore will work with the current Gretton Noticeboard and Gretton Help force to ensure news is available. The Facebook page will share items from both Gretton Parish Council and Gretton Village Association.

Mark Oliver



## Dog Fouling remains an unacceptable nuisance

Dog fouling sadly continues to be a nuisance in the village.

Tewkesbury Borough Council has recently introduced a public space protection order requiring that:

- A person in control of a dog must ensure that dog faeces are removed from the land immediately
- A person in control of a dog must ensure that they have means available to clear up dog faeces
- A person in control of a dog must ensure that dog faeces are disposed of in an appropriate receptacle

New signs have been installed. The order is enforceable and failure to comply may result in a

fixed penalty fine of up to £100 or prosecution.



You can report non-compliances anonymously through the Tewkesbury Borough Council website.

Mark Oliver

## Our approach to planning

National planning policy has had some abrupt and controversial turns in the last few years. The Parish Council, however, currently retains the right to comment on applications and if we object have them discussed by the Borough Planning Committee.

It is right that we are open about the process and criteria we use to decide whether to comment on or object to an application which can be anything from a replacement window to a developer's proposal.

We have put a paper which explains our approach on the website where you can also find current planning applications.

John Hurley

# Community Pages

*Solid progress is being made with the initiative to “bring our community together.” Some successful events have been held, the Village Association has new faces and ambitious plans and a calendar of community events are in the planning stages.*

## New initiatives for Gretton Village Association (GVA)

After 20 years as Chair of the GVA Jan Taylor decided to stand down. We owe her a significant debt of gratitude for her tremendous achievements in establishing the new hall and organising so many events for the village.

Mark Oliver succeeds Jan as the Chairman and the refreshed committee is as follows: Kirsty Lightowler, Kathy Tweedie, Judith Woodlock, MT Green, Sue Hughes, John Eaton, Treasa Butcher, Harold Bailey, Sue Fleck, Alix Scott and David Tweedie

The GVA is charged with maintaining the Village Hall and Playing Field. The Hall is a fantastic village asset and hosts regular group meetings together with Yoga, Dance and Pilates classes. The Hall is available to hire for events with local residents receiving beneficial rates.

The GVA need to improve Hall utilisation so if you know of any regular groups or potential customer's please get in touch.

Please contact Mark Oliver or [gvabookings@gmail.com](mailto:gvabookings@gmail.com) for Hall bookings



The GVA are also planning a series of events and opportunities to bring the community together throughout the year. The following are being planned or considered:

- Advent Windows throughout December
- Christmas Eve festive refreshments for all in the Village Hall.
- Village Quiz Night - 13 January
- Village Coronation celebrations 8th May
- Fireworks - November
- Harvest Celebration/Apple Rock and Scarecrow Competition – October
- Christmas events for 2023

Other activities being discussed include opening the Hall for a “Gretton Hub” drop in where people can gather for a warm drink, food and catch-up.

It will be great to see people getting together and if you have any ideas or would like to help please get in touch with a committee member.

## Village Hall and Playing Field Development

The Village Hall and playing field are essential facilities at the heart of the Gretton community. They are owned by the GVA charity and managed by the GVA committee. They are widely used by the community and the school.

However, following feedback from users and from the Village consultation (at the end of 2021), we wish to improve these facilities to meet current requirements and ensure the viability of the Hall.

New play equipment, more green areas and better accessibility for all, should encourage greater use of the Field and the Village Hall.

We've developed plans, which have been on display, are now on the new website, and have been discussed with Tewkesbury Borough Council (note pre-submission 22/00042/PRE).

We have some funds available, arising from the Redbrook Close development (known as ‘S106 Contribution’). This has to be used for the hall and playing field. We will need to fund-raise some more, but it's a great project and we are hopeful of success. We're currently talking to contractors and will then submit formal plans to Tewkesbury planners.

As we approach planning the project will gain momentum and help will be needed from the community to finalise plans and help with aspects of implementation. Volunteers are welcome to help this exciting project.



Geoff Hanson / Mark Oliver



# Community Pages

## Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

The village came together to put on a fantastic celebration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee.

The village was decorated, a village clean-up conducted, the phone box refurbished and the Church hosted a Flower Festival, Jubilee Service and a Pimms Reception. On the Saturday a full days entertainment commenced with the children parading from the school before the official opening by the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire. An afternoon picnic was followed by races and a range of activities, food and drink and the day closed by a very enjoyable square dance. The day was enjoyed by approaching 300 people.

A grant from the Gloucestershire County Councils Build Back Better Scheme supported our celebrations and the establishment of a new Jubilee bench on the Village Green.



## Apple Rock 22

Apple Rock is a traditional event in the village. Residents bring their apples for pressing and enjoy entertainment together with the chance to sample last years cider!

The day was once again a tremendous success. During the afternoon Friends of Gretton School put on some wonderful entertainment for the children whilst the bar and pork baps kept the adults happy. As night fell the Apple Mashers played to a packed hall.

This year's event was poignant as one of the event founders, Nick Sharman passed away earlier in the year. It was a chance to remember Nick and raise money for Winston's Wish – the charity selected by his family.

Some £626 was donated to Winston's Wish and Friends of Gretton School made over £300 for the School.

*Mark Oliver*

## Gretton Tower Trust

Now the Tower has been restored work is proceeding on the maintenance of the ancient monument grounds as quickly as resources allow.

A new gate has been installed, with help from Gloucestershire County Councils Build Back Better fund which allows safe access to the site.

A policy of light mowing of the grounds allows the native wildflowers,



already present there to flourish. Future plans include repair of the

stone walls, improved signage to the Tower and some improved historical

information, possibly in the form of display boards.

The Tower looked very splendid when it was illuminated at the last Christmas Eve advent windows event and we will be participating once more in this lovely village evening.

Do drop by to see the Tower and chat to the Trustees.

*John Hurley*

## School Report

## Village Events

## Through December - Advent Windows

A new window each day until Christmas Eve

## 24 December - Christmas Eve

4.00pm Christmas Carols in the Churchyard

Followed by:

Viewing the crib in the Church  
Advent Windows walk about  
Gretton Tower illuminated  
Festive refreshments for all in the  
Village Hall.

**11 January - Parish Council.**

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

This meeting will officially set the precept for 2023/24 and confirm the programme of village improvements for next year.

## 13 January - Village Quiz night

Village Hall - 7.00 for 7.30

## 8 March - Parish Council

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

The last meeting before the May elections and the new council. There will be a vacancy. Interested in standing? Come along and see what Parish Council involves.

## Dear Readers

I hope this latest edition of the Parish Council Newsletter finds you in good health and looking forward to the festive season.

## Curriculum Enrichment

Along with Sport and Outdoor Learning, Art is one of our key curriculum drivers and earlier this term the whole school visited Nature in Art. We had a very enjoyable visit - our pupils were able to make some amazing mini-sculptures and some beautiful textile pictures made of felt. Inspired by the work of a local Gloucestershire artist and the metal and glass tree found in the museum's garden, during a recent "Friendship Friday"

the children worked together to produce this wonderful display, currently sited in the school's porch. We certainly have some very talented children and staff at Gretton Primary!



## OFSTED Inspection

Towards the beginning of this term, two OFSTED inspectors visited for a day. Many of the school's strengths were highlighted in the follow-up report, such as the work we do promote our pupils' wider development, the range of extra-curricular clubs we offer, the strong emphasis we place on social and emotional support for pupils and very importantly, the support we provide for children with Special Educational Needs. We were delighted by the fact that the children told the inspectors that they enjoy school, they feel safe and well cared for and that they are adamant that there is no bullying.

The areas for further development were already outlined in our School Improvement Plan, published prior to the OFSTED inspection and we will continue to do our absolute best for all the children in our fantastic little school.

Best wishes to all members of the local community.

**Richard Woolston**  
**Headteacher**  
**Gretton Primary School**

## Winchcombe u3a

Many members of Gretton's senior community already enjoy free informal adult educational activities through our local voluntary u3a.

We share our knowledge and enthusiasms on a very wide range of subjects, some academic, some sporting, some lifestyle. Groups range from French, to historic building visits, to cycling, to wine tasting with many others in between. Some meet in Gretton Village Hall.

There is a monthly meeting at AbbeyFields Community centre where a hundred or more of us meet for presentations by guest speakers ranging from sleep patterns and ageing to the development of our local tourist railway the GWR. This is followed by tea and cakes.

To see the wide range of groups on offer and to join u3a go to:

[www.u3asites.org.uk/Winchcombe](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/Winchcombe)

*John Hurley*

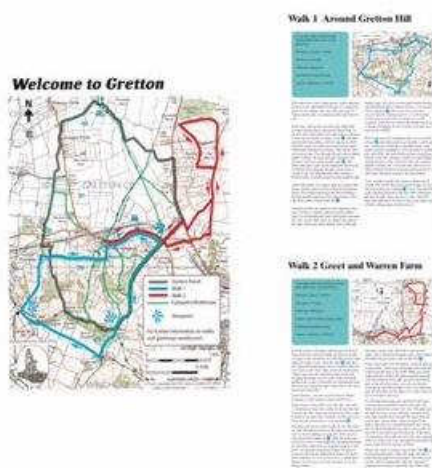


# Community Pages

## Cotswold Voluntary Wardens

Over the Summer months the Cotswold Wardens are kept busy ensuring that paths are clear of undergrowth to enable everyone to enjoy the lovely countryside around the village.

In addition a team of local volunteers have created a Parish map showing all of our footpaths and created two narrated walks around the village. These can be found on the noticeboard and on the Parish Council website.



Mark Oliver is the Gretton Parish Warden and as we approach the winter months please let him know of any issues with paths such as fallen trees.

## News from Christ Church

*The village church of Christ Church is part of the Parish of Winchcombe.*

As with many, the village church has had to cope with the effects of the pandemic, but also with the Rev'd John Paul Hoskins leaving last January to take up a post at Worcester Cathedral.

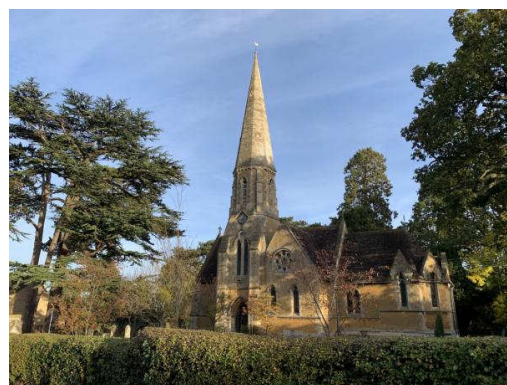
An interregnum is in place. This means that the Parish, including Gretton, has been maintained by retired clergy and lay readers. So, the usual weekly services at Gretton have been reduced to two – at present Holy Communion is on the 2nd Sunday, and Morning Worship on the 4th Sunday.

We are so grateful to all those who have led the services, particularly Rev'd Mike Holloway, who has led most communion services and has introduced a short Morning Prayer here every Thursday at 9:30am. He has also given time to join church members at important village meetings about future social initiatives.

Many families will remember the Carols in the Churchyard that Mike led last Christmas Eve. He plans another family Carols in the Churchyard this Christmas Eve at 4pm, followed by viewing the beautiful illuminated Crib in church. Let's hope for a drier afternoon!

In February 2023 we look forward to our new vicar, Rev'd Captain David Penny, his wife

Deborah and their daughter settling in to the Rectory in Winchcombe. David was born a West Country man but has spent much of his ordained ministry in the Diocese of Manchester, where for the past 17 years he has been vicar of the church of St Matthew and St Luke, Chadderton, outside Oldham. Rev'd Penny will be licensed at a service at St Peter's, Winchcombe on Monday February 27th at 7pm. It is hoped that many in the Parish, including Gretton, will come to welcome him and his family at this special service.



An automatic locking system now allows the church to be open every day between 9am and 4pm for any visitor to appreciate the peace and beauty of our village church.

If anyone would like more information about our church, please contact Sue Fleck, 07976 295710.

## Christmas Eve in Gretton

4.00pm Christmas Carols in the Churchyard  
Followed by: Viewing the crib in the Church

Advent Windows walk about

Gretton Tower illuminated

Festive refreshments for all in the Village Hall.

All Welcome