



Rural News

The Newsletter for the Oswestry Rural Parish
Issue 5 November 2017

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Rural News

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WELCOME...

November remains a most poignant month, in remembering those from our Armed Forces, and others, who either tragically failed to return home from 'foreign fields', or who have returned with life changing conditions from World Wars, regional conflicts, uprisings and the on-going modern conflicts of today. Many of you may have seen large poppies, that enduring symbol of the British Legion, attached to lamp posts throughout the parish this month. The poppies were provided by local sponsors and the Parish Council.

Those men and women who have given so much to protect a way of life that respects differing opinions, political divides and understanding, should never be forgotten, and we need to ensure that future generations understand the true meaning behind, "Lest we forget".

Robert Milton,
Chair, Oswestry Rural Parish Council

Local Plan Review Preferred Options

In the February 2017 edition of Rural News we explained Shropshire Council is reviewing its planning policies (known as the Local Plan).

Shropshire Council is now at the stage of consulting on its Preferred Options for the revised planning policies. The focus for residential development is now Shrewsbury and the market towns with less development in the rural areas. Development in the rural areas will centre on Hubs, those villages where services already exist and need supporting. 40 villages have been classified as Hubs by Shropshire Council through a new points system. Trefonen and Morda have been identified as Hubs.

We therefore encourage residents to review Shropshire Council's 'Preferred Options' and let us know your views before the December 19 meeting. Use this link to access the documents:
<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/local-plan-review-preferred-scale-and-distribution-of-development/>

Neighbourhood Planning

In September, the Parish Council organised a Parish Meeting so that Councillors and all residents had the opportunity to learn more about what Neighbourhood Planning is and the benefits and downsides of producing such a Plan. The meeting was very well attended — thank you.

At the October meeting the Parish Council considered it needed more information on Neighbourhood Planning, especially as Morda and Trefonen had been identified as Hubs under the revised planning policies by Shropshire Council. Another key consideration is the sites put forward by landowners for potential development. These sites will not be known until early 2018.

To commence on a Neighbourhood Plan is a decision with big implications. We encourage residents to understand what is entailed. Use this link to learn more: <http://locality.org.uk/resources/neighbourhood-planning-roadmap-guide/>

Hedges next to highways

The Parish Council would remind all land owners and occupiers of their duties and responsibilities if they manage hedges next to the highway.

Land owner and occupiers must ensure

- * Nesting birds and other wild animals are not disturbed by hedge cutting;
- * Hedges and trees do not cause an overhanging hazard or other obstruction to the highway;
- * Growth from hedges and trees does not restrict visibility of road signs and street lights, and
- * Clippings from hedge cutting activities do not cause a highway hazard.

It is the last of these points that causes most concern to highway users, walkers and vehicle drivers. Landowners and occupiers should ensure that when trimming hedges the work is carried out in good visibility and to try to avoid using machinery that spits hedge debris into the highway.

You should also ensure that contractors have adequate insurance as operators and/or landowner/occupiers could be held liable if an accident is caused which arises from a careless action.

Spot a Pot Hole?

Contact Shropshire Council on 0345 678 9006
or email:
customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk
or report it on-line at
<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/report/>

Councillor Vacancy

A vacancy on the Parish Council to represent Trefonen with Treflach Ward has arisen following the resignation of Jeff Court.

There is a set process to follow when replacing a Councillor and full details of the process can be found on the Parish Council website or by contacting the Clerk.

Being a councillor is a rewarding form of public service that puts you in a unique position where you can make decisions about local issues and improve the quality of life for people within Oswestry Rural Parish. It gives you the opportunity to help your local community and be part of a dedicated team influencing and providing key services for your area.

The councillor's role takes in:

- Representing the parish ward
- Decision making
- Policy and strategy review and development
- Community leadership and engagement.

Community leadership is at the heart of modern local government and councils are taking on new responsibilities. They are working in partnership with other organisations, including Shropshire Council and the voluntary and community sector, to improve services and the quality of life for citizens.

For more information please contact any of the Councillors or the Clerk. Contact details are on the back page.

Highways Issues

Highways issues are some of the more difficult to resolve as the Parish Council has very few of its own powers to work with. The Parish Council has to lobby Shropshire Council or West Mercia Police and sometimes both, to take appropriate action.

The Parish Council regularly puts forward community concerns under Shropshire Council's and Safer Road Partnership schemes but we are competing against other Town and Parish Councils for limited funds. The process from submission to implementation can take years.

One current major concern is the speeding through Treflach and the Council has agreed to fund traffic monitoring to assess the situation. It is hoped results from the monitoring will be available in the New Year.

Recent issues brought to the Parish Council include the fading of white lining around major junctions, vehicles travelling too fast along country lanes and parking on pavements. The Council would urge vehicle owners not to park on pavements, not just out of consideration to pedestrians but it is a safety issue too.

The Tree Charter

We know that trees are much appreciated and loved by our residents. You may be interested to learn about a new initiative called The Tree Charter.

The call for a Tree Charter was initiated in 2015 by the Woodland Trust in response to the crisis facing trees and woods in the UK. There was no clear, unifying statement about the rights of people in the UK to the benefits of trees, woods and forests. The UK's trees and woods face: low planting rates; lack of legal protection; inconsistent management; and declining interest in forestry and arboriculture careers to name just a few.

A new approach was needed that could unite individuals and specialist organisations, and help them speak with one voice. It was important to ensure the role of trees and woods in our lives could be visible and recognised in decision-making and practice.

On 6 November 2017, on the 800th anniversary of the 1217 Charter of the Forest, the new Charter for Trees, Woods and People was launched. You can find out more on the Tree Charter website:
<https://treecharter.uk/home.html>

Green Spaces and Play Areas

As explained in the last edition of Rural News, the Parish Council has been exploring whether to take over some of the green spaces and play areas currently maintained by Shropshire Council in our Parish. Shropshire Council is looking to reduce its costs incurred with green spaces and play areas by passing over responsibility to Town and Parish Councils.

As part of its investigations, the Parish Council has reviewed the grounds maintenance costs, repair and replacement costs of play equipment, fences etc, insurance premiums and inspection costs.

Milars Field and Parker Leighton Way in Morda.

These areas have play equipment within the sites and in the case of Milars Field it has a full and comprehensive range of equipment. It is hoped residents will understand that following its review the Council does not, at this time, have the capacity or financial resources to take on responsibility of these areas. The Council has therefore withdrawn from the transfer.

Trefonen Playing Field

With the help of Trefonen Playing Field Association the Parish Council carried out a full review but again, because of the play equipment, the Council does not have the capacity or financial resources to take on this extensive area. The Parish Council has withdrawn from the transfer.

Decisions have yet to be made on the green areas of Chapel Green and Chapel Lane Trefonen and the Community Orchard, Old Mapsis Way, Morda. The Parish Council is continuing its investigations and it is hoped these areas will be transferred to the Parish Council in due course.

Oswestry Racecourse

Residents will know that this heritage and special site is situated in both Oswestry Rural and Sellatyn and Gobowen Parishes. Although the Racecourse is managed by Shropshire Council a lot of work is carried out by volunteers from the Oswestry Racecourse Management Association. Shropshire Council has recently approached Oswestry Rural and Sellatyn and Gobowen Parish Councils for funding of £3,000 per annum from each Council to maintain the current level of service it provides at the Racecourse. Representatives of both Councils and the Management Association have met with Shropshire Council to discuss the practical implications of not providing £6,000 per annum. As a result, Shropshire Council has been asked to approach Oswestry Town Council to also contribute. The Racecourse is used by many town residents.

Residents will appreciate maintaining new green spaces and possibly contributing to the Racecourse will have an impact on the Council's finances. If you have any comments please contact your local Councillor.

Street Lights

By 2020 due to an EU directive, the manufacture of the most common street light lantern, the low pressure sodium lamp known as SOX, will have been phased out. Manufacturers are already phasing out these lanterns. The most popular replacement is LED lights

LED lights are cheaper to run than SOX so there is an advantage to change over. LED lights now have the facility to dim to 50% during the hours of midnight to 5:30am. This is even more cost effective without increasing risk to communities.

The Parish Council has started a programme of upgrading its street lights to LED starting in Morda. Also, where a light is needed to be replaced an LED light has been used.

On some of new LED lights which have been fitted there have been some teething problems with the dimming facility. Residents' patience while this has been rectified has been appreciated.

Community Grants

Within this year's financial budget, the Parish Council put aside a small amount of funds to help local community groups. There is an agreed criteria and application form which can be obtained from the Clerk. Completed applications must be submitted by 31 December and will be considered at the January Parish Council meeting.

The Parish Council has helped Morton Playing Field Association with a Community Grant to help with the additional grass cutting following re-seeding of the Playing Field. Can your community group benefit from a grant?

All applications will be considered on their individual merits. The final decision on assessment of applications and the level of any grant offered lies with Oswestry Rural Parish Council.

Parish Council Budget 2018/19

In November every year, the Parish Council starts its discussions around finances for the following year. It has to consider unavoidable increases in costs, special projects for the year and any one-off costs and how these will all be funded.

The Council would welcome your input to the 2018/19 Budget. Take a look around the Parish. Do you have any suggestions on how the local environment could be improved? Are there any projects that would help local community groups or businesses?

Please let your local Councillor or the Clerk know your thoughts. The Council is funded by public funds — your money, so you should have a say in how the Council spends it!

Oswestry Rural Parish Council

www.oswestryrural-pc.gov.uk

PARISH COUNCILLORS

There are 15 Councillors representing the 5 wards.

MAESBURY WITH ASTON WARD

Tony Milner 01691 610742 Park Mill, Maesbury Marsh, SY10 8JD
Peter Richardson 01691 679932 Statefield, Back Lane, Maesbury, SY10 8AX
Karen Swindells 07849 675296 Rhine Gold, Ball Lane, Maesbury, SY10 8AT

MORDA WITH SWEENEY WARD

Janet Barlow 01691 658134 Bryn-y-Mapsis, Nant Lane, Morda, SY10 9AL
Freya Humphries 07572 623457 Old Sawley, Silverdale Drive, Trefonen, SY10 9DW
Phil May 01691 829064 Herons Wood, Nantmawr, SY10 9HH
Paul Milner 01691 657863 56 School Lane, Trefonen, SY10 9DY
Robert Milton 01691 676110 Penylan View, Coed y Go, SY10 9AE

RHYDYCROESAU WITH LLANFORDA WARD

Peter Davies 01691 652853 Summerhill, Racecourse Road, Oswestry, SY10 7PN
Shirley Jones 01691 652836 Lower Forest, Racecourse, Oswestry, SY10 7PR

SYCHTYN WARD

Elliot Roberts-Jones 01691 652843 Trefarclawdd Farm, Trefonen, SY10 9DE

TREFONEN WITH TREFLACH WARD

Pam Broomby 01691 653479 Dolwen, Pit Lane, Treflach, SY10 9HB
Arthur Brown 07532 233210 5 Milars Field, Morda, SY10 9PU
Tony Cheetham 01691 655673 The Old Malthouse, Trefonen, SY10 9DQ

Vacancy

Councillors invite residents in their ward to contact them to discuss any issues or matters of concern.

You can also contact the Parish Clerk, Carole Warner, Orchard Cottage, Rowe Lane, Welshampton, SY12 0QB 01948 710672 or email clerk@oswestryrural-pc.gov.uk

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Tuesday 19
December
Morda Village Hall

Tuesday 30 January
Maesbury WI Hut

Tuesday 27
February
Morda Village Hall

Tuesday 27 March
Maesbury WI Hut

M E E T I N G S

Oswestry Rural Parish Council meetings are held at 7pm on the last Tuesday of the month. Please check the website for locations.

Agendas for all meetings are available on the website and are placed on notice boards around the Parish at least 3 days before the meeting.

Members of the community are welcome to attend all meetings and there is time set by at the start to allow you to address the Council.

This newsletter can be made available in large print and audio tape. Please call 01948 710672 for further details.



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