USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AgeUK Shropshire Telford and Wrekin ext.231	01743 233123
BINS - Waste Management customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk	0345 6789007
CAXTON SURGERY https://www.caxtonsurgery.co.uk/index.aspx	01691 654646
Citizens Advice Bureau, Castle View	03444 991100
CORBET SCHOOL www.corbetschool.net	01939 260296
DIAL-A-RIDE, Volunteer Bureau and Qube Arts centre (main switchboard Osw.Community Action)	01691 656882
ELECTRICITY Scottish Power (Manweb as was) 105 or	0800 001 5400
KNOCKIN Medical Practice	01691 682203
NHS Out of Hours Service	111
Orthopaedic Hospital	01691 404000
PARISH COUNCIL email: westfeltonpc@gmail.com https://www.westfeltonparish.co.uk/	
POLICE, West Mercia Non-Emergency number	101
Oswestry Police Station	0300 333 3000
Safer Neighbourhood team—email: oswestryc.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk	
PRADOE CHURCH: Chairman: Andrew Kenyon	01691 610218
PUNCH BOWL	07543 040618
QUEENS HEAD RESTAURANT	01691 610255
RAIL STATION, GOBOWEN	01691 681010
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH: Fr Philip Holy Mass Saturday 6:30 pm, Sunday 10 am	01691 652248
RSPCA Shropshire Branch	07703 567935
SAMARITANS	116 123
SCAMS (Banks, money) - STOP SCAMS UK	159
SCHOOL – West Felton C E School	01691 610388
SHOP: West Felton Stores	01691 610863
SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	0345 6789000
Anti-Social Report Line	0345 6789020
Shrops Councillor: Cllr David Walker	01743 256863/ M 07484 541576
ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH: MINISTRY vacant	
Church Warden: Dr Michael Davie	01691 610612
ST. CHAD'S: Chapel Warden: Mrs Ann Hampson	01691 610845
VILLAGE HALL Bookings	01691 610629
WASP Problems Emergency number	01691 831251 / 07772 006994
WATER - Severn Trent Water Authority	0800 783 4444
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE: President: Rhian	07375 997 782

Year 34 NOVEMBER 2026

ROUND and ABOUT WEST FELTON

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Featuring the children of West Felton School

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Proceeds go to Royal British Legion Head Office Poppy Appeal



Lest We Forget



Father Christmas says he will be dropping by West Felton Village Hall on Saturday 28th November – will you be there?

See page 21

WHAT'S ON

Parish Council	Second Tues of the month, 7:30 **School Hall**
West Felton Walkers	10am Mondays, Punch Bowl **EXCEPT...see page 25**
Pilates Class	Tuesday mornings: 2 sessions: 9:30-10:30 & 10:45-11:45am Need to book online GYMCATCH. Phone: Abi 07904 456 368
Badminton	Every Tues evening: 8pm to 9:30pm. Village Hall
Tuesday Tots	Every term time Tuesday 9.15 - 10.30 West Felton School
Felton Flexors	Wednesday mornings 9:30am to 10:30am Village Hall
Table Tennis	Thursday 7:30pm Village Hall
WI	2nd Thursday of the month 7pm Village Hall
Short Mat Bowls	contact Glynnis on 01691 610336
Royal British Legion	**INFORMAL MEETINGS** 8pm Meeting, **PUNCH BOWL** first Monday of the month except Bank holidays then second Monday.

3 November	**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN TEAM MEETING Village Hall**	**Page**
5 November	**10am COFFEE MORNING Village Hall**	19
6 November	**7:30 POPPY CONCERT West Felton Village Hall**	
8 November	**10am REMEMBRANCE SERVICE St Michael's**	
11 November	**11am SERVICE at WAR MEMORIAL with the school children**	
27 November	**6pm CHRISTMAS TREE SWITCH ON**	**25**
28 November	**1pm WI CHRISTMAS FAIR**	**23**
16 December	**Village Hall CHRISTMAS BINGO**	

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Shropshire Council

3rd Thursday each month| *Next surgery 19 NOVEMBER*

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Cllr David Walker, Whittington Division: 01743 256863,
Email: CllrDavid.Walker@shropshire.gov.uk | M: 07484 541576

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Articles/advertisement amendments for inclusion in next issue to Editor by email (preferred) or phone

Last day for submission of copy and deadline for content changes 10th NOVEMBER 2026

Editor: Colleen Hughes

Tel 01691 610300

colleenhughes748@btinternet.com

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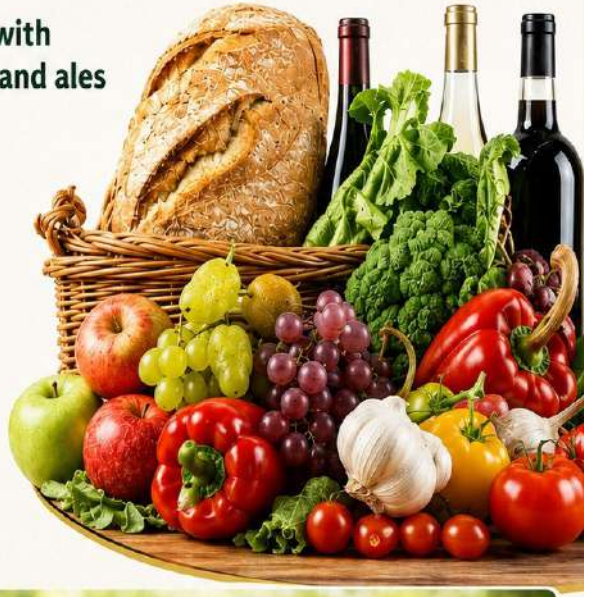
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Clerk to West Felton Parish Council: **Mrs Rosemary WOOD**

Parish Office: 5 Newtown Gardens

Baschurch, Shrewsbury SY4 2HF Tel 01939 262 881

Email: **see list.** Website: **www.westfelton-pc.gov.uk**

Chairman	Cllr John THORNHILL	07714 759 466
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Ozcan OZAGIR	07955 232 199
Cllr David CURTIS	01691 610 665 (Rep WF Primary School & SALC Area Committee)	
Cllr Alastair FORBES	01691 610 524	
Cllr Mick GREEN	07928 479 305	
Cllr Marian HESKETH	01691 610 441 (Rep for Village Hall).	
Cllr Chris JONES	01691 610 354 (Rep SALC Area Committee).	
Cllr Pat MABE	01691 610 400	
Cllr Ed NICHOLAS	01691 610 230 (Rep ABP committee)	
Cllr Neil SUMMERS	07523 318 005	
Cllr David WALKER	01691 897 117	

Our Shropshire Councillor : Cllr David Walker T: 01743 256863
Mobile: 07484 541576

Our Member of Parliament : Helen Morgan T: 01939 809387
E: helen.morgan.mp@parliament.uk

EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR PARISH CLERK AND COUNCILLORS

Rosemary Wood	**clerk@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
John Thornhill	**john.thornhill@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
Ozcan Ozagir	**ozcan.ozagir@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
David Walker	**david.walker@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
Marian Hesketh	**marian.hesketh@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
David Curtis	**david.curtis@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
Ed Nicholas	**edward.nicholas@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
Pat Mabe	**pat.mabe@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
Chris Jones	**chris.jones@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
Alastair Forbes	**alastair.forbes@westfelton-pc.gov.uk**
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WEST FELTON PARISH COUNCIL
MEETINGS 2026/27

10 November 2026	9 February 2027	11 May 2027
8 December 2026	9 March 2027	
12 January 2027	13 April 2027	

WEST FELTON PARISH COUNCIL
Report from Chairman Cllr John Thornhill

Public Participation Session

A number or residents from the Tedsmore area attended this session to express concerns about recent activities near their homes. The estate had previously made an application for change of use for the property to include weddings and other events. The Parish Council vigorously opposed this for a number of reasons including danger from increased traffic movements in the area if the application to use the 'holiday let' cottages for weddings and other similar events was agreed. The representatives provided a copy of a website page which stated 'Tedsmore Cottages is particularly suitable for' and listed a number of activities. It was also stated in an advert on page 30 in the October edition of the parish magazine that the venue and cottages were 'Perfect for weddings, birthdays' and other activities. Councillor David Walker has been in contact with the parishioners in the area and the matter has been reported to the Enforcement Officer. In his response he stated that:

'The planning department has made it very clear to the owner's agent that they should check whether planning/ licensing permissions will be required if they intend to hold any large-scale events or weddings. The information provided to the planning department is that there are no current plans to operate weddings or large-scale events. The planning assessment for a material change of use in planning is an assessment of matters of fact and degree. So, without knowing precise information regarding a proposed event, namely the scale, its frequency, its location, the particular buildings to be used for an event, whether the event is a separate commercial use or ancillary to the use of the Hall, it's not possible to provide information whether planning permission would be required or not.'

Residents were advised to provide any relevant evidence they had to the Enforcement Officer for his consideration as this is a matter for Shropshire Council and its officers.

Planning Applications

As I reported in the last edition, two planning applications for Rectory Gardens and Alma Close were before Shropshire Council Planning Committee for consideration on 22nd September.

(Continued on page 9)

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(Continued from page 7)

The relevant Council Officer made a recommendation that they both be approved. Prior to the meeting the group of Councillors making the decision made a visit to the two sites parking their minibus on the pavement at Alma Close which highlighted our concerns about the limited vehicular space in that area.

The Parish Council Chair and Lee Osborne as a local resident, were invited along with the Local Shropshire Councillor for the area to make representations.

I would like to thank those residents who attended both the visits and the meeting either in person or on-line and also lobbied the Councillors by email. We presented very strong cases based on the history of the sites and ecology and the fact that one site is entirely inside the Conservation Area. Section 72 of the Planning Act places a statutory duty to preserve or enhance this area's character. The Planning Officer's own report admitted this proposal would cause adverse impacts but claimed they are outweighed by housing delivery. When asked for evidence that we needed more houses they refused to answer – they seemed only to be interested in meeting their quota irrespective of damage to environment and whether the village had the infrastructure to sustain such developments.

In regard to the plan for 42 closely packed dwellings in Alma Close we stated it was out of character with the rest of the village along Holyhead Road and does not meet the requirement that such developments should be built within the legally designated SAMDev settlement boundaries, not in the Open Countryside which is the designation of the West Felton area. We pointed out that the Heritage Adviser explicitly warned that this proposal failed to respect or retain that unique historic green buffer.

'The Heritage Statement is weak on facts and contains not so much inaccuracies as a lack of knowledge about the origin and development of the settlement along the Holyhead Road, in particular the role of the coaching trade.'

They again ignored that completely. David Walker stated the neither plan provided the right homes in the right place, protected the village's heritage and character, or met local housing need.

David, Lee and I argued that both applications raised serious concerns about cumulative development, pressure on roads and services, drainage, heritage, and village character. David made sure these concerns were heard and argued that the plans must be judged alongside West Felton's recent growth – but it all fell on deaf ears.

Lee Osborne made a very comprehensive and strong case against the Alma Close development based on the current situation where flooding already occurs in that area due to lack of appropriate drainage and development. He argued that if another 42 houses are

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

built in that area without significant development there will be a serious prospect of severe flooding. The agent for the developers referred to a letter from Severn Trent which suggested they had no objections to the development. After significant pressure from the parish representatives the Chair allowed Lee to quote further from that letter from Severn Trent Water that indicated there was need for further development work before the application should be granted. Eventually, the members agreed to the application subject to Grampian conditions.

A Grampian condition is a negatively-worded planning condition that stops a development from starting or being occupied until a specific action has been completed. The required action usually involves land outside the applicant's direct ownership or control, or needs the consent of another organisation (such as a highway authority or a third-party landowner). Instead of illegally ordering an applicant to fix land they do not own (a positive condition), it is phrased as a prohibition: "No development shall commence until [specific action] has taken place. It is legally valid because a developer is not forced to build - if they cannot or do not fulfil the external requirement, they simply cannot implement the planning permission. The local planning authority can only impose one if there is a realistic, reasonable prospect that the required off-site work or agreement will actually happen within the lifespan of the permission.

Lee has now sought further details from Severn Trent Water and the Parish Council will support him by also writing to them for details of the proposed Grampian condition.

We also raised the serious issue of the significant increased traffic if these developments were approved and the impact this would have on the Queen's Head Junction.

The strong response showed how much residents care about the village. These decisions show why the new Local Plan must direct development to suitable places and properly consider infrastructure, services, heritage, environmental limits and genuine housing need.

The Parish Council agrees with David Walker's serious resentment that the last Shropshire Council's Local Plan was withdrawn as unsound after poor resourcing: 5 staff worked on it, compared with 25 on the previous plan. This has exposed Shropshire and the village to the Government's massive mandatory building target. Last year, nearly 1,400 houses were built in Shropshire. The current Government target is 2,046 homes per year. Random, unplanned growth has a lasting impact on the sustainability of communities such as ours.

Shropshire Local Transport Plan Consultation

As part of our objections to the planning applications we raised the issue that our transport support is very lim-

(Continued on page 11)



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(Continued from page 10)

ited and we now find out that it might well be reduced further. There is an online questionnaire and members agreed to individually complete it. I would urge all members of parish to go on line with the link below and complete it to express our concerns about public transport in our village.

https://getinvolved.shropshire.gov.uk/consultations/shropshire-local-transport-plan/

Shropshire Council

Shropshire Councillor Report

Cllr David Walker

Planning decisions in West Felton

Many residents will share my disappointment that planning permission was granted for Alma Close and land north of Old Rectory Gardens. Neither provides the right homes in the right place, protects the village's heritage and character, or meets local housing need.

Both applications raised serious concerns about cumulative development, pressure on roads and services, drainage, heritage, and village character. I made sure these concerns were heard and argued that the plans must be judged alongside West Felton's recent growth. Thank you to everyone who contributed. The Nursery site is still to be decided, and the wider threat remains until we have a Neighbourhood Plan, or the Local Plan is made.

The strong response showed how much residents care about the village. These decisions show why the new Local Plan must direct development to suitable places and properly consider infrastructure, services, heritage, environmental limits and genuine housing need.

I remain angry that the last council's Local Plan was withdrawn as unsound after poor resourcing: 5 staff worked on it, compared with 25 on the previous plan. This has exposed Shropshire and the village to the Government's massive mandatory target. Last year, nearly 1,400 houses were built in Shropshire. The current Government target is 2,046 homes per year. Random, unplanned growth has a lasting impact on communities.

The New Shropshire Local Plan

Shropshire Council has started its new Local Plan after completing the Government's readiness self-assessment. More than 800 consultation responses are being assessed for the next stage.

My priority is a fair assessment of rural communities such as West Felton. Housing numbers must be considered with roads, drainage, schools, health services, public transport, heritage and infrastructure capacity.

Being close to the A5 should not, by itself, make West Felton a highly sustainable place for continued speculative growth. Access to services, jobs, healthcare and realistic alternatives to car travel must also count.

(Continued on page 13)

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(Continued from page 11)

Changes To How Planning Decisions Are Made

New mandatory Government rules on whether officers or committees decide planning applications take effect on 31 October. We objected last year, but the Government ignored many objections from across the country. The rules centralise decisions and reduce democratic accountability.

A councillor's call-in request or local objection will no longer automatically take an application to committee. It must now first pass a national gateway test instead.

Residents and parish councils can still comment. Material issues—including highways, drainage, heritage, ecology, landscape, residential amenity and planning policy—must still be considered. Shropshire's current agenda-setting process will become the new formal gateway system.

Strengthening Planning Services

Planning Services have changed staffing, with new Planning Enforcement leadership and revised Development Management responsibilities.

Two experienced permanent planners have been recruited to strengthen capacity, improve performance and reduce reliance on costly temporary support.

New Estate Road Adoptions

A dedicated team is tackling the long backlog of estate adoptions on newer developments. This includes the surveys, inspections and legal work needed before roads are adopted. The team has grown from 2 to 5 officers, including team manager post which had been vacant since 2015. We are working with developers to improve performance at their end too.

Some roads still need more developer work. Others depend on water-company acceptance of sewers, pumping stations or drainage. The council is revising its approach for new applications while progressing older cases.

We committed to adopt 75 estates by Christmas. Since April, 33 estates have been adopted. 62 are now on track for adoption by Christmas—an increase of 20.

Highways investment and council transformation

Highways faced years of budget cuts, too little preventative maintenance, reduced staffing and limited senior strategic capacity. The council is reviewing the service, including the balance between in-house and contracted work, so funding gives better value and more visible results. This year, we increased preventative repairs, such as Queens Head to Rednal. Next year, the prevention budget will rise by a further 25%. Prevention is better than cure.

This is part of the council's wider transformation and improvement programme. New governance will strengthen accountability, financial controls and budget monitoring. Transformation aims to improve services, cut costs and minimise income. Changes must support the council's long-term financial health while improving your

(Continued on page 15)

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(Continued from page 13)

experience.

The senior officer team is being rebuilt to create a leaner, more focused and financially sustainable council. Senior management restructuring may concern some residents, but it aims to improve outcomes, income and capacity. Shropshire Council's senior management costs substantially less than 1% of the budget. A typical similar-sized business spends 3–5% on management.

Broader Council and Local Work

Shropshire Council has made early progress in stabilising its finances, but major pressures remain. We have reduced government borrowing by £30m this year. Further work to reduce costs and increase income continues under close scrutiny from Government and the Improvement Board.

The Local Transport Plan consultation is open until 16 November 2026. This is a critical document that needs to underpin the Local Plan. Please respond here: **https://getinvolved.shropshire.gov.uk/consultations/shropshire-local-transport-plan/**

Shropshire's SEND Reform Plan has been approved by Government, unlocking access to around £41 million of indicative funding. The programme aims to improve services for children with special educational needs while helping tackle long-standing financial pressures in the SEND system.

The council is reviewing its Housing Allocations Policy, which determines how social and affordable homes are prioritised and allocated. The review aims to ensure the system remains fair and reflects current housing pressures, with demand for affordable housing continuing to significantly exceed supply.

National Highways have approved the principal of solar lights being attached to The Avenue bridge - subject to Highline Electrical confirming their safe method of undertaking the work. I have also chased Highline about the new streetlight on The Avenue. No word yet on resurfacing Fox Lane footbridge. I have been told that Holyhead Road through the village is to get some much-needed attention soon, but there is no time frame for that yet.

I will keep pressing for West Felton's fair share of attention and investment. I will continue to strongly represent the village as the new Local Plan develops.●

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The Corbet School has an excellent reputation and is consistently one of the best performing secondary schools in Shropshire. The Trustees work closely with the Head teacher and her management team to help improve school performance.
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Message from Yoland at Ruyton XI Towns:

"Notice of the Pet Service at Leaton Sunday 27th September, reminds me of the service for mules at Pradoe Church, West Felton."

MULES IN THE BURMA CAMPAIGN

John Kenyon Burma Star and Military Cross.

Colonel John Kenyon fought in the 1944 battle through the Burmese jungle with no land communications.

John's unit, as part of the 7th Indian Division, was involved in intense fighting in Burma from 1943 to the end of the campaign. As well as John's Indian Mountain Regiment there were men involved from across the British Empire, including East and West Africa. The lack of transport infrastructure placed an emphasis on military engineering and air transport to move and supply troops, and evacuate the wounded.

The only communication with the outside world was by aeroplane and their valuable cargo of mules, these were loaded and then parachuted into the jungle to supply the army with food, medical supplies and armaments.

This gave John Kenyon a lasting affection for these sturdy animals so much so, that in 2006 he held a service to give thanks for all those animals who had accompanied them through the jungle and kept the army supplied.

See picture of the mules at Pradoe Church 2006



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COULD YOU HELP WEST FELTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CONTINUE TO THRIVE?

West Felton CE Primary School

Jo Lawson, Chair of Governors,
West Felton CE Primary School

2025/2026 was a fantastic year for West Felton School, with so much to be celebrated and exciting plans already underway for 2026/2027.

The school's Local Governing Body are all volunteers and are very proud to be part of the school and continue to strive to ensure the best outcomes for all.

If you have an interest in supporting our school to be the best it can be, please consider joining us as a Governor.

Who can become a Governor?

No specialist qualifications are needed, and people from many different backgrounds volunteer for the role. You do not need to have any current or previous connection with the school. Enthusiasm, commitment, and an interest in education are the most important qualities.

The Local Governing Body will:

- seek to understand and question how the school is led and managed, acting as a critical friend to the Headteacher and school leaders to ensure the school is fulfilling its ethos, vision and strategy and its role within the wider educational trust;
- act as the panel, as required, when reviewing the Headteacher's decisions on various committees, as required;
- be the consultative body for the school's stakeholders;
- represent the school's stakeholders;
- forge links with the community;
- as a church school, monitor and support the Christian distinctiveness and church ethos of the school;
- act as an ambassador for the school.

(Continued on page 19)

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(Continued from page 37)

were in very good evidence, namely the Coal, Willow, Long tail and Great tit. The Pied and Yellow wagtail were also seen in good numbers. Many hundreds of Starlings were always around, also Blackbirds, Thrushes and the homely Sparrow. Ring Doves and Pigeons were very much in evidence. The doves are increasing very much in the area. The Pigeons did not completely ruin the gardens this year, another very good sign that food was plentiful. A pair of Nuthatches and several Tree Creepers stayed throughout the winter in the village close to Threadneedle Lane and the surrounding area, a very rare sight and a sign of the mild climate condition this Winter. Migratory birds were also seen. Fieldfare were particularly noted in quite large groups, also the Redwing was frequently seen. Early in the year seven Dartford Warblers en route was a most unusual sight. Although food disappeared fairly rapidly from bird tables, the birds did not appear to be ravenously hungry. Only the birds that normally feed from our scraps were around, not the ones who in 1979 joined their feathered friends because of the extreme shortage of their normal and natural food, an excellent sign that natural food was abundant in 1980.

Nuthatch



To be continued

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10-12noon



Thursday, 5th NOVEMBER

In the village hall.
£1.50 entry includes tea/coffee biscuits. Bacon baps £1 extra.

(Continued from page 17)

Local Governing Body meetings are generally held every half term on Tuesday evenings and should last no more than 2 hours. Governors are also encouraged to visit school at least once a term to learn more about the way the school works.

More detailed information on the role of a Governor is available on the National Governance Association's website *(Types of governor & trustee | National Governance Association; Interested in becoming a school governor or trustee? | National Governance Association).*

Please consider whether you might be interested in the opportunity to support and make a significant difference to West Felton School to help us thrive.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss what is involved, please do not hesitate to contact me **jo.lawson@wef.mmat.co.uk.**

If you would prefer to have a conversation, just send me your number and I will give you a call. ●

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From the West Felton WI Doomsday Book, 1980.

CONSERVATION

by Pearl Bliss

1980 has been a particularly good year in the West Felton Parish with regard to the conservation of the flora and fauna of the area. Many people seems to be aware of the need to protect what we have now for future generations.

Due to the economic climate of the country and the county in particular, very little is being done in the way of maintenance to the hedgebanks. This has played a major role, though unwittingly, to the preservation of all aspects of the flora and fauna. Hedgebanks are being cut so infrequently, inefficiently and inexpertly that it has proved to be a blessing in disguise and has been the greatest boon that the wildlife and flowers have seen for many years.

Plants are flourishing, being allowed to germinate correctly, shed their seed and so multiply, giving food and habitat to numerous tiny creatures, insects, mammals and birds.

The trees came into their own during the Spring and Summer and although a few were seen to be dead, most trees in the area are flourishing. This is a very good sign when so many trees have been reported as dying of disease and so many more are often being needlessly destroyed. New trees have appeared in garden and orchards, a sign that we have listened to the experts and that we are alive to the threat to our ancient heritage.

Ancient trees similar to the ones growing in the grounds of the present derelict house, namely The Nursery on the main A5 road, are being looked after. The magnificent Yew Tree in these grounds has a preservation order attached to it. This is essential if we are to hold onto our od, but still hearty trees. Fortunately, West Felton inhabitants seem to be in the minority when it comes to felling of trees without rhyme or reason.

The mild winter experienced at the beginning of the year was very beneficial to the mammals and birds. There was an abundance of food for them. The birds in particular were very fortunate and a great variety of the species that had been seriously hit by the previous year's cruel winter had recovered sufficiently in numbers to promise a good future for the bird population. Birds noted at the start of the year in goodly numbers, and looking remarkably fit were that much-loved favourite, the Robin, a welcome sight – a pleasing number of wrens was also a welcome sight as they were badly hit in 1979. Milk bottle tops ripped off and the cream only half the usual depth announced the blue tit was busy and surviving very well. All the members of the tit family

(Continued on page 39)

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From Eileen Hanmer and the committee

27th November 6pm

WEST FELTON CARNIVAL COMMITTEE CHRISTMAS TREE SWITCH-ON

Hello everyone

Well, I can't believe I'm writing this with the weather so good, but by the time you get this magazine it will only be a month away from our famous "Switch On" of our Christmas Tree at the entrance to Alma Close.

Friday November 27th at 6pm is the date. We are hoping we shall have a few members of the Porthywaen Band to provide the music for Carols.

To most people this is the start of the Christmas Celebrations in the village.

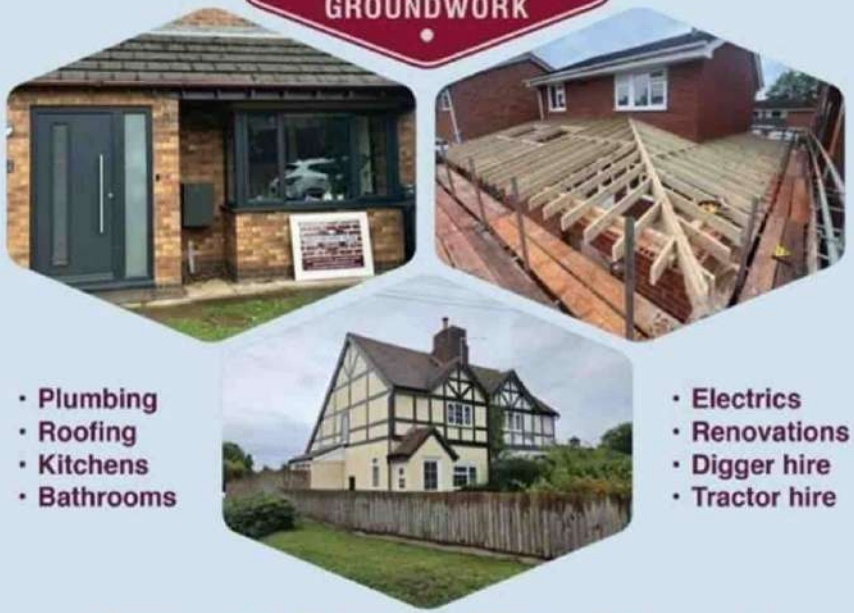
For newcomers, most of the village usually turns out for mulled wine, mince pies, cake, and a good community feeling so, please all join us. Thank You.



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Up the Garden Path with Topiarius

Autumn clear up

The clocks have changed so no chance of gardening after dinner. In fact, it is the start of the months when we have to expect the weather to interfere with gardening at just about any time.

Hence, the necessity of making good use of all fine days when the temperature is above freezing. My list for November is surprisingly long, a lot of which can be attributed to the amount of clearing up there is to do at this time of year.

It starts with the last cutting of grass and bringing any remaining tender plants inside. The clearing is first to remove the tomato plants, hoe the bed and wash the glasshouse, the space then being used for borderline hardy plants and those in small pots. Before bringing plants in I like to sprinkle a little lime on the bed and spray the glasshouse with bug killer and fungicide. Next, it is the asparagus to be cut down, grapes pruned and floribunda roses shortened. A start is made on raking and hoeing the vegetable patches (perhaps digging if you prefer). We have just a few plants outside that are best covered against frost, a lot would be too much like hard work. This can include dahlia tubers as we take a chance and leave most in the ground over winter.

Two ongoing jobs are the winter pruning and any building or rearrangement project you have, for which early progress is very helpful if there are spells of bad weather later. Indoors, a November job is to order soil conditioner for spreading to start in December. I think I have mentioned before that rather than visits to garden centres I prefer to buy all my year's need of composts, fertiliser, lawn sand, bark chips etc from a horticultural merchant and have it delivered, probably in January.

The October indoor job of ordering seeds was completed but a few changes had to be made because of some varieties not being available from my chosen suppliers. We will be trying Sweetcorn Rising Sun, Brussels sprouts Cryptus, Cabbage Vertus, Garlic Germidor and Nicotiana Roulette for the first time. We used a total of 5 suppliers for our requirements which included a specialist seed potato merchant and trying Thomas Etty for some of the traditional varieties.

It was John Grimshaw who said "Gardening is all about the future." Nothing could be more true. Gardeners are always looking to next year or even further ahead, and that is something that we will certainly be doing in November as we contemplate the projects we have in hand, the new plantings and the rosy thoughts of what will be better next time. In this line of thought, we have a plaque that reads "You don't stop gardening when you get old. You get old when you stop gardening." This is a mantra I keep in mind when many jobs are getting physically more difficult and taking longer.●



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All the fun of the fair

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To find out more about Derwen College Christmas Fayre or to book the Elf Training Trail, visit www.derwen.ac.uk.

Derwen College in Gobowen is a specialist college for young adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The college offers students the opportunity to learn new skills in real work environments and to learn life skills which will enable them to live as independently as possible.

Visit the College's Garden Centre and Gift Shop, The Orangery Restaurant, Walled Garden Café, The Vintage Advantage charity shop, and Hotel 751 training hotel.

Derwen College has been awarded a Queen's Award for Enterprise for Promoting Opportunity.

10am–4pm Saturday 28 November





Gobowen | Ludlow | Telford | Walford
www.derwen.ac.uk

Derwen College

Santa's helpers bring new Elf Training Trail

to Derwen College Christmas Fayre

Santa's helpers are out in force at Derwen College's Christmas Fayre this November, ready to welcome families to a seasonal adventure packed with fun, crafts and plenty of Christmas cheer.

Derwen College's Christmas Fayre, from 10am–4pm on Saturday 28 November,

will feature a brand-new Elf Training Trail where youngsters can meet a lively host of elves and learn festive skills before visiting Santa and Mrs Christmas.

Along the way to the grotto, children will walk through The Enchanted Christmas Garden where they can write a letter to Santa and try their hand at elf skills, including toy stuffing and reindeer food packaging. They can then enjoy Christmas crafts in the dedicated activity tent before meeting Santa and Mrs Christmas in the grotto and receiving their gift.

Tickets cost £20 per participant, which includes up to two parents/carers (children must be accompanied by at least one parent/carer).

There are seven slots for the Elf Training Trail from 10.30am to 2.30pm, with space for eight participants on each. Booking in advance is essential **at www.derwen.ac.uk.**

Visitors to the Christmas Fayre can also enjoy live music and browse artisan stalls offering unique gifts, crafts, decorations and treats from local vendors at the popular Christmas Market. College stalls and tombolas will add to the festive attractions.

Derwen College's shops and eateries will also be brimming with festive goodies. Seasonal food will be available to buy in the Walled Garden Café, while the Garden Centre and Gift Shop will take orders for locally grown fresh-cut or potted Christmas trees in a range of sizes, as well as greenery and wreaths. Visitors can also browse bargain-priced pre-loved clothing, accessories and homeware in The Vintage Advantage charity shop.

As well as enjoying a fun family day out, visitors will be helping to raise funds for Derwen College Charity, supporting extra experiences and opportunities for students with SEND as they develop skills, confidence and independence.

WEST FELTON VILLAGE HALL







WEST FELTON VILLAGE HALL NEEDS A NEW KITCHEN!

This is going to cost a considerable amount of money. The committee is hoping you will help in any way you can to help us achieve this by AUGUST 2027.

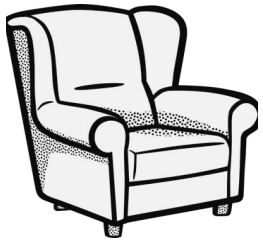
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WEST FELTON WALKING GROUP

Walk leaders:-
Iain Lambie 01691 900 539
Hilary Iles 01691 610 707
John & Eileen Hanmer 01691 610 629

We meet at 10.00 am Mondays at the Punch Bowl car park *EXCEPT* on the first Monday of the month when departure is 9:30am to allow time to travel to our chosen destination for the away day walk. New members always welcome.



OCTOBER AWAY WALK

A lovely Monday away stroll around Ifton Meadows nature reserve in St Martin's. Walk started from Miners Memorial garden and statue opposite Stans supermarket .

16 folk descended the grass paths behind Stans, down to Clarkes Lane with wonderful views towards Chirk and Welsh hills. Right down lane and along to nature reserve entrance and old coal truck and visitors' boards.

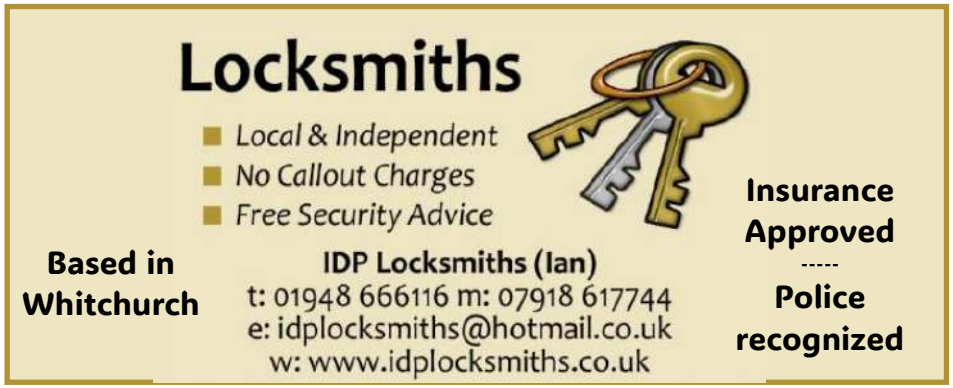
We skirted the edges of the reserve and dropped down through woodland to the hamlet of Glynn Morlas and along past no 11 turning up along Shropshire way into woodland and a Broadway alongside a stream.

Returned to reserve entrance via grassy knoll and lovely path along contours with handy benches for breathers and chat. Back along Clarkes Lane and up across meadows to Stans and great tea, cakes and rolls.

A lovely walk in fine warm weather with views and differing terrain with no stiles !









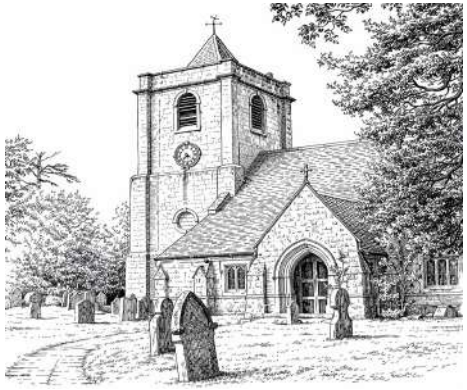
WEST FELTON CARNIVAL 2026

Carnival Budget Overview	Income	Costs	Balance
Carnival Items	£ 6,349.10	-£ 761.29	£ 5,587.81
Entertainment & Prizes		-£ 1,759.50	-£ 1,759.50
Operational Costs		-£ 2,681.65	-£ 2,681.65
	£ 6,349.10	**-£ 5,202.44**	**£ 1,146.66**

Carnival Items	Income	Costs	Balance
Gate	£ 1,205.00		£ 1,205.00
Bar	£ 1,736.10	£ 761.29	£ 974.81
Bric Brac	£ 105.10		£ 105.10
Bottle Tombola	£ 244.90		£ 244.90
Tombola	£ 221.00		£ 221.00
Grand Draw	£ 1,442.00		£ 1,442.00
Number Board	£ 150.00		£ 150.00
Auction	£ 95.00		£ 95.00
Concessions	£ 370.00		£ 370.00
Stalls	£ 280.00		£ 280.00
Sponsorship/ Donations	£ 500.00		£ 500.00
Other Costs			
Entertainment	£ -	£ 1,435.00	-£ 1,435.00
Prizes		£ 324.50	-£ 324.50
Operational Costs		£ 2,681.65	-£ 2,681.65
Totals	**£ 6,349.10**	**£ 5,202.44**	**£ 1,146.66**

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

Michael Davie



Although Harvest Thanksgiving is now a distant memory, I should like to record the gratitude of the Church to all those who took part in the festival. Almost 70 people sat down to a good meal at the Harvest Supper– for which thanks to all those whose hard work made it so enjoyable. Harvest services were held both in St Michael's and St Chad's and the produce distributed to various food charities.

Whilst we think of harvest festivals as a recent institution, thanking a higher being for the success of the crops goes back to pagan times. The Old Testament goes further and exhorts the people to bring the First Fruits to the House of the Lord, as in Exodus: "The…. First fruits of thy land.. bring into the house of the LORD"; and more specifically, in Leviticus, the priest is nominated "…..then ye shall bring the First Fruits of your harvest unto the priest." The latter instruction emphasized the priest and as such was noted by the Christian church.

Originally the time when the First Fruits were brought to the church was Lammas, once an important day in the Christian calendar, now almost universally overlooked. Lammas is derived from "loaf mass" since it was the custom to bring loaves baked from the new harvest to church. Lammas occurred on the 1st August and marked the end of the haymaking season and the start of the corn harvest. This year the timing might have been appropriate, but the harvest often begins later than August 1st round here. (In the Eastern Orthodox Church the 'First Fruits' tradition is kept during the Feast of the Transfiguration, held on August 6th). Cranmer initially may have overlooked the importance of Lammas since it was not mentioned in the 1549 prayer book but appeared in the 1552 prayer book.

First Fruits were a proportion of the first year's income of a clergyman which was paid to the Pope along with a tenth of the income in subsequent years. When Henry VIII split from Rome, these payments were transferred to the Crown. During the reign of Queen Anne, Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, persuaded the Queen the use the funds, which became incorporated into Queen Anne's Bounty, to augment the income of poor clergy. Queen Anne's bounty was amalgamated with the funds from the redemption of tithes in the mid-20th century and now form part of Church Commissioner's funds. The practice of First Fruits, tithing and glebe was abolished around the

(Continued on page 29)

(Continued from page 28)

same time.

The first modern Harvest Thanksgiving took place on 1st October 1843 in Morewenstow in North Cornwall. The instigator of the practice was Rev Robert Stephen Hawker. He was the son of a surgeon in Plymouth, who later took Holy Orders and went to serve in a parish in Cornwall. Robert was left in the hands of his grandfather – also a priest. An aunt paid for him to attend a grammar school, after which he tried his hand at law but found that boring. At the age of 20yr he went up to Pembroke College, and later Magdalen College, Oxford. In the same year he married a lady 40 years older than himself who helped to pay for his studies at Oxford. Whilst there he won the Newdigate prize for poetry. After graduation he was ordained in 1831 and was installed as vicar of Morewenstow in 1834. The parish had been without a vicar for almost 100 years.

Once installed at Morewenstow he found much to keep himself busy. He wrote poetry which received a favourable mention from Lord Tennyson and, finding the existing vicarage uninhabitable, built himself and his wife a new one. Whilst building the house he and his wife lived in a cottage at Combe. It is still there today and is looked after by the Landmark Trust. He had some eccentricities. He excommunicated his cat for killing a mouse on Sunday. He used to pretend he was a mermaid and, dressed up as one, went out to a rock in the Atlantic where he sang songs. He was nevertheless well regarded by his parishioners. He ministered to all his flock "including smugglers and seafarers" helping shipwrecked sailors and burying those who had died.

The early 1840's were known as the hungry forties. 1843 may have been an above average year. Nevertheless people were as he wrote "crushed down, my poor people, ground down with poverty, with a wretched wage". Three years after Hawker's Harvest Festival, Robert Peel repealed the Corn Laws, thereby liberalising trade and arguably setting Britain on the path to prosperity.

His first marriage lasted 40 years and a year after her death he married a Polish governess, 40 years his junior. He died in 1875 and converted to Roman Catholicism on his deathbed. Not everyone approved of him and his obituary in the Church Times described him as a "blasphemous rogue and scoundrel".●

The Afterlife

A churchwarden dies and goes to heaven. St. Peter meets him at the Pearly Gates and says, "Welcome! Because of your decades of faithful service looking after the fabric of the building and managing difficult curates, you get a special VIP tour."

St. Peter takes him past beautiful mansions, rolling green fields, and crystal-clear rivers.

Churchwarden (looking around nervously): "It's absolutely stunning, St. Peter. Truly paradise."

St. Peter: "Is something wrong? You look worried."

Churchwarden: "Well... I just can't help noticing all these stained-glass windows and gold paving stones. Who does the risk assessment up here, and what is your annual budget for dry rot?"