



## **DONNINGTON AND MUXTON PARISH COUNCIL**

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*Donnington Clocktower lit up in blue in honour of the NHS and Key Workers during the Covid-19 pandemic*

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*Annual Report 2020/2021*

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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2020/2021

There can only be one way to begin the Chair's report for the last year by saying 'what a year'. In April 2020, when we were putting the annual report together, the first lockdown was a mere month old, and although we were naturally concerned and anxious about infection rates and the effects on the NHS, we were reasonably confident that restrictions would be lifted in due course and that life would be back to normal by the summer. Little did we know then that we would be living under similar restrictions 12 months on and that all our lives would have been affected so much for so long.

This is also a report I wasn't due to write. We began the year with Councillor Phil Loughlin as Chairman. Unfortunately, due to work commitments, Phil resigned his seat on the council. I should like to take this opportunity to thank Phil for his Chairmanship, and his hard work in the community.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Parish council team for keeping the parish functioning under extremely difficult circumstances. I should also like to thank my fellow Councillors for the incredible way they have adapted to new ways of working. 12 months ago, few, if any of us had ever attended a virtual meeting, and yet we have continued to meet every month, via Microsoft Teams ensuring that the important work of the council can continue.

We were very sad that Councillor Clive Mason decided to step down from the Parish Council this year. Clive has been an incredible Councillor over more years than I think even he cares to remember and has worked tirelessly on behalf of the community. We miss his contributions at meetings but hope he will be able to take the chance to spend more time with his family when restrictions allow.

When this report is published at our annual meeting, we will have 3 new Parish councillors following the elections on May 6th – two in Donnington and one in Muxton. I know myself and the whole council will welcome these new councillors and look forward to working with them and being able to meet together as we hold our first face to face council meeting in a year!

Although we haven't been able to organise any events over the last year, we were able to mark Remembrance Sunday, although with only one representative each from the Parish and Borough councils, plus the Army, Police and Scouts. Thanks as always to Reverend Paula for a beautiful, simplified service.

As life slowly returns to normal, we are hopeful that we will be able to organise some events for the coming year.

Returning to the pandemic, the Council was delighted that we could play our part in the fight against Covid by allowing Turreff hall to be used as a vaccination centre. We know that residents really value having this resource at the heart of the community, and I should like to thank the whole team from Donnington Pharmacy for the amazing job they have done – not only with the vaccination centre but for their work throughout the pandemic.

Last and by no means least, I should like to pay tribute to all the Covid heroes; those working in the NHS, all key workers, volunteers, all those who kept life going – council workers for example, those who helped others, however small you thought it was – it would have meant a great deal, and everyone who worked from home, stayed at home, and did everything they could to keep us all safe.

Here's hoping that restrictions continue to be lifted, and here's to a return to a more normal life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Dugmore'.

Mrs Lisa Dugmore,  
Chairman Donnington and Muxton Parish Council

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has dominated events over the last year. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 the Country was ordered into lockdown to help prevent the spread of this virus and as such, the Parish Council staff had to resort to working from home and Councillors adapt to holding remote Council meetings using the Microsoft Teams App.

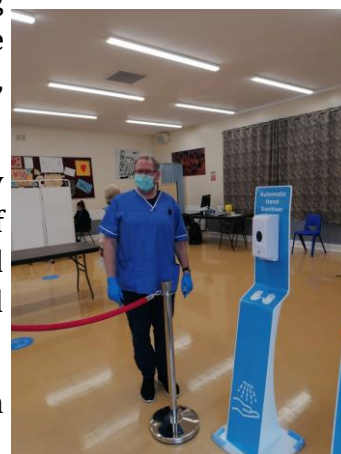
The Parish Council wanted to ensure that its community was not left without access to the support they needed and created a leaflet signposting information on local support for vulnerable residents, senior citizens, carers, families with disabled children and anyone who was simply finding life tough during lockdown. Within the leaflet was details of local businesses willing to deliver to those classed as highly vulnerable residents unable to leave their homes.

The Parish Council would like to thank the 25 volunteers that helped distribute these leaflets throughout the parish and the Police Crime and Commissioner for the Grant of £149 to cover the cost of the leaflets.

During April 2020, the Parish Council organised a 5-day challenge to try and encourage people to look after their mental health and wellbeing during these difficult times. The coronavirus outbreak meant that life changed for everyone and caused people to feel anxious, stressed, worried, sad, bored, lonely and frustrated.

The challenge encouraged people to learn a new skill, stay connected, practice gratitude, carry out random acts of kindness and focus on time for themselves. The Parish Council believes that people within the community found it useful and experienced a positive impact on their mental health.

In March 2021 Turreff Hall became a Covid-19 vaccination centre.



*Pictured is Pharmacist and Councillor N Dugmore at Turreff Hall on its' first day as the vaccination centre.*

### Councillor Vacancies

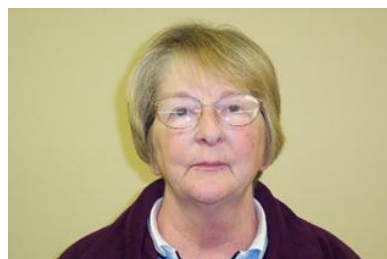
Due to the pandemic, all elections were postponed to 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. During 2020/2021 three vacancies arose within the Parish Council which will be filled during the May 2021 elections. Two vacancies are in the Donnington West Ward and one in the Muxton Ward. The vacancies arose due to the sad passing of Councillor Mrs E A Clare in January 2020 and the resignation of Councillors C Mason in October and P Loughlin, who was also the Chairman, in February 2021. The Parish Council would like to thank them for all their support to the community over the years as Councillors and wish Clive and Phil all the best for the future.

## Appointments

Due to the resignation of Councillor Phil Loughlin in February 2021, Councillor Mrs Lisa Dugmore was duly elected as **Chairman of the Parish Council** at the Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021. At the same meeting Councillor Adrian Lawrence was elected as **Vice-Chairman**.



## Mrs P A Green



It was with great sadness that we had to announce the passing of Mrs Pat Green on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020. Pat, along with her husband Brian, had been a Parish Councillor for many years as well as having served as Chairman of the Council. She served the Community up until 2015 when she stood down as a Councillor at the elections due to ill health.

## Armed Forces Covenant

Donnington & Muxton Parish Council became Shropshire's 100th signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant. It is committed to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. It recognises the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country. The Council is also delighted to announce that on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020 it was awarded the bronze award from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS).



## Staff Training

Whilst working from home, Councillors and staff have attended numerous training sessions provided virtually through different media such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Some of these include Fundamentals for Councillors, Risk Assessment Training, Introduction to town planning from a Local Council perspective. The Assistant Clerk, Katie Eshelby, attended many courses and seminars involving accounts and VAT whilst studying for the Association of Accounting Technician Level 4 qualification. In December 2020, the Community Events and Engagement Officer, Holly Westwood passed the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) which is a Parish/Town Clerk qualification. Well done everyone for continuing your personal development during this difficult time.



## **Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 Telford & Wrekin Council informed the Parish Council that it was now happy to proceed with the Regulation 16 stage of the process of producing the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This involves the Borough Council consulting with local residents asking them for their comments and opinions on the document. The consultation process was due to end on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021 but due to issues with the hyperlink and the period of purdah prior to the forthcoming elections in May 2021, it has now been extended to 14<sup>th</sup> May. The expected timeline is as follows:

|                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Appointment of examiner        | week ending 7 May 2021 |
| Anticipated Examination Period | Mid-May to June 2021   |

The Examiner's report will be published, and the Council will consider its recommendations and determine whether a referendum will be held. This determination is likely to be made at the meeting of the Borough Council Cabinet in July. If the outcome of the Examiner's report and the Council's considerations is that the draft Plan be submitted to a referendum, the referendum will take place later in the year, anticipated to be in the Autumn but this will be confirmed as soon as possible.

## **Emergency Climate Change**

At its Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021, Donnington and Muxton Parish Council declared a Climate Change Emergency. To facilitate the reduction of carbon emissions, the Parish Council will:

- Commit to becoming a carbon-neutral organisation by 2030.
- Create a carbon audit and action plan for achieving this aim.
- Where relevant include carbon emissions implications in officers' reports.
- Seek ways to facilitate and encourage its community in reducing direct and indirect carbon dioxide emissions and to become resilient to changes caused by the changing climate.

It will work with the Borough Council and other Parish and Town Councils to help reduce carbon emissions throughout Telford & Wrekin.

## **Census 2021**

The Parish Council worked with Nicola Mewis, the Census Engagement Manager Telford & Wrekin, to help promote the Census 2021 throughout the Borough. The Census has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941. Information from the digital-first census will help decide how services are planned and funded in your local area. This could mean the provision of doctors' surgeries, housing or new bus routes. The date by which the census 2021 had to be completed by was 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Help and assistance was provided in helping local residents complete the questionnaire.

## **Community Events and Engagement Officer (CEEEO)**

On 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020 the Parish Council's CEEEO Holly Westwood, her husband and daughter, welcomed their baby son/brother into the world. The Parish Council would like to congratulate them all on the birth of their baby boy.

## Unadopted Development Sites/Stewardship Fees

Due to the poor condition of some areas of the parish, the Parish Council has been working tirelessly with other Parish/Town Councils and Telford & Wrekin Council to ensure that developers and management companies improve and maintain their sites to a high standard. As a result, work has now been done identifying all the unadopted roads across the borough by Parish area. Borough Council Officers are now looking to engage individually with Town and Parish Councils, so they are aware of the timescales for adoption and causes for delay/inability for the Borough Council to adopt these sites.

There are currently around 178 outstanding agreements throughout Telford to come forward to be adopted.

With regard to purchasing new houses, residents are not always aware of what stewardship/maintenance fees are when they purchase a property, so it has been agreed to create a leaflet explaining what the charges are for and what their Council tax covers. The leaflet, "Stewardship and Buying a Property", is currently in its draft version awaiting comments from Parish and Town Councils.

The Parish Council will endeavour to continue its pursuit in ensuring any new development sites, and those not already adopted by Telford & Wrekin Council, are maintained by the management companies to a high standard.

## EVENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

### VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

On Friday 8th May 2020, Britain commemorated the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. Although the Parish Council, along with other Councils across the country, had to make the disappointing decision to postpone their VE Day event, the occasion was still celebrated by members of the community, sharing their pride and honouring the men and women of WW2. Donnington and Muxton Parish Council still commemorated the event...



The Clerk and his wife in full VE Day attire and Ration Baking from our Events Officer to remember those lives lost to save others.





## **“We Don’t Buy Crime” and SmartWater Ltd**

In August 2019, the Parish Council teamed up with West Mercia Police’s “We Don’t Buy Crime” and SmartWater Ltd to provide kits to residents identified as living in a crime hot spot within the parish. The Parish Council purchased 148 SmartWater Kits with the additional help of £1,000 from Councillor Adrian Lawrence’s Borough Ward Fund. As it reached the target for Smartwater safety kits registered in the identified area, West Mercia Police teamed together with Smartwater and, in August 2020, erected the signage. This technology and signage has been proven to be a successful deterrent to thieves in other nearby areas and the Parish Council is excited to see the positive effects it will have.



## **Remembrance Day 2020**

Despite Government Coronavirus restrictions, a small Remembrance Day Service was allowed to be held at the War Memorial, Winifred's Drive, Donnington. Reverend Paula Smith delivered a brief service and representatives of the Community came together to lay wreaths in honour of those who gave their all.

The people who laid wreaths were:



Lisa Dugmore - Acting Chairman to Donnington and Muxton Parish Council  
Jim Lavery - Borough and Parish Councillor  
Major Nicholas Purdy - Representing Donnington MOD  
Simon Heys - Donnington Scouts  
Inspector Leigh Barnes - West Mercia Police

Prior to Armistice Day in November the Parish Council erected 100 poppies on lamp posts throughout the Parish to

remember those that gave their lives during the World Wars and conflicts whilst serving this Country.

## **Christmas Festival and Light Switch On**

On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Parish Council held a small and brief switch on of its Christmas lights. Present were the Acting Chairman Councillor Mrs L Dugmore, Councillor N Dugmore, the Parish Clerk and a surprise attendance by Telford Batman. It is hoped that the Parish Council will be able to hold its Christmas Festival as normal in November 2021 at The Parade, Donnington, Coronavirus restrictions permitting.



## **Pensioners Christmas Dinner**

Sadly, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Pensioners Christmas Dinner 2020 was unable to go ahead. Hopefully, it will return as normal in December 2021.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Cycle Stands**

Telford and Wrekin Council launched a project which allowed the opportunity for Town & Parish Councils to access a scheme to bring forward additional cycle parking in the Borough. Every Parish & Town Council had been offered the opportunity to identify key areas in their locale where they could install up to 4 cycle parking stands to benefit their community. After consulting with the Councillors and the public, the two areas which received the most votes for benefitting from 2 cycle stands were Granville Country Park and the shops on Wellington Road, Muxton. The cycle stands have now been installed and the Parish Council hopes that this will help to promote Sustainable Travel, access to jobs and also encourage better health and well-being benefits within the Community.

### **War Memorial Muxton**

The Parish Council has agreed to have a War Memorial in Muxton. A piece of land off Marshbrook Way where the soldiers' bench is situated was identified as a suitable location. The land belongs to Persimmon Homes who kindly agreed to donate this piece of land to the Parish Council for this purpose. The transfer of land is currently being dealt with by solicitors representing both parties. Various designs for the memorial are still being discussed.

### **Trees**

The Parish Council was successful in bidding for 100 tree whips made up of Oak, Silver Birch, Beech and Hawthorn which was part of the Borough Council's Trees4TW Scheme. Councillors are now deciding the best places around the parish as to where to plant them.

### **Picnic Bench Central Hall ("The Snake")**

In May 2020 vandals/thieves tried to steal the picnic bench located in Central Hall, Donnington. The seats had been stolen so the Parish Council had it removed for safety reasons. Unfortunately, as this is the second time this bench has been targeted, the Parish Council has no plans to replace it in the near future.



## HIGHWAYS

### Liz Clare Court, Donnington



The Parish Council was delighted to see a street named after one of its Councillors. It is a wonderful and apt way to remember Councillor Liz Clare, who constantly fought to get the best for the residents of Donnington and was completely dedicated to her responsibilities as a Councillor representing her electorate. Almost a year on, the Parish Council still misses her vivacity but is delighted to see her legacy continue to have an impact throughout the Parish.

### Brands Meadow Footpath



Due to complaints received, the Parish Council has been working with Telford & Wrekin Council to reinstate the footpath at Brands Meadow, Muxton. Whilst there is a vast improvement to the path, there were still issues of water draining and pooling at the location. Hopefully, this has now been resolved. The Parish Council would like to thank Councillor



Mark Stokes for his tenacity and determination in getting this work done and the issues rectified.

## THE LIZ CLARE LIBRARY

With the easing of lockdown restrictions, Donnington and Muxton Community Library was able to re-open in August 2020 but on reduced hours. Restrictions, in line with Government regulations, had to be put in place to ensure the prevention of further spread of Covid-19. The Parish Council would also like to say a special big thank you to our local Volunteer, Jan, who without her help, the re-opening of the library would not have been possible.

Unfortunately, due to the second wave of infections the library again had to close. It is hoped to re-open again shortly.



## STAFF AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE



*Committee Members: Chairman Mrs L Dugmore (pictured), N Dugmore, M Edwards, J Lavery, A Lawrence and R Overton (Vice-Chairman).*

Its membership consists of no more than six members of the Council (Vice-Chair only included). This is to ensure that any redress against decisions made by this committee will be dealt with on a non-bias basis headed by the Chair of the Parish Council. Members are selected at the Annual Council Meeting of the Parish Council.

The Committee's objective is to ensure that any issues relating to the staff and personnel of this Parish Council are dealt with fairly and legally. The Staff and Personnel Committee met once during 2020/2021 to discuss making the Community Events and Engagement Officer post a permanent position and to agree a Covid-19 Risk Assessment in preparation to re-open Council buildings, office and facilities.

Due to Councillor Mrs L Dugmore being elected as Chairman to this Council in February 2021, she had to stand down her position from this committee as it is only the Vice Chairman of the Parish Council who is the ex-officio member to this Committee. The decisions made regarding the above can be found in the minutes from this meeting at the Parish Council office or on the Parish Council's website [www.donningtonmuxtonpc.org](http://www.donningtonmuxtonpc.org) unless they contain information that is protected.

## PLANNING COMMITTEE



*Committee Members: Chairman Mrs L Dugmore (Pictured), Miss F Doran, M Edwards (Vice-Chairman), J Gough, and M Stokes. Ex-officio members P Loughlin (A Lawrence in February 2021) and Mrs L Dugmore.*

In July 2020, Councillor J Lavery stood down as Chairman of the Planning Committee. As a result, Councillors Mrs L Dugmore was elected as Chairman to this Committee and M Edwards as Vice-Chairman. Councillor J Thompson was elected to the Committee in place of Councillor J Lavery.

The Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications. This means that it has the right and responsibility to give an opinion on all applications made to the Borough of Telford and Wrekin (the Local Planning Authority) that occur within its parish boundaries.

The Planning Committee met eleven times during the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Between these dates the Council received a total of 51 planning applications for discussion and comments. These were made up as follows:

Donnington 20 applications (up 2 from last year), Muxton 29 applications (up 10 from last year), The Humbers 1 application (up 1 from last year) and 1 other applications. Whilst this was in Priorslee this Council was consulted due to the size and close vicinity



to this parish.

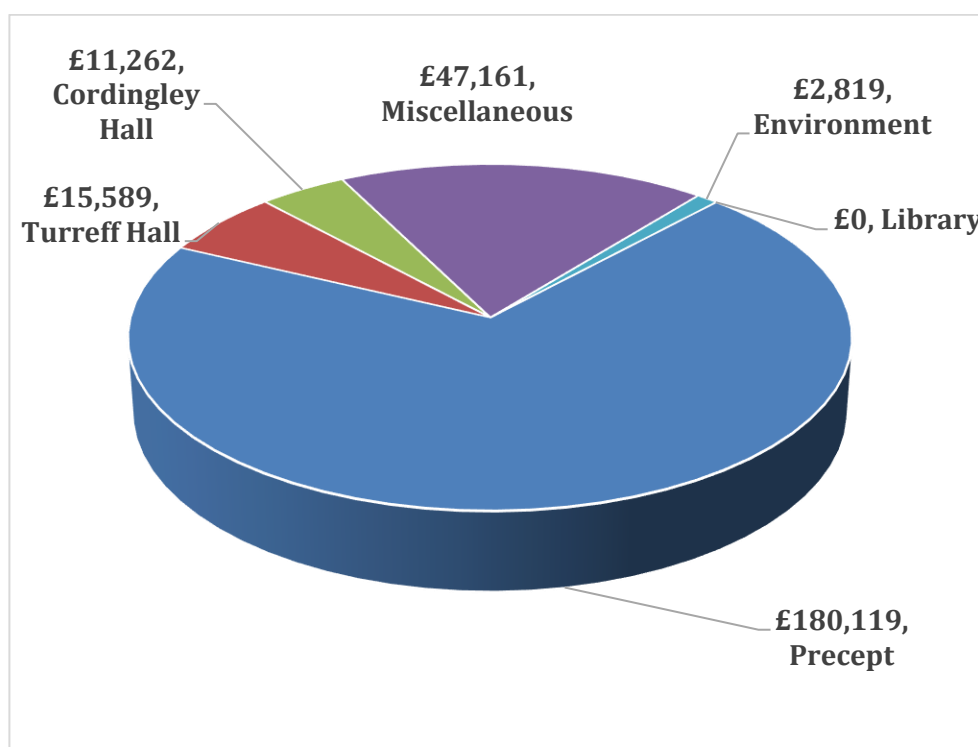
Notable applications discussed were the proposed erection of 233 dwellings off Donnington Wood Way by Granville Park, the erection of 450 dwellings on land adjacent to Red Hill/A5 and one for the removal of hedgerows by Severn Trent Water. Councillors are in discussion with the Borough Council's Planning and Environment departments because, on one hand, Telford & Wrekin Council has called a Climate Change Emergency, yet its Planning Department is approving applications to remove hedgerows.

The Planning Committee is also the steering group for this Parish Council's Neighbourhood Development Plan which, it is pleased to announce, is now at the Regulation 16 stage consultation before being submitted to an independent Planning Inspector. This Council's decisions regarding all applications can be found on its website [www.donningtonmuxtonpc.org](http://www.donningtonmuxtonpc.org).

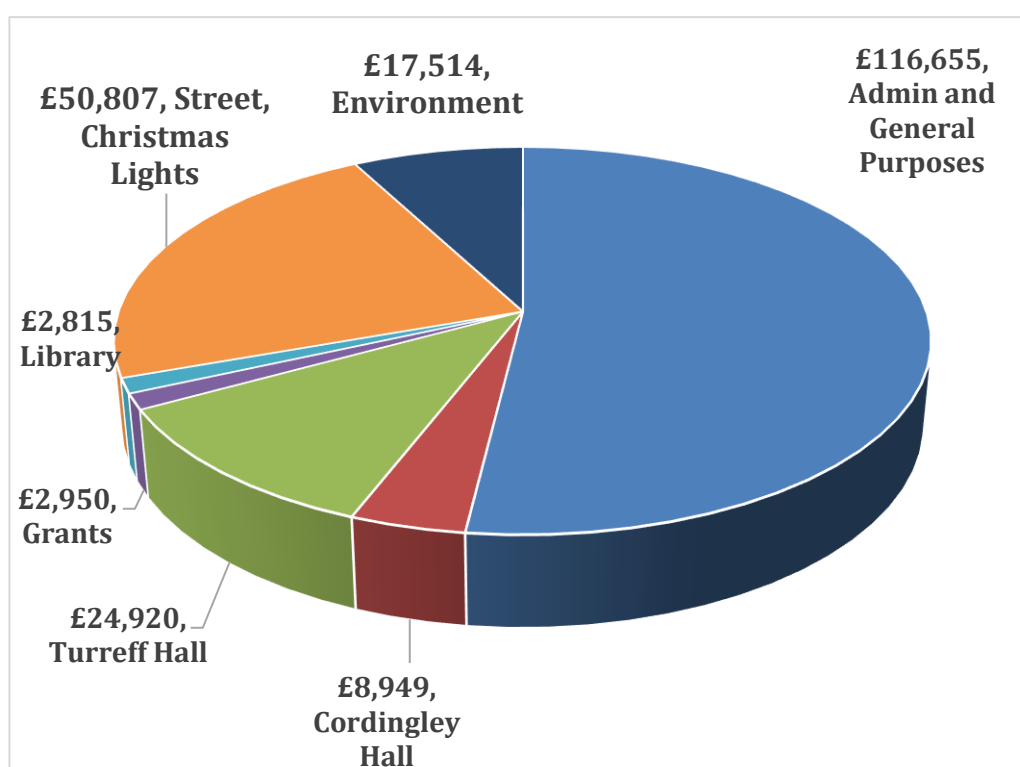
## FINANCE

The Council's precept for 2020/2021 was set at £180,119. This equates to a cost of £47.34, per annum on Band D equivalent houses within the Parish as part of the Council Tax. This figure was set according to the number of Band "D" equivalent properties in the parish which was given at 3,804.8.

### Income 2020/2021



## **Expenditure 2020/2021**



Grants totaling £2,950 were awarded to 5 groups and organisations that benefit the inhabitants within the Parish and Telford & Wrekin.

The Parish Council donated £900 towards purchasing three laptops for St Matthew's Church of England School along with £1,000 to the Kindle Kindness Campaign. The Campaign was raising money in order to buy Kindles or similar devices, and to be distributed to the vulnerable and self-isolating people within the area during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Parish Council received its Annual Return for the year ended 2020 back from its new Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP based at Canary Wharf, London which, once again, has been successfully signed off.

The Parish Council also received grants from various sources, mainly from the Borough Councillors Ward Fund £4,000 and Covid-19 business relief plus others, making a total of £27,213 received.

### **Parish Council Assets**

The assets held by the Parish Council are as follows:

| <u>Fixed Assets</u>  | <u>Estimated Value (£) as at March 2021</u> |
|--|---|
| Turreff Hall   | 450,159.05                                  |
| Cordingley Hall  | 763,684.97                                  |
| Street Furniture:<br>(14 x Bus Shelters, 15 x Benches, 446 x Street Lights). | 32,211.36                                   |



The Parish Council also has £32,353.57 of equipment with which to carry out its duties.

#### Land

Land opposite Muxton Primary School, Marshbrook Way, Muxton

Brands Meadow Play area and woods, Muxton

Land from Muxton Primary School on Marshbrook Way to the junction of Winchester Drive, Muxton.

Land off Saltwell's Drive to the rear of Thornton Park Avenue.

Land for allotments at Donnington Recreation Ground.

#### **WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

The website continues to be a great success with the Events Officer and Assistant Clerk constantly updating and refreshing all the news and information on it. All Agendas and Minutes of meetings are published together with a list of Councillors, activities for young and old, and links into the history of Donnington and Muxton. The Council's [Facebook](#) is also publishing more information especially helpful tips and hints of what to do during the Coronavirus lockdown as well as keeping residents informed of what is happening in and around the parish as is the Parish Council's [Twitter](#) Account (DonningtonMuxt1). The Parish Council now also has an [Instagram](#) account where updates are also provided of Council activities so you can follow this Council via any, or all, of these forms of Social Media.

## PARISH COUNCILLORS

### Donnington West Ward



Jim Lavery



Clive Mason



Richard Overton



John Thompson

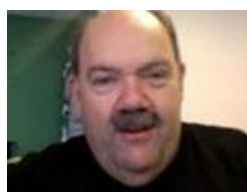
An election was due to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 due to a vacancy for the above Ward occurring as a result of the passing of Councillor Mrs Liz Clare. Due to the Coronavirus Act 2020 the election will now not be held until May 2021.

### Donnington East Ward



Miss Fiona Doran

### The Humbers Ward



Martyn Edwards



Jay Gough

### Muxton Ward



Mrs Lisa Dugmore



Nigel Dugmore



Adrian Lawrence



Phil Loughlin



Mark Stokes

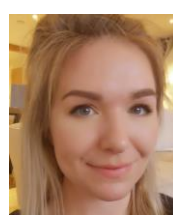
## PARISH PERSONNEL



Ralph Morgan  
Parish Council Clerk



Mrs Katie Eshelby  
Assistant Clerk



Mrs Holly Westwood  
Community Events and  
Engagement Officer



Mrs Helen Whitehouse  
Caretaker

## PARISH OFFICE OPENING TIMES

Monday to Thursday 9.00am – 3.00pm

Friday 9.00am – 1.00pm

The Parish Council Office is closed on weekends.