



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2007

AUDLEM PARISH COUNCIL

A Summary of Parish Council business – July 2007

ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING – 24th MAY

The second Annual Village Meeting was well attended and thanks are due to the speakers who gave up their time to talk to us. About 70 residents heard Lucy Johnson describe the work of her organisation “Visit Chester & Cheshire” which represents the Tourism Board for Cheshire and Warrington. Efforts are now being directed towards promoting this area as one of the gateways to the Capital of Culture 2008, which will also be “Cheshire Year of the Gardens”. Dr Russell Muirhead explained recent changes in the Audlem Medical Practice and answered a range of questions from the audience. Bob Cartwright updated us on the many and various aspects of the Parish Plan, and Andrew Smith spoke on behalf of Audlem Traders’ Association and fielded questions about the future of Audlem Post Office.

Churchfields: The Parish Council has instituted changes in management of the nature reserve and will be trying to strike a balance between the two extremes of total wilderness and suburban lawn. The areas at the centre and at the perimeter will be left uncut for a longer period each year so that the flora and fauna can flourish. A circular path will be cut so that school and playgroup will have easy access. The situation will be monitored to see if any further changes or improvements can be made as time goes on.

Parish Councillors’ Contact Details

Richard Furber (Chair) 811598
 Kate Down (Vice Chair) 811160
 Frances Christie 811340 Bill Consterdine 811647
 Mike Hill 811843 NormanHuntbach 812768
 Ken Jones 811532 Peter Morgan 811575
 Pam Seddon 811282 Andrew Smith 811969
 Geoff Stretch 811011 Irene Stockton 811828
 Your Parish Clerk is Jean White 01948 871383 or
 parishcouncil@audlem.org

*Parish Council meetings will be held in St James School on:
 September 3rd, October 1st, November 5th and
 December 3rd.*

At the beginning of each meeting there is an opportunity for residents to bring matters of particular concern to the attention of the Parish Council. Everyone is welcome to stay and listen for the rest of the meeting.

ANNUAL REPORT 2006/07

Richard Furber, Parish Council Chairman says:

Firstly I would like to thank the Parish Councillors and the clerk, Jean White, for the support they have given

me in the past twelve months. It makes the Chairman’s role so much easier with such enthusiastic support. Following the retirement of Paul Huntbach, Peter Morgan was co-opted onto Audlem Parish Council. A silver salver was presented to Paul in recognition of his loyal service.

Community Pride Competition: On 28th September Parish Council representatives went along to the prize giving at Tatton Park, and were delighted to be presented with the “Best Kept Village” award. We have entered this competition again in two categories: “Best Kept Village” and “Best Village Newsletter”. Particular thanks to Margaret Roberts and the team for producing such a lively and informative newsletter. We were also delighted to be ‘Highly Commended’ in the “Best of the Best” competition which followed on from the Calor “Village of the Year” competition.

Shops: We welcome the opening of the Animal Food Store in the centre of the village, and the re-opening of the Mill Shop on the canal wharf. Best wishes to all new proprietors in their ventures - please support and use all local businesses. We are hoping that the Post Office is spared from closure.

Parish Plan: As many of you are aware, the Parish Council is negotiating to acquire land in Audlem Vale, one of the most popular walks in the area. The District Valuer has been involved and an offer has been made for the land. We await events. Efforts continue to secure funding for a Sport Hall and Leisure Centre. The website, audlem.org, continues to be a mine of information, with the vote poll creating a lot of interesting results.

The Parish Council requested the Borough Council to update the children’s playground and renew play equipment, and also to refurbish the public toilets in the car park. I am delighted to see that these requests have been addressed. We also supported our local fire fighters, helping them to retain the fire engine, rather than it being replaced with a ‘tactical response vehicle’ which would have been unable to reach the top of a three-storey house.

The Public Hall continues to be improved. It has been redecorated both inside and out, windows have been replaced and a new ‘state of the art’ kitchen installed. Thanks to Geoff, Olive and the committee. Thanks also to all local organisers and volunteers who, as usual, worked hard put on so many successful events throughout the year.

Ambulance response times: Following complaints about response times the Ambulance service attended a CAT meeting in February. Our MP, Stephen O’Brien helped to organise and attended a public meeting with Ambulance officials in Audlem Public Hall in June.

Village Policing: Please support PC Ken Maple in his efforts for the village, especially with your attendance

at the CAT meetings when you can have a say in how the village is policed.

Youth Parish Council: The Parish Council is working to form a Youth Parish Council here in Audlem. Progress has been slow but we had a useful meeting with five young residents who showed some interest, and we are now progressing this initiative with support from Brine Leas School.

Allotments: The Parish Council received a request for allotments but there is no land available and unfortunately we have been unable to proceed.

Richard Furber

Chairman, Audlem Parish Council

WEAVER VALLEY PROJECT.

Audlem Parish Council and the Parish Plan were represented at a meeting held on 5 July to hear about plans for the Weaver Valley Regional Park and the Weaver Way. Held at Crewe Alex's ground, the meeting, hosted by the Mersey Basin Campaign, was attended by delegates from across Cheshire.

Mike Cooksley of the Weaver Valley Park explained how Cheshire was concentrating its tourism development on three key projects – making Chester Zoo a world class attraction; the renaissance of Chester as a tourist destination and the Weaver Valley Park.

He explained how tourism currently earns the county £1billion a year. The plan is to double that by 2015. Audlem is, of course, the southern gateway to the Weaver Valley Park and the Weaver Way, the long-distance footpath that will extend from the village to the banks of the Mersey. Another speaker, John Gittins of the Cheshire Landscape Trust, explained to the audience how he had fought to have the Park extended southwards from its original boundary to include Audlem. This followed pressure from Audlem Online and local newspapers eighteen months ago.

Village representatives now plan to meet up with Isabelle Gascoigne of the Mersey Basin Campaign, who is looking after projects in the Upper Weaver Valley, and representatives of the Weaver Valley Project to discuss how a number of tourism and environmental ideas in Audlem can be taken forward.

MOSELEY'S YARD

The development is now well under way. All of the apartments have been sold and the show home, a 3 bed 3 storey house, opened at the beginning of July. It is expected that the first residents will move in around the end of August. The Co-op will move in sometime in October to a slightly bigger store with more staff.

THE LORD COMBERMERE

The plans for conversion of part of the upper floor are on display in the hall of the main entrance. The conversion will have 5 en suite bedrooms and the building work will commence at the end of September and will occupy a large unused space above the dining

area. Steve Nash, Licensee, said that the décor of the rooms will mirror that in the bars downstairs. He has a background in hotels and aims to provide good comfortable accommodation at an affordable price. They currently get several enquiries each week as to whether they have accommodation so Steve is hopeful for the success of this venture.

HYDRO-ELECTRIC OPPORTUNITY TESTED

DerwentHydro, a company that specializes in small-scale hydro-electric schemes, visited the village in June to see if there was any opportunity to generate 'green' electricity using the Shropshire Union Canal's water. There is normally a strong flow down the sluice gates to the side of the lock gates and in all, a 93ft, or 30m, drop over the run of 15 locks. The idea has been discussed with British Waterways and a grant was obtained from an Environmental Trust to pay for the feasibility study.

John and Ollie, of DerwentHydro walked the length of the lock system, measuring locks, calculating volumes of water, making initial estimates and creating interest amongst the many narrowboat crews negotiating the locks. One crewmember even turned out to be an expert in tidal turbines. DerwentHydro will now see if a scheme would be feasible that doesn't affect the lock system and whether it would generate enough electricity to make any investment worthwhile. More when we receive their report.

THE DIORAMAS ARE COMING

Two dioramas will shortly appear in the village – one in the Public Hall car park and the other on the canal bank near the Shroppie Fly.

For the uninitiated, dioramas are illustrated maps with "you are here" signs and ours will show shops and places of interest in Audlem and the surrounding area so that visitors to the village can find their way around. The dioramas will be similar to the large map currently residing on the wall of W H Smiths in Nantwich - but of course we think they'll be better!

They have been funded by the Parish Council and the project to produce them was driven by the Community Projects Committee. This committee has been working since before the Parish Plan was published to turn some of the recommendations it contains into reality. Watch out for news on some of the other projects in the next newsletter.

LITTER-BIN TIPPER CAUGHT ON CAMERA

When PC Maple was on duty in Audlem recently he found that one of the litter bins at the edge of the football pitch had been deliberately emptied onto the field. A check of the Public Hall car park CCTV system clearly showed a youth taking the bin off onto the field. PC Maple was able to identify the offender, who was not local, and he has issued him with a £50 fixed penalty notice for litter.

AUDLEM WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The WI continues to hold their meetings on the first Thursday in each month despite all the media coverage on T.V. Still there's no such thing as bad publicity and at least it has awakened people to the fact that the members are lively folk and the organisation attracts the most prestigious people - even Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall is a member.

Over the last 6 months we have had some super speakers. We have learnt to "live with men", "life behind the headlines" and all about a "policeman's lot". We have been on 2 theatre outings to the Lyceum to see "Kiss me Kate" and "Fiddler on the Roof" and a pleasant afternoon was spent at Cholmondley castle with afternoon tea. In August we will be off to Llandudno and in autumn there will be another theatre evening and a very special Christmastide day out to Walton Hall on the Wirral.

On September 22nd we will be holding our WI autumn show in the Public Hall. There will be exhibits of all types from produce to photography and more, on display to be judged. This is a must for all the village to visit, open 2pm with refreshments and plants for sale.

Our darts team came 2nd in the play off at Blakenhall, as did our quiz team in the county competition. The scrabble afternoons continue as do the bridge and we are also planning some domino afternoons.

Should anyone wish to join us they will be made very welcome.

Please contact either Ann Knapper - President 811544 or Anne Poole - Secretary 811224

AUDLEM ST JAMES' PRIMARY SCHOOL FAIR

The Audlem St James' Primary School's summer fair on 7 July made £1,600, helped by the weather when, possibly for the first time in months, the sun made an appearance!

On the same day, the Friends of Audlem School Association chairwoman, Bernadette Cliffe, stepped down from the position she has held for nine years. Her colleague, Cecilia Bebbington, said: "Bernie has raised thousands of pounds for Audlem School and has been at the helm of just about everything we have done."

PRAISE AND PLAY

Praise and Play, which has been held fortnightly at St James' on a Thursday morning is going weekly during term time, starting in September. It starts at 9.30am, lasts about an hour, is for pre-school children and their carers and is free. ALL are welcome.

AUDLEM'S VILLAGE WEBSITE

Audlem Online is updated every day – in two years, the website has published over 1,600 Audlem news stories! There's information on local clubs and societies and almost a hundred local businesses. You can vote on local issues on-line and there's a Forum to have your

say. Check out www.audlem.org for daily news and a calendar of events.

AUDLEM HISTORY SOCIETY

Thursday September 20th at 7.45pm Sarah Thursfield "Recreating the Tudors"

October 18th: Graham Dodd "Tales of the Welsh Marches"

November 15th at 7.15pm: AGM followed by J. Popley "Vernacular Architecture"

Tuesday December 11th - 7 pm Christmas dinner – speaker Howard Hilton

Contact: *Celia Bloor (Secretary)*

Phone: 01270 811260

AUDLEM & DISTRICT PROBUS CLUB

The Audlem & District Probus Club has had a very enjoyable start to its current year's programme under the guidance of President Peter Ellis.

The Club meets at Brookfield Golf Club on the 2nd and 4th Thursday each month (except August) commencing 10 am for coffee followed by a guest speaker. Topics have included the Audlem Website, Life at Royal Doulton and How to live with Women(!) To come there are Experiences as a RAF pilot in the Gulf Wars, The Drug Scene, and the Titanic. A group of 48 had a very enjoyable 5 day visit to the Isle of Man in May and day trips have included Holker Hall and Cartmel, Highfields (Audlem), David Austin Roses and RAF Cosford. In August there is an exclusive evening at Wollerton Old Hall Garden followed by Supper and at the end of September a visit to Halfpenny Vineyard. In addition there are Lunches and Evening get togethers Two well known Audlem Residents were recently made Honorary Members in recognition of their service to the Club. Ron Bradford has been Treasurer since the Club was founded in 1995 and Humphrey Parker was the Clubs first President and continued to be its Archivist and Photographer until 2007. In addition to their official roles they have both given outstanding support to ensure the successful development of the Club.

For further details contact our President Peter Ellis 01270 812227 or Derek Rooke 01270 668111

ADAS (AUDLEM DISTRICT AMENITIES SOCIETY)

Our subs/contribution envelopes have been returned. Thank you to all who generously support the work that we do for the village.

The **Audlem in Bloom** collection is now underway to help pay for the £2000+ spent on the summer plantings and troughs, tubs and baskets. Once again your support is very much appreciated. Judging of the village for Britain in Bloom took place on 2 July with results expected in October. The judges appeared very pleased with the displays and the general appearance of the village.

The **Silent Auction** was held on Saturday **23rd June**. It was a great success and raised around £1800. Many thanks to all who so kindly donated a wide variety of items and promises.

Our next event is a **Table Top Sale** in The Public Hall on **September 29th** when you can dispose of all those unwanted items and get some cash for Christmas spending. A bit like a local live Ebay! Cost is £5 a table. Full details will be advertised later.

Judging of the good gardens in the area is taking place and the winners will be announced at the **AGM** which will be held at St James School on **October 17th** all are welcome to attend.

AUDLEM ARTS & MUSIC FESTIVAL

This took place over the Carnival weekend and, in spite of the rain, was a very enjoyable weekend. Plans are already in place for a bigger event next year.

ANNUAL AUDLEM CARNIVAL DAY

Organised each year by Gwen & Graham Moss and the committee –was another success. Plans are in hand for 2008. More floats are needed please to make the parade more appealing. Start your planning now!

SHAKESPEARE ON TOUR - BUERTON HOUSE

Another event hit by the rain but the Saturday night performance was well attended and enjoyed by all. The Actors have asked to return in 2008. The support shown here is very good and they value the welcome they receive from us.

For more information on any of the above events please contact Ralph Warburton on 812125

AUDLEM CRICKET CLUB

The season has progressed well so far, despite the atrocious weather, with the 1st XI in the hunt for promotion from Division 3 of the Cheshire Cricket Alliance and the 2nd XI in a mid-table position in Division 5 after a poor start. Unfortunately, the weather has hit the Local Knockout fixtures, but hopefully that will get back on track soon.

The newly-formed junior section attracted more than 20 youngsters aged between 6 and 14 in its first week of coaching, but, because of the poor weather, some sessions have had to be held indoors. Towards the end of the summer it is expected that friendly matches of mixed ability will be arranged against local clubs. The club are currently looking for venues where the coaching can continue during the winter. If anyone is interested in gaining coaching qualifications they can contact Simon Banks on either 01270 780189 or 07764 202752.

AUDLEM PUBLIC HALL

Improvements to the hall are still ongoing. Recently the kitchen has been completely refurbished. The bar is currently being improved with the hatch having been modernised and new fixtures and fittings are due to be installed soon.

The highly successful film show season will begin again in either September or October following Reels on Wheels' summer break. Details of the films to be shown will be available both in local shops and in the village website news section.

The hall recently passed its fire safety audit with the Cheshire Fire Service. The committee was commended for both the way that the risks to the hall have been minimised and the way that they make all users aware of the steps to take in case of fire.

AUDLEM BRANCH CONSERVATIVES

The Branch has continued to organise events including the recent Music and Canapés Evening at Brookfield Golf Club.

Betty Goodwin, the Branch President, has kindly agreed to host a lunch time drinks reception at her home, Kynsal Lodge. This will take place on Sunday 24 February 2008 for which details will be available later in the year.

For further information about the Branch and its events contact Roland Hall (812530) or Alan Cross (811974)

A Comment on the Weather

'Summer' issue seems a bit of a misnomer this year. The weather has certainly dampened the gardens and for at least one local family caused flood damage. However it doesn't appear to have dampened the spirit of Audlem. The Carnival, the Arts & Music Festival, the Proms and a couple of brave people who opened their gardens for charity were all well attended despite the appalling weather. I know that organising these events is no mean feat for the people who work so hard on our behalf and they deserve all our thanks and admiration for their dedication. Without them this summer so far would be even drearier than it has been. Ever the optimist, I hope that by the time this newsletter lands on your doormats, the weather will have taken a turn for the better and we can all settle down to BBQs and get some wear out of all those new summer clothes. The Editor

HAVE YOUR SAY

If you would like your views in the Newsletter or on the Website contact:

Newsletter editor Margaret Roberts on 812942 or newsletter@audlem.org or post your item in the box situated in the Post Office

Website Team on webteam@audlem.org or 'Contact Webteam' on the website.

The closing date for items for the autumn newsletter is: 14 October 2007