

ANNUAL REPORT

Kemble & Ewen Parish Council



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Welcome

Welcome to the first all digital copy of the Annual Report. Current circumstance prevent delivery to each household so please share details of where you found this with your neighbours and friends and feel free to forward it on to anyone who may be interested.

It looks unlikely that there will be an annual meeting of the Parish this year as gatherings are currently not permitted so hopefully this report will give you an insight into the activities and work undertaken by the Parish Council on behalf of the electorate of Kemble, Kemble Wick and Ewen.

Residents are welcome to contact councillors about local issues (details of how to reach us are on the final page) or to come along to council meeting to share ideas get involved in community initiatives.

Chairman's Report

Welcome to the Parish Council Annual Report. It is pleasing to see that the report records another year of good progress on a range of significant issues. Uniquely and regrettably this on-line document is likely to be our sole means of communicating events this year. Our usual arrangement of an invitation to attend an Annual Public Meeting looks likely to be ruled out by the present lockdown.

Within this report you will find details of the key activities which we have either initiated or become involved with over the year. Planning matters represent a constant and significant element of our workload. Over the last year we have considered around 40 planning applications for sites within the Parish. While most of these deal with alterations to existing buildings, some are for new premises. Coming down the tracks are proposals for the two new developments on Bathurst Estate sites (one at Clayfurlong Field and the other at West lane) together with CDC proposals for development of part of the Community Gardens. All of these have been the subject of local consultation and are included in the CDC Local Plan. In the case of the Community Garden site, it is hoped that a committee comprising local residents will be directly involved in the building design and management of the site.

With thanks to the many residents who contributed their comments, thoughts and aspirations our own Neighbourhood Plan has now been completed and submitted for final review and comment. Quite rightly the process has been very democratic throughout with opportunity for resident's input at each stage. Unfortunately, the process has now ground to a temporary halt because lockdown presently precludes the holding of the final democratic step, the residents' referendum.

A couple of personnel changes to mention. Firstly we were sorry that Carol Dougill decided to stand down. Carol has long been a valued member of the team and was particularly involved on issues related to village appearance. Our thanks to Carol for her significant contribution. We were pleased to welcome Daniel Demain as a new Councillor and wish him well in his new role.

As already mentioned, planning is a key activity and one of the elements of our wider focus on the character and appearance of our village which embraces many aspects of our activities. These elements range from consideration of proposed building works through to routine grass cutting of roadside verges. Between these extremes we have a tree planting project along the main access roads to the villages, planting of bulbs within those grass verges and, of course, keeping the Parish looking tidy and cared for, free of litter. Our thanks to all those residents who take a keen interest in and voluntarily contribute toward keeping our Parish looking cared for.

On the subject of volunteering it is both a reassurance and a delight to see how adversity brings out the best in people. With the onset of the pandemic a group of concerned volunteers comprising literally dozens of our residents was immediately formed to provide help and support to anyone in need. This is additional to the excellent established local support schemes and the many individual and unpublicised acts of kindness between neighbours. Again, sincere thanks to all those concerned. There should be no doubt that our Parish is a great place to live.

Best Wishes, Roger Pettit

Community Activities

Kemble Village Stores & Post Office

For 30 years, Kemble has benefited from the services of Kam & Nutan Chudasama who have run the village store and post office. In recognition of their service, the Parish Council, in a special Parish Council meeting held in September 2019, resolved to make them Honorary Alderman and Honorary Alderwoman of the Parish of Kemble & Ewen. This prestigious title has been made in recognition of their eminent service to the local area. It was hoped that a small presentation would be made to them at the Annual Parish Meeting due to be held this May but unfortunately world events have prevented this from happening. The occurrence will however be marked once we are able to reconvene at a community event. In the interim, the Parish Council are extremely grateful for their efforts in these current times to keep villagers in essential provisions and keep the local post offices service running.

Community Support during COVID-19

There is a community support group within the villages to assist those in need during the current pandemic. The Parish Council are grateful to Lisa Rawson for her co-ordination of volunteers within the villages to help with grocery shopping, prescription collection and other needs during this time. All households should have received a note through their door with details of their local representative. You can also request help via the Gloucestershire Community [Help Hub](#), Age UK Gloucestershire have a support line on 01452 422660 for free advice and the Thames Benefice offer visiting and befriending via [ASK](#).

Thank you to...

Steve Marsh who runs the village website www.kemble.co.uk; the Parish News volunteer editors; Pat Ayres for her co-ordination of WW1 Centenary events; Brian Ayres for maintaining the war graves; our various contractors and suppliers; Tom Barrow for organising the annual Litter Pick; the Village Hall committee and all those many others who volunteer to give their time free of charge to run and support community activities. And last, but by no means least, our parish councillors themselves



Community Activity

Playground

Although currently closed in line with government legislation, the playground has received notable investment this past year to ensure that it remains a safe and enjoyable area for the younger residents. Some essential maintenance was required to repair some of the wooden structures within the fenced play area and unfortunately, due to damage from overloading, over £1200 was spent repairing the zip wire during the year.



Village Environment - Highways & Footpaths

The Parish Council is pleased to have completed a footpath link to join up the footpath leaving Kemble with the permissive path and Thames Path to Ewen. These essential pathways mean that people no longer have to walk in the road to move between the two villages.

Following some vehicle damage, the fencing around the war memorial has been repaired with the inclusion of new oak posts to enhance this important historical monument. Additionally, a simple pathway has been added near the bus shelter on Windmill Road such that it is no longer necessary to walk in the road to access the shelter.

A project to enhance the approaches to our villages, which in turn is shown to assist with reducing traffic speed through rural villages, has been started this year. Following the success of the tree replacement programme along the A429, you may have noticed the legacy trees that have been planted on the approach to Kemble from Ewen on both the main highway and Washpool Lane. Traditional British trees have been planted close to the hedgerows which will hopefully be there for many years to come. During 2020/21 further trees will be planted on other approach roads to the villages. Additional tree works have been undertaken with the yew trees at the entrance to the cemetery and the large yew in the graveyard at the church to ensure their healthy growth and development whilst maintaining their safety.

Commuter parking continues to be an issue in Kemble and discussions with Gloucestershire County Council regarding a residents parking scheme are ongoing in the hopes that a suitable solution can be found.

Community Activity

Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Parish Council is edging ever closer to completing this project with more work carried out during the year by the steering committee in conjunction with our consultants - Kirkwells. The plan is now complete and has been lodged with Cotswold District Council awaiting the launch of a Regulation 16 consultation. The Parish Council are thankful to Groundwork UK for providing a grant towards the cost of works relating to the NDP.



Community Grants

Over the past year, Community Grants were awarded to Kemble Kids, Little Fishes and the Kemble Thursday Club. Kemble Kids provide a range of activities for primary school age children and their families during the school holidays which provides vital social opportunities for those in the local area. The funds provided by Kemble & Ewen Parish Council were match funded by Cotswold District Council enabling the activities to be provided at minimal cost in local facilities including Kemble Community Gardens, at the Playing Field and at The Tavern Inn. Unfortunately the village festivities planned to celebrate VE Day on May 8, 2020 had to be cancelled as social gatherings are neither permissible or appropriate in the current situation.

Kemble Community Garden

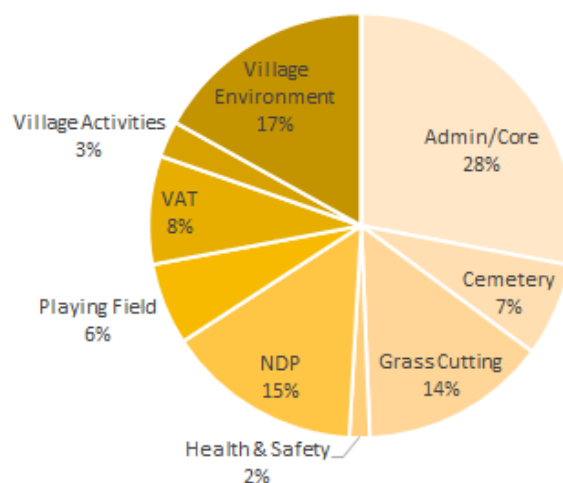
Kemble Community Gardens is an open green space situated to the rear of Old Manor Gardens which is open to the public. Comprising of eighteen allotments used for growing produce and an area of mixed grass and woodland, the site provides a beautiful semi wild area for relaxation and leisure for all ages.

Part of the site has now been fenced off for a proposed development. The remainder of the site will be maintained as a green space - if you haven't discovered this valuable village asset yet, it is well worth a visit.

Financial Summary

The Parish Council's main source of income is the local council tax, known as the precept. The precept requested for the year ending 31 March 2020 was £23,566.

For a typical Band D property, this equated to £44.96 per year. For this year, the Parish Council has asked for £25765, an increase of 7.9%. The cost for a band D property will increase by £3.53 per year. This will enable improvements to be made throughout the villages including improved pathways and visuals on the village approaches which aid traffic calming.



About one third of each year's expenses are required for 'Core services' such as insurance, salaries, training, stationery & printing, professional accounting/audit fees, village hall hire and subscriptions. The remainder is used within the village to provide the services and environment that make Kemble a village to enjoy. This year the Parish benefited from a grant from Groundwork UK which covered the cost of the work associated with the Neighbourhood Development Plan and a grant for Cotswold District Council towards Kemble Kids activities.

Payments	Amount	Receipts	Amount
Admin/Core	£ 9,514.29	Precept	£ 23,566.00
Cemetery	£ 2,427.12	Grants	£ 3,898.00
Grass Cutting	£ 4,840.00	Agency & Burial Fees	£ 1,868.08
Health & Safety	£ 524.00	Interest	£ 110.86
NDP	£ 5,075.00	PC VAT refund	£ 2,695.36
Playing Field	£ 2,118.75		
VAT	£ 2,805.07		
Village Activities	£ 935.00		
Village Environment	£ 5,756.40		
Total	£ 33,995.63	Total	£ 32,138.30

The Parish Council pays for independent internal and external audits each year, to ensure it is following correct procedures for authorising payments, record keeping, and reporting its finances. A copy of the audited accounts will be available from the Parish Clerk following the completion of the external audit. Any resident may look at the Parish Council's un-audited accounts throughout the year by requesting details from the Clerk.

Meet the Parish Council

Meetings are generally held on the second Friday evenings on each month (avoiding bank holidays) in Kemble Village Hall starting at 7.30pm.

Dates are shown on the Parish noticeboard and on the village website. Agenda and Minutes are also displayed on village noticeboards and the website.

Any resident is welcome to come along to these meetings. There is time allocated at the start of each meeting where you can raise issues, ask for advice, or ask questions.



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