



BREWOOD & COVEN PARISH COUNCIL with Bishop's Wood & Coven Heath

Newsletter

Spring 2014

Your Councillors:

Bishops Wood:

Jan Jeffries 01785 841156
John Pegg 01785 840404

Brewood:

Andrew Ball 850435
David Evans 851326
Cllr Anne Holmes 850611
George Martin 850713

(Chairman)

Dr Richard
Taylor 850594

Mac Webb MBE 850671

Coven:

(Vice Chair)
Moira Alden-Court
703528
Janet Carr 791443
Richard Dakin 850938
Vacancy
Paul Smith 07584087495
Peter Webster 791150

Coven Heath:

Linda Tomkins 786008

District Councillors:

Brian Cox 01785 840482
Mike Hampson 850562
Anne Holmes 850611
Wendy Sutton 851682

County Councillor:

Mark Sutton 851682

The scheduled meetings
of the Parish Council this
quarter are:

10 April (Annual Parish
Meeting)
24 April
8 & 29 May
12 & 26 June

Council Meetings are held
at 7.30pm in the Council
Chamber,
35 Stafford Street, Brewood
and include a public
participation session.

Consultation on Site Allocation Document

South Staffordshire Council has announced that the High Court challenge made by a local developer has been comprehensively dismissed and full consultation on the Site Allocations Document (SAD) has begun. It is imperative that as many people as possible make their views on the potential site selection known. The following consultation dates have therefore been arranged by South Staffordshire Council's planning team:

Coven: St Paul's Church, Church Lane on Tuesday 6 May between 2.00pm and 7.00pm

Brewood: The Jubilee Hall, on Tuesday 15 May between 2.00pm and 7.00pm

As there are no proposals to build in Bishop's Wood and Coven Heath, no events have been arranged in these villages. However, all residents are welcome to attend sessions at Brewood and/or Coven in order to express their views.

The Parish Council will be holding its own drop-in sessions in April in conjunction with the Community Council of Staffordshire and exact dates of these will be announced on the website at www.brewoodandcovenparish.gov.uk and on Parish Council notice boards.

Staffing Changes at the Parish Council Offices

No doubt you will have heard the sad news that Sue Groom Clerk to the Council passed away at the end of October 2013. She will be greatly missed both at the Parish Council and in the wider community, especially in Bishop's Wood where she was involved in a number of community groups. Her vacancy was advertised at the beginning of January and interviews took place in early February. The Council is pleased to announce that Maggie O'Brien has been selected as the new Clerk. Maggie has been the Assistant Clerk since 2009 and prior to that had worked for Wolverhampton City Council for quite a number of years in a variety of roles; she therefore has a wealth of local government experience. The Council is delighted to announce that the new Assistant Clerk is Tanya Postles, who has done a sterling job as the Car Scheme Co-coordinator since taking up the post in 2010. The Parish Council is currently recruiting to Tanya's vacancy.

Our Heroes Remembered

In the run up to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the Great War, we ask if there are any surviving relatives of local known casualties of World War One. A list of casualties has been put together giving locations of their final resting places, which can be seen on the Parish Council's website. We would like to hear from anyone who may have a story to tell about their ancestors who served in the conflict or maybe have photographs they would like to share with us. In addition, we would also like to know of the soldiers who survived the war and came back home to carry on with their lives. Please contact Mrs J. Carr on 01902 791443 or Mrs L. Jones on 01902 790157.

IF YOU REQUIRE THIS NEWSLETTER IN LARGE PRINT PLEASE PHONE 01902 850809

Superfast Broadband

There is now a Superfast Staffordshire website, to inform local people when and where the faster fibre broadband will be available. The ambitious Superfast Broadband programme will see the laying of more than one million metres of fibre optic cable and more than 500 new superfast broadband street-side cabinets across the county.

The programme will be coordinated with other works and schemes where possible and will make the best use of existing networks. It has been scheduled to get the very best value for money and maximum coverage.

Bishops Wood, Brewood, Coven and Coven Heath will be some of the first areas to benefit, with installation scheduled to commence as part of the first phase, commencing this month.

By 2016, 95 per cent of homes and businesses in Staffordshire (roughly 472,000 premises) will have access to superfast broadband. A further two per cent will have access to fibre-based broadband with the remainder having improved speeds using existing technology. The project is a partnership between Staffordshire County Council - which has invested nearly £8million - and BT, which has invested £12.47 million. A further £7.4million is being invested by the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK). The entire project will be completed by spring 2016.

The partnership programme is in addition to BT's commercial rollout, which will bring faster fibre broadband within reach of more than 360,000 homes and businesses across the county by the end of spring 2014.

Further details can be accessed on Staffordshire County Council's website at: www.staffordshire.gov.uk Follow the link to SuperfastStaffordshire.

Parish Council Budget for 2014 – 2015

As the end of this financial year approaches, the Council has been preparing the budget for 2014-15. The overall cost to the community in support of the activities undertaken by this Council has been **reduced again** this year on a Band D property giving a Precept Demand of £137,771 compared with last year's demand of £174,464.

This figure of £137,771 will be further reduced by the Local Council Tax Support Grant of £13,522 which is part of the Government's arrangement with Billing Authorities (South Staffordshire Council in our case) to compensate for changes to the Council Tax Benefit Scheme. However, this grant may not be available next year and so an increase may be inevitable, although we will endeavour to keep costs down wherever possible.

Some costs have unavoidably increased and these are mainly around the running costs that support the provision of services and facilities such as allotments, playing fields, football, skateboard parks, green open spaces and public conveniences. Even so, contracts for ground maintenance, insurance and printing continue to be reviewed and renegotiated, as do our contracts for utilities such as gas and electricity.

The Council has again budgeted to make grants available to the four Christmas Lights Committees, Brewood Parish Sports Association, Coven Heath Community Association, the Best Kept Village Working Parties as well as to the three Village Hall Management Committees in order to subsidise charges to local hirers. This year sees the first grant to Brewood & District First Responders who have been up and running for ten years without any previous support from the Parish Council.

Public consultations to ascertain levels of interest in improving the Parish Council's skate board parks in Bishop's Wood, Brewood and Coven are planned for this year and therefore budget has been set aside. It is hoped that match funding will be available in order to get the best possible equipment at the lowest cost to the Council. The Council is also aware that requests have previously been received for adult exercise equipment, which is still being investigated.

Funding continues to be held for Brewood Bowling Club to call off once development of the bowling green gets underway and match funding has also been included in the budget towards the provision of information boards at the Bront in Coven.

Parish Councillors do not receive any payment for the work they undertake or the time they spend on Parish Council business other than to claim £20 per annum telephone allowance. Travelling expenses relating to Council work are rarely claimed, with Councillors paying for mileage out of their own pocket.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

Following a successful fundraising campaign by the community to provide automated external defibrillators in the Parish, three machines have recently been installed by Brewood Fire Crew, Bishop's Wood Heartstart and Coven Heartstart and full training on their use has been given by Brewood and District First Responders.

An AED is a portable electronic device that can automatically diagnose potentially life threatening cardiac emergencies and treat them through defibrillation.

Defibrillators are located at the following sites:

Bishops Wood: The outer wall of the Royal Oak public house, Ivetsey Bank Road.

Brewood: The outer wall of the Village Bakery, Stafford Street.

Coven: The boundary wall of the Co-op Store, Brewood Rd.

Coven Heartstart would like to hold a second CPR and defibrillator awareness session which will be conducted by Brewood and District First Responders, with all proceeds from the training going towards the First Responders service.

Anyone interested in being trained to use the defibrillator should contact Moira Alden-Court on 01902 703528 or Peter Webster on 01902 791150.

If sufficient people register their interest then details of date, time and the venue of the session will be posted in shops in Coven and on the Parish Council noticeboards.

'Grow Your Own' Opportunities

A number of allotments are still available for rent at the Parish Council's site in Ball Lane, Coven Heath. Full and half size plots can be rented at a cost of £23 and £11.50 per annum respectively. Further details are available from the Clerk, Maggie O'Brien on 01902 850809.

Village Sign for Coven Heath

You may have seen on our website that our village sign has been erected. The official unveiling took place on Sat March 22nd at 9.45am, performed by Gavin Williamson MP. In addition, County Councillor Mark Sutton, District Councillor Wendy Sutton and the brilliant sculptor Robot Cossey attended the short ceremony. We would formally like to thank Mark Sutton, Wendy Sutton and of course Coven Heath Community Association for their enthusiasm and financial support.

🎵 BREWOOD MUSIC FESTIVAL 2014 🎵

Thursday 10th – Sunday 13th July

Headline event in the grounds of St Dominic's School

Saturday 12th July

Neomantics (dance/pop), Laurence Jones Blues Band, By The Rivers (reggae)

Glenn Tilbrook (from Squeeze) and Toploader

Tickets available from The Mess, Brewood (cash/cheque only)

£20 now / £25 from May 1st

Or buy online at www.brewoodmusicfestival.com £25 + postage

Learn more about all the weekend's events -

On the website, Facebook, Twitter and through local media.

Vacancy for Parish Councillor Coven Ward

Mr Tom Fellows resigned from the Parish Council at the end of January having served for over two and a half years as a Councillor for Coven. The Parish Council is the tier of local government closest to the community and the first point of contact when local concerns arise. Your local council has an overall responsibility for the well being of your neighbourhood. It represents your views, delivers services to meet your needs and strives to improve your quality of life. If you feel that you are able to influence and lobby the appropriate stakeholders, are over 18 years of age, on the Electoral Register or live within 4.8 km of the Parish boundary, please get in touch. Who knows, you could be our new representative in Coven.

Dog Fouling

Dog fouling continues to be a problem in the Parish and in Brewood in particular. The majority of complaints received at the Parish Council are in relation to dog mess left on pavements. There is a real danger to health from toxocariasis which in extreme cases can cause blindness, but more simply, people are fed up with having to put up with dog mess on their shoes or pram wheels which is then inadvertently brought indoors and transferred to carpets etc. Everyone appreciates that whilst most dog owners are responsible and clean up after their pets, there are a few people who do not take responsibility for the mess which is left for someone else to deal with. Incidents of dog fouling should be reported to South Staffordshire Council. **Failing to pick up dog mess can result in a fine of up to £1000.** People can report dog fouling online at www.sstaffs.gov.uk or by calling 01902 696203.

Roseclaim Grants to Bishop's Wood Groups

Following the 2013 V Festival, a grant of £7000 for the community of Bishop's Wood has now been received and we are currently considering written applications from groups and organisations. To apply, please contact the Clerk, Maggie O'Brien, or either of the Bishop's Wood Councillors, Jan Jeffries or John Pegg. The remainder of last year's money - £700, along with this year's grant, has been awarded to Brewood & District First Responders in view of the urgency of their need.

Coven Lunch Club

Coven Lunch Club has been successfully run for many years providing a Sunday lunch on the first Sunday of every month to Coven Court residents. The organisers are currently short of volunteers to help out with various tasks. If you can spare a couple of hours once a month, please get in touch with Moira Alden-Court on 01902 703528.

Bishops Wood Bus Stop

A very big thank you goes to Paul Dunbar, a local contractor, who has done a fabulous job in laying the kerb and hard standing at the bus stop in Bishop's Wood. This work has not only improved safety for passengers but has also greatly improved the street scene on that particular stretch of Old Coach Road.

Parish Councillor Surgeries (Coven)

These are being held on the 2nd Monday of each month in the waiting area of the GP surgery in Coven Memorial Hall. Any topic concerning the Parish can be raised. It is hoped that these surgeries will encourage a closer working relationship with the community and a better understanding of the role of the Parish Councillor.

Christmas Lights 2013

Although it all happened what seems to be a long time ago this is the first newsletter since the end of the 2013 festive season. Once again a fine display was provided in all of our four villages and the Parish Council is extremely grateful for the hard work so many individuals put in to make sure the Christmas Lights were a success. Their work is only noticed for a few weeks throughout December and into early January but many of those involved are active throughout the year meeting and planning for the year ahead and more often, fund raising to support what is becoming an increasingly expensive display, with legislation and more demanding criteria affecting them each year. The Parish Council continues to support these events with grant funding.

Coven put on another fabulous display this year and thanks go to Michelle Aston and her team. Sadly Michelle is unable to continue working on the committee for the forthcoming year. It would be a very sad occasion if there was no committee to formulate ideas for fundraising and therefore local people in Coven are asked to consider taking on the position. Although challenging at times, it is a most satisfying role for someone with a little spare time to dedicate. Even if you do not wish to be Chairman of the committee, you can offer your services in other ways so please do get in touch with Michelle or the Clerk, Maggie O'Brien for more information.

Bishop's Wood deserves a special mention this year following the splendid display of Christmas Trees for the festival in the church; the first of many, it is hoped.

CONTACT DETAILS

Council Office

35 Stafford Street,
Brewood,
ST19 9DX
Tel. 01902 850809

Open 9.30am to 12.30pm
Monday to Friday.

Clerk: Maggie O'Brien.

Assistant Clerk:
Tanya Postles.

Voluntary Car Scheme

Tel. 01902 851786
Open 9.30am to 12.30pm
Monday to Friday
Co-ordinator:
Vacant

Parking Matters

Parking continues to be an issue for residents especially outside shops in Coven and Brewood. Parking bays have been marked out to enable more cars to park outside the Co-op in Coven but motorists continue to park dangerously, even when spaces are available. Similarly, parking restrictions outside the Spar in Brewood are there to prevent motorists from parking outside the shop even just to 'pop' in. Parking here is not just a nuisance to local residents, but proves a risk to safety to the wider public as emergency vehicles may lose valuable time waiting for motorists to move their cars. Parking on grass verges has also been highlighted many times especially when the Best Kept Village competition is in full swing. It is unacceptable for green areas to be churned up by cars and vans that constantly driving on and off the grass. Please think again next time and park responsibly.

Email the Parish Council:

brewoodparish@btconnect.com

Websites:

www.brewoodandcovenparish.org.uk;
www.bishopswood.org.uk;
www.brewoodvillage.org.uk;
www.covenvillage.org.uk; www.covenheath.org.uk;
www.brewoodparish.org.uk

Staffordshire County Council maintains the network of highways throughout Staffordshire, with responsibility for roads and pavements.

Please report problems such as pot holes, street lights, blocked gullies etc to:

**0300 111 8000 or email:
highways@staffordshire.gov.uk**

For details of Neighbourhood Policing Meetings open to everyone visit www.staffordshire.police.uk/local_policing/south_staffs/