



BREWOD & COVEN PARISH COUNCIL

with Bishop's Wood & Coven Heath

Newsletter

Summer 2014

Your Councillors:

Bishop's Wood:

Jan Jeffries (Vice Chair)
01785 841156
John Pegg
01785 840404

Brewood:

Andrew Ball 850435
David Evans 851326
Anne Holmes 850611
George Martin 850713
Richard Taylor 850594
Mac Webb MBE 850671

Coven:

(Chair)
Moira Alden-Court
703528
Janet Carr 791443
Richard Dakin 850938
Lena Holmes 790066
Vacancy
Vacancy

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:

31 July
14 August
11 & 25 Sept

Council meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, 35 Stafford Street, Brewood and include a 15 minute public participation session at the start of each meeting, members of the public are welcome to attend.

Site Allocation Consultation Update

Following the site allocation consultation in May and June, South Staffordshire Council has begun to analyse the feedback received. Once this is complete, a smaller selection of sites, including some new sites which were suggested as part of the consultation, will be published. These new sites will of course be subject to normal planning regulations and South Staffordshire Council has made a commitment to preserving Green Belt land wherever possible. Further consultation will take place later in the year and we will inform you of the date as soon we have the details.

Drivers Wanted for Brewood & District Voluntary Car Scheme

If you can spare a few hours each month to assist with taking passengers to and from appointments such as GP surgeries, hospitals or the dentist, please get in touch with Claire on 01902 851786 for more information.

Staffordshire Library Service Reshape

Staffordshire County Council (SCC) has agreed to move forward on plans to reshape its library services. This is a three year plan to transform how libraries are managed. Libraries have changed considerably over the last decade; although they now offer more computers, internet access, wi-fi, and digital services such as e-books and e-magazines, alongside community space for partners, the number of people visiting their library and the number of books being borrowed continues to decline. The way that people want to access library services continues to change. Through consultation SCC wants the community, partners and stakeholders to give their views on whether the proposals are right for their local library and community. There are no plans to close any libraries, at the end of the programme the aim is to have the same number of libraries as there are now.

Brewood Library has been designated as Library Local – SCC is looking to the community to lead, manage and deliver this library provision giving local people the opportunity to maintain services, or introduce new services to meet local need. SCC will support communities to take on this role but will not be directly involved in the management or staffing. The county council will have a contract with a local community group/organisation to lead and to develop the library offer, possibly attracting local sponsorship of funding.

A twelve week period of consultation began on 16 July. If you would like to take part in the consultation please use one of the following facilities:

At www.staffordshire.gov.uk/connectedlibraries to find out about 35 drop in sessions at various libraries throughout Staffordshire

At any mobile library – in person or to obtain a questionnaire

By email at connectedlibraries@staffordshire.gov.uk

Through social media; Twitter: @StaffsLibraries or Facebook: staffordshirelibraries

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

Individual Electoral Registration

How you register to vote is changing—make sure your voice can be heard

People across the country—and in South Staffordshire—have the chance to have a direct say on who represents their views on a local, national and even European level by voting. However, the way that you register to be able to vote is changing.

Previously, one person would register everyone in their household who was eligible to vote. New legislation means all people of voting age and young people reaching voting age must now register individually.

In order to do this, you must provide your name, address, National Insurance Number and date of birth. This information—known as ‘personal identifiers’—will then be cross-checked by the council before a name is added to the register. You can also register online, something which was previously not possible.

South Staffordshire Council is currently going through a process of checking current data to make sure it is accurate. If you are one of the estimated 87 per cent of people in the district whose data is up to date, you will get a confirmation letter from the council confirming this and won't need to do anything else to enable you to be kept on the register for the 2015 elections.

If you are one of the few whose data does not match up, don't worry. You will get a letter explaining what you can do to register. Registration is easy, and can be done online at www.sstaffs.gov.uk/elections. The council is working closely with other authorities within Staffordshire and with Government's Cabinet Office colleagues to manage this change. Our priority is to make sure you stay registered and do not lose your important right to vote.

If you are one of our 10,000 postal voters, you will need to make sure you individually register or you will lose your postal voting facility in the 2015 Parliamentary election. The Electoral Registration Officer for South Staffordshire Steve Winterflood said: “With the changes to registration coming next year, it is even more important to make sure people are registered and are able to have their say on all elections.”

“Although we believe we have the most up to date details for the majority of residents in South Staffordshire, we want to make sure as many people as possible know about the changes and give those who need to re-register plenty of opportunity to do so. Registering to vote is essential in making sure people's voices are heard. If you're not registered, you won't be able to have a say on who represents you. Therefore, it's important you make sure your details are correct.”

More information on the new registration system is available at www.sstaffs.gov.uk/elections

Call for Best Kept Village Judges

The Best Kept Village Competition takes place during the summer months each year and numerous villages of different sizes throughout Staffordshire take part. The organisers are always looking for volunteer judges to assist with assessing the village entrants. Generally the judges are asked spend one day in May and one day in June visiting three to four villages on each day, in teams of four people. Should you wish to volunteer for what is essentially a couple of nice days out in the country, please contact either the Clerk or Dr Richard Taylor on 01902 850594 for further details.

Commemoration of World War One LIGHTS OUT – a silent vigil

On Monday 4 August from 10.00pm until 11.00pm there will be a silent candlelit vigil at the War Memorial in Brewood churchyard to join in a shared nationwide moment of reflection. There will also be a candlelit vigil at St Paul's Church in Coven from 10.00pm until 10.50pm and a procession to Coven War Memorial at 10.50pm which will end at 11.00pm. You are welcome to attend to pay your respects to those who sacrificed their lives during the conflict.

Applications for Grant Funding in 2015

The Parish Council has recently formalised the way that grants are awarded. If you represent an organisation that relies on grant funding or wish to apply for a grant, please visit our website to download an application form.

Due to a change in personal circumstances, Tanya Postles has resigned from her post of Assistant Clerk and will leave on 18 July. The Council will be sorry to lose Tanya as she has been an asset during her time in post as Assistant Clerk and previously as Co-ordinator of the Voluntary Car Scheme. As a result, the following advertisement has been circulated:

Vacancy for Assistant Clerk

(22 hours per week, Monday to Friday, core hours 9.30am to 12.30pm, plus evening meetings which are generally twice per month).

Salary commences at £16,215 pro rata per annum.

Applications are invited for the part-time post of Assistant Clerk to Brewood and Coven Parish Council. The ideal applicant will have excellent verbal and written communication skills with an aptitude for working with numbers, having proven experience of maintaining accounts, PAYE and producing financial, budget and audit reports. Outstanding organisational skills and the ability to be self-motivated as well as working well within a team are also key to this post. In addition to carrying out the financial procedures of the Council, the role will also involve taking minutes at Parish Council meetings, responding to correspondence as resolved by the Council, and dealing with enquiries from the public. Previous experience of working in Local Government is desirable.

Interested candidates should contact Maggie O'Brien, Clerk to the Council for an application form, job description and person specification on: 01902 850809. Email: brewoodparish@btconnect.com
Closing date for applications 29 August 2014.

'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, 01902 850809.

Brewood Defibrillator

Last year a defibrillator was installed on the Village Bakery wall in Stafford Street for use in cases of emergency when someone is suffering a heart attack. 24 hour access to this equipment is essential and motorists are requested to keep the area in front of the defibrillator clear of parked cars, vans etc. at all times.

Brewood Music Festival – A Message from the Organisers

Brewood Music Festival Committee would like to say a huge thank you to all those who gave their support and time to the festival in any way. Also thank you to all those that attended the event and helped make it such a huge success. It was fantastic to see so many people around the villages supporting local businesses and also, of course, enjoying the variety of musical performances that were available.

The bucket collection in Market Place on Sunday raised a massive £669.94 which will be matched by the Parish Council up to the value of £500. If you have any feedback that you would like to leave for us please visit our website at www.brewoodmusicfestival.com

Vacancy for Parish Councillor Coven Ward

In our previous issue we reported that Mr Tom Fellows had resigned from the Parish Council at the end of January. The Council is extremely pleased to announce that Mrs Lena Holmes has been co-opted to the casual vacancy. Mrs Holmes has previously served as a Parish Councillor for Coven for many years and therefore has a wealth of experience in Council related matters.

Sadly, two further Coven Councillors have resigned from the Council for personal reasons; Mr Peter Webster and Mr Paul Smith. If you feel that you are able to dedicate time to help your community, are over 18 years of age, on the Electoral Register or live within 4.8 km of the Parish boundary, please get in touch with the Clerk or any of the Councillors for further information.

There will also be Parish Council elections held in May 2015. Look out for details of how to stand for election in the in the next issue of the Parish Newsletter.

Dog Fouling

Dog fouling has still not improved within the Parish but there are some new initiatives to help to remind the minority of dog walkers, who do not pick up after their dogs, of their responsibilities. The maximum fine is likely to increase from £1000 to £4000 in the near future and the Council will shortly be taking possession of stencils and paint which will be sprayed onto pavements advising of this. There will also be temporary signs placed on lampposts which will be clearly visible. All litter bins can now be used for dog litter, not just those designated as dog litter bins. Please remember that it is the person walking the dog's responsibility; this may not necessarily be the owner and children walking dogs are also responsible for cleaning up dog mess too. Residents are urged to report dog fouling online at www.sstaffs.gov.uk or by calling 01902 696203.

Roseclaim Grants to Bishop's Wood Groups

Every year since the start of the V Festival, the Council has received a payment from Roseclaim, the organizers of the event. The fees are made up from donations made by guests using the VIP facilities but Roseclaim do not know until after the event how much money is available. Many years ago the Parish Council agreed that the money should be granted to organisations that have members from or are based in Bishop's Wood, as this is the village that is most greatly affected by the festival which is held in August each year. In 2013 we received £7000. The following organisations benefitted as follows from the grant:

Brewood & District First Responders £1,000 (plus £700 from last year's donation)

Elvis Night Start-up grant (1st Responders) £650.

Hillbilly Bonanza Start-up grant event £650.

Bishops Wood PCC (St John's Church) £700

Women's Institute £300

St John's Nursery & Out of School Care £500

Neighbourhood Watch/Speedwatch £600

BKV & Community Fund £500

Brewood Cricket Club £150

Village Hall £800

Belvide Reservoir Bird Reserve £50

St John's First School £700

The balance of £400 has been earmarked for a flagpole at the Village Hall.

If you think your organisation meets the above criteria, and you would like to be considered for a grant after this year's festival, please get in touch with Maggie O'Brien or a Bishop's Wood Parish Councillor for further advice.

Coven Christmas Lights 2014**Volunteers Wanted Urgently!**

The community in Coven has, for many years, organised a fabulous display of Christmas lights for the festive season. The switch on event has always attracted many people into the village centre for what has historically been a community occasion in the run up to Christmas.

Preparations for the next event usually start very early on in the preceding year. Sadly, this year the committee has dissolved and Coven, for the first time in many years, is in danger of not having any Christmas lights and as a result, no switch on event.

Moira Alden-Court, the Chairman of the Parish Council has kindly stepped forward in order to try to establish a new committee and to endeavour to get things up and running for 2014 before it's too late.

If you can spare a few hours of your valuable time to help out, please contact Moira directly on 01902 703528 or the Clerk, Maggie O'Brien on 01902 850809.

In particular, a treasurer is required to oversee the receipts and payments and associated financial transactions of the Christmas Lights Committee bank account.

Brewood & District First Responders

For the first time since being established ten years ago, the First Responders requested a grant from the Parish Council towards the provision of a new vehicle. The Council was pleased to be able to award £6,000 towards this worthy cause.

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: Vacancy.

Voluntary Car Scheme
Tel. 01902 851786

Open 9.30am to 12.30pm
Monday to Friday

**Car Scheme Co-ordinator:
Claire Macquarie.**

If you live away from a regular bus route you might be interested to hear about South Staffordshire's Connect bus service. The service is for short, local journeys even within the same village and will pick you up and drop you off at your destination. If you have a concessionary bus pass travel is free. Adults pay a flat rate of £2 per journey and those with a Your Staffordshire card pay £1 per journey. Operating times are from 8.00am until 6.00pm Mon-Fri, 10.00am until 4.00pm on Saturdays. You can book seven days in advance, but no later than two hours before you wish to travel. Registration is free on 0300 111 8003. Anyone can use the service provided that the journey is not possible by local bus or if you have a disability or mobility difficulties. Pick up a leaflet from the Parish Council office for full details.

Email the Parish Council:

brewoodparish@btconnect.com

Website:

www.brewoodandcovenparish.org.uk;

Find us on Facebook

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