



# BREWOD & COVEN PARISH COUNCIL with Bishop's Wood & Coven Heath

Newsletter

October 2016

## Your Councillors:

### Bishop's Wood:

Jan Jeffries 01902 851831  
Mary Sambrook  
01785 841398

### Brewod:

David Evans 851326  
Anne Holmes 850611  
Kevin Kearney 850336  
Wendy Sutton 851682  
Richard Taylor 850594  
Mac Webb MBE 850671

### Coven:

Moira Alden-Court  
703528  
Janis Bradshaw 791435  
Janet Carr 791443  
Richard Dakin (Vice Chair)  
850938  
Antonio Pupino  
07857 061 128  
Glen Sibley 790059

### Coven Heath:

Linda Tomkins (Chair)  
786008

### District Councillors:

Joyce Bolton 851079  
Brian Cox 01785 840482  
Anne Holmes 850611  
Wendy Sutton 851682

### County Councillor:

Mark Sutton 851682

## The scheduled meetings of the Parish Council for this quarter are:

27 Oct, 10 November, 24  
November & 8 December.  
Council meetings are held  
at 7.30pm in the Council  
Chamber, 35 Stafford  
Street, Brewod and  
include a 15 minute public  
participation session at the  
start of each meeting,  
members of the public are  
encouraged to attend.

## Best Kept Village Competition

Brewod and Bishop's Wood entered the Best Kept Village competition again this year. We are pleased to announce that Brewod took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the Large Village category and Bishop's Wood was highly commended. Although the competition runs during May, June and July a lot of effort is put in all year round and we are immensely grateful as a community to have such dedicated volunteers who keep our villages attractive and litter free.

We are extremely pleased to announce that the Parish Council office in Stafford Street, Brewod won the commercial section of this year's **Floral Front Garden Competition!** Our thanks go especially to our gardener/handyman Martin Smith who not only planted and tended the flowers, but also made the 4 new troughs himself.



## Flooding in Bishop's Wood

During the summer Bishop's Wood was subject to severe flooding. Sadly, some properties were very badly affected and families were unable to return to their homes for many months, only to be flooded again weeks later. District Councillor Brian Cox became involved and a multi-agency meeting was held at South Staffordshire Council offices with a Staffordshire County Council flood officer, Highways, National Flood Agency, Parish Councillors and local land owners. On the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016 Bishop's Wood villagers had a meeting with the National Flood Forum, a voluntary group who offered advice. It was decided to form a Bishop's Wood Flood Action group to meet with organisations to look at ways to manage the effects of flooding in the future and to try and bring a solution to the problem. Meanwhile if anyone sees any blocked gullies they can telephone Thomasin Sayers on 0300 111 8000 to report them.

**IF YOU REQUIRE THIS NEWSLETTER IN LARGE PRINT PLEASE CALL 01902 850809**

## Social Action in Your Community

**The following letter was received from Mr Mark Deaville, Cabinet Support Member for Highways & Transport, Staffordshire County Council at the start of the year:**

As you know, we are working with our partners across Staffordshire, and beyond, to explore the opportunities of increased social action, and how we can enable local communities to have more control and influence on the issues that matter to them. This work has been underway with partners across the county and the New Economics Foundation for some months, and a Business Case will be completed in June mapping out a suggested future direction of this work over the next few years.

It is already clear that many communities and local people are stepping up and leading on delivering safe, attractive and sustainable communities where people want to live. This gives us a clear opportunity to reform the public sector in the county, meeting the needs of local people and, at the same time, using the limited resources we have in the most effective way possible. The retendering of the voluntary, community and social enterprise infrastructure contract is an important part of this, but there is more to be done.

We are absolutely committed to working with our district, borough and parish partners as we move this work forward and to establishing a direction that looks at governance across Staffordshire, not just the role of the county council. This is challenging work, but is a once in a generation opportunity to make a fundamental difference to Staffordshire and its people.

One of the areas where local people are already involved is in environmental and highway maintenance. There are examples across the county of villages which have identified local improvements they want to make, and have then gone on to secure funding and resource to bring that change about. Over the next 12 months we will be working with parish councils, councillors and our district and borough partners to see how that community involvement can be increased. We are committed to this work not just as a way to meet our budget challenges, but to devolve power from the centre to towns, villages and communities and design the best local solutions.

As you know we have our medium term financial strategy to deliver and, in the context of the above, there are some changes to highways and environmental management that are happening now in order to make the savings needed so that we can continue to look after the most vulnerable people in our society.

As of April 2016 the number of Neighbourhood Highways Team hours available to parishes and district and borough councils will be reduced. The 'lengthsman' service, which supports highway and environmental works in around 90 parishes across Staffordshire, will remain unchanged this year. The lengthsman service will end in April 2017 and, from that date, we will review the future of the Neighbourhood Highways Teams. We will work with partners over the next 12 months to ensure that a suitable solution is in place for the lengthsman service and to look at the Neighbourhood Highway Teams. During that time, we also need to explore the longer-term future of the 'cyclical maintenance work' programme.

Like all public sector bodies, we need to work within our limited resources but this does not undermine our very real commitment to enabling social action and supporting local control of the issues that matter to Staffordshire people.

### **The Parish Council's View:**

**The parish is very fortunate to employ a gardener/handyman who undertakes many duties in and around our four villages and therefore we are not reliant on the Lengthsman Service. However, we do use the Neighbourhood Highways Team on a regular basis. All members of our community are asked to consider looking after the areas adjacent to their property, such as sweeping pathways and trimming back hedges in order to keep the pavements accessible for pedestrians.**

### **Improvements at the Jubilee Hall in Brewood**

A new kitchen has been installed at the Jubilee Hall in Brewood thanks to a substantial grant from The Big Lottery fund. The committee's next project is to refresh the interior of the hall by painting the walls and woodwork.

\*\*\*\*\* See the village hall website for all the upcoming events: [www.brewoodjubileehall.btck.co.uk](http://www.brewoodjubileehall.btck.co.uk) \*\*\*\*\*

## Projects in Your Neighbourhood

We are just over half way through the financial year and so would like to make you aware of the Parish Council projects that have been underway or are scheduled to take place over the forthcoming months.

**Bishop's Wood.** Unfortunately the wooden frame on the cradle swings in the play area were deemed dangerous following the annual inspection and have been removed. As part of next year's precept, these will be replaced. The frames were already in the playing field when the new equipment was installed in 2011 and were at the end of their lifespan when they were removed.

**Brewood.** The fencing for the bowling green has been installed and the grass for the green will shortly be laid. The Bowling Club members will be applying for some more funding (in addition to the £75,000 awarded by Veolia) to build the club house.

There have been some additional pieces put in to compliment the skate board ramps at the Jubilee Park in Brewood. We are also planning to add some outdoor gym equipment now that the bowling club fence has been erected and we can find the most suitable place to put them.

Five cycle racks have been mounted on the wall of the toilet block in Sandy Lane for the general public to use, this should help people who want to cycle rather than drive into the village. Cycles will be secure and the facility is just around the corner from all the local shops and facilities.

**Coven.** There should be a lot of activity in Coven playing field over the next few months! We have already had a new chain link fence around the tennis/basket ball court installed.

After a number of requests from local young people in Coven, the skate board ramp has been repaired and should last for many more years to come. Two new quarter pipes have also been installed and the access gate has been repaired.

The grant application for funding for some new playground equipment in Coven playing field has been submitted. We will know whether or not this has been successful in December. All being well work should start early in the New Year.

The Parish Council is extremely grateful to the newly formed Coven Playing Field Committee, a group of local people who have worked tirelessly together with the Council and SSCVA to bring this project to fruition. They have raised lots of money from various sources and will continue to hold fundraising events in and around Coven. Please try and support these if you can. Details will be advertised on our Facebook page.

### 'Rainbow Alley' Coven

You may be aware that there is a footpath that leads from St Paul's Church in Coven along the back of properties in Churchfield Close and The Nurseries' known locally as Rainbow Alley. Recently someone has very kindly cut back the hedges, presumably on a voluntary basis; as far as we can establish this was not done by either Staffordshire County Council, South Staffordshire Council or the brewery. If your property backs onto the footpath it is your responsibility to keep your boundary hedge from overhanging the path and to clear away any clippings. This is extremely important, especially at this time of year when leaves become a slip hazard and you really should make sure that thorns or holly leaves are swept up to prevent injuries to small children, dogs and other animals.

### Christmas Lights Switch-on Dates and Times:

**Bishop's Wood – 6.30pm on 9th December**

**Brewood - 3.00pm on 27th November**

**Coven Heath - 6.30pm on 3rd December**

**Coven – 4.30pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> December**



### Annual Precept Meeting

The Parish Council will be setting its annual precept for the financial year 2017-18 in December 2016.

The Precept is the money that the Council collects from South Staffordshire Council, paid for from local Council Tax.

It is spent by the Parish Council on the maintenance and improvement of the Parish Council's assets including the three playing fields in Bishop's Wood, Brewwood and Coven, two skate board parks, a number of amenity areas, Sandy Lane WCs, Coven changing rooms, the Bront, the Parish council office, Coven and Coven Heath allotments, benches and bus shelters.

In addition to this, each year the Council awards grants to local groups, three village halls, Christmas lights committees in all four villages, Brewwood Parish Sports Association. Other beneficiaries have been Coven Beavers and Cubs, Barnfield Sandbeds, Brewwood Music Festival the First Responders, Brewwood Bowling Club, and many more deserving groups.

If you are involved in a local community group please visit our website and download a grant application form in order to apply for a grant for next year.

### Christmas Dinner

Anyone who is elderly, on their own on Christmas Day and lives in Coven who would like a Christmas dinner, please call Moira 01902 703528.

### Halloween and Bonfire Night

Staffordshire Police would like to pass on the following message regarding Halloween and Bonfire Night:

The festivities around Halloween and bonfire night are always good fun but it is also a time to make sure that children are kept safe.

Not all adults enjoy **Halloween** and it can be quite frightening for people who are older or more vulnerable. Younger children taking part should always have an adult nearby to keep them safe and to stop them distressing people who do not want to take part. All children should have fun but always respecting other people in the community. It is better for children to stay in groups and wear light-coloured clothing, making sure they can be seen. They should only visit homes of people they know.

Whilst recognising and celebrating history on **Bonfire Night** it is important to remember that fireworks, although fun to watch, can cause serious injury and damage. Bonfires can quite easily get out of control. The highest number of firework related injuries happen at family or private parties. It is safer to attend an organised event that follows the firework code and have trained people on hand to alleviate any dangers. Don't forget your pets. Keep them indoors and turn up the TV or music volume to distract firework noise.

### Small Business Saturday on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

This national campaign highlights small business success and encourages customers to 'shop local' within their communities. Small businesses are a prominent feature of the district's local economy. Small businesses provide roughly 78% (30,420) of total jobs within the region.

#### CONTACT DETAILS:

##### Council Office:

35 Stafford Street,  
Brewwood,  
ST19 9DX  
Tel. 01902 850809  
Open 9.30am to 12.30pm  
Monday to Friday.

**Clerk: Maggie Birtles.**

**Assistant Clerk:**

**Gemma Jones.**

**Voluntary Car Scheme**

Tel. 01902 851786  
Open 9.30am to 12.30pm  
Monday to Friday

**Car Scheme Co-ordinator:**  
**Sofena Phillips.**

### Speeding Through Bishop's Wood

For many years the Parish Council has tried to prevent speeding in and around our villages. Part of the initiative was to lobby the County Council in order to have some speeding restrictions put in place in Bishop's Wood. This included 'sharks teeth' painted on the road and reducing the speed limit to 30 miles per hour, with appropriate signage. There is a community speed watch in existence in the area with members of the public having been trained in the use of the speed 'guns'. County Councillor Mark Sutton has been instrumental in bringing in these measures. Speed and volume surveys were carried out in Ivetsey Bank Road both in 2013 (speed limit 40mph) and 2016 (speed limit 30mph), the result have shown an encouraging decrease in the speed of vehicles. In 2013 northbound, 85% of vehicles were travelling at 51mph or below and southbound the figure was 46mph. In 2016 the survey showed that the corresponding figures were both 41mph. Thus a 10mph reduction northbound and a 5mph reduction southbound.

**Email the Parish Council:**

brewoodparish@btconnect.com

**Visit our website:**

[www.brewoodandcovenparish.org.uk](http://www.brewoodandcovenparish.org.uk)

**Find and like us on: Facebook.**

Report all dog fouling to **South Staffordshire Council.**

**Staffordshire County Council** have responsibility for roads and pavements across Staffordshire:

**Please report problems such as pot holes, street lights, blocked gullies to: 0300 111 8000, email:**

**Email: [highways@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:highways@staffordshire.gov.uk)**

**Online at: [www.staffordshire.gov.uk](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk)**

**Or download: MyStaffs App to access key services**