



Bournheath Parish Council Newsletter, April 2016

PLANNING FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

If the 'powers that be' identified Bournheath as a suitable site for building new houses, how prepared would we be to accept them?

Does Bournheath have an identifiable character? Is it any different to neighbouring residential areas? If yes, then what is it that makes it different?

Have you ever thought about what makes Bournheath unique? Are there any spaces in the parish that you think are to be cherished, that you would like to see conserved and conversely are there any spaces you think could do with improvement?

We don't have the answers to these questions but we are hoping you do.

As far as we know there are no bulldozers threatening to tear into the parish just yet, but with the demand for housing so high, the review of the Green Belt imminent and neighbouring councils eager to expand we think it would be prudent to be ready!

One way of preparing ourselves is to start with making a Parish Plan that will feed into a Neighbourhood Plan for the area.

This won't happen overnight and will take time and effort from all involved. It is inevitable that 'development' will happen whether we like it or not but we think that a bit of effort now will pay off in the future to enable the parish of Bournheath to withstand, prepare and cater for whatever happens. A Neighbourhood Plan will give us the tools to cope.

We hope you will come along when we talk more about this at the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 25th May. If you can't come but would like to find out more about Neighbourhood Planning, then please get in touch.

Annual Parish Meeting – Wednesday 25th May

Each year the parish council is legally required to arrange a meeting for all residents to discuss parish matters. Even though it is organised and hosted by the parish council, it does not take the format of the usual parish council meeting – it is a little more flexible! If you have an item for discussion at this meeting, then please contact the Clerk so that it can be added to the agenda – just remember it must be a topic that is specific to the parish.

The event will be in Bournheath Village Community Centre, Claypit Lane, B61 9LA on Wednesday 25th May starting at 7pm. Refreshments – tea, coffee, biscuits and maybe cake - will be provided. We look forward to seeing you there.

Here is news of two more topics for the Annual Parish Meeting on 25th May...

Smart Water

Please tell us what you would like us to do with regard to this product...

SmartWater is a clear marking liquid, visible under UV light, that carries a unique forensic code which is registered to an address or location. If your marked valuable items are stolen they can be easily identified under UV light. Once applied it is almost impossible to remove.

Burglars hate the stuff because it is easy to check for, so they prefer to operate in non-SmartWater areas.

We have the opportunity to become a SmartWater village, as at Cropthorne and Cleobury Mortimer, but only if 80% of households take up the offer and register. The Parish Council could invest in enough kits for the whole parish, at a potential cost of £4,000, or provide them at a subsidised rate. Let us know what you think at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Quality Parish

Some good news!

We are delighted to announce that we have gained the accolade via the parish councils' national body, NALC, of 'Quality Parish Council'.

The new Local Council Award Scheme has been designed to celebrate the successes of the very best local councils, and to provide a framework to support all local councils to improve and develop to meet their full potential. The scheme offers councils the opportunity to show that they meet the standards set by the sector, assessed by their peers, and to put in place the conditions for continued improvement.

The Chairman of the Worcestershire Accreditation Panel will be attending the Annual Parish Meeting to present the award. Please do come and share in our success!

PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES

Parish Council spending for the year ending 31st March 2016 has been very modest. Most of the council's income is raised via the precept – which householders pay as part of the Council Tax. Last year's precept was £10,333 and the average band D council tax payer contributed a total of £48.87 towards that amount. Payments during the year were as follows:

| | | | |
|----------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Administration | £2604 | Projects: includes | £2272 |
| Salary | £3970 | Defibrillator & cabinet | |
| Lengthsman | £2596 | Spring bulbs | |
| Property maintenance | £1431 | Grants | £114 |

At the time of publication these figures are unaudited.

The precept for 2016/17 has gone up slightly to £10,680 but because of changes to the council tax base rate and a government-based support grant the contribution to the parish council precept by each council tax payer will remain the same as last year.

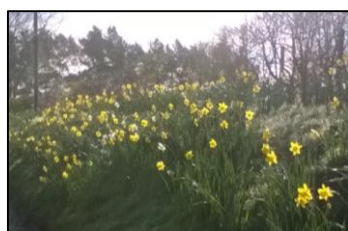
This year's audit 'window' ie the annual opportunity for residents to view the accounts, will be for six weeks starting on 6th June. Please contact the Clerk if you would like to see the books – more information will be on the parish council's website and on the notice boards during this period.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

Apologies if it seems all doom and gloom but we do think that being prepared for any emergency is a sensible undertaking. None of us wants to think of anything disastrous happening in our neighbourhood and most of the time it won't. But meteors don't choose where to strike and although we are working towards a flood alleviation scheme in Bournheath we have no influence over the weather!

The county's Emergency Planners are keen to support communities prepare for disasters and local emergencies and they are providing plenty of help towards setting up a parish-based Emergency Plan.

If you would like to offer to help put this together we would be very pleased to hear from you. Parish Councillor Carolyn Marshall is taking the lead on this issue – contact her by email: marshallcarolyn@hotmail.co.uk or by phone 07773 959568.



Daffodils around the parish of Bournheath, March 2016



ENVIRONMENT

We hope you have enjoyed the splendid display of daffodils again this year. The Parish Council arranged for 200 kgs of bulbs to be planted last year and are pleased to see that all that work was well worth the effort. Let us know if you have any suggestions for further improvements.

ROADS

The parish Lengthsman continues to do an excellent job for us. The role entails clearing the road sides and ditches, removing vegetation from road signs, siding back vegetation from footways and pulling noxious weeds from the verges. However, it is not his role to cut back your overhanging hedges. Please don't rely on other people to look after your hedge. It is upsetting for road users when the hedge impedes the free-flow of traffic especially if it causes pedestrians to step into the road or cars to swerve.

Last on environmental matters, but by no means least, thank you to everyone who is taking part in the nationwide campaign 'Clean for the Queen'. If we all do our bit to keep our bit of roadway and hedgerow clear of litter, then we are going a long way towards improving the environment. The Parish Council can help with organised litter picks by providing you with refuse bags if needed.

M5 ROADWORKS

Contractors for Highways England are working to convert the hard shoulder of the M5 between junctions 4a and 6 into traffic lanes to provide four running lanes on both sides. This is to improve journey time reliability and reduce congestion by smoothing traffic flows by variable speed control. Construction work started in January 2016 and is likely to last for 10 months; use of three narrow lanes both north-bound and south-bound is being maintained during the day but there will be some night-time closures between 21:00 hours to 06:00 hours when traffic will be diverted via the A38. Closure dates will be advertised on the Highways England website as follows:

www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/m5-junctions-4a-to-6

PARTY IN THE PARK

This year's Party in the Park, organised by the village community centre management committee will be 'Queen-themed' in recognition of HRH Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday. Everyone is very welcome to attend on Sunday 19th June, with a 2pm start. Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy this al fresco social occasion with musical entertainment provided by local bands.

VILLAGE COMMUNITY CENTRE GATE

Our thanks go to the dedicated team of residents who open and close the village hall gate on a daily basis. More assistance for this will help to ease the load! If you can give a moment of your time early morning or evening up to 5 weekdays approximately every 6-8 weeks or regular weekends, then please contact Keith on mobile: 07850 022027.

PARISH COUNCIL CONTACTS

Council members:

- Karen May : chairman
- Stuart Hall : vice-chairman
- Keith Drew
- Brian Lodge
- Carolyn Marshall
- Steve Westwood
- Vacancy - to be filled by co-option

Contact telephone:

- 07818 085140 (mobile)
- 01527 878123 (landline)
- 01527 575691 (landline)
- 01527 875048 (landline)
- 01527 575362 (landline)
- 01527 877783 (landline)

Clerk: Gill Lungley

- 07594 024625 (mobile)

Postal address: Grange Cottage, Birmingham Road, Hopwood B48 7AJ

Website: www.bournheath-pc.gov.uk / e-mail: clerk@bournheath-pc.gov.uk

Disclaimer: Whilst all care is taken to ensure details are correct at the time of printing some discrepancies may arise. The views expressed here may not always be those of the Parish Council.