



CLENT PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2017

Dear Clent Resident

**You are invited to the Annual Parish Meeting to be held
On Monday 15TH May at 7.00pm in Clent Parish Hall.
The Parish Council Annual Meeting will follow at 7.30pm.**

Welcome to our Annual Newsletter. We hope you will be able to attend our Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 15th May 2017 and the monthly parish meeting that follows.

First of all let me provide some information to those of you who do not attend our monthly meetings about this year's parish precept as shown on the current Council Tax Notice.

Many of you will have noticed a significant percentage increase in the Parish Precept for 2017/18. This came as much of a surprise to the Parish Councillors as it has to you so I hope the following information helps.

Each year the Parish Council sets its budget for anticipated expenditure. The total amount as recorded in our budget is then discussed and approved at our January meeting and the final total agreed is then notified to Bromsgrove to incorporate into Council Tax.

In 2016 part of Clent Parish transferred to Hagley Parish. This was referred to in last year's newsletter, as was its affect upon our expenditure and the amount you pay, the Precept.

Last year the Precept reduced as explained in the newsletter. We now know that this was incorrect and that the Precept should have increased. Unfortunately we set the Precept but have no control or involvement with how this is collected by BDC. In raising this with Bromsgrove District Council we have been informed that they over estimated the total number of dwellings which remained within the smaller parish and that this resulted in an under charge last year.

In correcting this and setting the Precept for the current Council Tax, based upon the correct number of dwellings has resulted in the increase.

The last year has been a busy period for the Parish Council. We live in a beautiful part of Worcestershire and your parish council strives to keep the verges, grass and hedges in the areas under its control, trimmed. We also organise litter picks and with the help of residents try to keep our village tidy.

We celebrated the Queen's 90th Birthday with a party in Centenary Field which was well attended and blessed with fine weather. Many games of rounder's were played in good spirit and the newly installed boules pitch was in constant use. Clent Cricket Club ran a BBQ and parishioners brought their own tables, chairs, drinks and food.

We have continued to invest in our public spaces and have completed the installation of new play equipment for children, a new boules pitch for adults and are currently investing in new toilets for the pavilion. More details about this appear later in this newsletter. In addition we have improved the drainage to the side of the pond by the gate. This was an area that flooded in winter after heavy rain and made it difficult to walk through. There has been a noticeable improvement.

We intend to continue such investment over the next 12 months and beyond and updates will be provided on our website.

Finally, may I on behalf of the Parish Council thank those of you who attend our meetings and correspond with Ruth Mullett our Clerk. You are always welcome at our meetings which start at 7pm at Clent Parish Hall. The dates for each meetings are displayed on our notice boards and on our website.

I hope you find this newsletter of interest.

Best wishes

Nick Sugden, Chairman

GREENBELT REVIEW

Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) have recently published the final version of the Bromsgrove District Plan 2011 – 2030 which was adopted in January 2017. This is available to view on the BDC website.

A greenbelt review by BDC is now underway to identify areas of land to be removed from the greenbelt in order to meet additional housing needs of 2,300 homes by the year 2030. Full details of the review are outlined in the plan. Although you're Parish Council have no say in the release of greenbelt land we will be allowed to comment on any proposals that affect Clent as will individual residents. Clent is within the greenbelt so any proposed changes could affect Clent.

There will be consultation by BDC during the review period so that Parish Councils and residents may make comments upon any proposed changes.

SPEEDING IN BELBROUGHTON ROAD

Worcestershire County Council have agreed to fund the cost of a new flashing speed sign with your Parish Council funding its installation. It will be sited along Belbroughton Road and will be on the same side as Centenary Field facing towards traffic coming from the direction of the Bell & Cross. The sign will be capable of being rotated 180 degrees to face the opposite direction if the need arises.

REDUNDANT BT RED TELEPHONE BOXES

There are two telephone boxes for which BT have given notice of their intention to disconnect the telephone line because of lack of use. One is at Adams Hill the other near the church and both are in poor condition. They have been offered to the Parish Council for £1 each for community use. However because of their condition they will require money expended upon their renovation and a purpose for their continuing use.

Before any decision is made the Parish Council is inviting local residents who would like to see them retained to come forward with ideas for their continuing use and volunteer to help maintain them. Grants may be available to help with their upkeep.

Please contact Ruth Mullett if this is something that you and fellow residents wish to become involved with as soon as possible.

PARTY IN THE PARK

The Parish Council were planning to hold this event in June. However as the installation of the new toilets will not have been completed in time we have reluctantly decided to postpone the event until they are ready. It is hope that the event will be held later in the summer.



YOUTH COUNCIL LITTERPICK

Saturday 8th April dawned as a sunny and hot day great weather for a Litter pick around the Parish.

This was the first of two Litter picks this year organised by the Parish council the second one will be in September, look out for a flyer dropping through your door. We assembled at 12.00 p.m. near the cricket pavilion in Centenary field; there was an excellent turnout as usual. Our stalwarts the Chater's were there as always and Jessica (from Camel Cottages) turned out with her two daughters, great to see youngsters supporting the event ready to take over from us oldies, for when we hang our High Viz and Litter pickers up.

The Youth Council came in good numbers and it goes without saying their support is much appreciated.

High Viz, Litter pickers and rubbish bags are supplied by Bromsgrove council including collection of the full rubbish bags after the event. Thanks to Councillor Howard for organising with Bromsgrove.

We split into several groups and covered an area including, Centenary field, Trim trail, down to the French Hen, up to the Church, out to the dual carriageway and down to Field House.

The Pick lasted for approximately 2hrs with 20 bags of rubbish collected plus one tyre!

On the evening I was driving out of Clent with friends and we all commented on how clean the verges were, so well done everyone.

As a Parish Council we would like to invite residents to attend the next Litter Pick in September, and make it as successful as previous ones.

VELO BIRMINGHAM AND CLENT, SUNDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER

On Sunday 24th September 2017, Clent and the West Midlands will play host to a major new 100 mile closed road cycling event - Vélo Birmingham. The 100 mile route will take cyclists of all abilities from Birmingham City Centre, through Dudley, Sandwell, Staffordshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire before returning to Birmingham.

It is estimated that over £1million will be raised for good causes, but unfortunately the event will have an impact on our local roads, with road closures throughout Clent and the surrounding area for much of the day. Locally the route will come to Clent via Belbroughton Road, before continuing up Church Avenue, Vine Lane and St Kenelms Pass. Riders will then leave Clent via Chapel Lane and St Kenelms Road before exiting Romsley up Dark Lane, and Bromsgrove Road into Day House Bank.

For further details of the event, the route and how it impacts on our area, please see the official Vélo site:

<https://velobirmingham.com>

<https://velobirmingham.com/the-route/>

<https://velobirmingham.com/the-route/road-closures/>

<https://velobirmingham.com/the-route/road-closure-faqs/>

NEW PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

As some parishioners may have noted, the parish website which can still be found at clentparishcouncil.gov.uk, has undergone a recent refresh.

To keep you updated on Council proceedings, you can view the latest Council news, see minutes from our monthly meetings and access updated on key decisions and issues. There is also a section on the Clent Youth Council, describing the valuable work that they do on behalf of Clent's younger residents.

With busy modern lives, people are always seeking alternative ways to connect, so we have also set up Instagram and Facebook feeds, which can be accessed directly via the website.

Our aim is for the site to further serve as a hub for the broader community, with links to clubs, societies and local businesses, so if you run or belong to a club or society and would like to feature on our website, or if you would like to publicise any event, please do get in touch.

The Parish Council hope you will find the new website informative and easy to use, but this is very much work in progress, so if you do have any comments or suggestions, then please let our Clerk, Ruth Mullett know at clent.parish@btconnect.com

DEFIBRILLATOR INSTALLED AT THE PARISH HALL

Clent Parish Council will now maintain a public access defibrillator following it's installation at the Parish Hall in January. It can be accessed at any time, using a code provided by the ambulance service, after dialling 999 in the event of an emergency.

Many cardiac arrest victims can be saved by using a defibrillator to provide an electric shock to restore the heart's normal rhythm. The defibrillator is designed to be used by anyone, even those with little or no medical training. Acting like a personal coach, the machine itself will guide the operator through the rescue process with verbal prompts and a video screen explaining exactly what needs to be done and when. It's completely safe and it won't allow a shock to be given unless the person's heart requires it.

The defibrillator we decided to install was the Lifeline View. It has a large, full-colour interactive display that gives you step-by-step instructions for performing CPR, rescue breathing and external defibrillation.

For further details about the specific defibrillator we have chosen and just how easy it is to use please have a look at <http://www.defibtech.com/us/lifeline-view/features>

The Parish Council will be holding a community awareness and training session on **Saturday 20th May at 10.00am in the Parish Hall** and we would encourage all residents to come along and learn a little more about this potentially life saving device.

Further information about public access defibrillators can be found at <http://www.communityheartbeat.org.uk>

SMARTWATER

Following consultation with Mick Simpson of West Mercia Police and the “We Don’t Buy Crime” initiative, the Parish Council agreed to make Clent a “SmartWater” village during our March and April meetings. To ensure this scheme has the greatest chance of success it involves the Parish Council purchasing, distributing and ensuring the use of SmartWater kits for at least 75% of local residents.

Residents will have access to individual signage, warning potential thieves that their property has been protected. In combination with this, the Parish Council will provide village wide signage to act as a further deterrent.

Once the SmartWater kits have been delivered, the police will assist local volunteers in their distribution to local residents. They will also be on hand to explain a little more about the benefits of SmartWater, or to answer any other questions you may have.

Further details of the We Don’t Buy Crime initiative and SmartWater can be found at the following links:

<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/we-dont-buy-crime>

<https://www.smartwater.com>

CENTENARY FIELD/CLENT CRICKET CLUB

Parishioners will no doubt have noticed work being carried out in Centenary field over the past few weeks. This in line with decision taken some time ago by the Parish Council to install a toilet block and septic tank for use by several sections of our Parish including Clent Cricket club, Boules players and in particular will make the outfield available for use by Clent Primary School if required for example a Sports day, also will a great addition to such days as the parishes party in the park which hopefully become an annual event.

The first major part of the project was the installation of electricity by Western Power which was connected to a new meter box installed by ourselves inside the field and at the end of March a 65 meter trench to carry power to the cricket pavilion and in turn the new toilet block which will be installed hopefully by June.

A PLEA TO OUR DOG OWNERS

Centenary Field and the Trim Trail are used by dog owners to exercise their dogs and are very welcome to do so. Most are responsible dog owners and always pick up any mess created. Sadly there are a few who continue to allow their dogs to foul the area but do not pick up any mess created. This is despite the Parish Council providing bins and bags for this purpose. So our message to them is simple. Please do not spoil our fields for the enjoyment of everyone. Act responsibly and always clean up afterwards.

FINANCE

The Council's total income for 2016/17 was £50,593.42. Of this, £45,000.00 came from the Parish precept with the other major elements coming from a Bromsgrove District Council Tax Support Grant of £648.00 and a Lengthsman Grant of £2,600.38. Spending to the end of the financial year amounted to £98,789.63. This increase on last year was due to renovation/upgrading of the children's skateboard ramp area and upgrading to the drainage issue around the pond in Centenary Field. The table below indicates the main areas of spending.

Finance	2015/16	March 2016/17	2017/18 Budget
INCOME			
Precept	78550.00	45000.00	47000.00
Bank Interest/Charity Income/Rent etc./VAT	653.53	815.96	525.00
Grants	2986.65	3777.46	2800.00
NHW Funds	0.00	1000.00	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	82190.18	50593.42	50325.00
EXPENDITURE			
Administration	28449.37	32933.19	26350.000
Open Spaces	27618.67	51093.03	12500.00
Highways	17729.26	9381.25	5250.00
Public Lighting	7738.78	1720.76	1700.00
Grants	2038.50	1641.40	1000.00
Equipment	0.00	2020.00	5000.00
TOTAL SPEND	83574.58	98789.63	51800.00
VAT Refund Due		9406.26	

The excess of £38,789.95 will be taken from our reserves.

Ruth Mullett Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

Parish Council Contacts

Parish Clerk

Ruth Mullett

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Current Parish Councillors

Nick Sugden (Chairman)

Drew Beaumont

Kevin Smith

Peter Bates

Caroline Howard (Vice Chairman)

Ed Sheppard

Richard Price

District Councillors Margaret Sherrey, Chris Allen-Jones

Worcestershire County Councillor Rachel Jenkins