



BREWOD & COVEN PARISH COUNCIL

with Bishops Wood and Coven Heath

PARISH NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2008

BEST KEPT VILLAGES IN SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE CONGRATULATIONS DUE ONCE AGAIN

For the fourth year in succession Coven has won the Best Kept Large Village in South Staffordshire with Brewood coming a close second this year. This is a tremendous accolade and a credit to the local communities who work so hard to set such tremendous standards across the parish. The Coven BKV group, co-ordinated by Mrs Yvonne Millward, was pleased at the continued level of interest in the competition and the enthusiasm of locals, including many youngsters, who give of their time voluntarily all year round to keep Coven to the standard residents have come to enjoy. The Brewood BKV Group, organised by Mrs Jenny Jackson and Dr Richard Taylor, are clearly closing the gap on Coven this year and will make the competition even more interesting next year.

Not to be out-done and after last year's success, Bishops Wood won the Best Kept Small Village in South Staffordshire, this for the second year running, with Lapley and Trysull finishing as runners up. The Bishops Wood BKV group, with co-ordinators Mrs Jeanette Edwards and Mr Tony Sloane, have also worked hard to maintain standards and build on the improvements made last year, even with the occasional hindrance of disappearing troughs.

The Council congratulates all three villages on all they have achieved and the wonderful community spirit shown by the volunteers who turn out day after day to make their own contribution. Rumour has it that Coven Heath residents have already started work on what will be their first entry in 2009 in the small village category. The competition can only get more interesting!

Brewood Bowling Club

Plans to develop a bowling green on the playing field at Engleton Lane continue to make good progress. This is an initiative being driven by the Brewood Bowling Club which the Parish Council are delighted to be able to support in a practical manner.

The preferred location, to avoid impacting on other users of the playing field, is the northern end of the field, beyond the existing goal posts. This end of the field is generally too wet to use for other activities but the Club have been advised it will suite the demands of maintaining a bowling green.

The Council have made arrangements for a 28 year lease to be drawn up whilst the Bowling Club seek grants to fund the project which is expected to be in two phases, initially to develop and fence in the green and secondly to provide a club house/store.

The nature of this project will mean it will be some time before a bowling green is available for use - let alone the time frame for grant applications to be processed, the Green itself will take time to establish. In the mean time the club are grateful to Brewood Cricket Club who have allowed them to bowl on the out-field for the summer, hopefully this will continue next year. If you would like more details on the club please contact Paul on 07971884213 or Helen on 01902 850188.



Your Councillors are:

Bishops Wood Ward -

Jan Jeffries and Ian Westwood.

Brewood Ward -

Cllr Andrew Ball, David Evans, Ann Holmes (Vice Chair), George Martin, Dr Richard Taylor (Chair), Mac Webb.

Coven Ward -

Moira Alden-Court, Janet Carr, Cllr Ivor Clay, Lena Holmes, Lorna Jones, Yvonne Millward.

Coven Heath -

Fred Barrett.

District Councillors -

Andrew Ball, Ivor Clay, Brian Cox, Mike Hampson.

County Councillor -

Rex Roberts O.B.E.

For contact information see Parish notice-boards

Council Meetings

Meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, 35 Stafford Street, Brewood. The remaining meetings scheduled for 2008 are: September 11 and 25, October 9 and 30, November 13 and 27 and December 11. A Public Participation session is held at all of the above meetings.

Office Contacts -

Tel: 01902 850809

Email: brewoodparish@btconnect.com

Clerk: Sue Groom

Assistant Clerks:

Valerie Turner, Deborah Poole

Car Scheme: Caroline Cumming
01902 851786

Web Sites -

www.brewoodparish.org.uk

www.brewoodvillage.org.uk

www.covenvillage.org.uk

www.covenheath.org.uk

www.bishopswood.org.uk

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

Traffic Management - Brewood

Following the report in the last newsletter of the creation of a Traffic Management Committee to investigate a number of concerns raised by local residents, the committee has now met on several occasions over recent months and held a site visit with Mr Mark Keeling of Area Highways, Staffordshire County Council to discuss the concerns around the village and possible solutions. In summary these included:

- Traffic entering Market Place on the wrong side of the trough, incorrectly driving in front of The Swan Hotel - the road marking has now been altered to improve the layout.
- Speed of traffic entering the village centre—rumble strips/cobbles are not recommended within 300m of a residential area
- Speed of traffic along Kiddemore Green Road, after entering the village—high visibility, yellow backing boards to be attached to the existing 30 mph signs and an additional notice to the effect of 'Please Drive Carefully'
- A bend warning sign and 'SLOW' to be painted on the road before the bend prior to the village entrance on Kiddemore Green Road.
- Traffic monitoring carried out in July has confirmed that of nearly 1,900 vehicles using the road over a 24 hour period (900+ in each direction) the 85%ile speed was found to be 41.3mph southbound and 44.7mph northbound, clearly a speeding issue. The effect of the high visibility signs will be monitored and further measures will be considered if necessary.
- Erection of a bollard on the south entrance to the car park at the Admiral Rodney - awaiting confirmation.

The following have been registered with Area Highways for future consultation with local residents and the appropriate authorities:

- Double yellow lines on Sandy Lane opposite Vicarage Road and up Vicarage Road from the junction with Sandy Lane
- Double yellow lines on both sides of Dean Street from Church Road down as far as the Admiral Rodney
- Single yellow line - no waiting during school start and end times - in Newport Street between numbers 22 and 34

Consideration is to also be given to two built out areas in Sandy Lane to assist pedestrians in crossing the road safely. Drawings are awaited from Area Highways to enable members to consider the matter further.

Community Gangs

A new initiative has recently been introduced by Staffordshire County Council's Area Highways to send out a 'Community Gang' to each parish on a rota basis for a period of two to three days at a time, depending on the size of the parish, to address many of the minor housekeeping jobs that are often set-aside for more urgent jobs.

This Parish has already submitted a list of work to be addressed which has now been actioned. If you should know of any other work which needs addressing then please contact the Council office on 01902 850809 where a list of work will be maintained until we are scheduled to receive another visit.

Typically they can carry out work relating to the street scene and highways which requires minimal equipment and can be carried out by up to two men.



Coneybere Gardens

Last winter Members attended a site visit to Coneybere Gardens with representatives of Area Highways and South Staffordshire Housing Association to discuss the serious need for maintenance to be carried out on the access road. At the time the Housing Association confirmed that the responsibility to maintain the road was theirs but unfortunately no further progress has been made to date.

A new Property Services Manager has recently been assigned to the problem and it is understood that the matter will now be progressed, possibly in partnership with other users of the road.

Youth Provision

There has been much news recently with regard to the intention of Staffordshire County Council to sell off their land in Deansfield Road that currently houses the Youth Club, Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Guides and Brownies - and previously adult education classes. The Scouts have run a tireless campaign to bring the matter to the attention of the local community and the Parish Council are supporting them, and the youth club, in their endeavours. Following a meeting arranged by Cllr Taylor, Leader of Staffordshire County Council with Cllr Drinkwater, also of Staffordshire County Council, and local representatives those present were informed that the sale of the land has been deferred and a working party will be formed comprising of the County Council, the Scouts, the Parish Council and South Staffordshire Council "to look at a long-term plan that will safeguard the future of services for young people in Brewood, including the Scouts." - Cllr Eric Drinkwater, Media Release 25 July 2008.

Hanging Baskets

A fine show of hanging baskets have been on display throughout the Parish again this year and although they (along with the tubs and planters) had a slow start they are now looking splendid.

The Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr David Barker, Handyman to the Council, for all his hard work in planting out and maintaining the Council's baskets and planters around the Parish. The baskets outside the Council Offices in Stafford Street have received numerous compliments this year and were fortunate to be recognised as 'Highly Commended' in the Brewood competition. The full results of this competition are displayed on the Council notice-board in Brewood.

Housing Needs Survey

The Parish Council, with South Staffordshire Housing Association, is carrying out a Housing Needs Survey across the Parish to assess the needs of the community. Survey forms will go out to every household in Bishops Wood, Brewood, Coven and Coven Heath during September and the returned forms will be collated by a representative of South Staffordshire Housing Association and the resultant data returned to the Parish Council.

The survey will provide the Council and other authorities involved in meeting the housing needs of the Parish (South Staffordshire Council and the Housing Association) with useful data relating to the level of demand and the type of housing required, shared ownership or rented for example, in the Parish. The Council was disappointed that contrary to expectations the Engleton Lane development only provided for rented accommodation. It is envisaged that this survey will provide accurate information if and when any future developments are considered. Your support in this survey would be greatly appreciated.

Barnfield Sandbeds

The Parish Council continue to keep in contact with South Staffordshire Council with regard to their plans for the Barnfield Sandbeds in Brewood. Currently they are awaiting reports to determine what needs to be done to 'clean up' the site of any waste dumped there in previous years and have obtained the support of the Forest of Mercia who will clear vegetation and carry out tree pruning at no cost to the Council. It is intended that development of the site will be low key to retain the natural environment that already exists.

Bus Shelter -The Parade, Coven

Coven Members recently met with Area Highways to determine the feasibility of erecting a bus shelter on Brewood Road at the bus stop in front of The Parade in Coven.

This is an extremely exposed site and passengers would benefit from a shelter. It was agreed that there was plenty of space to accommodate a shelter whilst still enabling pedestrian access.

Members are now considering the style and size of shelter that would be most suitable after which an order will be placed.

Coven Heath Although they have as yet never entered the Best Kept Village competition it would seem they are already 'ahead of the game'. Litter picks take place around the village on a regular basis and work is carried out to tidy grass verges. As well as a general tidy up they also identify specific areas to focus on, currently this is the pavement improvement in Ball Lane in the 'Triangle' area.

Bridle Path, Bishops Wood Garden rubbish is once again being dumped on the bridle path that runs from Old Weston Road to Whiteoaks Drive in Bishops Wood. This is a selfish act which spoils the path for other users and wastes the time of the Council workers who then end up clearing it away. In these days of green bin collections there is really no excuse for such behaviour. As on previous occasions the Parish Council will have to put the matter in the hands of South Staffordshire Council to identify the offenders and take whatever action is necessary.

Playing Fields

Brewood Parish Councillor Mr Mac Webb continues to work with representatives of local play groups to source some new play equipment for the younger children. Unfortunately earlier in the summer a large piece of equipment had to be removed after youths irreparably broke it while we waited for the contractor to arrive on site to carry out the necessary repairs. Not only has this caused the Council, and in turn the local community, unnecessary expense but the vandals also put themselves in serious danger by ignoring the warning signs and the tape closing off the area. The Council is extremely grateful to the local resident who initially brought the condition of the equipment to our attention in the first place - although weekly checks take place of all of our playing fields equipment we are aware that conditions can change very quickly. Such community support is greatly appreciated.

Coven See 'Capital Projects'

Bishops Wood As a result of the previous newsletter it is hoped once again that it will be possible to take up the generous offer of Trevor and Debbie Foster to donate a basket ball post for the playing field. Although availability of the post is subject to a production run we are fortunate that Mr Adrian Holt of Ace Kind has volunteered his services to deliver the post to site and erect it. We are extremely grateful to both parties for their generous offers which will, in due course, be appreciated by the children as well. Local children in Bishops Wood have also been taking an interest in their playing fields - two children recently reported some damaged equipment and erected warning notices whilst others reported an incident of someone walking their dog in the playing fields. This last point continues to be a problem in all our playing fields even though appropriate notices are displayed.

Please remember dogs are not allowed in any of the village playing fields

Public footpath from Tinkers Lane to Sparrows End Lane, Modification Order

The Council is waiting to hear the outcome of a public hearing that took place on 29 July to decide whether or not the bridleway should be added to the definitive map. The Council, supported by County Councillor Rex Roberts, submitted the case that 'the tarmac surfaced lane (Sparrows End Lane) has no footpaths and could be dangerous for walkers if cars came by; the footpath is wide in some places (it was a carter's track) and narrow in others (where undergrowth has impinged) but it is a historical route and there is no reason to close it; it is regularly used and forms an important part of a number of excellent circular walks from Brewood. Our thanks to Mr Brian Jones for his advice and guidance on this matter.

Capital Projects - Update

New Changing Rooms Coven - Detailed drawings and the detailed build specification have now been produced, and Building Regulations agreed which has enabled Tenders to be sought for the building of new changing rooms on the playing fields at Coven.

Now more accurate costings are available funding will be sought for the balance of the project which is largely funded by a grant from the Football Foundation. Work is expected to start in October once the contract has been awarded and the funding - most likely through a preferential rate loan available to Parish Councils - has been approved. This will be a tremendous facility for Coven and will enable football to be developed further in the parish.

Council Offices, Brewood – The need to redevelop the Parish Council Offices is ongoing with the requirement to provide access for the disabled, extend storage capacity and address maintenance issues affecting the current building. Following a presentation by Brewood Ideas Group that considered the requirements of several stake-holders in the village and the possible opportunities for the land such stakeholders owned, the Parish Council have held an initial meeting with representatives of St Mary and St Chad's Church, the Diocesan Board of Education and the Diocese to discuss whether, subject to ownership of Church House being resolved, the relevant party/ies would be interested in developing the site to create a community building to meet the needs of several organisations. Ownership will sit with either the benefice of the Church (the vicar), the Parochial Church Council or the Diocesan Board of Education. It is hoped that this first hurdle will be resolved later this year after which the idea can be discussed further.

Coven Luncheon and Sunday Social Club

This club, which meets once a month for elderly residents of Coven who would otherwise be on their own on Sundays, is now in its fifth month and is proving to be extremely popular. Moira Alden-Court is extremely grateful for all the support the club has received, both financial and hands-on, and local residents are appreciating the opportunity to meet up with others on what can prove to be a very lonely day of the week for some people.

Christmas Lights

All too soon plans for the Christmas Festivities will be upon us. Already the Christmas Lights Committees are turning their thoughts to this year's arrangements. Please support these committees in whatever way you can whether it be assisting with fundraising or supporting events. Christmas is a busy time for everyone but it is only by the generous donation of these committees of their time and effort that our villages set the tone for the whole season.

Bus Services

Following the withdrawal of the Green Bus Service through Bishops Wood, Wheaton Aston and Telford this Council has understandably received numerous complaints. We have raised these concerns with Staffordshire County Council, Mr David Kidney MP for Bishops Wood and the Transport Minister and understand that the County Council are determining whether a suitable solution can be identified.

As a result of complaints reported to Choice Travel with regard to buses possibly speeding in the Parish they have asked that the date and time of any further perceived speeding occurrences be noted and reported to the Parish Council, we will then forward the details so they may investigate the matter further. Please contact the Council if you have any such information.

From Friday 15 August a new Friday service has been running to provide a service from Bishops Wood and Brewood to Newport. We understand that new bus timetables will not be available until the latest changes to local services have been stabilised - all too often the County Council find the timetables are out of date within weeks of services being agreed and publicised.

Council Accounts The Internal Audit of the Council's Accounts was completed satisfactorily in June for the year ending 31 March 2008 with nothing to report on the Annual Return which the Council submit each year to the External Auditor. The report of the External Auditor is now awaited and will be published on the Council notice-boards in due course.

Inter Parish Games 2008

The 16 events that comprise the Inter Parish Games have now been completed with Brewood Parish finishing second to Wombourne.

Mr Paul Guest of Coven, co-ordinator for the Parish of Brewood and Coven with Bishops Wood and Coven Heath, once again led a team that entered every event.

The Council is extremely grateful to Paul for all his hard work in organising this Parishes entry into the games and all the participants who helped to achieve such a respectable result.



Clarence

is the one-stop problem report service run by Staffordshire County Council for reporting problems with any of the following:

Street lights and signs, roads and pavements, pedestrian crossings and traffic lights, blocked drains on roads. Clarence can be contacted between 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday free of charge alternatively you can email:

clarence@staffordshire.gov.uk