



BISHOPSTONE GROUP
PARISH
Newsletter



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www.bishopstonegroupparish.co.uk

Issue 20

March 2009

This newsletter is produced and distributed to every house in the five parishes for the purpose of communicating the activities of the Bishopstone and District Group Parish Council and other events being held locally.

Bishopstone and District Group Parish Council

The members of the Parish Council are elected to represent all residents of the villages in the group and can influence decisions made by the various departments of the County Council and other Government organisations such as the Police and Fire Brigade.

Please contact your councillor if you have any concerns on: -

Housing and Planning, Roads, Traffic, Public Transport and Rights of Way, Refuse Disposal and Waste Recycling or any other local issues

List of Parish Councillors

Village represented	Name	Tel. number
Bishopstone	Trevor Hunt	590325
	John Macklin (Vice Chairman)	590620
	Brian Merrick	590679
	John Verry	590680
Bridge Sollars	Lillian Allsop	590210
	Gary Malins	590601
Byford	Sue Hubbard	590319
	Penny Redshaw (Chairman)	590634
Kenchester	Muriel Holmes	590233
	Petra Hickey	590630
Mansell Gamage	Cathie Draper	590284
	Adrian French	590762

Clerk to the Council Barry Megson

Telephone Number 590691

Parish Paths Officers

Village represented	Name	Tel. number
Bishopstone	John Macklin	590620
Byford & Mansell Gamage	Sue Hubbard	590319
Bridge Sollars	Lillian Allsop	590210
Kenchester	John Macklin	590620

Herefordshire County Councillor

Adrian Blackshaw Tel:01432 260201 (contact via Herefordshire Council offices)

Resignation of Parish Councillor

The members of the Parish Council would like to thank Hayley Birch, who recently resigned from Bishopstone and District Group Parish Council, for her service as a Parish Councillor.

Parish Council Meeting

The next Parish Council Meeting will be on 12th March followed by a meeting on 14th May.

These will be held at The Portway Inn Hotel, Staunton-on-Wye starting at 7.30 pm unless otherwise advised.

Parish Plan

Members of Focus groups, ensuring that the Bishopstone Group Parish Plan is implemented, are as follows:-

Traffic and Rights of Way –John Verry and Sue Hubbard

Local services – To be appointed

Housing and Planning – Petra Hickey (Kenchester), Brian Merrick (Bishopstone), Gary Malins (Bridge Sollars), Cathy Draper (Mansel Gamage) and Muriel Holmes (Byford)

Recycling – Penny Redshaw

Community Centre – John Macklin and Sue Hubbard

Web Page

Readers with access to a computer can read Council notices, past issues of this newsletter and other local information on the Parish Council **Web site**. This can be reached by logging on to www.Bishopstonegroupparish.co.uk

Notice Boards

The appointed key holders for the Notice Boards in each village are :-

Bridge Sollars	Gary Malins	Tel. 590601
Byford	Penny Redshaw	Tel. 590634
Kenchester	Petra Hickey	Tel. 590630
Mansell Gamage	Adrian French	Tel. 590762

If you wish to display any article of public interest, please contact your local key holder.

Recycling Facility

There is a local recycling facility at Oakchurch Farm Shop on the main A438 near Staunton-on-Wye.

Councillors Wanted

The Parish Council require two councillors - one to represent Bishopstone and one to represent Byford. Applicants must live within three miles (as the crow flies) of the village they represent and must have lived or worked in the area for one year. To find out more about this opportunity call or visit the Parish Clerk who is Barry Megson, Whipsiderry, Bishopstone. Tel:- 01981 590691 or email barryanne99@tiscali.co.uk

Annual Parish Meeting

Why hold a Annual Parish Meeting?

It is an opportunity to talk to your Parish Councillor and ask any question of a parochial nature. You can praise or reproach, bring to their attention what you feel about life in a rural parish (with no amenities) or simply tell them that that is why you came to live here and that you like it just as it is and that you do not want change.

It is the first time that your Parish Council have held a meeting like this and because we want to make it as interesting as possible we have invited an excellent guest speaker to start the meeting off. He is Mr Andrew Ashcroft the Head of Planning and Transportation for Herefordshire Council. With the new planning laws having come into effect from 1st October 2008 it should be very interesting - plus he is willing to take questions after his talk.

The “Annual Parish Meeting” will be on Tuesday 12th May in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall. It will be an evening meeting starting at 7.30pm to allow as many as possible to attend.

Your Parish Council are looking forward to meeting you and hope that you will enjoy the evening.

Barry Megson
Parish Clerk.

Sandbag provision.

The sandbag stores, as reported in the last issue, at the bottom of Bishon Lane, Bishopstone, in Mansell Gamage and at Bridge Sollars, are now in place. In times of flooding call 01981 590 691 for assistance with sandbags.

Litter Picking

On Saturday 7th February a total of fourteen persons turned out to walk through the village of Bishopstone collecting litter. The Parish Council obtained a bag of equipment for the job and covered themselves with insurance – just in case.

One might have thought there would not be much litter to collect because it is a small village where everyone is sensible and responsible. So where does it all come from?

You might expect the odd bits of paper, packets and a plastic drink bottle or two plus maybe a couple of beer cans but you do not expect broken children's toys and bicycles and a television set. We have had bags of garden rubbish, waste building materials, washing machines and fridges in the past.

The countryside is NOT the place to dump household rubbish and there are significant penalties in place for anyone caught doing so. If you spot any offenders, please report the incident to the police giving the vehicle registration number.

Our litter picking day produced eleven bags of rubbish plus pieces of plastic, roofing felt and glass.

New Planning Regulations

If you are thinking of doing some home improvements you need to know what the new planning rules are that came into force in England, from 1st October 2008

Although articles have appeared in the national press about the subject Herefordshire Council and Government will not be publishing a booklet.

Instead you are invited to go to a Government web site to find out all you want to know about “**Householder permitted development rights**”. The web site is:-

www.planningportal.gov.uk

It is recommended that you note this web site because it will save you a lot of time and possibly money.

Who do I tell?

It's always good to know where to go and who to speak to when one has a problem. I suppose you should talk to someone close and someone you can trust who will give you good advice, but then they may not know the answer. It also depends on the problem.

The Parish Council have been busy making contacts and arrangements with Herefordshire Council departments and other organisations to enable them to help solve problems because that is what a good parish council does. Recent examples are when a hole appeared in the road and the sewage pipe was exposed and broken. This was repaired very quickly after the PC had been contacted. The road flooded and the PC arranged for the drains and grids to be cleared. The wind blew a tree over the highway and the PC arranged for it to be removed. Many pot holes have been reported and repaired. Speed limit and village name signs placed and new notice boards erected.

What is the correct procedure that one should take if a problem is of concern and you think the PC can help you? A full list of all councillors is included in the Newsletter that is delivered free to your house every quarter. Pick any one and write a brief note to that person giving your name and address and this letter will ensure that the PC will take some action because they are duty bound to do so. They will write and tell you what they decided to do on your behalf so that you know what is happening.

You may decide that the PC cannot help you and that you would be better served by going direct yourself. You can, by going to a PACT (Partners & Communities Together) meeting attended by Herefordshire Council, West Mercia Police and Social Services representatives who will listen to your problem and advise you accordingly.

The next PACT meeting will be held in The Council Chamber, Brockington (the offices of Herefordshire Council) on Tuesday 28th April 2009 starting at 7pm prompt. Just turn up and enjoy.

How do you solve a problem called?

For us the problem is not Maria but the road between Bridge Sollars and Madley. A driver of any vehicle will know only too well the hidden dangers of the narrow (single vehicle only) sections, the blind bends and the chance meeting of oncoming traffic.

Since the new bridge across the River Wye opened the number of vehicles using this road has increased steadily, not only cars but lorries of all shapes and sizes. The people who live on this road and local regular drivers are becoming more concerned about its future and have let their parish councils know of their

concerns such as speeding, parking with no concern for others, damage to fences and verges and the fear of a serious accident. Well that is the problem – how do you solve it?

On Wednesday 4th February 2009 the Parish Councils from Madley and Bishopstone Group met with the acting Head of Herefordshire Highways and the Herefordshire County Cabinet member for Highways to talk their way through this problem.

The first thing was to ensure that Herefordshire Council acknowledged that there was a problem. Then speakers from both parish councils offered evidence that outlined those problems, such as letters and emails of complaint from locals.

It was suggested that the road be widened to become a two-way road and be classified a B road. This, it was said, would only encourage more traffic and cash strapped Herefordshire Council could not afford to go that way. Then make lots of passing places but again this would cost money and where would they be placed said Herefordshire Council. Well put a speed limit on the road but even this would be difficult to police and there are only certain sections of the road where one can speed and there is no hard fact to prove that speeding is being done. So the talk continued.

Finally it was agreed that facts were needed and so Herefordshire Council agreed to monitor traffic during the Spring/Summer of this year. The main problem was the large lorries and so if both Parish Councils reported the lorries to their operators and asked them to use an alternative route it could alleviate the problem. Herefordshire Council will consider the most meaningful signs to be placed at the each end of the road again to try to reduce the use of the road by long, large and heavy lorries.

If you agree that something should be done to make this road safer then report any incident and/or any large vehicle that you think should not be on this road to your Parish Clerk during the Spring/Summer of this year only. Remember that we cannot write if we do not have an address to write to.

The contact at Madley is:- Mrs C Boyles, Madley Parish Council, 12 Grenfell Road, Hereford. HR1 2QR or email: boyles1@hotmail.co.uk

The contact at Bishopstone is:- Mr B Megson, Bishopstone and District Group Parish Council, Whipsiderry, Bishopstone. Hereford. HR4 7JE or email: barryanne99@tiscali.co.uk

The Search is on!

Do you know someone magical?

The search has started for the people who have selflessly and tirelessly given their time, free, to numerous causes in the County.

It's time for the Herefordshire Volunteers of the Year Awards! Organised by Herefordshire Voluntary Action, in partnership with Allpay, the awards are back for 2009 – by popular demand.

The awards will be presented at a 'magical' themed gala dinner at the **Hereford Racecourse on June 4th** hosted by the dynamic and rapidly expanding Herefordshire company, Allpay. This date significantly falls within National Volunteers Week which is marking its 25th anniversary.

Nominations, open to everyone, are invited for the following five categories:

Volunteer Team of the Year – Prizes: £200, £150

Young Volunteer of the Year – Prizes: £100, £75

Good Neighbour of the Year – Prizes: Day at the races for 2, Meal for 2, £25 ASDA voucher.

Fundraiser of the Year – Prize: £250

Sports Volunteer of the Year – Prize: £200

Inspirational Volunteer of the Year – Prize: £200

Details of the categories and prizes - generously donated by Barclays Bank, BOSS, Hereford Journal, Tesco and Allpay – can be found in the nomination booklet which is available from the Volunteer Centre at Herefordshire Voluntary Action, Berrows Business Centre on Bath Street, Hereford. You can also download the nomination booklet from www.herefordshireva.org.

Closing date for nominations is April 21st. Judging will take place on May 5th and the panel will comprise impartial representatives from BBC Hereford and Worcester Radio, Herefordshire Partnership, the Voluntary Sector Assembly and the sponsors.

If you would like a nomination booklet or more information, please contact Angela Legg on 01432 343932 or email angela@herefordshireva.org.

Community Wheels

Mr Truelove, the Transport Projects Officer of Herefordshire Voluntary Action, attended the Parish Council Meeting in January. He told the meeting that “Community Wheels” is a social car scheme for people living in North Herefordshire. Community Wheels provides a service aimed at the elderly, frail, people with physical or mental disability or persons who live in an isolated place with no bus service, no car and no neighbour or family to provide transport.

The service is provided by volunteers who drive their own vehicles to deliver their passenger/s to their destination and return them safely home. Community Wheels has a mini bus and this is used to carry wheelchair passengers. The cost of the service approximates to local bus fares plus fuel used.

The Leominster office is open Monday to Friday from 09.30 to 12.30. A minimum of 48 hours notice must be given. Tel: 01568 615 785.

Postage Stamp Forgery

Was it providential or just coincidental that the December newsletter contained my article on stamp forgery because in the Royal Mail magazine for stamp collectors issued late January 2009 there was an item entitled “Security features for definitive stamps”.

Here is an opportunity to see at first hand Royal Mail’s battle against the forger and something for you to look for when buying your next 1st or 2nd class stamp. Royal Mail state “All future printings will be self-adhesive and will feature four small semi-circular slits within the stamp. In addition each stamp will be printed with an iridescent ink security pattern inscribed “Royal Mail” on the darker background around the Queen’s head.”



The “new” stamps first appeared on sale on February 17th with more to follow. The new design will be on the two stamps above, the “Large” definitive’s also the 50p, £1, £1.50, £2, £3, and £5 values.

Arthur Sale

Bishopstone Soapbox Racing Club

Barry Megson

The first Soapbox race in Herefordshire was run at Mansel Lacy in 2002. Ever since that time Barry has been an enthusiastic and loyal member of the BSRC. In 2005 the club decided to build a second Soapbox, leaving the original machine without a driver. Barry gallantly stepped into the breach and, during the years up to 2008 and through many modifications to the vehicle, improved his technique until he was as fast as anyone. In 2007 he won outright at Richards Castle. In 2008 his fastest run at Mansel Lacy equalled the track record and the time of the eventual winner, but he was placed second because the final placings were based on the average time of the two fastest runs. Finally, at Little Dewchurch in the last event of 2008, he again won outright in the fastest time ever recorded on that hill.



Although Barry, as the eldest member of the team, has now decided it is time for him to retire from driving, he intends to continue helping with our Soapboxes in the future. We thank him for the enthusiasm, good humour and dedication he has displayed over the last seven years and wish him well in his “retirement”.

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2008
FOR EXPORT

How Many Birds?

Most readers will have heard of the R.S.P.B. (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), but there is another national organisation that is equally important, although less well known, the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). The BTO collects information on bird numbers from across Britain by means of surveys conducted by an army of volunteers. These surveys may be conducted over small or large areas, may be species specific or cover all birds in an area, but all are long-term studies. The BTO is the scientific side of bird-watching and is the organisation that the Government contacts when it needs information about bird numbers or the ecological importance of an area when it is drawing up plans for a major development such as a runway, marina or wind farm.

One such survey is the Breeding Atlas launched in 2007 and due to be completed in 2011. In order to make the best use of the BTO's facilities and expertise, a number of County bird clubs have decided to go into more detail than the BTO requires and produce their own County Breeding Bird Atlas. The Herefordshire Ornithological Club is one such club. In order to achieve its aim the HOC is following the BTO's format. The Ordnance Survey maps divide the county into 10-kilometre squares and these are sub-divided into 25x2 km squares.

These smaller squares are called tetrads. There are 550 tetrads in Herefordshire. Volunteers make four visits to a tetrad each year, twice in winter and twice during the breeding season. Each visit lasts one or two hours during which the volunteer records all the birds that are seen or heard. All observations are carried out from public paths or roads or by permission of the landowner if there is no other suitable access. The results are sent to BTO by post or on-line and will eventually produce an atlas showing where each species breeds in Herefordshire and how many are breeding in each tetrad.

Although much of the County will be covered there are still tetrads where help is required, Byford and Mansel Gamage, are two areas still to be surveyed, so if you would like to know more about the survey or would like to be involved then please contact me on 590622. Bird recording is good fun and you would be making a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the state of British birds. Further information and the current progress can be found on the BTO website: www.bto.org.uk.

PJ.Eldridge.

Would you like to have a say in the future of your local hospital

The NHS touches everyone, our families and our friends, from the beginning of our lives to the end. Hereford Hospital Trust, in common with NHS Trusts nationwide, is applying for Foundation Trust status. A Foundation Trust is not directly accountable to the Government but instead is accountable to local people like you. Foundation Trusts are still part of the NHS. If we are successful in our application, it will help to ensure that Hereford's hospital services continue to be managed locally rather than being controlled by another organization based outside the county. The success of our application depends on a number of factors, including having a membership representative of the population we serve and particularly those with an interest in healthcare provision.

At present, the Trust has 2,234 public members, 200 of whom are actively involved in Focus Groups. We are seeking to double our membership in 2009 in order to inform people about our services, increase representation and involve them in the development of the Foundation Trust. We want all our members to enjoy their involvement with the hospital. This may be nothing more than receiving information we send you and perhaps coming to our public meetings. The choice is yours how actively involved you wish to be.

We are asking you to help secure our future and show that local people really are interested in their local hospital by signing up as a "member" of the Trust. Please join via our website www.herefordhospital.nhs.uk or contact me for an application form. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Janette Ward

Foundation Trust Programme Support Officer

Hereford Hospital NHS Trust, The County Hospital , Union Walk, Hereford , HR1 2ER.

Found

An attractive flower shaped ear-ring has been found in Bridge Sollars church.
Contact Nancy Malins on 590601

Offa's Dyke: Hereford and the Welsh

By Sue Hubbard

On March 1st we celebrate Dydd Dewi Sant, the festival of St David, the patron saint of Wales. In the 21st century relations between England and Wales are usually friendly (except at the Millennium Stadium) but this has not always been the case and we have a reminder of that in Offa's Dyke, which runs through the centre of our parishes.

King Offa ordered the building of the dyke in about 784 in order to mark the western border of his kingdom of Mercia. This frontier ran for 149 miles from Sedbury Cliff above the river Severn to Prestatyn on the north Welsh coast and the dyke consisted of an earth bank with a wide ditch, usually on the western side. Modern measurements show the bank was over 6 feet high and the overall width of bank and ditch together about 60 feet. In our parishes the dyke runs down from Yazor Wood, over Garnons Hill, meeting the Roman road at the Steppes, and then down from Big Oaks to the Wye, leaving Byford and Mansell Gamage on the Welsh side of the border. A survey of church land in Byford in 1636 mentions that one of the fields adjoins "Offsditch," and the dyke still forms the parish boundary between Byford and its neighbours of Bishopstone and Bridge Sollars.

The dyke served both as a permanent defensive fortification to keep out large-scale incursions by the Welsh, and to prevent the cattle rustling that was rife in both directions. It also helped to control legitimate access from one country to the other and to direct traders and travellers to designated border crossing places. In fact laws drawn up by the leaders of both countries set out rules for safe crossing of the border so that "neither is a Welshman to cross into English land nor an Englishman into Welsh, without the appointed man from that land who shall meet him at the bank and bring him back there again without offence." Our Roman road may have been one of those crossing places.

In the two centuries following Offa's death relations between the two countries deteriorated with periods of peace increasingly interrupted by vicious border raids and local wars in which the English slowly pushed the Herefordshire border closer to its modern position. The various Welsh kingdoms also fought each other and it must often have been difficult to be sure who was a friend or enemy as alliances between English leaders and Welsh princes were made and broken in bewildering succession.

In 1055 a Welsh army led by Gruffydd ap Llywelyn marched on Hereford, overwhelmed the force hastily drawn up to oppose it and swept into the city, killing and plundering as it went. The cathedral was burnt to the ground, the bishop and seven canons murdered in particularly unpleasant ways and the victorious Welsh returned home “with many worthy prisoners, great triumph and rich spoils, leaving nothing in the town but blood and ashes and the walls razed to the ground”. Revenge for the Herefordians came eight years later when the Earl of Hereford, Harold Godwinson (later King Harold) led them in a successful campaign into Wales which resulted in Gruffydd’s death. The enslavement of the enemy’s women and children was a regular feature of this border warfare and some of the slaves listed in the Domesday book entries for our parishes were probably trophies brought home by soldiers in Harold’s army.

After their victory at Hastings the Normans found the area west of the Dyke devastated by years of warfare with some areas reduced to waste. They began a steady process of pacification and redevelopment, appointing strong leaders to rule the border lordships and to develop a network of castles from which they could ride out to nip trouble in the bud. Gradually trade began to seem more important than open war and Welsh visitors came to Hereford to buy and sell in the market rather than to rape and pillage. But old habits die hard and up until the time of Henry VIII parts of Herefordshire were often like some early version of a cowboy film with Welsh cattle rustlers raiding isolated farms and the sheriff gathering together a posse (yes, we had them before the Wild West did) to ride in hot pursuit.

Periodic uprisings like the Glyndwr rebellion in the early 1400s meant that the authorities were never quite sure where Welsh loyalties lay and Acts of Parliament were passed making it illegal for anyone born in Wales of Welsh parents to own property in Hereford; to become Mayor of Hereford or hold any public office there; or to stay within the city walls after curfew on pain of death. Opinions vary as to whether these laws are still enforceable. The oft-quoted idea that the Bishop of Hereford was given the right to take out his longbow and shoot any Welshman whom he encounters in the cathedral close is unfortunately an urban myth and has no basis in fact!



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Wackey Walkers

The FESTIVE WALK took place on Saturday 27th December starting from the car park at Credenhill Wood and then completing a circular walk around the wood. Afterwards most people stayed for a meal at the Bell Inn Tillington.

The January walk, led by John and Jo Macklin, was from the Bay Horse Inn, Kings Acre Road, along footpaths and minor roads around Breinton and back to the Bay Horse for lunch.

In February, the walk, led by Brian and Jenny Merrick, started from the 'Bull Ring' pub at Kingstone, along footpaths to Cockyard and then on a minor road towards Thruxton passing Whitfield House (ancestral home of the Clive family) before returning to Kingstone and lunch at the Bull Ring.

The next walk will start from Poston Mill on the B4348 road from Kingstone to Peterchurch, meeting at 10.15 am on Saturday 28th March.

If anyone would like to organise a walk in August, please contact John Macklin on 590620.

The walks normally take place on either the third or fourth Saturday in each month. They often start at a Public House where bar snacks can be enjoyed after the walk. Many walkers stay, but this is optional! The starting place and time are announced in the County Section of the Hereford Times under Bishopstone.

Forthcoming Events

Visit of Parish Freighter

During the last years the Parish Council has organised for these two vehicles to visit Bishopstone and Byford and to take away all kinds of household and garden rubbish. Unfortunately Herefordshire Council has increased the charge for this service from £38.70 per visit to £380 per visit from 1st June 2009 - a figure which the Parish Council meeting in January deemed excessive and could not be paid for out of our local Council Tax.

Visits this year were ordered at the original rate and the Parish Freighter will be in Byford Village on Saturday 28th March from 11am to 1pm and at Bishopstone, by the Telephone Box, on Saturday 16th May 11am to 1pm.

Bishopstone

The Easter Service at Bishopstone Church will be at 10 am on Sunday 12th April.

Bridge Sollars

The Easter Dawn Eucharist at St Andrews Church Bridge Sollars will be held at 6 am on Sunday 12th April. You are welcome to breakfast after the service at 1 Nelson Cottages.

Byford

At the time of going to print, details of the Easter Service at Byford Church were not available. Please contact Sue Hubbard on 590319.

Kenchester

The Easter service at Kenchester Church will be held at 8 am on Sunday 12th April.

The times of services for all our churches can be found on the Parish Council **Web site**. Log on to www.Bishopstonegroupparish.co.uk

Hereford Cathedral on Tuesday 7 April 2009 at 7.00 pm

St Matthew Passion by *J S Bach*

Simon Wall *Evangelist* Colin Campbell *Christus* Lucy Bowen *soprano*

James Bowman *countertenor* Huw Rhys-Evans *tenor* Robert Rice *bass*

Hereford Cathedral Choir Herefordshire Junior Singing Club

Marches Barque

directed by Geraint Bowen

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Hereford or Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust (01432 374261)

or on St John's Door on the night

In aid of **Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust**

Future Editions – Send copy to David Macklin Greenwalls Bishopstone

Tel. 590627 or e-mail to davidmacklin2002@yahoo.co.uk