

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT FOR

MEETING ON TUESDAY 9th APRIL 2013

WELCOME

Welcome to the 2013 Annual Parish Meeting. This is where we meet once a year to give you a report on what we have been doing in the Parish over the past 12 months.

We can discuss any problems you may have regarding the state of the Parish and also what you would like to see us doing for you over the next year.

If you have any questions or comments please ask them at the end.

REPORT

The main objective of the Parish Council is to work together as a team, combining our energies and skills to serve the Parish of Eckington. There are 9 elected councillors, the Parish Clerk & the Parish lengthsman.

We try to have at least one councillor representative on each of the main village committees and some of the local government committees. This keeps us up to date on what is happening within the parish and surrounding area.

The County & District Councillors attend our monthly meetings on a regular basis and we also keep in contact with the local police and the Bredon Hill Conservation Group.

We have, over the last twelve months:- Received & dealt with more than 30 planning applications within the village and surrounding area.

The Churchyard & Cemetery are both maintained by the Parish Council which includes the mowing and any necessary work to the trees and hedges being done at various times.

Nils Wilkes continues to keep the War Memorial looking tidy and weed free for which we are very grateful. Thank you Nils.

We manage the allotments, all of them are taken at the moment and there is a waiting list of 1. Due to an ongoing vandalism problem earlier in the year, we increased the height of the perimeter fence from 1 to 2m, which seems, so far, to be working.

The parish footpaths are regularly walked by our footpaths officer and any problems are reported and rectified quickly keeping them in good order. The new Wychavon Way is now open and the River footpath is included on it.

The Parish council support the Recreation centre with a grant each year to help with their running costs.

We purchased grit bins for some problem areas within the village and also gave the Village Hall a substantial donation towards the ongoing improvements and the new staging.

During the year we have erected, and continue to monitor the Vehicle Activated Speed Sign on the main road. This has proved very interesting with an average of 10,000 speeding vehicles being recorded each week when it was first installed.

We have just received the statistics from a recent speeding survey run by Worcester County Highways Department and we have the results already from a similar survey done before the speed sign was installed.

We will be analysing both these sets of results along with the data from the machine on the main road to give us an idea of changes to speed since the machine was installed.

Last year, at this meeting, we discussed the possibility of purchasing land at Stoneyfurlong Lane. This was to create another public open space within the village boundary using the money available through Section 106 from the Tewkesbury Road housing development.

This idea was withdrawn due to considerable local resident opposition to the project.

Since then the recreation centre committee have come to us with a detailed proposal. They are looking to regenerate the land near the railway line which has become unusable and also add a pathway around the play equipment for wheeled pedestrians, along with other improvements to the site as a whole.

Discussions have taken place with Wychavon District Council and they have agreed to let us spend the money on this proposal. This is an exciting project which will hopefully get started fairly soon.

The New Homes Bonus Scheme has been very successful and we, as a parish, have received over £12,000 from Wychavon District Council, all of which has been allocated to local groups. Some of the money has gone to the Recreation Centre committee for a new slide, Under Fives have purchased new bikes & scooters, the senior football club have new goal posts and Scouts & Guides put their share of the funds to refurbishing the toilets in the scout hut.

Some of the future funding has already been allocated to the village hall for their ongoing improvements and we are currently discussing if there are any other village projects we should be looking to help fund in the future.

The Parish Council have agreed to continue supporting the community bus service scheme for 2013, bus number 381, which was a new service in 2012 for Sundays and Bank Holidays in the local area running from May to September. This was not as successful as anticipated last year, but it will run again this year with a slightly different route.

We contribute to the Parish Games each year and this is now organised by Colin Chapman. Eckington won the competition in 2012 which is a massive achievement. Well done and thank you to Colin and all the village team members who took part. Because we won, the presentation evening for this year's competition will be held in the village. Details of this will be put in the Parish Magazine nearer the time.

Finally I would like to thank the team of councillors for the time they give and their ongoing hard work, the Parish Clerk, Louise, for doing all the paperwork and making things run smoothly and also Philip the parish lengthsman for his work keeping the village tidy.

Please continue to come along to meetings and discuss any issues you may have within the Parish. Our next meeting will follow on from this one.

Thank you.