



ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL



Spring Newsletter Issue 40 - 2018

Setting the Precept and planning ahead

We recently faced the very difficult task of setting the Precept (funding for your Parish Council collected with the Council Tax) for 2018/19. We believe it is very important to maintain current facilities and deliver the community events we all enjoy, but costs are increasing and the Precept has to be kept at a level acceptable to residents. We face many challenges this year: changes in data protection law mean we have to budget for a completely new and extensive range of administration tasks, while the loss of the Localised Council Tax Support grant also has to be managed. After much discussion it was agreed to raise the Precept by an amount equivalent to just over 6p per week for a 'Band D' (average) household.

Priorities for 2018/19

We know, from the community survey undertaken as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, how much residents value the 'village feel' of our Parish, and that this comes about from our sense of community, management of open spaces and the existence of the Green Belt. Maintaining the special nature of our Parish will guide our priorities for the coming year, and these will focus around:

- delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan, which will enable us to have a much stronger say in local development – see page 3
- continued enhancement of community facilities including our playgrounds and parks
- organisation and delivery of a range of community events – see article on right
- completion of the Greenwood Park Pavilion project.

Cllr Dorothy Kerry, Chair of Council



Parish in Bloom

It's time to get planting for the 2018 Parish in Bloom competition. Following the successful changes made to the running of the competition last year, more front gardens, basket, planters and floral business displays than ever before were presented with awards at the annual Presentation Evening in September. It is not necessary to make a formal entry for any category, as all front gardens, residential hanging baskets or planters, business floral displays and Parish Council allotments throughout the Parish will be assessed by the Parish in Bloom Working Party during July. Awards will be presented on 27 September 2018 at Greenwood Park Community Centre.

PARISH BLUEBELL WALK



SUNDAY 22 APRIL

Enjoy a Sunday morning guided walk based on the Parish Walk Map.

The walk will take about 2.5 hours and will explore some of the lesser known paths around Bricket Wood Common. The route will also take us through Jack Williams Wood, famous for its outstanding bluebell display at this time of year.

Events planned for you in 2018

2018 will be a busy year in your Parish. Please add the following events to your diary:

- Parish Bluebell Walk – Sunday 22 April. Enjoy a guided, morning walk based on the Parish Walk Map. Meet at the Parish Centre at 10.30am
- Armed Forces Day – Sunday 24 June, including a parade, the raising of the Armed Forces Flag and tea
- Crafts in the Park – 23–25 July, with children of all ages invited to be creative at this free event
- Remembrance Day – Sunday 11 November, with a service followed by the lighting of a beacon to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War
- Carol Concert – Sunday 2 December, which in the past has included music, carols, childrens' presentations and (on occasions) a donkey and sheep!
- The 2018 Fête, which was due to be held in May, has been postponed due to a number of circumstances over which your Parish Council has no control. We intend to hold the next Fête in May 2019. It'll be worth the wait!

See 'Events': www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk



Connect with us by Twitter

Your Parish Council's Twitter account is helping to keep residents, businesses and visitors up to date on what's happening locally. It's simple for you to stay informed.

'Follow' us now: twitter.com/ststephenpc

Response to County Council transport consultation

Rod Harman, of the Neighbourhood Plan Transport Working Party, responded on behalf of your Parish to the Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) consultation. Although largely supportive of the LTP4 draft, a number of points were raised, including the need for:

- improvements to road junctions to address increased traffic at the A414/A405 (Park Street Roundabout), the A405/B4630 (Noke Roundabout), A405/M25 and A405/M1 junctions
- improved bus services for Bricket Wood and Park Street villages
- more frequent Abbey Line trains and a direct service from St Albans Abbey Station to London Euston Station during peak times
- a Park-and-Ride facility between St Albans and Watford with bus services.

Abfly, the Abbey Flyer Users' Group, also responded, welcoming the abandonment of the proposal to replace the Abbey Line with a 'busway' (which it had campaigned against), and emphasising the need for:

- a passing loop on the Abbey Line to allow more frequent trains
- better connections between St Albans Abbey and St Albans City stations.

The responses were informed, respectively, by a Parish Council survey of residents and an Abfly members survey.

Become a Parish Councillor

There is a vacancy on Parish Council, and we are seeking to co-opt (appoint) an individual to serve as a Councillor for Park Street Ward. If you are interested in supporting your local community, please contact your Parish Office (01923 681443; clerk@ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk) to receive a nomination form. The closing date is 30 April 2018, and interviews will be held during May.

If you want to know more about being a Parish Councillor, why not ask one of them? See 'Your Parish Councillors':
www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk



Honouring people who make a difference locally

Your Parish Council values the outstanding performance and dedication shown by individuals living and working in the local community. In celebration of this work, we are asking you to nominate people you think have 'made an exceptional contribution that benefits the community.' There are two categories, Community Award and Youth Community Award; the latter is for people 18 years and younger. The awards will be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting on 10 May 2018. Nominees must be an individual, or an indivisible partnership of two, who has made an exceptional contribution that benefits the community, and who has not previously won the award. The deadline for nominations is 5pm on 8 March 2018; forms can be obtained from the Parish Office (01923 681443; clerk@ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk). If successful, your nominee may be asked to take part in publicity related to the awards.

Defibrillators in your Parish

When your Parish Council installs equipment it is expected that it will be well used. However, this piece of equipment is one that we hope will not need to be used.

The Parish has installed defibrillators on the outside walls of: the Parish Centre, Bricket Wood; the Pavilion at Park Street Recreation Ground; and the Community Centre, Chiswell Green. Park Street Village Hall has installed a defibrillator in the foyer.

All the pieces of equipment are easy to operate and just require you to follow very simple clearly recorded instructions to help a person suffering cardiac arrest to survive.



Remembrance Day Parade and Service

The Parade of Standards, led by Harpenden Pipe Band, was the largest to date with more than 300 participants from the local cadet forces, youth groups and other organisations taking part. Following the parade along Park Street, the service at the War Memorial was led by Revd Kylie Hodgins and was attended by more than 800 people. Wreaths were laid by local councils, cadets, youth groups, schools, churches, residents associations and other local organisations. In addition a wreath was laid by Cllr Ian Getley, on behalf of St Stephen Parish Council, in commemoration of all those who lost their lives at Passchendaele. Photos from the day can be viewed in our online picture gallery.

See 'Gallery':

www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Plan

You will have read in almost every edition of this newsletter for the last two years an article on the Neighbourhood Plan. That is because the Plan is important: it will affect residents, businesses, clubs, organisations and associations that reside in, work in, visit or use the Parish. It is being put together by a consortium of Parish Councillors, members of local residents associations and residents who have expressed an interest in its development.

The Plan will reflect your preferences on the location, type and style of development, thus increasing your influence in the developments that take place within your Parish. Once the Plan is passed, the District Council planning officers will have to take notice of the developments within it, which will also include the areas of open space and green spaces that you want to keep.

At the moment we are looking at a number of parcels of land that have been put forward as possible development sites. They have all been assessed by an external organisation to make sure that they meet the very strict criteria – those that don't will still appear in the Plan, with reasons for rejection stated.



We hope to have the draft Plan in place by late summer of this year. If you are interested in the Plan and its progress, contact the Parish Office (01923 681443; clerk@ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk) and they will put you in touch with a member of the Steering Group. It's your Plan: please become interested.

Cllr Bill Pryce

See 'Neighbourhood Plan': www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Carol Concert

The Annual Carol Concert proved to be as popular as ever at Greenwood Park on 3 December 2017. A full house of around 300 – including family, friends, local residents, Councillors and the Mayor and Mayoress of St Albans – was treated to music and poetry presented by all the local schools, plus performances from the Combined Churches Choir and the Watford Band.

Children from Mount Pleasant Lane School took to the stage with their presentation of the Nativity, ably assisted (and sometimes upstaged) by Legolam, a Shetland Sheep. The charity collection, held in aid of BLESMA (The Limbless Veterans), raised in excess of £530 – our largest total to date.



Be outstanding in our field

Did you know you can hire your Parish Council's outdoor spaces? The Parish Centre, Greenwood Park, Park Street Recreation Ground and other open spaces throughout your Parish can be hired for parties, events, fitness training, filming and other organised activities. Greenwood Park has accommodated larger events, like the Hearing Dogs for Deaf People Doggy Fun Day and the Dulux Trade London Revolution Charity Cycle Ride Pit Stop. Small areas can be hired to run regular organised activities. The Parish Centre is popular for outdoor parties, as we are able to offer a contained site with access to facilities and parking. For more details please contact Gill Marie at the Parish Office (01923 681443; gill@ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk).



Can you keep it up? Volleyball players sought

Moles Volleyball Club is a local group offering people the chance to get fit, have fun and make new friends. The club meets in the Greenwood Park Community Centre's Sports Hall on Wednesdays, 9–10 pm.

Club Manager David Amesbury said, "We have a good laugh and there's plenty of friendly banter flying around on the court during the games. Our members are aged between 16 and 65 years old, and once playing comes to an end you can choose whether to join us for a well-earned drink and chat afterwards. If you are new to the area, or find yourself at a loose end on Wednesday nights, and want to meet some local friendly faces, call me (01727 872844 or 07799 832536)."

The Community Centre offers numerous facilities, with the Sports Hall also accommodating badminton, children's indoor football, basketball, dancing – including Salsa and Line dancing, keep fit, 'Fitsteps', over 50's Fella's Fitness and indoor bowls. A meeting room, complete with bar, and a second hall are available for hire, while kitchen facilities allow for a variety of functions.

See 'Venue Hire': www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk

PARTIES, MEETINGS, WEDDING RECEPTIONS...

Whatever you're planning,
our two spacious centres can
provide an ideal setting.

Spaces range from a sports hall that
can accommodate more than 300
people, to smaller halls and outdoor
sports and leisure facilities.

Greenwood Park, in Chiswell Green, and the Parish Centre, in Bricket
Wood, offer free car parking, wifi, tables and chairs, and a kitchen.

Enquiries/booking: **Centres Manager, 01727 874867**

Dates for your diary

Main Parish Council Meetings

15 Mar, 19 Apr, 17 May and 21 Jun, 7.30pm: Parish Centre

Annual Parish Meeting

10 May, 7pm reception for 7.30pm start: Parish Centre

Parish Council events

31 Mar, 28 Apr, 26 May and 30 Jun, 10am–noon: **St Julian's
Wood Volunteer Working Morning** – meet at Greenwood Park
top car park

22 Apr, 10.30am: **Parish Bluebell Walk** – meet at the Parish
Centre car park for a two-hour ramble – see front page

24 June, 3.30–6pm: **Armed Forces Day**, Parade of Standards
to leave Black Boy Wood shops at 3.30pm, with raising of the
Armed Forces Day flag at 4pm at the Parish Centre

Other Local Events

Mondays (except Bank Holidays), 2–4pm, and Thursdays,
10am–noon: **Book Swap**, Bricket Wood URC Hall, free,
01923 673638

7 Mar, 4 Apr, 2 May and 6 Jun, 7.45–10pm: **Bricket Wood
Residents' Association Management Committee**, St Luke's
Church, Bricket Wood

10 Mar, 14 Apr, 12 May and 9 Jun, 10am–noon: **Hanstead
Wood Volunteer Morning** – meet at Hanstead Wood car park
entrance, Hanstead Park, Bricket Wood, 01923 673169

18 Mar and 20 May, 10–noon: **Park Street Pickers Community
Litter Clean-Up** – meet at Park Street Recreation Ground,
free, 01727 873365

20 Mar, 8.15pm: **Park Street & Frogmore Society Open
Meeting**, 'Farming in the First World War', Park Street Village
Hall, £2, 07792 588892

21 Mar, 16 May and 20 Jun, 8pm: **Park Street Residents
Association Committee**, Park Street Village Hall – all members
welcome (info@psra.org.uk)

17 Apr, 8pm: **Park Street Neighbourhood Watch Public Meeting**,
Park Street Baptist Church (TBC), 01727 874293 – biscuits and
coffee from 7.45pm

24 Apr, 6–8.30pm: **Park Street Residents Association AGM**, Park
Street Village Hall – all members welcome (info@psra.org.uk)

15 May, 8.15pm: **Park Street & Frogmore Society Open
Meeting**, 'The history of the Burston Estate and Nursery', Park
Street Village Hall, £2, 07792 588892

See 'Events': www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Public tennis court upgrade

Four years ago the Greenwood Park Tennis Club upgraded three
of its courts from macadam to a sports carpet. This has proved
so popular it is now upgrading the remaining courts, including
the public court and the Kidszone mini-court (for children
up to age 8).

The carpet surface is really pleasant to play on. It is also safer
and non-slippery, even in the wet. The work will be completed in
April, so Parish residents can enjoy the new surface throughout
the coming tennis season.

Prices to hire the courts will remain at £5ph for the public
court and £2ph for the Kidszone (or just £12 for the year). The
courts may be booked online (www.greenwoodtennis.com) or
in person at Day 1 Newsagent on the corner of Tippendell Lane
and Watford Road. Club membership is also available, which
includes free use of all courts.



District Council elections on 3 May 2018

If you've recently moved home
make sure you are registered to
vote (www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) by 17 April 2018.

The deadline for receipt of new postal vote applications is
18 April 2018 and the deadline for new proxy vote applications
is 25 April 2018; applications can be obtained online
(www.yourvotematters.co.uk) or phone (01727 819294).

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

DON'T LOSE IT



St Stephen Parish Council

Parish Council Meetings

Main Council and Committee meetings are held in the Council
Chamber at the St Stephen Parish Centre in Station Road, Bricket
Wood. Times and dates are displayed on the Parish Noticeboards.
Residents are welcome to attend the meetings.

The Parish Office

First floor, St Stephen Parish Centre,
Station Road, Bricket Wood,
St Albans, AL2 3PJ

Tel: 01923 681443 Fax: 01923 681338

Email: clerk@ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Open daily from 9.00am to 12 noon or by
prior appointment. Contact either:
Juliet Pienaar, Clerk, or Carol Hardy, Deputy Clerk

Q
QUALITY
PARISH
COUNCIL