



Cofton Hackett Parish Council

Newsletter Winter 2018

Dear Resident

Welcome to the Winter Edition of Cofton News.

As I write, work has begun on construction of the new Cofton Village Hall on the corner of Groveley Lane and East Works Drive. This will provide us with a state-of-the-art community facility and should be completed by May of next year. A charity organisation has been set up to manage the new hall and fundraising activities to help us kit it out are already underway. Please support as many of these as you can and keep an eye on the website, Facebook page and newsletter for details.

Parish Council elections are scheduled for 2nd May 2019 when all of the existing Councillors will be up for re-election. We are currently one Councillor short of our allotted number so if you have ever thought of standing for office and making a difference to your local community, now is a good time to do it. Information will be available early next year from the Parish Council and Bromsgrove District Council's election team, but if you want to find out more in the meantime about what is involved in being a Parish Councillor please contact myself or our clerk Andrew Billau.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very enjoyable Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Roger Westbury
Chairman

MP and Councillors' contacts:

MP Sajid Javid – sajid.javid.mp@parliament.uk

County Councillor Peter McDonald – pmcdonald2@worcestershire.gov.uk

District Councillor Richard Deeming – r.deeming@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Parish Councillors: Jennie Webb, Joan Fay, Keith Duncan, Claire Fryer, Mike Pattison, John Slack, Richard Deeming

Chairman: Roger Westbury

Clerk: Andrew Billau coftonhackett@hotmail.co.uk
Tel: 07496 979153

Parish Councillors' contact details can be obtained via coftonhackettpc.org
or from the Clerk

Parish Council meetings are (generally) on the third Monday of every month (excluding August) at 7.30pm at Cofton Hackett Village Hall and are open to the public.



<p>Parish Councillor Vacancy</p>	<p>The Parish Council has a vacancy for a Councillor.</p> <p>If you feel you would like to get involved in making decisions about your local community and make a significant contribution to the area in which you live, then this is the position for you!</p> <p>For more information, or to register your interest, please contact the Clerk, contact details on the front of this newsletter.</p>
<p>The Parish Council meets monthly, at Cofton Hackett Village Hall, Barnt Green Road, B45 8NB, all meetings start at 7.30pm. Forthcoming meetings are on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monday December 10th• Monday January 21st• Monday February 18th• Monday March 18th <p>Members of the public are welcome to attend to give their views or just to hear what is happening in the parish.</p>	<p>Parish Council Meeting Dates</p>
<p>Longbridge Walking Group</p>	<p>Councillor Mike Pattison volunteers as a walk organiser for a group of residents at the new Extracare retirement complex in Longbridge.</p> <p>This year's walks have included a guided tour around Bournville Village, taking in some of the features of historical and architectural interest, an introduction to the Lickey Hills, Sutton Park, and a bluebell walk on Beacon Hill. The walks, which typically happen on Tuesdays or Wednesday mornings, are gentle and, in many instances, wheelchair accessible.</p> <p>Anyone interested in tagging along occasionally should contact Mike at mpattison@coftonhackettpc.org.</p>
<p>Come and join us to blow away the cobwebs and work off the Christmas lunches on New Year's Day. This fun family fixture in our calendar takes in some local history and beautiful scenery. It is FREE and all are welcome, including dogs on leads and children, although the paths may not be suitable for pushchairs.</p> <p>The walk will be led by Steve Bach, the Parish Paths Warden. We will meet at 11:00a.m. at Myhill Field, Chestnut Drive, Cofton Hackett, B45 8AQ</p>	<p>Cofton New Year's Day Walk</p>



Highways and Environment Report

With the cold weather almost upon us again the Parish Council have been proactive in organising the refill of grit bins around the village. The highways department have filled all our yellow grit bins and the Parish Council has filled all our own green grit bins, with a new grit bin installed at Parsonage Drive, close to the Grove and Shadow Close. A request has been made to St Modwen to fill the three grit bins on the Cofton Fields estate.

Work continues on repairing or replacing failed lampposts around the village. The age of the lampposts means that many are beginning to fail. Our contractor has been successful in repairing some of our old posts, rather than replacing with new ones, this has seen significant cost saving to the Parish Council. Should you notice any lampposts that have failed please contact the Clerk so that we can arrange repairs.

The roof of the bus shelter on Groveley Lane opposite Chestnut Drive has finally been repaired.

The Parish Council arranged for the refurbishment of the older play equipment on the Myhill Field and regular safety inspections of the play area have taken place. New signs have also been installed around the play area which continues to be well used.

The Parish Council has also covered the cost of repairs to some of the equipment used by allotment holders for the general upkeep of the allotment sites and has installed a secure metal shed for storage.

Parish Councillors have assisted Steve Bach, the Parish Paths Warden, in repairing and maintaining local footpaths. Further repairs to the Stocken are imminent.

Representation has continued to be made to St Modwen about the reopening of footpath CH521 which runs from Cofton Church Lane under the railway to the Cofton Fields Estate boundary.

Finally, planters around the village have been maintained in a year of challenging weather and in October bulbs were planted around the village, including on Aero Park.

Cllr Mike Pattison



New Lengthsman for Cofton Hackett

Having been without a Parish Lengthsman for more than a year, we are pleased to announce that the Parish Council has appointed **Gary Haynes** as our new lengthsman. We welcome Gary to the Parish Council.

Gary started work with us on November 26th so you can expect to see him working around the Parish, usually on Tuesdays and / or Wednesdays.

The role of the lengthsman includes:

Drainage

- Clear gully grates
- Clear headwalls, outfalls where this can be done from the ditch.
- Rod blocked drains if practical where this can be done from the outlet into the ditch
- Advise landowners and frontagers when their ditches need cleaning

Vegetation Clearance

- Remove vegetation obstructing signs
- Remove vegetation at junction visibility splays
- Removal of basal tree growth from highway trees
- Pulling / cutting of noxious weeds following site specific approval from the Manager
- Side out footways to normal width and spread arising's on verge where there is a verge between the footway and the edge of the carriageway.
- Negotiate with frontagers for them to cut back overhanging vegetation

Miscellaneous

- Rotation and charging of mobile Vehicular Activated Signs (VAS) following site specific approval and authorisation from the Manager, where traffic management is not required.
- Clean dirty signs and/or retighten brackets (except illuminated signs), where traffic management is not required.
- Painting of heritage cast iron direction signs, where traffic management is not required.
- Snow clearance and gritting / salting by hand
- Removal of illegal fly posting, where traffic management is not required.
- Maintenance and repainting of highways approved visibility fencing, where traffic management is not required.
- Cleaning of subways

If you see any problems around the Parish which you think the lengthsman could or should attend to, please contact the Clerk. Contact details on the front of this newsletter.



Family Carol Service, Aero Road, Cofton Fields



There will be a fun, family Carol Service in the open area on the Cofton Fields estate at 4:00pm on Saturday 15th December. All families of all faiths welcome. Mince pies; mulled wine; teas & coffees served. Live music!

Open to the whole village.

Organised by the Parish of St Andrews and St Michaels, the Foundry, and Cllr Mike Pattison.

(Donations of tined foods, etc will go towards the B31 foodbank)



ST. MODWEN STARTS WORK ON £1M COMMUNITY CENTRE IN COFTON HACKETT

Expert developer and regeneration specialist, St. Modwen, has started work on a community centre in Cofton Hackett, Bromsgrove, after committing more than £1m to the development.

St Modwen will deliver the community centre facilities for Cofton Hackett residents as part of the planning agreement for the redevelopment of the former Longbridge East Works site, which will see more than 600 new homes being built in the village.

Once complete, the 4,000 sq ft centre will be a vital hub and resource for local residents and will be home to an array of activities and regular classes, including sports and exercise classes, family events for all ages, a lunch club for the elderly and hobby groups.



'Breaking Ground' at the New Community Centre. Left to Right: Councillor Mike Pattison, Julie Davis (local resident), Chris Newsome (Development Director, St Modwen), Rev Sheri Gidney (Chair, Cofton Village Hall Trust), Mark Batchelor (Head of Build, Midlands and North, St Modwen), Jack Pledger (St Modwen)

The centre, which will be located on the corner of East Works Drive and Groveley Lane, will contain a fully equipped kitchen, a 1,600 sq ft hall, an office, a meeting room and a sheltered external activity area. The building is expected to be completed by late spring 2019.

The Cofton Village Hall Trust, a charity trust created by local residents, is aiming to raise £80,000 to fully equip the building with furniture and facilities. The Trust has already raised more than £3,000.



Cofton Hackett Parish Council

St. Modwen is building the community centre just one mile from Longbridge, where the Company is continuing its work to regenerate the former MG Rover site. St. Modwen has already delivered over 600 family homes, a £100 million town centre, new offices, Bournville College, the Longbridge Technology Park, the three-acre Austin Park, bespoke medical accommodation for the MoD's Defence Infrastructure Organisation, and a 260 apartment Extracare retirement village.

Chris Newsome, Development Director at St. Modwen, said: "St. Modwen Homes has had a significant presence in Cofton Hackett and its neighbouring town, Longbridge, for a few years now and it's only right that whilst we're creating new homes, we're also taking into account the needs of existing residents in the area. It's been great to work with Cofton Hackett Parish Council and The Cofton Village Hall Trust on this project and we're pleased to be delivering a building that we know will play a vital role in strengthening this already tight-knit community."

Reverend Sheri Gidney, local resident and Chair of Trustees for The Cofton Village Hall Trust, said: "Cofton Hackett residents are very excited about the new village hall and we're looking forward to getting it completed and fully operational so we can begin rolling out activities for local people. We're grateful to St. Modwen for working so closely with us on the plans and for building the hall, which we know will be much-loved and well-used. We're now focused on fundraising activity so that we can make the centre comfortable and welcoming once the build is finished."

For more information on St. Modwen, please visit www.stmodwen.co.uk.

For more information on the Cofton Hackett community centre, please visit www.coftonvillagehall.org.

To make a donation to The Cofton Village Hall Trust, visit www.gofundme.com/CoftonVillageHall or get in touch with the Parish Clerk on 07496 979153, or email coftonhackett@hotmail.co.uk



Communications Report Nov/Dec 2018

Contacting Councillors:

Please note that all residents are welcome to attend any of the public meetings of the Parish Council to discuss any matter arising in the parish which affects them. Alternatively, we encourage you to raise any concerns with your parish councillors via our contact details on the front of this newsletter.

Facebook:

Whilst there are a number of Facebook pages relating to the local community, such media is informal, and therefore not the recommended form of communication with the parish council.

Facebook is however a valuable source of information about events and happenings in the area and we encourage social media users to connect with local groups to enable vital (or just interesting) local information to be imparted to the widest possible audience – here are some suggested groups:

- Cofton Hackett Community
- Cofton Community News, Views and Updates

Please let me know if you have a local facebook page so that I can publish it in the next newsletter.

Village Hall:

Action is finally underway on the much-anticipated new village hall, please see the press release in this newsletter for full details and direct all queries via the website – www.coftonvillagehall.org or facebook page: The New Cofton Village Hall.

In the meantime of course, the existing village hall remains open and available for hire as normal: www.ch-villagehall.org

Local Businesses & Events:

We are considering compiling a database of local businesses and regular events, so that we can keep local residents informed of all the activities, skills and services available on their doorstep. We're unsure of what format the database could take at this stage, but if this applies to you, please get in touch.

Councillor Claire Fryer
cfryer@coftonhackettpc.org

Diary of Events:

Parish Events:

Seniors' Xmas Dinner – Sunday 9th December 2018 at 1.30pm
NY Walk – New Year's Day at 11am (see notice in this newsletter)

Village Hall Fundraisers: (full details on FB page The New Cofton Village Hall)

Quiz Night - Sat 12th January 2019 at 7.30pm £10 per person (includes food)



Finance and Annual Budget Planning

The Parish Council (PC) has started its budget planning for the next financial year. We have to submit our precept request to Bromsgrove District Council before the end of January 2019, which means that the PC agrees this at its January meeting. The majority of the PC's income is obtained via the precept. For this financial year we requested a precept of £35,534 to cover our budgeted expenditure.

As part of the planning, we review how we are performing in respect to our budget estimates and also take into account potential gaps we may have in the next 5 years regarding potential costs, projects and liabilities we may face and may have to deal with.

The decisions we will be making may be impacted by the need to increase our reserves to take account of:

- The acquisition of the new village hall in May 2019.
 - St Modwen have started to build the hall and the ownership of the new village hall, and the land, will be transferred to the PC when the legal agreements have been completed. We will probably need to consider spending some of our reserves on the installation of essential infrastructure.
- Open space maintenance and new allotments
 - The possibility of creating new allotments is under consideration.
- Elections
 - There will be an election in 2019 if more than 9 eligible members of the community put themselves forward to be Parish Councillors. We currently do not have funds earmarked to cover the cost of an election.
- Repairs to current assets.
 - We currently have no funds earmarked for improvement or repairs to our current assets e.g Mission Hall, Myhill Field Playground etc.

We are currently considering a plan to increase our reserves over a five year period to avoid a large increase in the precept in any one calendar year.

Another cost that has increased significantly over the past couple of years has been associated with the repair and replacement of lampposts. These costs appear likely to increase over the next few years due to the current stock of older lampposts reaching the end of their useful life.

As previously mentioned, the PC will be discussing these issues in detail over the next couple of months and making a decision on the precept at the PC meeting in January.

Councillor John Slack



From the Parish Council Planning Committee

Planning

The Parish Council have received a series of applications for consideration over the last few months.

Developers St Modwen made some amendments to the new Village Hall which required the approval of Bromsgrove District Council. Changes were made to the roof line to accommodate ventilation for the kitchen equipment. Approval was granted and the building of the Village Hall is now proceeding.

Lickey Hills Nursing Home is now owned by the Priory Group. The proposal is that major changes will be made to the buildings. Part of the current building is to be demolished and replaced by another building at right angles to the existing. Also proposed, is to reduce the number of beds from 97 to 39 and alter the healthcare provision. The Parish Council have written to Bromsgrove District Council requesting further information on the type of healthcare envisaged.

There has been an application to build a new property on green belt land. The Parish Council wrote to Bromsgrove District Council objecting and BDC agreed. However, the applicant appealed against this decision but the appeal has been dismissed by the Secretary of State.

The Parish Council is also considering an application to convert a semi-detached house into two luxury apartments. There are many aspects to consider such as over development and car parking issues before a response can be made.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

The NDP main document is now with Bromsgrove District Council who will be checking through to ensure there are no mistakes and that we have covered all requirements before submitting to the Secretary of State for approval.

The Cofton Hackett Character Appraisal is nearing completion. The draft version is soon to be edited and then included as part of our overall submission.

Hopefully Cofton Hackett residents will look on the Parish Council website www.coftonhackettpc.org at the full and supporting documents. However, if preferred, hard copies can be viewed by making an appointment with the Clerk, Andrew Billau.

Councillors Keith Duncan/Claire Fryer

Nov 2018



Summer Parish Walk

Back in August, when the weather was still balmy, the residents of Cofton Hackett were treated to another village walk ably led by the Parish Paths Warden, Steve Bach. This twice-yearly event attracted nearly thirty residents from across the village. They were able to enjoy a warm summer's evening walk through beautiful countryside and the often amusing historical insight offered by Steve at various points along the walk. The route began at the Stocken, took in a section of the North Worcestershire Way towards Hopwood, and then turned back along the canal and past Barnt Green Sailing Club. Many of those who came made new friends and chatted to neighbours in an event that proves enduringly popular. Boiled sweets provided extra fuel to boost the stride-rate!

Our thanks to Steve for another brilliant event and a reminder that the next walk is traditionally held on New Year's Day.





CHRISTMAS IN THE PARISH OF COFTON HACKETT & BARNT GREEN

You are warmly invited to celebrate the wonderful Christmas story at the various services and events in and around the parish, which include the following:

Saturday 8th December

Nativity Scene Festival, display of nativity scenes from around the world
10.00am - 4.00pm St. Andrews Church

Sunday 9th December

Toy Service, when we receive gifts of toys for children in need in Birmingham
9.30am St Andrew's Church

Saturday 15th December

Cofton Fields Carol Service, 4.00pm Aero Way Park

Sunday 16th December

Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, 4.00pm St Michael's Church

Friday 21st December

Cofton Hackett Community Carols, 7.00pm end of Chestnut Drive by the Myhill Field

Sunday 23rd December

Christingle Service, 9.30am St Andrew's Church

Christmas Eve

Children's Nativity Service, 3.00pm St Andrew's Church
Carols by Candlelight, 4.30pm St Andrew's Church
Carols by Candlelight, 6.30pm St Andrew's Church
Christmas Communion, 11.00pm St Michael's Church

Christmas Day

All-Age Christmas Celebration and Communion, 9.30am St Andrew's Church

St Michael's Church, Cofton Church Lane, B45 8BD
St Andrew's Church, Sandhills Road, B45 8NR