



# Cofton Hackett Parish Council

## Newsletter Autumn 2020

Dear Resident

I hope you are managing to stay well in these exceptional times. I was hoping to be able to say that the pandemic is now behind us as we go into the autumn, but that has proven to not be the case. The Cofton Covid-19 support group is still operating and is there to support any residents requiring help - please see a short piece inside this newsletter about their activities.

I am pleased to see that both of our village halls are now back in operation and that many hirers have resumed their bookings. There are still many restrictions in place which restrict some of the events which they are able to hold, but at least it is a start. Our County Councillor Peter McDonald has kindly made a donation towards the cost of installing a defibrillator at the new Cofton Village Hall for which we are grateful. It will be an asset to the whole community and to those engaging in leisure activities in Cofton Park.

We have received several comments and queries relating to the work currently being undertaken in the Lickey Hills Country Park, with many trees being felled. Can I refer you to an excellent letter in the September issue of The Village magazine from Steve Hinton, ranger services manager at the Park which explains what work is being carried out, and why?

It is good to report that a decision on the planning application submitted by St Modwen for the erection of a five-storey apartment block on the Longbridge East and River Arrow development site off Groveley Lane has been deferred. Altogether there were 169 objections to the proposal, with residents and the Parish Council complaining that the scheme was not in keeping with the rest of the Parish, and that it was not in line with the Council's Neighbourhood Development Plan. St Modwen were asked to prepare revised plans and resubmit them to Bromsgrove District Council.

I sincerely hope that you are all able to enjoy the autumn months in the lovely area of Cofton Hackett.

Roger Westbury  
Chairman

### MP and Councillors' contacts:

MP Sajid Javid – [sajid.javid.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:sajid.javid.mp@parliament.uk)

County Councillor Peter McDonald – [pmcdonald2@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:pmcdonald2@worcestershire.gov.uk)

District Councillor Richard Deeming – [r.deeming@bromsgrove.gov.uk](mailto:r.deeming@bromsgrove.gov.uk)

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

Chairman: Roger Westbury

Clerk: Andrew Billau [clerk@coftonhackettpc.org](mailto:clerk@coftonhackettpc.org)  
Tel: 07496 979153

Parish Councillors' contact details can be obtained via [coftonhackettpc.org](http://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 Village Hall and are open to the public.



**Cofton Covid-19 Support Group**

As restrictions are increasing again with the Covid-19 pandemic we wanted to make sure all residents were aware of the volunteer Cofton Covid-19 support group. We have a mobile Phonenumber that anyone can leave a message on or send a text to - 07735 760662. We also have a WhatsApp group that anyone can join. Message the mobile and we'll add you. Stay safe and well, thank you.

Thank you  
Ruth Carruthers

The Parish Council meets monthly, usually at the new Cofton Village Hall, Village Hall Way, B45 8PD. During the pandemic meetings have been held on-line using Zoom. If you want to attend any of our meeting please contact the Clerk. All meetings start at 7.30pm. Forthcoming meetings are on:

- Monday October 19th
- Monday November 16th
- Monday December 14th

Members of the public are welcome to attend to give their views or just to hear what is happening in the parish.

**Parish Council Meeting Dates**

**Parish Council Annual Governance and Accountability Return**

The Parish Council has completed its audit return for the financial period 2019-20. The internal audit was completed successfully and the period for public consultation has now passed. We now await comments from the external auditor.

The Parish Council pays for the electricity to light our local streets, this year we have renegotiated the supply contract, moving to a different supplier with a 100% 'green' supply. We have also been able to reduce the cost of supply.

**Parish Council Electricity Supply**



## New Flagpole for Cofton Hackett

The Parish Council's flagpole, which is on the embankment at the Lickey Road / Rose Hill junction, was showing its age since it was installed around 2002 and had suffered from some acts of vandalism. At its meeting in May, the Parish Council agreed to fund a replacement, Councillors felt that residents appreciate seeing our flags flying, especially for important annual events. The new flagpole was installed in August.



Our Union Flag is also showing signs of wear so we'll be looking to replace that soon.

Mike Gallagher, our resident flag flyer and expert, tells me that any resident of Cofton Hackett, who is a foreign national, can request that their national flag is flown on their national day (resident must supply flag!). You may see Canada's national flag flying or even the Isle of Man on the appropriate days.

If you wanted to request the flying of a national flag, Mike can be contacted on 0121-445-4498.



## **Vacancy on Cofton Hackett Parish Council**

Cofton Hackett Parish Council (CHPC) is currently looking for someone, living in Cofton Hackett, to serve as a Parish Councillor. We hope that this will be of interest to people who have regular time to spare and are keen to contribute, on a voluntary basis, to the local area for the benefit of our community.

The Parish Council meets in Cofton Village Hall on the evening of the third Monday of the month (except in August). Meetings are open to the public with the agenda posted on the CHPC's website (<https://coftonhackettpc.org>). If you have an interest in applying to become a Councillor and would like to learn more then please consider either attending a meeting, or contacting the Clerk or a Councillor directly (contact details on the website or the front of this newsletter).

### **Cofton Village Hall**

Cofton Village Hall is leased by the Parish Council to the charity, Cofton Village Hall CIO (<https://coftonvillagehall.org>) and as a community hall has been up and running for over twelve months now. The charity is currently managed by eight Trustees, many of whom have been involved since the hall was being designed. The Trustees are now of the view that to secure its continued successful growth and enhance its contribution and value to the community, it would be beneficial to appoint further Trustees to broaden diversity of representation.

If you have regular time to spare and, on a voluntary basis, consider your background and experience may equip you to potentially contribute to the various aspects of running the hall, we would be keen to discuss this with you to explain how we currently work and where we are seeking wider input.

If you are interested, please contact John Slack ([jslack@btconnect.com](mailto:jslack@btconnect.com)) or Shelagh O'Loughlin ([shalaghouloughlin@me.com](mailto:shalaghouloughlin@me.com)) in the first instance.



## Highways, Open Spaces & Environment

During the pandemic, the work of those of us involved with open spaces continues to be necessarily more limited than we would otherwise hope.

Work to regularly inspect the Myhill playing field continues and quotes are being sought for the upgrade of some of the play equipment.

Discussions still continue with St Modwen about opening a suitable access route to the 'trapped' allotment land behind The Grove. Currently the Parish Council is awaiting a response from St Modwen about beginning the transfer of land to the Parish Council in order to provide a pathway to the site. It is hoped that an additional 9 allotments might eventually be made available.

On the Cofton Fields Estate, Councillors have been involved in requesting remedial work by St Modwen and Persimmon and monitoring the proposed maintenance fees to be charged to estate residents, as well as challenging a proposed apartment development which is contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan.

You may see our 'lengthsman' busy around the Parish clearing blocked drains, cleaning signs and cutting back overgrown vegetation. Where you have hedges and trees on your property that are growing over footpaths can you please ensure these are cut back so as not to cause an obstruction. The lengthsman cannot do that on your behalf.

As always, the age of our streetlamps continues to present some issues. The Council responds to reports of failed streetlights and asks that if you do notice a failed lamppost please do report it to the Parish Council clerk.

Cllrs Mike Pattison & Joan Fay



Cofton Hackett Parish Council

**COFTON**  
VILLAGE HALL

## Cofton Village Hall

We are back! It's great to be open again and welcome everyone back through the doors.

We've been pretty lucky as village halls are classed as a 'COVID Secure' venues which has allowed us to continue to operate most activities provided hirers follow the guidance which includes sanitising, cleaning and collecting of 'Track and Trace' data. We've trained all hirers in the safe use of the facility and significantly reduced the capacity to ensure that users can operate social distancing.

Since reopening we've been able to welcome back most of our regular hirers as well as some great new ones. We now have more groups than before COVID with Zumba, Zumbini, Bunny & Blossom (Mummy & Baby Yoga), Cofton Art Group, Cofton Book Club all recently coming on board.

If you're interested in any of the classes you can find more information on our Facebook page or drop in to the hall and pick-up a timetable.

We still have plenty of capacity at the hall, so if you're interested in booking one of our 3 rooms for an event or a regular group then you can book online or just drop us an email.

Stay safe and well

Sam  
Hall Manager

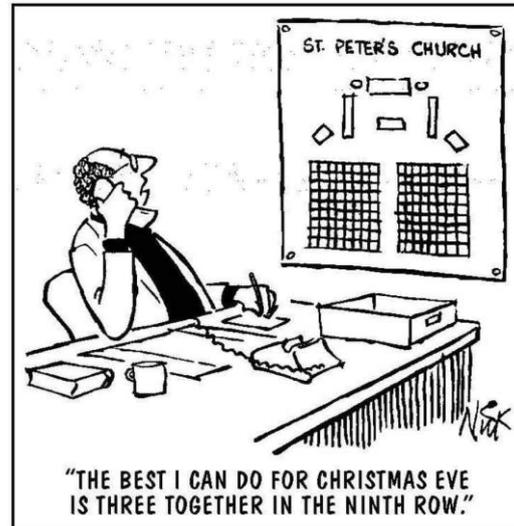
[www.coftonvillagehall.org](http://www.coftonvillagehall.org)

[info@coftonvillagehall.org](mailto:info@coftonvillagehall.org)



## ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH NEWS

Hi Everyone,



This cartoon seemed funny when I first saw it a few months back, but now it looks too close to the truth. The way things are going we might not be able to manage 3 together! If you've wondered what's happening at Church, our pattern of services, like pretty much everything else, has been turned upside down over the last 6 months. We now have a mixture of online and live worship and of course you are very welcome to join in any of it.

We can't yet hold our main family service (with lots of people, singing, and children's groups) in church so it continues on Zoom at 9.30am each Sunday. As well as songs, message, and prayers, there's usually a children's activity and we hear from someone about how Covid-19 has affected their life. Meeting ID is **295 293 9790** and password **standrews**. It would be great to see you.

Foundry, the new community service in Cofton Village Hall, has now restarted, at 3.00pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays each month. It's very informal with a mixture of worship, prayer, and creative activities for all ages. St Michael's is so small that with 2m social distancing we can only get about 8 people in, so it has not reopened. St Andrew's in Sandhills Road can accommodate about 30 with distancing so we have restarted some services there.

The current pattern each month is:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: 6.00pm Communion Service
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday: 11.00am Communion Service
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: 6.00pm Evensong
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday: 8.00am Book of Common Prayer Communion

Usual conditions apply to services: don't come if anyone in your household has shown CV-19 symptoms in the last 2 weeks or if you are shielding or vulnerable; observe 2m social distancing; use the sanitizer provided on entry and exit; give your contact details for tracing purposes; face coverings must be worn. And of



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course all this could change if further restrictions are introduced. Keep an eye on the church website at [www.standrewscofe.org.uk](http://www.standrewscofe.org.uk) for the latest.

So who knows how we'll celebrate Christmas? We'll keep you posted. But we continue to pray for God's protection for our community and that we will come through this year not only in one piece, but also with a deeper sense of God's presence and of gratitude for what is really important in life.

With my best wishes,

*Rob*

Rev Canon Rob Fieldson, Vicar

0121 445 1269  
07505 739647

[rob@fieldson.co.uk](mailto:rob@fieldson.co.uk)

The Vicarage  
8 Cofton Church Lane

## **Production collaboration from PRG's Live Space allows orchestra to celebrate their centenary with a global audience!**

**Date:** September 2020

Birmingham-based companies Outdoor Places and Unusual Spaces (OPUS), JA Productions and Production Resource Group (PRG) partnered with the CBSO to deliver their first full 75-piece socially distanced orchestral performance since lockdown began, from PRG's Live Space at the Cofton Centre in Groveley Lane, Cofton Hackett, reaching an international audience.

The performance by the CBSO was staged to commemorate their 100th birthday celebrations and was streamed free of charge on YouTube and Facebook. So far it has had over 170,000 views and received global positive support. The performance, which is believed to be the largest gathering of musicians seen since lockdown, was conducted by former CBSO Music Director Sir Simon Rattle.

The closure of the Birmingham Symphony Hall earlier this year meant that the CBSO's centenary birthday celebrations were unable to take place. At a time when the Live Event industry has gone dark with a ban on mass gatherings, safety of all involved was paramount. John Adkins, Managing Director of JA Productions and long-time collaborator, visited the PRG Live Space facility back in June and immediately saw the potential for the Orchestra - it was the perfect place to shoot a Livestream with over 75 performers, all whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines.



Birmingham-based independent arts producer and OPUS Managing Director Caroline Davis has a long-standing relationship with the CBSO. OPUS worked alongside the orchestra to develop the concept and delivery model leading the creative production team, including digital content creators Takt.

Everyone involved in the CBSO Centenary was temperature checked on arrival with PRG's proprietary "Smartxcan" Temperature scanners. To ensure additional safety for everyone in the building, PRG also brought in an air handling unit to regulate and circulate the air, in line with requirements.

