

# Stoke Parish Council

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Issue 2016.2

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER SUMMER/AUTUMN

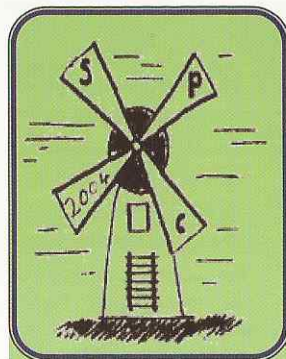
### WHAT YOUR PARISH COUNCIL DOES FOR YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY

The Parish Council works for the communities of Stoke Heath and Stoke Prior in a variety of ways. There is a focus at present on enhancing the professionalism of Parish Councils and in turn allowing greater delegation of responsibilities from District Councils. As Parish Clerk I will be looking at how the Parish Council can work towards obtaining an accreditation under the Local Council Awards Scheme. The aim of the scheme is to allow parish councils the opportunity to demonstrate their competence at managing a professional service which in turn will benefit the residents of Stoke Heath and Stoke Prior.

Your Parish Council has a wide range of responsibilities and within these is the provision of services such as the Parish Lengthsman. This role is currently carried out by Chris Cooke and his responsibilities include keeping ditches and drains clear within the parish as well as ensuring that the County Council as highways authority are aware of any road maintenance issues. Ian Gerrard of IDG Garden Services is responsible for maintaining the recreation areas as well as carrying out a variety of additional work on behalf of the Parish Council. Bob Hollick ensures that the various waste bins and dog bins are emptied weekly. All three provide important services and help the Parish Council to keep this parish looking its best.

As Parish Clerk I am available to take local issues and queries and will liaise with both Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council on matters which fall outside of our remit.

This is your Parish and if you wish to see Stoke Heath and Stoke Prior maintain their identities, please join us at our meetings to discuss relevant issues and the way forward. Full Parish Council meetings are held on the first Monday of each month (except August) at 7.30pm at the Annexe to the Avoncroft Arts Centre. All agendas are published on the website and notice boards prior to the meetings.



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## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The year (2015/16) started with the Stoke Parish Fete in May. This was a great day made possible by the efforts of the Fete Committee and everyone who gave their time to make it a success.

Due to the weather, the Carols in the Park in December 2015 was held in Avoncroft Arts Centre. There was a tremendous turnout and it was a very enjoyable evening.

The playground equipment in the Ryefields Road Recreation Area was totally replaced and the Shaw Lane Recreation Area has benefitted from a new rubber play surface.

The new Memorial Garden at Stoke Heath Recreation Area is now fully in place with the new plaques being fitted recently. It is hoped to plant a new tree at this spot in the near future to replace the one which was vandalised a few months ago. This project will then be complete.

Looking forward to 2016/17, it is good to see that the Tai Chi classes are again being held every Saturday through the summer at Stoke Heath Recreation Area and are proving to be as great success.

The footpath running alongside the Stoke Heath Recreation Area for the dog owners to use is in the process of being renewed by the County Council. Huge thanks to Chris Jewson for his efforts in making this happen.

The picnic area on the Canal near the Navigation Inn is in the process of being renovated. This will include the clearing of the whole area, laying new paths, replacing fencing and providing new picnic tables and benches.

After my first year as Chairman, I would like to say a sincere thank you to all the Councillors who I have worked with for their hard work and continued help. I would also like to thank John Ellis (Vice Chairman) and Neil Guliver (Parish Clerk) for all the guidance they have given.

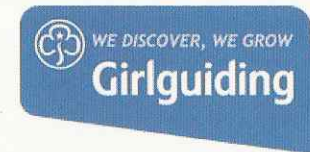
The Parish Council meets on the first Monday of every month at 7.30pm at Avoncroft Centre and I would like to extend a warm invitation to any members of the public who would like to attend and participate in public question time. If you would like further information then please contact the Parish Clerk, Neil Gulliver on 01527 757 190 or 07927 311 041 or email [clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk)

Thank you.

Cllr Peter Williams

Chairman Stoke Parish Council

## NEW GUIDE UNIT OPENS IN STOKE PRIOR



It is an exciting time for Girlguiding in South Bromsgrove, as Stoke Prior's first ever Guide unit, run by a team of four leaders, opened in April. Girlguiding in Bromsgrove has grown in popularity and so this new unit has been opened to offer even more local girls the opportunity to get involved. As well as providing increased capacity, 1st Stoke Prior Guides will also be offering Bromsgrove girls a new location and mid-week meetings so that it has never been a better time to get involved.

Girlguiding is the largest youth organisation for girls in the UK today, with one in ten of all 11-year-old girls in the UK signed up. The charity aims to give girls and young women a space where they can be themselves, have fun, build brilliant friendships, gain valuable life skills and make a positive difference to their lives and their communities. Girlguiding aims to build confidence, raise aspirations and give each girl the chance to discover their full potential.

The 1st Stoke Prior Guides have already been busy organising and taking part in lots of fun activities and challenges. The summer term included getting to know each other by completing the "Teamwork" badge, making clay dragons for St Georges Day and undertaking a cooking challenge which resulted in some very tasty dishes. Other important activities for the Guides have included starting work on the "Parties" badge, visiting Cadbury World and hosting a fundraising quiz for family and friends.

If you have any friends or family who would like to enrol their daughter in a local Rainbow, Brownie or Guide Unit, you can do so on the Girlguiding UK website under the "Parents" section. Also, if you know of any potential volunteers who would like to get involved they can register their interest on the website under the "Get Involved" section. Whether it is an hour or two every few months or a regular weekly commitment, there are lots of ways to volunteer with Girlguiding.

1st Stoke Prior Guides are looking forward to all the exciting activities they have planned over the summer and promise to update everyone on their latest adventures during the next few months!

The Leader of the 1st Stoke Prior Guides Unit is Emma Power.



## AVONCROFT ARTS SOCIETY

### "The Dirty Hands Brigade"

A theatre group, music group, discussion group and a film society all held meetings at Avoncroft College. These were amalgamated by a gentleman called George Gregg and his wife on the 21st May 1946.

Avoncroft Arts Society was born.

On the 24th May 1954 The Times newspaper ran a story "A village entertains itself". This indicated that the Society held an entertainment day which included plays, short operas, choral singing, folk dancing, lectures and exhibitions. The craft section included pottery, carvings, ironwork, weaving, English printing, bookbinding and illustration.

Fast forward to 2016, the Society's 70th year, and how times have changed. The Society now holds tutored classes in art, ceramics and sugarcraft. There are also untutored classes in calligraphy and textiles where members help and support other members.

The Main Hall hosts Yoga, Tai Chi, Keep Fit and Martial Arts. Groups such as Probus also book the hall, and it is hired out for private parties and corporate events. The Society also works in close partnership with Stoke Parish Council who hold their regular meetings at the hall.

In the words of the Society's Chairman, "The principle objective of The Arts Society is to educate, inspire and practice hobbies and leisure pursuits of the Arts."

The Society is proud to be called "The Dirty Hands Brigade". It reinforces the ethos of the Society. Members all come together, and work together, to ensure the continuing success of the Society.

If you want to know more about the Society, they can be contacted on 01527 833829 or email [avoncroftarts@btconnect.com](mailto:avoncroftarts@btconnect.com). You could also visit the Society's website at [www.avoncroftarts.org.uk](http://www.avoncroftarts.org.uk) for more information.

## PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

As I am sure you are aware, the Parish Council has developed a new website which is now available to the public. The website address remains the same, namely [www.stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk](http://www.stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk).

The aim of the site is to be more user friendly and provide more information which is relevant to local residents. We can continue to build up the information as we go along but if there is anything which you think should be included please let us know. The website is there primarily for you so we want to get it right at the same time as making it interesting.

Please take a look at the site and let us know what you think.

## MEN IN SHEDS

Age UK is an independent charity covering the North Worcestershire area and based in Bromsgrove. The Parish Council has previously provided financial support to this organisation but this year they have made us aware of a new exciting project based in Stoke Prior for the benefit of local older people.

The 'Med in Sheds' project supports men and women who have experienced life-changing events such as redundancy, retirement, bereavement or mental/physical ill health giving them a place to meet, be productive and get involved in their local community. The project is an innovative way of engaging socially isolated men and women in an informal adult learning activity where they can keep mind and body active; whilst also being able to learn new skills and hone existing skills working alongside each other on community projects and projects that raise funds to sustain the Shed. It is a place for regular contact with like-minded people giving them access to a workshop type space which contains tools, machinery, work benches and raw materials to construct, repair or finish a variety of projects. The group will also have access to advice and information about health, illness prevention and how to make more effective use of health and other services.

Age UK have this year set up a "Shed" project in Bromsgrove (Metal and Ores Industrial Estate) which has already attracted some 30 applicants so far and is growing as word spreads. Although the project aims to relieve social isolation and improve wellbeing it also aims in the long term to be fully self-sustaining by generating revenue from items made, repaired and up scaled. Age UK has managed to attract some funding to pay for the rental of the unit during the start-up phase of the project. However the group badly needs good quality tools and more importantly to fit electrical circuitry which will help keep the participants safe.

The Parish Council is very pleased to have been able to help this group by providing tools to help with their work and will continue to provide whatever support it can in the future. They strongly believe that this is a valuable community project.

If you want to help the group or know of anyone who might benefit from their help and/or support, please contact Angela Booton at Age UK on 01527 871840 or email [angela.booton@ageukredditch.org.uk](mailto:angela.booton@ageukredditch.org.uk)

## DOG FOULING

Sadly it is again necessary to highlight this problem across the parish. The Parish Council and the District Council is doing all it can to try and get the message across to dog owners that they must take responsibility for cleaning up behind their dogs and to ensure that they put the bags in the bins provided. We are trying to educate dog owners to be more responsible but it seems some owners do not believe that they any responsibility in this matter and are quite happy to make life unpleasant for the majority.

This is a particular problem in o around the children's' play areas which has an adverse effect on their health and safety. **Will all dog owners please take note that dogs should not be allowed in the children's' play areas at any time.**



## PARISH NEWS

In addition to the issues highlighted elsewhere in this newsletter, the following items highlight the work currently being undertaken by the Parish Council:-

**Chairman & Vice Chairman** — Peter Williams and John Ellis were again elected to these positions respectively for 2016/17 and the Annual General Meeting.

**Former Polymer Latex Works, Stoke Prior** — As you will be aware Barratt Homes have been given planning permission to develop the site to provide 202 houses. The process for starting this development seems to have been very protracted and the Parish Council is seeking a meeting with the developer to find out what the current position is and when work will start on the development. When this work starts it will have a significant impact on the local community and it is important that we are fully aware of any impact. We are hoping that this meeting can take place at the September Parish Council meeting.

**1st Stoke Prior Guides Unit** - We are pleased to have been able to give some financial help to this new Unit which started up earlier this year. This is a clear example of how the Parish Council can help local organisations which provide a service to our local community.

**Speed Limits on Hanbury Road (B4091)** - We are trying to persuade the County Council about the need to lower the speed limit along this road but so far have been unsuccessful. The County Council have said that they are looking at the situation but no further feedback has been forthcoming. We will continue to pursue this matter.

**Tai Chi Classes** - The Parish Council has again this year provided Tai Chi classes on Saturday morning during the summer at Stoke Heath Recreation Area which have proved to be very successful..

**Salt Fest, Droitwich** — The Parish Council have been given a stand at this event which takes place on the 10th & 11th September. We will use to promote the John Corbett Trail.

## COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

May I remind you that Councillors' surgeries continue to take place on the first Saturday of each month at 9.30am at the Parish Council Office, 17B Ryefields Road, Stoke Prior (next to Capelli Hair Studio) on the first Saturday of every month between 9.30am and 10.30am.

These surgeries are attended by John Ellis, Vice Chairman of the Parish Council together with your local District Councillors. These meetings are your opportunity to let us know about the issues which affect you. If you are unable to attend but still want an issue addressed please let Neil Gulliver, the Parish Clerk know by calling 01527 757190 or email [clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk)

## CHRIS JEWSON— PARISH COUNCILLOR

For those of you who are regular readers of the Parish newsletter you may recall that I introduced myself back in the spring 2014 newsletter as the new Parish Paths Warden.. Well here I am again. I am delighted to be co-opted onto the Parish Council. As well as supporting the Council I hope this will help in having their ear on matters concerning the parish footpaths. On that subject I am pleased to report that I finally managed to persuade the County Council to carry out improvements to the surface on the footpath that cuts across the recreation ground at Stoke Heath. The top dressing of stone should eliminate the perennial winter mud problem once and for all. Hopefully money well spent.

I did say in the 2014 newsletter that I would be retiring shortly; well that was the plan at least. I opted in the end to go for semi-retirement naively thinking I would get the best of both worlds. It is quite strange how all that newly-acquired free time is gobbled up by all sorts of things and I find myself as busy as ever. I hope at least that the time I devote to the Parish Council will be time well spent in contributing to improvements within the local community.

Lastly if you are aware of any issues with footpaths please let me know either directly or via the Parish Clerk.

Chris Jewson

## LIZ EDEN — PARISH COUNCILLOR

I have lived in Stoke Prior since I was four, although I did move out for two years when I got married. I was actually born at the old Bromsgrove General Hospital (now the Princess of Wales Community Hospital).

I went to Stoke Prior First School where my teacher was Mrs Sherwin which was very useful as I had always gone to Traction Engine Rallies at weekends and her husband was a wood turner and also displayed at the Rallies so she understood what I was talking about. I also went to Aston Fields Middle School and South Bromsgrove High School before moving to Hindlip College.

When I got married, we moved to Catshill and then to Kings Norton before moving back to Stoke Prior to be nearer family and friends. I have been helping the Parish Council with the Annual Fete since 2009 assisting with setting up.

Liz Eden

## FORTHCOMING PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Parish Council will meet on the following dates over the next few months:

Monday 4 September 2016

Monday 3 October 2016

Monday 7 November 2016

Monday 5 December 2016

All meetings will take place at Avoncroft Arts Centre at 7.30pm

<b>Peter Williams (Chairman)</b>	07970782690	Planning (Chairman), Communications, Fete Working Group,
<b>John Ellis (Vice-Chairman)</b>	01527 570287	Planning, Communications, Finance & Resources, Fete Working Group, Stoke Heath recreation area, Worcs CALC representative
<b>Diane Brown</b>	01527 821692	Planning, Finance & Resources, Fete Working Group, Picnic Site, Worcs CALC representative
<b>Jillian Howe</b>	01527 570274	Planning, Communications, Finance & Resources, Fete Working Group
<b>Susan Abel</b>	07808053556	Planning, Communications (Chairman), Fete Working Group
<b>Dean Smith</b>	07956609500	Planning, Communications, Fete Working Group, CPRE representative
<b>Keith Shakespeare</b>	01527 575003	Finance & Resources, Fete Working Group (Lead), Stoke Prior Village Hall Management Committee
<b>Paul Eden</b>	01527 759573	Finance & Resources, Fete Working Group, Stoke Works recreation area
<b>Alyson Jewson</b>	01527 578821	Fete Working Group
<b>Chris Jewson</b>	01527 578821	Parish Footpaths Officer, Fete Working Group
<b>Liz Eden</b>	01517 759573	Fete Working Group
<b>Vacancy</b>		

<b>Parish Clerk</b>	Neil Gulliver Parish Office, 17B Ryefields Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove B60 4NA Tel 01527 757190 E-mail: <a href="mailto:clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk">clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk</a>
<b>Parish Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk">http://www.stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk</a>
<b>Comments and Articles</b>	<a href="mailto:clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk">clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk</a>
<b>District Councillors</b>	Malcolm Glass (Conservative) 07791 187901 Mike Thompson (Labour) 07861 739942
<b>County Councillors</b>	Bromsgrove South Division Christopher Bloore (Labour and Co-operative) Tel 07905 612710 E-mail <a href="mailto:christopherbloore@hotmail.co.uk">christopherbloore@hotmail.co.uk</a>