



# Stoke Parish Council

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Issue 2019.3

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER AUTUMN/WINTER

### WINTER TIME ON THE WORCESTER TO BIRMINGHAM CANAL

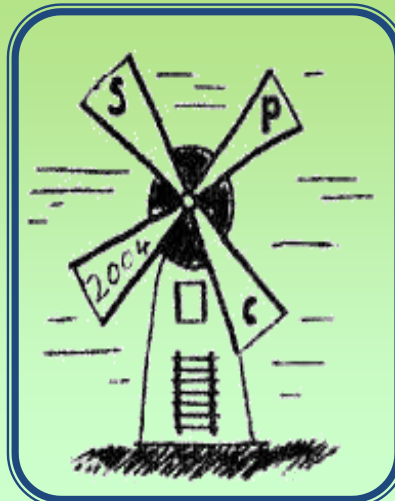
Back in January several exposed parts of the canal from the Queens Head through to Astwood Lane froze over, such as below near the Whitford Bridge Road. With no narrowboat traffic the ice stayed there for around two weeks before the swans began to fall through it and break it up.



Photograph courtesy of Assistant Clerk

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## PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

### Chairman's Report – December 2019

The outdoor film night was a great success again in August with over 500 people attending. The weather was cold so I was very pleased with the attendance and I hope you all had an enjoyable evening. I would also like to thank Chris Dawson for his help on the night.

**If anyone has any suggestions with regard to the film for next year, please do text me on 07970 782 690. Keep checking the Council website for details for 2020.**

I was sorry to have to miss the Memorial Service on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2019 due to work commitments. The Parish Council was represented by Vice Chairman John Ellis and Susan Abel who laid a wreath on our behalf. Thank you John and Sue.

The Parish Council have been distributing **FREE** SmartWater packs during the past few weeks. These are for your security! There are enough packs to supply all residential properties in Stoke Parish so please do collect your pack from the Parish Council Office in Ryefield Road as soon as possible, especially as we are approaching the Christmas period. The office number is **01527 757 190**, please see Page 11 for its normal opening times. If you are coming some distance you may wish to phone first to check that the office is open and so possibly avoid a wasted journey.

We are distributing wild flower seeds in various locations around the Parish in a bid to help both brighten it up and to attract bees, birds and butterflies etc, so please do keep your eyes open for the flowers that will be appearing in Spring throughout the Parish to compliment the daffodils.

Once again this year, we will be holding our 'Carols in the Park' on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at the Stoke Heath Recreation area commencing at 5.00pm. Refreshment will be available free of charge. We look forward to seeing you all there.

I would like to welcome Liz Eden and Rory Shannon to the Parish Council and look forward to working with them in the future.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding the Parish please contact the Parish Clerk, Neil Gulliver, or Stan Petrovic the Assistant Clerk on **01527 757190** (there is an answerphone if you call outside of normal office hours) or myself on **07970 782690**.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous 2020, Peter Williams



## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

from the Parish Clerk

### CAROLS IN THE PARK

You are all invited to attend the Parish Council's 'Carols in the Park' event being held on Saturday 7th December 2019 commencing at 5.00pm at the Stoke Heath Recreation Area.

The carols will be conducted by the Reverend Wyn Beynon and will be followed by free hot drinks and refreshments provided by the Parish Council.

### CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMPETITION

The Parish Council will again this year be running a competition for the best external Christmas lights in the Parish. The display must obviously be Christmas related and in good taste.

Two prizes of a gift voucher towards the cost of a meal at a local hostelry will be given, one for the best display in Stoke Heath and the other for the best display in all of the other 'Stokes'.

You do not need to register your entry as Parish Councillors will tour the Parish on an unspecified date in December to choose the winners.

Winners will be announced in the Spring 2020 Newsletter.

### NEW COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Following the By-Election on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, Kyle Daisley (Conservative) has been elected as the County Councillor for Bromsgrove South which includes the Parish of Stoke Prior.

### WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS FOR CHRISTMAS 2019

#### Normal Collection Day

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
 Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
 Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020

#### Revised Collection Day

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2019  
 Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
 Monday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2019

There are no further planned changes to collections throughout the festive season.

### LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF THIS WINTER

#### Keeping Yourself Well in Winter:

- Maintain room temperatures at a minimum 18-21 degrees.
- Keep active by moving around regularly, remove hazards that may cause a trip or fall.
- Dress warmly, eat hot food and take warm drinks.
- If you have health concerns, call your GP or 111.
- Ensure you are stocked up on medication and food in good time. Order prescriptions and groceries in advance or ask friends and relatives to do so on your behalf

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS (Continued)

### LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF THIS WINTER (Continued)

#### Going outdoors:

Tune into the local weather forecast before undertaking outdoor activities –  
[www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast).

If you have to go out dress warmly to suit the conditions.

Tell someone where you are going and at what time to expect you back.

If you have a mobile phone keep it with you at all times, keep it charged and ensure that, if possible, you have emergency contact numbers are on speed dial.

#### Winter Ailments:

Get a FREE flu jab if you are over 65 or in a high risk group. Ask your GP or local pharmacist for details.

Find reliable health information online at NHS Choices [www.nhs.co.uk/staywell](http://www.nhs.co.uk/staywell)

Ensure you have sufficient stocks of medication and food.

#### Have your home prepared:

Contact Act on Energy for free, impartial household energy advice 0800 988 2881

Check your heating is working and get it serviced annually by a qualified Gas Safe engineer.  
[www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk).

Contact your local fire and rescue service for a FREE home safety check 0800 032 1155.

Get electric blankets tested, test smoke alarms and change their batteries regularly.

Make sure you can access to sufficient fuel supplies.

Always have a torch ready in case of emergencies.

Protect your pipes from freezing, draught proof windows and doors.

### SAFETY AT CHRISTMAS

If you go away at anytime over Christmas make sure your home looks occupied and so does not tempt opportunist burglars. By following the advice below you can prevent crime this Christmas.

Keep those presents that Santa has dropped off early out of sight of inquisitive little ones but also make sure they are kept in a safe place inside the house, or perhaps leave with a friend.

Do not put Christmas presents under the tree too early. Burglars have been known to break in and steal ready wrapped gifts from under the tree.

If you go out to visit friends or family or know you will not be home until after it has gone dark leave the radio on and use the timer switch to make the lights come on.

Your Christmas tree may look lovely with its bright lights, but don't leave the curtains open overnight for everyone to admire it. Burglars are attracted to twinkly lights too!

Make sure all your doors, patio doors and windows are locked and secure, even when you are at home and make a special point of checking they are all locked before you go to bed at night. In 30% of all burglaries thieves don't break in but get in through unlocked doors and windows.

If you are buying bicycles, ask the shop about post coding schemes for your bike. Most shops will also let you store the bikes with them until nearer to Christmas Day. Your local Safer Neighbourhood Team will also be able to advise about property marking.

Do not keep large amounts of cash in the house.

If someone offers you something at a tempting price, ask yourself "Could it be stolen?"

By buying stolen property you are supporting criminals and committing a crime yourself

## SMARTWATER



### Free We Don't Buy Crime SmartWater Kits

As part of our Parish Council's drive to protecting our community, we have joined forces with the West Mercia Police 'We Don't Buy Crime' Team to offer a SmartWater kit for each home within our parish **free of charge**.

SmartWater is a sophisticated security system containing a unique forensic code which is applied to your valuables and registered to your address.

Anything marked with SmartWater can be traced back to your home, thus allowing the police to identify stolen property and link criminals to crime scenes. Currently the conviction rate is 100%.

SmartWater is invisible in natural light but glows brightly under ultraviolet (UV) light.

The kit contains SmartWater '**THIEVES BEWARE – SMARTWATER FORENSIC SYSTEMS IN USE**' deterrent stickers which send out a powerful warning to thieves and we encourage you to display the window stickers immediately upon receipt of your pack.

**We will be handing out free kits at various locations in the Parish, please see our website**

**In addition - free packs are available to collect from the Council Office next to the Capelli hairdressers on the corner or Ryefields Road and Prior Avenue**

Please note that the packs on this particular scheme are currently only available to residents within the Stoke Parish Avoncroft and Rock Hill Wards. If you are outside these areas and wish to become a SmartWater protected area, please contact your local parish councillor.

Once over 70% of our kits are registered, the Police Crime Commissioner John Campion has agreed to further support us by providing free signage to put up in the area to deter any travelling criminality entering our parish, therefore we really encourage your support

Thank you, Your Parish Councillors.





## OUR PARISH - THEN AND NOW

**October 2016**

The Main Entrance to the old Polymer Latex Site



**June 2019**

Now it's the main entrance to the new Henbrook Gardens estate



## **MOST COLOURFUL GARDEN COMPETITION**

The winners of the 'Most Colourful Garden' competition for Stoke Heath and the other 'Stokes' are as follows, the residents of each house concerned will receive a £30 Webbs Gift Voucher

### **Stoke Heath - 18 Fircroft Close**



### **The 'other Stokes' - 4 Foley Gardens**



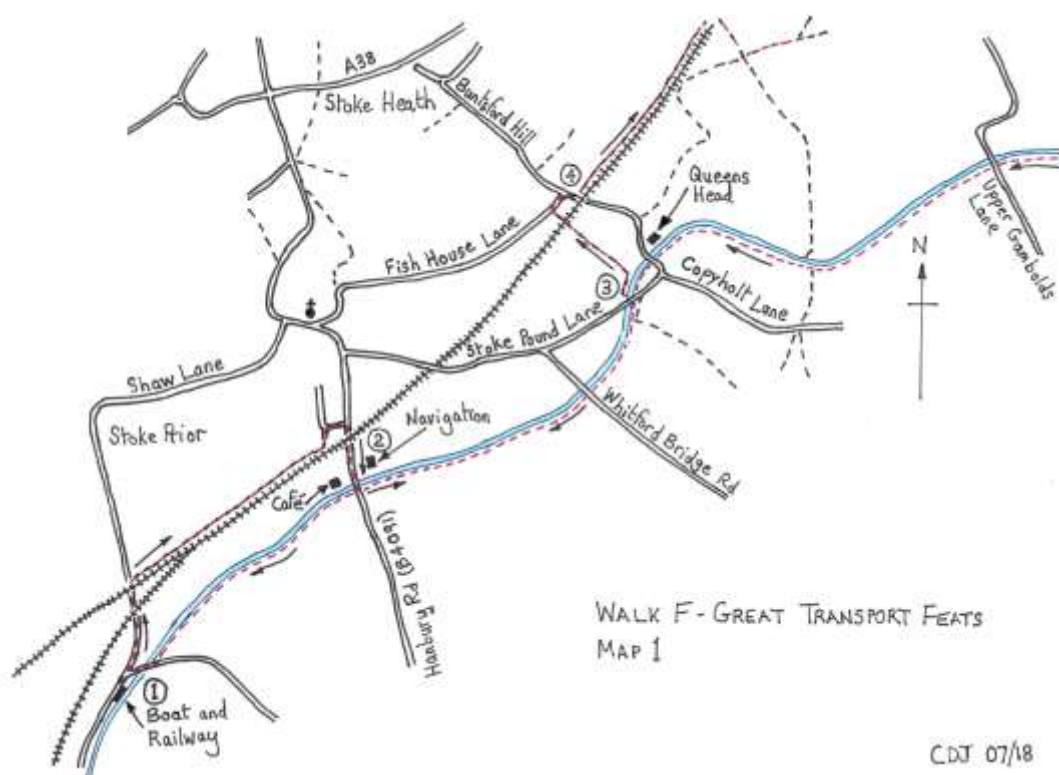


## PARISH WALK - LICKEY INCLINE AND TARDEBIGGE FLIGHT

The walk starts at Stoke Works, criss-crosses the railway uphill with an easy stroll back down the canal towpath. In dry weather only sensible footwear is needed but the link-paths can become muddy and overgrown at other times. The walk distance is 12¼ miles and typically takes between 4½ to 5½ hours but there are a number of opportunities to shorten the route if you refer to an OS map. Due to the length of the walk it has been split over two maps.

Roadside parking is available near the start point. There are car parks at Aston Fields and Tardebigge Church. Some public houses may allow walkers to use their car parks but please check.

**MAP 1 OF WALK**



- 1. Stoke Works** - In 1812 salt was discovered during the building of the canal. The two salt works that developed there were taken over by John Corbett, the Salt King in 1852 and 1858 who built an industrial village, including the village school, now converted to dwellings. The works had a large boat fleet and its own internal rail system. From the Boat and Railway proceed north along Shaw Lane under the Midland and Great Western Bridges then turn right at the Footpath sign and follow the track parallel to railway across the Hen Brook to reach Foley Gardens (F/P sign)
- 2. Stoke Wharf** - Turn right and right again into Hanbury Road, pass the Navigation Inn to the canal, where there is picnic site on the left hand side over the bridge. Turn left along towpath (upstream). There are refreshments at the café on the Metal Ores Ind. Estate, open weekdays and Saturday mornings). Continue along towpath to Lock 28.
- 3. Thompson's Bridge** - Cross the canal to the kissing gate opposite. Follow field round to gate and into an enclosed path. Cross into the adjacent field through another gate, keeping straight on towards the railway line. Only cross the tracks if you can neither see, hear nor feel a train as many come round the curve at full throttle to climb the Bank. Turn right into Fish House Lane (F/P sign).
- 4. Sugarbrook** - Turn right into Sugarbrook Lane and turn left up bank (F/P sign) to tarmac path alongside railway



## PARISH WALK (Continued 1)

MAP 2 OF WALK



- 5. Formerly Garringtons** – Once claimed to be the largest automotive forging unit in Europe employing over 1200 people Garringtons closed in 2002. About halfway along the path there is the waiting point for the banker engine. At the end of tarmac path turn right over railway bridge and through gate onto an enclosed path.
- 6. Footpath Junction** - (F/P sign) Go left through the gate and continue through another gate into lane. Just past Maidsmere Cottage turn left across stile (F/P sign) and small stream. Keep to left-hand side of sports ground. As the track bears right carry straight on through a gate into the housing estate (Platform Road). Go down the road and straight on through a gate.
- 7. St Godwald's Road** - (F/P sign) Turn left just below entrance to Sports Club. For Bromsgrove Station, Ladybird, shops, buses and car park, continue over railway bridge and turn left.
- 8. Aston Fields** – Just before the bridge turn right on to path along railway embankment to next bridge.
- 9. Rigby Hall** - Cross railway bridge and main road into service road parallel to Rigby Lane, passing Rigby Hall School. Where the road bears left go straight on down track between another school and playing grounds. Bear slightly right just past playing fields and go right along cycle track/path. Turn first right into Penshurst Road and right again into Belvoir Road. At end follow tarmac path which, becomes combined with cycle track, runs parallel to the railway
- 10. Oakalls Railway Bridge** – Turn right under bridge and through gate, follow track to road
- 11. Heydon Road, Finstall** - Turn left, right and left (almost a cross roads) into Pikes Pool Lane. For refreshments go straight up main road to Cross Inn] Go under highway. Just beyond end of pavement turn right over stile, continue parallel to lane and cross fence.
- 12. Pikes Pool Bridge** - Turn right. Follow track with partial hedge initially to the left and then cross to right. Path then keeps to left of hedge/fence until stile is reached in top corner of field. Continue alongside hedge/fence across two stiles. Turn left along driveway but turn right across stile in a hedge just by the first gate.

## PARISH WALK (Continued 2)

**13. High Barn Farm / Vigo** – The walk now heads back to the canal. Alternatively, to continue following incline turn left onto bridleway, then left onto road and right onto path before the railway bridge. Keep straight on for Burcot with Garden Centre and bus 145. For Tardebigge Cider continue straight up road and take first right.

For the canal turn right onto the bridleway, back along the other side of the hedge. Go through gate by barn, keep close to right hand side of field to small wooden gate in corner. Head half left downhill to Finstall Farm. Go through gate into farm yard and left along driveway parallel to highway.

**14. Tutnall Lane** - Go under highway and turn right into Alcester Road.

**15. Finstall** - Turn left by B/W sign by second bus stop. Alternatively keep straight on to visit Cross Inn. Follow this bridleway through the woods and down towards Stoke Cross Farm.

**16. Dusthouse Lane** - Turn left, keep left at road junction until road turns sharp left by a F/P sign. Take this path, keeping left of the wire fence. Follow the line of the fence to bridge and cross into copse. Turn right through kissing gate, then left parallel to copse to another kissing gate. Go up the enclosed path to canal bridge (No 56). Cross the bridge and go down the steps onto the towpath.

**17. Canal / Top Lock** - Turn left under bridge and follow towpath back to Stoke Works. The 'Top Lock' is one of the deepest locks on any canal in England and was built on the site of a unique boat lift.

**[17A]. Tardebigge Basin & Church** - turn right. At Top Lock (58) there is an information plaque by the Transport Trust and an information board further along opposite the wharf. Turn right just past the lock and over a stile and through two gates to visit the Baroque St Bartholomew's Church. At one time the church straddled the Worcester/Warwickshire boundary and has also been in Staffordshire. There is a car park just below the church. The towpath continues over the top of the tunnel to Alvechurch and Birmingham.

Just after the London Lane bridge at Tylers Lock is a building which was formerly the Engine House. It once housed a Newcomen-Watt beam engine, used to pump canal water uphill from Tardebigge reservoir.

**18. Tardebigge Reservoir** - At either Bridge 52 or Lock 33, turn right for short cuts back to Aston Fields or continue along the towpath.

**19. Queen's Head** - Just beyond the start of the Stoke Flight is this popular inn. Continue along the towpath back to the starting point of the walk.

## HAVE YOU ANYTHING YOU COULD SHARE ABOUT THE STOKES?

Having renovated both our website and the newsletter we are keen to push on and expand their content to provide more information about our diverse community that is The Stokes.

One of the areas we would very much like to improve is the history of the Stokes and so we are asking that if you, or someone that you know, have any stories and/or photographs relating to the Stokes that you feel that people might like to hear or see and that you would be willing to share, we would be very grateful for them. Any such information would be put on our website under the 'About the Stokes' section and, if you wish, credited to you, with selected stories or photos (which would be returned to you) also being used for articles in future Newsletters.

If you can help us then please contact Neil or Stan either by calling in at the Office or by Phone (01527 757190, records out of hour messages) or e-mail (spcasstclerk@hotmail.com), or speak to any of our councillors, please see the back page of this Newsletter for their contact details.

**FORTHCOMING PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The Parish Council will meet at 7.30pm at Avoncroft Arts Centre on the following dates over the first few months of 2020:

Monday 13th January 2020  
Monday 3rd February 2020  
Monday 2nd March 2020  
Monday 6th April 2020

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place at Stoke Prior Village Hall  
on  
Wednesday 13th May 2020

**PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE AND CONTACT DETAILS**

The Parish Office based at 17B Ryefields Road, Stoke Prior will usually be open to the public on Monday to Thursday mornings as follows when Neil Gulliver, the Parish Clerk, or Stan Petrovic the Assistant Clerk, will be happy to try and help local residents with any issues which concern them

Mondays normally between **10:00am and 1:00pm**  
Tuesdays normally between **9:00am and 12:00 noon**  
Wednesdays normally between **10:00am and 1:00pm**  
Thursdays normally between **9:00am and 12:00 noon**

You can contact the Clerk outside office hours on 07927 311041, leave a message at the office on **01527 757190** or email [clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk). If you want to meet the Clerk or Assistant Clerk outside of the above hours, an appointment can be arranged to suit you.

As with the arrangements for meeting with the Clerk or Assistant Clerk, if any local resident has a particular issue or problem that they wish to discuss with the Chairman or another Parish Councillor, or with your local District Councillor, again please contact the Parish Office to make an appointment.

**SMARTWATER NEWS**

Councillors Sue Abel (Foley Gardens, 01527 835613 or 07808 053556) and Jill Howe (Shaw Lane, 01527 570274 or 07821 589766) are happy to for residents local to them to phone them and make prior arrangements for them to go and collect and register their SmartWater from their respective homes.

**AND FINALLY . . .**

As we constantly remind you, the Parish Council is there to support everyone who lives in the parish but we need your help to know what is going on out there and what you would like to see provided in the parish so please come to our monthly meetings or call into the office and talk to Neil (Monday & Wednesday) or Stan (Tuesday & Thursday)

## COUNCILLORS AND OTHER CONTACTS

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<b>Peter Williams (Chairman)</b>	07970 782690	Planning (Chairman), Communications. CPRE and Worcestershire CALC representative
<b>John Ellis (Vice-Chairman)</b>	01527 570287	Planning, Communications, Finance & Resources, Stoke Heath Recreation Area
<b>Diane Brown</b>	01527 821692	Planning, Finance & Resources, Worcestershire CALC representative, Picnic Site
<b>Jillian Howe</b>	01527 570274	Communications, Finance & Resources, Stoke Prior Village Hall Management Committee
<b>Susan Abel</b>	07808 053556	Planning, Communications (Chairman)
<b>Chris Jewson</b>	01527 578821	Parish Footpaths Warden
<b>Liz Miller</b>	01527 831942	Planning
<b>Liz Eden</b>	07803 764360	Communications
<b>Alyson Jewson</b>	01527 578821	
<b>Alan Bayliss</b>	07999 835599	
<b>Jean Jackson</b>	01527 328971	
<b>Rory Shannon</b>	07527 724088	

<b>Parish Clerk</b>	Neil Gulliver Parish Office, 17B Ryefields Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove B60 4NA Tel 01527 757190 E-mail: clerk@stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk
<b>Assistant Clerk</b>	Stan Petrovic - contact details as above
<b>Parish Council Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk">http://www.stoke-pc-worcs.gov.uk</a>
<b>Website Comments and Articles</b>	spcasstclerk@hotmail.com
<b>District Councillors</b>	Malcolm Glass (Avoncroft) at <a href="mailto:m.glass@bromsgrove.gov.uk">m.glass@bromsgrove.gov.uk</a> Harrison Rone-Clarke (Rock Hill) at <a href="mailto:h.rone-clarke@bromsgrove.gov.uk">h.rone-clarke@bromsgrove.gov.uk</a>
<b>County Councillor</b>	Bromsgrove South Division Kyle Daisley Tel 07722 241335 E-mail <a href="mailto:kdaisley@worcestershire.gov.uk">kdaisley@worcestershire.gov.uk</a>