



NORTHILL PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Representing Northhill, Upper and Lower Caldecote,
Ickwell, Thorncote, Hatch, Budna and Bells Brook

Issue 13

March 2010

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ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

This year's Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 29 March at Caldecote Church Rooms, Biggleswade Road, Upper Caldecote starting at 7.30 pm. This meeting gives you, local Parishioners, a chance to have your say, discuss parish affairs and pass resolutions thereon. The only persons entitled to speak and vote at a Parish Meeting are the persons registered as local government electors for the Parish. Every question is decided by the majority of those present and voting on the question.

We are pleased to report that we will have Karen Kenny from the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Limited giving a talk at the meeting. After the meeting it is hoped that the local parishioners interested in renting an allotment will get together and, with Karen's help, form an Allotment Association. Setting up an association at this stage in the proceeding will help secure funding that the Parish Council would not be able to obtain itself.

In the meantime if there are any landowners that would be willing to either sell or offer on long term lease between 2 and 4 acres of land within the Parish then would they kindly contact

Clerk Linda Trevena on 01767 221930

or email parishclerk@northhillparish.co.uk

RECENT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council has met once since the last Newsletter, on 15 February. The Planning Committee has met on two occasions, the Highways and Open Spaces and the Cemetery Committees have each met once.

Constable Paterson was in attendance at the 15 February meeting and was pleased to report that the overall level of crime within the Ivel villages had fallen. He gave outline information of the crimes within this Parish. He confirmed that whilst Magpie Farm/Oak Tree Nursery Gypsy and Traveller Site had recently seen more Police activity, the site problems had been mostly caused by visitors to the site. He advised that speed data collection strips had been installed in Upper Caldecote as there is currently an ongoing investigation into speeding.

Confirmation has been received from Highways that the request for a vehicle-activated sign in Caldecote Road near Ickwell Green can only be considered through the Parish Partnership. However, as the funds for this year's allocation have already been spent this will not take place in this Financial Year. As yet, there has been no confirmation from Central Bedfordshire Council that the Parish Partnership will continue. If the partnership does continue next Financial Year then this Council will be able to make a proposal for this site at the appropriate time.

Tenders had been received from three contractors in relation to (a) Ickwell Green ditch clearance to be carried out after 1 April 2010 and (b) reinstatement of grass area and installation of soak-away outside Colemoreham Farmhouse to be carried out as soon as practically possible. Contracts for the work were awarded to A R Worboys Limited and Adrian Sinfield Contracting respectively. The Ickwell Cricket Club will be requested to inform their members/visitors not to park on the area adjacent to Colemoreham Farmhouse in the future.

Highways and Open Spaces Committee

During the recent walkabout/meeting it was noted that all work required on Caldecote Green had been satisfactorily carried out and the Green looked good considering the recent wet and wintery weather. The newly formed Northill Pond Working Party had begun planned maintenance on the pond. Unfortunately there was evidence of dog fouling on the verge adjacent to the pond and within a few metres of the dog fouling waste bin.

Cemetery Committee

Northill Churchyard was generally in a very good condition. It was agreed to write to the Parochial Church Council drawing their attention to the poor condition of the churchyard noticeboard. Members remarked on the excellent repair work carried out by D G Granger Grounds Maintenance Limited to Ickwell Green War Memorial and its surrounding wooden posts. The Clerk has been asked to look into the possibility of grant aid towards the upkeep and general cleaning of the war memorial from the War Memorial Trust. Due to the extreme wet weather, in both cemeteries several graves had sunk and required topping up. There was also evidence yet again, in Upper Caldecote cemetery, of mole infestation which will need to be addressed.

Planning Committee

The Council is one of a number of consultees who respond to planning applications submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council. If members of the public have any comments or concerns regarding a planning application then please do attend the Planning Committee's meetings. These meetings are held as required at 5.30 pm on a Tuesday in the Church Hall, Sand Lane, Northill. Notices advertising meetings and detailing the planning applications to be considered are placed, at least five days in advance of the meeting, on the six noticeboards throughout the Parish. During these meetings there is a ten-minute slot reserved to allow members of the public to speak on items on the agenda. In addition you should forward your comments direct to the Planning Department at Central Bedfordshire Council.

**REMINDER TO ALL
VOLUNTARY GROUPS/VILLAGE
ORGANISATIONS**

Application forms for Parish Council grants are now available from the Clerk. Applicants are reminded that they need to state a specific purpose for the funds for which they are applying and to enclose a copy of their most recent accounts. The Council will only accept applications from community groups and organisations within the Parish for grants which in its opinion are in the interests of, or will directly benefit, all or a portion of the Parish or its inhabitants. Retrospective grant applications cannot be considered. Successful applicants may be required to submit a short report outlining the use made of the grant within three months of the project's completion. Although all applications will be considered, some applications may not be successful. Completed applications must be sent to the Clerk to Northill Parish Council by 30 April 2010 for determination at the Council Meeting on 17 May 2010.

POTHOLES

Potholes caused by the recent severe weather conditions are beginning to appear across the local road network and Central Bedfordshire Council Highways Department are taking every step necessary to identify problem areas and ensure public safety. The worst conditions in 30 years have left roads exposed to a condition known as "freeze-thaw". Water in cracks in the road expands into ice causing the surface of the road to break up and deeper than usual potholes to form.

They will be attending urgently to any pothole on the carriageway that measures more than 150 mm long x 150 mm wide x 50 mm deep. On the footway, they class slab movement, uneven ironwork, and holes with a trip exceeding 100 mm long x 20 mm wide x 20 mm deep as urgent. Anything smaller will still be assessed but monitored for future repair.

If you feel your issue is urgent, as outlined above, please call Highways on 0300 300 8049 so they can give it immediate attention.

For all other issues, a member of their Customer Service Team will respond to your issue within two working days with advice, guidance, and a report number where action may be required. Their Technicians then have the following timescales to inspect your issue and decide the best course of action:

- Potholes, surface defects, kerbing, general highway faults - 5 working days from the date of their reply
- Street lighting faults - 10 working days from the date of their reply
- All requests for new additions to the Highways, e.g.: signs, lines, etc - 20 working days from the date of their reply.

CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON REDUCTION, SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

Following the snowiest winter many of us can remember it is hard to believe that the earth is heating up. Yet whether you believe the scientists who tell us that humans are responsible or believe that this is just part of the natural cycle of the world, the climate is certainly changing. On top of that certain of the earth's resources are being used up at an increasing rate and are costing us more money. All good reasons to investigate alternatives to our current energy use!

Under the terms of The Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006, the Government must promote community energy projects in England and Wales. It must also promote the use of heat produced from renewable sources. The Act also explicitly gives Parish Councils in England and Wales the power to promote local energy saving measures, energy efficiency and micro generation.

In April 2006 the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) launched the Low Carbon Buildings Programme, which provides grants to individuals, communities and businesses wishing to invest in micro generating technologies. These schemes are to be replaced in turn by new proposals from the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) for clean energy cashback via Feed-In Tariffs for generating electricity from April 2010 and the Renewable Heat Incentive for generating renewable heat from April 2011.

What does this mean for Northill Parish Council? It means that the Parish Council can encourage and lend moral support for projects that would lower the use of energy in the Parish, make our use of energy more efficient and even generate some of our own!

One idea that some local residents are kicking around is the possibility of having a wind turbine for the village – something larger than a turbine that supplies energy to just one home and a lot smaller than a full scale wind farm! The idea is to generate enough electricity to provide energy for a large number of homes and still feed into the national grid, making money. Some local residents have offered their land as a possible site. On the other hand, we are very sensitive to the beauty of our Parish and don't want to destroy that!

A number of us are hoping to get a small group of people together to discuss the pros and cons. If you are interested, please contact Wendi Momen at wendi@northill.demon.co.uk or 01767 627626.

POTENTIAL SITES **FOR GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION**

At the meeting of Central Bedfordshire Council's Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 February, the members voted in favour of an amended list of proposed sites which excluded the three pitches with temporary planning permission at Woodside Caravan Park, Hatch, but included seven proposed pitches at Magpie Farm/Oak Tree Nursery, Upper Caldecote, in addition to the existing three pitches with full planning permission. A six-week public consultation period on a Preferred Sites document is scheduled to begin in late March 2010. It is very important that as many people as possible make their views known. The consultation will be advertised in the local press and on the website talktocentralbedfordshire.co.uk. Replies can then be entered on this website or letters can be sent in the usual way.

Further consideration of the sites and a Public Examination will take place later in 2010.

A REQUEST TO ALL DOG OWNERS

Dog fouling continues to be an increasing problem throughout the Parish, please, please, please make sure that you pick up after your dog.

Allowing dogs to foul and not clean up after them is illegal as well as being anti-social. Estimates put the British dog population at around 6.8 million, producing 900 tonnes of excrement per day.

If you spot someone who hasn't cleaned up after their dog then you should note what happened as soon as possible. Where known, include the name and address of the person in charge of the dog, a description of the dog plus details of the date, time and place of the offence. You can then forward this information to Central Bedfordshire Council on 0300 300 8000 or online. The maximum fine for a dog fouling offence is £1,000. Alternatively, Central Bedfordshire Council has the power to issue a £50 fixed penalty fine.

Central Bedfordshire Council provides bins for the disposal of dog waste across the District although ordinary litter bins can be used if the waste is securely bagged. If you feel that our area requires additional bins then please contact Central Bedfordshire Council with your proposed location and they will endeavour to provide one in the area.

FORTHCOMING PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Monday 12 April 2010, at Ickwell Village Hall
Monday 17 May 2010, at Caldecote Church Rooms
Monday 7 June 2010, at Ickwell Village Hall

A Councillor Surgery will be held from 7.00 pm to 7.30 pm
prior to Council meetings
All meetings start at 7.30 pm.

This newsletter will be published on the Parish Council website
www.northhillparish.co.uk
with links to
www.northhill-parish.info

COUNCILLOR AND CLERK CONTACT DETAILS

Avril Bird	tel: 310384	The Vine, 7 Lower Caldecote SG18 9AX
Rebecca Brinkley	tel:	40 Ickwell Road, Northhill SG18 9AB
Jack Coutts	tel: 601698	29 Shakespeare Drive, U. Caldecote SG18 9DD
John Franklin	tel: 627644	Trumpeton's Farm, Thorncote Green SG19 1PU
Gerald Gilbert	tel: 314940	193 Biggleswade Road, U. Caldecote SG18 9BJ
Maureen Hall	tel: 627566	Oak End, 23A Bedford Road, Northhill SG18 9AH
Sally Mandley	tel: 313812	40 Manor Place, U. Caldecote SG18 9DA
Peter Maudlin	tel: 316212	Water Lane Farm, U. Caldecote SG18 9BP
David Milton	tel: 627661	8 Sand Lane, Northhill SG18 9AD
Wendi Momen	tel: 627626	Wixamtree, 28 Sand Lane, Northhill SG18 9AD
Margaret Morgan	tel: 627602	Clareford, Warden Road, Ickwell SG18 9EL
John Yatchisin	tel: 626374	17 Ickwell Road, Northhill SG18 9AB
and your Parish Clerk		
Linda Trevena	tel: 221930	10 St Margaret's Gdns, Biggleswade SG18 8NU

OTHER USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

Central Bedfordshire Council

General Enquiries	0300 300 8000
Highways	0300 300 8049
Dog Warden	0300 300 8631

Police Constable Paterson (Local Beat Officer)	01234 842521
Police Headquarters (general non-emergency enquiries)	01234 841212

**FEEDBACK ON THIS NEWSLETTER WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED
BY THE EDITOR:**

editor@northhillparish.co.uk
or via any parish councillor

Finally, thank you for reading this and to our distributors