

Message from the Chairman:

It seems this time there is not much I can say as it has mostly already been covered. I have been privileged to serve a second year as Chairman and it certainly keeps me busy. Yes, you will from time to time see me sitting in the Parish Clerk's Chair which is a wonderful opportunity not only to speak to many of you on the telephone, but also in person face to face.

During the recent illegal encampment by travellers it made me realise even more what a fantastic job is done by Ann Jacobs our Parish Clerk who worked tirelessly, even giving up her holiday, to ensure the travellers were moved off in record time. It is at times like this that you have to keep not only a sense of proportion but also remain positive and optimistic to meet each challenge as it is presented.

I would like to say a big thank you to those fellow councillors who also assisted and all those parishioners who offered and provided help by way of updates, witness statements and security issues.

I am now left to wonder what other challenges will be thrown at us in the coming year, whatever they are we are going to be prepared and are presently formalising a plan to deal with genuine emergency situations.

Getting away from the travellers, I attended a meeting at East Dorset District Council on July 18th regarding decisions made with regard to Post Office closures and was overjoyed to hear our post office was to remain. We were given the average customer

sessions for those branches due for closure the lowest being 0 to 49 sessions per week and the highest 1000 to 1499. This shows how important it is that we use our post office.

With regards to the Forestry Commission you will note that there is a separate article in this newsletter and we shall ensure that information is updated on our website.

Cllr Mrs J House

Travellers at Horton Road

At the time of writing this piece the travellers who illegally camped at Horton Road Village Green have left. For accuracy these are the facts:

Persons unknown used cutting gear to remove the burrs on the hinges, which enabled them to then lift the gate off its hinges with the security padlocks in situ. The Council reviewed the security of this and its other site at Braeside Road about 18 months ago, taking into account various factors and assessing the risk the measures taken were thought to be sufficient. This has now been proved wrong. Immediately the travellers left the site the Council put in some additional temporary security measures and is presently progressing permanent improved security measures.

The legal costs, specialist cleaning of the site and immediate security measures following the departure of these visitors has come in at £5,784.

The reason that the Council could not just move this encampment on was that the Government has brought in guidance which requires a Public Authority to carry out certain duties, If these are not

carried-out and or the request to evict is not presented correctly at the beginning and the Judge feels that the Authority has not acted in accordance with this guidance, then he may adjourn the case for whatever period he feels is necessary to provide further evidence. A great deal of information and evidence was required to prove that this area was not just a field but a recreational area, that the presence of this encampment was depriving the residents of a facility not just another green space. Had our presentation been lacking then this encampment could have stayed for a much longer period. Because of the efforts of a strong and determined team the travellers moved off the site in 13 days.

Since the goals have been erected we have had two sets of nets stolen by persons unknown. We have also received a number of complaints about children playing football with the associated noise and degree of litter that this has possibly brought. But having put the evidence together for the eviction one of our strongest points was that this pitch is marked and the goals in situ. I hope that those who have complained in the past will accept that the issues relating to the game of football have to be more acceptable than an illegal encampment.

Council Membership

This July a by-election was called as a result of a resignation of a Councillor. This in itself resulted in many calls to the Parish Office for information about the candidates. The Council was criticised for not circulating information. The Council and the Parish Clerk are not permitted to do this. The candidates are the only ones able to do so; a body or group such as

a political group may help them if they are their nominees.

The successful candidate was Ray Bryan and a good turnout, over 18%, for the election was recorded. Ray has already been extremely busy in assisting with security for our various sites.

Allowances and Pay for Councillors

There has been much made in the media of allowances and expenses paid to Councillors. For your information this Parish Council allows an allowance of £300 for the year to be paid to the Chairman to cover the expenses related to representing this Council in the District such as telephone calls, stationery needs and travel expenses. No other Parish Councillor receives an allowance for their Parish duties they are volunteers. As there is only one member of staff, the Chairman and Vice Chairman can often be found covering the office when the Clerk is on leave, this is also done on a voluntary basis.

It is extremely rare for even expenses to be claimed and normally only done when a Councillor attends a course and claims the mileage allowance of 40p per mile.

Other Councils do pay their Councillors an allowance but this would further increase your Council tax. This Council has no plan to change its current scheme in this respect.

Statutory Duty

The Council can only act when it has a statutory duty to do so. Whilst sometimes residents want the Council to do something about a matter they feel is important and, on some occasions the Members would dearly like to, the Council has to be careful that it is not deemed 'ultra vires' i.e. beyond its powers. This is not to say that the Council cannot try and support the residents, but care must be taken.

The Council also has to ensure it meets and complies with its statutory duties and responsibilities.

The unauthorised encampment caused a lot of work for the officer of the Council and several Members and yet somehow the normal day-to-day duties still have to be carried out.

A Plea from all walkers, the visually impaired and children in buggies!!

Unless you walk fairly often on the pavements you will not notice how annoying overhanging bushes and other vegetation is. Please, please look at your boundary and trim it back. We get so many complaints about this issue we could write a book. Many of these bushes are quite sharp and can hurt if brushing into your skin. They catch on clothing and when wet are even lower and obstructive. As a homeowner **you** are responsible for ensuring that your hedging does not interfere with pavement users or obstruct streetlights and signs. The entire width of the pavement should be clear and to a height of 2.1m or 6ft 9" on any overhang. Please take a moment to check your boundary out and trim it before a person is injured, they may wish to sue.

Horton Road

Having just spent £600 on specialist clearance at Horton Road it would be nice to think that all users of this area will see this clean slate and ensure that they ALL clear up after their dog and their litter. The specialist team that followed the encampment cleared up a great deal of dog faeces as well as other faeces, and before anyone says it, there were no dogs to my knowledge with this group of travellers. There are plenty of dog and litterbins on site. This green space is for us all. Please clear it up and pick it up!

Forestry Commission Proposal Update The Ashley Park Action Group continues to try to keep our fight in the local media.

We understand and as reported in the Stour and Avon Magazine

(May 9th) that the Forestry Commission is apparently looking at 'alternative sites in the area from the Avon Valley round to north of Bournemouth. This includes Hurn Forest and other large areas of woodlands' (Bruce Rothnie: Forestry Commission)

Nevertheless, the Forestry Commission invited members of the St Leonards & St Ives Parish Council and members of the Ashley Park Action Group to visit one of their concert events at Cannock Chase on 28-29th June. As a sign of good will, two of our members, at their own expense and time, have visited Cannock Chase as a fact-finding exercise. They found that:

- Cannock Chase and the proposed Ashley Heath/Ringwood forest sites are not at all comparable, as Cannock Chase is extremely large compared to our local forest.
- There are few residential properties near to the venue at Cannock Chase and therefore most importantly the density of population there is significantly lower than at Ashley Heath.
- The traffic flow is tri-directional, whereas in Ashley Heath it will be predominantly from one direction from Ringwood along the B3081, which will therefore cause gridlock.
- At a chance meeting, one local resident who lives 3 miles away from the venue reported when the wind was in a certain direction, the concert noise was heard in-doors over the sound of their television, while another offered to sign our petition.

The Action Group strongly maintains that the proposed siting at the Ringwood/Ashley Forest is unique and unlike any of the other sites, including Cannock Chase. It is near a large residential area that includes Ringwood. The proposed siting will allow large numbers of non-ticket holders from the surrounding area to sim-

ply walk to the site and it is this that makes it impossible for the Forestry Commission to properly control the event. The resulting disturbance & environmental impact on the local will still exist, however well managed the actual concert may be. There is also concern that access via the Horton Road may be utilised if the B3081 becomes congested.

Ashley Park Action Group urges you to **continue the fight by writing again** to the Forestry Commission expressing your continued concerns and your determination to fight on, until they withdraw the proposal. We also require them to disclose as much information as possible (which to date has not been forthcoming) regarding the actual review process being undertaken when considering these alternatives and their progress to date. We would like to know when the final decision will be made.

We must ensure that the Forestry Commission's review of alternative sites is not simply a delaying tactic to lull us into a false sense of security.

Once again thank you for your continued support.

St Leonards & St Ives Village Hall

Your team on the Village Hall Management Committee continues to work hard on the numerous jobs that need to be done. Bookings have increased including an excellent Craft Group and a Dog Training session every week. Our staff continue to work hard on cleaning, maintenance, decorating. etc.

We need the support of our local people and cordially invite you to our AGM on Monday 6th October in the Annexe for wine and nibbles prior to the meeting where your input and views would be very welcome. Better still why not join our committee to represent the local group you are with.

Your Parish Council, the owners of the hall, is having a structural survey carried out on the Village Hall to ascertain all work neces-

sary during the next five years. On completion of this it is hoped to finalise the new lease terms and conditions so that we can move forward

For bookings please contact Mrs Elaine Linden on 01425 478177 or 07725 464653.

Ann Warman, Chairman

Parish Plan Update

The Parish Plan Monitoring Group, currently numbering 10 members of the Steering Committee responsible for producing our Parish Plan, is continuing to work towards achieving the Action Plans embodied in the Parish Plan. We are continuing to oppose controversial planning applications, including recent proposals for more flats, which is rather surprising in view of the gross oversupply of flats in all regions of the Country.

We have also raised a number of transport issues with the appropriate authorities, who seem to be taking a very complacent view of our concerns, such as wide loads in Horton Road and access difficulties at Woolsbridge Road roundabout.

Through the East Dorset Community Partnership we are hoping to join with other Action Groups set up in other areas of East Dorset following publication of their Parish Plans. We would be please to follow up any issues raised in our Parish Plan, which you can contribute to in any way. Indeed, we would welcome volunteers to join our Monitoring Group. Please make initial contact with our Parish Clerk, Mrs Ann Jacobs on 01425 482727.

Ken Brooks
Chairman, Parish Plan Steering Group

Home Watch – Working together for a safer Community

To strengthen our numbers we continue to appeal to residents who live in the roads where membership is fragile. Do you reside in Ashley Drive West,

Braeside Road, Birch Close, Heath Road, Hesketh Close, Pine Drive, Pineholt Close, Peverill Close, Sandy Lane or Windsor Close and, if you do, are you a member of Home Watch? If not would you please consider joining us?

For only £1 per annum (per household) the membership benefits include – police messages detailing criminal activity in our area, Community Newsletters 3 or 4 times a year, Nominated Traders List, involvement in a caring community, a possible reduction in home insurance and more.

We have over 100 Co-ordinators and with the help of deputies, they look after an average of 10-20 members. We would also need Co-ordinators to volunteer in some of these highlighted roads, as a Co-ordinator circulates the police messages (sometimes by email), the Newsletters, and generally they encourage a neighbourly environment.

Finally our website – 2saints.org.uk – will provide you with a great deal more information about us.

The more residents that join Home Watch the stronger and safer we will all be.

Brian Parsons – Editor – 01425 461573 – email: brianand-sophie@hotmail.com

Out of Hours Service

Did you know that St Leonards Hospital has an emergency out of hours treatment centre for when your GP surgery is closed, open from 6.30 p.m. to 10 p.m. from Monday to Friday, and from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Dorset Emergency Care Service number is 0845 6001013.

Serious Danger to Health Warning

If you are guilty of not clearing up your dog's mess, and you know who you are; you may also be guilty of blinding a child. A child born with good sight but due to

your thoughtlessness or laziness could spend the rest of their life in darkness. Toxocariasis can be contracted from dog mess, which would lead to blindness, asthma, and epileptic fits. Toxocara eggs take 2-3 weeks to mature. Removing dog mess immediately prevents this and restricts infection.

In our Parish we have two recreation fields where children play. These are the same areas used by dog owners to exercise their dogs. In both fields there are bins provided, but some irresponsible dog owners fail to clear up after their dogs, leaving it to others to clean up or worst still for others to take samples home on their shoes.

The act of not clearing up after your dog is a criminal offence. This Parish is buying in additional hours to the District Dog Warden Scheme. The Warden will be patrolling our area for the purpose of issuing substantial fines to anyone guilty of not clearing up after their dog. Not having a 'doggy bag' for the purpose of clearing up is not an excuse – you have been warned it may cost you up to £1,000.

If you are a responsible dog owner and see anyone committing this offence, please report the date, time and description of the

owner and dog to the Parish Clerk in order that action can be taken.

Kay Redknap.

Youth Club, Braeside Road

The Club is open on a Monday and Wednesday from 7pm to 9.30pm. We cater for age group of 10+ to 19.

Our aim is to challenge, engage and facilitate youth to make responsible decisions. We want youth to develop into confident, responsible members of the community and have lots of fun on the way.

The Club wants to help all ages of our community understand each other and work together. This helps with a reduction in anti social behaviour and a good community feel. We believe we have had an impact in this area and anti social activity is far less in this village compared to the surrounding area.

We actively encourage youth participation, we use ideas generated to drive and improve our club, ensuring that the voice of the youth is listened to and acted upon. I meet weekly with the youth to ensure their voice is heard. The youth also take part in the Management meetings and

often have their say! (Try stopping them!)

Youth are encouraged to have a responsible attitude to the well being of others and foster community spirit. Trust and respect to all are key themes. The Club is now run by a strong Management team made up of Parents, Youth Professionals, Community Police, Councillors and Villagers who meet every month to drive the club forward.

We also make sure the youth do their bit by organising fundraising events. We currently have around 40 members and we are trying to drive this number up. If you know youth that will benefit from coming, send them along the first night's free.

Which reminds me to ask you to note the 11th of October in your diaries, we are holding a Senior Disco. Tickets will be £5 all proceeds will go towards the Youth Club. You must be over 21 and able to dance!, and be known locally.

If you have any youth issues or ideas please phone me on 01202 873786

Andy Skeats

Chairman Freedom Youth Club.

**Are you caring
Good with people
Enjoy socialising**

**Come and help us as a volunteer
On Mondays – Village Hall, St Leonards
No pay, but rewarding
Crowd of senior citizens
Enjoying talks, outings and fun
Recruits urgently needed
NOW!!**

**Visit us on a Monday
10.30am to 3 pm
at Braeside Road!!**

POLICE

To contact your Safer Neighbourhood Team:

Ring 01202 222 222

OR

07825 521 779

Only dial 999 if a life is in danger or a crime is in progress

Email:

westmoorsnt@dorset.pnn.police.uk

Mrs A Jacobs, Parish Clerk, Parish Office, Village Hall, St Leonards, Ringwood, BH24 2PJ

Telephone: 01425 482727 office hours Tuesday-Friday 10.30am to 12.30pm

Email: stleonardsstives@dorsetparishes.gov.uk Web Site: www.stleonardspc.org.uk

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW EMAIL ADDRESS