

Parish Council News – November 2012

The Parish Council meets at 7.30pm, on the third Tuesday of every month (except December), in the Parish Rooms, Waterside, off Rumbush Lane. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 20th November 2012 and then Tuesday 11th December 2012, please come and join us!

Village Improvements

I am pleased to announce that the village will soon be the proud owner of a new clock which will be installed on the main square-about island as you enter Dickens Heath. You will no doubt have noticed the activity on the main island with the preparatory work being undertaken. The clock is a classic design and is made by John Smith and Sons of Alfreton Derby. We are pleased to be able to support a highly respected British manufacturer, buying British products is something we can all do to help the economy and I am pleased to see that we have done our bit. The money for the clock comes from the consortium of builders who built the village so no council tax funds have been used but I think it will enhance the entrance to our village.

I hope you have noticed the enhancements to the village that have been taking place recently. The Parish Council had a meeting with Jim Harte, Service Director (Transport, Highways & the Environment), Mike Swallow, Strategic Land Advisor and Chris Barr, Principal Officer (Streetcare, Forestry, Parks & Open Spaces) to discuss a range of issues. I explained that the Parish Council was concerned about the lack of maintenance for the islands and the canal paths and lack of adoption of roads. Our displeasure was clear and I am pleased to see that they responded quickly to our complaints. I accept that with Parkridge going into liquidation and the remainder of Garden Squares now being effectively owned by the bank that there are some difficulties that need to be worked through. We are informed that there are interested construction companies discussing with Solihull the acquisition of Garden Squares and we will be kept informed about progress. I will keep you updated – and updates will be published on our website.

Griffin Lane

A significant planning application has been made by Taylor Wimpey in respect of land adjacent to Griffin Lane. We are concerned, this should not be being promoted ahead of schedule and certainly not prior to the Garden Squares completion. We need to see the village settle down before more construction occurs and we really do need to find a solution to the lack of facilities for our 11-16 year olds. There is over £100,000 cash for a capital project available but can you believe it, no land; a failure of adequate planning that has let down our young residents. We need to see some progress on this and we have made strong representations to Solihull about this, we will keep up the pressure.

Police Update

We asked Wendy Shale our local PCSO from West Midlands Police to come to our last meeting and she came with her colleague WPC Sharon Grant to our

meeting on the 16th October. Regrettably there have been a number of bicycle thefts (my son's BMX included!) we need to take simple steps to make it more difficult for these thieves who, we are told, are well known to the police and use the canal footpaths as a means of escape. Practical steps of keeping our sheds and gates locked are a good start. Also a spate of interference with German cars with keyless entry has been occurring. A device which blocks the keyless signal when exiting the car has been used by criminals, just take time to make sure the car has locked and the alarm "red light" is flashing.

I suppose we should be flattered that these criminals think Dickens Heath is worth coming along to, we do live in a great place, and I would like to keep it that way by supporting a new initiative the police are championing called "Street Watch" which is an enhanced Neighbourhood Watch system with the police providing support, high visibility jackets and training to provide assistance to trained volunteers who wish to undertake periodic village patrols and respond to anti social or criminal behaviour. We probably have a number of residents who might be interested in supporting this scheme, and the necessary skills, and I would encourage anyone who is interested to contact our Clerk –Helen Marczak.

Parish Rooms

The Parish Rooms continue to be used and I am pleased to hear that Julian Dimock has facilitated the acquisition of a table tennis table and there should soon be coaching sessions for "ping-pong". The Tuesday coffee club continues and free Yoga sessions are being provided for retired residents – with the next one on October 30th at 11am.

New Parish Councillor

I am pleased to welcome Josh O'Nyons as a new fellow councillor and wish him well in working with the council.. He is a resident of Monkspath and fought a highly publicised campaign.

Remembrance Day

We will mark the annual observance of Remembrance on Sunday 11th November in the centre of Dickens Heath adjacent to the Library. We would suggest assembly from 10.45 with the observance of a two minute silence at 11.00am and a short service. Road closures have been organised to respect the dignity of this solemn occasion. I will be remembering my mother's uncle, William Richard Saunders of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment who died on 12 July 1916 aged 22 and who is buried at Bapaume. As a young 22 year old man his ability to found a family was denied to him, unlike his brother - my grandfather who was too young for the war.

Refreshments will be provided afterwards at the Parish Rooms and you are welcome to join us.

Richard Holt, Chairman.

Contact Us:

If you would like to get in touch, please contact Parish Clerk – Helen Marczak on 07772 469271, by emailing dickensheathpc@hotmail.com, or at 1 Wharf House, Waterside, Dickens Heath, Solihull B90 1UE.