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END OF OUR WATCH

Readers of our Parish newsletter will probably have noticed that there are elections in May. These will end the current Council and bring in a new one for the next four years. As this is the final newsletter of the present Council it seems a good time to give an end of term report on some of the milestones of the last four years.

The achievement of dropped kerbs near the St Leonards Hospital and Oaktree is an example of how dogged determination can eventually win through. We badgered incessantly and finally got our result. We also flagged up potential flood risks at Oaktree in our Emergency Plan and got the Hospital to carry out maintenance on the approach road. We were successful too in fighting off the proposal to reduce the number of South Ward Councillors from three to two which would have left the ward under represented.

Extra car parking at the Village Hall and allotments are projects which are making good progress. Negotiations for a site near Three Legged Cross are coming along nicely.

Although the Parish Council is just a consultee when it comes to Planning matters, our views can make a difference. We have successfully argued for refusal on a number of proposed backland and infill developments, notably at 51 St Ives Park, which is in the Special Character Area. Developers often appeal, but even on these our track record is good, although Inspectors have given approval for some that we do not like.

We have also remembered old friends and colleagues. There is to be a memorial plaque to Brian Kliger, who did, and organised, so much volunteer work on our heaths. This will be at the

refurbished Ashley Halt railway platform. The popular Packham's outdoor gym was installed in the

play park in the memory of Councillor Mike Packham and funded by a very generous contribution from Mike's widow. We also gave a grant to St Leonards and St Ives ex-Services Club towards their Memorial Garden, a quiet spot for reflection and remembrance at any time.

Our campaign to prevent charges being made to enter the recycling centre on the Verwood Road has received unexpected help from the Government, who have brought out their own consultation aimed at making such charges illegal. The response from our residents to the DWP consultation has been huge, so they will be in no doubt about how we feel about their proposal to make charges when they reconsider in late May.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank my fellow councillors who have time and time again demonstrated how much they care for the place we live by the giving of their time and of their tireless work representing the people of this Parish during their term.

Written on behalf of the Parish Council 2014/2015

Finding Out About Your Parish Council

Look for your nearest Parish Council noticeboard. Attend a meeting. All meetings of the Parish Council are open to the public and an agenda must be

published three clear days prior to any meeting detailing the matters to be discussed. The Council cannot make a legal decision unless the matter is on the published agenda. The full Council meets on the last Wednesday of every month in the Committee Room at the Village Hall, Braeside Road, St Leonards. Meetings start at 7pm.

Go on our website:

www.stleonardspc.org.uk

or pop along to the Parish Office and take a look at the Minutes of previous meetings.

Alternatively email or write to the Clerk:

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

Telephone: 01425 482727

Office hours Tuesday to Thursday 10.30am to 12.30pm

office@stleonardspc.org.uk

Website:

www.stleonardspc.org.uk

INVITATION TO THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY
15th April 2015

DOORS OPEN AT 6.45PM
TO START PROMPTLY
AT 7.00PM

IN THE MAIN HALL AT
THE VILLAGE HALL,
BRAESIDE ROAD, ST
LEONARDS

The Chairman will give his annual report. Take the opportunity to ask questions directly of the Councillors and put forward ideas for the future.

It's your Parish, don't sit in silence come along and be a part of it!

A338 Update

The Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP) has secured funding from Government for a four year programme to improve access to South East Dorset. The first scheme will be the reconstruction of the A338 Bournemouth Spur Road.

During the first two months of 2015 preparation work has already taken place and the protection of many endangered species of reptiles is now underway before they come out of hibernation. In September 2015 the main work commences on this £22 million project and again much work will take place to protect these reptiles and will continue until April/May 2016. Work will be carried out twenty four hours per day to ensure the work is speedily completed.

Delays are inevitable as each side of this very busy road will be closed for lengthy periods. Diversions will be put in place and signage placed on major routes leading into the area.

Regular updates will be on local radio and television. You can also get updates via the internet either on the Dorset for You website <https://www.dorsetforyou.com> or using the link we will provide from the St Leonards Parish web site www.stleonardspc.org.uk.

This is a massive engineering exercise and whilst every care has been taken in the detailed planning the unexpected may happen. It is our intention to keep information flowing during this period.

Your local Parish Council are attending regular update meetings with both the Highways Department and also the contractor Hanson Contracting.

This part of the A338 was built in the late 60's with a twenty year life expectancy, each year £250,000 of tax payer's money has been spent repairing the road. The growing volume and weight of the vehicles has meant that an upgrade was essential.

The work on this very busy five and a half mile stretch of road includes upgrading the safety barriers to concrete. Improving drainage to solve flood problems associated with the road. Increasing the width of the carriageway to current standards, renewing road signs and protecting current bridge structures.

The old road will be removed and taken away to be reworked and then returned to form part of the new road. The final surface material will be much quieter than that currently used although the choice of material is a balance between noise reduction and longevity.

Please look out for the updated information bulletins.

Finance

The Parish Council is pleased to support a number of local organisations which directly help the residents of this Parish. For a number of years the following organisations have received an annual grant:-

- Greyfriars Minibus
- Age Concern Monday's Day Centre at Braeside Road
- Brightside and Friday Friends Clubs
- New Forest and East Dorset Citizens Advice Bureau's

The Council also covers the annual building insurance for the Youth Club each year.

In 2013/2014 a substantial one off grant was also awarded to the Scouts and Guides JHQ building to replace their floor.

Patio Replaced at the hall:

The existing patio area at the rear of the Village hall was becoming unsafe. The Parish Council decided it was more cost effective to lift and relay rather than patch and repair. To save costs and for environmental reasons the existing slabs were cleaned and reused. This now gives hirers additional options when using the hall.

Bonfires

Spring is just around the corner and hopefully some better weather. It is easy to start getting carried away in the garden and suddenly you have a sack full of debris to get rid of. The best place for your garden waste is the compost heap or garden waste bin. Alternatively take it to the Waste Recycling Centre at

Somerley just off the Verwood Road.

Please can we ask you to think twice before deciding to burn it. We have many trees in this area and it can be easy to allow the fire to get carried away. It is also an offence to allow smoke to drift across the highway for safety reasons. Most of all ~~though~~ your neighbours also have a right to enjoy their gardens and have their windows open in warmer weather. Smoke is a health issue particularly for those with asthma. Please be thoughtful and dispose of your rubbish in a more considerate manner.

Verges – please be considerate

If you have a grass verge outside your property please remember you do not own it and it is not an extension to your drive for parking on. They are there for all of the Parish not just you. A number of you are lucky enough to have wild orchids growing on them. Other residents have put in some bulbs for all to enjoy. By the time you have parked on it and worn out the grass it looks a mess. There really is no need to park on them, use your driveway. It makes it difficult to get verges looked after when they are obstructed.

Thank you on behalf of all of the rest of the residents and many thanks to those of you who try and keep the verge outside your property tidy!

Consultation about Braeside Road Village Green

Last year the very successful St Leonards and St Ives Tennis Club asked the Parish Council to consider allowing them more land for a mini-court and installation of a Multi-Use Games Activity wall (MUGA) adjacent to the existing tennis courts. A number of possible locations were put forward however as a registered Village Green there are a number of restrictions and the Council is concerned about allocating more land. The Council is still considering this matter and seeks your views. There is an

opportunity for a MUGA to be installed partly replacing some of the existing fencing of the courts. The MUGA would be double sided and on the open recreation ground side a small hard court type of surface would be put down but this would be open at all times to the public. The MUGA would be for a variety of sports. The Tennis Club would fund the project via grants it would not be funded by the Taxpayers purse. MUGA's need to be sited a minimum of 30m away from any residential properties which limits possible locations.

Please let us know what you think of the idea by writing to the Clerk.

Elections 7th May 2015

A Parish Council is elected for four years, this year on 7th May 2015 will be the opportunity for you to stand as a prospective Councillor. If there are more candidates than seats an election and full ballot will take place.

You may have wondered what your Local Parish Council does and how do you become a Councillor?

A Parish Council is the collective voice of its community. To do that effectively it needs to be representative of its community.

Did you know that your local councillors are consulted on nearly everything that happens in your area? They take an active part in influencing what services are and are not provided and that affects you and your family!

Our responsibilities include: The Braeside Road Village Green, Jubilee Copse, Horton Road Village Green, bus shelters, noticeboards. The Parish Council is consulted on all planning applications within the Parish and liaises with the County and District Council on matters directly affecting this Parish. We also award small grants to other bodies directly assisting our residents such as the Citizens Advice Bureaux, Youth Club, Greyfriars and Age Concern.

What can we do?

A Parish Council can only act within the law by exercising powers and functions which have been conferred on them by Statutes Anything a Parish Council tries to do outside these powers is *ultra vires*, in other words, outside the law. It is how and which of the powers entitled to us that our councillors decide to use, that makes a vibrant forward thinking Parish Council and can bring positive benefits. The basic responsibility of the Parish Council is to represent the whole electorate within the parish, delivering or coordinating services to meet local needs and striving to improve quality of life in the parish.

No individual councillor is responsible for any single decision. They must act as a body. The role is unpaid however, expenses for travel and training is provided.

One of the most important tasks of a Parish Councillor is to listen to and understand the views of people in their community. Many public bodies or organisations acknowledge this is the hardest information for them to capture and they in turn use the skills and local knowledge of the parish council for advice to assist and inform their services. Councillors attend regular monthly meetings of the Council.

If you wish to stand as a councillor you must satisfy these requirements:

- You need to be over 18 years of age
- A British citizen, a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
- On the Electoral Register for the council area for which you wish to stand,
- A local government elector of the parish; or a person who during the whole of the twelve months before nomination as a candidate occupied land or other premises as owner or tenant in the parish; or has, during the same period, resided in that area or within three miles

thereof; or has during the same period, had a principal or only place of work in that area

You cannot stand for election if you:

- Are bankrupt and an Order or Interim Restriction Order has been imposed.
- Have, within five years before the day of the election, been convicted in the United Kingdom of any offence and have had a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of over three months without the option of a fine
- Work for the council where you are intending to stand for election (but you can work for other local authorities, including the principal authorities that represent the same area).
- Have been convicted or reported guilty of a corrupt or illegal practice by an election court, or have been disqualified from standing for election to a local authority

To apply: Nomination forms can be obtained from the Parish Office or East Dorset District Council Offices in Furzehill, online at www.dorsetforyou.com.elections or www.electoralcommission.org.uk.

Notice of Election – 25 March 2015

Close of Nominations – 4pm on Thursday 9 April 2015. Elections' Offices will let you know who is standing in your area and if the election is contested.

This year the rules have changed and people standing will not be able to withdraw if the seat is contested. You will be informed who is standing and whether there will be a need for a ballot on the 10th April you therefore need to be prepared to decide whether to put out election material or just leave the name on the ballot paper and hope for the best as you will only have 26 days before the day of the election.

Allotments - A Step Nearer

For many years the Parish Council has been looking for a suitable site to establish an Allotment site, for those in the Parish who wish to pursue their interest in horticulture but this seemed to be a pipe dream, as no suitable sites were available but it maybe that this dream is about to be realised, as a local businessman has recently offered to provide a suitable site in the village.

The Council already had a small number of local people, who had enquired about the possibility of having an allotment, so it was decided to appoint a small sub Committee, with a remit to investigate the matter further.

As a result, a leaflet drop to all households in the Parish was arranged, in order to gauge the interest of the local population and as a result, twenty four interested parishioners attended a public meeting at the Village Hall, at which the Council put forward their ideas of how the establishment of an allotment site would be handled and the commitment required by the prospective allotment holders.

From the enthusiasm of those that attended the meeting, it was clear that they were willing to get involved and assist in making the project a success. The Parish Council has decided to progress the project by opening discussions with the landowner, to obtain a draft lease for the site and has written to the owners of properties adjacent to the site, to make them aware of the Councils intentions.

There is still some way to go but with the assistance of all those involved, it can become a reality. There is already a fledgling Allotment Society in being, so if you would like to become an allotment holder, please contact Ann Jacobs our Parish Clerk, who will be pleased to pass you details on to the Chairman of the Society.

Written on behalf of the Allotment Sub-Committee

Additional Parking Spaces for the Braeside Road site

After diligent research into facilitating additional Parish Council car parking on the Braeside Road site, the sub-committee have with the kind agreement of the Scouts and Guides JHQ, established a suitable area at the rear of the Village Hall car park. This area will provide an additional seven parking spaces owned and paid for by the Council.

The additional spaces being at the end of the village Hall car park will mean they are nearer to the play-park and recreation area, thus being of benefit to those with small children and those with walking difficulties. This has taken time due to ensuring the space found did not impinge or detract from the site facilities.

Written on behalf of the sub-committee

Your Local Village Hall

The halls have been very busy and bookings are steady. Our administrator is on maternity leave having had a baby girl at the beginning of February.

A grant from a District Councillor of £2,000 has been put to very good use as we have refurbished our main kitchen and now have a new floor and a lovely belling electric range for all to use.

Our Intranet Café continues to thrive on Friday mornings and many people find it good value at £2 per session for 30 minutes, many people who are now purchasing new laptops or tablets find the intranet café an ideal place for beginners where you can be taught by any one of our four mentors.

Our Race Night was a huge success and we had over 60 people enjoying a buffet and a little flutter on the horses. I have already been asked to do another one.

Our Community Day is tentatively booked for 14th November so please put this in your calendars.

Ann Warman (VHMC Chairman)
01425 476319

Braeside Bowling Club Braeside Road St Leonards Tel: 01425 479701 (when open)

We are a friendly bowling club with a 'difference'!! We bowl outside 12 months of the year on an artificial carpet surface.

For more detailed information please see our web site:-
www.braesidebc.co.uk

Stop Press: Open Day Event

Our Annual Open Day on
Saturday 18th April 2015.
Sessions are from 10am until 4pm
all welcome. For further
information Tel: John on 01425
476754 or Allan on 01425 474855

Aerial Slide

By the time you read this newsletter the new aerial slide will be installed at Braeside Road Play area. The previous slide had kept many children happy since 1998 however the wooden pillars had begun to show signs of rot so a replacement was sourced. I know a number of parents and grandparents will be very pleased to see the new one!

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