

Hail Weston Parish Council Newsletter

Autumn 2015



Welcome to the Hail Weston Parish Council Newsletter. In this Newsletter we want to introduce you to the Parish Council, make you aware of the work that we've been doing and share our plans for the future. We also want to hear what you think Hail Weston needs and how we can all help to improve it so please do get in touch.

As you will be aware, we are facing real issues due to dramatic cuts in central funding. These cuts have already hit the resources available to us and will continue to do so. We are therefore increasingly looking to the "DIY Community". We welcome all your ideas for improvements but, even more, we need your help to realise them. So please, get involved in some of the initiatives that will be starting over the next year.

In this Newsletter we hope to make you aware of just some of the work the Parish Council has been doing, including where the "DIY Community" is already making a difference. And we'll share some of our plans for 2016 and beyond. If you would want to get involved in any of them, we would love to hear from you.

Your Parish Council

What's been happening?

New noticeboard

You may have noticed a change on the High Street. Our trusty Parish Council notice board has been replaced with a smart new version. Many thanks to Cllr. Baker and Richard Gooch for their work on this.



Refurbishment of the playing field

As a community, we are extremely fortunate to have such a fantastic playing field that can be used by just about everyone in the village, irrespective of their age!

The Parish Council is committed to maintaining the playing field to the highest standards. As part of this commitment, the kiddies' playground equipment has been repainted and the swing and zip-wire seats have been replaced.



Village sign refurbishment

Noticed anything missing? Our village sign has gone back to the original craftsman who made it but will soon return, fully refurbished and resplendent in its new paintwork.



New grass cutting service

You may have noticed that the verges and communal areas of the village are looking particularly good at the moment. This is thanks to the new contractors that we have brought in.



Road Safety on the B645

We are acutely aware of the road safety issues on the B645 and as the grass verges grew over summer the 1st right turn into the village was especially dangerous. We therefore worked with Cambridge County Council to get the verges cut back. In addition, the landowner, Richard Squire, kindly cut back the grass across the whole area and even removed a section of the hedge resulting in vastly improved visibility on that corner.



Tree planting

Councillor Tony Baker, with the help of Dawn Isaac and Richard Gooch were busy earlier this year planting over 20 trees provided by Huntingdonshire District Council along Ford Road and around the playing fields. The trees are establishing nicely despite the dry start to summer and we look forward to seeing them grow over the years.

Dealing with problem trees

The tree opposite the allotments was identified as a serious safety concern after a large branch fell over the winter. After quite a lot of hard work we were able to get Anglia Water to deal with this issue and the tree has now been safely removed.



What's been happening?

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Royal Oak Pub

The Hail Weston Community Pub Society (HWCPs) commissioned a professional Pub Valuation Company to undertake a true and fair valuation of the Royal Oak. This valuation took place with the permission of the owner, who allowed access to the Royal Oak. HWCPs made an offer in line with this Professional Valuation. Regrettably the owner stated that it was insufficient. HWCPs will continue to discuss this with the owner, as well as looking at alternative options. In the meantime, the pub is restricted to A3/A4 planning usage, so can only be sold as a pub or restaurant.

HWCPs ran a very successful Fish & Chip night at the Village Hall in September and an Oktoberfest, in October! They thank everybody for their ongoing support.

Finally, HWCPs would like to offer their condolences to Elaine McCarthy on the sad loss of Neil, who has been a fantastic supporter of HWCPs and will be remembered.



Community Led Plan

Thanks to the hard work of the CLP teams, draft actions have now been produced for all areas of the CLP. The production of the final document will soon commence and the hope is that the Plan will be published at the start of next year.

In the meantime, the data gathered is being put to good use with a number of initiatives already in action.



Buying the phone box

You may have noticed that the phone box on the High Street has been decommissioned and the equipment removed. In order to save this piece of history the Parish Council have bought the phone box and we await the results of the Community Led Plan which will help decide what we can do with it.



HACT

Transport

HACT (www.hact-cambs.co.uk) is a registered charity providing a door-to-door service for people who cannot access local bus routes for various reasons such as age and disability, but also serves people living in rural locations with limited or no access to local bus routes or those without access to a car.

The Parish Council donated £100 to HACT and in return we have several HACT memberships available to anyone in Hail Weston who would like to use this wonderful service.

Please contact Parish Clerk, Jen Abell for more information.



St Neots Museum

We've also made a small donation to the St Neots Museum and in return Hail Weston residents get free access. When visiting museum simply state you are from Hail Weston.

What's been happening?

What's happening next?

So that was just some of the things we have been doing, and here is what we will be working on over the next few months.

Hail Weston Website and Communications

We are well aware that the current website is out of date and we are working hard to launch a new website as soon as we can. If you have any suggestions for the new website, then please let Councillor Guy Warner know. Hail Weston will also be on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram! When we launch these in the next few months they will be able to give you almost instant news and facts and allow you to feedback to us. All this will run along side other forms of communication such as Newsletters and the Notice Board. More news soon!

Responding to the actions from the Community Led Plan

As mentioned above, the CLP will soon be making formal recommendations and we are already working with some of the CLP groups to help with the plans.

Dealing with problem trees

We will be carrying out a tree survey to develop a maintenance plan for the trees under the Parish Council's responsibility to note species, health & condition to identify and deal with issues in a proactive way before serious problems occur and to support future tree planting decisions.

Road safety and repair

Road safety remains a paramount concern for the Parish Council. Thanks to the support from many volunteers from the village, we recently carried out a speed survey which will be used to inform our negotiations with Cambridge County Council (CCC) about the need for highway improvements.

We are also working closely with CCC to deal with the poor road surface on Orchard Close. In the meantime, please use the reporting tool to log any issues you have with the roads in and around Hail Weston - <http://goo.gl/618Cmg>



EVENTS

Makeshift Royal Oak, Pie Night – Friday 27th November

The Monday's Christmas Concert – Mon 14th December

ALLOTMENTS

Currently we have 2 vacant allotments

Please contact Parish Clerk, Jen Abell for more information

VACANCIES

Parish Caretaker

This is a varied role established to support the upkeep of the village. The post holder will work closely with, and under the direction of the Parish Clerk to maintain and improve standards across the village

Hours of Work: 2 hours per week

Rate of Pay: To be discussed at interview. As from 1st January, 2015 the range of pay will be £7.12 - £7.45 per hour

Hail Weston Parish Council operates an Equal Opportunities policy

Parish Councillor

We have a Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council

A great opportunity to get more involved with the community and make a real difference!

If you are interested in either position please contact the Parish Clerk, Jen Abell

Your Parish Council

What do we do?

- We're responsible for public open spaces including playing field, cemetery and allotments
- We represent the Hail Weston Parish on matters of planning
- We represent Hail Weston to get better resources
- We try to make a difference for the future

As a council we get involved in more than just that and we are allocated various 'lead roles'. So here's who we are, and how can you contact us with problems, issues or offers of help and ideas.



Veronica Bolton - Chairman veronica.haggard@sky.com 01480 217061 6 Weston Close, Hail Weston	Neighbourhood Coordinator
Jill Gooch— Vice Chairman gooch335@btinternet.com 01480 212401 8 Orchard Close ,Hail Weston	Village Hall Financial Reviewer
Guy Warner— Councillor guy.warner@unilever.com 07976 613456 121 High Street, Hail Weston	Communication & Publicity Community Led Plan Village Hall
Leona Evans— Councillor Leona.evans83@yahoo.co.uk 07745 190932 1 Ford End, Hail Weston	Open spaces Playing Field
Tony Baker— Councillor a.j.baker@btinternet.com 01480 474596 37 Orchard Close, Hail Weston	Highways Local Authority Community Led Plan
Phil Evans— Councillor phil.evans83@yahoo.co.uk 07756 945175 1 Ford End, Hail Weston	Allotments Cemetery Trees
Jennifer Abell— Parish Clerk jenandnick@waitrose.com 01480 215880 5 Orchard Close, Hail Weston	Main point of contact
Vacancy— Councillor Make a difference by becoming a Parish Councillor. Influence policy, have an impact on the future direction of your village. Contact a councillor or the Parish Clerk	

THE CHAIR'S REPORT, ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY, 17TH MARCH 2015

We stand before you as a very different Parish Council from last year. As some of you may know we welcomed Jill Gooch and Tony Baker last March and this last year we have welcomed Guy Warner who joined in November last year. This year has seen the addition of Phil and Leona Evans who joined us in February. This means that for the first time in a while the Parish Council have had full membership! However at this point Nigel who has been on Hail Weston Parish Council since June 2010 has decided to hand over the baton. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Nigel for his time he has given. Bridget Bickley has also decided to hand over the baton of for the Parish Steward, so many thanks to her for all her hard work. Given the year of change to membership I would also like to record thanks to all members of Hail Weston Parish Council for what you have done and thanks in advance for what we will do in the year ahead. [...]

The work of Hail Weston Parish Council as you know falls into two areas representing you on issues affecting the community such as planning applications and secondly maintaining our open spaces – the allotments, playing field, and the new cemetery,

One of the main themes has been improving village assets which you will hopefully be able to see: benches improved; village sign improvements originally installed in 1993 and designed by a resident and paid for by several villagers; a new notice board; and more sand at the playing field.

Jen Abell our parish clerk has commenced her CILCA training (Certificate in Local Council Administration) and Jill and Tony have also received councillor training on planning. HWPC have supplied HDC with 11 observations with regard to planning applications: one more recently required attendance at a Management planning meeting at HDC.

We have recently organised a playing field tidy and annual litter pick and planted 20 new trees. Another theme is upgrading the website [..]. We plan for the website to be a Village Website, rather than a Parish Council Website with sections for an Events Diary, the Village Hall, St Nicolas Church etc.

One of the challenges is understanding what Hail Weston wants and needs and it's very exciting to learn that the Community Led Plan is happening. I won't dwell too much on the important work that is being undertaken by Barry Easom & CLP team along with Karl Frestle and the HW Community Pub Society as you will hear from both soon. But I would like to record on behalf of HWPC thanks to both teams and all involved for persistence on both significant activities for Hail Weston.

The precept for 2015/16 was approved in December at £16460 reflecting a 2.5%/£402 increase. Advice from both HDC and CCC is consistent with last year in that funding remains tight and undoubtedly services will be affected and HWPC will need to be prepared to potentially pay for services in the future.

District Councillor Jonathan Gray and Peter Downes County councillor do a sterling job at keeping HWPC informed of opportunities to shape consultations and wider County news. I would particularly to thank Jonathan Gray on his continued support at HDC with the Pub activity.

Finally I would like to acknowledge all the help and support from Jen Abell our village clerk; without whom I wouldn't be able to do this job. Many thanks to Jen from both myself personally and on behalf of the Hail Weston Parish Council.