

News

from Wisborough Green Parish Council

Photo taken by Robert Armistead

Q1
Q2
Q3
Q4

From the Chairman

Welcome to our new look newsletter! Due to previous publication problems we concluded that a change was necessary, so this is the first issue produced by Eyelevel Publishing of Pulborough. It is printed on paper made from sustainable sources and again is funded from the advertising.

At the time of writing we are hopefully in the late stages of a harsh winter. The recent extreme weather caused problems for us all – it's nearly 30 years since the village has seen snow like it – but in the light of reports on climate change, maybe we can expect more snow in the future and perhaps we should all be a little more prepared. There is more on this topic later in the newsletter.

We also have some exciting news! Members of the Parish Council have been working with the West Sussex Youth Service to establish our own Village Youth Group, which will meet on (most) Thursday evenings in the Village Hall from the end of April. We have been trying to achieve this for the past few years, but community help is still required. Please do read the article in this newsletter.

You will have noticed that after a period of recovery the pond now looks very good, with a happy, but fortunately not enormous, population of ducks! As the warmer weather arrives more of us will enjoy walking around the village and stopping to feed the ducks, particularly

as the ducklings appear. Can we please remind you that the water quality is adversely affected by decaying bread, so if possible, feed the ducks on the bank and do not throw bread unnecessarily into the water.

Further drainage of the village green was successfully undertaken last September. However the drainage contractors will shortly be returning to re-lay a pipe at a lower depth, having accepted it is necessary in order to achieve the desired result. This is obviously at no cost to the village and should take a maximum of two days to complete when weather and ground conditions permit.

Turning to other village issues, the mortuary wall (the wall between the churchyard and the Village Hall) needs remedial work. The Council and Churchwardens are currently seeking specialist advice. We will obviously keep you updated as the project progresses.

We continue to investigate plans to improve safety at the Cricketers crossroads and ease parking on the Kirdford Road side of the Green by considering the creation of a lay-by in this area as well as extending the current lay-by in Durbans Road. Specifications have been received from WSCC Highways and quotations are being sought. Once we have this information we can then consider the affordability of the project, which is

a large one for a community of this size. Again, we will keep you updated. You will see early notice of our Annual Parish Meeting in this issue. For this year, we have an outside speaker on the West Weald Landscape Project. This is a fascinating initiative and should provide an interesting evening. As is legally required, the evening will also include the report of Parish Council activities and finances for the past year and offer the opportunity for discussion on relevant village issues. A full agenda will be published in the Parish magazine. Please put the date in your diary!

Keith Charman – Chairman



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Keeping you informed of the work of the Parish Council and the community of Wisborough Green

Emergency Plan

The recent heavy snow and subsequent power failure proved a difficult challenge for us all. Although the heavy snow turned the village into a winter wonderland, once the snow became compacted it was treacherous under foot and this confined most less able residents to their homes. Unless one had an appropriate vehicle it also prevented access to and around the village to provide for the more senior members of our community, meals-on-wheels, home help, fuel supplies, groceries etc.

We do appreciate the huge part the more able-bodied residents of the village took in looking after those in need by providing hot water for drinks and hot water bottles, hot food and by sourcing, particularly bread and milk, for those who had exhausted their supplies. A small team led by members of the Parish Council also provided hot lunches to nearly 40 people who live in all-electric homes. The Parish Council would like to acknowledge the efforts of all at the Village Shop who were a tremendous help to everyone, and at The Cricketers pub, where, not deterred by having no gas or electricity, they lit the fires for warmth and cooked (inexpensive) BBQ food. This was much welcomed by those more able to get about in these conditions. The value to the community of local businesses really shows through in these testing conditions.

The village does seem to suffer from a number of power failures during the year, sometimes for a few hours but mostly lasting just a few minutes. In adverse weather conditions, be it wind, rain, or as recently heavy snow, we are still likely to lose power as supplies to the village are via potentially vulnerable overhead cables. In the recent outage, families with a portable generator were virtually unaffected, those with a gas hob and open fires were certainly inconvenienced at best, but it was those who depend on electricity for both

cooking and to have heating with no back-up systems who were seriously disadvantaged.

In these situations, self-help is critical, so it is important for every family to take stock of their own emergency plan and this does not mean just a few candles and a box of matches – but ‘How will you heat your home and feed yourself in the event of an extended (especially winter) power failure?’ Do you have another form of heating available, perhaps a portable gas heater or a working open fire? Do you have fuel stashed away for when you really need it, a camping stove, spare gas bottles etc?

There were also many other little things that we found helped during the recent difficulties. A thermos flask for a neighbour to fill with hot water, a traditional hot water bottle as, of course, the microwave type requires electricity to heat them. Make sure you have a corded phone that works when the power goes off, and as up to 75% of your body heat can be lost through you head, wear a hat even indoors!

We do have, as you may know, an Emergency Plan which really deals with situations in which physical damage to properties may have occurred and where people can move around the village but not outside it. We have a list of volunteers with specific skills or equipment for that circumstance, but it would also be helpful to have a register of volunteers willing to contact vulnerable neighbours in any future serious situation.

Perhaps it will be another 30 years before we see this amount of snow in the village again but in order to be more prepared and hopefully provide a more co-ordinated level of support for the village, we ask you to consider the following two questions in the box above and contact the Parish Council; the information will be held confidentially by the Parish Council and only used if the situation arises. Let’s make sure nobody goes unconsidered in the future.

1 Would you be at risk in any future extreme weather or similar event? E.g. is your property only electric? Do you have any other form of heating/cooking? Do you need repeat prescriptions collected regularly?

If so and you would like someone to check that you are alright, please contact the Parish Clerk, Louise Davies, on **01403 701102**, by email to clerk@wisboroughgreenpc.org or post a note into the Village Hall letter box or by post to **PO Box 255, Wisborough Green, RH14 0WT.**

2 Would you be prepared to help in any future extreme weather or similar event? E.g. as a contact point for neighbours, 4x4 transport etc?

If so, again please contact Louise.



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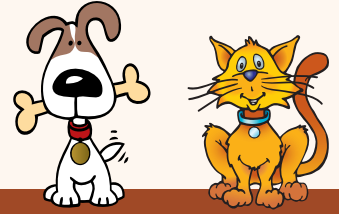
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One final push and we have a Village Youth Group

Many of you will have seen the Purple Bus parked by the Green on Wednesday evenings. This is a mobile youth club provided by West Sussex County Council, and well attended by up to 20 young people (13 – 18 years old) from the village. However, the Purple Bus is not a long-term solution to providing a club for our young people, it serves a wide area and other communities need a turn!

The Parish Council is setting up a permanent youth club, which will meet most Thursdays in the Village Hall, from 6.30 to 9.00 pm, for

youngsters 10 to 18 years of age. West Sussex Youth Service is offering their support and our own Fete Society has kindly donated £2000 to enable a Youth Worker to be employed to organise and run the group. Further financial support is also being provided by the Parish Council. However, we do still need community support to make this a success.

A management committee is being established, initially under the leadership of the Parish Council, to support the development of the Youth Club. Volunteer helpers are also required to assist with the sessions

either on a regular or ad hoc basis. So if you feel that the wellbeing of our young people is important perhaps you would consider lending a hand, either on the management committee or as a helper.

Please contact the Parish Council Clerk, Louise Davies, on 01403 701102 or email clerk@wisboroughgreenpc.org for more information.

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Precept for 2010/2011

The Precept has been set at £32,000. The Parish Council has held the Precept at £31,000 for the past 3 years, but due to increasing costs, it was necessary to apply a modest increase this year.

Parish Spring Clean Day

We will be organising another clean up once the Spring arrives. Details will be published in the Parish Magazine and displayed on the notice boards. Your support would be much appreciated.

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publishing

Eyelevel Publishing produce quarterly Parish Council magazines for the following Parish Councils: Ashington, Broadbridge Heath, Billingshurst, Pulborough, Shipley, Storrington, West Chiltington and Wisborough Green.

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or email us at publishing@eyeleveldesign.co.uk for more details and a media pack

Guidance for footpath use

Taking your dog for a walk in the countryside

We know that lots of people who use the rights of way network do so to walk the dog and it's clearly an excellent way of ensuring a bit of regular exercise.

Residents of Wisborough Green certainly have some lovely walks to choose from! There are many positive benefits of dog ownership and recent research suggests that they contribute towards a healthier, more inclusive society.

However, in my role as a WSSC Access Ranger, I have had a few conversations with landowners recently who are concerned about the behaviour of dogs on their land. Some seek advice on fencing in their footpaths because they want to prevent dogs from running around their fields and potentially worrying their livestock or chasing their pheasants. This is a shame because we prefer not to see paths restricted in this way but appreciate that the landowner must protect their stock and their livelihoods. As far as the law is concerned, the entitlement to take a dog on a right of way is confined to the line of the path so if it's allowed to run around a field, off the path, trespass is committed against the holder of the land. There is no requirement for dogs to be kept on a lead but they are required to be kept under close control at all times. They should not be allowed to attack or chase livestock and a farmer may shoot a dog that is doing so.

Dog fouling can also be problem and again I have received reports from farmers that have had animals turned away at slaughter due to worms allegedly being picked up from dog faeces. Some landowners are so worried about this

they feel unable to keep stock in fields with footpaths across them. This clearly has an impact on their business. Please do not leave dog mess behind – it's horrible to tread in and can be dangerous to livestock and humans. Remember to worm your dog regularly and try and encourage it to 'go' at home. Otherwise please pick it up and put it in the special bins, flush it down the loo or pop it in your refuse bin (securely tied in a plastic bag). Incidentally, Chichester District Council has a Dog Control Order that requires anyone in charge of a dog to clean up immediately after the dog fouls on any land which is open to the air and to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access – this includes rights of way.

Finally, a quick word on the recent reports in the press regarding injuries to walkers caused by cattle. These are very few and far between. The advice from the Ramblers' Association and the NFU is that dogs should be kept on leads around cattle but that they should be let go if they are being chased or feel threatened by cattle. So, do enjoy your walks around Wisborough Green and don't forget to let us know if you have any rights of way queries or concerns. Call **01243 777620** or go to www.westsussex.gov.uk/prow.

Mary-Ann Edwards, WSSC Access Ranger



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Calling all photographers

Each newsletter will feature a seasonal photograph of the village, be it the centre or views from around the Parish. If you have a photograph you would like us to consider using at some point, please send to the Clerk by email: clerk@wisboroughgreenc.org. From the entries at the August Show, we know there are many talented photographers amongst you and it would be wonderful to include your pictures capturing the beauty and spirit of the village. Acknowledgements will be included.



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Planning Meetings

The Parish Council is a statutory consultee for any applications for planning permission in Wisborough Green and has 21 days to make representation to Chichester District Council (CDC). CDC ultimately determines the decision. Please refer to the agendas displayed on the village notice boards and website for information on when meetings will be held. Planning matters are also discussed at regular Parish Council meetings, and the additional meetings will only be held if there is a need.

Tuesday 2 March, Tuesday 6 April, and Tuesday 4 May

Annual Parish Meeting *Hear about your Council*

Thursday 22nd April 2010 in the Village Hall at 8.00 pm

This evening gives you the opportunity to hear more about the Council and what has been happening during the past year, as well as our plans and objectives for the coming year. In addition, we are delighted to say that Rich Howarth from the West Weald Landscape Project will be speaking to us about the significance of the project and the internationally important natural environment in which we live.

How to contact your Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Louise Davies

Wisborough Green Parish Council
PO Box 255, Wisborough Green, Billingshurst
West Sussex RH14 0WT

Telephone: 01403 701102

E-mail: clerk@wisboroughgreenpc.org

Alternatively, letters can be posted in the Parish Council letterbox at the Village Hall.

Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council will be meeting in the Committee Room at the back of the Village Hall at 7.45 pm on:
Tuesday 16 March, Tuesday 20 April, and Tuesday 18 May 2010.

Members of public are welcome to attend. The agenda is published on the village notice boards and website (www.wisboroughgreen.org) and includes a Public Questions item, which allows you to make any comments or raise concerns to the Parish Council.



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