

Walford Parish Newsletter

Autumn
2015

Issue
NO 11



Walford Church from the old railway line – Photo courtesy of Karen Chinn

Introduction : Your Parish Council : Ward Councillor : Facebook : Completion of Annual Audit : Parish Precept : Fibre Broadband in Walford : Rights of Way : The Lengthsman : Withdrawal of Grants : Parish Projects - Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch / Neighbourhood Plan / Daycroft Lane Flood Alleviation / Walford Links / Forest Green / The Village Warden Scheme : AONB : Walford Pre-school Playgroup : Walford Village Hall : The Mill Race : Bishopswood Village Hall : Parish Churches : War Memorials : Parish Notice Board : Defibrillator provision : BT Phone Box Adoption : Howling Bull Run : Dog Fouling : Parish Council Meetings Schedule :

Chairman: Frank Myers MBE
Vice Chairman: Shane Carlson
Clerk: Catherine Murray

Website: www.walford-pc.org.uk

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It was disappointing when we began this four year cycle to have three Parish Council vacancies.

Not enough people stood for election in May for our thirteen places, and consequently ten of us were elected unopposed. However, it didn't take us long to find three other enthusiastic and capable people and we now have a full complement of councillors willing and able to serve the Parish...and dare I say it, I think we have reduced the average age, a good and welcome trend.

I welcome all of my colleagues old and new as we embark upon renewed efforts to continue to improve the Parish. This we will have to do in the now well understood climate of reduced funds from Central Government. The most immediate effect of this is the likely removal of the grants for Lengthsman and Rights of Way. This constitutes a potential significant change to the way we approach our work in keeping the Parish tidy and I urge you to engage in the consultation which is written about in this newsletter ...we will always attempt to deliver what the Parish Residents want, but we do need your views to guide us.

In the newsletter you will find good and encouraging news about our plans for a Village Warden scheme. It seems likely that we will be able to launch this in the near future and I urge you to take a keen interest.

The need to look out for the more vulnerable in our society is growing rapidly. Please take an interest and volunteer to help if you are able to do so. Otherwise acquaint yourselves with the scheme and look out for people who may need help. The whole purpose is to look out for early signs and head off the potential for subsequent problems.

The other major aspect which is coming to the fore is neighbourhood planning. Now that Herefordshire Council's plans have been endorsed, our efforts to create our own Neighbourhood plan have been redoubled and I encourage you to look out for progress and, again, make your views known.

Finally, you will notice the new 'Unsuitable for HGV' signs which have been erected at the bottom of Bull's Hill and Leys Hill.



By erecting these with voluntary effort from your councillors, we were able to save more than two thousand pounds.

Hopefully the problem of 'trapped HGVs' is now a thing of the past in these locations.

Since the last issue of the newsletter, an election has taken place, in which the entire Parish Council was re-elected to serve for a term of 4 years.

The outcome was that 10 candidates were nominated for the 13 seats on the Parish Council; this meant that the election was 'un-contested' and therefore all 10 candidates were elected unopposed. An uncontested election does not cost the Parish anything, as would be the case in a contested election.

This left three vacant seats, which, by law had to be advertised by The Electoral Services Office; in such cases, if an election is not called, the Parish Council is entitled to fill the vacancies by means of co-option. In accordance with national procedures, 3 councillors have now been co-opted to Walford Parish Council.

Your Parish Councillors are listed below:

ELECTED COUNCILLORS:

CHAIRMAN: Frank Myers

VICE CHAIRMAN: Shane Carlson

Dave Berry

Karen Chinn

Simeon Cole

Eric Drummond

Heather Evans

Luke Freeman

Sophie Hurley

Angus McIntosh

CO-OPTED COUNCILLORS:

Murray Alston

Martyn Jenkins

Nesta Hirst

PARISH CLERK: Catherine Murray

WARD COUNCILLOR: Paul Newman

Ward Councillor Paul Newman

*Paul Newman OBE
Your new Ward Councillor*

Finally, after 7 years of to-ing and fro-ing, on 16th October the new Council acted decisively to adopt a Herefordshire Local Plan, covering the period 2011-2031. We now have a modern strategic plan which is compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework, a structure to accommodate neighbourhood planning and a five year housing land supply. As a result, we have a much better chance of deflecting inappropriate and speculative housing development in our communities.

In August, it was a shock to see the government begin consulting on a plan to award a licence to frack in Kerne Bridge, an environment which many had

assumed would be protected by the lower Wye Valley's status as an AONB, SSSI and Special Area of Conservation under European law.



I pressed the issue with our local MP, the Leader of the Council, the Chairman of the Planning Committee and other Ward Councillors directly affected (including Ross) and personally submitted a written response to the consultation.

With best wishes, Paul

Walford Parish Council Active on social media!

As part of our continuing drive to improve communication with our Parishioners, Walford Parish Council was recently delighted to announce the launch of its own Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/WalfordParishCouncil>

Since its launch, the page continues to receive daily visits and input from people locally and beyond!



As mentioned previously, the intention is to feature council information and village events - whilst showcasing local businesses - coupled with providing news updates and alerts from in and around our parish.

Additionally, we will regularly feature County-wide announcements from Herefordshire County Council.

Feel free to “Like” our page now to stay connected!!



Additionally, if you have any interesting articles or photographs that would be appropriate to share with our parish community - please send them directly to Councillor Shane Carlson (Vice-Chairman of Walford Parish Council) at

vice.chairman@walford-pc.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you!!

Councillor Shane Carlson – Vice Chairman

Successful completion of Audit for 2014-15

The Parish Council is pleased to report the successful completion of Audit for the accounting period 1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015. Local councils in England with an annual turnover of £6.5 million or less must complete an annual return in accordance with proper practices, summarising their activities at the end of each financial year.

Grant Thornton is the company nationally appointed to carry out external audits for all local councils. Following an internal audit, carried out by an independent person with appropriate experience, the accounting statements are formally adopted by the Parish council; this must by law, be done by 29th June each year.

The completed annual return is sent to the external auditors, who scrutinise the documents in order to establish whether the information is in accordance with proper practices and, if necessary, to draw the attention of the Parish Council to any issues giving cause for concern.

The accounting statements are certified by the external auditor and sent back to the Parish Council, with the auditor's certificate and report.

The annual return and external auditor's report are then published by the Parish Council, no later than 30th September each year; and can be accessed on the Parish Council's website: www.walford-pc.org.uk

The Parish Precept - Please let us know your views

The Parish Council is principally funded from the Precept on your Council Tax, which was set at £16,810 in 2015/16, in order to cover normal annual expenditure . For the past few years the Parish Council has maintained general reserves of around £12,000, principally to enable the Council to support initiatives, without needing to wait for a subsequent year and new budget. It can also be used to spread the cost of one off expenditure.

For example, reserves have been used in the past to support a feasibility study for the Walford Links project, and will imminently be used to add 25% to top up a 75% grant awarded by War Memorials Trust, to fund cleaning of the Parish War Memorials, which have been badly stained and colonised by lichens over the years.

Another on-going initiative , which will hopefully soon receive support from reserves, is the Village Warden Scheme; this project has been on the back-burner for some years, due to delays in identifying funding sources; however, it is now back on track, following the application for a grant to the 'Wellbeing and Innovation Fund', which has initially been given a favourable response, pending the clarification of some minor details.

In addition to this, in 2015-16 Herefordshire Council contributed a further £5,788, specifically earmarked for two schemes that the Parish Council administers - the Lengthsman and P3. (Parish Paths Partnership).

Under the Lengthsman scheme the Parish Council does important minor maintenance on local roads; **The P3 scheme** is concerned with maintenance of public rights of way, such as footpaths and bridleways.

As part of the budget cuts required by the

reduction in government grants, it is very likely that Herefordshire Council will stop paying grants to the Parish Council under the Lengthsman and Rights of Way schemes. These bring significant environmental benefits to the community, including clearing of rights of way, repair of stiles and gates, clearance of litter and debris on footways (pavements), additional hedge trimming / flailing, clearing out blocked gullies / drains and winter maintenance on minor roads, such as salt and gritting. **If the grant, which in the current year amounted to £5,788 is stopped, this work could only continue if funding is raised through the precept.** Currently, each £1,000 raised through the precept represents £1.58 per year on the council tax for a Band D household. The requirement for £5,900, allowing for a small increase, would add £9.32 a year.

The expenditure on work carried out by the Parish Council is funded by the precept, with grants obtained whenever and wherever they are available. The amount of precept reflects both the amount of work carried out and the size of community. By way of comparison, the Band D charge for the vast majority of parishes across Herefordshire is between £18 and £55, although a few are as high as £90. Walford is near the lower end at £25.45, so an increase to £34.77 is not out of line.

The Parish Council will be meeting on 25/11/15 to consider a budget and set the precept for 2016-17. We would welcome your views, particularly on future funding for the Lengthsman and P3 Schemes.

PLEASE E MAIL OR POST YOUR VIEWS TO THE CLERK BY 20TH NOVEMBER.

Recently The Chairman and I were given a fascinating insight into some of the challenges involved in bringing faster fibre broadband to the parish, by engineers from Openreach (BT's local network business). They're working on behalf of the Fastershire broadband partnership (headed by Herefordshire Council & BT as part of the Government's Broadband Delivery UK programme).

I won't potentially baffle you with too much jargon, but in case you weren't aware, there are two sorts of technology being deployed in Herefordshire - "fibre to the cabinet" (FTTC) - where a new fibre-enabled green road-side cabinet is installed alongside the existing copper one - this can be seen in Ross itself. The other, known as "fibre to the premise" (FTTP), is what's being used to deliver high-speed broadband in the Walford area and does not require a new cabinet, but instead involves engineers installing new sections of fibre optic cable - via an existing cabinet (known as cab two) in what we saw can be a very complex and time-consuming process. **Openreach has to complete and commission** the new fibre distribution entirely before it can give internet service providers the 'green light' to start taking orders from customers - the likes of you and me. You can check when it's available by logging onto www.adschecker or the Fastershire website.

It's important to remember you do not get upgraded automatically - you have to approach your chosen service provider and ask for fibre service. But because Openreach are installing the new fibre network, it is 'open', which means you have a choice of who you take your fibre service from.

We'll do another piece for the Walford Parish Newsletter and Facebook closer to the actual "Go Live" date to remind everyone of what will be available. While we were there, Frank and I asked engineers why it takes - what might seem to some - such a long time to complete the installation work in some instances. Without taking up too much of their time, they took a few minutes out to show and explain the sorts of time-consuming things involved.

For example, they reminded us how fibre optic cable has been installed from the Ross exchange all the way out to cabinet 2 in Walford - and beyond - using existing underground ducting. Sometimes, this can get blocked by silt or slightly damaged over time through normal wear and tear, and engineers might not find out until they come to work there.

When this happens, extra civil work has to be undertaken to clear the route. Also, much of the distribution from the cabinet to our homes is done on overhead cables meaning that each and every telephone pole has to be tested. We learned that several poles along Bulls Hill had to be replaced completely as part of the process and specialist equipment - known as a 'rock driller' - had to be brought in to help speed up the excavation process.

Overall, the morning was a real eye-opener and the whole experience really helped us both to appreciate some of the challenges being faced when delivering fibre broadband to our community. The expectation is that the network will be commissioned by the end of the year and we'll be able to place orders then. But more of that in due course.

Rights Of Way

Please send any local reports to:
rightsofway.officer@walford-pc.org.uk

As the growing year draws to a close, I hope that at least most of the regularly used paths in Walford are in a reasonable state of repair. Much trimming and strimming has been done this year by volunteers (thank you!), as well as our regular contractors, the Can Do Crew, from Enviroability in Ross.

There are still landowners out there who allow their hedges to infringe our Rights of Way; I would ask all those around the parish who border our paths, to control their overgrowth to allow users to pass.

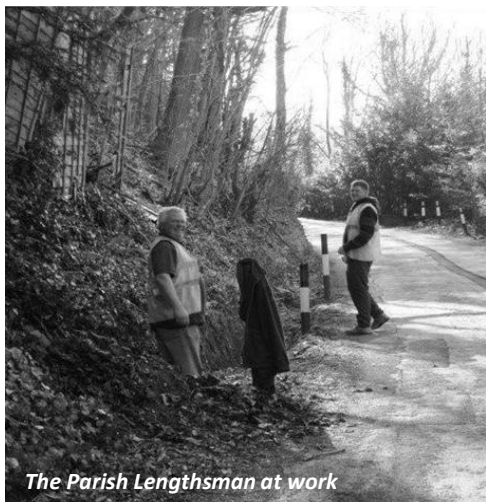
Sadly, the maintenance budget that we have received over the years is likely to be withdrawn, alongside the cuts in spending by local councils everywhere.



For this reason, users may need (please) to muscle in to snip and trim even more next year, to keep our network useable into the future. We are still not sure what level of funds will be available, if any, in the coming year and beyond, so please be aware. Happy tramping!

The Lengthsman Scheme

Please send any local reports to:
lengthsman.coordinator@walford-pc.org.uk



The Parish Lengthsman at work

The Lengthsman has been busy keeping the parish tidy over the summer; carrying out the following work:

Cleared the parish bus shelters of leaves and debris, removing the litter; cut and cleared the mud along the footways (pavements) throughout the parish; cleared the grips and the drain tops, to allow water to run away; cleared around the church parking area at Bishopswood;

In preparation for the winter, he has also cleared around the salt bins, and as part of winter maintenance services, he will grit / salt affected footways (pavements) and minor roads, if necessary.

****Withdrawal of Lengthsman and P3 grant funding****

As a result of cuts that Herefordshire Council must make to balance its budget, it is very likely that existing grants to the Parish Council for the Lengthsman and Rights of Way P3 schemes will be

withdrawn. Please read the article on the precept on page 5, to understand the implications of these cuts and what action the Parish Council has the power to take, in order to maintain them.

Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch

Cllr
Frank Myers

We still remain hopeful that this asset transfer will materialise and that we will be able to proceed with plans to develop it as a tourist attraction, for the economic benefit of The Parish.

The world of contract agreements and asset transfers grinds exceedingly slowly

but there are signs that this is now coming to a conclusion.

Once we know that the transaction will go ahead, the working group will re-appraise and develop the whole project plan as it is now three or four years old.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

Cllr
Angus McIntosh

The Herefordshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2011-2031 was successfully examined and adopted on 16th October 2015.

Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP's) are being considered in 93 Herefordshire areas to address sustainable development and proportionate housing growth - including Settlements at Walford (Coughton), Bishopswood & Howle Hill.

Your NDP Steering Group meet regularly to determine next steps, sources, timeline and possible grants towards a Walford Parish NDP.

We welcome participation from any residents who can contribute expertise and interest!

Please contact the Parish Clerk if you are interested in getting involved:
clerk@walford-pc.org.uk

Daycroft Lane Flood Alleviation

Joel Hockenhull
Balfour Beatty

Joel Hockenhull, Lead Drainage Engineer at Balfour Beatty has said:

"The Daycroft Lane scheme is listed in the annual plan for a feasibility study. When we were last in contact I had anticipated that we would be in a position to allocate funds for the feasibility study so that it could commence in July. We are currently delivering several highway drainage

schemes, once these have been completed and accounting is complete we will revisit the schedule to see how much funding remains. Once this has been completed we will be able to take a decision along with our client Herefordshire Council to allocate funding. I anticipate that we will complete this exercise within a month."

Walford Links Cycle Way

Cllr
Shane Carlson

A new team has now been put together to progress this activity after the previous group leader (Councillor Phillip Heath) moved out of the Parish.

The new group, headed up by Councillor Shane Carlson, is currently familiarising

itself with the long-standing history and current status before re-convening to formulate an agreed action plan for adoption. Once progress is underway, a further update will be forthcoming.



Forest Green looking good after clearance work

Walford Parish Council would like to formally thank Richard Freeman and his team for the work recently undertaken to tidy up Forest Green.

As you can see from the photograph above, it has made a huge difference and has ensured that the previous hazards have successfully been removed.

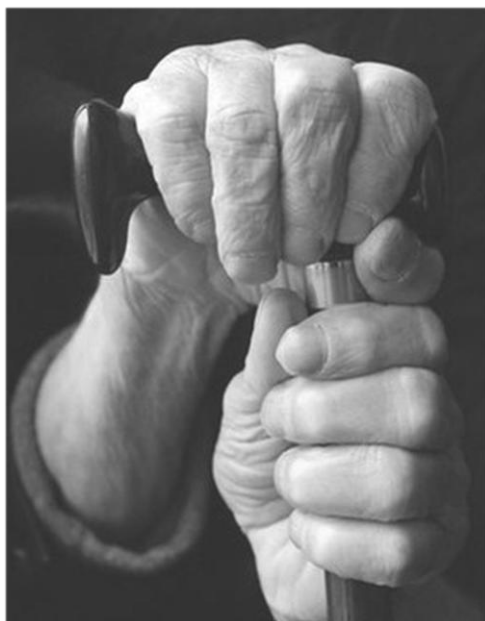
Village Warden Scheme (Care Closer To Home)

Cllr
Sophie Hurley

Encouraging progress has been made with the Village Warden (Care Closer to Home) scheme. This scheme, which the council has been pursuing for some time, will strive to combat loneliness and help anyone who is vulnerable or in need of help.

A grant application has been made by the council and we are excited to announce - subject to details - that it has been accepted. The council will match fund the grant which will provide a substantial amount to get our village warden scheme off the ground.

In the coming months we hope to employ a part time Village Warden who would kick start the marketing of the project to gather awareness. We will also be actively looking for volunteers who will get the necessary training and who the Village Warden will then match with appropriate clients. We hope this will really make a difference to the parish and will give comfort to many.



With this in mind if you would like to be considered for the part the village warden post or feel you could spare a small amount of your time to volunteer please contact The Parish Clerk.

clerk@walford-pc.org.uk

Tel: 01989 562476

The Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee hosts this annual event for local Councillors, Officers of County & District Councils & other interested parties within this AONB. This year around 30 guests visited these sites in Gloucestershire:



THE LANCAUT PENINSULA: Is 2 miles N of Chepstow, surrounded by a large bend in the River Wye; the site of a deserted village and the Ban-y-Gor SSSI Nature Reserve. Little remains of the village except the derelict Grade II listed St James church and a working farm.

The area was under Welsh control until the 10C and the church is said to have housed a leper colony looked after by the monks at Tintern Abbey. The village became deserted and the church was abandoned in the 19C. The church is now owned by the Building Preservation Trust who have obtained grant funding for basic conservation works to stabilise the structure. Grass turves are being placed on the tops of the unprotected walls to prevent damage from water ingress.

The surrounding reserve area was established in the 1970s and is managed by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. It is subject to the tidal river flows which have created a saltmarsh alongside the meadow areas and the woodland above; the management's aim is to preserve the biodiversity.

ST BRIAVELS CASTLE YHA: Is open to all and has been a YHA since 1947, prior to that being a school and private residence. The castle, built around 1100, is a Grade I listed scheduled ancient monument; originally a residence & administrative centre for the Sheriff of the Forest of Dean, then a royal hunting estate for King John. It was never a defensive castle, but an important royal armoury using Forest of Dean iron to make cross bow bolts and over 30,000 horseshoes for The Crusades. Later it was used as a debtors' prison and a court. Like many such buildings it was built in stages with additions over the years, now comprising an East and West Tower with a main hall and (former) banqueting area. The YHA staff provide meals and a range of activity packages are available for guests.



STOWFIELD QUARRY: Operating since the 1940s, is 1 of 2 working quarries in the Forest of Dean. Owned by Lafarge Tarmac, the 120 acres Forestry Commission site has planning consent until 2036; 15 employees work on site with 10 hauliers delivering materials off site.

The Forestry Commission receive a royalty from the extraction workings, with the rate being adjusted against demand. Quarry workings can be controversial with much local opposition but the extraction is controlled and limited by the planning consent to around 800K tonnes pa.

The excavation extends to 165M below ground level and blasting usually takes place on a weekly basis. There are 2 stone crushing plants on site whose activity (around 700 tonnes per hour) is licensed and controlled under the Environmental Protection Act.

The site ecology is diverse and is monitored by Natural England who oversee and advise the operators on management of the site where wild boar, deer, badgers, foxes etc are living .

BRACELANDS MINESCAPE PROJECT: Is a 4 year lottery funded project for people with dementia to enable them and their carers to interact and reconnect with the outdoors. Now in its 2nd year, the project is managed by Artspace, a charity based in Cinderford, providing workshops and activities for people with varying abilities. About 15 participants and their carers are taking part in around 24 activities per year at the forest base near the Bracelands campsite.



To expand the project, which has national and international renown, training sessions are also being delivered to carers in the wider community, e.g. in care homes and in partnership with organisations such as MIND. To enable activities to continue during the winter months a suitable village hall site is being located - and is likely to be Bishopswood Village Hall in Walford parish.

BIBLINS & THE SLAUGHTERS: This extensive Forestry Commission owned area alongside the River Wye is surrounded by the woodland of the Wye Gorge SSSI and has been the site of a youth campsite and bunkhouse since the 1940s. The Forestry Commission are planning to lease the running of the campsite to enable outside funding to update the facilities.

Opposite, and across the famous Biblins bridge is Lady Park Wood, an ancient woodland and national nature reserve which can be accessed from the riverside Peregrine Trail, established on the route of the Wye Valley railway, and the nearby Wye Valley Walk. This area was on the route of the historic Wye Tour, heavily industrialised by coppicing and iron forging activities in the 1800s. Lady Park Wood was left unmanaged after this extensive coppicing until it was partly clear felled during WW2. Today it is part managed / part unmanaged and a recent comparative study has shown that biodiversity has significantly declined in the unmanaged woodland area.

Mention was made of the evolving plans for the 2016 WYE RIVER FESTIVAL... which will take place in venues from Hereford down the River Wye to Chepstow. Arts Council grant funding has been obtained to contribute but it is hoped that local communities will stage events as happened with the inaugural River Festival in 2014

If you've any queries about the above projects or the other activities of the unit, please contact the WVAONB office on Tel = 01600 713977 or look at the website = www.wyvalleyaonb.org.uk

Bridget Vine – Walford PC AONB Representative

On Monday 7th Sept, Walford Pre-school welcomed children for the 41st year. Set amidst green fields and rolling hills in the village of Walford, the pre-school this year celebrated forty years providing high quality community-based childcare and education: a huge achievement given the enormous pressure on providers to keep costs low and quality high.



Balancing the learning needs of children whilst also involving parents in their children's development requires much more than satisfying an Ofsted inspector. Sustaining high-quality, pre-school provision means creating a thoughtful and stimulating learning community - where children feel secure to develop socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively.

Engaging the community plays a key factor in Walford's success and longevity. Manager, Sara Jones, has led the group for over five years. 'It is always a struggle and a challenge to provide the best we can, whilst keeping fees affordable for parents and bound by the government's 15 hour free sessions.

The only funding we receive are fees and some Nursery Education Funding, the rest comes through the hard work of a small group of parents and grandparents who put on events to raise much needed cash.

One of our biggest fund-raising events is a May Fair; a great community involvement day.

We play a vital role in preparing children for school, benefiting from being a smaller group and reinforcing good values and behaviours between ourselves and the wider community. A local farmer brings his tractor along, a fire engine pays an occasional visit, we have close links to the schools and church, parents and grandparents get involved too. Pastoral care for the children is really big. We are like a big family, which helps to break down barriers for children when they start school etc.'

At Walford, children get to see the value of community engagement and relationship building, 'This creates the right atmosphere to make the difference. The smaller, more personal environment means children are more relaxed, which is so important for learning' says Ally Sargent, deputy

Parents attracted from across the Ross-on-Wye area particularly like the sense of community and large outdoor garden space. The willow wigwams, mud-play kitchen, hidey-holes and a vast array of learning resources against a backdrop of trees, hills and countryside view, offers a truly rich environment for their children! And new for January 2016, two year old will now be able to join in with all this fun. Walford Pre-school Playgroup can provide three full and two half-days, term time.

Please come and see us or drop into our Coffee Morning on Friday 13th November. For more information, contact: Sara Jones, 07765005871 sarajones.09@hotmail.co.uk

SEE PAGE 18 FOR DETAILS OF OUR NOVEMBER FUND-RAISING INITIATIVE: THE HOWLING BULL RUN.

Three long-standing members of the committee have decided they will not seek re-election at the AGM on Thursday 12th November; these individuals have been associated with the Hall for between 16 – 12 years and the Hall is looking for new members to replace them.

The Hall constitution requires office bearers for the 3 main roles (Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) as well as representation from all user groups. In recent times, the user group representation has declined, leaving a current situation with members only from the Playgroup, Parish Council and Old Thyme Dancing.

What the Hall would like now is for people to come forward and get more involved with our great little village hall, serving the village of Walford. Not just for user groups but as a centre for village social activity.

Recently, we have not been able to stage a programme of social events (Social Lunches, Pudding evenings, Quiz Nights, Weekend Table Sales etc.). Events such as these have in the past contributed to a “feel good” spirit in Walford, and the Village Hall is an excellent venue in which to host these again. Popular though they were numbers went down when these events took place which was a big disappointment to the organisers.

But, these types of activity at Walford Village Hall are what makes for a warm village spirit; that is what makes a difference.

Apart from a pub the Village has no communal centre. No shops. No Garage. No place where people can bump into friends and neighbours and socialise. **That's a great shame!**

So if you rate keeping in touch with like minded souls and keeping Walford Village Hall alive and functioning or have any other ideas to spark things off then -

1) Pop along to the AGM and put suggestions to the committee.

- Do you want these types of activity at Walford Village Hall? Do you have any other ideas? How would YOU like YOUR village hall to be used?

2) Better still join the Committee and help make things happen from within.

Again, the AGM is on Thursday 12th November 8pm.

Walford Village Hall needs people with ideas to get very active again. Please think about joining us.

Anyone can get more information from committee members or by contacting Julie Church on julie@markswell.co.uk. Meetings generally last between 60 – 90 minutes and are usually held every two months. Day of week and time are decided to suit committee members at the first meeting following the AGM, or as required.

**Walford Village Hall AGM
Will take place on Thursday 12th November at 8pm
Please come along and get involved...**

New look Mill Race opens in November

Advertising Feature from
MF Freeman group

The Mill Race, Walford is celebrating its 10th year Anniversary this year and to celebrate it has been given a makeover!

Part of the MF Freeman Group, which will celebrate its 50th year anniversary next year, the Mill Race has won a number of accolades over the years. Known for its locally sourced ingredients along with the excellent customer service, the Mill Race is a great place to meet up with friends and family.

The pub has been decorated and a brand new kitchen installed. Exciting features include a state of the art charcoal oven, which will mean even tastier steaks! The menu is getting a new look too and will offer classic pub dishes using the freshest locally sourced produce. There will also be a separate steak menu so we can show off our charcoal oven. Even the bar will have a new look and a bigger range of locally produced ales, ciders and soft drinks.

Luke Freeman, Joint Chief Executive for the MF Freeman Group of Companies commented, "Although we didn't want to close the pub, it made sense to do so to carry out the works. We are looking forward to re-opening the doors in early November. This is an exciting time for everyone who has been involved in the Mill Race currently and over the past 10 years, the team are looking forward to the next chapter and can't wait to celebrate the next 10 years and more with all of our valued customers."



The grand opening is scheduled for Friday 20th November and reservations are now being taken

To book a table call 01989 562891 or email enquiries@millrace.info or feel free to just pop in for a drink and a chat!

Bishopswood Village Hall

Chris Puzey

The hall continues to be well used – many sessions booked by a wide variety of users from Ballroom dancing to Zumba. So much - that on occasion we have difficulty fitting in our own social and fundraising events.

One event we were really pleased to fit in was renowned Dartmoor musicians Nigel Shaw & Carolyn Hillyers Wild Sanctuary tour. The concert featured music & songs from their new and recent albums 'Bones', 'The Wyched Wombe' & 'Nocturnes'. It was a very atmospheric evening in front of an audience of approx 80 - with ancient instruments and unusual songs and music.

And we have to include our popular annual quiz – this year on Saturday 13th November. Quizmaster Roger Morgan is researching his questions right now – there will be a prize for the winning team. Come along as a team or come and join a team when you get here – you'll find a warm welcome and have a very enjoyable evening.

Our plans for Christmas are well under way – our Christmas Party is on Friday 5th December, with Lydbrook Band providing the entertainment – always good family fun and an excellent way to kick start the Christmas festivities.

Our Community Christmas Lunch is on Sunday 13th December – a fantastic opportunity to get together with friends and neighbours over a delicious turkey lunch, and of course – those fabulous desserts everyone looks forward to. **Booking is absolutely essential for this event. Call Monica on 01594 860303.**

Full details of these and other events at Bishopswood Village Hall can be found on

our website www.bvhonline.co.uk where you could also sign up for our free monthly e-newsletter – the Bishopswood Preview - to get news of events in and around Bishopswood delivered direct to your 'inbox'.

You can unsubscribe at any time – and we promise not to pass your email address onto any third party.

All Saints Church Bishopswood

Carol Pimblett

Sunday Services

1st Sunday 11.15am Sunday Praise at Bishopswood Village Hall following 'Big Breakfast'

Except 6th December - services cancelled

2nd 11am Holy Communion

3rd Services vary - please see notices on Church Notice Board and Border News

4th 11am Holy Communion

5th Services vary around the Wye Reaches benefice - see Border News information.

Dates for your diary

Sunday 8th November - REMEMBRANCE

SUNDAY SERVICE: Meet at the War Memorial at 10.45 - service continues in Church at 11.05. Tea and Coffee served after the service. (Please see separate item about the restoration of the War Memorial and surrounding area)

Sunday 15th November 6pm - 6.45pm A

SERVICE OF TAIZE: We are pleased to welcome back John Cass to All Saints, leading a candlelit service in the tradition of TAIZE - a village near Lyon in the South of France and home to an ecumenical community. As before, this informal meditative service will include short chants, led by John, and silence.. to quiet the mind, open the heart, and feed the soul - All Welcome.

Sunday 20th December CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS!

This year we will be joined by The Berry Hill Brass Band leading us in joyful music with Carols and traditional Christmas songs to sing along to in a twist on our usual Carol Service. The band will be playing in Church at 3pm but keep a look out for further information on what else will be going on throughout the day.

A lovely way to start Christmas and Holy Week - please join us!

'BREAKFAST IN BISHOPSWOOD' - Served 9.30 - 10.45 am at Bishopswood Village Hall - **Sundays 1st Nov/3rd Jan/7th Feb.** Please note: No Breakfast served in December.

Full English *plus* cereals, fruit juice, toast pancakes & maple syrup! Tea and Coffee, oh, and a beautiful view of the riverside whilst you eat! All this for £5.50 (£3 under 12's)

A warm welcome awaits anyone wishing to join us.

Monica, Carol and Bishopswood PCC wish to thank everyone for their generosity, help and kind support of events throughout 2015 and wish you a healthy, prosperous and peaceful 2016.

Church Wardens - Monica Edmunds 01594 860303 Carol Pimblett 01989 565533.

New Facilities Project: We are excited to tell our parishioners that we hope to start installation of the new kitchen and toilet facilities at the church in the New Year. The church will remain open while this work takes place but some disruption is inevitable.

Tidying the Churchyard: In preparation for our Remembrance service on Sunday 8th November, we are having our annual tidy of the churchyard and cleaning of the memorial stones on Saturday 31st October at 10am – all volunteers are welcome to join us!

Many of you will have seen, we put up a sign in the churchyard a few months ago providing notice that we are under obligation to keep the area safe and tidy and as such would only be allowing fresh flowers in fixed pots upon graves. We are grateful to those who were able to comply and offer our sincere apologies to those whom enforcement of these policies has caused upset.

New Service Schedule: From September there will be two opportunities each month to come to a Family Service at St Michael and All Angels' Church, Walford: **9.30 am every 2nd Sunday of the month and 11.15 am every 4th Sunday of the month. Arrive from 10.45am for a chat and refreshments.**

The 9.30am Parish Communion will move to the same Sunday as Evensong on the 3rd Sunday of each month.

Gift Day: We extend a huge heartfelt thanks to all the parishioners who have kindly generously donated to our church as part of our annual gift day. We are very grateful indeed for your support which helps to keep our little church going. We will continue to accept donations in the coming months.

Upcoming Events:

Sunday 8th November: Remembrance Service with our village trumpeter Jack Campey. We will be gathering at St. Michael and All Angels' Church Walford memorial at 10.45am

Thursday 24th December: Christmas Eve Service at 4pm – St Michael and All Angels' all age service with our orchestra. If you would like to become a member of the Christmas Eve orchestra, please see adjacent advert for more details

Regular Events

Our monthly Paddle and Praise, kindly hosted by Wendy Alston, is an ever-growing event. The usual format is for parents and kids to have a swim and a sing in Wendy's pool followed by snacks, a bible story and a craft activity. Please contact Wendy Alston for more details about upcoming Paddle and Praise activities (wendy_alston@btinternet.com)

Coffee on a Tuesday (COAT) is held monthly and welcomes everyone in the community. Please contact Revd. Laurence Mathew for more details: (laurence.mathew@rawchurch.org.uk)



Calling all Musicians
St Michael and
All Angels, Walford
Christmas Eve Band



All ages welcome

Whether you are a complete beginner
or an accomplished musician,
or somewhere in between.
Please come along and join our
Christmas Eve Band at
St. Michael and All Angels, Walford.

Music will be sent out before hand with one
practice running up to the 4pm service.

Please contact Wendy Alston
wraalston@gmail.com



Parish War Memorials

The Parish Council is pleased to announce that following the approval the grant applications for the War Memorials at St Michaels and All Angels Church in Walford and at Howle Hill by War Memorials Trust, that cleaning works have been carried out by Ursells Memorial Masons of Ross on Wye.



Following an approach from Bishopswood PCC, Walford Parish Council has submitted a pre-grant application to restore the war memorial; this has been approved by WMT. In anticipation of the award of a grant, once the formal application has been considered, work has started to tidy up the area.

Thanks to Cllr Simeon Cole for his offer to help by removing the conifer trees surrounding the memorial, which were undermining the retaining wall, and to Barry Pimblett of Bishopswood PCC for his support. Further landscaping works will be carried out within the near future.



The removal of the trees has exposed the old fencing, which is in a dilapidated condition and discussions are on-going regarding its restoration or replacement.

For the first time in years, people attending this year's Remembrance Sunday Service will be able to stand around the memorial instead of on the roadway.



Bishopswood Memorial after removal of conifers

New Parish Notice Board

You may have noticed, since the last issue of the newsletter, that a smart new notice board has been installed outside Walford Primary School.

As the old wooden notice board was on the verge of collapse, the Parish Council decided to replace it with a metal framed powder coated model, which will have a longer shelf life and will not require regular maintenance.

Thanks to Cllr Simeon Cole, who kindly offered to install the notice board.

NEW PARISH COUNCIL NOTICE BOARD

Councillor Simeon Cole, after he installed the new Parish Council notice board



Defibrillator for Walford Parish

You may recall that some time ago, at their Annual Parish meeting, the Parish Council was given a presentation on defibrillators and discussed the provision of a unit in Walford; after consideration of the costs involved and an appeal for support for the scheme, this initiative did not progress any further at the time.

The Parish Council is now pleased to report that Cllr Luke Freeman, owner of the Mill Race has offered to provide a

defibrillator unit FOC for parish use, if the Parish Council supplies the external box needed to house the unit, which will be located on the outside of the pub.

At the last meeting, the PC approved the purchase of an external defibrillator box; it is hoped the unit will be in place for use in case of emergency, by the time that the Mill Race re-opens following its refurbishment, and if not, soon afterwards.

BT phone box adoption

Walford Parish Council recently adopted the red BT phone box, sited opposite the Mill Race Pub, for the cost of £1, with a view to using the box as the location for a defibrillator unit; however, since the agreement to site the defibrillator on the

outside of the Mill Race, a re-think is on the cards. There have been suggestions in the past, that the phone box could prove a useful location for a parish 'hub' providing local information.

Any ideas will be welcome!

Howling Bull Run

Elaine Sandford

Walford Pre-school Playgroup is hosting the first **HOWLING BULL RUN** from **Walford Village Hall on Saturday 14th November.** This is a 6 mile multi-terrain race around Howle & Bulls hill to raise

much needed funds for the Pre-school.

If you would like entry details please go to our website www.howlingbull.co.uk or our search for us on Facebook as HOWLING BULL RUN.

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Dog Fouling on Parish Footpaths - Appeal to dog owners

The Parish Council has received several reports of regular dog-fouling on some of the Parish footpaths. Our footpaths are used by parish residents and visitors alike, who all deserve to be able to walk our rights of way without having to dodge piles of dog faeces. It is also worth considering that some of our footpaths border fields which grow crops destined for human consumption.

Most dog owners are responsible, respect their environment and clean up after their pets, but the Parish Council appeals to those who don't, to **please collect and dispose of their dog faeces appropriately**. We all want to preserve the natural beauty of this lovely AONB – **TAKE A BAG WITH YOU AND BIN IT!**



Parish Council meetings schedule 2015 -16

6.30pm Finance Committee	25/11/15	Bishopswood Village Hall
7.30pm Full Council		
7.30pm Full Council	13/01/16	Walford Village Hall
6.30pm Finance Committee	24/02/16	Bishopswood Village Hall
7.30pm Full Council		
6.30pm Annual Parish Meeting	06/04/16	Walford Village Hall
7.30pm Full Council		
7.30pm Annual Council Meeting	18/05/16	Bishopswood Village Hall
6.30pm Finance Committee	29/06/16	Walford Village Hall
7.30pm Full Council		
7.30pm Full Council	31/08/16	Bishopswood Village Hall
7.30pm Full Council	12/10/16	Walford Village Hall
6.30pm Finance Committee	23/11/16	Bishopswood Village Hall
7.30pm Full Council		
No meeting in August or December Except on 31/08/16		

Clerk: Rose Cottage, Coughton Ross on Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 5SF.

Tel: 01989 562476 **E mail:** clerk@walford-pc.org.uk 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm