

THE HASSALL HERALD

HASSALL PARISH NEWSLETTER



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Dear Parishioner,

It's been a while since HPC last contacted you with an update in Parish activities and with the next Annual General Meeting and Annual Parish meeting due soon, it seemed like an opportune time to do so again.

In this edition we have some dates for your diary alongside some key decisions that HPC needs to make in relation to our future direction and focus and where we would like your help.

HPC COUNCILLORS UPDATE

First off, an update on who your current HPC councilors are: -

Janie Stark – Chair	Eric Smith – Vice Chair
Richard Holt – Councillor	Roy Price – Councillor
Graham Warner – Councillor	Gill Whitmarsh – Councillor

You may note that we have some new faces amongst us which is great news as it's good to have some fresh perspective and energy. Both **Richard and Graham** are new to the parish and joined the council in August 2017. Welcome to both and thank you for giving up some of your time to support HPC.

Our previous clerk – **Sue Davies** – who had been with us for 2 years left us at the end of December to take on a bigger role with Holmes Chapel PC and has been replaced by **Ruth Burgess**. Ruth works for Streetscape in Congleton Town Council and was formerly with Cheshire East. She therefore brings valuable knowledge of the inner workings of the Council and also has some helpful contacts. A very warm welcome to Ruth.

Since our last update **Chris Lyon** has unfortunately had to leave us due to work commitments as has **Eileen Smith** for the same reason (more of this later in the newsletter). We'd like to thank both Chris and Eileen for their contribution to HPC. **Roy and Gill** continue as Councillors although both are taking a short sabbatical from meetings. **John Wray** continues to support us in his role as Conservative Councillor for Brereton Rural and attends the majority of our meetings. Details of all the Councillors can be found on the NEW HPC website at www.hassall-parish-council.org.uk

CALL FOR COUNCILLORS – Again!!

We know we repeat this in all correspondence with you but please consider whether you would be prepared to join us especially as we now have access to a coffee machine and a radiator! HPC meets 6 times a year and each meeting last on average 2 hours and is usually held on a Tuesday at 7pm now in Sandbach Library as opposed to the Pink Church.

As we are such a small parish, and we are all volunteers, the meetings are not 'political' and are relatively relaxed affairs and we deal only with items of local parish interest. You do not need any qualifications or experience and it's also probably also worth saying that unless you actively volunteer to do anything on behalf of HPC, there are no actions for Councillors outside of attendance at the meetings. To be eligible you must be at least 18 years old and either: -

- Be on the electoral register for the parish; or
- Live within 3 miles of the parish boundary; or
- Have your principle place of work within the parish; or
- Occupy property or land within the Parish.

If you are interested, or would just like to find out more, please e-mail (contact@Hassall-Parish-Council.org.uk) or write to the Clerk (details on the last page) and provide your contact details for an initial informal conversation. Alternatively, come along to the Annual Parish Meeting on April 10th and meet us.

DIARY DATE - ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish meeting is to be held on **Tuesday 10th April at 7pm** in Sandbach Library.

We had a good turn out last year and hope for even better this year. All Hassall residents are invited to come along and find out more about HPC and ask any questions that you may have relating to Hassall.

This year we plan to cover the findings of the survey that we are undertaking (enclosed within this newsletter); a presentation by Whitespace of a potential super-fast Broadband solution for HPC residents (see information enclosed); and outline our plans going forward.

NEW HPC WEBSITE & CREST

The new HPC website is now up and running. There was a requirement on HPC to have it redesigned to include more content and information in order to comply with the new 'transparency' legislation. There are also lots of other new additions such as road closure information, winter gritting routes etc.



To complement the new website, we also have a new HPC Crest.

We would like to warmly thank local artist Bob Newns for his excellent interpretation of our very rough sketch!

A full description of what the 4 symbols mean are on the new website if you are interested.

www.hassall-parish-council.org.uk

DAY GREEN SPEED RESTRICTION

You may recall that HPC had been pushing Cheshire East for a 30mph speed restriction through Day Green since late 2015 to counter what is believed to be excessive speeds through this narrow stretch of road.

Although we had received confirmation from Cheshire East that this *would* be put in force; we were surprised to subsequently find out that Cheshire Police would not grant the enforcement order as Day Green did not meet the new Highways England criteria for 30mph speed restrictions.

We were obviously bitterly disappointed with the decision especially as Cllr Price had put in significant time and effort to secure the initial decision. Having subsequently established that no appeals procedure existed; we then met with CE Highways in 2017 to see what else could be done to mitigate the issues. During the meeting it was agreed that CE Highways would: -

- Renew and replace the existing hazard warning signs with yellow backed signage in a more strategic location.
- Repaint the worn and faded 'Slow' road markings
- Paint in new white lines along the road edges through Day Green to highlight the narrow nature of the route.
- Undertake a speed count data speed survey before and after these changes to determine the effectiveness or otherwise of the above plans.

The work to the signage and road markings was completed in November 2017.

The 1st survey was undertaken in May 2017 (before any remedial works were undertaken) and showed that the average 7 day speed was 31.1mph in a 60mph zone and that 0% of vehicles were driving at above 60mph. These results do not mean that some road users are not driving too fast for the road conditions, but they do mean that Cheshire East will not support the need for a SID (Speed Indicator Device).

However, what is of note in the survey findings is that 1,681 vehicles (including cycles and motorbikes) pass through Day Green on an average weekday, most between the hours of 8 and 9am and 4 to 6pm. The weekly total traffic is 10,791 vehicles. High for a rural lane. Which means if you live on this stretch of road it will feel very busy and potentially dangerous.

On the back of this volume data, and coupled with:-

- The closure of Arclid Household Waste Recycling Centre late last year (the increase in traffic resultant in this was obviously not included in the May survey and HPC was not consulted about the potential impact on Day Green residents due to the increase in traffic using Alsager HWRC);
- The building of c. 1000 new homes in Alsager and;
- A similar number in Sandbach with many residents now using Day Green as a 'rat run'

HPC has secured a second survey to relook at the impact on Day Green residents taking the above factors into account. This survey is due to take place in June 2018. We will report back on the findings and any subsequent action.

CALLING ALL CATS

HPC vice chair, Eric Smith and his wife Eileen (also a former HPC Cllr) are celebrating success with the opening of their brand-new cattery on Alsager Road, Hassall.

Lodley Cattery is one of Cheshire's premier luxury moggy motels and since opening in March 2017 has been almost continuously fully booked. It is a purpose-built facility with all mod cat-cons, including scratching posts, toys and individual heated sleeping accommodation, in a lovely rural setting.



Your cat's country getaway

Taking almost 2 years to build from start to finish the cattery is a long-term dream fulfilled for Eric and Eileen. If you have any furry feline friends in need of a country retreat while you have yours, check out the website at www.lodley-cattery.co.uk.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Vs PARISH PLAN – DO WE, DON'T WE?

HPC has begun discussing whether or not we should have a Neighbourhood Plan or a less onerous version of it called a Parish Plan (or Village Design Statement or Community Action Plan).

While Local Plans lay out a vision of future development for a whole area (such as Cheshire East's Local Plan), the needs of individual towns and villages within that area can vary. Neighbourhood Plans are optional documents that detail further development priorities for individual communities. They are community-led and can be written by town or parish councils.

A Neighbourhood Plan helps communities have a say in the future use of land and buildings in the Neighbourhood. They cannot, however, be used to stop development.

A Parish Plan reflects how local residents would like to see their area change in coming years. They are broader than Neighbourhood Plans and could be anything from ensuring building projects fit in with local character to improving the state of local ponds.

Currently, our thinking is that we are too small (and poor!) to justify the time or resources needed to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan and, as they focus on planning issues, that fact that we have no schools, shops, village hall etc. suggests that this is probably not the right approach for Hassall. They can also take 18 months to 2 years to prepare.

As we are a rural Parish we believe that protecting our countryside and rural environment and encouraging our native wildlife should be one key area of focus for HPC which we've labelled '**Hassall Heritage**'. We have included in this hedgerows, trees, birds, native wild flowers, our ponds, Cheshire Railings (as they are an important part of our heritage) and promoting Hassall History.

Our other identified focus is currently under the banner of '**Hassall Housekeeping**' and covers parish maintenance (litter, potholes, gritting, gully clearing etc), traffic management, broadband provision, website and noticeboard maintenance.

Before we embark on any of these projects - or decide whether or not to proceed with Neighbourhood/Parish Plans - we would like you to have the opportunity for some input as to where HPC's focus should be given the limited financial resources that we have available?

To this end we have included a questionnaire with this newsletter and your comments and thoughts would be gratefully received and will be built into the plans. A SAE is also included for convenience.

The findings from the survey will be presented back at the Annual Parish Meeting on April 10th

HELP THE HEDGEHOG

As part of HPC's Environmental focus for the next couple of years, we would like to become a Hedgehog Friendly Parish. Below are some useful pointers as to how we can all best help this dramatically declining species.

Handling Tips

If you find an injured hedgehog pick it up, wearing thick gardening gloves (!), by holding it in both hands round the middle and scooping it up. Put it into a cardboard box lined with newspaper and provide a small towel or tea towel for it to hide under.

If the hedgehog is very poorly or is cold, you can also give it a hot water bottle or a drinks bottle filled with *warm* water and wrapped in a tea towel. Take care not to accidentally 'roast' your hedgehog with water that's too hot!

If you will have it for any period of time before it can be taken to a rescue centre, then offer dog or cat food in a shallow bowl, plus a non-tip dish of fresh water. Never give it milk, it will become a defunct hedgehog.



Do's and Don'ts to protect hedgehogs in your garden

- Do leave some areas of wilderness where the hedgehogs can snuffle for insects.
- Do put out water for drinking.
- Do put out a bowl of dog food or meaty cat food around dusk.
- Do install, in a quiet part of the garden, a hedgehog house.
- Do look to see if your hedgehog is limping or appears to be injured, or in late Autumn look out for underweight hedgehogs
- Don't put out bread and milk – this can kill a hedgehog
- Don't pick up fit hedgehogs
- Don't leave black sacks lying around.
- Don't use slug pellets or other chemicals, they may poison hedgehogs and other animals.
- Don't light a bonfire without checking to see if a hedgehog or other wild animal has moved in.
- Don't fork over compost heaps in case hedgehogs or other animals have taken up residence.
- Don't spray hedgehogs with dog or cat flea sprays. It will be detrimental to the hedgehog.

Our nearest hedgehog (and other wildlife) rescue centre is Lower Moss Wood Educational Nature reserve and Wildlife Hospital, School Lane, Knutsford, WA16 8SJ.

GULLY CLEARING AND GRITTING

Sections of the parish got missed off the Gully Clearing programme last year due to a change in contractor and route reallocation. After much gnashing of teeth the missed sections have now been done and we are assured they have been built into the schedule for this year.

We have also requested to be included on the gritting route particularly at the junction of Mill Lane with the bypass and Roughwood Road, however, we have been told that this is very unlikely to happen due to budgets and time.

We will now press for gritting bins to be installed at these locations in time for next winter. The CE winter gritting routes are now on the HPC website



LITTER PICK

As part of the Hassall Housekeeping agenda the next litter pick will be on March 4th 2018 at 11am

The meeting place is next to the HPC noticeboard on Alsager Road. Equipment will be provided but please wear appropriate footwear. Please join us if you can. Many thanks



"Catch the Community Spirit"

To get in contact with the Hassall Parish Council please contact our Parish Clerk
Mrs. Ruth Burgess.

Address: 34 Cherry Tree Avenue, Church Lawton, ST7 3EL

Telephone: 01270 873408

Email: Clerk@hassall-parish-council.org.uk