

Bickenhill Parish Council Newsletter May 2008



Welcome to our Newsletter

Message from Frank Bunce, Chairman of Bickenhill Parish Council

Following the Annual Parish Meeting on 7th May I was pleased to accept the nomination of chair. Having served the council for 3 years; the last 2 years as vice chair and chair of the Recreation committee, I am excited by the prospect of this opportunity.

First of all I would like to record my appreciation and thanks to Margret Wilden who has served as Chair for the last 3 years. Her commitment and hard work over this period has steered this council through some challenging times.

This council is here for the benefit of the residents of Bickenhill and Marston Green but to be an effective council there needs to be a two way dialogue. This newsletter is the first step towards achieving this goal, and work is well underway to develop a Parish Council website. By the beginning of July the Parish Council office will have moved and will be situated within the Pavilion at the recreation ground.

What is the Parish Council?

The Parish Council is the part of local government responsible for improving facilities and services for the village. All councillors are volunteers; some are elected to the position and others are 'co-opted members', having applied to fill vacant seats.

How do they make decisions?

The Parish Council is made up of a number of councillors who meet regularly to make decisions on the work and direction of the council. As elected bodies parish councils are responsible to the people they represent – that's our local community. Attending a council meeting is the best way to find out what they do and these are held on the first Wednesday of the month (excluding August), at the Parish Hall, and begin at 7.30 pm with the first half an hour made available for the general public to speak.

Where do they get their money from?

Each year a sum of money called a 'precept' is collected through your council tax. This money is used by your parish council to provide services and improve facilities for local people.

What services do the Parish Council provide?

The Parish Council is responsible for providing and maintaining community facilities. Just some of these many responsibilities are:

- The Memorial Garden with its landmark Clock
- Recreational grounds, for example the cricket, football and baseball pitches

- The Burial Ground
- Millennium Wood
- Allotments
- The Pleck
- Liaising with Marston Green Horticultural society, who provide hanging baskets for the ground staff to maintain
- Liaising with local community police
- Reviewing planning applications, which are available for viewing on the Solihull MBC website
- Liaising with Solihull MBC regarding services, for example: roads, litter, graffiti and street lighting

What do parish councillors do?

Councillors have three main areas of work:

1. Decision-making: councillors decide which activities to support, where money should be spent, what services should be delivered and what policies should be implemented.
2. Monitoring: making sure that their decisions are implemented and keeping an eye on how well things are working.
3. Getting involved locally; councillors have responsibilities towards the residents and local organisations.

How can I get involved?

Come to the monthly meetings to let us know your ideas and requests for improving or providing services. There are currently vacancies for new councillors and being a parish councillor is a way of contributing to your community and helping make it a better place to live. Could you make a difference to village life in Marston Green or Bickenhill? If you would like to know more about the role then please contact the Parish Clerk on 779 4040 and she will be pleased to give you the relevant information.

Stop Press

At the next Parish Council meeting on 4th June we are having a visit from Inspector Sarling who will be talking about future policing plans.

Come and find out more.....



BICKENHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk

Carole Picken

Parish Council Office, Recreation Ground, Bickenhill Rd, Marston Green B37 7ER **779 4040**

Opening Hours: 9-5 Monday-Friday

Parish Councillors

Chairman

Frank Bunce

Blackfirs Ward

The Heath, Bickenhill Road, Marston Green B37 7ER

779 2606

Vice-Chair

Margret Wilden

Marston Green Ward

76 Station Road, Marston Green B37 7BA

779 2196

Councillors

Celia Dowell

Marston Green Ward

21 Elm Farm Avenue, Marston Green B37 7AA

779 3707

Lucille Green

Bickenhill Ward

5 Hidcote Grove, Marston Green B37 7BE

779 7179

Tom Hewlett

Merstone Ward

1 Berwicks Lane, Marston Green B37 7HR

779 2852

Velma Jones

Blackfirs Ward

Chartley, Coleshill Heath Rd. Marston Green B37 7HU

779 3452

Michael Kay

Marston Green Ward

11 Hall Drive, Marston Green B37 7DD

770 0692

Steven Mills

Bickenhill Ward

Mapledene, St Peters Lane, Bickenhill B92 0DP

01675 443658

Linda Poulson

Marston Green Ward

69 Elmdon Lane, Marston Green B37 7DN

779 4787

Jim Williams

Marston Green Ward

18 The Orchard, Marston Green B37 7DH

779 4657

Local Contacts

Metropolitan Borough Councillors:

Alan Martin, **0121 684 3744** Bob Sleigh, **0121 779 4760** Jim Ryan, **07746 785484**

Police:

The local police team, Sgt Mel King, PC Steve Turton & PCSO Andy Burton
0845 113 5000, extn **76016148**