

**Clerk** - Carole Cox

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## Parish Councillors

Name	Ward	Telephone Number
<b>Chairman</b> Frank Bunce	Blackfirs	0121 779 2606
<b>Vice-Chair</b> Clive Hill	Marston Green	0121 779 3885
<b>Councillors</b> Celia Dowell	Merstone	0121 779 3707
Velma Jones	Blackfirs	0121 779 3452
Michael McGinn	Bickenhill	07949 745351
Linda Poulson	Marston Green	0121 779 4787
Margret Wilden	Marston Green	0121 779 2196
Donna Williams	Marston Green	0121 779 5090
Jim Williams	Marston Green	0121 779 4657
Phillip Wood	Marston Green	0121 779 5747
Vacancy	Bickenhill	
Vacancy	Merstone	

# Bickenhill Parish Council Newsletter October 2011



## Local Contacts

**Borough Councillors:**

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

**Police:**

Sgt Tony Hanlon and his team can be contacted on 0345 1135000 Extn 7601 6448

# Welcome to this special 'Chapel Garden' edition

## A summary of the Chairman's notes from the Annual Parish Meeting

The biggest challenges faced by the Parish Council this past year were the responses to Solihull MBC regarding the Emerging Core Strategy and the planning application to build on Moat House Farm off Elmdon Road. Our response to the Emerging Core Strategy was deemed to be a matter of major importance if we were to challenge applications to build on the proposed green sites identified within the strategy for development in Marston Green. We objected to the application to build 125 dwellings on the Moat House Farm site and have retained the services of a Planning Consultant to speak against this proposal, when it is heard by SMBC Planning Committee. (See below for details of the result.)

Bickenhill Parish Council sees the proposed Government Localism Bill as an opportunity to develop a Neighbourhood Plan with the long term view of helping to protect the village and to determine its future. We conducted a Village Survey to establish the views of the residents and used this to respond to the Emerging Core Strategy.

I would now like to tell you of other work completed over the last twelve months.

### The Pleck and Garden of Memory

- The ongoing maintenance programme has improved the appearance of both gardens.
- We completed the refurbishment of the War Memorial.

### Millennium Wood

- Designated as a Local Nature Reserve
- Ten year Management Plan developed with SMBC
- Community Service Day with Marston Green and District Lions
- Local residents and children involved in a 'bug hunt'
- Village schools are now including the wood in their curriculum.



Memorial Garden

### Burial Ground

We have replaced the Notice Board and have re-laid and extended the paths.

### Recreation Ground

- We facilitated the local Schools Cricket Day run by Warwickshire County Cricket, held at the Recreation Ground,
- We have continued with the refurbishment of the Pavilion.

### Marston Green Village

The Parish Council negotiated with Solihull MBC for the return of the planters on Station Road and took over responsibility for their planting and maintenance.

### Bickenhill Village

We contributed to St Peter's Church for maintenance of the churchyard and have replaced the swing seats in the children's play area.

### The Parish Council in the Community

- We continue to update our website and regularly distribute our newsletter.
- The Parish Council works with Marston Green Horticultural Society to provide hanging baskets and supports their annual Best Basket competition. (As we go to press we have heard that the winner this year is Tony Burnett.)
- We decided that, due to the current economic climate, there would be no increase in Recreation Ground, Allotment or Burial Ground fees.
- We have maintained the budget within inflation.

Being a councillor can be time consuming and, for various reasons, we have lost, over the past twelve months, four of our parish councillors. I would like to extend my thanks to them for their much valued service over the years. We are always looking for local people who would like to make a difference to their community and if this would interest you please contact the Parish Clerk for details of the application process.

For the full version of the Chairman's speech, delivered at the Annual Parish Meeting, held in May 2011, please visit our website at [www.bickenhillparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.bickenhillparishcouncil.org.uk)

## Around the parish

### Chapel Garden Dedication and Opening

We were delighted to see so many people at the dedication and opening of the new garden on 12th September. Our thanks go to Alderman Beryl Kellie for stepping in at the last minute to perform the opening ceremony, due to the Mayors' illness. We are grateful to the Rev'd Roy Allen for the service of dedication and were delighted that children representing both village schools were able to take part in this historic event.

### Bug and Butterfly Hunt

On August 2nd more than fifty villagers braved the blazing sun to join Local Nature Reserve Officer Gary Farmer and his team from Solihull MBC for the Millennium Wood guided walk looking for bugs and butterflies. More than twenty children enjoyed running around the wood catching butterflies with their nets, which Gary could then identify for the children before releasing them back into the wood. We are grateful to the Evergreens for arranging this and to Gary and his team for making this event such a huge success. More photographs can be seen on the website at [www.bickenhillparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.bickenhillparishcouncil.org.uk)



Bug and Butterfly Hunt

### Moat House Farm Planning Application Results

Solihull MBC Planning Committee rejected the application and below are the reasons given.

(1) The application site is identified as a long term housing site and UDP Policy H2 confirms that green belt policy currently applies to this long-term housing site. There is no requirement to release the site to provide five years supply of deliverable housing sites within the Borough. The proposal would therefore, prejudice and undermine the Emerging Core Strategy spatial vision and wider policy objectives, contrary to the Solihull Unitary Development Plan (2006), West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, PPS1 and PPS3.

(2) The proposed development by virtue of a lack of spaciousness and minimum separation between dwellings together with the use of uninteresting house types & design mix would result in a cramped & poor layout that fails to reflect the character of the wider area. The Proposals are therefore contrary to policies H5 & ENV2 of the Solihull UDP and PPS1 & PPS3.

(3) The proposed development will have an adverse impact on the infrastructure serving the wider area which does not have capacity to serve the additional demand generated by the development. It is not considered that contributions offered in order to discharge policy IM1 of the Solihull UDP 2006 would overcome this impact.

### STOP PRESS:

The builders have since lodged an appeal against the decision to refuse the application. A date has yet to be fixed for the hearing but it is likely to be early in the New Year.

### Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Next year's anniversary is an important one for the country and if you would like to celebrate this, would you be prepared to organize and help? Please let us know by emailing us at [bickenhillpc@gmail.com](mailto:bickenhillpc@gmail.com).

### Bickenhill Village

To be able to fully represent the views of residents we need to have local representation and we currently have a vacancy for a councillor in the Bickenhill Ward. If you would like to help your community and would be interested in learning more please contact the Parish Clerk. Contact details opposite.

## Parish Council Contact Details

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