

BOURN PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2014



Parish Council elections and vacancies

Parish Council elections are held every four years and 2014 is election year. This means all the existing Councillors retire and anyone, including the existing Councillors who want to serve on the Council for the next four year term need to apply. More details on the process will be posted on the parish notice board outside the village hall in April.

The job of your Council is to represent the interests of the whole community. Understanding the needs of different groups in the community (such as young and elderly people) is an important part of the role of a councillor. Occasionally there will be a conflict of interest requiring sensitive judgement; for example, dog owners, parents of young children and walkers might disagree about use of the village paths or recreation grounds. Making difficult decisions, in an open and in public and reasoned way, is something that local councils need to do well.

- Councillors have a responsibility to be well-informed, especially about diverse local views..
- How can this be achieved? (parish plans, newsletter consultations, public meetings, The results of community consultation help councillors:
 - speak on behalf of your community with greater confidence especially in discussions with principal authorities;
 - provide services and facilities, especially where there is no other provider or the local council can secure better value for money;
 - support community action and services provided by others;
 - the council can offer buildings, staff expertise and funding to get local projects off the ground;
 - work in partnership with community groups, voluntary organisations and other local authorities, including neighbouring local councils, to benefit the community.

The Council and its members have to work within a framework of policies and legislation. Your Council is a Quality Council. This means that its policies are already in place and it has passed a number of vigorous criteria and have reached the standard required These include:

- Electoral Mandate
- Qualifications of the clerk
- Council meetings
- Communication and Community Engagement
- Annual Report
- Accounts
- Code of Conduct

- Promoting local democracy and citizenship
- Terms and conditions
- Training

You should consider standing for election and becoming a Parish Councillor if: You Want To Do More for Your Community, You Want To Spend Your Time Productively, You Want to be Involved in Setting the Budget, You Can Think, Listen and Act Locally

As with most things, the more you put in, the more you (and your community) will get out.

The Council employs a Clerk to support the Council in its work both at meetings and also between meetings. Bourn Parish Council meets each month on the third Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

All members are encouraged to take on an area of responsibility to help share the workload and to ensure that the Council maximises its efficiency. The Council has several working groups which offer members a chance to use their skills and knowledge for maximum benefit or to review a matter in more depth before a decision is reached. Sometimes Working Groups will meet in between the meetings of the full Parish Council.

Being a Councillor should cost you little. There is usually cover for subsistence and travel allowances if your duties take you out of your local Council's area. These allowances will be within a maximum laid down by the Government.

The Council provides free training for all its members.

While the elections will be held in May the Council has two vacancies following and these would offer an opportunity for anyone interested in standing for election to trial the Council for a few months before the elections. The Council extends its thanks to Robert Ansell and Heather McLean for their time and efforts on the Council.

If you are interesting in joining the Parish Council before May 2014 please contact the Clerk or speak to any of the Council's members for more first-hand information first. For an application form please contact the Clerk. Don't be put off by the thought of an application form it only requires basic info to check that the applicant qualifies; which 99% of residents over 18 years of age would and also an opportunity for the applicant to introduce themselves to the Council.

If you would like to stand for election in May 2014 please look out for the notice of election which will be on the notice board in April.

Flooding

The prolonged period of rainfall has resulted in the ground becoming saturated and some flooding problems within the district.

To help a link to information on the District Council's website is below. This is also shown on the homepage of our website too.

<https://www.scambsgov.uk/content/flooding>

The District Council has delivered sandbags to areas where homes are at an immediate risk of flooding today and the service will continue over the weekend where necessary. As you will see on its website, they want to make sure they can direct our resources to areas in most need.

Severe Weather Forecast

As everyone is aware a National Severe Weather Warning has been issued across the whole of England and Wales for gale force winds.

To report any power cuts and damaged power lines on free helplines, call 0800 783 8838 or 01243 50 8838 for mobile users. You can also see www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk

Preparing for a power cut

Bellow is some advice on how you can prepare for a power cut:

- Keep the freephone number handy
- See the website for some videos offering you advice during a power cut.
- Keep spare batteries for radios and torches – local radio stations often broadcast helpful information
- Keep an old-fashioned corded phone which you can plug in, as cordless phones won't work in the event of a power cut
- Dress warmly in several layers of clothing, stay in one room or even get into bed
- Take care if using candles, tea-lights and other naked flames
- Keep fridges and freezers closed, with a blanket over as they will stay cold for many hours
- Switch off all your electrical equipment, except one light which will let you know when the power comes back on
- Remember the street lights may also be off so take care if you go out
- Look out for elderly neighbours; please consider taking them a flask of hot water round or hot food

S137 Donations

Each year in the autumn the Parish Council invites applications for grants from village groups and organisations. The Parish Council has received applications for the Church (churchyard upkeep), Village Hall, Merrybourn Club and the Twinning Association and the Council has allocated a budget for its grant pot out of which these applications will be considered after 1st April 2014.

South Cambridgeshire Grants for Bus Facilities Improvements

The Council was not successful in its bid for proper signage and road markings at the village bus stops but is working to encourage the County Council and bus operators to supply these so that residents know where all the bus stops are.

Outcome of the CFT Bus Services review

A proposed demand responsive (DRT) service for some parishes in South Cambridgeshire has moved a step closer with the issuing of an invitation to

tender to transport providers to ask them to provide bids to operate the service. The proposal is to provide a DRT service that will pick up residents from the villages of Eltisley, Croxton, Caxton, Longstowe, Abbotsley, Waresley, Gamlingay, Little Gransden, Great Gransden, Arrington, Croyden, Orwell, Wimpole, East Hatley and Hatley St George and take them to the destination of their choice. This could be direct to towns such as St Neots or Cambourne, by connecting with commercial services such as the X5, 66 or Citi 4 to destinations further afield such as Bedford, Huntingdon or Cambridge or direct to any village within the roam zone. In addition, Stagecoach are proposing to operate service 18 on an hourly commercial basis to cover the villages of Comberton, Toft, Kingston, Bourn and Cambourne.

This type of transport provision is new to Cambridgeshire but currently operates elsewhere in the country, including Lincolnshire and Suffolk. Following concerns raised by residents the DRT service will be supplemented by some more traditional fixed route journeys in the morning and evening peak as well as on Thursday to St Neots with the more flexible DRT service available at other times. As the final details develop and are agreed with the successful tenderer further information will become available.

Hall Close Play Area and Ditch

The Parish Council continues to urge SCDC to make this ditch safe. Temporary fencing and signage has been erected.

SCDC is keen to transfer the Hall Close Play area to the Parish Council and this was considered at the Parish Council's January meeting. The Parish Council decided in principle if the ditch work is done the Parish Council was amenable to taking over the land however before it does the proposed affordable housing to the rear of the Hall Close needs to be resolved with SCDC first and also issues regarding access to the School should be resolved with CCC.

Village Litter Pick

The Council is arranging a litter pick around the village in late March. If you are interested in helping out please contact Cllr Gill Pountain.

The Bourn Youth Project Working Group and transfer arrangements

The minutes of the Special General Meeting of the Bourn Youth Group whereby the group was officially closed, were considered by the Parish Council in November 2013. A cheque for the sum of £1103.80 was received from Ms Hilary Gretton together with a list of the Bourn Youth Group assets to be transferred to the Parish Council. The Parish Council has added the assets to its asset list, increased its insurance accordingly, and ring fenced the above sum of money for the Youth Group. Working Group members are Suzanne Armitage, Jan Burrell, Hilary Gretton, Gill Pountain, Rita Charter and Joy Naylor. These members will work in conjunction with the Clerk. The Council is very grateful to them all for their efforts and work with the youth of the village.

Complaints about parking in the High Street

The Council welcomed Mr Scott from The Willow Tree to the January meeting and he outlined the measures already taken regarding parking in the High Street, including speaking to Bourn Hall about parking when a big event was taking place, and erecting signage. Manor Farm was willing to help but there were issues with SCDC as this is a listed building. An attempt had been made to purchase or rent the field and for the last 8 months there had been a steward outside directing parking. The car park had been redesigned for events and awareness raised with neighbours. Houses across the road park on the road and staff park on the entry splay. The Pub is trying to be proactive and the Parish Council felt that it was doing all it could.

S/2605/13/E2 – Development of land at West Cambourne – 2200 houses

The Parish Council reiterated its absolute opposition to any development on the site.

RESOLVED to respond as follows:

1. Bourn Parish Council is opposed to the development of West Cambourne because we consider it will have adverse environmental impacts on Bourn and surrounding villages.
2. We would thus like to request that South Cambridgeshire District Council ensures a rigorous EIA is carried out and that adequate attention is paid to the following environmental impacts:

Hydrology and flooding.

3. A detailed study of the impact of the proposed development on the local hydrology and the downstream assessment flood risk on neighbouring villages especially Bourn.

Increased traffic and impacts on neighbouring villages

4. There are other large developments planned along the A428 corridor, including an extra 4,000 houses at Loves Farm in St Neots (under Huntingdon District Council) and 3,000 houses in NW Cambridge/Madingley Road. Based on Department of Transport guidelines, we estimate that an extra 2,200 houses at West Cambourne would generate an extra 3,600 car journeys a day. This would put unacceptable extra pressure on the local road network and surrounding villages.

Visual Impact.

5. The proposed development is on top of a hill and would be seen from miles around. . Light pollution impact on nearby villages is also a concern.

Sewerage.

6. The sewerage works in the area are already at or close to full capacity. The consultants should assess the cumulative impact of West Cambourne taking into account other developments in the Local Development Plan and neighbouring plans

Two other points:

7. The Parish Council suggests that SCDC should ensure the consultants:

- are transparent about the sources of information they use and assumptions they make. The consultants should also be prepared to share their analyses on which they base their recommendations with interested parties, such as Bourn Parish Council, if requested to do so; and
- take full account of other planned developments in the area. They should not just focus on the incremental impact of the West Cambourne on the situation 'as is' but should have different scenarios for the incremental impact of West Cambourne assuming other developments in the area under the Local Development Plan.

Budget for the Financial Year ending 31 March 2015

The Council has approved the budget for FY2015 and to set a precept of £31,123 this being the amount required to balance the budget. The Council's budget will be printed in full in the Council's Annual report which will be discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting. If you would like a copy of the budget now please contact the Clerk or view it on the Council's website.

Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership

The Parish Council is still working on this initiative and looking at the Green Deal, use of a terminal imaging camera and other interesting money and energy saving things for the home, plus village shared ideas of generating a greener environment. Anyone interested in getting involved please contact Xanthe Rees-Howell how100@btinternet.com.

Annual Parish Meeting

Every English Parish must have a Parish Meeting. All Parish and Town Councils throughout England are required by law to hold an Annual Parish Meeting between the dates of 1st March and 1st June (inclusive). This is not a Council meeting but a meeting of registered electors. The date for this year's Parish Meeting will be advertised on the notice board but it is expected to be held in either April or May this year. Come to the meeting and join in the discussions. Everyone welcome.

Is a Parish Meeting the same as a Council meeting? No. Although a Parish meeting is convened, chaired and minuted by the Parish Council, it is not a Parish Council meeting but a meeting of registered electors (including councillors who are registered electors).

What is the purpose of the Annual Parish Meeting? - The purpose is to enable the registered electors to discuss parish affairs and to pass resolutions thereon. This meeting is also an opportunity for the Parish Council (and higher tiers of local government) and community group leaders to explain their activities over the last year.

Who can attend the meeting? - Anyone may attend but only registered electors in the parish may speak and vote.

Will I be able to ask questions and make resolutions? - Yes, there will be an opportunity to ask questions of any of the speakers and also any registered

elector may ask questions of the Council. Where ever possible and if the information is to hand then the questions to the Council usually be answered by the Chairman or by the Parish Clerk or a designated Councillor. Sometimes it is necessary to make enquiries after the meeting or refer the question to the Parish Council or someone else for an answer. If you have a question please send it to the Clerk as far in advance of the meeting if at all possible. An elector may also make suggestions and comment on parish issues and propose resolutions at the meeting. Resolutions relating to allotments are legally binding but all others are persuasive only, but will be considered by the Parish Council at their meetings.

Who will chair the meeting? – The Chairman of the Parish Council must chair the meeting, if present. In his absence the vice chairman must preside if present. If neither is able to attend, then the meeting will elect a chairman from those electors present.

Will Parish Councillors be there? – Although there is no compulsion, Councillors normally attend. They will speak if required, but the purpose of the meeting is to enable the ordinary electors to have their say. Councillors will listen with interest and as electors themselves, also have the opportunity to raise questions and make comments if they wish.

Will notes be taken of the meeting? - Yes, a written record of the meeting will be taken by the Parish Clerk kept in a special book. The rules on the signature and admissibility of minutes are the same as those for Parish Council meetings.

How long will the meeting last? - As long as need be within reason but this is at the Chairman's discretion. It really depends on those present and the number of questions and the discussion that is raised. Generally, the meeting will last no longer than 1.5 to 2 hours.

Bourn Parish Council website

The new website is now up and running. The address is the same - www.bourn.org.uk - but the whole layout is different.

Several items/sections that were on the old website have not yet been transferred over. Many organisations have been contacted regarding their entries. In most cases we are waiting for updates to information as many entries were out of date.

If you are/were involved with any organisation, club, etc that had a presence on the old website, or feel that you would like to see something else on the website please contact the webmaster - Les Rolfe (les.rolfe@hotmail.co.uk or 01954 718150).

We are hoping to be able to distribute this newsletter using the website at some point in the future. This would involve emailing residents as each newsletter is published which they can then read at their leisure. This would enable us to keep production costs down. The paper version would still be available for those residents without computer access.

Parish Council Contacts

Nigel Ball (Chairman)	38 Caxton End	718960
Neil Blair	19 Church Street	719794
Vivien Bruce (Vice-Chairman)	16 Kingfisher Close	718221
Steve Jones	Rosemary and Lavender Cottage, Caxton Road	719329
Gill Pountain	13 Church Street	719266
Xanthe Rees-Howell	Maple Lodge, The Drift	710042
Les Rolfe	57 Hall Close	718150

Parish Clerk

Mrs Gail Stoehr

30 West Drive, Highfields Caldecote, Cambridge, CB23 7NY

Tel: 01954 210241

Email: bournpc@lgs-services.co.uk

The Parish Council meets on the third Thursday each month (except August and December) **at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.** All parishioners are invited to attend the meeting and the first ten minutes or so are open to residents to ask questions or make comments and observations on Bourn matters or on items on the agenda. If the matter is on the agenda or has already been under discussion a response may be given at the meeting otherwise the matter may be tabled for fuller discussion at the next or a future meeting. If you want to raise a matter with the Council please write or email the Clerk.

If you require this newsletter in large print please contact the Clerk on 01954 210241