

A Message from the Chairman..... we are fast approaching Easter, a time of thought and reflection. For local councils like ours it also signals another year drawing to a close and a need to re-assess whether we are meeting community needs and aspirations. Our main project in 2017/18 was the move from traditional street lighting to new low energy lighting. This has reduced operating costs but we are aware of some ongoing issues that still need addressing.

In the coming year we are looking at options to further improve the play area, provide new bus shelters, and to refurbish Brockton WWI war memorial. **Best wishes Cllr Simon Stacey**

Protecting Our Parish Boundaries..... Some of you may have read in a local newspaper moves by Newport Town Council to change their town boundary. Their proposals encroach into Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote Parish and potentially into Church Aston Parish. They (NTC) say this is to *harmonise / rationalise* boundaries so that local people are less confused. There is no evidence to support their claims and we believe that they are motivated by an opportunity to increase their council tax income from existing and new homes.

To initiate a boundary review a town or parish council must show that 7.5% of the electorate support their proposals. NTC Councillors have been busy canvassing local people to sign a petition in order to secure the necessary ~700 signatures. Sadly, many people have signed this without fully understanding the implications, and in some cases we believe NTC Councillors gave misleading information to the public.

On 8th March 2018 Newport Town Council presented their petition seeking a boundary review to the T&WC Boundary Review Committee (BRC). Because they (NTC) had achieved the required number of signatories the BRC are obliged to initiate a formal boundary review. At this point in time they have not determined the scope of the proposed review or a timetable setting out key stages of the review.

What has Church Aston PC been doing in response?

- We have contacted and met with representatives of Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote PC who are also affected by the review proposal and we have agreed to work jointly with them to resist any attempts to encroach our historical parish boundaries.
- We have written to the Chairman of the T&WC BRC letting him know that we believe there is no coherent case for changing current boundaries;
- We have collated extensive information and evidence to present in the fullness of time to the BRC demonstrating the weakness of the NTC case.
- We have developed an action plan to respond proactively to this unwarranted challenge.

This will be a standing item for each and every Church Aston PC meeting until the matter is satisfactorily resolved, and we will keep you informed of any developments.

Keeping our Community Safe..... your local parish Councillors have recently applied to T&WC to become part of a traffic management programme that helps to reduce occasional speeding traffic by use of variable speed indicator signs (SIDs). Specifically, we requested a speed indicator sign that has been installed on Wallshead Way near to the play area. This is because we anticipate additional traffic using this route during the closure of Liddles Bank.

If all goes to plan this should be a periodic feature along this busy bus route and key local traffic route for residents and those visiting our community.

WWI Centenary Remembrance..... 2018 is a special year in remembrance of those who sacrificed their lives during the 'Great War'. In this context Church Aston PC has been looking at how best to renew a WW1 monument to the fallen. The monument is located in a historic barn wall at Brocton Manor Farm where existing lettering is badly eroded. Our initial thoughts were to have the original worn memorial stones re-cut or replaced but this has proved to be technically difficult and a high cost option. Instead we are proposing to replicate the existing memorial stones and to mount them around the hexagonal base of an adjacent roadside war memorial.



Before implementing the project we want to ensure local people are aware of the proposals and that you have an opportunity to comment by emailing churchaston@gmail.com

Design and layout of individual stones including lettering and content will remain as close to that on the wall mounted memorial as is possible. On a related note Zoe Heming Priest in Charge at St. Andrew's Church has kindly agreed to carry out a service of dedication at the site once the works are complete.

Slight rise in Council Tax..... having held the parish element of your Council Tax bills at the same level for 4 years local Parish Councillors reluctantly agreed recently to increase it by just 1 penny per week (for band D 'average' households) for the coming year 2018/19. This is a rise of about 1.5% and is necessary to help meet rising costs of goods and services.

Comparison with other town & parish Councils shows Church Aston to be one of the lowest charging parishes in the Telford & Wrekin borough.