

“Section 137” Grants

The Parish Council still has funds available in the current financial year for discretionary expenditure that have not, as yet, been allocated to specific projects and activities. The powers granted to the Council under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the Council to make discretionary awards to worthy causes, including charities, sports and social activities, improvements to the local environment, etc. In fact, to just about anything that can be perceived as being of wide benefit within the Community and where that extra bit of help is required to meet a specific objective that, without that final boost, might be left unattained. If any organisation, club or society based in the Parish feels that it might be eligible, those involved should contact the Parish Council office for an application form, or visit the Parish Council website, www.loggerheadsparishcouncil.com to download a copy.

Parish Councillors by Ward

Loggerheads Ward

(two vacancies)

Cllr Neil Bown

Cllr Ian Douglas

Cllr Jane Egerton

Cllr Jane Hughes

Cllr Ed Martin

Cllr Paul Northcott

Cllr Della Rowley

Mucklestone Ward

Cllr Graham Sedgley

Cllr Jim Vallings

Cllr Jamie Friend

Ashley Ward

(one vacancy)

Cllr Sue Fox

Cllr Bunty Hodgkins

Cllr John Lovatt

Tyrley Ward

(one vacancy)

Cllr Bert Bennion

Cllr Roy Claydon

*All Councillors can be contacted
on 01630 673426 or by email*

Parish Council Meetings

Meetings of the Council are being held on

Thursday, 24th January 2013 at Oddfellows Hall, Ashley

Tuesday, 26th February at Hales & District Club

(please note that, exceptionally, the February meeting is being held on a Tuesday)
meetings commence at 7pm



YOUR Parish Council The newsletter of Loggerheads Parish Council

Loggerheads Parish Council Room
The Presbytery, 75 Church Road, Ashley, Market Drayton,
Shropshire, TF9 4JY
Telephone: 01630 673426
loggerheadspc@btconnect.com
Clerk to the Council— Andrew McRae

www.loggerheadsparishcouncil.com

Inside this edition of YOUR Parish Newsletter
Getting Involved****Do you need some Money?
Making your voice heard in the Planning Process

THE BURNTWOOD PHYTOPHTHORA RAMORUM OUTBREAK

As this edition of the newsletter went to press, the Parish Council was about to commit to the widespread clearance of rhododendron plants to comply with a statutory Containment Notice served by DEFRA to deal with an outbreak of the plant disease Phytophthora Ramorum on the Burntwood.

The requirements of the notice mean that all rhododendron plants on the area of land at the Burntwood leased to the Parish Council are to be destroyed.

It has been accepted, with regret, that the complete destruction of all affected and ‘susceptible’ plants will be the most cost effective solution for the long term, as failure to comply fully with the DEFRA notice would compromise the qualification for available grant aid to help meet the considerable costs involved, and leave the Parish Council at risk of further penalty.

A completion date of 28th February has been agreed for the work. During the period concerned, access to the area will be limited at times in accordance with the requirements of the contractors engaged to undertake the task.

PLANNING and HIGHWAYS ISSUES

As most readers will doubtless be aware, one of the functions of the Parish Council is, in its role as a 'statutory consultee', to monitor and comment upon proposals for development in the Parish, and to provide feedback, on behalf of the community, to planning applications submitted to the local planning authority, Newcastle Borough Council. Every substantive application dealt with by the Borough is duly considered and commented upon, even if there is 'no objection', by the Parish Council's Planning Committee. The Committee meets formally immediately before each full monthly meeting of the Parish Council, whilst the monthly meetings of the Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee similarly review and comment on applications in those instances when the three-week public comment period does not allow for consideration at meetings of the full Council.

The Council would welcome active involvement from individuals in its deliberations on planning applications; particularly from those residents who, as neighbours, are directly affected by any proposals submitted to the LPA. For example, if you are, as a neighbour, commenting to the Borough upon an application, it would be helpful if you could copy your response to the Parish Council in order that it can be assessed in the light of the Planning Committee's own review. There may be issues not readily apparent to the Parish Council that could help inform and strengthen its own response.

The Parish Council has, in recent weeks, had cause to make representations to both Staffordshire County Council, in respect of matters affecting highways, and to Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, as the LPA, in connection with transgressions of planning legislation that have been to the detriment of the enjoyment of property of a number of residents. Whilst the Parish Council itself has no formal powers in such matters, it endeavours to work closely with both the Borough and the County to find appropriate solutions to related problems when they arise, to try to safeguard the interests of the community as a whole. The Parish Council is rightly often seen as the first line of defence – or attack, depending on the perspective – in addressing issues where residents are inconvenienced or put at risk by the thoughtless, or illegal, actions of others. Our liaison with officers in the other tiers of local government is strengthened by the close co-operation of ward and division Councillors at the Borough and County. In light of the seriousness of the specific issues concerned, recent representation has also included letters being sent to the Chief Executives of the Borough Council and the County Council reminding them of the duties of their respective organisations in connection with the enforcement of the law, as defined in planning and highways statutes, and of their responsibilities in safeguarding the interests of members of the public whose lives are adversely affected by the failure of others to respect the law.

Remember, the Parish Council is YOUR local body for making representations; please use it to ensure that such representations are as effective as possible.

YOUR PARISH NEEDS YOU!

Loggerheads and the surrounding villages within the civil parish enjoy a well deserved reputation for active community service reliant upon the good work of numerous volunteers. The excellent work done by Loggerheads Community Information Shop, BloomIn' Ashley, Ashley & Loggerheads First Responders, Loggerheads Pickers and Planters, the management committees of the several village halls, church groups, branches of the Women's Institute, and similar organisations all rely on such willing volunteers.

The work of the Parish Council is similarly dependent upon the commitment of volunteers, but may appear to some as being a little less attractive or more imposing! Perhaps it is seen as being a little 'aloof'; 'impersonal' in terms of community involvement and the capacity and prospects for making an effective impact? Certainly, many of the issues with which the Parish Council is obliged to deal under statute may appear to be rather mundane and, perhaps, less immediately rewarding than some of the practical, 'hands on', tasks associated with some of the aforementioned community groups.

For example, poring over the detail of planning applications; keeping an eye on the weather in order to arbitrate on the calling out of a gritting lorry; or checking to see if footpaths are kept free of overgrowth; (the list is by no means exhaustive!), might not, perhaps, sound all that appealing to some, but each such task, in its own way, represents an important contribution to the well-being of the community.

But, crucially, being a Parish Councillor also represents an opportunity to help shape the locality and its infrastructure; in providing a platform upon which the community as a whole can flourish.

In 2013, the Parish Council proposes to look anew at its "Parish Plan", first published in 2008. The review will involve consideration of options for land use that will in due course sit alongside more specific proposals associated with a Neighbourhood Development Plan through which it is hoped to transform the character of the centre of Loggerheads.

To ensure that a balanced approach is achieved, the Parish Council relies upon Councillors having different strengths, enthusiasms and interests; different skills and attitudes. Some are more 'ideas' people; others more 'practical'. The key is to develop a team that is both representative of the community and willing and able to work together effectively.

Would you like to be part of such a team? The Parish Council currently has vacancies which can be filled by co-option of suitably qualified residents. If you would like to know more about what is involved, please contact the Clerk. And look at our website, www.loggerheadsparishcouncil.com to learn more about what the Council does. Or, better still, perhaps also attend a future meeting as a member of the public, to help assess how you may be able to contribute to the future of Loggerheads.

Please visit www.loggerheadsparishcouncil.com to read the minutes of meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees, and see the background to, and greater detail of, the issues being dealt with on your behalf.