

THE BURNTWOOD: PHYTOPHTHORA RAMORUM OUTBREAK

The destruction and clearance of rhododendrons that were affected by, or susceptible to, the plant disease Phytophthora Ramorum, on land leased to the Parish Council at the Burntwood, was duly completed on 22nd February. The work was undertaken in order to meet the requirements specified by DEFRA, which had issued a statutory notice calling for the elimination of the plants concerned. The Parish Council met its financial obligations by fulfilling the request of the Borough Council for payment of a contribution of £7,000 towards the latter's costs in commissioning related work over a wider area encompassing the recreational land leased to the Parish.

Please visit www.loggerheadsparishcouncil.com to read the minutes of meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees, and learn more about the background to, the issues currently being dealt addressed on behalf of the community.

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)

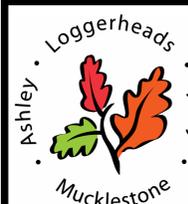
Cllr Bert Bennion

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, 28th March at Knighton Village Hall
Thursday, 25th April at Oddfellows Hall, Ashley
meetings commence at 7pm



YOUR Parish Council The newsletter of Loggerheads Parish Council

Loggerheads Parish Council Room
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Clerk to the Council— Andrew McRae

www.loggerheadsparishcouncil.com

Inside this edition of YOUR Parish Newsletter

HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS SPECIAL ISSUE

HS2—What's your opinion? *** Local footpaths
The poor condition of local highways

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 23rd APRIL

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on St George's Day, Tuesday 23rd April at Ashley Memorial Hall, commencing at 7pm. The principal theme of the meeting is to be a "Celebration of the Community", focussing on the contribution made by all volunteer groups operating within the Parish.

The meeting is also an opportunity for individuals to address the entire Parish on issues that they feel would be of interest or which deserve collective attention – do you have such an issue, and would you like to state your case? If so, the Parish Council would be pleased to hear from you, and to consider including the matter on the agenda for the meeting. And don't neglect to tell us if you have some good news! Perhaps you have something very positive to reflect upon and share?

It's a valuable opportunity to make public something that you care about! Please send to the Clerk details of any issues you wish to raise by no later than Friday, 5th April.

A53 TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

Following an intensive campaign by Parish and Borough Councillors, and residents, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has determined that the building of the new community fire station on Market Drayton Road will only be allowed to proceed on condition that, in the interests of highway safety, the development is complemented by a series of traffic calming measures on the A53 to the west of Loggerheads village centre. These will include a speed indicator, dragon's teeth, anti-skid surfacing and 30 mph repeater signs. Concerns remain over the Fire and Rescue Service's proposal to seek a compromise on the specification of previously specified requirements in respect of visibility splays relating to vehicles exiting the fire station site.

HS2—The 'preferred' route

The recent announcement of the proposed route of the HS2 railway linking the West Midlands to Manchester and the north-west has led to the reaffirmation of Staffordshire County Council's policy of opposing the project, on the grounds that the 'business case' is fundamentally flawed. The County has declared that it will nonetheless not only pursue outright opposition to the scheme but, in parallel, develop strategies to mitigate the impact on Staffordshire communities on the assumption that the project is to proceed.

In the northwest of the County, many affected residents have expressed concerns about the proposed route of HS2, notably in the vicinity of the nearest point to where the route passes the civil parish of Loggerheads, at Whitmore Heath. In tunnelling under the Heath, it has been suggested that HS2 will have a major adverse impact upon the quality of life in Baldwins Gate and Whitmore, and an action group had been formed locally. More than 200 residents attended a recent public meeting at which Bill Cash, MP, outlined his opposition to the scheme.

It has also been suggested that the very least of the effects upon Loggerheads are likely to be major disruptions to the A53 Newcastle Road during the construction phase. It remains to be seen what the official policy of Newcastle Borough Council towards the project will be; it is acknowledged that many in the north west of the County will be encouraged by the potential of employment opportunities at Crewe should HS2 be constructed.

What do you think about the proposals? Do you believe that this is an issue in which Loggerheads Parish Council should actively concern itself, given the relative proximity of the preferred route, and the potential impact upon other aspects of local transport in years to come, or should determining policy towards HS2 be left to those nearby Parishes which are more directly affected?

Please let us know YOUR views!

Footpaths in Loggerheads Parish

At the other end of the spectrum of the concept of getting from "A" to "B", the Parish Council's Footpaths & Environmental Committee has recently been giving consideration to the possible upgrading of a number of public footpaths locally. It is hoped to secure some funding from Staffordshire County Council under its "Community Footpaths Initiative", to repair gates and stiles where necessary, and to make the most of existing public rights of way, thereby creating a network of linked footpaths offering different levels of challenge to walkers. The ultimate intention is to stimulate more active participation, and the enjoyment of the local countryside, by residents of Loggerheads. Central to this objective is the ability to offer opportunities to accomplish worthwhile and enjoyable walks that are not dependent on first making a car journey to a start/finish point.

HIGHWAYS : POTHoles & FLOODING

The extensive problems being experienced of late in connection with potholes and flooding on highways throughout the Parish and beyond will be very obvious to all. The Parish Council has regularly submitted reports of such problems to the County Council, the highways authority responsible, to encourage prompt repairs to damaged surfaces and thereby minimise the inconvenience - and, in many instances, potential danger - to road users.

Residents themselves can always report such issues giving cause for concern directly to the County Council by any one of several means:-

Telephone: 0300 111 8000

Email: highways@staffordshire.gov.uk

On-line: go to <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/staffshighways>

The County has itself made clear the importance of presenting to them the information in an appropriate hierarchy, identifying the priorities, and giving very detailed information (e.g. the depth and width of a pothole), in order that the most serious and problematic issues are dealt with efficiently. It is acknowledged that in recent months the County Council has voted through the expenditure of an extra £500,000 committed to emergency repairs to highways. With 6,000km of highways to attend to, it is clearly a massive task. The better the information provided to the County, the more likely is the prospect of there being a satisfactory response.