

HS2 PHASE II

Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association has invited member Parish Councils to comment on a draft policy statement to help frame the County Association's response to the recent announcement about the preferred route for HS2 Phase II. Whilst SPCA has recognised that within Staffordshire there is 'a divergence of opinion about the merits of the proposals for HS2', your Parish Council has encouraged the Association to go further and acknowledge openly the strength of feeling against the development, rather than imply that opinion is merely 'split' equally. Loggerheads Parish Council has also endorsed SPCA's three-strand policy, viz

(i) encourage strategies, and the pursuit of specific initiatives, to mitigate the impact of HS2 Phase II on Staffordshire communities directly affected by the proposed route, on the assumption that the line is to be built.

(ii) distribute related information to Parish Councils and advise Parishes which choose to respond in their own right to the published plans.

(iii) facilitate, where appropriate, a co-ordinated response on behalf of Parishes to the emerging plans for the construction of HS2 Phase II.

Parish Councillors by Ward

Loggerheads Ward
Cllr Linda Banner-Perry
Cllr Neil Bown
Cllr Ian Douglas
Cllr Jane Egerton
Cllr Gerald Hughes
Cllr Jane Hughes
Cllr Ed Martin
Cllr Paul Northcott
Cllr Della Rowley
Mucklestone Ward
Cllr Graham Sedgley
Cllr Jim Vallings
Cllr Jamie Friend

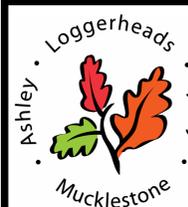
Ashley Ward
(two vacancies)
Cllr Sue Fox
Cllr Bunty Hodgkins

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, 23rd May 2013 at Oddfellows Hall, Ashley
Thursday, 27th June at Knighton Village Hall
meetings commence at 7pm



YOUR Parish Council The newsletter of Loggerheads Parish Council

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CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

A CELEBRATION OF THE COMMUNITY

The Parish Council would like to thank the representatives of all the volunteer organisations who contributed reports to the Annual Parish Meeting, which was characterised as a "Celebration of the Community", at Ashley Memorial Hall on Tuesday, 23rd April. The occasion amply demonstrated the outstanding level of commitment shown by a great many selfless volunteers who contribute so much of their time to helping improve the quality of life for other members of our community. We are all clearly very well served by those who show such dedication to their fellow citizens, be they young, old, or in ill-health or, perhaps, disadvantaged in some other way. And, indeed, also by those who spend many hours of their leisure time making our villages look cleaner, brighter and more colourful places to live.

The Annual Meeting showed that we do, as a community, indeed have plenty to 'celebrate'. Thanks are also due to Ashley WI for the provision of delicious refreshments at the conclusion of the meeting.

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.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Jubilee events

This time last year we were, of course, all looking forward to the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, and the Parish Council played a full part in helping to ensure that the community could mark the occasion and enable residents to enjoy the associated festivities. It proved to be a busy summer for everyone and I'd like to acknowledge the very considerable efforts put in by many volunteer groups who organised events, or made other substantial contributions. Even if the weather didn't do its bit, I'd like to think that Loggerheads did Her Majesty proud!

The Parish Council made financial support available to a number of community organisations to help meet the costs of events and activities. These included the "MALT" Community Group, the Ashley, Loggerheads and Mucklestone Community Choir, and Ashley Parish Church. We also made exceptional awards of section 137 grants to enable our two important local 'floral' organisations, Loggerheads Pickers and Planters and Bloomin' Ashley enhance the appearance of the respective villages with special 'Jubilee' themed displays.

As part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, all local children aged from 5 to 11 years who attend either St Mary's School, Mucklestone or the Hugo Meynell School, received a commemorative pen set presented by the Parish Council.

Street Lighting

Following a presentation to last year's Annual meeting from the "Campaign for Dark Skies", and to help inform the County Council's review of night-time street lighting, the Parish Council sought the views of all residents on the subject.

We were able to consider the option to introduce 'Part Night' street lights (i.e. to switch off street lights from midnight until early morning), but the majority of those who responded to our survey were firmly against this. People generally seemed happy with the *status quo* so we were, as a Parish Council, unable to recommend any changes to the County. We can nonetheless anticipate that in some areas the lights will be dimmed for part of the night, to meet the County's objective of conserving energy.

Community Fire Station in Loggerheads / A53

Throughout the year we have continued to try to bring about a more satisfactory state of affairs on the A53 with the installation of traffic calming measures, in association with the planned building of the new fire station. Despite our best endeavours, we have repeatedly come up against the arguments of the developers and the highways authority, who have cited legislation that precludes the adoption of the measures we'd like to see. There have nonetheless been some minor improvements to the situation which at first it appeared likely we would have to live with.

Housing Site Allocations and the Future of Loggerheads

During September, the Parish Council distributed a letter to all house-holds in the parish setting out the background to, and the implications of, the Borough Council's consultation on its "Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan: Issues and Options" paper, which is a key element of the development of the Local Plan for the period to 2026. This exercise will have a major impact upon the future character and size of Loggerheads. The Parish Council believes that the matter is of such importance that residents should be consistently encouraged to engage with the process, in order that their interests are respected and safeguarded, and to make sure that the Borough Council pays heed to everyone's very real concerns.

We did, of course, take in board the views of residents expressed at the public meeting hosted by the Borough Council held here at Ashley Memorial Hall on 16th August and we represented them formally in our comprehensive response to the Borough. We're now awaiting the publication of a Draft Options Report by the Borough Council and we will respond accordingly in due course.

Gritting

As in previous years, the Parish Council did its best to help ensure that local residents faced the minimum inconvenience during the winter by bolstering the efforts of the County Council Highways Department in the provision of gritting services. We feel that this commitment is widely appreciated; it goes well beyond what most other Parish Councils achieve but recognises that so many of our residents work or, indeed, attend schools, outside the immediate locality and we need to do everything possible that they can gain access to the main highways.

The Burntwood :Phytophthora Ramorum Outbreak

Late last year we were, unfortunately, faced with a very significant, and expensive, problem, in having to deal with an outbreak of the plant disease Phytophthora Ramorum on the Burntwood. This obliged us to arrange for the widespread clearance of rhododendron plants, to comply with a statutory Containment Notice served by DEFRA requiring that all susceptible plants be destroyed. The destruction work was duly completed during January and February to the complete satisfaction of DEFRA, at a cost to the Parish of £7,000.

Footpaths in Loggerheads Parish

The Parish Council's Footpaths & Environmental Committee has recently been giving consideration to the possible upgrading of a number of public footpaths locally, and we have secured funding of £500 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.

We're hoping to create a network of linked footpaths offering different levels of challenge to walkers, and the objective is to offer facilities for worthwhile and enjoyable walks that are not dependent on first making a car journey to a start/finish point.

Cllr June Hodgkins, 23rd April 2013