

Pembridge Parish News



www.pembridgeparishcouncil.gov.uk

February - March 2013



Bridge Street works

The picture above, taken last year, shows sewage discharging into the Arrow on the south east side of the bridge. This was observed on a number of occasions and repeatedly reported to the Environment Agency - anyone can do this by calling 0800 807060. The problem was investigated and found to be a failure of the combined sewer overflow (CSO) in the area between Parsons Walk and Curl View. Welsh Water already had this CSO scheduled for replacement but were 'persuaded' by the Environment Agency to bring the work forward because of the repeated pollution incidents.

Systems installed these days mostly use separate sewers to carry waste water and surface run-off but older systems like

ours combine the two. This means that during heavy or prolonged rainfall the volume becomes too much for the normal sewer and an overflow is provided which discharges into a river or the sea - a filter or screen is normally fitted to prevent the discharge of sewage solids (too much information?). When it's working correctly the overflow happens rarely and then usually into a swollen, fast flowing river. In this case overflow was occurring too frequently and the screen was not performing adequately.

The work now being undertaken will install a new CSO including an electrically operated mechanical screen which will activate in storm conditions. The work will take around nine weeks in total with complete closure to traffic planned between 11 February and 1 March.



Christmas past

It already seems a long way off but the Christmas period was again marked by many lighted trees throughout the village thanks to Julie, Rod and others. The Market Hall was also splendidly decorated for the grand switch-on which featured a contingent from *The Helen Vereker rock choir*.



Pembridge Parish Council

Police Surgeries

Our local police representatives will be holding surgeries at The Steppes every fourth Thursday in the month from 11am to 1pm. This is an informal opportunity to meet our local police and to ask questions or pass on information.

Ward Councillor's Report

Good Report for Pembridge School

Pembridge School has been given a glowing report by OFSTED (the national inspection agency). They are so impressed with the standards of education and running of the school that they have placed it in one of their highest performing categories. The school has over 90 pupils and with the recently completed refurbishments is a real credit to our Parish.

Budget

The council received approximately £5.5 million less than in previous years in the settlement announced just before Christmas. Although there was some extra funding for social care and health there is still an estimated increased cost pressure of £3.5 million. In addition a slight of hand was done with education grants causing more problems.

Herefordshire Council has made over £20 million worth of savings in the last two years. In 2013/14 another £10 million will be found with similar reductions in following years. All council budgets are reducing and while everyone hears it on television, radio and papers I don't think people quite grasp the impact of this reduction in public expenditure. This is aggravated by the rising pressures of care costs. The council has over 400 contracts on care packages, some will involve one individual with huge complications, others involve many people.

This year our adult care budget was £67 million and after charges left £50 million to be found from budget (covering 6,500 people). The implication of these savings will be a rise in charges, cutting of services, staff levels (281 FTE have gone with other 120 posts next year), and new methods and ways of delivering services.

Highways

The recent snow and frost and the significant rainfall really has taken its toll on our roads. Please continue to report any potholes or highway concerns to streets@herefordshire.gov.uk or phone 01432 261800. It will be difficult to get on top of

the situation in the remainder of this financial year particularly if we have any quantity of frost and snow.

In the longer term the problem of maintenance of our roads is not going to go away. The current contract with Amey is due to come to an end in September and a process of procurement began last Autumn for a new supplier. In the previous contract the repair and maintenance of the main roads was a priority and until recently certainly our main roads have been in good repair. In the new contract the minor roads must have a higher profile.

All my parishes operate a lengthsman scheme. This is where Herefordshire Council gives a sum of money to the Parish Council (based on the mileage of non-main roads in each parish) to pay a local contractor to keep open slips, ditching and small works to help with the drainage of water off the highways. The Parish Councils operate the scheme which has been fairly successful, but I think we need to enhance this so that more extensive ditching and works can be done. Savings in administration costs in some cases need to be made and more scheduled programmes of works need to be done to ensure all parts of the Parishes are covered. I will work with both Herefordshire Council and my four Parishes Council to ensure we get the flexibility we need and value for money.

In the meantime I will encourage landowners to clean any blockages in our ditches and everyone using a minor road to where ever possible reverse your vehicle rather than drive on soft verges and fill the ditches in.

Broadband

BT have been officially named as the preferred builder of a wholesale broadband network for rural parts of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. The £35.4 million contract will see £18.7 million spent in our County with match funding coming from the Council (£10.1) and Government. The contract runs to 2016 by which time everyone will have a minimum of 2Mb/s and 88% of the County will have 30Mb/s or more. The aim is to get half of the contract area premises to have fibre to their premise. By 2018 through emerging technologies, Superfast Broadband should be available to anyone who wants it. Details of the roll out of the scheme are still awaited but I will lobby for our patch to be included as soon as possible. In the meantime there are currently broadband options available and I would advise that you if you need a supply you investigate them.

Roger Phillips

rjphillips@herefordshire.gov.uk

Parish councils & the community

Recently the Sustainable Communities Team at Herefordshire Council has launched a new website which answers many of the questions you might have about the Parish Council's role and powers. It also has links to related topics including the Lengthsman Scheme and Locality Working and to external resources such as "Plain English guide to the Localism Act".

As I write, the site is in 'beta' so only accessible via the lengthy address along the bottom here but worth a visit if such things interest you.

The screenshot shows a web page titled 'Parish councils and the community'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Public Services', 'Contact us', and 'Login'. A search bar is also present. The main content area has a sub-header 'You are here: Home > Community > Parish councils and the community'. Below this, there is a section titled 'Parish councils and the community' with a brief introduction. Further down, there is a list of bullet points under the heading 'What do parish councils do?'. The page also includes a sidebar with links to 'Documents' and 'Related pages'.

The Parish Hall



Most people know it as the village hall but either way it's an excellent resource available to parishioners and others for any type of event or function. The hall is administered by a trust which receives no funding from the Parish Council or elsewhere so the hall is entirely reliant upon hiring fees for its upkeep and improvement.

Sarah Parkinson handles bookings (tel. 388360) and told me that a model helicopter group is one of the regular bookings. I imagine they prefer a minimum of furniture but the hall can provide a wide range of facilities for more conventional events in its large and smaller two rooms. Seating is available for up to 180 people and up to 100 place settings can be supplied comprising cutlery, cup, saucer and a small plate. The two rooms have fire safety limits of 150 and 75 people in each.

The building has a full music licence which means you can bring along and play recorded music of any type. Alcohol cannot be sold on the premises except by a licensed outside-bar supplier (of which Pembridge has at least one!) but you can bring your own or provide it free of charge. There is a kitchen with 'domestic' scale equipment - small fridge, microwave, small oven and basic utensils. Toilets include disabled facilities.

Hiring rates for parishioners are £6.50 per hour for the small room and £12 for the large - others pay slightly more. If you need access to set up prior to the event there is only a nominal additional charge. Call Sarah with any questions.

Pride In Pembridge

Despite the distraction of Christmas and the wet and now cold weather, the team have been active litter-picking and planning further improvements. Bluebell bulbs have been planted in the woodland of the Conservation area and also in a part of the moat. They probably need longer in the ground before they flower but keep a sharp look out in May. Five bags of rubbish were collected on the verges of the A44 on the outskirts of the village in one session. It is amazing how much people chuck out of car windows!



Alan Stokes - PIPs correspondent!

Veronica and Robert Hodges from Tarrington came to meet the team and give us tips on how to win gold – they achieved gold in the Regional campaign, and Silver Gilt in 2009. It was a very interesting talk. Tarrington is quite a different village

from Pembridge and is fortunate in not being bisected by a main road – they only litter-picked a couple of times a year. However, they had planted Ceanothus shrubs up the steps to their church (sadly dead after two severe winters) and established various areas of wild flower planting. Shady places were sown with Foxglove seed from someone's garden and Ox-Eye Daisy seed was also scattered in suitable environments. Although their planters were lovely they used perennials and shrubs to great effect also.

Suitably inspired we shall be ordering plug plants of trailing Begonias, trailing Geraniums and Snap Dragons for various tubs. When Bridge Street is closed for three weeks due to the Welsh Water works, we shall remove the accumulated soil (and weed potential) from the kerbs and paths and hopefully plant some attractive trailing plants like Aubrieta and Campanula in suitable crevices in the wall.

We also intend to manage (by strimming) a section of the moat. There is a danger that it will become a forest of Ash trees (unless dieback claims them).

The more the merrier, so if anyone would like to join in these activities you would be made very welcome. Watch the shop notice board for information on dates for these activities.

Police and Crime Commissioner



Recently elected Police and Crime Commissioner, Bill Longmore, is developing a draft Police and Crime Plan for the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2017. This "is a formal legal document which serves to steer the Chief Constable in the priorities West Mercia Police should deliver".

In a summary of the plan Mr Longmore says, "I am anxious to preserve so far as resources allow, the visibility and availability of front line police services. To this end I am proposing to adopt a policy of reassurance to police officers that so far as possible during my period of office police constables will not be subject to enforced retirement, that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) will not be made redundant and the numbers of specials will be increased".

The full text of the draft plan can be found on the Commissioner's website at www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk. Comments on the draft are welcomed and can be emailed to opcc@westmercia-pcc.gov.uk or submitted via the website where a postal address can also be found.

Good Neighbours and Cakes!

The splendid people from the Pembridge Good Neighbour Scheme are planning to hold monthly get-togethers in the Parish Hall every third Saturday in the month starting from Saturday, 16th March between 10am and 12 noon. Come along and chat to your neighbours or make new friends or even just come along and read the newspapers.

There will be tea, coffee, home-made cakes, soft drinks available and everyone is welcome. If you would like to come but have problems getting to the hall transport is available, just give us a ring on 07779 122499.

Leen Times

I look out of my window now to see 6" of snow on the ground. The grandchildren have just left after a snowball fight and building a snowman - so much simple fun. But oh! - those hands get so cold!!

What does it mean on the farm? Apart from having to struggle out into it at 5.30 am – it really doesn't make much difference - So Far! The temperature hasn't dropped enough for us to have to thaw drinking troughs. The cattle have plenty to eat (and we have enough for the rest of the winter). They have clean, dry beds and we are able to get the muck away from them - we thankfully still have plenty of storage space. The main worry is getting the milk tanker in to take away the milk - we have to carefully clear the yard, the farm track and the public road to us. The problem can occasionally be that the tanker gets stuck on another farm.

Some cattle still live outside. These have been a problem during the wet weather, however they grow very thick coats which keep them warm provided they have some shelter and enough food.

Bad news from the village - I have had some cases of Trichomonosis in birds reported to me. This is a parasite that affects garden birds (particularly Greenfinches) causing unthriftiness and death. It is transferred from bird to bird by feeders and baths that are not clean - so please keep your feeders etc as clean as possible and disinfect them if they have damp food on or in them.

On the subject of bird feeding: There are different views on this, but I like to start feeding on the first frost in December (the natural food will last till then) and continue until April (when natural food comes, in abundance) - that way the young can learn to fend for themselves in the most natural way.

I feed fat balls, peanuts, mixed feed and Niger seed - this gives the best variety of birds feeding. Just a few tips:

- Hang/place feeders near bushes so birds can dive for cover if a sparrow hawk appears.
- Never let feeders run out. Always keep clean. Shut the cat in!
- Finally – watch the birds and enjoy them.



Barn owl

The Barn Owls still show at Milton Cross and Twyford lane. A large flock of Lapwings seen on the Leen.

Snowdrops, Aconites, Violets, Catkins and bulbs pushing up all tell us what is round the corner.

Tony Norman
tony@leenfarmorganics.co.uk

Pembridge Good Neighbours

Call 07779 122499 9.30am to 5.00pm

Pembridge Doctor's Surgery

Monday:	8.85am to 1.00pm	2.15pm to 6.00pm
Tuesday:	8.85am to 1.00pm	Closed afternoons
Wednesday:	Closed all day	
Thursday:	8.85am to 1.00pm	2.15pm to 6.00pm
Friday:	8.85am to 1.00pm	Closed afternoons
	Tel: Pembridge - 388566	(Kington - 230302)

The Steppes

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri:	8.00am to 5.30pm
Wednesday:	8.00am to 12.00noon
Saturday:	9.00am to 5.00pm
Sunday:	9.00am to 4.00pm

Townsend Farm Shop & Butchery

(Winter opening)

Thu, Fri, Sat: 9.00am to 4.00pm

Mobile Post Office

Monday:	2.30 to 3.30pm
Tuesday:	1.30 to 2.30pm
Wednesday:	No service
Thursday:	4.00 to 5.00pm
Friday:	1.30 to 3.00pm
Saturday:	9.00 to 10.00am



Pleasing green shoots - unfortunately not of the economic kind

Your Parish Councillors and telephone numbers

Cllr Garfield Evans - Chairman	388638
Cllr Andrew Pace - Vice Chairman	340696
Cllr Tom Bennetto	388972
Cllr Kevin Duggan	388833
Cllr Mrs Claire Evans	387987
Cllr Ms Catherine Fothergill	388279
Cllr Mrs Julie Mifflin	388414
Cllr David Owens	388422
Cllr Mark Ratcliffe	388506
Cllr Philip Rogers	387976
Cllr Alan Stokes	388769
Cllr Phillip Thomas	388457
Cllr Roger Phillips - Ward Councillor	340269

Clerk:

Mrs Heather Harding
153 Bargates, Leominster HR6 8QT
Tel: 01568 612143
Email: mail@pembridgeparishcouncil.gov.uk