

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF FECKENHAM

**Will be Held at the Village Hall,
7:00pm on Thursday 18 May 2017
All Parishioners Are Invited**

1. **Apologies:**
2. To confirm the **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting** held 19 May 2016.
3. To receive a report from **Alan Smith, Chairman of the Parish Council.**

Another busy year for the small band of Parish Councillors!

We were sad to be told that that Phillip Gretton was stepping down as our County Council representative, due to poor health. He has helped us greatly in many matters over the years, and we send him our best wishes and thanks for all he has done for the Parish

On a more positive note we now welcome Councillor Jane Potter, and Councillor Roger Bennett who were elected in May this year as our new County Council representatives.

The agreement negotiated with the use of the Recreation Field for football has greatly improved the situation in the centre of the Village, and appears to be adhered to.

After much discussion/negotiation/persuasion/nagging, and some extremely useful local knowledge, High Speed Broadband arrived in the village this year, for which I for one am most grateful. It will enhance the village greatly. At last "Line of Duty" on playback without buffering every ten minutes.

The Feckenham Manor Community Archaeological Project is moving forward, clearance work has been undertaken by Redditch Borough Council, with further works are planned. The project suffered a minor setback in March when the application for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund was refused. However this is apparently not unusual and is on the point of being re submitted

The Feckenham Neighbourhood Development Plan has made some advance over the past twelve months, and currently a survey document is now being "fine tuned", in association with Redditch Borough Council, which will then be forwarded to all households in the Parish.

Thanks to Richard East and his group of helpers, Feckenham senior youth club is back up and running, which a great achievement for all those involved that give their time and energy to run the club.

Feckenham junior youth club is also thriving, and again this is all down to the massive effort put in by the organisers.

The Committee of both the Feckenham Flower Shows, and the Over 60's Christmas Dinner are desperately in need of some new blood and ideas if their sterling work is to continue.

Volunteers are always needed to assist in the many activities that go on in our wonderful little village, please step forward if you are able to join one of the merry bands of volunteers that run these events.

One of the major concerns for the Parish is, as ever, traffic. Throughout this year we have been in detailed and lengthy discussions with Worcestershire Highways.

When the current Parish Council took over the advice from County was that little could be done to assist us in this matter. Well we are most pleased to report that under the leadership of Councillor Arthur, this is now not the case.

As you all will be aware the B4090 has been resurfaced, although we were of the opinion that we had negotiated that the white lining could be omitted. Speed assessments are ongoing and at the time of this report we are informed that there has been no increase in speeds through the village. Two vehicle activated signs have been ordered, but not yet arrived. We are informed that they are due to be installed at the end of May. A further speed test will then be undertaken to see what effect they may have had.

White line, “chicane” style road markings are also proposed to be introduced at each end of the village. There will be some consultation with residents on the positioning of these, before being installed. Further speed tests will then be undertaken once they are in place.

Rock Hill lane has been resurfaced, and tree work undertaken at its junction with the B4090 to improve visibility. Councillor Arthur has negotiated with the owner of the land on the village side of the junction with Astwood Lane, Mr Coburn, who has generously offered to remove a section of hedge to improve visibility, and donate the land to the Parish Council. As you are probably aware this is a nightmare junction at the moment, the work should greatly improve road safety. All that is currently delaying this work to be done is confirmation from Redditch Borough Council that no consents are required to undertake the removal and replacement with a stock fence.

Signage has been installed to redirect traffic, but unfortunately incorrectly, this is due to be put right shortly, indicating that through traffic should use Rock Hill Lane.

In September this year we sadly lost two members of the Parish Council, Councillors Chute and Jones, we thank them for all their efforts. We then, in November, welcomed Councillor Guise, and Councillor Hammersley

Promoted by Councillor Guise, the Parish Council have ordered 350 “smart water” kits which can be used to identify property and belongings if, or when stolen. These will be offered to all households within the Parish, by a member of the constabulary, and/or a Parish Councillor free of charge. There is no obligation for any resident to use the system should they not wish to, but each kit is unique and has to be registered to a particular property. This project is undertaken in association with “we don’t buy crime”, and the local constabulary. As a result of this association we are able to buy the kits for £8.90 plus VAT, and signage through the Parish is provided warning those considering appropriating other people’s property that this is a Smart Water Parish.

Last, but by no means least, I would like to thank the Square Management Committee for all the work they do to preserve and maintain the Square for everyone to enjoy.

The Clerk reports the 2017 Statement of Accounts were internally audited by Mr Richard Fletcher. The precept received was unaltered from 2016 at £8,300 and the total income was £10,814, which does not include VAT recovery. The balance of funds carried forward to 2017-18 is £22,600. A significant percentage of these funds are ring fenced in Reserve Accounts.

An external audit will take place during a four week consultation period which is likely to commence on 5 June and close on 14 July. The public has the right to

inspect the accounts. Any parishioner wishing to examine the accounts is invited to make an appointment with the Clerk.

4. To receive a report from **Mr Bob Gordon, Parish Paths Warden.**

When I started in spring 2016 there were just fewer than 70 problems across the parish on the WCC database. Since then, 23 new problems were reported by the public and I have reported a number, so the number of issues to be tackled reached 112 over the year. Of these, 102 have been checked and reported to WCC. Some of course are fairly easily resolved on the spot, e.g. clearing vegetation from around a stile, fixing waymarks.

52 issues have been closed and are no longer on the database. Most of the rest require WCC action, some of which is planned already.

Early 2017 brought Storm Doris which resulted in a number of fallen trees, several along Burial Lane. Three falls I managed to clear from the path using hand tools. Two larger trees will need machinery and were reported to WCC. Other repairs include repairing a stile cross-piece near Meadow Farm (Noah's Green), adding slip rails to a bridge North of the mill wheel, and major repairs to hand rails and side-pieces on a footbridge near Bean Hall Mill.

The path following Swansbrook Lane going North is somewhat marred by work on the riverbank but is still passable.

Still a problem is the area South of Droitwich road and East of the farm track opposite the Mill Wheel that has previously been reported to the PC. A couple of paths are difficult to use as the area has been fenced off by the landowner, some of this being electric and there are unofficial and aggressive signs trying to direct walkers around the edge of the field rather than the correct route across it. Patrick White is aware and I have been told that there is dialog with the landowner.

In the plan for 2017 is a leaflet for a circular walk to and from the village. My thought is to include Wylde Moor Nature Reserve and Bean Hall Mill (where the old mill is being restored) on the route.

5. To receive a report from the **County Councillor(s)**
6. To receive a report from the **Borough Councillor(s)**
7. To receive reports from any other parishioner or parish group.