

Latest News from the Parish Council

On the 10th August the Council met face-to-face at the Village Hall for the first time in more than twelve months. It was good to be able to have a genuine conversation with a sense of freedom, albeit with the underlying thoughts of the pandemic and its potential harm.

There is little doubt that the problem is to be with us for the foreseeable future and we must endeavour to return to a pattern of life that embraces the difficulties whilst being suitably cautious.

Village Green and Lengthsman

The green is now entering the autumn phase and the wild areas are being trimmed back and collected. Further planting will take place during the coming months and areas will again be seeded with wild mix. It is apparent that the impact of years of 'cut and leave' has left a residual richness in the soil that is not in favour of many wild flowers so as we move forward the planting will have to adapt to suit.

The lengthsman has been busy and he continues to maintain the area to ensure good visibility at junctions and drainage where necessary. It must be remembered that he is employed to carry out the tasks that would have been carried out by the road maintenance teams in the good old days and this does not mean tackling areas of hedgerow or verge that are within the boundary of private householders. If you have hedges at your property bordering footways or the road please ensure that they are trimmed back to prevent overhanging brambles or loss of footway. If we receive a complaint the householder will be notified in writing.

Finance Matters

The annual period for account inspection passed without enquiry. Full details can be seen on the County Council website under 'My Parish—Hill Croome'.

Broadband for the Area

Many of you will have received the recent letter from 'AIRBAND' giving information as to their plans to introduce fibre connections to the Parish. The scheme is ambitious and has the potential to provide us with substantially better speeds than are currently available through the normal suppliers who have no apparent plans for improvements.

Ever the sceptic I went along to meet the representatives at the village hall. The first important question I had was how the plan would be implemented?

It is to be a full fibre link utilising the poles that are already in place. A connection box would be installed and fibre run to individual properties. For those in more outlying areas joining the scheme at the outset could result in a significant saving compared to linking in at a later date when all costs would be at the householder's expense.

At the end of the visit it was hard to see any reason why adopting the scheme could be anything other than a good move. The proposed monthly costs are significantly less than my current BT contract where I do not achieve the promised speed.

If you are considering taking advantage of the scheme it is important to make contact with AIRBAND now to register your interest.

Contact details:

www.airband.co.uk

Brad York—Senior Field Sales Advisor 07399 050 371

Email: brad.york@airband.co.uk

Planning

The Council continues to monitor applications for our area and makes observations to the authorities where appropriate.

On occasions it is necessary to make representations to the Planning or Highways Department to bring to their attention matters relating to development that has taken place without the necessary permission and to help in protecting our environment. The last twelve months has been difficult for the Planners without the ability to make site visits but it is to be hoped that things will return to something like normal.

Waste dumping



The latest instance of illegal fly tipping by the motorway has been reported and removed from the scene. Please ensure that any such activity is reported to me so I can get action taken to clear it at the earliest opportunity. The longer it remains in view the more the likelihood of others doing the same.

Speed of vehicles in the village

This issue continues to be a concern. To help address the matter we have installed new signs to inform motorists of the possibility of there being checks carried out to monitor the problem. Whilst we have had very occasional officer presence, the reality is that more regular checks are required to instil the 'fear factor'.

I have had recent talks with other parishes about the issue and with the help of the Worcestershire Association of Local Councils we have devised a survey for all parishes to get a summary of the perceived problem in the county. Once the results are collated it is intended that the relevant authorities be updated with the findings. It is already apparent that most areas are under resourced and that speeding is not taken seriously. Combined with a recent vote at the County Council to defeat a motion to make speeding a county-wide priority, we have some idea of where this issue rates with those in charge.

A new approach is required and the matter will remain a priority.

Hunting with dogs—coursing

This time of year seems to bring out those who enjoy the barbaric and unlawful pursuit of coursing and this last week saw the latest visitors in the village. Whilst approaching those involved is discouraged, the recording of vehicle registration and type and the number of people and dogs is useful intelligence. I am happy to forward any information gathered.

On this last occasion the details of one of the vehicles has been recorded and submitted to the police.

One of the pleasures of living in the countryside is to see the wild animals going about their business and with hare numbers diminishing nationally we must do our bit to protect what few we have left.

New island on the A38

The latest meeting of the consultation group was held last week and I attended on behalf of the Parish. It seems the work is going well and whilst recent traffic lights have been the cause of some angst it is hoped that most of the work in the coming months will be within the field.

Questions relating to the new lighting, landscaping, tree planting, surfacing and the security of the old redundant carriageway were all addressed. Concerns were expressed as to the possibility of the old road becoming a dumping ground or a potential site for travellers. Unfortunately there are vital services beneath the current road and access is required to be maintained at all times.

It is acknowledged that the success in completing the work in good time will be influenced by the weather and the impact it will have on the groundworks.

Neighbourhood Watch

The number of residents subscribing online to the scheme is still small and until we have more join, the system does not recognise Hill Croome as a full member. Until the scheme is verified we cannot move forward.

To join is simple:

Visit <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk>

Complete the details to register for the National Scheme and once accepted, follow the links to the Hill Croome group. Your request should then trigger a message for me to accept you into the group.

Recent updates to the scheme have resulted in changes but they hopefully will not affect the group.

Joining the group costs nothing, but has the potential to keep us informed on matters relating to trends in rural crime and how we may keep ourselves better prepared.

Hill Croome Parish Council

The next meeting is to be held on:

Tuesday 26th October 2021 at 7.00pm

At Earls Croome Village Hall

Everyone is welcome to attend and there is an opportunity to speak to the meeting when the floor is open to the public.

If you have a particular question for the Council please give it in advance to the Clerk to assist in the research and preparation of a response.

The discussion of any topic is at the discretion of the Chair.

For any correspondence or matters arising please contact

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