



Preserve
Conserve, Enhance

Avening Parish Council

NEWSLETTER NO 2

APRIL 2007



Did you know - April
19th is Primrose Day?

NEWSLETTER NO 2

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The Chairman's View



The parish council have set their precept for the next financial year (from April 2007) at £17,500. This will enable the council to fulfill its objectives and planned work for the coming year. It equates to an increase of 15p per week for a band D household.

To arrive at this figure the PC have reduced some budget heads and introduced some new ones based on our pattern of spending in the last couple of years. We are maintaining our usual annual grants to the Playing Fields Association, The Village, the PCC and the Youth Club. We have reduced the amount available from our community fund (for local organizations to apply for money for help with community projects) as it hasn't been fully utilized in

the last couple of years. We also considered employing a maintenance person for various jobs in the village, but felt that we could be more effective in responding to situations by using an appropriate local contractor when needed.

As the business of the council has grown over the last couple of years we have introduced both planning and finance committees as well as the main council meeting. This year we are also looking to review the Parish Plan (which will set our work schedule for the forthcoming year and beyond), continue plans with the two outstanding bus shelters and push forward plans to secure the future of the village hall. To allow for this to be done we

have increased the Clerk's hours. Her pay scales are set through the Local Government Pay Scales against the size of Council that we are. I have every confidence in the way she has conducted the business of Council in the short period she has been with us and has proven to be fair to all.

We have also been advised that we should carry a contingency fund for emergencies. We have agreed to save towards this over the next ten years at £1,000 per year.

The full budget is available online at www.avening-pc.gov.uk

Jim Parsons, Chairman

Litter - A Blight on the Landscape

On a recent walk along the footpath adjacent to the Nails-worth road to Longford Mill, I was shocked, saddened and appalled in equal measures at the amount of litter casually tossed from passing cars. Predominantly plastic bottles (there must have been hundreds), but everything from fast food packaging to plastic bags. It got even worse around the bend above the lake where bin bags, traffic cones and believe it or not a double freezer! This was not casually tossed, but must have involved a deliberate trip in the car to get there. It begs the

question why? If people are making a special trip with rubbish, why not just go to Horsley? Also, it's so easy to ring the council (01285 623000) who will collect bulky refuse. I have asked Highways if they can send a gang down to clear up, and also the Princess Royal since much of the rubbish has fallen down the banks of her estate.

Anyone who has stopped at the 'temporary' traffic lights by the subsidence cannot have failed to notice the piles of litter building up

But all of this assorted plastic

doesn't just disappear—far from it. It's you and I that have to keep on paying through our council taxes! When your next bill arrives soon, consider how much it costs to keep collecting all of this detritus because (a few) people are too lazy to take their rubbish home, or deliberately fly tip.

As a community we can help (see the item on the next litter pick) but legislation is available to fine litter louts—perhaps we need to use it more?

**Tony Slater,
Vice Chairman**

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What has the Parish Council achieved?

The Parish Council is the first tier of local government. They are best placed to see the needs of the village they live in and have powers to take action or give grants to improve life in the village. The 9 councillors representing Avening and Nag's Head have had a varied work programme in the last year – sometimes from ideas they have initiated themselves and sometimes responding to situations as they occur.

In the last year the parish council has:

- * Organised two litter collecting events – one in the spring and one in the autumn.
- * Completed the installation of the bus shelter at Hampton Hill.
- * Councillors have personally cleared the silt from the stream in Woodstock Lane, caused by runoff from the road.
- * Replaced 4 damaged heaters in the Memorial Hall
- * Replaced 1 litter bin at the playing fields following vandalism. A further three have recently been installed at the playing fields and Sunground along with a new dog bin at the playing fields.
- * Arranged for the restoration of the original wooden Avening sign, and at the time of writing it is just about to be re-installed.
- * Compiled a list of items that needed attention on the roads and arranged with Gloucestershire County Council to have most of these items addressed (see page 3).
- * Organised a hedge laying event run in conjunction with the Royal Agricultural College for residents

to learn the art of hedge laying and then finish laying the hedge at the playing fields, and subsequently completed one side of the field

- * Produced the first Parish Council newsletter and delivered to all households in the village
- * Signed up to the Gloucestershire Charter (a commitment to communicating and working with the County Council in a constructive way).
- * The parish council have achieved £378 of grant funding from Cotswold District Council for some small but necessary items to improve facilities in the Memorial Hall.

Plans for the future

The council have been looking at their work programme for the next financial year. At present the plans include:

- * Securing a favourable future for the Memorial Hall through some form of investment and improvement of facilities. The council is carrying out public consultation to find out residents views (please see attached questionnaire)
- * Revitalizing the Parish Plan and encouraging more community involvement in volunteer activities

in the village. A public meeting is planned in May to showcase what has been achieved from the original plan and review the priorities set at the last public consultation.

- * Completing the installation of the 2 remaining bus shelters – one in Mays Lane and the other at Sandford Leaze
- * Continuing with the twice yearly litter collecting events.

This is all alongside the standard work of the council such as commenting on planning applications (approximately 30 since this time last year), tree work applications and responding to government or other bodies consultation requests where these have a bearing on village life, for example the recent waste consultation strategy. Councillors also receive comments from the public about issues in the village and attempt to address those as well.

The last year has been busy for Councillors and Clerk alike and the council as a whole is looking forward to achieving worthwhile, tangible results for the village over the coming year.

Deborah J. Cook, Clerk to Avening Parish Council

Save Money On Your Heating Oil

Local resident Frances Lindley has set up a scheme for other villagers to save money on their heating oil by using a 'MULTIDROP'. This consists of several households grouping together to achieve the best oil price for delivery to a particular area. The September 'drop' consisted of 9 households for 9000 litres and there are now more than 20 households involved!

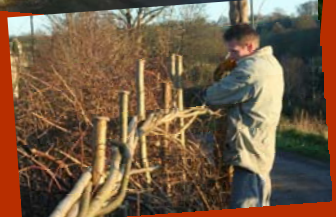
Minimum delivery to any one address is 500 litres. Frances checks the oil prices and puts the order in for the best offer considering such

things as delivery date, no extra fee for credit card payments, willingness to deal with multi-drops, small tanker, long hose, etc.

Normal times for drops are Jan/Feb, Aug/Sep (and Nov/Dec for those with smaller tanks or a very cold winter). The weather will influence the number of deliveries and an extra drop can be arranged if there is enough demand.

To join the 'AVENING DROP'

Contact Frances Lindley On 01453 835115 Email: Flndly4@aol.com



Some of the varied activities supported by the Parish Council



One side of the playing field is complete

The long and Grinding Road

You have probably noticed that Avening roads had quite a bit of attention at the end of last year. While it was sometimes a little inconvenient to have temporary traffic lights springing up, I am sure you will agree that having large pot holes and crumbling surfaces repaired was worth it.

The work was carried out following great cooperation between Avening Parish Council and Gloucestershire Highways. I have responsibility for roads and transport on the Parish Council and prepared a report of the local roads needing most urgent attention. I then met with Gillian Portlock in September for a walk around the village to discuss them. Despite a very small budget Gillian was very supportive and subsequently arranged for teams to

make the repairs. In addition, a number of larger scale projects were identified, and funding will be sought to progress them in the future.

There is a big backlog of maintenance due to funding issues in the County so we can't be too optimistic that the patchwork of surfaces will greatly improve, but anyone can report potholes, damaged roads or street lighting faults simply by calling 08000 514514. An even easier method is to visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/pothole any time - 24 hours a day.

Maintenance planned for the next financial year includes topdressing the B4014 Avening to Tetbury, including new cats eyes.

Longford's Mill

The 'temporary' traffic lights by the

Longford's Mill turn on the B4014 Nails-worth road are still with us and the latest

news from Highways on the subsidence is that it is still necessary to continue to monitor movement on three landslips. All three are reducing and it is estimated that by mid-summer they will have stabilised. Negotiations with the developers have been completed and further building work will not now proceed. Assuming stabilisation of the landslips, and installation of deep cut drainage, the two way carriageway will be rebuilt in late summer. As expected the current traffic management system will be with us for many months to come.

Tony Slater



Another pothole in Chavenage Lane

We can't be too optimistic that the patchwork of surfaces will greatly improve

Keep Avening Tidy

Although our village could be classified as clean and tidy, several litter pickers found this was not the case during our Spring and Autumn tidy up mornings last year. A number of unwanted items were strewn around the vicinity including an old bike dumped in the village stream, exhaust pipes littering our roads and lots of unwanted packaging flying around our lanes. All of this unnecessary litter was successfully removed from our streets by an army of volunteers and taken to the local recycling centre.

However, to maintain and keep Avening tidy and clean we need to keep up the momentum with further litter picking events in the future.

Cotswold District Council have kindly donated more bags and gloves to support us with our anti-litter campaign. Our first event of the year will be **May 12th between 9.30 and 12 noon**, so



keep your diaries clear, and we look forward to seeing some of you again soon. Of course Litter is not the only thing that can make Avening look shabby - Trees and shrubs overhanging pavements, and overgrown verges also look messy and can be dangerous. The PC have arranged for even more verges and pathways to be trimmed this summer, and you can help by checking that your garden specimens are retained within the garden. If there is a danger to the public, Highways can legally hack off any excess - and send the bill to you afterwards!

Chris Redpath

Local Elections Coming Soon

Local Elections take place on 3rd May 2007. If you would be interested to stand as a Councillor please come along to one of the parish council meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the Memorial Hall. Alternately, contact CDC (01285 623000) for an application form or collect one from the Corner Shop. Information as to how to stand for the election is also available from CDC.



Handyman

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Grants and Donations 2006/2007

Grants Received

The parish council have achieved £378 of grant funding for the purchase of small items for the village hall, from Cotswold District Council's Ward Projects Fund.

The new items mainly include sanitary/hygiene equipment for the toilets and public kitchen area, such as toilet roll dispensers, soap dispensers, toilet seats, 2 new bins for the kitchen, catering urn and kettle. There will also be some more comfortable public seating for the reading room.

The application was made after consultation with the School, WI and Youth Club whose representatives indicated that there was a need for these improvements.

The parish council is keen to work in partnership with community groups on village hall and other parish matters in the future. If you would like to be involved in future consultations please ensure the Clerk has your contact details. The easiest way is by emailing parish-clerk@avening-pc.gov.uk. Alternately please keep an eye on the parish notice boards where posters and agendas are displayed and

perhaps attend council meetings (2nd Thursday of the month) where there is a time for public questions at the start of the meeting.

Grants Given

During this financial year grants/donations have been made to the following organisations:

3 to Avening Playing Fields Association to pay annual running costs, additional bills for repairs and most recently to fund the repair of the flying fox.
Avening Playgroup for a contribution towards safety surfacing.

The PCC to fund the Pig Face Day celebrations in September.

The Youth Club to pay for hire costs of the Hall.
The Sandford Trust to support young people.
Tetbury Town Council to help fund the dial a ride bus which provides transport to hospitals for parish residents.

Annual grant to Avening Parochial Church Council.
Annual grant to the Village magazine
Annual donation to the Citizen's advice bureau
Annual donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

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Bins Means Fines?

Wheeled Bins On The Way

Wheeled bins for general household waste are set to be rolled out across the Cotswolds from this autumn. Cotswold District Council (CDC) voted to approve plans to replace the current kerbside collection of an unlimited number of black bags with a wheeled bin service. Kerbside collection of plastic bottles remains uneconomic but CDC plan to increase the number of plastic banks at our recycling sites.

This is being promoted as a positive step towards increasing the recycling rate, which is currently running at 42%. 'We are

top of the league in the county and very much intend to stay there!' said Cllr Lynden Stowe. 'I would like to assure you that special arrangements will be made for householders unable to cope with a wheeled bin.'

However, while Avening Parish Council supports any actions that reduce landfill and encourages re-cycling, in common with a number of other parishes we have a number of practical and aesthetic concerns. We already have a green bin for garden waste, and will now have a second for general rubbish—for houses without suitable storage or properties that open directly

onto the road the visual impact will be highly detrimental. It will also cause problems for those unable to manoeuvre the bins through infirmity or frailty. Families may also be impacted by being restricted to one bin instead of the current unlimited collections, especially if a fortnightly collection is adopted. It will also increase the need to store and individually transport items such as cardboard and plastic bottles to recycling centres. Your Parish Council will be passing these concerns to CDC but in the meantime residents will be kept fully informed of changes to the waste and



Will we soon be living in a sea of Wheelie Bins?

recycling service. For further information, please contact the new Waste Communications Officer, Mike Harris on 01285 623140

Tony Slater

**Contact: By post to Avening Parish Clerk, 18 Martin Close, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1XY;
Email: parishclerk@avening-pc.gov.uk; or phone 01285 656139 (9am-6.30 weekdays only)**