



Tiverton and Tilstone Fearnall Parish Council Newsletter March 2019

What's On

Village Society Spring Event (Beetle Drive & Quiz) – Saturday 30th March, Village Hall.
Bronze Age Roundhouse Project Presentation – Tuesday 14th May at 7pm, Village Hall.
Annual Parish Meeting – Tuesday 14th May at 7:30pm, Tiverton Village Hall.
Parish Council AGM & Parish Council Meeting – to follow the Annual Parish Meeting.
Village Society Village Day – Saturday 29th June, Hockey Club.

Presentation on the Beeston Castle Bronze Age Roundhouse.

Carolyn Hicks of English Heritage will be giving a talk about the Bronze Age roundhouse project at Beeston Castle, **before the Annual Parish Meeting on May 14th, starting at 7.00pm.**

As I indicated in the last Newsletter, this is a major development project, which started in February and will take seven or eight months to completion, working alternate weeks, give-or-take, allowing for holidays. The specialist build team of about sixteen volunteers will have six weeks of intensive training in total, spread over the whole period. Training covers Bronze Age timber preparation, timber frame construction, thatched roofing, wattle-and-daub walling, flooring and furnishing. Additional volunteers supplement the core build team to help with the extremely labour-intensive tasks. Bronze Age tools are being used alongside

modern ones in controlled comparison experiments (but absolutely no chain saws!)

The site can now be viewed by the public, including when work is in progress, and specialist “explainers” are on hand to answer any questions. Previously all you could see was a dozen or so “de-barked” oak trees lying around, piles of woodchip and big holes in the ground, but now the huge upright posts are in place as the frame of the building begins to take shape. Already the site is attracting a lot of visitor interest and English Heritage plan a major educational programme based on the roundhouse. Carolyn, who is a real enthusiast, will tell us more about their plans for utilising the finished roundhouse both for general visitors and school parties, as well as a lot more on the historical and archaeological background to the project.

Chairman's Notes

Upcoming Parish Meetings

In addition to the regular bi-monthly Parish Council Meeting, every year in May we hold the Annual Parish Meeting, which really is a meeting for the residents of the Parish and an opportunity for you to have a say about what is happening in the Parish and what you would like to happen and also an opportunity for you to hear what has been happening over the last 12 months. Historically this has been a relatively short meeting, but if there is sufficient interest shown we could expand this to include more input from organisations and partners that impact the Parish e.g. Police, Cheshire West & Chester Highways/ Transport, Sandstone Trust etc. However, for this to happen we need your support, so please come along on 14th May and let your views be heard.

Red Fox Junction

This seems never-ending, but fear not the implementation of the junction redesign is imminent! Work on the underground ducting did occur in January on the Eaton Lane leg of the Red Fox Junction but work proper is scheduled to start on 11th March and will last for about 4 weeks. There will obviously be some significant disruption over this period with lane restrictions and (mainly) overnight road closures. Further details can be found on the Parish Council website under The Parish Council/Public Notices and on the Parish Council Noticeboard on the Village Green on Huxley Lane.

Local Bus Services

I mentioned in the last newsletter that CW&C Transport had carried out a consultation with Parish Councils within Tarporley Ward on their requirements for bus services. Since this review had the potential to impact Tiverton we requested to be part of this process. As a result, we were invited to a meeting with CW&C Transport, along with all the Tarporley Ward Parish Councils, at their offices in Chester in February to review the findings of the consultation process. In summary I don't think we are any clearer now as to what is likely to happen. I hope that, if nothing else, CW&C Transport and others were clear that we want to protect our Community Bus Service to Chester – in particular the Tuesday service which is far more popular than the Thursday service.

Tiverton & Tilstone Fearnall Website

Just a quick note to say that this website is going to become an increasingly important way for the Community as well as the Parish Council to provide information to our residents. Please take a few minutes to take a look at it and provide feedback (via the Parish Clerk please)

Ray Mould – Chairman, Tiverton & Tilstone Fearnall Parish Council.

The Future of Local Government in Cheshire.

This is a personal piece by your Deputy Chair to prompt a few thoughts. The title above was the subject of the recent CW&C Town and Parish Council Conference, attended by councillors from across Cheshire. The two questions for discussion were; how can parish councils become more visible in communities? and did they need to become more business-like?

Asked what our big issues were, I wrote down all the “little” issues that are frequently raised by our residents and discussed at Parish Council meetings; potholes, speeding, water bursts, slow broadband, poor mobile reception, roadside and path-side litter, overgrown hedges and grass, bus services, parking in Tarporley and Chester, un-coordinated and badly-signed road closures etc. Our problem is that we do not often get prompt and satisfactory service from CW&C, Cheshire Highways, the utility companies etc with regard to these issues and problems. This may be because there is just not enough resource in terms of budget and personnel to deal with the volume of these issues county-wide. But their main focus does seem to be on the priorities for Chester, Ellesmere Port, Northwich and Winsford. This said, however, CW&C's record on communicating with parish council on issues raised is not very good: communication often seemed to be one-way.

On the first question, the strongly-held view was that rural parishes in particular were very much visible in their communities and close to them because of the small size of parishes. On the second question, the view was that, allowing for different degrees of formality and style of operating, parish councils were quite business-like in dealing with their agendas. The discussion moved on to question whether and how parish councils could do more for their communities when many of them had very limited budgets from the annual precept, especially as CW&C has, over the years, centralised some services that were previously managed by the parish and also reduced parish funding, for example by abolishing the new homes allowance.

Should we raise the precept to provide more cash for capital projects? Should neighbouring rural parishes seek ways to co-operate more extensively or consider mergers? Bigger parishes might command more attention from CWaC and might realise some financial economies of scale or some non-financial economies of scope, thereby helping us to provide a better service to the wider local community. Tiverton and Tilstone Fearnall were originally two parishes, and we co-operated successfully with Beeston on our Neighbourhood Plan, having discussed a possible merger at various times in the past. Should we liaise more closely with Tarporley Council, along with other neighbouring rural parishes, since it provides many of the services that we use (shops, parking, restaurants, pubs, bus services, which we do not have)? At present Tarporley Council, quite understandably, looks after its own residents not ours. If you have any views on these issues please make your views heard at our open sessions or to your parish councillors individually.

Voneus Superfast Broadband.

I am afraid that it looks increasingly unlikely that Voneus will be able to deliver on their promises, now or at any time in the near future for those of us suffering from snail-pace speeds. Voneus do not respond to queries with any meaningful information, and their website mainly records delays, problems, slow delivered speeds and abandoned projects in the various counties where they have projects. Having personally promoted the project enthusiastically I am sorry that we have been so severely let down by Voneus.

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