

ST MARTINS PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER spring 2014

A series of newsletters which aim to keep residents in touch. Please let us have your views Disclaimer -All articles are published in good faith

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

There is a new bus shelter at Halls Corner which, thanks to a phone call as a result of the appeal for information in the Autumn edition, we were able to track down the bus that knocked the old shelter over and Arriva buses paid for the new shelter. Many thanks to the person who called.

Welcome to new Councillor

Unfortunately, Councillor Hannah Guntrip left the village and resigned from the council. The vacancy was advertised and Mr Gordon Fryer was co-opted onto the council at the December meeting. Gordon's interests are the countryside and wildlife.

Clerk Retires

Sue Crow who has been the Clerk for 17 years is retiring at the end of March. The Council has appointed Mr Edward Davies in her place, he will be taking over **from the 1st April. His contact number is 01743 366420 email edward865davies@btinternet.com**

From The Chairman of St Martins Parish Council

Thank goodness the days are getting longer and brighter, we are still likely to get more winter weather, but the dark days of December have gone.

The improvement works to our village drainage are coming to an end, the contractors have tried to minimise disruption and have continued to work on through some awful storms.

We are having some of the wettest winter weather but not flooding as previously. Fingers crossed, flooding alleviation works are successful.

Please report the dog walkers not picking up after their dog, if you see someone leaving a mess, phone 03456789006 with description of the dog/s and name and address of the person. You do not have to leave your name, but any help in stopping ignorant dog owners will help our campaign against dog mess.

Keep your speed down in the village and lock your doors and sheds.

Helen Williams, Chairperson to St Martins Parish Council.

INTRODUCING THE NEW PARISH CLERK

Mr Edward Davies will start work as the Parish Clerk at St. Martins Parish Council on the 1st April 2014 he has been Town Clerk at Market Drayton Town Council for the last seven years. Prior to that he was the Management Project Officer and Deputy Returning Officer at North Shropshire District Council. For the last 20 years he has been the part-time Parish Clerk at Ercall Magna Parish Council in the Telford & Wrekin. In that time the parish council gained Quality Status and, in partnership with Telford & Wrekin Council, designed their new website. He has been in Local Government for over 20 years and holds a Certificate in Local Council Administration along with being a founder member and principal of the Institute of Local Council Management.

Edward lives in Shrewsbury, is married with three grown up children, all married and living in various corners of the country. His interests include golf, gardening and now spending more time with his three grandchildren.

Parish Council Budget for 2014/15 The Council has set the precept at £49,500 the same as last year but due to a 10% reduction in the amount of money awarded to Parish Councils by the government to compensate for the number of residents who claim council tax benefit in the parish, the council was already facing a short fall of £805 in income before the budgeting process started.

This means that every household will be paying pennies more per week.

Do remember that ALL the precept money is spent in the parish.

Items from the budget; The Council agreed to

- i) take over financial responsibility for the Trust land, not including the garden, the Community Centre & the storage space behind the Centre at an extra cost of £1,900.
- ii) to pay 50% of the cost for the grass cutting and the lease for the Football Field behind Stan's; £2,040 this year
- iii) to upgrade the War Memorial in commemoration of the start of WW1 by a) buying planters and planting them up in red and white. b) covering the panels with cast bronze panels—this will protect the stone carving. c) cleaning the Memorial. This will be done in consultation with the War Memorials Trust. £4,000 is in the budget for this and joint funding grants have been applied for towards the cost of the work.

Local Joint Committee (LJC) At their meeting on 25th February the committee agreed the following grants for the parish.

£1,000 towards buying planters for the village - three for the fencing on the War memorial and a three tiered planter for the land adjacent to the mini roundabout. They will be planted with red and white flowers to commemorate the start of WW1.

It is hoped in the future that this will lead to a stand alone committee of parishioners to look after the planters and add to them. This will enhance the village and maybe in time St Martins could enter Britain in Bloom.

£1,928 to The Community Centre 1 to purchase and install a flagpole + four flags; 2. to provide six unemployed parishioners with training to obtain a ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) 3. to fund the set up and initial printing costs to produce a village magazine on a bi monthly basis by a group of people in the village.

£4,203 St Martins School—This is to support the School in the purchase of 25 E Readers. The aim of this project is to encourage reluctant readers and be promoted through a range of book clubs. The School also plan to further develop their communication with pupils and the community. These devices will be an alternative way of communication. In addition the school would like to purchase sports related science equipment to support pupils and yr 6 feeder junior schools preparing for transition.

£200 Shropshire Scouts - to support one scout living in St Martins to undertake training and development associated with attending the World Scout Jamboree in Japan

A Message from Sue I have been Clerk to St Martins Parish Council for seventeen years. I should like to thank all councillors, past and present for their support. I have enjoyed my time as Clerk and seen many changes "Thank you" to all the parishioners who have taken the time to let me know about problems - especially lights out. I have strong feelings about the village where I was born and lived - St Martins. It has been a pleasure to be of service. I wish Edward all the best and trust that he will enjoy his time with St Martins Council. **FROM 1ST APRIL please remember to contact Edward with questions and reports of problems**

ANNUAL MEETING of the PARISH will be on **Thursday 17th April 2014 at 7pm at The Community Centre.**

What is the Annual Parish Meeting (APM)? It is not a council meeting, it is a meeting of the parish electors that is everyone on the electoral role, though young people are welcome to attend. You, the electors, can contribute to the agenda, just let the clerk know if you have an item you wish to be on the agenda.

The meeting is also to celebrate local activities and debate local issues. So please come along to let everyone know what your group has been doing in the last year or about any new plans you have. Do you have an issue you wish to be discussed?

There is usually a guest speaker so look out on the parish noticeboards nearer the date for more information.

Coffee/tea and biscuits are served at the meeting. PLEASE come along and make your views and aspirations for the parish known.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE

WHAT is a PARISH PLAN?

A Community Led Plan is a statement of how a local community sees itself developing in the future. It sets out the needs and aspirations of the community based on the views and opinions of the people that actually live there. You may have heard them described as a parish or town plan

The Parish Plan initiative was launched by the Countryside Agency in 1999 and presented rural communities across the country with an opportunity to explore the issues facing their community and to identify which aspects they valued or felt needed to be changed.

Through the process of community consultation issues are prioritised and an action plan is produced

to support the implementation of the plan. The action plans contains three levels of action:

1. Actions the community can take forward by itself;
2. Actions that require some support or finance from outside the community;
3. Actions that require strategic support through inclusion in statutory plans and/or investment

from local authorities or service providers.

It is the engagement in this third level of action that offers the greatest potential for community empowerment through the opportunity to use the parish plan as a tool to directly influence decision-making within local authorities and other public bodies. Shropshire Council take parish plans into account when making decisions.

Shropshire Rural Community Council's (SRCC's), is supporting the Parish Plan Steering Group in St Martins with help and advice. The Parish Council has funding in the 2014/5 budget to take the process forward. St Martins' first Parish Plan was completed in 2007. This included an Action Plan, here are some of the items from that plan that have been actioned.

Crossing at the Doctors' Surgery –there is now a refuge in the centre of the road

Upgrade play equipment for the under fives - done

Provision of a library – Book Box has been set up

Improve existing play areas –new equipment for the older age group has been installed

Retain St Martins Post Office

There is still much to do, unfortunately, despite the best efforts of the parish council there is still no Multi Use Sports Court in the village.

The Steering Group is looking to update the 2007 plan and need more input from the community so please contact the Chairman, Mrs Myfanwy Dulson on 772885 if you want to be involved.

THEIR NEXT MEETING will be Monday 24th March at 7pm in the Community Centre. All Welcome.

ARE YOU GETTING YOUR 15 HOURS OF FREE EARLY YEARS EDUCATION?

All children aged 3 and over who live in England are entitled to 15 hours of free early years education a week for 38 weeks a year. The free sessions can begin in the term following your child's third birthday and lasts until your child reaches the statutory school age. Places are available now at play-groups, pre-schools, nurseries and childminders in your local community.

The Government is also starting to introduce free early education to some 2 year olds. Some free places are available now and they have pledged to extend free childcare to more families from September 2014. To qualify for a free place **now** you must be getting one of the following:

- Income Support
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
 - income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
 - support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
 - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income not over £16,190
- the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit) From September, as well as the current rules, a child will also be eligible if any of the following apply:
- you get Working Tax Credits and earn no more than £16,190 a year
 - they have a current statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care plan
 - they get Disability Living Allowance

they've left care through special guardianship or an adoption or residence order

To confirm if you are eligible and to find out how to access your free place you can e-mail Shropshire Council at 24U@shropshire.gov.uk or phone Shropshire Family Information Service on 01743 254400.

PLANTERS for War Memorial would you like to sponsor the purchase of a planter or even volunteer to water and maintain a planter during the summer? It is not too late. If you would like to become involved with this project or contribute to the purchase of a planter please contact the Parish Clerk.

CHOIR ON LOOKOUT FOR NEW SINGERS

The Orthopaedic Male Voice Choir is on the lookout for new singers to come and join their growing Choir. The Choir has been in existence since 1968 and is organised as a charity which seeks to promote music in Shropshire and the surrounding counties. We perform concerts for local organisations helping them raise funds for their designated charities, as well as visiting and performing in care homes, local clubs and associations and, of course, for the Orthopaedic Hospital in Gobowen.

With the success of Gareth Malone's various "Choir" television programmes there has been a revival in people wanting to sing for pleasure. We wish to welcome any new members who would like to come and sing with us. There is no need for previous experience, all that is required is enthusiasm. All voices are welcome, especially tenors. We practice on Thursday evenings in Meeting Room 1 at the Orthopaedic Hospital starting at 7:30 p.m.. If you would like to know more visit our website (www.omvc.org.uk) or contact us via email (info@omvc.org.uk)

January 2014 Warm Homes Discount - DON'T MISS OUT

Marches Energy Agency and partners are urging residents to see if they qualify for a discount on their energy bills.

The government's Warm Homes Discount scheme is now in its third year and offers discounts on energy bills for households on low incomes. This year the grant has risen to £135 off the energy bills to those that qualify. The scheme is administered by the electricity suppliers and places are filling fast.

Two groups qualify. The '**Core Group**' are those in receipt of the Guaranteed Credit element of Pension Credit. Provided the claimant or their partner was named on their energy bill as of 20th July 2013 they will automatically qualify and should have already received their payment. Those over 75 in receipt of either element of Pension Credit will also qualify. If this applies to you then you should receive a letter before the end of February telling you one of two possible messages. The first is that you qualify and don't need to do anything else. The other possibility is that it will say that you qualify but that you need to register with your electricity supplier by 14 March 2014.

Anyone receiving Pension Credit that has not received this letter by the end of February 2014 should contact eco@mea on **0800 112 3743** or contact their electricity provider.

The second group is called the '**Broader Group**'. Eligibility for this element is set by the individual electricity providers. Most electricity providers that supply more than 250,000 households will be offering the discount, each with their own criteria and figure of the numbers of people they aim to help. This element is decided on a first come, first served basis and schemes are already booking up. If you think you might qualify contact your electricity supplier as soon as possible.

For more information on the above or for any matter relating to energy call eco@mea on 0800 112 3743.

Lantern Parade: Ifton Meadows Management Committee will be holding an open meeting on 26th March 7.30pm at St Martins Centre everyone is invited. Unfortunately, the committee can no longer take on this event without a large number of new volunteers. This event is enjoyed by parishioners, especially the youngsters of the parish, so please show how much you value the Lantern Parade and come to the meeting.

Latest News re Broadband Improvements - High-speed Broadband will be arriving in more areas of Shropshire

Connecting Shropshire is moving up a gear as work begins to bring faster broadband to 25 new areas. After several months of planning and surveying work, engineers will be out and about on the roadside installing fibre optic cable and new cabinets that are needed for the new faster network. Work on the Chirk exchange is expected to start in the Autumn of 2014 and completed by Spring 2015. Not all premises on the Chirk exchange area will get access to fibre based broadband through the programme, current projections are that 93% of premises in the Shropshire Council area will get access to fibre based broadband by the end of spring 2016 (when added to the commercial broadband roll-out).

The Chirk exchange area is covered by the broadband programme in Wales. Links to their programme are on the Connecting Shropshire website in the 'Bordering Counties broadband information' section: www.connectingshropshire.co.uk/related-external-links

WW1 Commemoration—please contact Councillor Fryer on 774520 if you would like to be involved in any way.

Parish Plan More Members are Needed in order to have representation from a cross section of parishioners and areas of the village. Should you be interested please contact Mrs Dulson on 772885. Meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Community Centre.

DOG FOULING - The Council has received complaints so here is a reminder of what you can do
If anyone has information about people allowing their dogs to foul and not pick it up will they please contact Shropshire Council on 0345678006, the 24 hour number, and leave the information which will be logged and forwarded to the Dog Warden. The type of information needed is—where, time, description of the person, description of the dog, name of the person. Shropshire Council will then send out letters to the person involved, fixed penalty notices will be used in some instances. If anyone is prepared to make a witness statement about an offence please leave a message on the same number and someone will contact you. Any information will remain anonymous.

Parish Council Members

Ashley Allum; 3 School Lane	770042
Gordon Fryer; 29 Cottage Lane	774520
Neil Graham; 53 Greenfields	778427
Mark Hayball; 57 New Ifton	770207
Emma Harkess	238334
Brian Herbert ; 10 Garden Village	772647
Alison Kynaston-Jones	777671
Duncan Laing; 6 Homestead Avenue	772990
William Lander	770207
Brian Latham, 32 Cottage Lane	772890
Glenn Pennington; 33 Garden Village	778477
John H Sands Wigginton Hall, Wigginton	772394
Sue Schofield; 6 Greenfields	777710
John Stevens; Julohn, Bryngwili	770677
Helen Williams, Zia, Overton Road	777561
Steven Davenport –Shropshire Councillor 07776173678 622421	

Parish Council Grants A Reminder

Each year at their June meeting the council give grants to local groups. If you wish to be considered for a grant please contact the Clerk for an application form.

Nightingale House Midnight Walk Saturday 28th June; This is a 10km sponsored walk around Wrexham starting from Llwyn Isaf in front of the Guildhall. Nightingale House provide specialist palliative care, free of charge, to patients and families in the Wrexham and the border town of Oswestry. For information call 01978 314292

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

PACT Meetings— Last Friday of the month 4pm at Community Centre.

St Martins W.I. First Tues of month, 7.30pm; Institute lounge, visitors welcome

LJC Meeting— 7pm 24th June Weston Rhyn Village Institute

Parish Council Meetings—**2nd Thursdays** at 7pm at The St Martins Centre **2014 - 9th Jan; 13th Feb; 13th March; 10th April; 8th May; 12th June; 10th July.**

Bell Ringing Practice -Tuesday evenings 7:30 until 9pm.

Ifton Colliery Band—in the St Martins Centre Contest Band - 8pm Mondays; For more information contact 654030

USEFUL NUMBERS—

St Martin's Centre 770204; e mail - adminmartin@btinternet.com

St. Martins Parish Church Enquiries for Baptisms (Christenings) & Weddings Rev

Stuart Jermy 778468, 07766 255436;

email: sjvicar@btinternet.com

CSO Dan Firth's Blackberry 07816172510; mobile 07792 757647; PC Kate Le

Clere 07792 774 024; Web www.westmercia.police.uk;

Email – oswestrym.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk; witter @OsCops;

NHS DIRECT 0845 4647; **Shropdoc** new number 08444 068888;

Shropshire Council 0345 678 9000

LIGHTS –please would you report any street lighting problems to myself. the Clerk on 655385. I have an answer phone.

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE can be found on ShropNET, scroll down to find St Martins Parish Council and click on it.

All parish councillors serve in a voluntary capacity. Councillors are not paid and do not receive any allowances for attending meetings.

Clerk: Mrs S Crow, 3 Fernhill Close, Gobowen, SY11 3PW

Tel: 655385

e mail clerksmc@dsl.pipex.com

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UNsung HERO AWARD Four nominations were received, for two people. All Parishioners are asked to vote for the person that they think should be the **Unsung Hero for 2013**.

Please fill in the voting slip at the bottom of this page and put it in the boxes at Stan's or The Community Centre. The nominee with the most votes will receive a public service certificate at the

Annual Meeting of the Parish on Thursday 17th April at St Martins Community Centre

Public Service Certificate Nominations for your consideration are;

NICK HEARD

David Boyce says;

Nick has been instrumental in running the youth club in St Martins, with his wife Sue, for a great many years and has contributed a great deal to the life of our community as a result. He has extended this into providing activities for young people in the summer school holidays. Nick is also very active in the community via his involvement with the Ellesmere Road Methodist Church, and has taken a lead in developing the Big Local Partnership – wide-ranging activity

Linda Arthan says;

Nick works tirelessly within our local community supporting the Youth Club as a youth leader; securing funding for local projects such as maintenance work on Ellesmere Chapel. He is a pillar of our society and deserves recognition.

Carol Napper says;

Nick together with his wife Sue have supported the youth within our village for over 30 years. They have run the youth club alternate Friday nights over this time, together with running the Sunday School. It has been an outstanding achievement and commitment over many years

JUDITH PHILLIPS

Helen Roberts says;

I would like to nominate a very special unsung hero. I have known Mrs Judith Phillips of Dudleston Heath most of my life, at the age of seven I joined St Martins Brownies where Mrs Philips was a leader. I then went on to join guides gaining valuable life lessons, morals and learning life- long skills in a safe and loving environment, carrying fantastic memories of guides with me forever. Now aged 36 with five daughters of my own, guides is once again part of my life. My eldest daughter joined guides in St Martins six years ago where Mrs Phillips was still the guide leader twenty years after I had joined guides myself.

My daughter was struggling with friendships and behaviour and has since been diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome, Mrs Phillips was amazing with her, encouraging her organisation skills and supporting her to achieve her Baden-Powell award.

Daughter two has also been through guides and daughter three is a St Martins girl guide at present.

Our youngest daughter is four and has complex medical needs, there has been times when Mrs Philips has given them a lift home after guides as their sister was too ill or in hospital and they would not have been able to go otherwise, enabling them to keep some normality and routine at an already unsettling time.

I can not praise Mrs Philips and the work she does with children highly enough, she never fails to be there every Tuesday night, puts hours of work in preparing and organising events and camps, always with a smile. On top of being a teacher at Criftins Primary school, where she is respected by the staff and loved so much by all the pupils, she especially gets involved with the outward bounds holidays.

She has been through some very hard and sad times, losing her beloved husband to cancer after a very long illness many years ago, her courage and resilience inspires me.

She always goes that extra mile to help people, she has the biggest heart and the brightest smile, but I don't think she realises just how special she is.

She has given so much to St Martins and the surrounding areas over the years and I think you would be hard pushed to find a better 'Unsung Hero.'

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY Cut this off and put it in the boxes at Stan's or The Community Centre

JUDITH PHILLIPS

NICK HEARD

Votes must be received by 31st March please