

## WINTER 2004/5 NEWSLETTER

A QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF  
HANLEY CASTLE AND HANLEY SWAN

### A 'FIRST' FOR THE PARISH

This is the first edition of our new quarterly newsletter, designed to give villagers a better and more 'up-to-date' idea as to what has happened, is happening and will happen within our parish boundaries. It is intended to focus upon the activities which fall under the control or remit of the Parish Council and it does not pretend to be a general 'village' newsletter—we already have the very fine 'Parish Link' which performs that essential duty!



Hanley Swan Pool in 1898

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Currently, we incorporate the newsletter of the Parish Plan Action Group, which was set up by the Parish Council in an attempt to deliver some of the improvements highlighted as desirable by the recent Parish Plan.

We hope that you will find this Parish Council newsletter both interesting and useful — any feedback or suggestions are welcomed warmly, either in print or electronic form. Contributions that might be considered of in-

terest to our residents and which relate to the Council's activities are also encouraged. Do you approve of this method of communication? Bearing in mind that the cost of producing the newsletter is paid for out of your council tax, would you consider it a good use of funds? Please let us know.

This newsletter can provide only a small portion of the information available to Parish residents: for much more, take a look at our website at :

[WWW.HANLEYCASTLEPARISHCOUNCIL.CO.UK](http://WWW.HANLEYCASTLEPARISHCOUNCIL.CO.UK)

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## AROUND AND ABOUT

Some villagers may have encountered our parish 'lengthsman' by now. Bob Kendrick is one of the first new Lengthsmen in Worcestershire and is employed by the Parish (though paid for by the County Council) for twenty-or-so hours per month to undertake minor work and general upkeep of the paths, ditches, gulleys, verges which might fall under the responsibility of the Highways Department. 'Lengthsman' is an age-old occupation stretching back to the early days of the turnpike road system and the railways,

so called because the man walks the 'length' of the road or railway, looking for items that need repair or replacement. Originally, the lengthsman would have been responsible for the repair of the road surface, but this element of the work now falls under the jurisdiction of the Highways Authority. His workload is managed by our Parish Clerk, Ann Canham. If you see anything that would benefit from Bob's attention, please let Ann know on 01684 310366 or email [ann@hancaspc.demon.co.uk](mailto:ann@hancaspc.demon.co.uk)

(Read more about this in 'Happenings of Note')

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## HAPPENINGS OF NOTE

*by Sue Roberts,  
Parish Council Chairman*

### **PARISH PLAN**

The Parish Council was very pleased and proud when the hard work of the Parish Plan Working Party resulted in the publication of the most impressive final document, a copy of which was distributed to every household in the parish. The feedback was almost entirely positive and the plan was in great demand by other Parish Councils as it was, of course, the first Parish Plan to be completed in Worcestershire.

A committee was formed, under the chairmanship of Ian Bowles, to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and many members of the Parish Council together with local volunteers have agreed to lead the various action groups, each taking a different aspect of the plan forward.

We would like to thank all members of the Parish Plan Working Party for their work in producing such a professional and informative document and extend my thanks

to all members of the Implementation Group for their willingness to help in realising the objectives of the Action Plan itself.

### **PLAYING FIELD & PLAY AREA**

The playing field, situated behind the village hall in Hanley Swan is used mainly by Hanley Swan Football Club but has also this year been a venue for Welland Junior Football Club – a club which caters for young footballers from a large area including Hanley Castle and Hanley Swan.

The field is also used for a occasional car boot sales although this use is restricted to local or charitable functions which benefit the local community.

The Play Area was inspected by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents in the annual survey and, apart from the climbing frame, found to be in reasonable order. The climbing frame was discovered last autumn to be unusable, due to the uprights having rotted through at the base, and was roped off and signed to indicate its dangerous con-

dition. It has been fully repaired, thanks to Ian Thompson's woodworking skills, and should now outlast all the other items of play equipment on the site.

Just outside the play area a kickboard was erected, thanks to Tony Atkinson and once again Ian, and having weathered over the winter this will now be stained in a fetching shade of green to enhance its appearance and protect the timber. I am sure everyone would like to thank Ian and his team for their hard work and skill in providing/preserving these items for future generations of local children.

### ***WAR MEMORIAL***

The Parish Council applied for a Local Distinctiveness Grant from Worcestershire County Council to pay for the repairs to the War Memorial in Hanley Castle churchyard only to find that the grant scheme had been phased out and no money was available. In a search for other sources of funding the Friends of War Memorials have been contacted and they may be able to help in some small way. A number of donations has been received from local (and not so local) residents and some of the profits from the Open Gardens in Hanley Castle in June 2004. The fund has now topped £1,000, so we look forward to repairs being carried out in the not-too-distant future.

### ***EWE & LAMB GREEN***

The residents of the houses bordering the Ewe and Lamb Green expressed their concerns regarding the damage caused to the green and the cider mill by children using it as a football pitch and play area. The grass had worn thin in particular places, probably due at least in part to the dry summer, the woodwork on the cider mill continued to deteriorate and the trees planted to replace previous ones had been broken off and had died. It was agreed to ask for a quotation for the repair of the cider mill from a different carpenter and to consider overseeding some areas of grass.

### ***VILLAGE POND***

The pond soon recovered from the dry weather of the summer of 2003 and is once again looking a picture, thanks, as always, to the continuing hard work of Brian Robinson. Brian has tended the pond and its inhabitants for many, many years and we must thank him most sincerely for his dedication to that most central part of the village of Hanley Swan.

The dry weather during the summer did serve to expose the side wall of the pond and bring to the attention of local residents, the Parish Council and ultimately the Highways department of the County Council that part of it was falling down and causing the footway to subside. Highways are continuing to investigate the scope of their responsibility for repairs, the ownership of the land etc. and we await their response before any remedial work will be undertaken.

### ***POLICE***

PC Mark Taylor, our local Beat Officer, has attended some meetings of the PC during the year and has advised on various matters particularly relating to the Parish Plan. I should like to thank him for keeping the Parish Council informed of local issues relating to crime, traffic, etc. and particularly for his offer of the assistance of the police in trying to address the needs of the young people of the parish, including help with the formation of a youth club.

### ***HIGHWAYS***

#### ***Safer Routes to Schools***

The Parish Council was consulted on the proposals under the Safer Routes to Schools scheme, though it was understood that works associated with schools in the

Hanley Castle Pyramid were not scheduled to take place for some time. The measures proposed for Hanley Swan Primary School included dropped kerbs at the end of Westmere, a pedestrian crossing over the Welland Road, flashing lights in the approaches to the school, and improved cycle sheds.

As an interim measure Sue Adeney arranged for “sharks teeth” to be painted on the approach road from Welland and for the yellow zigzag lines outside the school to be repainted.

### ***Speed Reader***

The portable speed reader has been deployed at various sites in the parish on a few occasions during the last year and has at least made drivers aware of their speeds at the time. It would seem to be necessary to have the benefit of its presence more often before any judgement on a positive effect on vehicle speeds could be made, and the Parish Council will continue to ask for as many return visits as the County Council’s Highways budget will allow.

### ***Maintenance Work***

Various items of routine maintenance and improvement have been carried out by Highways (or their contractors) including kerbing in Church End and, after a spate of accidents, a new non-slip road surface in The Holloway. It was fortuitous that the Parish Council were meeting Nils Wilkes, Highways Maintenance Manager, regarding another matter on the very morning that one of the many cars to leave the road in The Holloway was still neatly balanced in the hedge! He identified the problem with the road surface, erected “slippery road” signs the same afternoon and found the requisite funds to complete the surfacing work as well. There does not seem to have been any further problems since the resur-

facings was completed and the kissing gate, which was flattened by two separate accidents, has now been replaced with an equivalent metal version thanks to Pat Loader’s skills and the successful claim on the insurers of the cars.

### ***TRAFFIC TO THE THREE COUNTIES SHOWGROUND***

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman met Gareth Smith of the Three Counties Agricultural Society and discussed the adverse impact of the large volumes of traffic accessing the Showground on the villages of Hanley Castle and Hanley Swan. It was agreed that the Society would issue a voluntary code of conduct to organisations hiring the site, detailing times when the showground would be closed, and that the Parish Council would ask the Highways Partnership to undertake a traffic survey to determine the extent of the problem.

It was further suggested that signage to the showground directing traffic approaching from the north via Guarlford and Poolbrook would help to relieve the pressure on Roberts End. However, although the Society were in favour of the strategy Highways were not, claiming that the route was already busy with Malvern traffic, particularly at “rush hour”. Sue Adeney tried to argue that “rush hour” for Malvern was unlikely to occur at the same time as busy times at the showground but so far the Highways have not been persuaded.

More recently, members of the Parish Council together with Sue Adeney and Tom Wells met with the new chief executive, Nick Vincent, and the Chairman of the society. Whilst they were sympathetic to the problems experienced by the parish, an immediate solution could not be found and a decision was taken to investigate the situation further.

### ***NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH***

The Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the area has been revised and updated following the

model piloted in Teme Valley and I am most grateful to David Cheale for volunteering to instigate the scheme in the parish.

**LENGTHSMAN SCHEME**

The scheme started as a pilot in three parishes in the Malvern Hills area and Hanley Castle was pleased to be included in the initial tranche. Our man, Bob Kendrick, has done a splendid job clearing grips and drains, siding out footways and cutting back small sections of vegetation, and the Clerk has directed operations and administered our end of the paperwork. The Parish Council were very pleased with the pilot scheme and took every opportunity to mention this to the County Council and were therefore delighted to learn that the scheme would continue from April 2004 with over fifty parishes receiving up to £2,000 each to cover the work for twelve months. This equated to 200 hours of Bob’s expert time, approximately what he would have been doing during the pilot, and the Parish Council signed up immediately.

I should like to thank Ann for her part in the pilot scheme and especially Bob whose enthusiasm for the tasks, particularly where drainage was concerned, ensured the success of the pilot and no doubt contributed to the County Council’s decision to continue and to extend the scheme. We hope that Bob enjoyed his work and his meetings with the good folk of Hanley Castle and we look forward to a long association with him.

**PLANNING**

At its Annual Meeting in 2003 the Parish Council established a Planning Committee and agreed that meetings would be arranged on an ad hoc basis and, since they would be open to the public, would take place either at Orchard House or, if there was likely to be a large number of residents wishing to attend,

at the village hall. This Committee met on numerous occasions during the year, considered many planning applications and passed their comments on to MHDC Planning Services.

These have included:-

- (i) an application to demolish Jubilee Cottage, Malvern Road, Hanley Swan to allow access to a development of three dwelling to the rear. The PC objected strongly to the potential loss of the cottage and to the backland development and the application was withdrawn by the applicant. A subsequent application to build to the rear without demolishing Jubilee Cottage was then received and the PC once again objected to the backland development and the lack of detail consistent with an outline application. The application was refused and the applicants have since decided to lodge an appeal which will be heard in August 2005.
- (ii) a bungalow on land at The Spinney, Worcester Road where the bedroom and bathroom were housed in a basement.
- (iii) an infill plot adjacent to Fairfields, Worcester Road, where permission for a house was approved and where a similar application had been refused a few years earlier. Very recently, another application has been received for a dwelling to be built alongside The Small House, Worcester Rd., The Council objected to both these applications, thought the former has received approval from MHDC and is virtually complete.
- (iv) two dwellings adjacent to Mayfield, Picken End. The PC objected considering the site more suitable for one house. The MHDC has, however, granted permission for two dwellings.
- (v) development of part of Blackmore Park Industrial Estate. This followed other applications for this site and associated ones for the stables, caravan storage, tyre storage (refused), etc. received over the past number of years. Outline planning permission was granted for a large development of new in-

dustrial units. The Parish Council voiced its concerns about access and road safety at the junction with Blackmore Park Rd.

(vi) Tree Preservation Orders placed on all trees in St Mary's Churchyard, Hanley Castle and subsequently confirmed on all except a lime tree to the west of the church which caused damage to the fabric of the building and which has now been felled.

(vii) Permission has been granted for the construction of a 16-pen boarding cattery at Little Merebrook Farm.

The Parish Council also arranged a special meeting during 2004 to discuss the First Deposit Draft of the Malvern Hills Local Plan 1996 – 2011 and the comments and concerns of Parish Councillors and local residents were submitted as either objections to or support for the Plan. The detail of the council's comments can be seen in the Chairman's report for 2004, available to download at our website, or on in printed form on request from the clerk.

### ***COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS***

Our County Councillor, Tom Wells, has been a very busy person this last year but has found the time to join us at some Parish Council meetings and has always been on the end of a telephone (or e-mail) to help residents with specific problems, and we thank him for that.

Our two District Councillors, Sue Adeney and Mary Wilkinson, have attended meetings regularly, reported on the major items of interest at DC level and played a full part in discussions on various topics where their local knowledge and/or experience has been most useful. I should like to thank them both for the time spent on these matters.

### ***MEETINGS & TRAINING***

Parish Councillors and the Clerk regularly attend a variety of other meetings and trainings to keep themselves and the PC fully informed and updated on both local and national issues and, during the last year, these

have included:

- Joint Councillor Forums
- Malvern Hills Area Committee of CALC
- Clerks Gatherings
- Briefing on the Draft District Local Plan
- Speed Meeting at Welland
- Accounts to Audit Training
- Hill Centre Annual General Meeting
- Sports Hall Joint Liaison Group
- CALC Annual General Meeting
- Lengthsman Scheme

The Parish Council continues to have representatives on the Village Hall Committee (Tony Atkinson) and the Governors of St Gabriel's with St Mary's Primary School (Sue Roberts).

### ***WARDENS***

The Parish Council enjoys the many benefits of having Footpath Wardens, a Tree Warden and an Environmental Pollution Monitor (EPM) and is particularly lucky to have such a dedicated and hard working team – all volunteers of course. I should like, on behalf of everyone, to thank Marjorie & Michael Nelson our very experienced and very efficient Parish Path Wardens (their new title); David Cheale our relatively new but nonetheless efficient Tree Warden, who has surveyed all the trees on public land, labelled them, tended them, planted new ones etc. etc.; and Margaret Norris who, as EPM, provides a most useful service even though we are more than pleased when she has nothing to do.

*..and Finally!.....*

At the beginning of October 2004 the Parish Clerk, Ann Canham, completed 25 years service to the Council, having been first employed in 1979. This fantastic achievement was celebrated at a party held in her honour on 9th October at which she was presented with wine, glasses and garden vouchers (donated by council members and others) as a thank you for her dedication to the work of the Council, and the Parish as a

whole, over so many years. The role of Parish Clerk has changed considerably over the years as Parish Councils have taken on a greater role in Local Government. Ann has kept pace with all the new requirements and is even now

studying for the new qualifications for clerks, the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA). The Parish Council would like to thank Ann for her influential role in the Parish and looks forward to many more years

## HANLEY SWAN MEMORIAL HALL

*‘ . . . for the purpose of the physical and mental training and recreation and social, moral and intellectual development of the inhabitants of the Parish . . . ’* (from the original charity document)

Hanley Swan Memorial Hall was built as a War Memorial after the 1939 - 1945 War. Various documents record the establishment of Hall in 1950, beginning with a conveyance of the land in April and finally registering with the Charity Commissioners in September. It then took a few years to raise funds and build the Hall, which was opened on 7th January 1956.

To increase the scope for activities at the Hall an extension with shower facilities was approved. With funding and support from many sources the extension was officially opened on 11th September 1999.

The Toilets and Kitchen are now in need of refurbishment to bring them up to 21<sup>st</sup> Century standards.

The proposal is to change the main entrance by building an extension from the small committee room across the present fire doors. This will provide a cloakroom and storage area. The Toilets and Kitchen will be completely refitted. The opportunity will be taken to carry out other necessary refurbishment at the same time.

The Management Committee can apply for grants towards the cost of the work, but some grants may be for ‘matched’ funding which could mean that fund raising events will have to be organised to meet the full cost.

The Management Committee is made up of representatives from the groups using the Hall, i.e. Football Club, Women’s Institute x2, Keep Fit, Yoga, Pre-school, Mothers and Toddlers, Senior Residents, Bee Keepers and Scots Club, and residents of the villages of Hanley Swan and Hanley Castle. It is the Committee’s responsibility to raise funds through letting the Hall and other activities so as to maintain, improve and equip it.

## PARISH COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

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Hanley Castle Parish Council meets on the third Thursday of January, March, May (AGM), July, September and November at Hanley Swan Village Hall: meetings start (usually) at 7:30 pm. All members of the public are welcome at these meetings, though they will be allowed to address the council only before and after the meeting unless otherwise invited by the Chairman.

<b>Our Council comprises:</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Sue Roberts (Chairman)	592686
Tony Atkinson	310408
Anne Ballinger	592812
Ann Davies	310861
Francis Harcombe	310740
Margaret Norris	310786
John Taverner	310460
Ian Thompson	310716
Associated officers:	
Ann Canham (Clerk)	310366
Marjorie & Michael Nelson (footpaths)	310302
David Cheale (Tree Warden)	310233
Tom Wells (County Councillor)	01905 831752
Sue Adency (MHDC Councillor)	310440

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Comments and contributions from parish residents are welcomed on any subject to do with our community. The Parish Council is very conscious of the cost of producing and distributing this newsletter and the methods of so doing will be under constant review. If you would be prepared to receive it in electronic form either by email or by downloading it from our website, please let us know—this will help us to keep production costs to a minimum.

The information contained in this newsletter is compiled by Ian Thompson  
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