

PARISH COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

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.

Our Council comprises: **Telephone**

Sue Roberts (Chairman)	592686
Sue Adeney	310440
Tony Atkinson	310408
Val Fare	311994
Francis Harcombe	310740
John Taverner	310460
Ian Thompson (Vice Chairman)	310716
Dennis Wade	310410

Associated officers:

Ann Canham (Clerk [retiring 31/3/08] & RFO)	310366
Caroline Sutton (Clerk [appointed])	311665
Michael Andrews (footpaths)	310352
David Cheale (Tree Warden)	310233

The Parish Council Website

Our website presents far more information than can ever be printed in a newsletter. On it, you will find all the minutes of committee meetings, planning decisions, information regarding businesses resident in the parish, news, links to other sites, information about recycling facilities, access to our new forum and much, much more.

We are very keen to expand this site and to make it a valuable source of data for our residents. However, it is run by volunteers at no cost to the Parish and consequently would benefit from additional effort. If you would be prepared to lend a hand in providing content and timely updates, we would be glad to hear from you. Experience is not necessary (we'll help you with the technical stuff!), but a PC, an internet connection and boundless enthusiasm are all essential! We have plenty of ideas — we need help in getting them put onto the site. If you can help, please contact the editor: irt@cygnetlodge.co.uk or

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 edited by Ian Thompson
 Telephone: 01684 310716, email irt@cygnetlodge.co.uk or by post to
 Cygnet Lodge, Worcester Rd., Hanley Swan, Worcs. WR8 0EA.

Hanley Castle Parish Council - March 2008

SPRING 2008 NEWSLETTER

AN UPDATE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF
 HANLEY CASTLE AND HANLEY SWAN

Our Clerk's retirement

The 31st. of March marks the retirement of the Parish Council's long-serving clerk, Ann Canham, who has notched up nearly 30 years of service dedicated to her local community. Ann's background in 'Young Farmers' helped her towards a successful application for the post all those years ago and the Parish Councillors of the time are to be congratulated on their choice. I'm sure that no-one then could have predicted that Ann would embrace all the many changes in procedure, legislation and technology and maintain her enthusiasm for Parish Council work for so long. Indeed, it was Ann's willingness to undertake training for the Certificate in Local Council Administration that was instrumental in the Parish Council gaining Quality Status only last year.

Ann has served under five Chairmen and I'm sure that I'm not the only one who has benefitted from her well organised 'clerking' and her timely advice. I'm sure that everyone in the Parish will join with me in wishing her a long, happy retirement and a well-earned rest from the endless stream of paperwork. Truly, she will be a hard act to follow....

Appointment of new clerk

Following the advertisement for a new clerk, we received two applications for the job and after a lengthy selection process our staffing committee decided to offer the post to Caroline Sutton. Caroline, who takes over from Ann on 1st. April, needs no introduction to the Parish having lived and worked at the heart of the community for many years. We wish her well in her new job and trust that she will find it an interesting and rewarding role.

Sue Roberts, Chairman.

PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE DUCKS ...

continued

The Parish Council is currently in the process of registering the Hanley Swan pond as a village green. As part of the procedure confirmation that the pond and its surrounds have been used by villagers and others continuously for more than twenty years is required. A form is available at Hanley Swan Post Office for you to sign should you wish to preserve this wonderful asset for the village for future generations.

On the subject of preservation you will have noted that further works have been carried out to the banks of the pond. Under the guidance of Wade Muggleton (Worcestershire County Conservation Officer) repairs have been done to the willow weave that has been ravaged by the ducks climbing out of the pool (between 80 and 90 ducks + 2 Canada geese have been recorded at any one timePLEASE DO NOT FEED THE DUCKS). The majority of the willow weave has survived and is growing well and will be providing a living bank this season.

Thanks to a local developer more soil has been obtained and the banks that have subsided due to the heavy summer and winter rains and the passage of human feet have been backfilled and will be reseeded.

In the meantime, as a temporary measure, to allow the repairs to become effective and for the banks to consolidate the pond has been fenced in. Also that gregarious little imp, Elfin Safety, considers this barrier should deter those who ignore the appeal NOT TO FEED THE DUCKS from creating further damage and maybe even falling into the water.

Work will be undertaken in due course to make the necessary repairs to the Coverfields side of the pool to complete the restoration of the pond to its former glory.

Bread is not a natural part of a duck's diet and can be harmful to their health. Un-eaten bread rots down in the pond causing green slimy water without oxygen in which few plants or wildlife can survive. Also the leftovers encourage those furry long tailed critters that no one likes and costs the Parishioners to rid themselves. So PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE DUCKS.

Many questions have been asked about the cages that have appeared in the pond. Contrary to the perception that they are for the incarceration of those caught feeding the ducks, they are to protect the water lily plants kindly donated by Roger Kings. Unfortunately these plants will not survive in contaminated water so please, PLEASE, PLEASE....DO NOT FEED THE DUCKS.

The village is indebted to Wade Muggleton, Khaled Hussein, Roger Kings, Dave Roberts and all those willing volunteers who have given their time, sweat and blood to this project. Thank you all!!

The Children's Play Area

Following the acquisition of a grant from 'Awards for All', we are pleased to announce that a range of new play equipment is to be installed. The order was placed recently for two sets of swings (one with 'cradle' seats for tots) and a climbing frame. The old and broken equipment will soon need to be removed and the site prepared for the installation of the new equipment — this is due to happen some time in early April. Because of the limited funds available, the site preparation has to be performed by volunteer effort, so if you feel like wielding a shovel or have a mini-digger and/or dumper to loan us, please get in touch with Ian Thompson (310716 or irt@cygnetlodge.co.uk)

THE PARISH PRECEPT 2008/09

Remember: a loaf of bread costs £1.12, a pint of beer £2.50*, a gallon of petrol almost £5.00.

Via the precept, the Parish Council charges each household £0.81 per week (2008/09). For this amount the Parish Council cares for the interests of its residents in all aspects of the environment and its amenities.

This year's increase in the precept is partly due to the effects of inflation on general expenditure in addition to which:

- As you will have read elsewhere in this month's edition of Parish Link, the Hanley Swan pond is hopefully soon to be registered as a village green and consequently the costs of maintenance will fall upon the Parish Council.
- Although part funded by Grants, the Council is anxious to continue to improve the playground facilities behind the Hanley Swan Village Hall.
- The Council always recognizes its responsibilities to the public and the need to engage professionals to advise on aspects of health and safety. Soaring indemnity insurance premiums directly affect those professional fees.
- After nearly 30 years our long serving Parish Clerk, Ann Canham, is retiring. Provision is made in the budgets for the ex-gratia long service payment to which Ann is entitled and also the costs of training of the new Parish Clerk, Caroline Sutton.

We hope that you will agree this to be good value for less than the price of a loaf of bread per week for each household.

* The Three Kings excepted!