

ES&BG

Ecchinswell, Sydmonton & Bishops Green Parish Council

The July meeting of the Parish Council was held at Ecchinswell Village Hall on Wednesday 17th July. Despite our small numbers, we had a good meeting with lively discussions of items on the agenda. Topics ranged from highways issues, through waste recycling, to summer holiday play events. If you have views on any of these or any other local issue, then why not come and join us to have your say? We still have vacancies for 2 councillors.

Our County Councillor, Tom Thacker, gave us an update on the situation with waste recycling in our area. Hampshire County Council (HCC) and West Berkshire Council have still not agreed a permanent solution and one is not expected until mid-2020. The permits for the Newbury recycling site will remain valid until a permanent solution is achieved. New permits will not be issued, so it is important that you do not throw the old ones away despite appearing out of date. Tom also informed us that HCC funding for the Parish Lengthsman Scheme is under threat. As a parish we benefit hugely from this scheme. Without it, we would not be able to maintain the parish roads by doing things like cutting back overgrown verges to make our lanes safer or clearing ditches. We are joining with other rural parishes to urge HCC to keep this service.

Several traffic issues were raised this month. The bridge in Ecchinswell is an ongoing issue and we are looking at ways we might alert drivers of large vehicles more obviously that they should not use the roads leading to it. There are plenty of signs, but they are often not noticed or ignored. The bus stop near Ash Road in Bishops Green is causing concern. The bus often stops there for a long period of time if it arrives early, and consequently blocks the view for drivers from Ash Road and Ecchinswell Road. We have raised both these issues with HCC. If there are any other issues like these which you know of, please let us know. It may take time, but improvements can often be made. If issues are not brought to anyone's attention, nothing can ever happen.

We had reports from both our village halls, and I am pleased to say that there are several entertaining events being arranged at both venues during the autumn. Look on noticeboards, their websites and social media to find the details. We are very lucky to have two versatile, complementary halls in our parish and it is great to see them being used. Both committees work hard to keep these open for us. Please support them.

As you read this in September, you may be considering a spot of autumn garden tidying. This is the time of year that we, as a council, begin to gear up to our own version of this – **Ecchinswell village pond clearance on Sunday October 13th**. Please put the date in your diary. There are plenty of ways to help, from pushing a wheelbarrow, to donning waders and getting down into the water, or even helping with the refreshments. Come and join in the fun.

The next Parish Council meeting is on Wednesday September 11th at Bishops Green Village Hall. We look forward to seeing some of you there.

Cllr Marian Dain