ES&BG

**Ecchinswell, Sydmonton & Bishops Green Parish Council**

The first Spring meeting of the Parish Council took place on Wednesday 8th April at the Ecchinswell Village Hall with the Chairman welcoming all those in attendance.

Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council have implemented some important changes from the 1st April. Firstly, OAP bus passes can now be used only between 9.30 and 11.00 daily. However passes for disabled persons are not affected by time restrictions.  Also, as mentioned in last month’s magazine, stricter rules have now been instigated regarding the type of waste that is acceptable for your recycling bin and other domestic waste for your grey bins. A leaflet was distributed to all households on the subject and any queries should be directed to Basingstoke & Deane - Waste Management.

A nationwide National Plant Monitoring Scheme is taking place and we have received a request for volunteers to input local information. Please have a look at the website [www.npms.org.uk](http://www.npms.org.uk) I am sure you will find it interesting and we would be pleased if you could contribute some information.

Spring has really arrived with the first clutch of ducklings swimming happily on the village pond. It is certainly time to get out and about and enjoy the wonderful countryside we have on our doorstep. With this in mind, the Parish Council’s review of footpaths and bridleways that fall within our boundaries is almost complete. There are some stunning walks in our area and if you would like to take advantage of our updated maps, they will be available (FOC) at our AGM in May (please see details below). Copies will also be available at the Royal Oak.

Potholes remain an ongoing issue. Cllr. Sparrow is keeping Hampshire CC Highways appraised of all the repairs necessary, but as is so often the case our requirement always seems greater than their resource available to handle the matter. Nevertheless we battle on. The Parish has taken the opportunity to benefit from a government sponsored “Lengthsman Scheme” which gave us about 50 man hours of work last year. We have used this resource to clear litter in areas not covered by our litter wardens, to clear some ditches and also clean some road signs. It is hoped that the scheme will be extended for the coming year.

Please take note of the collection times on your local post box as some of these have recently been changed.

The annual May Fayre on 3rd May promises to be bigger and better than ever, offering many new attractions for all the family. The chosen charities for this year are The Air Ambulance and Sebastian's Trust, a local charity offering support to terminally ill children and their families. Entry forms and information are available from The Royal Oak.

A final reminder, **the Parish AGM and Annual Assembly will take place at the Ecchinswell Village Hall on 13th May starting at 19.30.** There will be brief presentations by the Parish, Borough and County councillors, as well as the Police to update you on local happenings. Please do come along and join in – we welcome your participation. Refreshments will be provided.

Jackie Bayliss