

ES & BG News – March 2017

Our March meeting took place on Wednesday 8th at Ecchinswell Village Hall.

We have had a vacancy for a parish councillor for many months now and we're delighted to welcome Stephen Bate to the team as a new councillor. Stephen has returned to the parish after working abroad for a period of time and now lives in the Palmers Yard area. He joins Marian Dain, Jackie Bayliss, Nick Owen, Samantha Keyse, Lissa Lowrie and me on the council – all supported by our clerk, Doreen Gascoine. It's good to have a full complement.

Whilst most of the parish either has, or is expecting to get superfast broadband, there are always a few outlying properties who may not receive it. The Dept of Culture, Media and Sport has made a commitment to provide every home and business in the UK with access to a basic broadband service. If you cannot access an affordable broadband service with a speed of at least 2 Mb per second, you may be eligible for a subsidised installation with subsidies of up to £350. If this affects you, please navigate – if you can - to this URL: <https://basicbroadbandchecker.culture.gov.uk/>

I hope you'll make some time in your diaries for the annual Parish Assembly on May 10th. In addition to our regular agenda, we will focus on the potential requirement for us to develop a parish or neighbourhood plan. This is a plan which gives a vision for the future of our parish and its needs – housing, amenities, social, sporting etc. Its purpose is to capture and represent all the residents' needs and help guide any investment and development in the area. We need your time, effort and input if this is going to be a true representation of the community's vision. Please come and join us – we'll be popping a leaflet through your door in the next month or so.

In a previous newsletter we referred to the World War 1 commemoration that's being planned across the UK next year to mark 100 years since the end of the Great War. We're investigating whether we should join forces with neighbouring Kingsclere and Hannington to see if we can get our activities aligned – watch this space for more news.

As spring is almost upon us, it's time to think about planting – why not opt to take one of our available allotments? They're sited at the top of Oakfields Close opposite the Royal Oak pub and we have three vacant plots. They're all ready for planting and the rental is £30 per annum for a large plot or £20 for a smaller one. Contact Doreen at clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk if you, or someone you know is interested – you don't necessarily have to be a resident of the village to rent one of the plots!

Our next meeting is just before Easter on Wednesday 12th April – if you have any issues to discuss with us, please come along. We kick off at 7.30pm in Ecchinswell Village Hall.

Tim Hall
Parish Council Chairman