



Newsletter Spring 2013

*The Annual Parish Meeting will be held in
the Community Room at the Library
Thursday 25th April, 2013 at 7.30 pm*

This year the invited speaker is the Leader of Cheshire East Council (CEC), Councillor Michael Jones. This will provide an opportunity for residents to listen and to ask questions about the role of CEC in Holmes Chapel.

ANNUAL REPORT

The last Council year has been a busy one. The wheels of local government turn slowly and we often feel that nothing is happening, but this year I feel we have made some progress and things have begun to change.

Some projects seem to take a long time, and others seem to be gone before they have started. This civic year we saw the Queens Diamond Jubilee and the Council took the decision early on that this should be a community led celebration. Working with many organisations within the village a magnificent celebration was laid on. Despite the weather many people were involved and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, culminating in the lighting of the beacon on the top of the Church tower. Thank you to everyone who took part, and to all the organisations that spent time planning and organising events throughout the day.

Everyone knows that traffic in the village is a problem and the Parish Council set aside money to help to try to address the issue of speed in the village. Working with a residents group and CEC Highways, a traffic survey was undertaken to allow potential changes to be modelled, so that any changes we make improve the problem and not make it worse. The location and layout of Holmes Chapel does add to the problem, but we hope to have the results available soon, and hope also to have speed detection signs (Smiley SIDS) located on the worst affected roads soon.

When I first joined the Parish Council there were plans to refurbish the play areas in the village. Working with Holmes Chapel Partnership we are finally making progress. We secured funding from WREN, a grant giving body, which together with the funds from you (via the Parish Council) will finance the refurbishment of the Middlewich Road Play Area (adjacent to the Middlewich Road Primary School). We have just put the project out to tender, and hope to be able to award the contract in the next month or so, and finally see a new play area for all to enjoy.

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The Dane Meadow is another long-term project that is progressing with the help of local residents and the Holmes Chapel Partnership. The Scouts organised a clear up event in the meadow that really got the project off to a good start. This was followed by the installation of bird and bat boxes in the woods. A large grant has been secured from P4C, which will allow the Programme Board to improve access to the meadow, and another grant from WREN will also be sought to allow further improvements to be made.

I would like to thank all those who have been involved in all these projects. It is only by involving the wider residents of Holmes Chapel that we will stay the vibrant community that makes Holmes Chapel such a pleasant place to live in.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for the time and effort they devote to the Council throughout the year.

Nich Guthrie

Chairman, Holmes Chapel Parish Council.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The figures below are a summary of the provisional accounts for 2012/13.

A full set of accounts will be available for inspection at the Council office on prior appointment.

Summary Receipts and Payments FOR YEAR 2012-13

2012-13 Budget		Figures exclusive of VAT Actual
	RECEIPTS	
100,930.00	Precept	100,930.00
500.00	Bank Interest	219.28
100.00	Grants	4,640.50
1,500.00	VAT	7,189.38
9000.00	Partnership	9,000.00
100.00	Village Volunteers	662.85
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	£122,642.01
	PAYMENTS	
16,050	Employees	15,550.80
6,150	Premises	4,546.94
1,900	Office Services	4,896.11
1,650	Communications	1,227.19
1,350	Members	667.51
5,780	Professional Services	5,800.71
11,800	PCSO	11,800.00
1,750	Subscriptions	1,414.90
8,000	Grants and Donations	6,320.00
1,650	Village Services	1,574.71
4,850	Village Maintenance	1,819.05
1,000	Jubilee	1,142.96
15,000	Cap: Traffic measures	0.00

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38,000	Cap: Dane Valley	503.00
19,500	Cap: Play Areas	5,566.40
4,000	Cap: Partnership	9,000.00
1,075	Cap: Village Volunteers	300.00
-	Vat on payments	4,023.61

	£76,153.89
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD on 01/04/12	87,949.63
ADD Total Receipts (as above)	122,642.01
LESS Total payments (as above)	76,153.89
Less cheques not cashed	-1,116.70
Balance Carried forward 31/03/13	134,437.75

COMMUNICATION

In recent newsletters, we have asked residents to respond to certain key issues, and we thank those that responded.

A major concern is the development of Holmes Chapel. While the Parish Council is not the planning authority we continue to influence planning decisions by inputting local views and knowledge, and aim to develop a Local Plan to ensure consideration is given to the needs of the whole community, especially investment in the infrastructure such as

- Recreational facilities for young people
- School facilities.
- The Health Centre
- Traffic in and around the village
- Car parking

We hope to involve as many residents as possible in this process and will provide updates in future newsletters

PUBLIC TOILETS TO CLOSE

CEC has announced that the public toilets in Holmes Chapel (and a number of other locations) are to close on 3 June 2013.

The building located off the Square was erected in the 1940's or 50's and was condemned by the former Congleton Borough Council in the 1990's and money was included in their budget to provide a new facility, although little process was made.

CEC has addressed the issue by making available for public use the toilets inside the library but, because they are accessed from inside the building, they are only open during normal library hours.

The Parish Council have given thought to the alteration of the toilet facilities at the library so that they could be accessed from outside the building and be available at additional times and a feasibility study was carried out. A meeting took place in November 2012 but, 4 months later, information promised from that meeting has not been provided to the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is disappointed that CEC announced the closure of the existing toilet block before concluding discussions about alternative provision. The Parish Council will continue to look for ways of making the facilities at the library available for a longer time; and, in the short

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term, hopes to reach agreement for additional signage so local people and visitors to the village can locate the toilet facilities without difficulty.

RETIREMENT OF THE CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

The end of this council year marks the end of an era. Our Clerk, David Cowgill, will retire after nearly 43 years service. David has given excellent service to the council over the years, and guided many members and chairmen through the intricacies of local government. His experience, memory of issues past and present and understanding of the processes of local government has been a help to all of us who have served on the Parish Council. On their behalf I would like to thank David for all his hard work and efforts over the years and wish him well in his retirement.

The Council have appointed Nicola Clarke to succeed him, and wish her luck in her new role. An Administrative Assistant to the new Clerk has been appointed and will take up her role at the end of May.

Officers and Members of the Parish Council with contact details

	Member	Telephone	Email **
Clerk of the Council	David Cowgill	01565 631528	clerk@
Assistant Clerk	Nicola Clarke	01477 533934	office@
Chairman	Nick Guthrie	01477 549958	nick.guthrie@
Vice Chairman	David Savage	01477 537464	david.savage@
	Alan Ashworth	01477 537690	alan.ashworth@
	John Clowes	01477 532266	john.clowes@
	Patricia Cotton	01477 537491	patricia.cotton@
	Les Gilbert	01477 544307	les.gilbert@
	John Latham	01477 549480	parishjl@btinternet.com
	May Mackenzie	01477 532007	may.mackenzie@
	Rab Parry	01477 533715	rab.parry@
	Margaret Ranger	01477 533909	margaret.ranger@
	Steve Ranger	01477 533909	steve.ranger@
	Mike Street	01477 534745	michael.street@

** Except as shown, all email addresses have the domain name holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk

e.g. clerk@holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk

For more details of items in this newsletter and for other communications, please see

- The Parish Council website (www.holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk)
- The Council notice board located outside the village library

Parish Council Office – 1 Church Walk Holmes Chapel CW4 7AZ – Tel 01477 533934