

EAST STOKE PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Number 12

Spring 2004

HAWKINS TRUST

As usual at this time of year we are delivering Easter Eggs on behalf of the George Hawkins Trust to those children in the area whose parents have completed the form as sent out in October with the last newsletter. Hampers and bottles were delivered to those senior residents who were eligible and we trust they enjoyed their gifts. Any thank you notes received were read out at the January Parish Council meeting and put on file.

PARISH PLAN

The East Stoke Parish Council has decided to adopt the Countryside Agency's "Vital Villages" initiative. We are pleased to announce that in January we managed to secure funding from the Countryside Agency under the Vital Villages Programme to produce a Parish Plan for East Stoke. Although the response to the initial questionnaire sent out in November was a little disappointing, a Steering Committee has been formed under the chairmanship of David Topp to move things forward. We are grateful to him for contributing the following paragraphs to inform you of the intentions.

The Countryside Agency provides funding and advice to rural communities through the community services grant schemes. Parish Plans were announced in the 2000 "Rural White Paper" which set out the government's plans for the countryside. This is a framework for communities to plan their own futures.

These plans should identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved. To do this a steering committee has been set up but the key to the project is that every person living or working within the village should have a say, from toddlers to OAP's.

A comprehensive questionnaire will be circulated to every household in due course but in the meantime the Steering Committee is inviting everyone to a Public Meeting in the Village Hall on 20th May at 7.30pm.

Drawing up a Parish Plan offers a great opportunity to bring together everyone in the community to work together and decide where the parish is going in future. Also to discuss declining rural services, increasing

traffic, a shortage of affordable housing, a play area, or a new village hall to mention a few examples.

This is your opportunity and it is hoped that many of you will take time out to participate and support us.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

For the first time certainly in recent memory an Annual Parish Meeting is to be held on Thursday 20th May 2004. This meeting is quite separate to the Annual General Meeting and the Chairman of the Parish Council will present a short report on key issues that have affected the Parish over the past year. It is also the opportunity for members of the Parish to come along to the Village Hall and raise issues of concern or for the good and benefit of the Parish. For simplicity this year it will also be the forum for the Chairman of the Steering Committee to present the approach to the preparation of our Parish Plan.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Parish Council would remind residents that all planning applications for consideration at Parish Council meetings are posted on the notice board at least 3 days before the meeting is held. Due to Purbeck District Council having to meet new Government targets to process these applications within 8 weeks from start to finish, it is possible the Parish Council may have to move its meetings further towards the beginning of the month. Anyone who has objections or are in favour of applications as posted are welcome to attending our meetings to pass on their opinions. Public Participation time is held at the beginning of our meetings at 7.00pm – 7.15 pm.

CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE

The next two-year period of Churchyard Maintenance has been put out to competitive tender and two submissions were received in February. We are pleased to announce that Colin Baker from Wool will be looking after our Churchyard for the coming period. Colin takes over from Mike Welsh who has been with us for a number of years. We would like to thank Mike for his efforts during this time and wish him well in the future.

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WAR MEMORIAL

The Parish Council are going to approach the Royal British Legion asking if they could lay a wreath on our memorial on Remembrance Sunday. This used to be done by the Bovington Branch in the past. We would be interested to hear if anyone in the Parish have any views on this.

PRECEPT 2004-05

Similar to last year we have found it necessary to raise the precept by just under £5 per household in order to maintain our standing liabilities for the maintenance of the Churchyard, insurance, etc. and keep a small reserve fund for contingency purposes.

CARSHAREDORSET.COM

We have received a letter from Dorset County Council about this new countrywide car-share scheme for Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. This is a free service that links drivers and passengers to share car journeys and will make finding and matching potential car-sharers very easy. If you would like any further information please contact Helen Jackson at DCC Telephone 01305 225085 or log on to www.carsharedorset.com.

BOUNDARY REVIEW

Our previous appeal against the move of East Stoke Parish from the Egdon Heath electoral division within Purbeck District to Purbeck Hills was rejected by the Boundary Committee. This request had been initially turned down by Dorset County Council against the wishes of both our County Councillor Malcolm Shakesby and the member for Purbeck Hills, Councillor Phil Duffy. We have lodged a further appeal with the Boundary Committee and we are pleased to say that our local MP, Jim Knight, has supported this. Quite apart from the allegiances and interests of East Stoke, such a move would be merely fiddling with the numbers for the sake of it and not addressing the real areas of disproportionate representation in Swanage and Upton. It would mean that Councillor Duffy would have the largest geographical area in Purbeck District though by its rural nature is not densely populated. We await the

outcome of our appeal and hope to report at the Annual Parish Meeting.

PARISH MAINTENANCE UNITS

To improve highway maintenance service Dorset County Council have set up Preventative Maintenance Units (PMUs). These units consist of two men in a fully equipped vehicle who will be travelling around our Parish repairing any defects they find and carrying out minor highway repairs that have been identified by us or themselves. 'A' Class roads will not be dealt with under this scheme. Our Councillor Andy Saunders of Holmebridge House, Telephone No. 550599 is our representative for this scheme. He will be completing a works schedule for DCC to act upon when the PMU's visit our area. The units will be in our area in July and January of each year. If you are aware of any repairs that are in need of attention please contact Andy and tell him the location of the repairs needed.