



Issue No 46  
Autumn 2012

## Hepscott Parish Council

John Lewis has decided to step down after twelve years of valuable service as a Councillor, Planning Adviser and Chairman. Our best wishes follow him in his convalescence and 'retirement'. As Vice-Chairman I will take over as caretaker supported by the Parish Council team until the new council begins in six months time.

Parish Councillors visited Hepscott flood defences recently, invited and led by Mr Peter Kerr of the Environment Agency. It was a useful morning spent looking at the rapid fill/slow release 'leaky pond' and drainage system at Red House Farm upstream of the railway, The Orchard and Crofts Park, then on to the Catchburn at County Hall to see that pond and sluiced outlet which had unfortunately been vandalised but fortunately was promised to be quickly reinstated after our visit. Finally protection works on the Hepscott Burn downstream of the Village Road Bridge.

This visit was very much on my mind when on the third Thursday of September, the heavens opened and the road drains were quickly inundated. It happened again at the end of September but much, much worse. Hepscott Burn rose dramatically to bridge height, water flowing downhill was unable to get away, forming an over-welly-top depth lake. Road storm drains could not cope. Our heartfelt sympathy goes to householders whose drives, gardens and garages were flooded. They narrowly missed water going above floor height, spending a night taking precautions, worrying about rising water, consequently with little sleep, followed the next day by having to clear slime, sludge and silt from their properties.

To provide a defence to protect against inappropriate development: parishes are presently disenchanted by planning policies proposals and decisions which demand a reactive adversarial approach to new proposals of which many show a lack of sustainability or ignore the local wants, needs and impact upon residents, commerce and industry. To achieve this aim of defence and protection by their own local policies, preferred development sites and protected areas, proactively, parishes in and surrounding Morpeth have formed a consortium, a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group to produce a Draft Local Neighbourhood Plan. It would have four areas of influence - Heritage, Housing, Economy and Environment. Additionally there will be four cross-cutting topics: Transport, Education, Sport & Leisure and Infrastructure. The Neighbourhood Plan will be funded by the Government, Northumberland County Council, Town and Parish Councils. It has been assigned its own Planning Officer, a Northumberland C.C. Liaison Planning Officer and administration help.

To promote the Neighbourhood Plan in draft form and engage public involvement in order to complete it, there will be several roadshows:

|  |                       |                 |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------|
| An Official Presentation in Morpeth Town Hall. | Thursday 18th Oct.    | 6.30 - 8.30 pm  |
| Drop-in Session in Morpeth Town Hall.          | Friday 19th October   | 2.00 - 7.00 pm  |
| Information Stall in Morpeth Market Place.     | Saturday 20th October | 10.00 - 1.00 pm |
| Drop-in Session in Mitford Parish Hall.        | Friday 26th October   | 4.00 - 7.30 pm  |
| Drop-in Session in Pegswood Social Club.       | Saturday 27th October | 10.00 - 1.00 pm |

A referendum of registered local voters will follow.

Once formed and in place the Neighbourhood Plan will carry legal status. Ref: [deemtc@btconnect.com](mailto:deemtc@btconnect.com) Hepscott Parish Council also welcomes public involvement, please come to our next meeting.

Have a healthy, happy and helpful Autumn. David Cowans

**Your Parish Council needs**



**YOU**

There are parish council elections next May. There is a current vacancy that could be filled before these elections.

If you are interested in serving your community as part of the Parish Council please contact the Parish Clerk, Mrs Angela Parr on 01670 761234 or speak to current councillors.



| Parish Council Contacts: |                |              |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Chairman:                |                |              |
| Vice Chairman:           | David Cowans   | 01670 516397 |
| Village Ward:            | Norma Barker   | 01670 504885 |
|                          | Anne Finlay    | 01670 518888 |
|                          | Derrick Melia  | 01670 515575 |
| Stobhill Manor           | Philip Ashmore | 01670 516726 |
| Ward:                    | Philippa Raper | 01670 503436 |
| Parish Clerk:            | Angela Parr    | 01670 761234 |

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Look out for  
each other



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Criminal presence and criminal damage have increased this past month, but we are on top of it!

Village residents returning from holiday found their properties vandalised. No entry was made and it is believed security lights limited the damage. With the dark nights approaching it is well worth ensuring your house is not left in darkness and an added suggestion is to leave a radio on, playing quite loudly.

It happened in Hespcott. A male and female lingering in a dark cul-de-sac at 9pm is suspicious and so it proved to be. Calling at one house they tried to persuade the resident to change his electricity supplier, at another requesting directions to Blyth and at a third purporting to be collecting for a charity. It is probable that they were sleeping

rough and the next morning an unlocked car had been entered and the contents stolen. At least no damage was done. This shows the range of inventiveness by the undesirables but clearly no one should be calling door to door at 9 pm in the dark. If you encounter this inform the Police on 101 or, if threatened, dial 999.

A village resident and his daughter were seen noisily towing a laden wheelie bin along Fieldhouse Lane towards the countryside. Full of smelly garden rubbish this ended up being dumped, bin and all in a watercourse, blocking it. It was kindly removed by Bob Hodgson of NCC fly tipping dept who was keen to prosecute. This is being written at a time when we are again threatened by flooding and such thoughtless actions will not be tolerated. Should it happen again prosecution will ensue!

### Morpeth & District Red Squirrels



As I type this a bedraggled red squirrel is scampering around the lawn busily burying hazel nuts. A sign that winter is coming and the

squirrels need help from anyone prepared to feed them. They also need your protection from an increasing number of grey squirrels which are arriving in the village. I have had sightings reported from both ends of the village and from the edge of Hespcott at the end of Field House Lane. In the last edition of the Herald I asked that villagers be vigilant as MAD RS has been receiving reports of large numbers of grey squirrels in the area, most worryingly from localities where reds are well established and greys have not previously been spotted. I am most grateful to all of you who have contacted me directly or via the MAD RS mobile number (07570 897979) if you prefer to email your sightings the address is mad.redsquirrels@yahoo.com On a more positive note we have been contacted by many people who wish to get involved and support our work. There are many ways in which you can help and if you are interested please do let me know.

Kate Weightman 01670 515504

### The Orchard



Many residents have commented favourably on the tidy up of the old orchard in the centre of the village. This area of public open space was once the commercial orchard run by the Lowrison family who lived in West Field. It was declared a public open space soon after it came into the ownership of the parish council. Several management schemes have been thwarted because of the innate fertility of the soil and the presence of malicious weeds – particularly dock. When it was left as a wild-life area it became too wild with very tall dock. Suggested solutions included a flock of geese or a herd of goats – not very practical on this open site. General grass cutting and minimum tree and hedge trimming was fine for a while but there came a time when a little more was required. Last year the decision was made to build up the orchard with a wider variety of soft fruit trees and bushes. This would still allow for the collection of windfall fruits by villagers and provide food for the birds, squirrels etc.

Over the years there have been commemorative plantings within the area – bulbs to mark the new millennium, five trees with gold foliage or berries for the Queen's Golden Jubilee, and most recently an memorial apple tree planted by the family of Rene Bevan who lived in Hespcott most of her long life. The Parish Council is to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee by planting a plum tree, a development of the victoria plum named Jubilee.

Many thanks are due to Paul Martin for pruning the broken and damaged branches from the old apple trees and helping to mastermind this development of the orchard. If you would like to be involved with this work please contact Anne on 518888.

Thanks are also due to several residents who have helped keep other parts of the village looking good. Pauline McKay has once again kept the old horse trough planted up with a bright display of flowers. Julia McPhail provided and maintained Jubilee planters at the Parish Hall doorway. Malcolm Clasper and others have mown grass verges near their properties. Joe Easton cleaned out the gutters of the parish hall. There may be other public spirited residents who have been omitted but Thank You all for improving the public spaces within the village.

### HEPSCOTT HERITAGE GROUP

The Annual General Meeting of the Heritage Group will be held on Monday 12 November 2012 in the Village Hall, commencing at 7.45 pm. Anyone who is interested will be very welcome.

## A View from County Hall – with County Councillor David J. Towns

There's only one thing I can comment on in this article, and that's the terrible new traffic lights in Morpeth. I say new, they have in fact been in place since April, but there is no sign of them "bedding in" as we were promised when first we complained.

The public have made their views very clear on the subject of these lights. A Facebook Group grew to over 1,600 members in a matter of days. Then followed a packed public meeting at the Town Hall, where over 200 people voted unanimously for the removal of the lights and the restoration of the roundabout. A second meeting had a similar outcome, and then followed a petition signed by nearly 2,500 people. More recently (Friday, 31 August), I led a protest march from Market Place to County Hall, and I was joined by around 500 people. We delivered a letter demanding the removal of the lights, but more significantly we delivered a powerful message to the Council.

If you haven't done so already, can I ask you to please visit [www.lightsout.org.uk/](http://www.lightsout.org.uk/)

main which is the website for the official Lights Out! campaign, which I set up in early August. You can see the arguments and evidence of the failings of the junction. Lights Out! has already become one of the County's most influential lobby groups, and I held a meeting at County Hall with senior officers earlier this month which has led to the setting up of a fully independent review of all of Morpeth's traffic issues.

I think it is fair to say that at heavy peak times, the lights can prove somewhat effective, but the problem they cause is that peak hours have now been extended throughout the day, causing congestion when it is least expected.

There have now been at least two crashes between vehicles at the lights (both in the same week earlier this month), large vehicles overswinging the pavement, the lights themselves struck by vehicles, wheel overruns and even a lamppost knocked over (see the website above to watch a video of the lamppost being struck). Many people are telling me that they now avoid coming into Morpeth, and

the Chamber of Trade is reporting large drops in footfall in certain stores, with evidence that the lights were the straw that broke the camel's back (when you add in parking charges, over zealous wardens and building works).

Add to this the fact that the Police say traffic congestion is worse, and the roundabout was inherently safe and effective, and the lifespan of the traffic lights does look shorter and shorter, and I am confident that the roundabout will be restored at some point in the not-so-distant future!

As some of the worst affected residents, may I please invite you to send me your photographs, videos or stories of the lights and congestion? Please email me, the address is below.

As ever, if you have any comments or issues you would like to raise with me, please feel free to contact me on 07985 012012 or [david@davidtowns.co.uk](mailto:david@davidtowns.co.uk)

David

### Broadband News

Just as the last issue of The Hepscoth Herald was coming from the printers Simon Roberson, BT's Regional Partnership director for the North East announced that Hepscoth would be included in the next roll out of superfast broadband. He said it generally takes 6-9 months from announcement to completion so the cabinet should be ready to go live in the first quarter of 2013. This can vary by a couple of months either way depending on the progress of engineering work. Residents will notice a new green street cabinet set up close to the existing one at the A192 road end.

#### **Be warned that this sometimes happens weeks before it goes live!**

The cabinet will serve premises from Barmoor Farm to Hepscoth Park along the A192 – these should all get speeds of 15Mbps or over. Most properties in the village of Hepscoth should get speeds over 20Mbps, with those closest to the cabinet getting most. Shadfen (inc Shadfen Park, Healeywood, Paddock Hall Farm and Northstead Banks) is connected to this cabinet and although they will not get such high speeds they should get 5-15Mbps. Some ISPs don't publicise products over fibre at these speeds so residents will need to check with their ISP closer to the time and may need to shop around. Dunces House is not covered by this cabinet being connected to the Stobhill cabinet which already has superfast broadband.

Next year BT will be introducing Fibre on Demand which means that anyone in a fibre-enabled cabinet area like Hepscoth will be able to order a direct fibre connection to their own home or business which will offer speeds of 300Mbps. Prices for this are yet to be determined and there will be an engineering charge for laying the fibre. This may be of greater interest to businesses but it will be available to anyone who needs higher speeds, for example - if anyone is running a digital business from home.

Websites to check are: <http://www.openreach-communications.co.uk/superfast/> which shows all the broadband providers who offer services using BT's fibre network, with links to their web sites to compare packages. Closer to the time these providers' sites will show the live date for service in Hepscoth and the speeds that can be obtained on individual lines. As an example the BT Infinity site is at [www.bt.com/infinity](http://www.bt.com/infinity).

A big Thank You is due to Otto Meth-Cohn for initiating and driving forward this fibre broadband development in the village.

### ATTENTION DOG WALKERS

The path at the end of Park Side leading to Choppington is a public foot path used not only by many dog walkers but by joggers, walkers and children. This path has become increasingly soiled by the dog deposits left by irresponsible dog owners who neglect to pick up after their dog. The result is not only an unsightly mess but is also a potential health hazard. This is especially so for children.

There is a dog bin at the start of this path and there is therefore little excuse not to use it accordingly. I know that most dog owners pick up after their dogs but judging by the mess left on the path there are obviously some habitual offenders.

So please, if you are walking your dogs anywhere in the village please carry the appropriate bags and be prepared to pick up after your dog(s).

M Callf

## PARISH HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

On one of the rare sunny days in August a table top/car boot sale was held on the hall car park along side the coffee morning. Both were quite successful. The race night held in August, although not well attended (bad timing I think), was a really entertaining night and brought in a good sum for the hall coffers.

October 5th brought Miranda Sykes and Rex Preston a delightful singing duo. November and December will be a busy time in the hall. On November 30th we have back by popular demand Lee's Christmas holly wreath making. Also in November we are hoping to have one more coffee morning. December 14th brings us A BRASSY CHRISTMAS. This is a family show with a great variety of seasonal songs played on many different brass instruments. So bring the family along and get into the Christmas spirit. Speaking of spirit - the usual Mulled Wine drop in is 15th December, 4.30 - 6.30 and don't worry everyone will be back home in time for "Strictly".

Early next year we are hoping to brighten the cold miserable nights in late January or early February with a jolly entertainer - maybe a band or comedian. As with all events in the hall please check the notice board for what's on, dates and times of all events will be advertised outside the hall.

Once again the bus services have changed. The 445 service no longer runs through the village as it was not viable. There are also changes in the bus services to Newcastle and Cramlington. For current route and timetable please use Traveline 0870 608020608 www.traveline.org.uk

Katie McDonald 01670 514031

### Parish Boundary Walk



This is a walk around the whole parish of Hepscoth using rights of way, footpaths, tracks and roads. The circular route is about eight miles long but you could choose to walk part of the way and then make your own way home - we are never too far from home!

**Start at 10.00 a.m. in the Parish Hall Car Park on Saturday 20 October.**

Children (and dogs) are welcome but must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Boots or stout walking shoes are recommended and bring waterproofs, drinking water and a packed lunch. To register a place please ring Anne on 518888

### 100 Club Winners

May:

1. Mr Johnson, 2. Mrs P Kidd, 3. Mrs A Ainsley

June:

1. Dr E Ross, 2. Mr and Mrs Bosanke,  
3. Mr D Scales

£50 half yearly draw: Mr A Murray

July:

1. Mr A Dixon, 2. Mr J Haworth,  
3. Mrs E Jeffrey

August:

1. Mrs A Porkson, 2. Mr and Mrs M Weightman,  
3. Mr and Mrs D Melia

### Tau Tong School of Tai Chi

Class held every Monday Evening

6.30-7.30pm £4.50

In the Parish Hall

Beginners welcome

- Amanda 01670 820464

Tai Chi nurtures health of mind and body, to help prevent internal and external attacks. The movements exercise and harmonise the body systems which is the idea behind preventative medicine. If we nurture our good health we therefore help our bodies to do their best to fight off disorder and disease. Our immune system is battling away all the time and our cerebral programs are keeping time for us while we go about our daily life. If we become run down or abuse our bodies, then we weaken our defences. If we have a better understanding of these processes, surely our lives will be more successful and rewarding in every way? If you gain a degree of mastery over yourself, you will have more control over the rest of your life! Don't wait until you need drastic measures!

As the Tao TeChing says; 'Deal with great tasks while they are still small!'

### Hepscoth Herald DEADLINE

Friday 25 January 2013

Editors: Anne 518888 Kate 515504

Hepscoth Herald is a community newsletter provided by Hepscoth Parish Council. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the council or the editors. Whilst every effort is taken to check accuracy of the information contained herein, no responsibility can be taken for errors or omissions.

## Regular activities in the Parish Hall:

### Mondays

Quilting Class 10.00 a.m.  
Tai Chi 6.30 p.m.

### Tuesdays

Bridge Class 10.00 a.m.  
Line Dancing Club 7.00 p.m.  
W.I.  
3<sup>rd</sup> in month 7.30 p.m.  
Village Tea  
Last in month 2.00 p.m.

### Wednesdays

Quilting Class 10.00 a.m.  
Yoga Class 6.30 p.m.

### Thursdays

Art at Hepscoth  
9.00a.m. - 12.00p.m.  
Bridge for All 1.30 p.m.  
Parish Council 6.30 p.m.  
3<sup>rd</sup> in month bi-monthly.  
Bridge Class 7.00 p.m.

### Friday

Keep Fit 10.30 a.m.  
Bridge for All 1.30 p.m.

### Saturday

2nd in month  
Chatterbox Quilters 9.30 a.m.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### OCTOBER

#### Parish Boundary Walk

Saturday 20 Oct. 10.00am

### NOVEMBER

#### Parish Council

Thursday 8 Nov. 6.30 pm

#### Hepscoth Heritage Group Annual General Meeting

Monday 12 Nov. 7.45 pm

#### Police Commissioner's Election

Thursday 15 November  
7.00 a.m. - 10.00 p.m.

#### Hall Committee

#### Wreath Making

Friday 30 November 7.00 pm

### DECEMBER

#### Hall Committee

#### A Brassy Christmas

Friday 14 December 7.30 pm

#### Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

Saturday 15 Dec.  
4.00—6.30 pm

There is an opportunity to use the walls of the Parish Hall to exhibit

paintings, photographs,  
embroideries, etc.

Contact 01670 518888