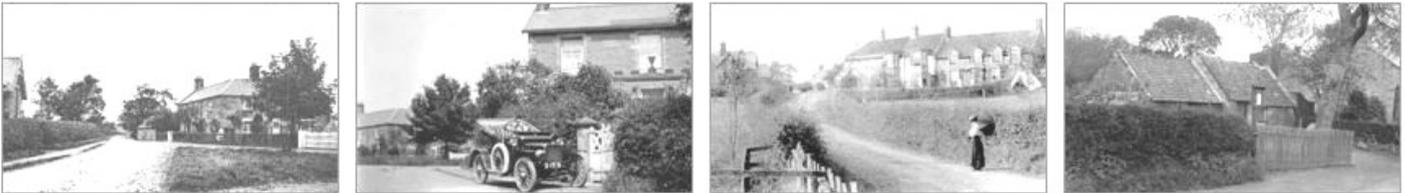


PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

The Parish Council has recently uploaded a website for the benefit of parishioners. In it you will find useful information about the parish, a parish map, copies of the Hepscott Herald, as well as financial documents, minutes, contact details of the parish council, historical facts and pictures. The pictures above show historic views of the village that appear on the website. If you hover your mouse above these web pictures they will show the place today. To view please go to:

<http://hepscottparishcouncil.org.uk>

From The Chairman

Here is my brief summary of the current news:

1) Barratt application, Stobhill roundabout. There is a planning hearing at County Hall at 6.00pm Thurs 20 February to hear the application to build 400 houses. It is a public meeting so please try to get there if you can, as a show of local opposition is extremely important. As I write this, an objection from the Highways Dept has been put on the NCC website, but the Planning Officer's report (either recommending acceptance or refusal) is not in the public domain until 11 February. The site visit on 13 Jan was very useful and showed up the traffic and road safety issues very well. But there are other major issues too—scale, flooding, 'prematurity' given the impending County Local Plan/Core Strategy and Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan, green belt and Morpeth encroachment issues, infrastructure and the sheer scale of public opposition (more than 500 objections on the website, a very high number). I am hopeful but not complacent that common sense will prevail.

2) Northumberland's Core Strategy/Local Development Plan. Hepscott Parish Council (HPC) replied to Northumberland County Council's (NCC) consultation, and stressed that the Morpeth Green Belt should start at the A196 (and therefore that 'Barratt's fields' should be Green Belt). The Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) felt that the 'Barratt' land should at least be 'safeguarded' i.e. not be allocated for any development for the life of the Plan, up to and beyond 2032.

3) Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan. Thanks again to the many of you that completed the questionnaire. Hepscott was the top performer in participating in the questionnaire and was outspoken in its views on the Green Belt, which was very useful. I am sorry that feedback from the whole MNP area is taking some time but it is expected shortly.

4) County Hall. This is an emerging issue but there appears to be little in writing by way of the Administration's intentions apart from what has appeared in the press. If 2000 houses is anything to go by this is not an issue that has been thoroughly thought through.

(continued on page 3)



Residents of Hepscott Village, Stobhill Manor and Green Lane, Stobhill unite against the housing development at the site meeting in January.

Views from County Hall



Glen Sanderson County Councillor for Hepscott Village Ward

A very late Happy New Year to you.

Today, the day after the surprise announcement by the administration at County Hall that they were planning to sell off County Hall, I have asked that the developers involved should do the honourable thing and withdraw their application to build on the green fields between Hepscott and Stobhill.

Given the turmoil that the County Hall decision will cause to the planners, it seems logical and sensible to pause before this unwelcome and untimely application goes any further.

Those brave souls who were kind enough to join the site visit may well have been as surprised as I was to see just how much traffic uses the A192 and A196. So until we have a Traffic Plan which addresses the concerns about the effects that any application would have on local roads, that is another reason for the applicants to hold fire.

Finally, the flooding issue is still a worry despite the assurances of the Environment Agency - I have asked that the Council seek a "second opinion" - this should not take too much time and is a sensible precaution.

So we shall see. I will continue to work closely with Philip Ashmore and the Parish Council who have worked tirelessly on this issue, and with Ian Lindley, my colleague on the County Council who represents the Stobhill area.

Finally, thank you for attending the Public Meeting in such numbers. I know it was frustrating, but it did give most of the local residents who wanted to question the planners and applicants the chance to do so, and it was a very effective meeting I thought.

In the meantime, please keep in touch and let me know if I can help with anything -

glen.sanderson@northumberland.gov.uk or 07730 979737.



Ian Lindley County Councillor for Stobhill Manor Ward

Hello Hepscothians - First, a few words about Hepscott Parish Council. I believe this to be one of the best-run parishes in the County; with an excellent Chair in Phil Ashmore. Phil and I, along with Glen Sanderson, Alison Byard and the other local parish councillors have been working to effectively focus opposition to the Barratt's Development. As an Independent Councillor I am especially grateful for the non-political way colleagues belonging to both Lib Dems and Conservatives have worked on this.

The Planning Committee hearing date has been set for 20 Feb. I trust we will be successful in convincing them to reject this huge estate (396 houses). We aim to protect this much-coveted field at Stobhill roundabout from all future development. (Residents will remember the last attempt a few years ago was for a superstore on the site). The only sure way to protect it is Green Belt status. Failing this we are seeking cast-iron guarantees around the settlement boundary for Morpeth.

In other news: Coca Cola (ex-Abbey Well) have agreed to offer a programme of free work training and experience for local people to help them gain employment. This is in development and will be through our Community Shop (Shields Rd). Anyone interested in the Coca Cola offer or for any info, please contact me or Brooke Burgess (Community Link manager - 504488).

I am supporting two other big projects at the moment - Redevelopment of Morpeth Station's unused space as a business incubation facility - with Greater Morpeth Development Trust. This follows on from the improvement work we completed here last year (the new station car park and the road junction and footpaths).

The other is the redevelopment of St Aidan's church to include modern community facilities for use by all. Both are relatively capital-hungry projects, and effective partnership working is essential for delivery - but I am optimistic we can sort them and they will bring a few local jobs as well as better facilities and much improved streetscape aesthetics.

Another key resource - Stobhill Community Centre on 9th Avenue, has long been under-used (the subject of legal and other issues). These are now resolved - after literally years of partnership effort - and I am now looking forward to working with the new leaseholder (Barnabas - local charity) to ensure all sectors of the community are able to use and access what is an enviable facility for events, leisure and sports. If you have any thoughts please contact me or Chris Menzies (Manager - 514881).

5 Feb - sees the launch of a wheelchair accessible dial-a-ride service for Stobhill (inc Stobhill Manor) to help people access town and health centre etc. This is a door-to-door service including help with bags, mobility etc. Has to be booked. Call 'Adapt' (who are running this for us) 01434 600599.

As ever, feel free to contact me anytime about anything if I can't help I will be able to access someone who can.

All the best for 14! Ian.Lindley@northumberland.gov.uk

Morpeth and District Red Squirrels

The December MAD RS newsletter makes positive reading regarding reds being spotted in places formerly inhabited by greys within our area. (Let me know if you would like a copy, I can email one to you) Reds have been reported within the Parish of Hepscott but, sadly, not in the village itself. There have been no sightings of reds, or greys, for several months now. Reds living in woodlands close by have been infected with squirrel pox after a single grey was seen travelling through and it is possible the grey seen last summer may have caused the disappearance of our local reds. Please do report sightings of animals of either species, that is the only way we can support and protect any reds which may travel into the village.

Kate Weightman

PARISH HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Happy New Year from all members of the committee I would like to say how successful the hall New Year Party was - a good time was had by all. The games were fabulous thanks to Bill and Graham. Roll on October for the Halloween Party!

We have some wonderful nights lined up in the hall for the coming months. The first on Friday 7th February is a Race Night. Come along, enjoy the filmed races, a pie and pea supper (veggie alternative available if you let us know in advance), bring your own booze and your purse so you can have a bet and maybe go home a little richer.

The official quiz (as I call it) is on Friday 7th March. This is the usual friendly contest set by last year's winners. Fish and chips is on the menu (again alternatives available if we know in advance). Bring your own drinks. On Sunday 27th April we have SNAKE DAVIS and friends, Burden of Paradise, who play a mix of pop, soul and jazz. Snake has played with Take That, Eurythmics and M People. Tickets have already been sold for this show, it will be popular so if tickets are wanted give Anne or myself a ring. (01670 518888 or 514031)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kathryn Scott for all her hard work overseeing the 100 club, David Scales for making sure the hall rubbish bin is always put out for collection, Paul Martin for keeping the Orchard trees looking lovely and Richard Slater who is employed by the Parish Council to cut the grass and hedges of the orchard. It is a joy to walk through. As usual please keep your eyes open for hall events, prices and where to get tickets which are advertised on the boards outside the hall.

Katie McDonald

HOBBS EVENING

Nicola, the store manager at Hobbs, has arranged an evening for the Ladies of Hepscott (through the Hall Management Committee) on Thursday 27th February 2014. Starting at 5.00pm - 9.00pm. Free entry, 15% discount, free bubbly and canapes. As well as being able to browse the store and try on clothes, there will be an opportunity for mini manicures and mini beauty treatments along with fashion/colour advice if required. Please come along and bring family/friends and have an enjoyable retail therapy evening -

All Welcome.

100 Club

Thanks to everyone for supporting the 100 club this year, including our five new members. We have raised over £600 towards the running of the Village Hall. **Anyone who is interested in joining please contact me on 516805.** For £12 per year we have a monthly prize draw of £25, £10 and £5 plus two special prizes of £50 and £100 which are drawn in June and December. Your support would be most welcome.

Kathryn Scott

More LERTS Please

I wrote in the last edition of the Hepscott Herald about how useful it would be to have an email contact list for the Parish ('Alert! Be alert—your Parish needs lerts'). How much more efficient, modern and more professional it would be to be able to contact large amounts of people, give them updates on the latest situation, let them know when meetings are being called and generally get people more involved in some of the big issues that are occupying us at the moment.

I am delighted to say that it has proved a great success and I have about 40 households who are on my list. I have had many who have passed words of support to me, for which I thank them, and no one yet has complained that I have been trivial or lacked confidentiality about their email address. The email list has made it easy to contact people and consequently we have had really good turn-outs at the Public Meeting, the Planners' site meeting and at other village meetings ('Hands off Hepscott' etc).

We have about 400 households in the Parish—and it is the Parish not only the village of Hepscott that the Parish Council represent—so clearly there are many households that are not on the list. Of course there will be many who haven't got email, many who do not want to be kept up to date, many who live on Stobhill Manor and do not even realise they are in Hepscott Parish! But if you do wish to be kept informed and be put on to the email list, it is easy. Just email me at philipashmore@hotmail.co.uk and I will place you on the lerts list. As I said before, I will keep the list confidential and use it only for Parish Council business, and if anyone wishes to be removed I will do so immediately. Many thanks.

From the Parish Chairman

(continued from page 1)

However I would have thought that it meant that we needed to put a pause on applications such as Barratt's so that we can think through the implications of so much 'brown field' land being possibly available, before swathes of green fields are submerged in concrete.

5) Planning applications. Nothing major to report but for those interested in the Nedderton wind turbine I believe the application still has a problem with a Ministry of Defence Alnwick objection on the grounds of air defence radar interference, and NCC tell me that if this is not cleared up the application is likely to be refused. We'll see.

6) Website. Ken Reed and Sylvia Johnson have been working hard to get HPC's website up and running and I am pleased to report that it is now functioning.

Finally thanks for all the support we have had as a Council, and indeed the support I personally have had from so many of you and from my Parish Council colleagues, over the multitude of things going on at the moment. It has been hard work but I really appreciate the comments from you. That is not to say we have to 'take our foot off the gas' just yet.

Phil Ashmore, Chair Hepscott Parish Council

Tidy Up Day Saturday 5 April:

10 a.m.—Noon from the Village Car Park, Barmoor and possibly Stobhill Manor.

Details nearer the time from Philippa Raper
01670 - 503436



Hepscott Rainfall in 2013

The year's total rainfall was 27.25 inches, about 4 inches below the 16 year average of 31.73 inches and well below the 2012 figure of 44.7 inches.

The wettest month last year was January at 5.2 inches and the wettest day was December 12th. April was the driest month with 0.92 inches. April is normally one of the wettest months. February and June were much drier than usual.

There was one period from July 3 to 23 when there was no measurable rain, usually a wet time of year.

Those with barographs will have noticed the recent (December/January) extreme pressure changes during the stormy weather. David Scales

Hepscott Women's Institute (Apologies to Sandra Armstrong for the severe editing. I shall redress the balance in the next issue)

Membership has increased. There have been some cracking meetings but members were disappointed with the poor response to their Quiz Night. Be sure to catch their **Murder Mystery Evening in June**. An interesting programme for 2014 began in January with Julie Porksen— "Women in International Development.". **February 18th welcomes Lilian Nelson—Chenobyl Childrens' Lifeline**. She has organised visits to Morpeth for children affected by the nuclear disaster 25 years ago. There is a **Garden X Factor in March 18** with questions and experts to improve your gardening skills.

Visitors to W.I. meetings are always welcome. See posters on the Hall windows for details. **Further information from Carolyn Reid 515308 or Linda Wadge 504909**

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Look out for each other



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

A lady living on the outskirts of the village went outside about 10pm to lock up the outhouses as she did regularly. She returned to the house to see her Porsche being reversed out of her driveway and driven off into the night. In a split second her car keys and mobile phones had vanished from the hallway table. Was this an opportunist who just happened to be passing or did someone have the house under observation? It is prudent to acknowledge that such things happen, so close drive way gates, vary routines, always lock doors and be as vigilant as possible. There was a happy ending as the car was recovered 20 miles away by the police.

More cars. There has been a spate of unlocked cars being entered in the village and at Stobhill and contents such as phones, ipads, shavers being stolen. No damage to the cars but it could so easily have been prevented. And of course there is no insurance claim for theft from an unlocked vehicle.

And yet more cars. A lot of complaints have been made regarding inconsiderate car parking, sometimes obstructing the only pavement, by guests visiting the Village hall on a Thursday and Friday afternoon. There is very good reason for concern. The school bus drops off many school children, dressed in dark school uniforms, in the late afternoon darkness, in the centre of the village and they must have safe crossing of the main road and an unobstructed passage home. Likewise our wheelchair users should be given consideration. The speed at which this rat run is used is also a worry and it may be time to install a speed camera. The police have intervened and thankfully there has been a marked improvement.

Even more cars. I have been asked to highlight the dog fouling in Fieldhouse Lane, again by visitors bringing dogs to walk the country lanes. The dogs are let out of the car, run round excitedly, and by the time the owner has put on walking boots, all dogs have performed, perhaps unnoticed. This is distressing to a disabled resident, particularly when there is receptacle right there. I can only suggest we name and shame. Car registration please.

Horse Tackle and quad bikes are high on the list of stolen items at present. Those with horse tackle could perhaps consider having it stamped with a postcode or Smart watered.

Sorry about all the doom and gloom but that is the nature of the beast. J McPhail

WATCH OUT! Paul Kidd and Otto Meth-Cohn have joined the police force! Or at least, have become Community Speed Watch volunteers. So if you see two dubious characters in bright yellow jackets, one with a Laser gun and the other a clip board, that's us.

Our primary aim is to deter speeding through the village, something Hepscottians tend not to do.

Hepscott Herald is a community newsletter provided by Hepscott 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.

Editors: Anne 518888
Kate 515504

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. 3rd in month 7.30 p.m.
Village Tea
Last in month 2.00 p.m.

Wednesdays

Wriggle & Rhyme 10.00 a.m.
Yoga Class 7.00 p.m.

Thursdays

Art at Hepscott
9.00a.m. – 12.15 p.m.
Bridge for All 1.30 p.m.
Parish Council 6.30 p.m.
3rd 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.

Sunday

1st and 3rd in month 6.00 pm
North East Mandolin Band

SPECIAL EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Hall Committee

Race Night

Friday 7 February 7.30 pm

Hobbs Evening

Thursday 27 February 5.00 pm

MARCH

Hall Committee

Quiz Night

Friday 7 March 7.30 pm

Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 20 March 6.30 pm

APRIL

Parish Council

Tidy Up Day

Saturday 5 April 10.00 am

Hall Committee

Burden of Paradise

Sunday 27 April 7.30 pm

MAY

Morpeth Art Group

Bill Gowdy Exhibition

Fri/Sat 30/31st May.

Hepscott Herald **DEADLINE**
Friday 30 May 2014