

This is the Parish Council sponsored Newsletter for April 2019, giving details of past and forthcoming events and other items we think will be of interest.

1. **Parish Council Notes:**

- a. As only 3 people have applied to become Parish Councillors in Forthampton, they have automatically been elected so there will be **no Parish Council election** on 2nd May. However, voting **will** take place for Tewkesbury Borough Council so the Polling Booth in the Village Hall will still be “open for business” on that day. It is hoped that a further 2 people can be co-opted at the Annual General Meeting which will be held in the Village Hall on Thursday 16th May.
 - b. The **Litter Picking event** held on Saturday 6th April was a great success with 15 volunteers of all ages helping with the task. So thank you to everyone who took part. Our next Litter Pick is likely to be in October so watch this space for details.
 - c. The Parish Council have been notified that **Action Fraud** has received over 100 reports about fake emails that purport to be from Virgin Media. The emails threaten the recipient with “automatic disconnection” due to “invalid billing information”. The links in the emails lead to genuine-looking phishing websites that are designed to steal your Virgin Media account login details. Don't click on the links or attachments in suspicious emails, and never respond to messages that ask for your personal or financial details. For more information on how to stay secure online, visit www.cyberaware.gov.uk
 - d. As a reminder, this year the annual **NGS Open Garden day at Forthampton Court** has been moved from the usual date in July to **Sunday May 19th from 12noon till 4pm**. This is the day before Chelsea Flower Show opens, so could be viewed as a taster day before you all dash off to London! Apart from the wonderful gardens on display there will be tea/coffee and cakes as well as plants for sale.
 - e. Another activity you may be interested in is a visit to the “**Affordable Garden Art Exhibition**” which is held annually at **Showborough House**. The exhibition runs from Thursday 2nd May until Sunday 16th June, and is open on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays. Opening hours are 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. There is no entry charge and there is free parking but they do welcome donations. The house is located a mile from the centre of the village of Twyning. From the village War Memorial take the road signposted to Hillend, Strensham and Pershore. After ½ mile turn right, signposted Showborough and Downfield. At the bottom of the hill turn left, signposted Showborough. The House is the first property on the right. The gardens are fantastic and the display of art and sculpture adds hugely to a great experience - there is even tea/coffee and cake for sale 😊
 - f. Now that spring has sprung, **Tewkesbury Borough Council is asking dog owners to join the dog walking community in bagging and binning dog poo**. A new Public Space Protection Order has been introduced which now gives council officers more powers to tackle dog fouling across Tewkesbury Borough. As part of the order, dog walkers can not only be fined £100 for not picking up after their dogs, but can now also get a £100 fixed penalty notice for not carrying dog poo bags. The council is aware that most people are picking up after their pets but, sadly, the small few who don't are continuing to risk the health of others.
- F
- g. On 13th-14th July the **Tewkesbury Medieval Festival** will be held, re-enacting the Battle of Tewkesbury during the Wars of the Roses. This is the largest free event of its kind and includes traditional entertainment provided by jugglers, musicians,

dancers and jesters. The event is held on the fields next to the A38 (near the Gupshill Manor pub), entry is free and gates open at 11 a.m.

- h. Following public consultation Highways England has finally announced the preferred route **for improving the A417 (Air Balloon) road**. No date has been set for the work to begin but details of the agreed route, and other information, can be found at: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a417-missing-link/>

2. Church Notices:

- a. **Services at St Mary's, Forthampton** for the coming weeks are:
 - i. Sunday 14th April at 09:30 (Morning Worship)
 - ii. Friday 19th April at 2 p.m. (Good Friday Service of the Word)
 - iii. Sunday 21st April at 11:00 (Sung Eucharist)
 - iv. Sunday 28th April at 09:30 (Holy Communion)
- b. A **new Electoral Roll list** is being developed this year. Those wishing to be on the list for Forthampton please contact Richard Ascough (the Electoral Roll Officer) for the necessary form. Richard can be contacted via email at: rcnahillbeck@gmail.com
- c. Following the excellent response to the **Church Tower Appeal**, discussions have taken place between the PCC and the Architects in order to agree "next steps". It is hoped that work can begin as soon as the weather improves. During the period of work scaffolding will be erected around the tower so please take care when visiting the grounds of the church while work is underway.

3. Village Hall Notices:

- a. The work to **improve access to the Village Hall** is now underway with completion planned by Easter. As a safety precaution the Hall will remain closed until the work is completed.
- b. The Village Hall Committee are also pleased to announced that **Baby changing facilities are now available in the Hall**.
- c. A **children's Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday 27th April**, followed by a Bingo Fish 'n' Chips evening on Saturday 11th May. See the attachments for full details.

- 4. The next outing of the **Sevenside Walking Club** will be on Monday 18th March when the walk will start from the Royal Oak pub in Kinnersley; then in May the walk will start from The Gardener's Arms in Alderton. So, if you enjoy walking and meeting friends, simply contact Alan Brown on 01684 291220 or e-mail: skepcott1@gmail.com for full details.

- 5. At the April meeting of the **Forthampton & District WI** Ian Caskie, a volunteer with the SS Great Britain Trust since 2007, gave an inspirational presentation on one of the most iconic ships in British maritime history. From the beginning we were all caught up in the fascinating tale of this amazing vessel, from its inception as the most innovative ship of its day, through the many phases of its working life, to its ultimate salvage from the Falkland Islands and return to Bristol, where she was originally built.

Designed by Isambard Brunel, the ship was the first to combine an iron hull (as opposed to a wooden one), and the first screw propeller. Scepticism surrounding the ship's seaworthiness resulted in only 45 passengers from a potential 250 taking its maiden transatlantic voyage. Fears were groundless. In 1852 the ship was refitted to take 700 passengers on voyages to

Australia and around the world. It took only two months to sail to Australia, by far the fastest ship to do so at that time.

Passenger diaries record the luxury on board, with sumptuous menus and likening the ship to the best hotels, but there was also terrible seasickness and rat infestation. One passenger recorded waking to find a rat nibbling at her companion's toenails! There was also segregation by class and gender. On occasion the ship was commissioned by the government to take troops to Malta during the Crimea War and to India to quell the Mutiny. In 1882 SS Great Britain was stripped out and converted to a sailing ship, carrying freight instead of passengers. Suffering storm damage, she became a floating warehouse and coal store, before she was scuttled in 1937 and remained rusting and broken in the Falkland Islands.

A joint English/German salvage team, thanks to funds raised by Sir Jack Hayward, philanthropist and former President of Wolverhampton Wanderers F.C, rescued her. The hull had not only rusted but there was a fissure down its middle; this was filled with pieces of mattress jammed into the crack. The ship was ready to be towed on a specially built pontoon, 8,000 miles back to Avonmouth, arriving to a tumultuous reception as it passed under the suspension bridge to its final mooring place. The ship has now been restored to its former glory and attracts thousands of visitors every year.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 14th May at 2:15 p.m., in Forthampton Village Hall, when we will be considering the GFWI Resolutions and hold a Bring and Buy Sale. New members are always welcome and, should you require any further information, please contact Veronica Silber (01684) 591513.