

This is the Parish Council sponsored Newsletter for February 2018, giving details of past and forthcoming events and other items we think will be of interest.

1. **Parish Council Notes:**

- a. **The annual Litter Picking Day in Forthampton** has been arranged for Saturday 14th April 2018 when we will meet at the Cross at 10 a.m. All equipment (gloves, pickers, sacks etc. will be supplied; all we need is volunteers. So, if you have an hour or two to spare to clean up our lovely village, then please come along on the day.
- b. **Highways England is conducting a consultation on proposals to improve the A417** between the Brockworth bypass and the Cowley roundabout (via the Air balloon Roundabout). The consultation period runs from 15th February to 29th March 2018 and is your opportunity to express your views on the proposals. For more details go to: <http://roads.highways.gov.uk/projects/a417-missing-link/>
- c. Following the recent successful completion of the A40 Elmbridge Court Roundabout improvements, Gloucestershire County Council will shortly be starting work to **improve the A40 Over Roundabout**. The scheme will improve traffic flow across this roundabout, which can be heavily congested at peak times. Highways England will also be using this opportunity to resurface the roundabout. The work will include;
 - A40 westbound; widening of the approach carriageway to provide three lanes at the roundabout junction and increase the approach lane width and capacity;
 - A417 southbound; extending the three-lane approach to increase lane capacity;
 - Widening of the carriageway around the roundabout to provide a third lane;

Limited vegetation and tree clearance on both the roundabout and the approaches on the A417 southbound and A40 westbound, will take place in February 2018, to prepare for the widening of the carriageways as detailed above. Main work is planned to start on site in May 2018 and will last for around 16 weeks. To enable the contractor to complete construction within this timeframe, and to keep lane closures on the A40 and A417 to a minimum, it will be necessary to have overnight closures. Further information is available on our website at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/major-schemes

- d. The Parish Council have received a number of messages via **the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme** which are included here for general awareness:
 - i. Flight Ticket Fraud: Fraudsters are attempting to entice victims who are looking for cheap flights abroad. Victims have reported booking tickets via websites or a "popular" ticket broker, only to discover that after payment via bank transfer or electronic wire transfer, the tickets/booking references received are counterfeit. In some cases, all communications between the company or broker and the victim have been severed.
Pay safe: Be cautious if you're asked to pay directly into a private individual's bank account. Paying by direct bank transfer is like paying by cash – the money is very difficult to trace and is not refundable. Wherever possible, pay by credit card or a debit card. Conduct research on any company you're considering purchasing tickets from; for example, are there any negative reviews or forum posts by previous customers online? Don't just rely on one review - do a thorough online search to check the company's credentials.
 - ii. Phantom Debt Fraud: Action Fraud has recently experienced an increase in the number of calls to members of the public by fraudsters requesting

payments for a “phantom” debt. The fraud involves being cold-called by someone purporting to be a debt collector, bailiff or other type of enforcement agent. The fraudster may claim to be working under instruction of a court, business or other body and suggest they are recovering funds for a non-existent debt. The fraudsters are requesting payment, sometimes by bank transfer and if refused, they threaten to visit homes or workplaces in order to recover the supposed debt that is owed. In some cases, the victim is also threatened with arrest. From the reports Action Fraud has received, this type of fraud is presently occurring throughout the UK.

- iii. People are also receiving telephone calls from someone pretending to be from the Metropolitan Police suggesting that the person’s credit card had been cloned and used but that the criminal was in custody in custody. They then request credit card details “to confirm ownership” and then use the card to make purchases on-line.

- e. In response to the action in the **Forthampton Parish Plan to introduce a small number of additional houses**, a meeting between the Parish Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council Planning Department has been arranged in March to discuss options.

2. Church Notices:

- a. **Services at St Mary’s, Forthampton** for the coming weeks are:
 - i. Sunday 25th February at 09:30 (Holy Communion)
 - ii. Sunday 4th March at 6 p.m. (Evensong)
 - iii. Sunday 11th February at 09:30 (Morning Worship) Coffee and biscuits will be served after the service.
 - iv. Sunday 18th March at 11 a.m. (Sung Eucharist)

3. Village Hall Notices:

- a. Thank you to everyone who braved the cold to attend the **February Fayre** where a further £73 was raised to support the ongoing maintenance of the Hall. The date to remember for the March Fayre is Saturday 3rd from 10.30 until 12.30. Hope to see you there! (see poster)
- b. At the **AGM** held on Monday 12th February the Chair, Lyndon McLean, sadly stood down (as he’d warned us he would do) after five years of being at the helm. The Committee and Trustees would like to offer their sincere thanks to Lyndon for all his hard work and dedication. Much has been achieved and everyone appreciates all that Lyndon has contributed to making it happen. A note of thanks must also go to Mark Gouldbourne for his regular and valuable contribution to the work of the Committee and help at so very many of the monthly Fayres, Christmas Parties and events. Both will be greatly missed.
- c. The current Committee are also extremely grateful to all those people who came along to the AGM to offer their help moving forward. More hands make light work and all that. Details of roles and responsibilities for the new committee members will be announced in the next newsletter

- 4. At the February meeting of **Forthampton WI** the speaker, Mike Bottomley, dressed in the attire of Katherine Parr’s personal almoner, Miles Coverdale, and gave a fascinating insight into her life, explaining her connection with Sudeley Castle, where she is buried. An extremely

intelligent and wealthy lady, following her two previous marriages (both of which ended in widowhood), she caught the eye of Henry VIII. Although in love with Thomas Seymour, she agreed to marry Henry. What else could she do? Her interest in the reformed faith led to her arrest warrant being issued for heresy but she escaped trial (and execution) by playing devil's advocate and appealing to her husband's ego. Katherine was the first woman to have two books published; she also was an excellent stepmother to Henry's three children and those of her first husband. After Henry died, she married Thomas Seymour, who became enamoured of the future Queen Elizabeth. Katherine died in Sudeley Castle, following the birth of her daughter Mary and, sadly, Thomas was not present at her funeral.

The presentation was excellent, with Katherine's life being enacted in the grounds of the castle. We were also shown two exquisite replica headdresses (like those worn by the Henry's queens), and made by Alan's wife. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, 13th March, when the speaker will be Brian Partridge, whose topic will be "You cannot be serious", the story of a Wimbledon linesman. For further information about Forthampton WI, please contact Veronica Silber on 01684 591513.

5. The next outing of the **Sevenside Walking Group** will be on 19th March when the group will take a local walk around Tredington and Stoke Orchard. Then in April we will be driving further afield to enjoy a lovely walk through bluebell strewn countryside near Monmouth. So, if you enjoy walking and meeting friends, simply contact Alan Brown on 01684 291220 or e-mail: skepcott1@gmail.com for full details.