

PARISH COUNCILLOR PROFILE: SALLYANN CARTWRIGHT

“I joined the Parish Council seven years ago but my local connections go back much further! I was born at the Swan public house, which my parents ran until they retired in 1986. My four children were all raised in Blakedown and attended the school here.

“One of the most important things you need to do as Parish Councillors is to listen to other people’s opinions, even when you

don’t agree with them. And also it’s about coming up with amicable solutions.

“If I could wave a magic wand, I’d like to be able to turn the clock

back to a time when our villages were more self-sufficient. We used to have our own policeman and police station, not to mention a garage, butchers, green-grocers, paper shop and hairdressers. At least we still have our village shop and post office!

“My motivation as a Parish Councillor comes from my belief that some things should be kept the same so that the generations to come can enjoy them.

“I work at Hatt Kitchens at Hartlebury, and in my spare time I enjoy baking, knitting and gardening.”



WELCOME TO ANGELA!

As the Parish Council says goodbye to Roger Gurney, a warm welcome is extended to the new Clerk, Angela Preece. Angela, who lives in Alveley, Shropshire, is already Clerk to Upper Arley. In the past she has been employed by Wyre Forest District Council as an Environmental Maintenance Supervisor.

MEETING DATES

Forthcoming Parish Council meetings are on 21st January, 18th February and 18th March at 7.30pm in the Sports Pavilion. You are most welcome to attend.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about items for future issues, please contact the Parish Council Clerk on 01746 781171 or 07572 108924 or email the Chair at peter_dearden@ajg.com

Jan
2015

CHURCHILL & BLAKEDOWN NEWS

Published by Churchill & Blakedown Parish Council

HAVE YOUR SAY ON FUTURE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

It’s been four years since the last Housing Survey was published for Churchill and Blakedown, and the Parish Council is delighted that Wyre Forest District Council has agreed to provide the funding and manpower to conduct a new one.

Look out for your copy of the survey, which should be ap-

pearing through your letterbox within the next few weeks. Please make sure you complete and return it so that your views and future requirements can be taken into account.

The survey results will influence our Neighbourhood Plan (see p3 for more details about this) and will be used by the District Council when considering any future developments. This time round, the scope of questions has widened to include all types of housing, not just social. Parish Council Chair Pete Dearden says, “Of course it’s still going to be tricky to decide where new housing



should go without compromising the Green Belt, but at least this survey will get us off to a good start by establishing what the need is going to be.”

You’ll need to return the survey within four weeks once it’s been delivered, and a free post envelope will be provided. As an extra incentive to respond, each completed and returned survey will be entered into a prize draw.



WE'RE BLAZING THE TRAIL ... AND IT'S LITTER-FREE!

Churchill and Blakedown are leading the way in Wyre Forest when it comes to dealing with the age-old issue of keeping the environment tidy. Under the Localism initiative, your Parish Council secured a grant of almost £5,000 from Wyre Forest District Council to purchase and install 29 litter bins throughout the two villages. Perhaps you've spotted some of the smart new bins appearing as the installation work progresses?

The Parish Council has been assisted in this project by Blakedown resident and retired building inspector John Lorton who has taken a leading role in sourcing and specifying the bin design. He explains, "We approached three potential suppliers and the Staffordshire company Broxap came out as a clear winner. They even added cigarette stubbing plates and smart lettering with the Parish Council's name, at no extra cost."

The new bins are suitable for both litter and dog waste, and come in two sizes: a post-mounted 40 litre bin and a floor standing 120 litre bin. They'll be emptied regularly by village handyman Mark Jones who says, "It's my job to help keep our parish looking nice and



Resident John Lorton and village handyman Mark Jones with one of the new bins

the new bins are going to make a real difference. We'll have far more bins than ever before. Churchill will have at least four whereas previously there was only one."

Parish Councillor Jim Long agrees, "We've almost doubled the number of bins and hope that by supplying free dog waste bags at 15 of the locations, we'll really encourage people to keep our villages clean. It's all about loving where you live!"

The Parish Council took over responsibility for emptying litter bins in the Parish in July, and is planning to take on further responsibilities under the Localism initiative such as grass mowing and safeguarding the future of the village car park.

FAREWELL TO PARISH COUNCIL CLERK

The Parish Council Clerk,, Roger Gurney, is about to retire from his post. He looks back on his 15 years association with Churchill and Blakedown.

"I recall that the main issues in the early years were the large number of planning applications, and problems with the A.456 trunk road such as speeding, litter and lack of verge cutting. The same problems still exist but now the road is managed by Worcestershire CC.

"One of the most significant changes I've seen has been the appointment of Mark Jones as the Parish lengthsman and handyman. He's the man on the ground looking after minor roads, footways, litter picking and grass cutting. I've also seen the playground renewed and the building of the sports pavilion, and I'll continue to follow the signal box restoration with interest.

"I was particularly pleased to have ar-

ranged for the historic milestone on Birmingham Road, near Churchill Lane to be restored at its original location, and for it to be listed nationally as being of historic interest.

"The greatest challenge over my 15 years has been keeping up with changes in legislation and responsibilities of parish councils.

"My advice to my successor is to keep up to date and enjoy the work! I have found all parish councillors supportive and co-operative and I can see no reason for this to change.

"With my newly found time

I'll be getting my garden straight, taking more holidays, spending more time with my young grandchildren, and keeping up my hobby of church bell ringing.

"Finally, a big thank you to all the residents and Parish Councillors who've shared their local knowledge and given me support during my time as clerk.



GOOD PROGRESS FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Work on the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan is now well underway. The Parish Council has used a substantial Government grant to pay for a specialist planning consultant's services. His expertise will ensure our Plan does not clash with either Government or Wyre Forest planning or other policies.

The draft Plan will be published and made available for public consultation later this year, when all residents will be able to comment. All views will be

taken into account as we move forward to produce the final Plan, which will be put to the vote in a referendum.

The Neighbourhood Plan will cover housing, community issues, heritage and the environment, traffic and the economy of Churchill and Blakedown, and will set standards for local planning policy through till 2026.

There's still a lot to do, but the Parish Council hopes the Plan will be up and running by the end of this year.