



Berkswich Parish Council

NEWSLETTER

Christmas 2024



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Welcome to our newsletter for Christmas 2024. Over the Summer we attended two local events at Milford, held two police surgeries and have been busy at Hollybush Coppice. In 2025 we hope to have the flower beds in the parish replanted and to introduce a scheme for planters to enhance our local area. We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our residents a **Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year 2025.**

Road Safety

Berkswich Primary School recently raised a concern about safety for children and parents walking along narrow roads on the way to school. Because Walton on the Hill is a conservation area it would not be possible to introduce pavements without causing significant harm to the special character of the village. Drivers and pedestrians are requested to take great care particularly at school opening and closing times. It is also important that roadside hedges are kept trimmed and not allowed to overhang the carriageway to ensure there is room for both pedestrians and vehicles.

Parking is another big issue at school opening and closing times at both Berkswich Primary and Walton High Schools. Please park considerately and don't obstruct the road, residents' drives or mount the pavements.

Precept for 2025/26

The budget and precept for 2025/26 were agreed at the Parish Council meeting on 3 December 2024. The decision was for an increase of 3.2%, £1.69 a year for Band D properties. This will bring the precept for a Band D property to £54.03 per annum, the equivalent of just over £1 per week. The precept is collected on our behalf as part of the Council Tax by Stafford Borough Council.

The precept is the majority of the regular income that the Parish Council have and it pays for grounds maintenance for verges, footpaths, Walton and Hollybush Coppices plus the playing fields; staffing costs; and all day-to-day running costs for the Council. We hope you will agree we offer value for money.

Planters Scheme

The Parish Council have decided to introduce a scheme for residents to take responsibility for a planter near to their home/business and to claim up to £20 (receipts required) from the Council for compost, plants, bulbs, etc. If you have a planter in a public space near you, or if you think there is a suitable location for a planter near you, and you would be happy to look after it, water it etc please contact the Clerk (details on back page).

Cedar Way Changes

A local resident attended the public session of a Parish Council meeting recently to raise concerns about the dilapidated bus shelter on Cedar Way. The Clerk made enquiries into ownership of the bus shelter and was able to get Streetscene from Stafford Borough Council to remove it which has improved the look of the area.



The Parish Council noticeboard outside Berkswich Primary School has also been removed to allow the school to have a boundary fence at least 2m high to comply with DfE guidance.

Hollybush Coppice

If you have visited Hollybush Playing Fields recently you may have noticed some improvements to Hollybush Coppice. The fenceline has been slightly moved and a gate has been added to allow Berkswich Primary School to access the Coppice directly.



During half term, tree maintenance and felling to remove rotten trees and branches was undertaken and then flailing took place to remove brambles and ivy which would have been a hazard to children using the Coppice.

Berkswich Primary School have been provided with gardening tools and wheelbarrows. Hedgerow plants will be planted by the school children in the coming weeks. The new hedgerow will provide privacy for both the children and homeowners on Holly Drive whose properties back onto the Coppice. Six trees will also be planted along the fence between Berkswich Primary School and the football field. This work has been partly funded by a Farming in Protected Landscapes grant from Defra (via Staffs County Council) with the remainder coming from Parish Council funds.

Remembrance Sunday

Cllr Sue Francis laid a wreath at the War Memorial at the top of Radford Bank on Sunday 10 November along with The Scouts and representatives from Berkswich Parish Churches among others.

Barley Mow's Macmillan Event

Cllrs Ann and Malcolm Millichap and Cllr Alan Taylor attended the Barley Mow's Macmillan fundraising event on 3 August 2024 at Milford Common. It was a very warm day and they managed to raise almost £100 for Macmillan Cancer Support from the Parish Council's stall alone.



berkswich-pc.gov.uk

We recently moved to a .gov.uk web domain and our website address and email addresses have changed. Please see below.

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