

Dear Romsley Resident,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Parish Council Newsletter. Since the last edition we have continued to work hard to improve our community and, in this newsletter, we will update you on the many areas we have progressed in as well as the increasing challenges we now face.

I'm delighted that we have completed the restoration of the telephone kiosk on St Kenelm's Road and successfully installed a community defibrillator. I would like to thank Hillside Ladies, the Learning Journey Nursery and Severn Trent Water for their generous fundraising support. I am also pleased with the ongoing improvements to the ambience of the Parish; in partnership with Hunnington Parish Council the newly installed bus shelter and planter look excellent. We would like to thank our County Councillor Karen May for her funding support for this, as well as for the new memorial benches that we have installed in the park. We continue to install the dog mess bag dispensers at problem locations and in the coming months we will be installing new bins and replacing a number of the damaged bollards and signposts around the Parish.

A new community group called the "Friends of Romsley" has been established this Spring and we have been working together to undertake a neighbourhood litter pick in which 10 bags of rubbish were collected. In the next few weeks, we will also be working with the group to trial some floral planters at various locations in the village. You can find out more about the group and how you can become involved on page 2 of this newsletter.

2017 saw two very successful community events. In July we held our first celebration of St Kenelm's Day with a very successful "Last Night of the Proms" concert performed by the Stourport on Severn Brass Band and a fireworks display. This free event was very well received by the 300 attendees who joined the celebration, and we are looking forward to this year's event being held on July 14th. Please see page 3 for more details. We also held another very successful Romstock music festival in June. Romstock has continued to grow in success over the past 8 years. However, because of the increasing focus on safety and security, the legal demands now being imposed by the authorities are rightfully very high and it is becoming much harder and more expensive to organise the festival. Last year many of you will have seen the increased levels of security, paramedic support and the greater emphasis on evacuation routes and signage we have had to introduce.

Whilst preparing for this year's Romstock we have had to face two tough safety decisions around the freedom to bring in alcohol and the exclusion of glass, both of which are frequently banned at other similar events. With regard to the alcohol policy, we know that this is one of the things you enjoy and we have resisted these pressures so **you can bring your own alcohol to Romstock 2018** in line with the T&Cs that can be found on our website.

However, with regards to glassware and glass-bottles, it is vital we protect you and your families from the horrific injuries broken glass can cause. Forbidding glass is now normal and expected practice for this type of music event, and if a severe injury occurred because of glass, the licensing authorities are unlikely to grant us the necessary permissions to hold Romstock again in the future. For this reason, **we will be enforcing a no glass policy at this years Romstock**; please decant any beers, wines or spirits into appropriate plastic containers.

We do understand that this is an added inconvenience, but it is for your safety and will help protect the future of the event. Also, to help minimise the inconvenience to you, we have ensured that the prices at the on-site bar are competitive, and we have published a price list on the back of this newsletter. Thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

Finally, the current Parish Council will come to an end in May 2019, when new elections will be held. Parish Councils play a vital part in our democracy, and on page 7 and 8 there is an outline of the roles and responsibilities of Parish Councils. Going forward, Romsley will continue to need an active and inclusive Parish Council who will fight for the interests of our community. As such and regardless of whether you have supported the policies of this Parish Council or whether you believe things could have been done differently, I urge you to consider standing at the coming election. If you are interested, please feel free to contact the Parish Clerk who will be happy to advise you on the process in a completely impartial way.

Kind Regards,

Richard Arrowsmith

Romsley Parish Council Chairperson.

Romsley Parish Council update

Spring 2018

Contact the Parish Council

If you would like to contact the Council on any matter please contact

Ruth Mullett
Clerk to the Council
Tel - 01562 712050
ruth.mullett@btconnect.com



SmartWater®
protecting
Romsley
(see page 2)



**Through
Romsley &
Hunnington**
(see page 5)

Please help us to keep you and your family safe, no glassware or glass bottles at Romstock 2018. Thank you for your support.



Smartwater Protecting our community from crime

Romsley Parish Council has teamed up with West Mercia Police to make Romsley a “We Don’t Buy Crime” village by supplying all households with a SmartWater® kit to protect their homes. SmartWater® is an easy-to-apply liquid that enables the Police to trace valuables back to the owner.

A “drop-in session” was recently held where villagers could collect their kits. The drop-in session was a great success where we broke all records for a launch as part of the “We Don’t Buy Crime” project. We are also allowing residents to collect packs at our next Parish Council meeting, Romstock and the St Kenelm’s Day celebration.

If you have not yet received your kit and cannot make any of the future collection sessions, you can get in contact with the Parish Clerk to arrange collection on 01562 710255.

You can find out more information on the Smartwater project by contacting Romsley Parish Council at <http://romsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk>

The Parish Council have obtained a grant from the Police Commissioner as well as part-funding the cost of the packs to provide them free of charge to all residents.

Our aim is to ensure that every household in Romsley is equipped with a Smartwater pack.

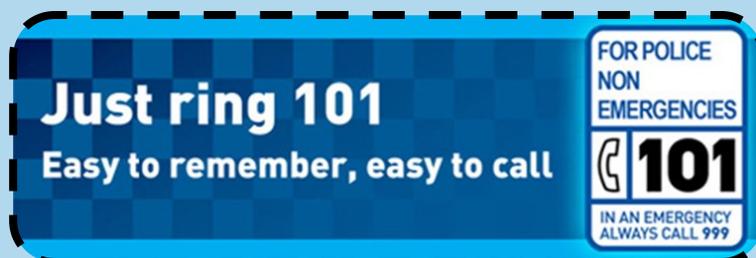
There will also be signage installed in the village to send a clear message to criminals that Romsley is united and determined to protect our valuables against acquisitive crime.



In the meantime, if you are suspicious that a crime is being committed in Romsley, please help your community and contact West Mercia Police to report it. In an emergency use 999. However for less urgent matters for example; if your car has been stolen, if your property has been damaged, if you suspect drug use or dealing; or to give the police information about crime in your area please ring 101.

You can also contact Hagley and Rubery Safer Neighbourhood Team at,

Email: hr.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
Twitter: [@HagRuberyCops](https://twitter.com/HagRuberyCops)



Telephone Box restoration and community Defibrillator

The Parish Council is very pleased to confirm the successful refurbishment of the telephone kiosk on St Kenelm's Rd and the installation and commissioning of our community defibrillator. We would like to thank the Hillside Ladies, the Learning Journey Nursery, Severn Trent and Bromsgrove District Council for their fundraising efforts or grants which helped pay for kiosk and equipment.

To gain access to the unit you must ring 999. The operator will provide the access code as well as send an ambulance although the defibrillator is very easy to use and provides audio and video instruction to users. We are also arranging for some training for those residents who may be interested. Please register your interest with the Parish Clerk on 01562 710255.



St Kenelm's Day celebrations

Last July we held a St Kenelm's Day celebration in the park. Over 300 residents joined us for a "last night of the proms" concert and a firework display; the feedback was really positive from everyone who attended and we were able to raise several hundred pounds for St Kenelm's School through the bar and raffle.

Few villages can claim to have their own Saint and the murder of a king! For centuries the residents of Romsley have come together around St Kenelm's Day, 17th July, to celebrate our community and its history.

Given the success of the inaugural event, we are going to hold a similar event on Saturday, July 14th. Once again the event will be free to attend, and any money raised at the bar will be given to community causes. As well as the fireworks and the Stourport-on-Severn Brass Band (www.stourportband.co.uk) performing a "Last Night of the Proms" concert we are also being joined by the Bluebird Belles who are going to dazzle us with some 1940's glamour, (www.1940strio.co.uk).

Pack a picnic, bring some deckchairs and enjoy a summer evening celebrating Romsley!



St Kenelm's Day 2018

Celebrate with us on Saturday 14th July

A free concert and fireworks display at
Romsley Park from 7:30pm

"Last Night of the Proms"
with the
Stourport on Severn Brass Band
&
1940's retro glamour from
The Bluebird Belles

Bring a picnic and enjoy snacks and drinks
from the bar



*It is estimated that the celebrations will end by 10:45pm,
For pedestrian safety no parking will be available at the Park or on surrounding roads.
Our standard T&C's apply to the event and are available at romsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk*



The Friends of Romsley Group – *Looking after our Parish, protecting our environment.*

A new group has now started up in Romsley Village. Working in partnership with the Parish Council, we are helping to improve our local environment, and everyone is invited to come along and join in!

We meet every third Thursday of the month, at 7pm at St Kenelm's School Hall. We are looking at entering Romsley into the RHS "It's Your Neighbourhood" competition with Romsley in Bloom and with the Parish Council we are looking at bringing more flowers to the Village with new planters. We also want to work with the local Wildlife Trust to look at wildflowers on the verges as well as capture other residents' ideas.

Our first activity was a Litter Pick on the Great British Spring Clean Weekend on a cold day at the end of March.

Our next activity will be planting up the new planters, when they arrive, to help make our village look an even more beautiful place.

The group is always open for more people to come and join us, so if you are passionate about the village then come along!

We try to keep meetings relaxed and get together at the Swallows Nest for a drink after.

Our next meeting dates are:

- Thursday 7th June
- Thursday 19th July
- Thursday 20th September
- Thursday 18th October
- Thursday 15th November

Please let us know if you want to come and join by contacting Sarah Royal on sarahroyal09@gmail.com or 07982 401933



Damage to grass verges

During the winter there were many incidents of reckless and irresponsible 4X4 owners driving across the green areas of the Parish.

The worst case was on the common land outside the Church which is a protected site because of the plants and flowers growing there. The damage was devastating to the rare plants with tyre ruts across its full length that were 18 inches deep in places. Restoration has required over 20 tonnes of topsoil, many hundreds of pounds and hours of work by our maintenance team, all of which could have been utilised elsewhere in the Parish.



Prevention is difficult and costly because of the length and number of verges in the Parish as well as the need to comply with road safety rules. Following negotiations with the County Council, we gained permission to start installing wooden rails to protect the common land of the Church. Eventually, we will extend these rails around the entire location.

Driving on verges is illegal and dangerous. It also shows a total disregard to our Parish and its residents. The Police and authorities are aware and will prosecute this offence. If it persists, an option to install covert CCTV to capture registration numbers is being considered.

Romsley Litter Picks

Many thanks to residents, members of the Friends of Romsley Group and Parish Councillors and their families who all helped in the recent Litter Picking events.

Two litter picks have taken place during the last 12 months. The first in September 2017 and the second in March 2018. In combination, these two sessions have collected more than 20 bags of litter from our streets, hedges and verges.

More litter picks will be organised in the future. So, if you want to help keep Romsley beautiful let us know your details via the Parish Clerk or contact the Friends of Romsley Group. We'll also put the dates of any future litter picks on the website.



McDonald's litter - we're not loving it -

We've been surprised by the volume of litter coming from McDonald's. Much of it appears to be thrown from vehicles travelling through the Parish late in the evening. We have contacted McDonald's about this to see if they can provide support and fund some additional bins.

Safer roads in Romsley

Please do
your part!



The Parish Council are continuing to lobby Worcestershire County Council who, as the Highway Authority for the area, is the only organisation that can make the necessary changes to improve our roads.

We have held several meetings with the most senior members of the Highways Department at which we are actively promoting the need for safety and parking improvements across the Parish. We are receiving invaluable support from our County Councillor, Karen May, on these matters and we are publishing all our correspondence with the Highways Department on the Parish Council website.

From this dialogue, proposals have been tabled by the County Council for improvements. These include upgraded road markings and signs on the Bromsgrove Road, the positioning of bollards opposite the school to stop vehicles mounting the pavement, as well as a reduction in the speed limit on Dayhouse Bank to 30 mph.

The Parish Council welcomes these changes and you can see the proposed plans on our website. However, we do not believe these go far enough to address the safety problems on the Parish roads which have had repeated collisions and safety incidents occurring on them. Going forward we will continue to lobby for additional improvements including a proper pedestrian crossing, improvements to school and shopping area parking as well as methods to reduce traffic speeds across the Parish.

In the meantime we can all help to improve road safety by adhering to the speed limit of 30mph on all the roads through Romsley and Hunnington.

If we all travel at the speed limit, then all the vehicles behind us will also have to travel at the same speed, making the roads safer for everyone in the Parish, including you, your family and your friends.

Travelling just a little bit slower really doesn't make your journey time very much longer, but it makes a huge difference to road safety.

Let's all do our bit to make Romsley and Hunnington's Roads safer and ensure no one else has to lose friends and family in such tragic circumstances.

Thank you for your support.

Development and planning

All responsibility for planning and development control sits with Bromsgrove District Council.

Legally the Parish Council must be made aware of any planning applications, and we have the statutory right to comment and address the district planning committee. However, we cannot directly stop or approve any planning application.

During 2017 many residents and the Parish Council worked together to protect the Rolling Hills from development. We made strong arguments and ensured that the District Council understood the level of community concern.

However, at no point were we guaranteed success and it was vital that as many people as possible passed on their views to the Planning Officers and District Councillors.

Central Government has set very ambitious targets for house building. They have also changed the planning regulations which has deliberately given developers far more power and reduced community influence.

Whether we like it or not, in the coming years we will see more developments proposed in the Parish. In recognition of this, the Parish Council is taking a pragmatic approach. We will continue to build constructive relationships with the District Planning Team to improve our influence.

Experience also shows that just saying no to developments rarely works, as the Parish Council is simply ignored and loses any influence to mitigate the impact of a development.

As such we are committed to undertaking constructive dialogue with all involved parties in order to improve and change those developments that significantly impact the quality of our resident's lives, damage the character of our Parish, or that have a negative impact on our utilities or infrastructure such as roads.

We will lobby for all significant developments to provide a community legacy which improves our community and the services and facilities within it.

We will also do this in an open and transparent way and publish our formal responses and correspondence on the Parish Council website.

Grass cutting, litter picking and fly tipping

Three areas of ongoing concern are: grass cutting, litter picking and the response to fly tipping, all of which are the responsibility of Bromsgrove District Council.

Due to budget reductions, these services have seen reductions in the numbers of employees and an increase in the age of the equipment being used. The resultant decrease in the effectiveness and quality of these services are apparent to all.

During 2017 we approached Bromsgrove District Council in an attempt to move responsibility and funding to the Parish Council so that we could deliver a better and more efficient service.

Despite offering to deliver the service to improved performance criteria and offering an upfront reduction in costs; Bromsgrove District Council would not enter into negotiations. Nevertheless, we have continued to raise quality concerns and to lobby for transfer of these amenity services as all of them could be improved if the Parish Council were responsible.

To view the results of the Romsley Residents questionnaire 2017 please visit;
<http://romsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk/2017-residents-questionnaire-results>

The Purpose and responsibilities of the Parish Council.

One of the issues repeatedly identified in the resident's questionnaire responses was a desire for greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the Parish Council.

What is a Parish Council?

A Parish Council is a local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the Parish. It is the level of government closest to the community, with the district authority (Bromsgrove District Council) sitting above it in the hierarchy. The activities of a Parish Council fall into three main categories: representing the local community, delivering services to meet local needs, and improving quality of life and community well being. The powers of Parish Councils were recently strengthened in the Localism Act which including the extension of the "General Power of Competence" to eligible Parish councils. Romsley Parish Council successfully adopted these additional powers in 2016.

However, it is correct to say that on their own, Parish Councils have only limited powers to make the big decisions. But they do have the ability to negotiate with those other organisations that make the final decisions, such as the District Council, County Council or Police etc. In this respect, Parish Councils are extremely influential. The organisations that make the final decisions know that a Parish Council gives the best reflection of how a community feels about something and its views will be taken seriously.

What powers and decisions do Parish Councils make?

Parish Councils make all kinds of decisions on issues that affect the local community. Probably the most common topics that they get involved with are improving public amenities, enhancing public areas and open spaces, campaigning for and delivering better services and facilities. They also have a voice on planning matters as they are statutory consultees, though they are not the decision maker on planning matters as this responsibility sits with the District Council.

The Parish Council has the power to raise money through taxation; this is called the precept. The precept is the Parish Council's share of the council tax. In Romsley the precept is around £76 pounds per year for a band D house which is around 4% of the Council Tax Bill.

In Romsley, the Parish Council provides a wide variety of local services, including the park and all its amenities, the allotments, the bus shelters, car parks, common and open spaces, community safety and crime reduction measures, events and festivals, footpaths, leisure and sports facilities, litter bins, litter picking, campaigning on traffic calming measures, maintenance of trees and hedgerows, floral displays, notice boards, the community defibrillator, drainage maintenance, signposts, Christmas decorations, supporting our young people and environmental protection projects.

How much time does it take? Do the councillors get paid?

The members of the Council are all volunteers, no Councillor in Romsley receives any payment or claims any expenses for their work. There is a Chairman's annual allowance of £250 pounds per year, but the current Chairman donates all of this to good causes in the Parish. Romsley Parish Council currently has two part-time employees each working around 20 hours a week; their pay rates sit within the nationally agreed framework for Council employees.

Council accounts are prepared and audited annually by independent auditors with returns being made to the relevant authorities.

Romsley Parish Council usually meets on the second Monday of each month for the council meeting, to which members of the public are also invited. Meetings may last two or three hours, depending on the agenda set for the meeting to discuss. We have a separate committee to deal with the organisation and management of public events such as Romstock. In addition to the regular meetings, Councillors are required to attend other meetings to represent the Parish or community, for example acting as a representative to the District or County Council.

How long does a parish councillor serve for?

Elections in Romsley take place every 4 years, with the next election due in May 2019. If they then want to stay in the post, they must stand for re-election.

Can I be a Parish Councillor?

To stand for election on a Parish Council, you must:

- be a UK or Commonwealth citizen, or;
- be a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, or;
- be a citizen of another Member state of the European Union;
- be a least 18 years old.

To be eligible to stand for an election for a particular Parish, you must:

- be an elector of the Parish, or;
- for the whole of the previous 12 months have occupied (as owner or tenant) land or other premises in the Parish, or;
- during the previous 12 months have worked in the Parish (as your principal or only place of work), or;
- for the whole of the previous 12 months lived in the Parish or within three miles of the Parish boundary.

You don't have to be connected to a political party.

If you do become a Parish Councillor, you will have to sign up to the Code of Conduct and adhere to the Council's standing orders.

Meet Your Parish Council

The recent residents survey, identified that a number of residents would like more information about the current membership of the Parish Council

Richard Arrowsmith — Chairperson



Richard lives in Dark Lane with his wife and young family. He has lived in the parish for the past 12 years.

He is a Technical Director working for a large Civil Engineering consultancy firm specialising in Highway Asset Management and investment planning.

Shaun Bolar — Vice-chairperson



Shaun Lives in Dark Lane and was born, raised and educated in the Halesowen area, moving to Romsley in 1995

He is a Cost Consultant and Project Manager, working within the construction industry for over 26 years, holding the position of Company Director, for the past 18 years.

Nigel Williamson — Parish Maintenance

Nigel lives in Dark Lane and is responsible for a variety of maintenance activities across our Parish. Nigel is widely experienced and provides similar services to a number of nearby Parishes in the borough.



Louise Bestwick — Councillor



Louise Bestwick lives in Dark Lane with her husband, and young son and daughter. She has lived in the parish for 8 years.

Louise has been a Primary School Teacher in Birmingham for the last 10 years.

Lesley Gray — Councillor



Lesley lives in Dark Lane and has resided in the Parish for twenty-seven years.

She is a retired teacher and spent the majority of her career in a school for children with special educational needs.

Derek Tilt — Councillor



Derek lives in Hillcrest Road and has resided in the parish since 1960. He has served as a Parish Councillor before and as Chairman in 2000. Derek is the Parish Council representative for the

village allotments. He has also helped in the running of the village horticultural show for the past 21 years.

John Shaw — Councillor



John lives on Dayhouse Bank and has lived in Romsley since 2000. He is a retired Automotive engineer and has a keen interest in rugby, being the current facilities

director at Stourbridge RFC. He is the most recent member of the Parish Council joining in 2017.

Dave Powell — Councillor



David lives in St Kenelm's Road with his wife and young son. He has lived in the Parish since May 2012.

He is a self-employed Management

Consultant working to improve processes and deliver projects across a variety of industries.

Ruth Mullett—Parish Clerk



Ruth lives in Hunnington and brings a wealth of experience and local knowledge serving as Parish Clerk for Romsley, Hunnington

and Clent.

Parish Council meetings second Monday of the month.

Romsley Parish Council will be meeting on the following dates at St Kenelm's School.

- ◆ Monday 11th June
- ◆ Monday 9th July
- ◆ **No meeting in August**
- ◆ Monday 10th September
- ◆ Monday 8th October
- ◆ Monday 12th November
- ◆ **No meeting in December**
- ◆ Monday 14th January
- ◆ Monday 11th February
- ◆ Monday 11th March
- ◆ Monday 8th April
- ◆ Council Elections Thursday 2nd May
- ◆ Parish Council AGM and inaugural meeting of new Parish Council; Monday 13th May

The meetings are open to all residents and commence at 7:00pm. The meeting opens with a public forum in which any matters can be raised with the Council before moving onto the main Council meeting.

This is a good way of understanding the business of the Council and we would be very glad to see you there.

Please feel free to continue to bring your own alcoholic drinks, but help us to keep you and your family safe.
No glass bottles or glassware at Romstock 2018.

Romstock

Saturday 9th June 12pm - 9pm
Romsley Playing Fields - St Kenelms Rd



THE QUARRYMEN
 THE BAND THAT BECAME THE BEATLES

Strictly
ABBA

Vaseline

PRONE 2 MADNESS
 THE MUSIC OF MADNESS AND A BIT MORE



Paul Shakespeare as
ELVIS

Colin Hall's Gypsy Blood

Felicity



Ticket Information

romsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

AVION TSL
 EVENTS. IT'S WHAT WE DO!



Early Bird Wristbands are now on sale from Romsley Co-op - 5 St Kenelms Road, Romsley *until June 6th (while stocks last)*

Early Bird Tickets can be purchased online (you will receive a unique code which will grant entry on the day) see the Romsley Parish Council Website/ Romstock Facebook page/ aviontsl.com/ticketing - *available until June 6th*

We only have a limited number of Romstock wristbands for sale. Purchase early to avoid disappointment. All sales are subject to the Terms and Conditions detailed on the Romsley Parish Council Website

Early Bird On Sale to Wednesday June 6th* - Early Bird tickets are NOT available on the day

£15 Adults

£3 Child (5-16 under 5's free)

No Parking On Site

On the Day

Prices on 9th June payable on the gate. Early Bird tickets are NOT available on the Day

£20 Adults £5 Child

Romstock 2018 bar prices

Banning glass and glass-bottles is the safe thing to do, But we understand the frustration it may cause. So to help remove some of the hassle we are guaranteeing the following bar prices.

- Ale — £3.00 a pint
- Larger — from £2.50 a bottle
- Cider — £ 3.30 a pint
- Sprints — £2.00 a shot
- Prosecco — from £2.50 a glass
- Wine — from £2.50 a glass

Romstock is a family event that we want everyone to enjoy in safety, please be aware of the following T&C's
 A visual inspection of the contents of all bags and containers will be undertaken on entry. You may bring reasonable quantities of alcohol for personal consumption; however excessive amounts of alcohol will not be allowed into Romstock. For safety reasons, please do not bring any type of glass, glassware, glass containers or glass bottles to the event. Any form of drug, legal-high or items deemed dangerous or offensive by the organisers is strictly prohibited. Parents and guardians are fully responsible for their children's safety and behaviour and must maintain appropriate supervision of them at all times. No Public parking will be available at the carpark or on surrounding roads. There is a zero-tolerance policy towards any anti-social or aggressive behaviour. The organiser's decision on all matters is final, and we retain the right to bar entry to or remove people from the event without refund.