

# ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## NEWSLETTER ISSUE: OCTOBER 2006

This newsletter, which is the first from the Parish Council, gives an idea of what the Council does and how your money is spent. Hopefully, one will be published at the end of each financial year so as to keep you, the Parishioners, informed

### **Romsley: One of Three**

Romsley Parish Council is one of the three local authorities responsible for the provision of services within the Romsley area. Worcestershire County Council is a first tier authority responsible for the strategic services of the area which include planning, highways, waste disposal and, above all, education. Bromsgrove District Council is responsible for the provision of most of the area's direct services, relating to such matters as planning applications, housing, leisure and recreation, and waste collection.

A Parish Council such as Romsley has a variety of powers conferred by statutes. Although its powers are not as extensive as those of County and District Councils, the Parish Council is not subordinate to either of those tiers of local government. The Parish Council is responsible for such functions as play areas, footpaths, open spaces, allotments etc. However, one of its most important responsibilities is to act as the voice of the Romsley community, and, as such, to advise and, when necessary, badger and complain to the two other tiers of local authorities when the Parish's interests are involved or are being compromised.

### **Major Activities of the Romsley Parish Council during 2005-2006**

#### ***Planning***

Romsley Parish Council has the facility to comment on all planning applications submitted to Bromsgrove District Council by parishioners, and this responsibility occupies a large part of the Council's deliberations. Planning is one of the most sensitive areas of the Parish's activities which directly affect parishioners. However, it must be stressed that the Parish Council has no power to make decisions on planning matters, but merely to advise. In fact, in 2005/2006, the Council had no objection to 23 submitted applications, but 4 of these were refused by District Council. Of the 8 to which the Parish raised objections, 5 were approved by District and 1 was withdrawn.

#### ***Playing Fields***

The development and running of the playing fields is the direct responsibility of the Parish Council and constitutes a large part of its annual budget. In this role, the Council strives to balance the various needs and interests of all parishioners, both young and old. The safety of children, is naturally, of prime importance, and any equipment provided has to be of the highest quality.

A Safety Officer employed by the Council inspects the play equipment each weekday, and RoSPA carries out an annual inspection.

In addition to general maintenance, such as new fencing, gates and litter bins, an extensive drainage project has been successfully completed, made possible by a grant of £15000.00 from District Council.

#### ***Environmental Issues***

The Parish Council is responsible for the provision of a number of environmental services, including the provision of benches, litter bins, dog bins, and spring bulb planting.

A voluntary Footpath Warden walks the rights of way to identify any problems and arranges necessary repairs.

A voluntary Tree Warden checks the safety of the trees within the parish.

An employed parishioner ensures on a weekly basis that the dog bins are emptied and that the playing fields and footways throughout the village are kept litter free.

**Allotments**

The Parish Council provides an allotment site at Winwood Heath Road. There are at present 26 allotments – all occupied. There is a waiting list, and Council policy is that, as and when a plot becomes vacant, Romsley parishioners on the waiting list have priority over those from other areas.

**Finance**

The Parish Council is required to set an annual budget having undertaken a risk assessment of all its activities and agreed its policies. To fund its budget, the Council sets a precept, which is the amount of money included in your Council Tax bill. The precept set for 2005/2006 was £16000.00; to allow for increased costs and the provision of possible new services, this was increased to £17000.00 for 2006/2007. A reserve fund of £9000.00 is deposited at District Council, which is added to and drawn upon as and when determined by the needs of the Parish.

**Dayhouse Bank**

Romsley Parish Council often acts as the mouthpiece of its parishioners, even in areas where it has no direct responsibility. The Council continues to support the residents of Dayhouse Bank in their efforts to restrict traffic speeding. Hopefully, a recent meeting with PC Lord will achieve positive results.

**Health Services**

Members of the Council attended a meeting dealing with NHS services at Bromsgrove Council offices. Here the meeting was informed that the health services (or lack of them) offered to Romsley residents were woefully short of what they should be and urged the District Council representatives who were present to put the case for better health services for Romsley residents.

**Affordable Housing**

The Parish Council is aware of Bromsgrove Housing Trust's attempts to find affordable housing. Its possible interest in this regard to the Waverley Crescent/Hedgerows garage site has caused anxiety to some parishioners. As a result, the Parish Council is attempting to keep the activities of the Housing Trust under review and has been given assurance by the Trust that it will be kept informed of any developments.

**YOUR COUNCIL**

Parish Councils are required to adopt a Code of Conduct, to which all Councillors must sign up.

All members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend the monthly meetings of the Parish Council. Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, excluding August, and are held at Romsley Primary School, Bromsgrove Road. Details are displayed in the Parish notice boards. There is a period set aside at each meeting for members of the public to talk with Councillors and to raise any subject of parochial interest.

Should parishioners think the Parish Council can help in any way, or if you have ideas as to how any of the services provided can be improved, please get in touch with any Councillor or the Clerk. Again, details are in the notice boards.

**Councillors:**        **Mr I A Hodgetts (Chairman)**  
                             **Mrs M A Bayfield**  
                             **Mr D Crump**  
                             **Mr P Crump**  
                             **Mr D Hancox**  
                             **Dr K Isaac Henry**  
                             **Mrs K Uppal**

**Clerk:**                **Mrs P L Taylor**



