

# BILLING PARISH COUNCIL BULLETIN

SERVING BELLINGE, ECTON BROOK,  
GREAT BILLING and LITTLE BILLING



Newsletter No. 30

Winter 2017

## Double Success for Bellinge

**H**UGE congratulations are due to Bellinge for their success in attaining two prestigious awards: Northamptonshire Partnership Homes - Best Community Garden 2017 Gold Award, and Northampton in Bloom - Community Group Gold Award 2017.

During 2016 Bellinge Community House, a registered local charity based in Bellinge Ward within the Parish of Great Billing, applied for funding from Groundworks under the Tesco carrier bag scheme. Our organisational aim was to make small improvements around the area in which we are based - and that was the start of Bellinge Gets Better. We chose this project name based on the views of residents in 2017 living in the parish, and the need to have a more positive outlook for our young people rather than the negativity from over 20 years ago lingering - in their view still feeling stigmatised, and that view is not supportive of how they would like to view where they live. Working with the community, starting with Bellinge Youth Group 8-12 years, to begin with we planted over 350 Bulbs. We received many positive comments when spring arrived in 2017 and an array of colour adorned the local hub where many residents in the parish use the community facilities of the Co-op, take-aways, the local pub, Bellinge Community House or Bellinge Community Centre. We knew we wanted to keep improving the aesthetics for local people and decided to have a plan that was supported by our Ward Councillor Andrew Kilbride and, at that time the Mayor, Cllr Christopher Malpas.



*Middle Ward (Bellinge) Parish Councillor Dennis Nash (right) at the presentation of the Northampton in Bloom - Community Group Gold Award 2017.*

We started off this project with residents providing support and it has gone from an idea to a reality. It's been a huge success, combining the hard work of lead volunteer on this project Jon Porter, and with Parish Councillor Dennis Nash, who is also Trustee of Bellinge Community House, playing an active role in the project.

The community response to the improvements has been overwhelming - messages on our Facebook page, comments from the residents and businesses, with ad hoc donations from the community have been unexpected but rewarding.

As a result of this we have small groups of residents taking part in looking after their areas. This is a positive step in keeping the area a more pleasant place to live and bring up families.

Phase One - Preparing the area, we had the support of NBC Wardens and would like to thank Sarah Oakes for her support and that of her colleagues. Additionally, we had two groups of volunteers from out of the area.

With the bulbs turning heads and making their first appearance and bringing much needed colour, the project that has been started is hopefully making an impact.





## Community Clean-up dates for 2018

**T**HERE are three new dates to put in your diary for the 2018 Parish Community Clean-ups of litter and fly-tipped rubbish.

The 2018 schedule is Saturdays 10th March, 14th July and 10th November between 10am and 12 noon.

Volunteers meet outside the Co-op in Fieldmill Square (for Bellinge); outside the Newsagents/Post Office in Ecton Brook Road (for Ecton Brook); outside the Elwes Arms in the High Street (for Great Billing), and on the bridge over the stream by Little Billing pocket park (for Little Billing). High-viz jackets, bags, gloves and litter pickers will be provided. We look forward to seeing you there.

Further information may be obtained from our Green Space Manager.

## Great Billing WI

**W**E meet in the Bernard Weston Pavilion at 7.30pm. Refreshments and a warm welcome is always served at our meetings.

**December 13th** - We have our Christmas party with a buffet and musical entertainment by New Vintage.

**January 10th** - This is our games evening and quiz. Subscriptions for the new WI year are due at this meeting.

**February 14th** - A History of Buttons is the talk by Jenny Swindells. Our button tins may be more valuable than we think!

**March 14th** - Sue Watkins: The Alpaca Experience. Various items will be available to purchase on the night.

For any further information please contact our President Maddy Harrison on 01604 414749.

## Little Billing WI

**A**LL meetings will take place at the Methodist Chapel, Great Billing until further notice.

**7th December** - Festive Bagpipes

**4th January** - Games evening  
Please come along and join us.

For further information contact Linda Brett 01604 403525.

# Little Billing Pocket Park

**A** small band of loyal and industrious volunteers have continued to maintain the Pocket Park in Little Billing throughout the summer.

This year the Group has undertaken two volunteering sessions a month, but, from October, reverted to one session a month over the autumn and winter periods.

Unfortunately, there is still a small cross-section of peculiar youths, who either live elsewhere or are determined to undo much of the work undertaken by the volunteers to make this area of natural beauty a usable, and enjoyable community space for local residents.

Much work was undertaken to obtain a Tesco Bags of Help Grant last year, and, apart from the new ride-on mower which was purchased with this grant, and then immediately stolen, a door has now been removed and stolen from the new Notice Board, and, at the end of August, one of the new picnic tables was destroyed by fire by local children. Clearly there are many decent, law abiding, pleasant, helpful and industrious youngsters in Little



**One of the new picnic tables in Little Billing Pocket Park that was destroyed by fire in August.**

Billing of whom we can all be proud.

Sadly, there appears to be a hard-core of mindless morons whose sole purpose in life seems to be to make life less

tolerable and inconvenient for the residents at large.

However, the work, and future plans, for this environmentally important piece of land, will continue.

## Ecton Brook Community Group

**P**LEASE look out for the notices regarding forthcoming meetings either at the Post Office or on the Billing Parish notice board.

Everyone in Ecton Brook is welcome and we want to hear from you, so don't be shy, come and take part.

Raise any problems or ideas you may have, or just hear what other people have to say and we will try our very best to

help and to raise the standard of life in our Ward.

For anything between meetings contact Bipin at the Post Office or one of the Parish Councillors listed in this bulletin.

Particularly at this time look out for the Christmas features including the Tree and the Children's Ornaments evening which will be fun for all, regardless of age or religion, so come and enjoy!

## Bellinge Community House

**I**T'S been busy as normal at the Community House and we are planning for Christmas and the Street Nativity that will take place on Sunday 18th December at 5.30pm in Fieldmill Square with Christmas Carols from the Youth Group and the Salvation Army.

We hope residents from the Parish will come along and join in the festivities with warm mince pies and hot chocolate.

Meanwhile, education and training opportunities are provided free - refreshments £1:

**Food Safety in Catering Level 2** - on Monday 4th of December 2017 from 9.30am to 11.30am.

**Brush up your English** - Starts Monday 8th January 2018 and lasts until Monday 5th February and runs from 9.30am to 11.30am.

Get started again with English, possibility to progress onto a longer qualification course.

**Healthy Eating** - three weeks on Thursdays 4th, 11th and 18th January 2018, including demonstrations, practical skills, tastings and handouts

**Word Processing for Beginners** - two weeks on Thursday 1st and 8th February 2018. Learn the basics of Word.

**IT Skills for Job Seekers** - six weeks from Thursday 22nd February 2018 until Thursday 29th March from 9.30am to 12.30pm.

Practical skills using the computer, CVs,

accounts on job sites, Universal Job Match, online job applications etc.

**Heart Start First Aid workshop** - Thursday 25th January 2018. Recognise a heart attack and cardiac arrest; help an unconscious person; perform CPR; help someone choking; respond to serious bleeding

### Social and recreational activities:

Mondays - Health Walks from 10am meeting at Bellinge Community House

Billing Joggers - two groups - beginners and intermediates, at 6pm

Core-De-Force - Bipin Brook Centre 7.15pm £2.50

Tuesday - Community Coffee Mornings 10am to 12 Noon

Chair Exercise - suitable for anyone 1.30pm to 2.30pm. £2.50 with Liz Wills

Bellinge Youth Groups - 8-12 years 4.30pm to 6.30pm; 12 years + 6.45pm to 8.15pm. £1

Make do and Mend sewing group - 9.30am to 1.30pm. £1 - additional cost may be involved depending on what you choose to make.

Thursday - Knit & Natter 9.30am to 11.30am all welcome, pattern and stitch swaps along with laughter. £1 per week.

Friday - Community Breakfast

Contact 01604 411473, Mob: 07553577183, Email: [bellinge@bellinge.org.uk](mailto:bellinge@bellinge.org.uk) or find Bellinge Community House on Facebook



# New Green Space Manager

**J**UST prior to the start of the new millennium I was asked if I would consider becoming a Councillor with Billing Parish Council, and having a deep interest in providing and maintaining sport and recreation facilities within the local area I decided to give it a go.

I was, at that time, already concerned regarding the condition of and lack of use of the sports pavilion and playing fields at Great Billing, and the original group that had created Great Billing Pocket Park had long since ceased to exist.

The pavilion itself had graffiti adorning its walls and there was regular evidence of drug use and glue sniffing around the building particularly at the rear. It was decided that we needed somebody to look after our assets.

Following the appointment of the original Green Space Manager (he was tempted away from us), I was one of the councillors who interviewed and subsequently appointed Chris Campling as our new GSM.

I look now at our pavilion, the sports fields, our two Pocket Parks, the Leys, areas of wildflower meadows, a restored



**Paul Marks - took up his appointment on 1st November.**

orchard, a fantastically re-built dry stone wall around the grounds of St Andrews Church and I am proud to be associated with it all, but also extremely grateful and thankful for all the effort that Chris has put into all of these different projects.

Please don't get me wrong, the GSM has not personally completed all of these projects himself, but without his drive, his commitment and his determination we would not be where we are today. Chris is retiring this December and while I am sad to see him go, he has definitely left his mark on Billing Parish and I would like to offer, on behalf of everybody who enjoys the Parish's assets and open spaces my personal thanks to Chris, and to wish him and his wife a long and happy retirement.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Paul Marks, who was the successful candidate in the interviews held to replace Chris after his retirement, and who is due to commence his employment on 1st November.

Paul is a local resident who has lived in Ecton Brook for the past 13 years with his wife Kerrie. He has two daughters, the eldest aged five and a baby of six months.

We wish Paul well in his new role and look forward to what he can bring to the Parish, and we hope for a long and happy relationship between Paul and the Parish.

**Steve Rockall**  
Vice-Chairman

## Great Billing Conservation Area

**T**he contribution that historic areas make to our quality of life is widely recognised. They are a link to the past that can give us a sense of continuity and stability and they have the reassurance of the familiar which can provide a point of reference in a rapidly changing world.

The way building traditions and settlement patterns are superimposed and survive over time will be unique to each area. This local distinctiveness can provide a catalyst for regeneration and inspire well designed new development which brings economic and social benefits. Change is inevitable."

Northampton Borough Council is currently undertaking a review of Great Billing Conservation Area as part of an ongoing duty they have to review all of the 21 conservation areas in Northampton. An Appraisal and Management Plan has been produced and a formal period of public consultation with the Parish Council and residents living within the Conservation area will run for six weeks from the end of



**The War Memorial at corner of High Street and Elwes Way**

October. The purpose of the appraisal is to identify those elements which contribute to the special character and appearance of a conservation area and to specify management proposals that aim to safeguard that special character. The suggestion is that the existing boundary of the Conservation Area remains unaltered.

NBC is also seeking views on whether there would be support for the introduction of an Article 4 Direction; this would mean that planning permission would in future be required for any alterations affecting the external appearance of properties, such as changing original windows or paving over front gardens.

No planning fee would be required for an application and the measure (which has been introduced in six conservation areas in Northampton) would give greater control over alterations which could affect the traditional appearance of the area. If there is general support for an Article 4 Direction at this stage, then separate detailed consultation explaining the restrictions will be undertaken and a report taken to Cabinet for their approval before the Direction comes into effect.

## The 'Elwes-Rockets' are running the 2018 London Marathon in aid of 'WHIZZ-KIDZ.'



### 'Elwes-Rockets'



Teresa, Nicky & Chris are running the 2018 London Marathon on Sunday 22nd April in aid of 'Whizz-Kidz'. The Charity transforms the lives of disabled children by providing the vital equipment, support and life skills they need to reach their full potential.

Teresa, Nicky & Chris are 'Elwes-Rockets' and would greatly appreciate your donations, sponsorship and fund-raising support to help them reach their pledge target. Please attend our events at the ELWES ARMS, GREAT BILLING or visit: [whizz-kidz-london-marathon18.everydayhero.com/uk/elwes-rockets](http://whizz-kidz-london-marathon18.everydayhero.com/uk/elwes-rockets)

WHIZZ-KIDZ IS THE WORKING NAME OF THE MOVEMENT FOR NON-MOBILE CHILDREN (WHIZZ-KIDZ). REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 80870



## BILLING PARISH COUNCIL

Established 1894

Website: [www.billingparish.co.uk](http://www.billingparish.co.uk)

THE Billing Parish Councillors are as follows:

### Ecton Brook Ward

Rev. Richard BURBIDGE (Tel: 555186)

Patrick HENESEY (Tel: 536804)

Steve ROCKALL (Tel: 530640)

Stephen WARD (Tel: 410548)

### Great Billing Ward

John MARLOW (Tel: 404678)

Michael PEARSON (Tel: 407118)

Cheryl WORTHINGTON (Tel: 408613)

### Little Billing Ward

David BREDE (Tel: 07930 960241)

John CLEMENTS (Tel: 07764 158516)

Norman NICKASON (Tel: 07486 999328)

### Middle Ward (Bellingle)

Dennis NASH (Tel: 403702)

Gurcharan Kaur CHAGGAR (Tel: 07986 905963)

### Green Space Manager

Paul Marks (Tel: 785447)

Email: [greenspacemanager@billingparish.co.uk](mailto:greenspacemanager@billingparish.co.uk)

### Clerk to the Council

Mrs Sue Harris (Tel: 402756)

23 Elwes Way, Great Billing,

Northampton, NN3 9EA

Email: [clerk@billingparish.co.uk](mailto:clerk@billingparish.co.uk)

### Parish Highway Warden

Damian Lang

Email:

[highwaywarden@billingparish.co.uk](mailto:highwaywarden@billingparish.co.uk)

## Forthcoming Council Meetings

**P**ARISH Council Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month (with the exception of August) at 7.30pm at the Bernard Weston Pavilion on the Playing Fields at Great Billing.

Members of the public are always welcome.

Agendas and approved Minutes may be found on the website.

Forthcoming meetings will be held on:

Monday 14th December 2017

Monday 8th January 2018

Monday 12th February 2018

Monday 12th March 2018

Monday 9th April 2018

# Jesus - A Light in the Darkness

**P**EOPLE often say that when you are young, Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year. As the father of four young children I can certainly attest to the truth of this! From the magical atmosphere in the shops, to the extended time with the family, to the feast of rich food, to the fun of tearing into the presents under on Christmas morning - our children absolutely love Christmas. And I was exactly the same when I was young. When you are young, Christmas truly is magical.

But when we grow up, many of us will know that the magic of Christmas starts to fade. We start to realise that world is not quite as safe and secure as we once thought. Even though we might still share the time with our loved ones, gathered around warmth of a roaring fire, or the dazzling lights of the Christmas tree, we know deep down that there is a darkness in the world.

For example, on Christmas day this year 250,000 elderly Britons will be eating alone, with only a television screen for company; 120,000 children will be living with their families in emergency homeless accommodation; 500,000 UK families will have an empty seat at the dinner table having lost someone this year and 80,000 families will be celebrating with a loved one behind bars.

So where is our hope at this time of year? Do we just stoke the fire to make it even warmer? Or turn up the lights to drive out the dark? Or drink more mulled wine until the pain goes away? The bible tells us of a better hope. For about 700 years before the birth of the baby Jesus, Isaiah wrote of his coming with these words.

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned (Isaiah 9v2).

It's dark in the bible when Christmas comes. The world was just as damaged as it is today, with death, disease and sickness abounding. There was poverty, hunger and homelessness on a grand scale. And for the

## Parish of Billing

### Christmas Services 2017

**A**LL services are due to be at St Andrew's Great Billing as we expect All Saints to still be closed due to our refurbishment, but in the event of All Saints re-opening some will be held there. Please check the website for details.

#### Sunday 3rd December:

3pm: Christmas Scones of Praise

6.30pm: Watling Singer's Carol Service

#### Sunday 10th December:

10.30am: St Andrew's School Nativity Service

#### Sunday 17th December:

6.30pm: Carols by Candlelight

#### Sunday 24th December:

10.30am: Christmas Family Service

5.15pm: Crib Service

11.15pm: Midnight Communion

#### Sunday 25th December:

10am: Christmas Day Lord's Supper

Israelites in particular, they were a subjugated nation - living under the oppressive rule of the Roman Empire. And yet Isaiah says that with the birth of Jesus, we have the coming of a great light into our dark world. As we read on in the bible, we see that he is the light in two ways. He is the light, firstly, because even as we live in this dark world, and suffer the pain that it this brings - if we come to him we can be welcomed back into God's family, and start to enjoy a wonderful relationship with the God who made us.

And he is the light, secondly, because he has promised to one come back and completely re-make and restore our dark and broken world. Given the darkness of our world, I urge you, please do not miss out on the light that Jesus has come to bring. Come to him this Christmas and let him dispel the darkness.

May I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas.

*Rev. Richard Burbidge  
Rector of Billing*

## Help our Spiky Friends

**O**UR hedgehogs are in serious decline. Litters born in the autumn find it difficult to build up the fat reserves needed to ensure survival through the winter.

If you spot a hedgehog (regardless of size) wandering in your garden during daylight hours it is a sign that all is not well. Pick up the hedgehog in a soft towel and place in a high sided box. Deliver to a local animal rescue centre who will be happy to treat and overwinter these lovely animals.

Please help.

