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Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) 'Stop The Drop' Village Spring Clean

As mentioned in the last Newsletter Brafield is holding another Village Spring Clean to help clear accumulated rubbish from in and around the parish and would welcome help from local residents. We will be meeting on the **Village Green on Saturday 2nd April at 10 a.m.** If you would like to give a hand to make the village a more pleasant place to be, please come along! Rubbish sacks and gloves will be provided. Please contact Dawn Allingham 899083 or Gill Ager on 891488 for further details.

We need a 'Litter Pick' photographer. There is money to be won! CPRE's partners, Carlsberg UK, are repeating their generous sponsorship of this year's CPRE Northants Litter Hero Awards. A total of £900 will go to just 3 winning villages and/or community groups, to be spent on litter equipment, campaigning or similar. Please contact Dawn or Gill (as above) if you are interested in taking photographs on the day.

A reminder: Please be considerate and remember to clean up after your dog. Last year various residents commented on how unpleasant it was to pick up rubbish with dog poo about!

Digital T.V. Switchover

The switchover to a digital T.V. signal will begin in this region at the end of March 2011. A Switchover Help Scheme has been set up by the government to ensure that elderly and disabled people get the help they need so that they are not left without access to a T.V. after switchover. If you or anyone you know needs help, please contact Elizabeth Packer (Cogenhoe and Whiston Parish Council) who has been trained to support people in the run up to the switchover. Tel: 01604 890636

Police warning:

With the switchover imminent please be aware of Bogus Callers knocking on your door offering to retune your televisions. These people may deliberately target the elderly and vulnerable who may have concerns about the switchover, and their intention could be to enter the property and steal money, handbags and other items of value.

David Clayson's Retirement / Presentation

David Clayson is standing down from the Parish Council at the District and Parish Council Elections on 5th May 2011 after over 40 years service to Brafield.

The Parish Council has invited David to attend the start of the next meeting on Monday 16th May at 7p.m. when a short presentation will take place (before the Annual General Meeting) to mark David's outstanding contribution to our community. You are all welcome to join us for this occasion.

Interested in becoming a Parish Councillor?

If you are interested in filling the vacancy created by David Clayson's retirement and volunteering to stand as a Parish Councillor for Brafield on the Green, please contact the Chair, Gill Morgan, for further information.

Additional Police Community Support Officer

We now have an additional Police Community Support Officer, 7007 Michelle Lee. Michelle will be working alongside Charlotte Johnson and PC Andy Scott on the Brafield / Yardley and Hackleton Ward. Michelle can be contacted on: michelle.lee@northants.police.uk and on 03000 111 222 extension 3255 or 3264.

There have been three thefts of copper piping recently (which appear to be unique to Brafield), a bicycle theft, several number plate thefts and some incidents of petrol siphoning around the area. Please be vigilant.

Overhanging hedges

Now that the growing season has started it is particularly important to keep hedges that border footpaths trimmed back so that they do not cause a nuisance to other residents – particularly those who have to use wheelchairs, mobility scooters or pushchairs. There are a number of hedges that currently need attention.

Village Green and Pond

A number of residents have expressed concerns about the state of our Village Green. This is one of Brafield's greatest assets and it is sad to see its verges being regularly gouged away by vehicles. The Parish Council has been discussing various options to try to prevent further erosion and will report back in the near future.

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy - What Happens Now?

Firstly, thanks both to those of you that helped to deliver copies of the draft response to the Pre-Submission Joint Core Strategy from the Parish Council and the Action Group to every household and business in the village, and to those that commented on that draft. Responses made by people were positive and acknowledged and accepted the technical and complex nature of the comments required at this stage in the development of the Strategy. The Council and Action Group have now finalised the response and sent it off to the Joint Planning Unit as the 'representation' from the community of Brafield on the Green.

Our 'representation' will add to the many other responses the Planning Unit receives as part of this consultation which ends on 31 March. The planners will take all of the comments in these responses and use them to prepare a 'Submission Joint Core Strategy' by June 2011. This, too, will be published for comment and, at the same time, sent to the Planning Inspectorate. An independent Planning Inspector will then be assigned to convene a public meeting – called a 'Public Examination' - at which the 'soundness' of the Strategy will be further debated. The Parish Council and Action Group have requested that a representative from Brafield on the Green has the opportunity to take part in this process. Following the Public Examination, the Inspector will produce a report with recommendations which will go to central government and 'be binding'. Changes required by the Inspector will be incorporated and then the revised final Strategy will 'be adopted' and become accepted policy. It is expected that adoption will take place about May 2012 and then the final version will be published.

Northamptonshire County Council budget : Details from our County Councillor Michael Clarke

The Northamptonshire County Council budget for the 2011/12 year has been set following lengthy consultation. The Local government Settlement has meant that the Council has had to look for £73 million in savings. A further £25 million will have to follow in 2012/13. The results of the consultation have been taken on board and some of the initial proposals for savings have been scrapped. The main points are as follows:

- The 8 libraries being considered for closure will remain open pending a review of their efficiency and the numbers using their facilities.
- No bus services are cut but the subsidy has had to be reduced because of the overall economies. This amounts to £1.4 million. Negotiations with the service providers over how buses can be run more efficiently are ongoing.
- Savings to the Trading Standards service will amount to £150,000.
- 900 Council jobs will go with redundancy packages to be negotiated
- The Council is passing the funding of "lollipop ladies" to schools to fund from their reserves, saving £201,000.
- Grass verge cutting and street sign cleaning will go, saving £350,000.
- Speed cameras (Casualty Reduction Partnership) will be passed to the police for enforcement. The savings to NCC are £1 million.
- The restructuring of the delivery of adult social services and other "preventative services" will result in savings of £4.2 million.
- Car parking charges at country parks like Salcey will be increased, raising an additional £182,000.
- Savings on consultants will reduce the cost to NCC by £1.2 million.
- The County Councillors' Empowerment scheme will be reduced but it is not clear yet what each Councillor will have available in the year beginning in April. In Hackleton division some early requests for support have been noted and will receive a response when we have the new budget total.

Play Area : Good news / Bad News

The Parish Council has been pleased to receive a cheque for £568 from the new combined 'Church and Poor's Land Charity'. This represents the profit from the 100 Club for 2010 which will go towards the upkeep of the Alley Gardens Play Area.

However, further vandalism in the Play Area on Sunday 20th March when some of the monkey bars on the wooden climbing frame were broken and thrown in the hedge, will mean that some of this charity money will now need to be spent on repairing this damage..

If you have any information about this incident please report it to Gill Morgan (see top of page for contact details)

Reporting Faulty Street Lights

Following David Clayson's retirement from the Parish Council will residents now please report faulty streetlights to Dawn Allingham giving both the number of the streetlight and its location.
Tel: 899083 or email dawn2710@hotmail.com

Brafield on the Green Information Booklet

If you are new to our village and have not yet received our information booklet please contact Helen Barnell Tel: 890373 email barnell@globalnet.co.uk to obtain a copy.

Next Meeting: Monday 16th May : Annual General Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting at 7 p.m. followed by the Parish Council Meeting at 7.30 p.m.
Sargeant Memorial Hall Brafield

Members of the public are most welcome to attend any meeting
At the start of the Parish Council meeting, time is set aside for public enquiries