**Report of Annual Village Meeting, 17th June 2014**

The Annual Village Meeting was attended by thirty five people including representatives of the Village Groups. Before the meeting each household received a hand delivered invitation, including an updated *‘Who’s Who’* of key contacts and groups in the village, and a *‘What’s On’.* Before that an email was sent to all households on the database (102 people) inviting suggestions and ideas for the meeting and encouraging people to attend followed up by a reminder a week before the meeting.

Glyn Bennett, Chair of the Parish Council, introduced the meeting before handing over to Bob Earll to facilitate the evening. The format of the evening was informal, with people sitting at café tables, enjoying tea and a range of cakes made by the Kempley Baker Boys (Chris Bligh, Bob Earll, Simon Hanes, Tony Hawker-Bond and Roy Stirzaker). For the first 30 minutes each table was asked to produce a list of the key issues they would like to see raised during the evening.

**Issues raised**

**Parking on the Green**

An issue, which has been raised frequently at Parish Council meetings, related to parking outside of the layby, causing an obstruction and possible hazard. Actions had been taken on several occasions.

**Purchase of de-fibrilators for the village**

Following the very well received First Aid Training organised for the village by the Parish Council, Tony Hawker-Bond proposed that 2 defibrillators be bought. This proposal was unanimously supported and Louise Earll and Tony Hawker-Bond will take this project forward.

**Village Agent**

Sally Ann Batchelor outlined her role in the community, which is to make life easier & less stressful for older people (over 50) and the more vulnerable members of the community. Sally outlined the services, clubs and groups available. Contact no. 07810 630212.

**Dog pooh**

A perennial problem. Various solutions were discussed, the Forestry Commission guideline was given: ‘Stick and flick’ from the verge into the hedge.

**War Memorial**

Tony Prisk outlined progress since the project received unanimous support at the 2013 Annual Meeting. A draft poster outlining the project as distributed to each table and comments invited to be sent to Tony and considered by the project group (Tony, Howell Rees, Liz Daykin & Louise Earll). It is anticipated that funding for the project will go to public subscription on the 4th July and that the memorial will be unveiled late October with a corresponding display in the Village Hall.

**Village Hall update**

Pauline Hawker-Bond outlined progress on improvements to the Village Hall, including results from a village survey. Following the last AGM of the Village Hall Committee in June 2013 a subgroup was formed to take this forward. A topographical and structural survey have been undertaken and the Village Hall Committee plan to hold an open meeting in the village hall in July to enable all villagers to see preliminary sketches outlining some of the possibilities. Following this, funding will be explored. Funding raised by the recent Auction of Promises together with a donation from the Daffodil teas together with existing funding will help towards this. Thought is still being given to the issue of parking and access to the adjacent field.

**Traffic, speeding and the state of the roads & verges**

There was a wide ranging discussion was had on speeding, potholes, state of the roadside verges and unsuitable heavy traffic use.

**Traffic:** It was reported that traffic has doubled, in particular heavy traffic from the M50 past the golf course to Much Marcle. It was suggested that the Parish Council consider seeking designation of the road as ‘unfit for heavy traffic’. This status has been secured for other similar roads in neighbouring villages. Parish Council to follow up.

**Speeding** through Kempley village was reported as continuing, with many of the culprits being local residents. Various interventions were discussed, most of which had been raised by the Parish Council with the highways department. These included ‘Surrey Gates’, an LED flashing speed sign and a 20mph speed sign for the village however, all of these come with a price tag. Personal responsibility was highlighted as the main option with a possible ‘name and shame’ campaign.

**State of the roads**: While those in Gloucestershire are currently good those in Herefordshire are not. It is important that individuals report incidents directly to Highways, 01432 261800 quoting the area code HR9 7UR. An internet reporting site is also available (<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes/cg-report-a-pothole>) A growing problem however, is the number of deep ruts at the side of the road making it dangerous to leave the road surface.

**First Responders**

There are no First Responders in Kempley now and only one in Dymock. It is difficult to maintain this in a village with such a low population; the number of incidents does not enable the skill set to be maintained. The Parish Council subsidised two First Aid Training sessions by the Red Cross. These were extremely well received. It was suggested that this be repeated every other year. Next one 2016

**Broadband**

Bob Earll outlined the extremely poor service received by Kempley and the implications for all households, not just in terms of internet connectivity but also house prices. The difficulty in securing any information or commitment to improvement to this service from BT or the County Council was outlined. A Kempley Broadband Group has been set up to take this forward (Bob, Simon Hanes, Jon Osmond, Martin Brocklehurst & Simon Roberts) in conjunction with the Parish and District Council. As part of the way forward, the possibility of a wireless service was outlined. Peter Cartwright a wireless provider from Loop Scorpio had met with the group and attended the meeting. He is a local provider based in Ledbury who outlined what his service was capable of providing. The group will take this forward.

**Crime**

Basil Jarvis reported the theft from St Edwards of the money from the collection box, which had been forced open destroying the lock and the front plate had then been replaced. He asked that villagers remain vigilant and report suspicious behavior to the police on 101.

**Conclusion**

Glyn Bennett closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and in particular Bob for Facilitating the meeting, the Kempley Baker Boys for providing the cakes and Maggie Bligh, Louise Earll, Susie Hanes and Pauline Hawker-Bond for setting up and providing teas.

Bob & Louise Earll, 2nd July 2014