

29 November 2017

Christmas collections

Please feel free to copy and paste this image into your own newsletters to share with your parishioners. You can also download a copy of the Christmas collection dates [here](#).



WYCHAVON
Christmas collection dates

Changes to your refuse, recycling and garden waste collection days for the holiday period

| Usual collection day | Festive collection day |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Mon 25 Dec | Wed 27 Dec |
| Tue 26 Dec | Thu 28 Dec |
| Wed 27 Dec | Fri 29 Dec |
| Thu 28 Dec | Sat 30 Dec |
| Fri 29 Dec | Tue 2 Jan |
| Mon 1 Jan | Wed 3 Jan |
| Tue 2 Jan | Thu 4 Jan |
| Wed 3 Jan | Fri 5 Jan |
| Thu 4 Jan | Sat 6 Jan |
| Fri 5 Jan | Mon 8 Jan |
| Mon 8 Jan | Tue 9 Jan |
| Tue 9 Jan | Wed 10 Jan |
| Wed 10 Jan | Thu 11 Jan |
| Thu 11 Jan | Fri 12 Jan |
| Fri 12 Jan | Sat 13 Jan |

Normal collections resume on 15 January 2018

Collection calendar
for 2018 are available online www.wychavon.gov.uk/collection-calendar or can be collected from Wychavon Customer Contact Centres.

To help you with any additional waste and recycling at Christmas, from **Wednesday 27 December until Monday 8 January** we will accept extra recycling in clear sacks on your recycling day, and a **maximum of two refuse sacks** in addition to your normal bin on your refuse day. (Clear recycling sacks can be collected from Wychavon Customer Contact Centre)



Council Tax

Town and parish clerks should by now have received 2018-19 budget requirement forms, for completion and return to us by Friday 2 February 2018. The letter that accompanied the forms explains the action that needs to be taken and the information we need to know about your budget and Council Tax requirement for next year. Should you need more information on this, please contact Julie Jones on 01386 565505 or e-mail julie.jones@wychavon.gov.uk.

We'd like to remind you of the potential for the Government to call for local referendums where there are excessive increases in Council Tax by town and parish councils. Just below is an extract from the [2018/19 Local Government Finance Settlement Technical Consultation Paper](#) (DCLG, September 2017). It reads:

“Last year, the Government issued a challenge to town and parish councils to demonstrate restraint when setting precept increases that are not a direct result of taking on additional responsibilities, and to make precept decisions more transparent to local tax-payers. The continuation of this position in 2018-19 is contingent upon the Government receiving clear evidence of how the sector is responding to this challenge. The Government expects parishes, in setting their precepts, to consider all available options to mitigate the need for Council Tax increases, including the use of reserves, where they are not already earmarked for particular purposes, or for ‘invest to save’ projects, which will lower on-going revenue costs.”

Whilst there is no mention of revised referendum limits for town or parish councils at the moment, the document does go on to say, “Any revised proposals will be set out at the time of the provisional local government finance settlement later in the year.”

The return deadline, of Friday 2 February 2018, should therefore allow town and parish councils time to address any final announcements from the Government on referendum principles.

The following may also be helpful when considering your budget requirement:

The Council Tax base for each town or parish area is recalculated annually. It may increase (for example, there may be additional properties in your area) or it may decrease (for example, there may be additional single person discounts or empty properties). Banding changes to individual properties may also cause the tax base to move up or down. We are planning to set Council Tax bases for each town or parish area and for the district overall, for the year 2018-19, at our Executive Board meeting on 10 January 2018.

We will notify town and parish clerks of the calculated Council Tax base for their town or parish that has been published in the report to Executive Board during the first week in January, although clearly these may be subject to change at the Executive Board meeting, so you may wish to plan your budget setting meetings around this.

It is intended that the grant that we give you to offset your budget requirement will be frozen at 2017-18 levels.

The band D Council Tax charge for any town or parish council can be worked out using this formula:

Band D Council Tax = precept/Council Tax base, where precept = budget requirement less grant.

We then apply the relevant proportion to arrive at the Council Tax for each band.

So, if the Council Tax base changes, this will impact on the level of Council Tax, even if the precept has remained the same. Any resultant percentage increases or decreases in the town/parish council element of the Council Tax will be shown on Council Tax bills.

If you have any questions on Council Tax base calculations or tax setting, then please call Vic Allison, Deputy Managing Director, on 01386 565586 or e-mail vic.allison@wychavon.gov.uk.

New Homes Bonus

All Parish and Town Clerks have received an open letter about New Homes Bonus (NHB) from Councillor Audrey Steel, Chairman of our Localism and Community Funding Advisory Panel. The letter provides an update on three things: the future of New Homes Bonus; what monies are available for parishes and towns to make applications to spend; and, making successful NHB applications and what type of projects are likely to be successful.

We won't repeat all its contents here, but we would like to remind you that the Localism and Community Funding Advisory Panel is looking for innovative projects that have a clear community benefit and community support. We want projects to be well thought through and of a scale that ensures that the NHB money creates a legacy and benefit for communities.

We realise that some very small parishes with very small amounts of NHB will invariably submit small-scale applications and we will be sympathetic to them. But many of you have already spent a notable amount of NHB on small items and/or have over £10,000 of NHB available. In such cases, the Panel is seeking larger-scale submissions that command community support, meet proven need and will leave a tangible and lasting legacy. Our Localism and Communities Officer, Tracy Perkins, is always pleased to offer advice to parish and town councils and can provide examples of successful NHB applications that do fulfil the requirements outlined above. She can also advise on effective ways of consulting the community about NHB. She can be contacted on 01386 565517 or email tracy.perkins@wychavon.gov.uk.

Our strategy and promises

The image shows a graphic representation of the Wychavon Council's strategy document for 2016-2020. It features the title 'WYCHAVON' in large blue letters, with the subtitle 'Our priorities, goals and promises' in a script font. The document is organized into three main sections: 'People', 'Place', and 'Prosperity'. Each section contains a list of promises and goals, such as 'Helping people to be healthy, active and supported', 'Keeping the district clean, green and safe', and 'Attracting businesses and quality jobs'. To the right of the text is a graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with a blue cover. The notebook has a title 'Our purpose' and a list of five goals: 'Keeping people active', 'Helping you recycle', 'Keeping streets clean', 'Investing in communities', and 'Supporting the economy'. Below the notebook are several photographs showing community events, including a group of people running a race and a group of people standing together. At the bottom left, there is a URL: www.wychavon.gov.uk/ourstrategy. At the bottom right, there is the Wychavon District Council logo with the tagline 'providing great services, good value'.

We're currently carrying out an annual review and a refresh of our four year [strategy](#). The strategy covers the period up until March 2020, and contains our three priorities (people, place and prosperity), associated goals and promises, which are the annual actions we commit to delivering.

While we're not planning to change the three priorities or goals in our strategy, 12 of the 24 promises are due to be delivered by the end of March 2018, leaving some significant gaps. So we're working to develop some new promises for 2018/19 onwards to help fill these gaps and address local needs.

Our councillors and managers have already come up with lots of good ideas for potential new promises – from promoting more physical activities in our parks and running a litter education campaign, to assisting people with the change to Universal Credit and helping struggling village halls learn from those that are more successful. We've also heard from two groups of residents. But what do you think we should be focusing on over the next couple of years? If you've got any suggestions you'd like us to consider as potential promises it'd be great to hear them – as long as they are things within our control or influence. Please send your suggestions to cherrie.mansfield@wychavon.gov.uk by 4 December at the latest.

Defibrillators

Thank you to everyone who responded to our survey about defibrillators. The responses show that there are defibrillators located in over 40 Wychavon parishes; some of these have been funded through New Homes Bonus. We're aware that some residents don't know where defibrillators in their area are located, which could mean that they are not used as they could be in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest. If you've purchased a defibrillator for your parish or town and you haven't listed its location, be it on a website, on a parish/town council notice board, or alerted residents to its whereabouts in some other way, we urge you to do this as a matter of urgency. You can also register and search for defibrillator locations on [the Heartsafe website](#), which is the UK's leading Public Access Defibrillator website.

Five ways to achieve wellbeing

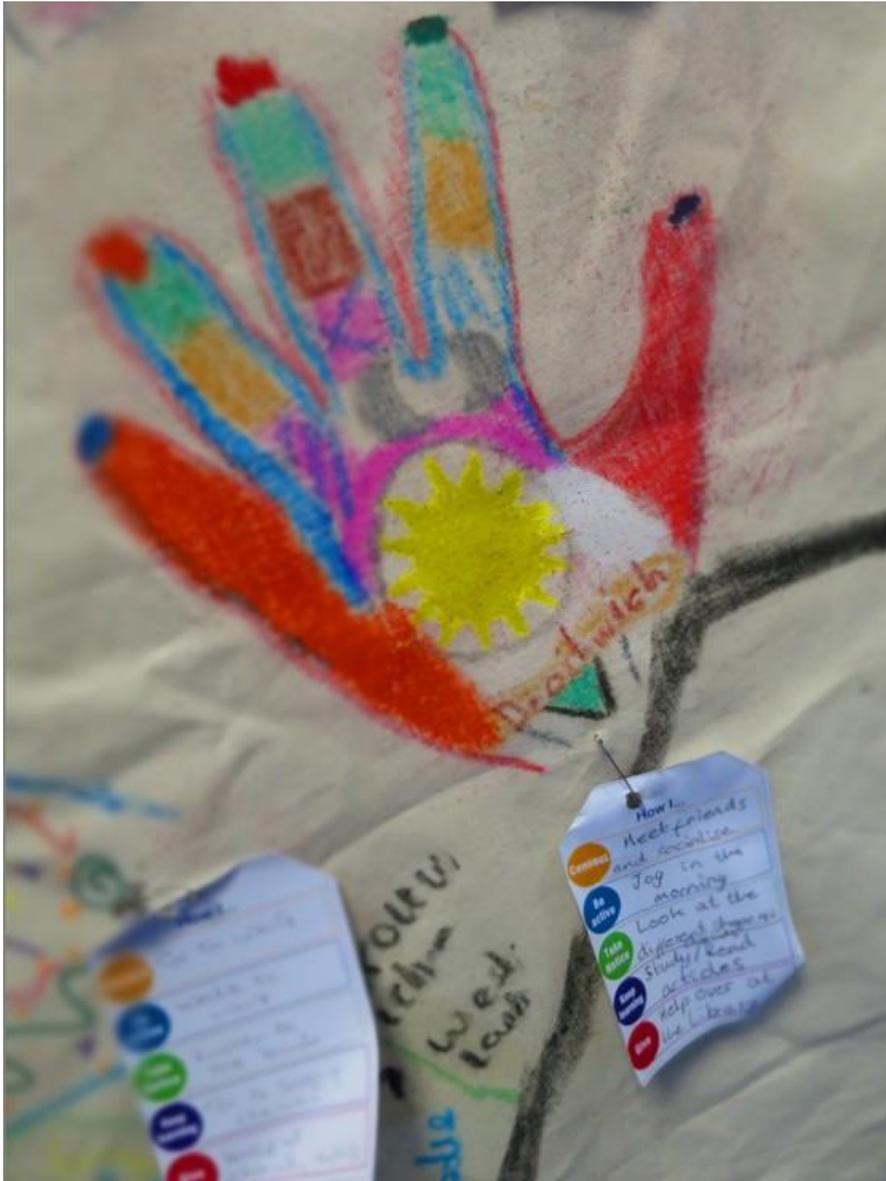


This year one of our promises was to put on a week of activities across Wychavon to promote mental wellbeing. The idea originated from a Partners Together event on health that we held last November.

So this October we teamed up with more than 15 different organisations across the district for [Wychavon Wellbeing Week](#). This included Fortis Living, Rooftop Housing, Worcestershire County Council, WANDS in Droitwich Spa, Pershore Library, Wychavon Leisure and more. Together we put on and promoted a programme of positive and practical events and activities that appealed to people of all ages and were based around the [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#).

We're planning to run Wychavon Wellbeing Week again in 2018 and would love every parish and town to get involved. Email tracy.perkins@wychavon.gov.uk if you'd like to be kept informed about plans for the week.





Free smokefree signage for your play parks

We want to ensure that our children have pleasurable and healthy places to play in their communities. But we also know that children are influenced by what they see around them and copy behaviour, and this includes smoking. That's why we are inviting parish councils to get in touch if the benefits of a smokefree environment for children are important for their community.

A number of parishes have already expressed interest in being awarded funding for signage to create smokefree play areas, and there is still time to submit an application if you want your parish to benefit from signage too.

All applications need to be submitted to clare.charlton@wychavon.gov.uk by 31 December 2017. Applications will be considered immediately on receipt (on a first come first served basis) so that parishes can be allocated funding and start work on the signs without delay. If you wish to discuss your application, please give Clare Charlton, Public Health Practitioner, a call on 01386 565182 or [click here](#) to find and download an application form.

Funding is available from Worcestershire County Council Public Health to pay for the installation of signage promoting smoke-free parks, and Clare can support you through the straightforward application process, and provide guidance regarding what to include on your smokefree signage.

Getting to know...us

We now have ward profiles for each of our 32 wards and these include a wealth of information including latest population figures, deprivation and crime figures, as well as a profile of the residents. They are all on our website and can be found on the [Information about our district](#) page or by going [straight to the list of wards](#).

We are also developing parish profiles that will be added to the [parish profiles page](#) as they are completed. These will be produced upon request and will provide useful information about your parish or assist you in the development of neighbourhood plans. If you have any questions about any of the profiles or would like to request a profile for your parish, please contact Paul Curry, our Joint Research and Intelligence Officer, on 01386 565333 or email paul.curry@wychavon.gov.uk.

Community Recognition Awards 2017

We're once again looking for the community heroes of 2017 for our annual Community Recognition Awards.

Open to the whole community, the awards give those who have volunteered, coached or helped others in the district a chance to gain well deserved recognition for their efforts in helping to make Wychavon a better place to live and work.

2017 WYCHAVON Community Recognition Awards

Wychavon is a great place to live and work and one of our best assets is our residents. There are a huge number of individuals, and groups working voluntarily week after week, helping to run clubs and projects which make a real difference to our communities.



Nomination forms are available [on our website here](#), and must be returned by 5pm on Friday 2 February 2018. For more information or to talk through your nomination, please contact Tracy Grubb on 01386 565168 or email tracy.grubb@wychavon.gov.uk.

The Community Recognition Awards ceremony will take place on Thursday 8 March 2018 (by invitation only).

Dashboard diners beware!

Litter seems to be high on the agenda at the moment, and with the minimum level of fixed penalty fine increasing from £75 to £100 (with a maximum fine of £150) in April 2018, it may well remain a high profile issue for some time to come.

One of the catchphrases you may come across is 'binrastructure'. The national anti-litter strategy is encouraging councils to make sure there are enough litterbins available and that they are in the right places to reduce littering. Litterbins won't prevent those who don't care about dropping litter, but they do reduce casual littering from those who just need a bit of encouragement to do the right thing. If your parish has a litter hotspot area, please talk to us about what we can do to help. We can suggest where you may want to install litterbins and the best type of bin for the location, or carry out enforcement or education where this may be productive.

The law is also changing to make the driver of a vehicle responsible for any litter dropped out of it (up until now we had to prove who was driving and who dropped the litter). This change, if applied properly, will make prosecution of littering from vehicles

much easier and this is a good thing. We shouldn't have to put up with road junctions strewn with paper coffee cups and takeaway wrappers and this change will help us put a stop to it. Dashboard diners beware!

If you spot someone littering from a vehicle, you can report it by calling our Client Services team on 01386 565018. For more information or to discuss your parish or town 'binrastructure', call Mark Edwards, Waste Management Officer, on 01386 565245, mark.edwards@wychavon.gov.uk.

My Local Area

Our popular My Local Area webpage is now clearer and easier to use and people can find out a wealth of information about a property or area; this includes 'Where's my nearest', electoral details, Council Tax and Business Rates information, as well as a direct link to waste and recycling collection days. For those who want to see all this information on a map, a quick switch to 'map' view will display this information geographically. The map view also supports features such as an option to select planning applications and provides links to our online planning pages. This is a valuable online resource and we'd encourage you to use it and share it with people you know, especially if they're new to the area. [Click here](#) to go to the My Local Area page.



Any bin will do

Did you know that properly scooped (and bagged) poop from the street can now be dropped into any of the regular litter bins? Please feel free to share this information with your dog walking parishioners. Should any litter bins become too full because of the quantity of dog waste being deposited, then the decision would have to be made as to whether such a location might realistically be served better with a dog waste bin. If you have any questions on this subject you can call our Client Services team on 01386 565018 or email client.services@wychavon.gov.uk.

South Worcestershire Building Control inspection app is now live

South Worcestershire Building Control (SWBC) recently launched its mobile app as a way to give building control clients a way to quickly and conveniently request a site inspection wherever they happen to be, and all without the hassle of having to wait until they're back in the office or at home.

The service is competitive, reliable, professional, easily available for both Apple and Android mobile phones and tablets, and we'd encourage anyone wanting to use the service to try out the app for a simple way to book appointments with SWBC.

If you'd like to know more, please contact Kath Smith, Interim South Worcestershire Building Control Manager, on 01386 565484 or email kath.smith@wychavon.gov.uk.

War memorials

The War Memorials Trust is continuing to encourage those responsible for war memorials to apply, as soon as possible, for funding for conservation and repair work. Any parish or town councils interested in applying for a grant should submit a Grants Pre-application form, which can be obtained from the War Memorials Trust website at www.warmemorials.org/grants.

Historic England, Civic Voice and the The War Memorials Trust are currently running a project to list 2,500 war memorials before the end of 2018. Individuals and community groups are being encouraged to apply to Historic England to have their community's war memorial listed. Further information is available on the [Historic England website](#). You can also access and download Historic England's [Listing War Memorials guide](#), or contact Ben Lawless, our Conservation Officer, on 01386 565327 or email ben.lawless@wychavon.gov.uk.

Affordable housing

Ten new affordable housing plots in Oak Lane, Bredon, have recently been handed over to Severn Vale Housing who will manage the properties. The affordable homes on this site comprise of 4 x 1 bedroom flats, 2 x 2 bedroom bungalows and 2 x 2 bedroom houses for rent, and 2 x 2 bedroom houses for shared ownership. An open evening was held on the 30 October at Bredon Village Hall from 4pm-7pm for local residents to see the plans, meet the landlord and find out how to apply for the properties. Anyone interested in applying for affordable homes can register and find

out more on our Home Choice Plus website at www.homechoiceplus.org.uk. The properties advertised are renewed each week.



Wychmove

Our Wychmove scheme is a social lettings agency service that we launched to help Wychavon residents access privately rented accommodation, but also to provide landlords with more security when it comes to the letting of their property. We understand the barriers some residents have in accessing the private rented sector, as well as the issues landlords face when the tenancy has not been successful. We aim to help prevent these problems from occurring by matching the most suitable tenant to the property and offering a robust service throughout the tenancy to landlords. We offer landlords three levels of service – **Matching a Tenant, Assisted Letting**, and **Managed** – and you can find out more at www.wychmove.co.uk.

Wychmove can also offer landlords individual services suited to their specific needs as and when required. For more information contact Sarah Cook, Private Sector Accommodation Officer, on 01386 565114 or email sarah.cook@wychavon.gov.uk.



Planning Enforcement changes

It's been a year of change for our Planning Enforcement Team at Wychavon. On the back of the Planning Enforcement Action Plan put in place by our Executive Board, we have established the new Planning Enforcement Scrutiny Panel chaired by Councillor Hugh Hamilton, put in place a new IT system for enforcement, introduced new monitoring reports to measure workloads and performance, aligned the Local Enforcement Plans for Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils, and taken on two new members to the team – Kerry Stallard and Tom Tudor.



Kerry Stallard has filled a new position in the team as Enforcement Support Officer, a post that was proposed in the Planning Enforcement Action Plan. Kerry is the first point of contact in the team, receiving enquiries, registering new cases and allocating them to the enforcement officers. A key focus of Kerry's role is around improving communication between those reporting potential planning enforcement cases (such as district councillors and parish councils) and the Enforcement Team. You can contact Kerry on 01386 565321 or email kerry.stallard@wychavon.gov.uk.

Tom Tudor has joined as a Compliance Officer, which is now a full-time post. Tom's role takes a proactive approach in ensuring we offer the support and advice to developers in complying with the conditions on their planning approval. Tom works closely with the rest of the Enforcement Team as there is often an overlap between his compliance work and active enforcement investigations. Tom is regularly out of the office conducting site visits throughout the district, maintaining relationships with

developers and monitoring developments as they progress. Tom can be contacted on 01386 565303 or by email at tom.tudor@wychavon.gov.uk.

The recent performance data presented to the Enforcement Scrutiny Panel suggests that the team is set to receive around 600 cases for investigation for the 12 month period starting the 1 April this year, and that performance is in line with the target of dealing with 80% of reported cases within 12 weeks.

2018 Boundary Review – revised proposals for new constituency boundaries

On 17 October 2017, the Boundary Commission for England published its Revised Proposals for new constituency boundaries. We are now in an eight week consultation period during which time the proposals and maps are available to view at the reception desk at the Civic Centre in Pershore, or alternatively online at www.bce2018.org.uk. This website can also be used for making comments on the proposals.

This will be the final time the public will get a chance to give the Commission their views on the latest proposals for the nine English regions that are open to consultation, before recommendations are reported to Parliament in September 2018. Please spread the word about the proposals and the consultation with the people in your parishes and through your own communications. The eight-week public consultation period will run until 11 December 2017.

The Boundary Commission has worked with the Local Government Association and others to make it as easy as possible to share this information and they have produced a partner pack of materials that is available on [their website](#).

Floods destroy. Be prepared

5.2 million homes in England are at risk of flooding. You and your parishioners can now find out if a property is at risk and sign up to the Environment Agency's free [flood warning service](#).

Flood warnings, would you know what to do?

PREPARE:

- Prepare a bag that includes medicines and insurance documents.
- Visit the flood warning information service (see the link above).

ACT:

- Turn off gas, water and electricity.
- Move things upstairs or to safety.
- Move family, pets and car to safety.

SURVIVE:

- Call 999 if in immediate danger.
- Follow advice from emergency services.
- Keep yourself and your family safe.



Are you ready for winter?

All types of weather can affect you, those around you, and your property. Make sure you're prepared by checking the [Met Office's](#) 'Get Ready for Winter' tips and advice.

And while you're at it, please also [Stall Well](#) this winter too! There's lots of information you can share here with family, friends and parishioners, particularly as it starts getting colder.



Launch of Community Reserve Volunteers initiative

The British Red Cross has launched a new Community Reserve Volunteer initiative, the aim of which is to recruit a pre-registered reserve force of volunteers who will be able to assist their community in the event of a major local emergency. As the devastating terror attacks in Manchester and London showed, as well as the recent Grenfell Tower tragedy, when a crisis hits there is often an outpouring of support from individuals offering to help in any way they can.

This project, supported by Aviva, provides a way of harnessing that goodwill, and gives members of the public a practical way to use their kindness, skills and local knowledge to help others by carrying out practical tasks as a coordinated part of the overall response.

It only takes ten minutes to sign up online at redcross.org.uk/reserves. People are required to watch a short training video and fill in an online application form. In the event of a local emergency they will be mobilised at the appropriate time by the Red Cross.

Garden and bulky waste service



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Helping young people in your villages

The Wychavon Youth Bus continues to be out and about visiting our villages each week. The mobile youth facility runs up to 100 sessions each year for 8-17 year olds, providing a range of positive activities across the district. We have done extremely well with finding external funding for this project since it began, with grants from various sources such as the Criminal Justice Board, the Police and Crime Commissioner (in 2014/15) and Worcestershire County Council, and this has enabled the conversion of the bus and has also covered its running costs. We are nearly in the final year of our funding though and we need support to keep the project running. By making a donation towards the Youth Bus, it is possible to secure regular sessions in your village or parish. We'd like to say a big thank you to those villages and parishes that are already helping with this, and by doing so also supporting the needs of young people in those areas. Providing donations towards what we do also helps us lever in other funding and most importantly prioritises your village on our schedules. For more information about how to support the Youth Bus and to book your sessions for 2018/19, please contact Robin Mace, Youth Bus and Outreach Officer, on 07773 031205 or email robin.mace@wychavon.gov.uk.



Parish Matters – let us know what you think

We'd like to know what you think of Parish Matters. Do you find it useful? Do you share any of the news items in your own parish newsletters? What else would you like to read about? If you have any feedback we'd like to hear it - please email spencer.winnett@wychavon.gov.uk.