

FREE
to the residents
of Snitterfield



ISSUE ONE

SUMMER 2002

LAUNCH ISSUE

Welcome to the first issue of 'SNIPE' a quarterly publication, produced by the residents of Snitterfield for the residents of Snitterfield.

We must count ourselves very lucky to live in such a delightful village in the Warwickshire countryside, with an award winning village shop, (that most villages would die for), an organic farm shop, two pubs, two churches, a surgery, tennis and bowls club etc, but no post office, but then I guess nothing is perfect!

Results of The Village Appraisal survey, showed lack of communication within the village was a key issue.

Good communication is vital, in order to maintain a thriving community. So here we are, with the sole aim of putting that into place, hence the need for SNIPE!

The 'vision' for this new publication is to 'create an awareness within the village', covering important issues affecting all residents of Snitterfield, whilst also providing a forum for your ideas and opinions. Some of the issues covered in this, our launch issue, are Possible Closure of the Surgery, Policing, the New Parish Council, The Village Cricket Team, Traffic, Wildlife, etc. We urge you to refer to The Link (Parish Magazine) for forthcoming events etc.

Please help us get this village working together more, particularly on issues that affect our every day lives, we need your contributions to make SNIPE work, be it an article on an issue you are steaming about, or a letter to 'Sniper's Corner', whichever, please let us air your views! USE YOUR LOCAL NEWS TO AIR YOUR VIEWS!

Editor, Diane Hoe

WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR YOUR VILLAGE...

Just as SNIPE was going to press, it was discovered that **FIVE** green field sites have been submitted for inclusion in the Stratford-upon-Avon Local Plan 1996 - 2011.

The sites are:

- 1 North of Bearley Road
- 2 South of Bearley Road, joining Hurdler Lane
- 3 North of Church Road (Appleton House)
- 4 East of White Horse Hill (behind Park House)
- 5 West of White Horse Hill (land running down to The Green)

These sites are 'developer opportunities' and if they meet the required policies and were included in the Local Plan they could be developed at any time between now and 2011.

This is a very serious threat to the character of the community and would fill in some of the important green spaces that keep Snitterfield special.

The fields off Park Lane



THIS...OR THIS?



New developments on Park Lane

A spokesman for the Parish Council said that they would 'resist these opportunistic developments and are looking into how they relate to Local Planning policies and National policies concerning green belt and housing needs'.

They urge the villagers to support their objections and plan an approach, especially regarding sites that affect their property, facilities or visual amenities.

The plans of the proposed sites are available for inspection on the village notice board opposite the The Foxhunter.

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT LEFT TO LOSE?

Your village is shaped by **YOU**, just as much as the other 1100 inhabitants. Where you shop, where you drink, where your children study, where you go for services – these all have an effect on our community. If you've been following the Archers (and let's face it, who doesn't?) you may recognise this everyday tale of country folk.

At one time your village had a post office, a shop and a doctor's surgery. They have had mixed fortunes in recent years. The post office closed, and despite re-opening briefly, it closed again after vicious attacks on the staff. The shop too closed, re-opening with new owners, and in 2001 won the hugely prestigious Glenfiddich award for best village shop nationally. **YOU** made it a success by supporting it and making it a new focus for the community. We now have a second shop, Medlars organic farm shop on Kings Lane, which also needs your custom to thrive.

And now we are beginning to feel like extras in the current Archers storyline. In Snitterfield, as in Ambridge, the doctor's surgery has always been a comforting fixture. But proposals may be afoot to close it. Are we in danger of losing a lifeline? The people who would be most affected are the elderly, disabled and young families without cars. The nearest surgeries are in Claverdon (which has no bus route from Snitterfield) or in Stratford, where our infrequent bus service delivers patients to the town but leaves them with a long walk to the practice.

No doubt Dr David Buckley, a senior partner in the Snitterfield surgery, is not the Wicked Witch in our story. He and his colleagues have served us well and are trying to make a practical decision. And could it perhaps be that we have been Sleeping Beauties – with many of us using the Stratford surgery rather than supporting the village practice? Dr Buckley is quoted in the Stratford Herald of 9 May 2002 as saying 'We do



have to look at the service we are providing....the surgery in Claverdon could serve a number of people who use Snitterfield and is open all day rather than just the morning'. He adds that it is premature to protest now, since no final decision has been made. But when do you protest - if not BEFORE it's too late? If you have strong feelings on this issue make them known to us here at SNIPE, to your MP John Maples, and to the doctors at the surgery.

The moral of this particular story reaches beyond a single issue. Village facilities can't be taken for granted and they need our support if they are to thrive.

Let's not reduce important issues to griping and blaming. SNIPE is here to challenge you, to encourage debate, to provide a forum for ideas and possible solutions for our village.

If you have an opinion, voice it here. If you have an idea, float it here in our pages and see what happens.

If we want to see something new happen in our village, let's get off our communal backside and do something! A village is only as vital

Villagers protesting about the threatened closure of the doctor's surgery in Snitterfield
Photo: Courtesy of The Herald Press

as its villagers, and we know that this village is bursting with vital and vibrant people. Our role is to make them aware of each other, to get you all talking and thinking... and doing!

If you have strong opinions on the potential closure of the surgery, you may wish to write to the authorities concerned:

The Senior Partner
Chestnut Walk Practice
Chestnut Walk
Stratford-upon-Avon
CV37 6HU

South Warwickshire Primary Care Unit
Westgate House
Market Street
Warwick
CV34 4DE

South Warwickshire Community Health Council
Elta House
Birmingham Road
Stratford-upon-Avon
CV37 0AQ (Lesley Fall and Jo Bell)

SNITTERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Left to right: Gerry Stammers,
Dr John Fitchford, Sylvia Morlidge,
Peggy Joslin and Bill Collett

The new Parish Council took responsibility for the Parish affairs on 13 May this year.

This Parish Council will continue the work started by the previous council and during the next month or so prioritise the important issues within the parish.

A commitment given by the Chairman to make available information relating to planning applications is high on the priorities and to clear the backlog of agenda items including the agreement with the District Auditor of the accounts for the last two years.

The council members are available to help and assist in any Parish related issues and the members are as follows:-

Mr Gerry Stammers, Chairman,
Telephone 731364

Mrs Peggy Joslin, Vice Chairman,
Telephone 730300

Dr John Fitchford Telephone 731357

Mrs Sylvia Morlidge Telephone 731279

Mr Bill Collett Telephone 731382

The council members are all bound by the new Code of Conduct for Parish Councillors. This document developed by the Standards Board for England under the instructions of The Department of Transport and Local Regions and came into force on



5 May 2002. The purpose of this new Code of Conduct is to ensure anyone in a public office, conduct themselves in a responsible way, with respect, with impartiality, without compromise, discrimination, or conflict of interest.

The future of the Parish is changing, we must make a Parish Plan and our Parish Appraisal and Village Design Statement form the basis of a new incentive by the District Council to plan the Parish around the needs and wishes of the residents. This must be done with the involvement of everyone in our Parish, we can only plan our future with your input.

Changes have already started, we are no longer a category 2 village, with a built-up area boundary. Our new status is one of a Local Centre Village. These are villages with facilities such as a general store, primary school, bus service etc, we are covered by the Green Belt policies and other policies relating to the Enhancement and

Protection of Environmental Features for the Parish.

The Warwickshire Structure Plan has made a big impact upon developments that will be permitted in villages such as ours. All major development must be in the Main Towns and Main Rural centres for our area, this means effectively no development within our village without the local need being identified and proven.

The District Local Plan is under review and changes will be made to the criteria for our village status, we will keep you informed of the change and how they will effect our village and parish.

Please remember - the Parish Council needs your support and input to ensure the development of our village and parish is in line with our needs and expectations.



SNITTERFIELD VILLAGE APPRAISAL

The basic purpose of a Village appraisal is to give the residents of a village the opportunity to express their opinion as to what changes and improvements they would like to see, and at the same time to say what they would like to see conserved.

The key feature of an appraisal, is the involvement of the local community so that any plan developed from it may be seen to represent their wishes. The document will be adopted by Stratford District Council, as a formal document, which the council will have to take into account as representing the views of the residents. The District Council is bound to take note of the appraisal in such matters as planning, development and formulation of a District Plan.

To this end, a Steering Group was formed in Snitterfield. We set to assembling the appropriate information, distributing a number of newsletters, a questionnaire and organised three open days in the village hall. The response to the questionnaire was excellent with 75% of households completing it, the results were analysed by computer and it is on these answers that the appraisal will largely be based.

Community involvement and self-help are also important features. The response so far has been very encouraging with volunteers for distributing a variety of material and others inputting questionnaires into the computer.

We expect to have the appraisal completed towards the end of June and a copy will be distributed to

every household.

Volunteers have already started work on a number of projects, of which this newsletter is one; others are:

- Traffic/road safety
- Footpaths
- Facilities for children and young people
- Village Hall
- Conservation
- Neighbourhood Watch

Progress on these projects will be detailed in future issues of the newsletter.

May I, on behalf of the Appraisal Steering Group, take this opportunity of thanking all those who have helped so far.

John Holmes
Chairman, Appraisal Steering Group

The Green - rural retreat or . . . ?

A haven for wildlife, the 'lightning tree' situated behind The Green, is just one of the beautiful, historic oak trees of the village.



My family and I moved into The Green only eight years ago, we knew then we didn't want to live anywhere else. We arrived on a sunny June day and were immediately struck by the tranquillity, the birdsong, the abundance of flowers and trees, open green meadows and fields, and quiet leafy lanes. It was almost as if we had time-warped back to a bygone era.

Of course times move on, and since then we have seen a number of changes to The Green and the village overall, both in the increase of traffic and of building developments. Most recently, apart from the usual improvements to private dwellings, the major changes on The Green have been the addition of a Barn training centre and a new indoor school and extensions to the stables. Currently there is a field of polytunnels being erected for the fruit farm and a group of new large

three-storey houses under construction.

Stagnation benefits no-one, and my own inclination is to encourage the use of land for rural activities and pursuits sooner than the more obvious 'purely for profit' house building.

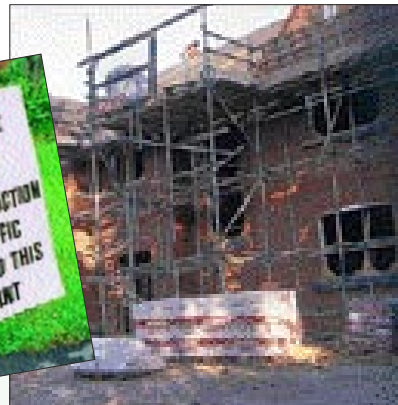
I do hope that the more excessive building that has taken place can be curtailed and that housing will be confined to that which is required by the village, in keeping with the style and size of existing properties (although it is to be noted that a substantial number of houses has been quoted for this alone).

Traffic volume and on-road parking on The Green, as with everywhere else, has increased of late, and I do feel sympathy with the number of householders who have no off-road parking and have to squeeze their vehicles into any available space. Although it sometimes feels hazardous driving through this twisting lane with cars parked at all angles, it does have the advantage of reducing speed and acts as a natural traffic calming measure.

Of concern at the moment to all residents is the number of large, heavy lorries delivering materials to the building sites. Earlier objections were raised at meetings of the previous parish council about the movement of heavy vehicles through the centre of the village, especially down The Green and over the culvert, but to no avail.



New 3 storey houses dwarf the cottages and houses on The Green



After residents had several conversations with contractors and builders, a large sign has been placed at the cross roads, contradictory to the ones at the entrance to the village directing them down this way! Irrate drivers, finding it too late to turn, are faced with no alternative but to continue. If The Green or culvert suffers structural damage from these heavy lorries - will we, the residents, through no fault of our own, have to face paying the bill for repairs?

We count ourselves fortunate to live in such a pleasant village, and hopefully we will not be put into the situation of saying 'we loved Snitterfield before it was concreted over'. Once the open green areas have gone, they will have gone forever, never to be replaced. We really have to define and hold onto what living in a 'village' really means.

These are my own views. You may have your own, or information you want to share with the village about your street or road, if so put pen to paper and contact SNIPE now.

Jim Crow

Could you make a difference?



How much do you enjoy living in Snitterfield?

Would you like the opportunity of putting something back into the village?

Can you spare just one evening a month, plus the occasional site visit?

We are looking for a sixth member to join our inspirational Parish Council by the end of July!

One of our main aims in this term of office, is to carefully monitor planning and building issues in the village, so if you would like to have a voice in this and other such issues, then this is your opportunity!

We are determined to 'make a difference'.

Send an application as soon as possible to:

Mr I A Wilkins, 21 Flower Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 0AE

SNITTERFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

The recently conducted village appraisal indicated a high level of concern among many residents regarding the way our village may be developed in the future. This, combined with the current dramatic increase of inappropriate new developments, has led to the establishment of The Snitterfield Conservation Group.

Their main aims are to maintain and improve the environment of the Parish of Snitterfield and to create awareness among residents of conservation issues. It intends to achieve this by recording and cataloguing all the things that the residents value within the Parish. This could be a beautiful view, buildings, a tree, a pond, a stile, a post box, an allotment, the village shop - in fact anything that



Snitterfield village in 2002, but will it still look like this by 2010?

is special to you or that you would not want to lose.

The group intends to be an 'environmental watchdog'. It will be somewhere to go for help when you believe something within the village that you care about is about to be destroyed or damaged. Let them know the kinds of things you wouldn't want to lose and if there

is something happening now that you are concerned about then contact either of the following immediately:

Elaine Wilkinson
telephone 731127
Marjory Yates
telephone 731541



Anyone for Cricket?

Following the formation of a nomadic Snitterfield Cricket Team last year, during which we managed to fulfil five fixtures, (1 victory, 4 defeats), we can now announce this year's fixtures.

Summer 2002

2, 9, 16 June 14, 21 July

4, 25 August 8 September

The team has been formed with a view to laying our own pitch in the village over the next couple of seasons. Our aim is to try to have a team of players local to the area.

All our matches are 'friendlies' played against similar sides, with everyone who plays taking part in the match - ie,

batting, bowling, or both.

We don't have people along just to make up the numbers!

BUT if we are to take this any further we need more help and support. Firstly we need more players. With a great deal of effort we have managed to attract eleven players for every match so far, BUT WE NEED MORE. It doesn't matter what standard you play to, what age you are, or if you can only play one game a week - as long as you like cricket and want to enjoy an afternoon with our team.

Cricket was always played in the village until the club folded about 25 years ago. We do know there is plenty of funding available to help start a club in the village, we just need to show there are enough people who want to play the game, and help with the running of the club. Surely in a village this size we can find enough people to lay on a game of cricket!

If you are interested in playing, or contributing in some way, eg: as committee member, fundraising, grant applications etc, then please contact Lee at Snitterfield Stores Telephone 01789 730007

SNIPER'S CORNER

Don't put your foot in it!

Dear Sirs

What does it take to stop dog owners allowing their animals to foul the footpaths and pavements of Snitterfield? Bins are provided for owners to dispose of their pet's waste, and no doubt responsible owners use these, but there are still a number of idle owners who seem to think that their dog's excrement is other people's problem.

I have had to clear this foul mess from outside my house, manoeuvre a push chair round it in Smiths Lane and circumnavigate it on pavements and footpaths.

Owners who do not want this disgusting and unhealthy filth on their own property should not expect the rest of us to live around it.

Those who offend should be named!



SNITTERFIELD – PART OF THE STRATFORD DISTRICT POLICE SECTOR

I am most pleased to write about our policing service in this newsletter. Taking over as Commander of the Stratford District Police Sector in April, I realised that we have a challenging task in providing a service to both rural areas and towns, with almost 400 square miles and 250 villages and hamlets to look after. On 8 April I attended Snitterfield Parish Council meeting to introduce myself and to get a feel from local people about policing matters. It was a positive meeting and I was made most welcome. What came across to me clearly was the great value people place on having a police officer seen on patrol in the villages. People are reassured by the overt presence of the police.

I received many questions concerning who the Community Beat officer now was, and how often Snitterfield is patrolled.

The Community Beat Officer is PC John Harris and he is based at Henley Police Station. John has been away from the beat for a considerable period of time to work on a major incident, but I am glad to say he is now back to his normal duties. He can be contacted at Henley Police Station on 01564 792691. His mobile phone number is 07747 136008. John's beat covers Snitterfield, Claverdon, Preston Bagot, Wootton Wawen, Wolverton and Bearley. He works alongside PC Adrian Langley, also based at Henley and who has responsibility for the Tanworth in Arden beat.



John Harris, our Community Beat Officer

Our Community Beat Officers are a vital part of our policing service. They are hardworking officers who seek to form close partnership with the communities they work in and really are the 'problem solvers' of the police world. It is their job to get to grips with the emerging problems on their beats and deal with the cause, finding the right solution. We are working hard to find ways to maximise their visible presence in the villages and raise their profile.

Some of the key issues being addressed by John Harris in Snitterfield include car crime, theft and criminal damage. Last year, on the Snitterfield beat there were just over 100 cases of vehicle crime, (mainly theft of and from vehicles),

over 80 cases of other types of theft and over 50 cases of criminal damage. Possibly linked to the criminal damage are issues relating to nuisance and vandalism caused by a small nucleus of young people in Snitterfield. Clearly, these are issues that the police want to make inroads into, working with the community. I should point out however that, by comparison to many other beats the overall level of crime is low. Our overall aim is to make it lower still.

Therefore, please get to know your Community Beat Officer, PC John Harris.

Information you have may help to solve a crime. And don't forget that if it is a real emergency, dial 999.

Chief Inspector Mike Slemensek

Barry Armitage, Neighbourhood Watch Officer for the South Warwickshire Police Area writes:



My name is Barry Armitage and I am the Neighbourhood Watch Officer for South Warwickshire.

I am glad of the opportunity to write a few words about neighbourhood Watch (NHW) to the residents of Snitterfield.

My role is a result of the Crime and Disorder Act that dictated that local councils, the police and other relevant agencies should adopt a partnership approach to community issues and the like. My role is funded by the Stratford and Warwick District Councils, the County Council as well as the police.

It is my responsibility to develop NHW, which means the formation of new schemes and importantly the development/support of existing schemes. Communication from both the police and within NHW itself is an issue that continues to demand attention; without effective communication, consistent police support AND up to date information on local criminal activity, I can understand that NHW schemes can become disillusioned and demotivated. I am working hard to try and bring about improvements in these areas.

Please get in touch with me at Stratford police station (tel 01926 415669) if there are matters that you would like to discuss. Alternatively you may wish to speak with Renate Stephens (your village NHW Co-ordinator) on 01789 731426. renate has been involved with NHW much longer than I have, and she has a wealth of practical experience.

The Parish Council investing in our future generation

The Parish Council recently refurbished the play areas within the village after vandalism attacks - let's keep the areas looking as good as new for our young ones.



- before and after



Nature notes

Let's imagine, we're a young hedgehog, busily searching for food, we stumble across a larder of plump slugs and snails to feast upon, OR - we're a song thrush, looking for our favourite delicacy of slugs and snails, to feed our eager young chicks who are hungry after a cold spring night, and we come upon a flower border with a rich succulent meal awaiting.

These are just two of the many creatures that live on slugs and snails, and other garden pests, the list is endless - so is the death from slug pellets! The manufacturer's label recommends - keep away from pets etc - so what are they doing to our valuable wildlife?



The concentration of poison fed to young birds and animals is FATAL!

A wet spring is not good, slugs and snails thrive in these conditions, and I must admit, I am really struggling to keep them at bay myself.

But, be responsible in the use of slug pellets, be selective and use as few as possible, then collect up

the dead or dying slugs and dispose of them out of harm's way.

Snitterfield is blessed with a good number of hedgehogs and thrushes, so let's keep it that way.

My own recommendation is to sit in the garden with a gin and tonic and listen to the song thrush saying 'goodnight' - it's well worth it!



SNIFE – SNITTERFIELD VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

We want the village newsletter to be shaped by your needs and opinions. Please take a moment to fill in this form, so that we can improve the newsletter and make sure it's what you want. We need your feedback – bad or good.

PLEASE fill out this form, try your hand at the competition to the right, cut along the dotted line and then place in the SNIFE Box at the village shop, or send to SNIFE, 14 The Green, Snitterfield, CV37 0JG, before 10 Aug 2002.

Your age (please circle) Under 16 16-24 25-35 36-45 45-60 60+

Did you enjoy the newsletter?

Which articles did you like best, and why?

Which articles did you like least, and why?

What else would you like to see in SNIFE?

How could we improve it?

Would you like to write a short article? If so on what subject? (Please bear in mind that all articles must meet our mission statement – 'to create awareness in the village')

You don't have to tell us your name and address unless you want to write for us!

Name

Address

Phone number

Any other comments?

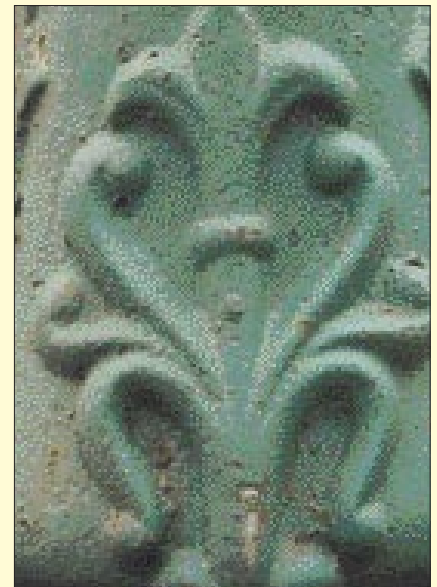
Many thanks – we will use your comments to improve the newsletter, ready for next time!

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW SNITTERFIELD?

Use your powers of observation to identify this object situated somewhere within the parish and...

...win a meal for two at your local pub!

kindly donated by
The Snitterfield Arms
or
The Foxhunter



WHAT IS THIS?

WHERE IS IT LOCATED?

YOUR NAME:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

All correct answers will be entered into a draw. The winner will receive a voucher for a meal for two persons. Send your entry in before 10 August 2002 to: SNIFE, 14 The Green, Snitterfield, CV37 0JG.