

We wish YOU a Very Happy New Year!!

Billingborough Emergency Community Group (BECG) – is now up & running. The role of the group is to provide a structured, community led response, acting as a first line in times of crisis or severe or adverse weather conditions, to support people and co-ordinate with emergency services & councils to ensure the best outcomes for the village. Its goal is to build a safer, more resilient community where everyone knows what to do & where to turn in challenging situations. Currently there is a committee of 6 Billingborough residents, who will initiate actions in an emergency & take the necessary steps to liaise with the emergency services to tackle it accordingly. There is also a list of volunteers willing to help in an emergency (without being involved in the committee). If you'd like to be such a volunteer please contact **Rob** on **07972 383257** or at hifivephoto@gmail.com. Joining doesn't commit you to anything other than helping when you can should an emergency occur. It also gives you the protection of being covered by their volunteer indemnity insurance & access to training. Being a **BECG** volunteer is like being a good neighbour & good neighbours help build a strong resilient community.

Staying Safe - Many actions have been taken to minimise a reoccurrence of the last year's flooding, including the installation of **Telemetry devices** in three different locations in & around our village. These monitor water levels in real time & transmit data to an online dashboard every 15 mins, showing location, condition & current readings. **Level 1** – water reaches a predicted level. **Level 2** – water exceeds its maximum capacity. Once triggered, alerts are sent via SMS or email to notify residents of potential flooding. While these alerts do not guarantee a flood event, they provide a valuable early warning to help our community prepare. If you were unable to attend the information session on 17th Dec, you can still register to receive these alerts. Information how to do so can be found on our website. You can also stay informed of any flood warnings by signing up for **flood alerts** at <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>. Don't let the weather outwit you, flooding can happen very quickly! So be prepared by having an emergency plan & protecting important documents & valuables by keeping them safe & in a high place. Also check that your drains & gutters aren't blocked. If you consider your home or anywhere in the village may be in danger of flooding call **999 & let BECG know on 07972 383257**.

Don't take risks - avoid walking or driving through flood water, as little as 15cm/6" of moving water can knock someone over & 60cm is enough to move an average car. Not to mention the hidden hazards such as loose manhole covers.

Flooding Prevention Updates – BFG – held a meeting on 14th Nov with partner agencies & the Stantec Consultancy representative, who has been appointed by LCC to assess our watercourses. He presented a comprehensive explanation regarding the planned works for the flood mitigation project, which will be delivered in two stages. **Stage 1** - involves surveyors visiting the village & surrounding area over the next months to examine & photograph water courses, drains & culverts, which will enable them to understand water flow patterns. This stage should be complete by spring 26. **Stage 2** – will focus on finalising the analysis & developing potential solutions, for review & discussion later in the year. The meeting was followed by a village tour by all attendees (on foot) to our key problem areas. BFG plan to hold a public meeting in the early year, which will be attended by the consultants & representatives for LCC, to provide updates on the flood mitigation strategy & provide an opportunity for residents to ask questions. **Anglian Water update** – though they were unable to attend the meeting, it is known that they intend to carry out works in the coming months in Vine St, West Rd & the High St. Unfortunately to date no timings have been provided for these. **Riparian Responsibilities** – SKDC & LCC will be contacting residents who are riparian owners of drains on their land, to remind them of their responsibilities re the upkeep & maintenance of these. To find out more about riparian responsibilities, go to <https://www.lincolnshresillienceforum.org/resilient-communities-programme/#news> & open the newsletter for quarter 4 **Q4** & scroll down to **Your Watercourses: Rights & Responsibilities**. People have been observed **dumping rubbish/garden waste** in the ditches on Folkingham Rd – this not only restricts water flow, creating a potential flood hazard, it is **ILLIEGAL**. If you witness someone doing this, anywhere, please report them to SKDC – thank you. **Everyone can help with gutter water flow** by ensuring that the gutters outside or near your property are free from debris & by reporting any blocked drains on **'fixmystreet'**.

New Year is when people often try something new – so why not give being a Councillor a try? Never considered it – well perhaps now's the time to do so? Or think you'd not know what to do – don't worry none of us did when we joined but training & support is provided. Still not certain then why not test before you commit by coming to our next meeting on **13th January at 6.30pm** to see what is involved? If you've decided to give it ago application details can be found on our website & selection will be co- option at Jan meeting.

Our Budget Considerations for 26/27 – it was resolved – not to increase our cemetery fees. Not to increase our agricultural rents but to look to review the rent of one of the areas next year. To increase the rental cost of the cemetery field to £240 pa & the fees for grass cutting on Bladdon Way to £425 pa. To maintain the current amount requested as donation from both the CC & HPC. To continue with all current subscriptions, apart from the one to CPRE & it was also agreed that all DDs should remain the same for the coming financial year. To accept a 3 year fixed quote from Glendale of £1875.83 pa for grass cutting & £2294.02 pa for hedge cutting. The cemetery grass cutting contract is in its last year & will be reviewed in our 27/28 budget. To accept the increased charge of £89 per print for our newsletter, NB this may require reviewing again in May. An increased offer to our caretakers' hourly rate was agreed. Donations – it was resolved to set a budget of £50 pa to RBL & have a £500 pot set aside for any other requests. We only had one request from the public, which was to install a litter bin in the Low St area. We have explored this before & unfortunately were advised by SKDC that they do not have the capacity to empty any additional litterbins. However; we intend to ask again if this would be possible. There was one councillor suggestion of looking for funding to install outdoor gym equipment in the recreation ground. It was agreed not to explore this further because of the community gym. It was also agreed to set aside **£5k** to paint the play equipment in the summer of 2026. **Previously Agreed expenditure** – to go ahead with the installation of new fencing & gates at the cemetery, funds are already set aside for this & it

is hoped that work will be completed before the end of March. **Precept** – this will be set at our January meeting after the finalised budget is presented & agreed. **NB** some of these financial decisions may have to be amended at the time of agreeing the precept.

Notice of a Memorial Stability Test – to ensure the stability of memorials in Birthorpe Rd Cemetery, a safety test will be carried out during the week commencing **26th January 2026**. The memorial stones will be gently tested for stability. BPC would like to thank you in advance for your understanding & make an assumption that it will attempt to contact relatives before any remedial works are carried out. For further information please contact our clerk. **NB** testing only takes place once every five years.

Footpath Update – It's been **two** years since we met with Cllr Hill to undertake a walk around the village to discuss the abysmal state of our pavements, we were then assured that LCC would remedy these. At our last meeting he assured us that these works had been added to the list of necessary works but as they are budget dependant, they wouldn't be undertaken in this current financial year.

Pride & Proaction – no this isn't a new novel but a New Year's resolution that we could all adopt to help improve our village. Little things such as sweeping outside your property, clearing the gutters, cutting back over hanging branches, pulling up weeds in pavements, clearing away leaves, that become slippery when wet, picking up litter rather than walking by, picking up your dog's poo & not leaving it to be trodden in! It's the most difficult thing to remove! Helping neighbours not as able as yourself. Reporting that blocked drain, cracked pavement etc. to the correct authority & not assuming someone else will report it, perhaps even organising a working party to tackle bigger jobs. **If we all aim to do some if not all of these things, together we'll make our village an even lovely place to live!**

Church News – The **Poppy Display** was **amazing!!** We hope you got to see it, if not go online & take a look. **Thanks** go to all that made this possible!! The collection at the Remembrance Day service raised **£275** for Help the Heroes & **£275** for Combat Stress. **East Clock Face** – is now back in place. A **massive thank you** goes to everyone that helped make the Christmas Fayre such a success! It raised **£1200** for church funds.

Village Hall News – **AGM** - Malcom Barlow was elected Chair, Karyn Wilkins Vice Chair & Secretary, Keith Wilkins Treasurer. There was a new addition to the committee & one registration. Over the last year they have made great progress with the refurbishment , updating the bar area in April, the flooring in August & adding further banquet chairs & bistro tables. This was achievable via a lottery grant of £20k , donations & money raised by the Aveland Art Group fayres. They also introduced online booking & a card payment machine. In 2026 they plan to refurbish the stage area, add fire resistant curtains & noticeboards, attend to the walls & apply for funding to enable these works. There are currently posters around the village asking for reviews, 200 are required to support their funding application, so if you've not submitted one yet, please click on the QR code & do so. It's **your** village hall they are trying to improve! Their very popular **Bingo** will next be held on **Friday 6th February** . On the village's behalf we say a **MASSIVE THANK YOU FOR ALL THEIR HARD WORK!!**

BATS will be performing their no doubt hilarious interpretation of Jack & the Beanstalk – in **March** on **Friday 27th (evening), 28th (matinee & evening) & 29th March (matinee.)** Be sure to get you tickets early as they're bound to be in high demand.

The Aveland Art club – would like to thank all those who supported their **Autumn fayre**, which raised an amazing **£940** for the village hall refurbishment fund. **21st March Save the date – for their Spring Market.**

Pop in Too – first meeting in the New Year is on **Wed 7th January at 10am**, first lunch is on **4th Feb**.

Ladies Wednesday Club – first meeting is on **4th Feb – at 7.30** – The Fabrics of Life by Faith Truscott.

New Springwells Surgery Medical Equipment Fund – would like to thank all those that supported their Christmas coffee morning. With special thanks going to the Folkingham Singers & the Billingborough School Children both of whom sang a delightful selection of Christmas songs & to those who generously donated one of the 49 raffles prizes. **Patient Participation group** – unfortunately the November meeting had to be cancelled. It will now take place on **Thursday 8th January at 1.30 pm** in the waiting room.

Fortescue Arms – SKDC have received an application from the **Fortescue Arms Action Group**, to register the Fortescue an Asset of Community Value. No decision had yet been made. If you wish to know more about what this means you can view Understanding the Community Right to Bid on SKDC's website. The group have also objected to the recent planning permission granted by SKDC.

Library van dates - Vine St – 5th January & 2nd February at 15.30 to 16.15 - Village Hall – 28th January and 25th February from 9.45 to 10.45. There's also Books to your door - for more details about this service please call **01522 782010** or email benjamin.tatton@gll.org.

Can you help? Linkwell our good neighbourhood scheme **needs volunteer DRIVERS** - For more information please call **07731 678242**.

Recycle your tree – don't forget that you can put your real Christmas tree out for recycling with your green bin

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