

Not the Peppard News

Dear Reader,

If this is not Peppard News, what is it?

It is a newssheet which on the front tells you about the future of Peppard News and asks for your help in keeping in going, and on the back gives local information about events, Church services, rubbish collection and the like which you are accustomed to seeing in Peppard Diary on Page 3 of each issue. The excellent Health Centre Newsletter is being distributed with it.

The future

Peppard News is continuing as a quarterly community newspaper, but it was not practicable to produce the issue for this September. Peter Longhurst, who for over five years has edited, composited, administered and to a considerable extent written Peppard News, announced that he was retiring, and on the front page of the June issue wondered if that would be the last. Happily, there are six people in the community who decided that they did not want it to be the last and, more to the point, that they would do something about it by offering their talents and their time. The six are (in alphabetical order):

Steve Cannon
Susan Carter

Ian Fraser
Rita Hadgkiss

Penny Harvey
Jennifer Smith

(Ian has served as Advertising Manager for some time already)

We all owe these people a great deal of thanks.

The six volunteers have discussed with Peter Longhurst the jobs which need to be done and what each could contribute. They have established that amongst them they can cover the large majority of what is required, including inviting (and chasing!) contributions to the text, sub-editing contributions for style and length, some reporting on local activities and events, compositing the text for the printer (in old language, type-setting) and distributing the copies to the network of loyal people who deliver to individual homes. The one role yet to be covered is that of the editor (described below). But the team is determined that Peppard News will continue to come out quarterly from next December and confident that this can be achieved. This letter is agreed by all of them.

Your help

Peppard News has always relied substantially on contributions to the text and Peter has sent invitations to over twenty representatives of organisations every quarter. Some pages depend (almost) entirely on contributions (albeit sub0edited), for example, Peppard Diary and the Church pages. But over the years Peter has built up links and techniques which have enabled him to gather news about local events and which he has then written. This will be difficult for the new team to replicate, at least for a while, they are all “amateur” volunteers, as Peter himself was when he started.

So, if you value Peppard News, will you, the reader, think about what you can contribute to it? What local event that you know about do you feel justifies a report on it? Can you provide some text on it, or at least details of it? We have a community newspaper and we need the community to tell the community what it is doing. Your suggestions and contributions may on occasions not be used because of space constraints or duplication of offerings by others, and you can expect them to be sub-edited for style and length. But please make a habit of thinking about what you can do – and then, of course, doing it!

The other way that someone could help is by joining the team. We need one more person as editor. This is not an invitation to replace all of Peter, already six people are doing their parts in that, and there is room for one more. So it is a much more limited, but still very important role. The editor needs to be in overall charge, to review events in the village (with your help), to select what items should go on the front page, to review what matters should be followed up and what articles should be commissioned, and to advise the sub-editor and compositor on the general layout plan. So the role differs from what Peter has filled by being much less wide and by the existence of a team who can be consulted. All Saints' Parochial Church Council has agreed certain aims for Peppard News, and the editor would need to discuss the strategy for implementing them with the PCC and with the Parish Council which also contribute funding. So do you think that you could join the team? Telephone me, David Silsoe on 01491 680258 (answerphone 01491 682360) for a discussion, or write to me at Neals Farm, Wyfold, Reading RG4 9JB.

Local information

Peppard Diary is on the reverse side and no more needs to be said about it here.

So, Not the Peppard News this quarter, but look for the real thing to return in December.

**David Silsoe
Lay Vice-Chairman,
Rotherfield Peppard Parochial Church Council**

Postscript

Six or seven to replace one? Remarkable. But the remarkable aspect of that equation is not that there will be six or seven, since any newspaper would normally use the talents of several people. The remarkable feature is the one that Peter has done it virtually single-handed. No wonder, after more than five years, he is ready to give it up. He deserves congratulations and gratitude for what he has achieved, the establishment of Peppard News as a community newspaper. With our new team, **and with your help**, it can continue.