

The Parish of COMPTON BISHOP

NEWSPLETTER
WINTER
2010

It is once again a pleasure to be able to write a short piece for this our Winter 2010 Newsletter. We have had a vacancy develop on the Council and Dr. Sue Passmore has been welcomed through co-option. She is making an important contribution in our service to our Community. Society requires volunteers to ensure those matters that are within our scope are continued without unnecessary interruption. Please consider, what you can do for our Community in the future? One very important avenue is the continuity of this Parish Council. Next May, a number of councillors will have completed their service. This is an opportunity for you to become involved, just by putting something back into our Community or seeing a particular project through. The Parish Council has no age or political affiliations, so there is a place for you here. Your commitment need be no more than voicing your honest views once a month at an evening meeting. Two residents, Messrs Laney and Ormerod have volunteered to be co-opted onto one of our Advisory Groups to gain experience, but there is scope for others. If you can and would like to take this further then please let any councillor know or speak to me.

The Ward of Axe Vale is changing according to a Boundary Commission report. It is due to incorporate Axbridge Town as part of a two member Ward in the forthcoming 2011 elections. Progress has been made on two key issues that affect our Parish, namely the A38 crossroads and the threatened march of pylons through our beautiful patch. Somerset County Council Highways has insufficient funds to be able to do anything more than to consider installing electronic signs South and North of the junction on the A38 and improve the junction's road markings in 2012. As regards the pylons we have made our views clear to National Grid, see the reports below. Planning application consideration continues as an important function of the Council.

I would like to wish you all a peaceful and pleasant Christmas season.

Eddie Farley, Chairman

Cold Calling

The Parish Council is looking to extend the Neighbourhood Watch scheme with a police sponsored crime prevention initiative to establish a 'No Cold Calling' zone in our parish. Please read the enclosed letter from P.C. Wills.

Carol Singing

On 19th December starting at 5.30, Cross Connections hope you will all join in Christmas Carol Singing by lamplight at The White Hart, with Mince Pies, Mulled Wine & kids refreshments. Santa will arrive in style bringing presents for the children.



Web site

What do you think about our web site? Have a look and give your feed-back. Comments and suggestions are welcomed. Check it out by clicking on www.comptonbishopparish.org.uk

Elections 2011

Elections for parish councils will be held in May 2011. If you would like to find out how you could stand for election and contribute to our grass-roots parish council then have a word with any councillor or contact our Clerk on 733373 for more information.

Community Land Project

Investigations began last year into the possibility of providing parish allotments and/or a recreation ground, but after extensive enquiries no suitable land was found for sale or rent. In addition, a parish survey revealed very little demand for allotments, so this part of the proposal was shelved. The demand for permanent recreational facilities seemed similarly low and, after discussion with Cross Connections, it was concluded that most outdoor activities need only the occasional loan of some field space. In the meantime, Dave and Heather Gaze of Wavering Down Farm, Cross and Brendan Flood of Bramble Farm, Webbington Road have kindly offered to consider making land available for village events, so long as this does not prejudice their business needs or the welfare of their animals. The Parish Council thanks them for their public spirit, and has now closed this project.

Transport, Buses and routes

There are local buses between Wells and Weston and Shipham and Weston which stop in Cross. There is also a Sedgemoor Community Transport service for those who need transport but are unable to get to a bus. You can book these by phoning Sedgemoor on 01278 434881 or the Slinky Bus on 01749 331234. Our Web-site has the details.

Appeal to Dog Owners - Care of Livestock on the hills

The grassland on our local hills is now being maintained by sheep supplied by a local farmer. Unfortunately, 6 sheep were mauled to death last winter by dogs, which were not under responsible control. If you use the hills to exercise your dog please abide by the Countryside code, which states "You do not have to put your dog on a lead on public paths, as long as it is under close control. As a general rule, keep your dog on a lead if you cannot rely on its obedience". Whenever you approach sheep you should ensure your dog is on its lead.

Appeal to Dog Owners - Dog Mess

We continue to have reports of owners ignoring their responsibility to clean up after their dog messes on a public footpath, which is an illegal act. You are encouraged to report any incident to Sedgemoor District Council on 01278 435210, confidentiality is assured.

Planning

We have commented on 15 planning applications in 2009 and, so far, 9 in 2010. We raise local issues, check that any new plans are in line with the district planning guidelines and our Village Design Statement and particularly ensure that our rural environment is protected. We do not have any details of the new government's 'Community Right to Build' initiative and are unable to ascertain its impact on the new Sedgemoor Local Development Framework, which is in the final approval stage.

Footpath project - Cross Lane

Somerset County Highways has only categorised this project as "desirable", with a "low value for money" rating, and so progress has to be postponed until such time as funds are available.

A38 Old Coach Road/Cross Lane junction

The Somerset County Highways 'Drop-In' exhibition was a great success with 182 visiting members of the public - a turnout that surpassed any SCC exhibition. The outcome was overwhelmingly against a no-entry into Cross from the A38. There are insufficient funds for traffic lights, roundabout, etc. There is a commitment, by Somerset Highways, for a continuing review of this dangerous junction. In the interests of safety residents and visitors are asked to respect the 'Keep Clear' area to the east of The New Inn and not park vehicles or place signs on the grass verge immediately to the south of the junction.

Local Policing

Our local police are very keen to receive any information or comments from residents. Feedback forms can be posted in message boxes to be installed in the Post Office, Surgery and Co-op in Abridge. All information will be regarded as confidential.

Major Development Projects in Sedgemoor

Hinkley C

EDF Energy is proposing to develop a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point C. Consultations have looked at the development, planning, building and site specific plans for accommodation, transport and freight. Compton Bishop Parish Council was not a statutory consultee, but has made comments on the possible health risks due to accidental emissions of radioactive material and on the potential increase in local road traffic especially as 20% of aggregates will be sourced 'locally'.

New Power Lines for Hinkley

National Grid proposes to install pylons on a route from the Power Station to Avonmouth. The pylons will be 1.8 times higher than existing ones and will be routed from Mark through the Lox Yeo valley which is between Loxton and Webbington. Compton Bishop Parish Council has been forthright in opposing the installation of overhead power lines favouring the option of routing cables under the Severn Estuary. National Grid has now been instructed to review its options with a detailed study into the undersea and underground routing of cables. As a result the next stage of consultation has been delayed. Your Parish Council remains actively involved and has joined with local Parish Councils to ensure that each parish's views are understood and, where possible, adopted.

Monitoring other Major Proposed Developments

Your council is keeping an eye on the following major developments, which may in future impact upon our parish. The known developments are in the new 'Local Development Framework' for Sedgemoor i.e. Energy generation at Puriton Energy Park: the Walpole Anaerobic Digestion Waste Management Project: Huntspill Level Wind Farms: Steart Coastal Management Project: Parrett Barrier (not required until 2030-2050) and, more locally the Cheddar Reservoir extension.

Our countryside

Our local hills contribute to the beauty of our parish. The National Trust and its volunteers work hard to maintain the environment which qualifies as a SSSI and AONB. We occasionally have exuberant people who abuse the environment leaving litter, bottles and general rubbish, especially in Cross Quarry. If you witness any misuse then inform a councillor, clerk or phone the police on 0845 456 7000 (note: NOT 999!)

The Financial Situation

Having dealt with unexpected election costs and audit fees incurred in 2008/2009 financial stability has been restored. We are working towards a small reduction in our precept and your council expects to meet all of this year's liabilities. We have decided to build a reserve for possible future projects that may require advanced funding. An issue for next year concerns Sedgemoor District Council, who may wish to reduce costs by charging individual parishes for certain services (e.g. emptying of 'dog bins'). The net effect on our precept has yet to be confirmed.

Refurbishment of Benches

In another example of public spirit, Mr Dean Harvey of Compton Bishop has voluntarily refurbished the John Lodge Memorial Bench in Cross (which had become quite shabby but is now once more in pristine condition and mounted on new concrete foundations) and Cllr Mike Rolfe has done a similar job on the bench in the Springfield Wildlife Site.

Litter Picking

If you would like to help with our Village Litter Picking, please make a note of the date: Saturday 12th March 2011, 10.00 a.m. at Cross Hall. We will have black bin liners available but please bring gloves and any tools you think would be useful. For further information call any parish councillor or the clerk.

Cross Connections

The 2010 Village fun day was another success with Cross winning the cup for the rounders competition. Everyone had a lovely day with a bouncy castle, games and sports. Keep an eye open for events including the popular Quiz Nights, which are run on a regular basis and are great fun for all.

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Is the print size too small?

Why not view this newsletter on our website : www.comptonbishopparrish.org.uk or contact our Clerk for a copy with larger print.

Your Parish Council

*Eddie Farley - Chairman
Sue Passmore Richard Parker
David Windmill*

*Alison Rix – Vice Chairman
Mike Rolfe Jim Warner
Clerk – Paul Passey- Tel: 733373*

Visit the Parish Council Web site at www.comptonbishopparrish.org.uk