

CHAR CHAT

Char Valley Parish Council Newsletter

Whitchurch Canonorum, Stanton St Gabriel, Wootton Fitzpaine

Issue 4

March 2004

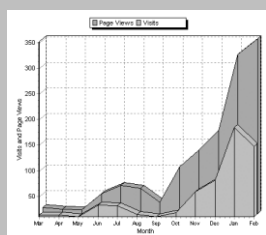
Char Valley Web Site

Did you know that.....

Since February 2003 the CVPC website has had 666 visitors, currently averaging 7 per day - with an average visit time of 2.19 minutes, visiting approximately 2.5 pages per visit. (Figures correct as of 25th February.)

80% of the visits have been from the UK. Others were from USA, Europe and Eastern Europe; 99% were English speaking.

Were you one of those visitors? If you have not yet had a chance to look at the site, we think you will be impressed: www.charvalleypc.co.uk



The Budget

This financial year (April to March) the Parish Council plans to spend £9,685 of the £13,795 available budget.

Of the total, Parish Council running costs (insurance, office expenses, audit, the hire of halls, membership fees and payment to the Clerk of the Council) will total around £4,320 against a planned expenditure of £5,195.

£920 was spent on repairs to all our notice boards and the provision of a new Board at Fishponds. Whitchurch Village Hall received a grant of £2,500 and a £250 contribution was made to the Leisure Bus. £285 was spent on Village

Improvements, providing a salt bin in Wootton and we spent £600 on the upkeep of our six burial grounds, this being half the cost of grass cutting. £555 will be spent on maintaining our playing fields and playgrounds, cutting the grass and undertaking general repairs.

Careful spending this year means that we shall be carrying about £3,500 forward into next year's budget. This means that, although we plan to spend £15,265, we have applied to West Dorset District Council for a precept of £11,750, an increase over last year of around 4% (equivalent to an average increase of 50p per week per household).

In this forthcoming year, all three of our Village Halls will be receiving grant aid from the Parish Council: Whitchurch will receive a further £1,750; The James Hargreaves Hall at Morcombelake will receive £2,800 and Wootton will receive £800 towards the cost of a new roundabout on the playground and the renewal of the concrete apron at the entrance to the car park.

Village Improvement plans include a new seat at the top of Goodens Hill and we plan to donate £250 among various organisations including Dorset Air Ambulance and the Citizens Advice Bureau. We estimate the cost of the *Char Chat* and our Web site to be £850 and have budgeted to continue our grant towards the Leisure Bus.

ESTIMATE
OF FINAL
SPEND BUDGET
2003/04 2004/05

	ESTIMATE OF FINAL SPEND	BUDGET
	2003/04	2004/05
Parish Council Running Costs	4,319.11	5,115.00
Playingfield & Playground Maintenance	555.00	600.00
Repairs to Property	0.00	100.00
S137 Payments (donations)	55.00	250.00
Notice Boards	920.00	500.00
Village Improvements	285.32	550.00
Burial Grounds	600.00	600.00
Contingency	0.00	1,000.00
Transport Scheme	250.00	350.00
Char Chat	154.03	350.00
Web Site	46.94	500.00
Whitchurch Village Hall	2,500.00	1,750.00
Morcombelake URC Hall		2,800.00
Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall		800.00
TOTAL	9,685.40	15,265.00

Charmouth Library

We are pleased to confirm that Charmouth Library will now remain open, following a proposal from Dorset County Council to close it. Unfortunately, however, we shall lose the mobile Library in Wootton.

Ring and Ride

Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride Service for people with mobility problems will come to YOUR door now! Ring 01404 46529 for further details. In addition, Clive's Cabs offer a wheelchair friendly service and can be contacted on 01308 862485 or 07817 204017 (mobile).

New at the National Trust

Helen Mann starts as the new Property Manager of the Trust's West Dorset Golden Cap Estate on the 1st of March. Telephone and other contact details will remain unchanged and we look forward to working with Helen in the future.

Draft AONB Plan

A draft of the AONB plan is now available and may be viewed on their web site:
www.dorsetaonb.org.uk

Char Valley Village Communities Action Plans 2003 Progress Report January 12, 2004

The *Action Plans*, published in October 2003 listed nine topics under each of which the Parish Council set out key areas for action. This report lists our progress to date. All activities below have either been already undertaken or are under review by other agencies.

Original headings from the Action Plan are used.

- 1. Provision of Social Housing.** We have put forward the views in the Action Plans to the Local Plan Review, WDDC Housing Department and District Councillors. We set up a *Housing Working Group* and have made many proposals - change in designation from 'agricultural ties' to 'local employment' ties, restrictions in the use of tied cottages as holiday accommodation, changes in the use of redundant buildings, and prioritisation of local people for social housing units.
- 2. Planning and Employment Issues.** We have put forward the views in the Action Plans to the Local Plan Review, WDDC Housing Department and District Councillors. We have talked to Countryside Rangers and DCC Rights of Way about the natural environment as a tourist attraction.
- 3. Countryside and Environment.** We have set up an ancient/important hedgerow group in each parish.
- 4. Rights of Way.** We have talked to DCC about a crossing scheme for horses over the A35.
- 5. Road conditions, Restrictions and Controls.** *Hyder Consulting* has been engaged to consider re-routing of HGVs on the A35, reductions in traffic speed and pedestrian/horse-rider safety in Morcombelake, a cycle path between Morcombelake and Charmouth, and road signs for lanes leading off the A35.
- 6. Community Policing.** We have requested changes in the Exeter and East Devon telephone directories to provide contact numbers.
- 7. Char Valley Burial Grounds.** We continue to offer financial support for grass cutting in burial grounds. We have looked into ways to help tourism and have requested *Brown Tourist Signs* on the A35 to the shrine of St Wite at Whitchurch.
- 8. Our Three Village Halls.** We continue to provide financial help in the form of grants. There is at least one representative of the Parish Council on each village hall committee.

Parish Council Meeting Dates - 2004

12 th January	Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall
9 th February	Morcombelake URC Hall
8 th March	Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall
19 th April	Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall
10 th May	Morcombelake URC Hall - Annual Parish Council Meeting
14 th June	Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall
19 th July	Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall
August	No Meeting
13 th September	Morcombelake URC Hall
11 th October	Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall
15 th November	Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall
December	No Meeting

** All Meetings take place on a Monday evening starting at 7.30pm.
** Everyone is welcome to attend Parish Council meetings and there is always a public discussion period.

Quiet Lanes

Introduction. Speeding traffic is a serious problem in villages and country lanes, and is likely to become worse as traffic levels continue to rise. Organisations such as the *Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)* and the *Countryside Agency* have introduced the idea of **Quiet Lanes** in an attempt to protect our rural environment from the adverse affects of speeding traffic. CPRE's own *Rural Traffic Fear Survey 1999* found that 65% of people felt threatened either all or some of the time by speeding traffic in country lanes.

What are Quiet Lanes? Quiet lanes are minor rural roads, typically C grade or unclassified routes, which have been designated by local highway authorities as offering special concessions to the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and others. They are designed to enable users to enjoy country lanes in greater safety and to encourage car drivers to respect more vulnerable road users. The *Transport Act 2000* contains provisions that give local highway authorities the power to designate certain roads for which they are responsible as quiet lanes. The term 'Quiet Lane' thus has legal status.

Noticeable features of quiet lanes (not all quiet lanes will display all the features listed below).

- *Quiet Lane signs.* A national 'Quiet Lane' sign has been designed to define entry to and exit from quiet lanes. Usually they are inconspicuous, mounted on small timber posts.
- *Fingerposts.* These redirect traffic on to more appropriate routes.
- *Removal of unnecessary traffic signs.*
- *Landscape features.* Hedges, verges, walls and wayside trees are managed to improve the landscape, retain local character and make travel easier for cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Enforcement of Quiet Lanes. Quiet Lanes are mostly self-enforcing. Such enforcement as there is largely depends on advertising their presence and maintaining public awareness about their purpose. This requires a continuous programme of promotion in order that the local community and visitors to the area know that quiet lanes exist and what they are for. Legislation does not give any user group priority on a quiet lane and so its use is shared. CPRE would like vulnerable users to have priority right of way in the same way as they have on zebra crossings.

Existing Quiet Lane projects. Two pilot study projects in Norfolk and Kent were started in 1998 with the support of the Countryside Agency. Across the country, some 31 local authorities (including Dorset) have begun to develop quiet lane networks with the intention of developing over 300 Quiet Lanes in their local communities. The main source of funding is through the local highway authority's *Local Transport Plan*.

Checklist for Public Action on Quiet Lanes. If you think that Quiet Lanes are a good idea, CPRE (web site www.cpre.org.uk) offers a detailed checklist as an aid to getting local authorities to agree to such a scheme.

Finally, Richard Nicholls, Chairman of the CPRE West Dorset Group, has been invited by the Parish Council to talk on this subject during 2004.

Meeting with Police Service

On 2nd February, representatives from the Char Valley Parish Council and the Char Valley Home Watch met our local P C Mullen and the Bridport Section Commander, Inspector Alan Jenkins, at Lyme Regis Police Station.

Inspector Jenkins encouraged us not to be hesitant in reporting an incident to the Police. All offences against the person, and this includes deception burglaries by those who come to your house, are given the highest priority. All 999 calls should have a response within 20 minutes.

Although the days of a 'Bobby on the Beat' are gone, we now have Community Support Officers who patrol in a well-marked car and whose role is to deal with anti-social behaviour. The importance of reports to the Information Management Unit, which is manned by three officers, was emphasised. Information from Home Watch members or from neighbours is invaluable in helping the Information Unit to solve a crime or build a case. The best evidence is a number-plate, but any observation is useful. **Don't hesitate to call the Police or your Home Watch Co-ordinator with suspicions.**

Lyme Police Station is closing, but the local officers will still be working in Lyme Regis, from a new Joint Command Centre with the Fire and Ambulance Services.

The Bridport Police Station is manned from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. There is also a Police helicopter for urgent missions, on call most hours of the day. To make a report ring: Bridport Police Station **01308 422266** or **999** for emergencies.

When I was young.....



Our area has a wide range of activities on offer for the younger generation, from riding to sailing, from youth clubs to guides and brownies. Take a look at some of the following and see if there is something there to interest you!

3-Counties Youth Club

Meets on Tuesday each week at Bettiscombe Hall between 7pm and 9pm.



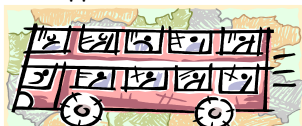
Sport and Recreation.....

Bridport Leisure Centre provides a wide range of recreational facilities including: 25 Metre Swimming Pool, 12 Metre Teaching Pool, Aerobics Studio, Fully Air-Conditioned Fitness Suite, 3 Squash Courts, Multi-Purpose Sports Hall, Rugby and Cricket Pitches, Floodlit AstroTurf, 6 Tennis Courts, Sports Bar, Function Rooms. Call 01308 427464 for more information.

Axe Valley Sports Centre has a range of facilities and activities to suit most ages, including a multifunction sports hall that caters for classes, casual hire and even children's parties. In addition, there is a fully equipped fitness suite called "Axes", with friendly, qualified staff. Contact us on 01297 35235.

The Leisure Bus ...

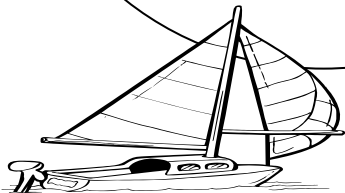
is off the ground and ready to take children aged 8-19 to Bridport Leisure Centre on Friday nights. Contact Kate Geraghty, Vital Villages Transport Group 01297 489422 for further information and application forms.



Guides and Brownies

Charmouth Guides meets each week. Contact Davina Pennells on 01297 560965 if you would like to join.

1st Charmouth Brownies meet each Friday during term time at St Andrews Community Hall in Lower Sea Lane. If you are between 7 and 10 years and would like to join, contact Anthea Thomas on 01297 560465



Sailing in Lyme Bay

Lyme Regis Sailing Club has gained **RYA Champion Club** status for the strength of its Youth Section. Youth training takes place on Tuesday evenings from the end of April until the Summer holidays. Sessions start at 6 pm. For safety reasons, numbers are limited to 50 and there is usually a waiting list. (Members must be youth members of LRSC). Contact Sally Holman 01297 442373 or visit the web site www.lrsc.org.uk

Playgrounds The Wootton Playing Field has low and high basketball nets and goal posts on the small football pitch. It is a general meeting place for children in Wootton and there are youngsters kicking a ball around on most fine days after school. The Wootton Social Club hold entertaining family football matches on summer evenings. Beside the Hall there is a fenced playground for small children with a double swing and two animal springs and very soon there will be a wonderful large, new roundabout.

There is a splendid playground in Whitchurch next to the Village Hall provided by the Parish Council as a Millennium project.

All of the playgrounds are inspected once a week by the Caretakers and annually by the WDDC Health and Safety Officer.

WILDLIFE ON THE EDGE - CAN YOU HELP?

Roadside verges are an important feature of our landscape. Many are miniature nature reserves, providing a home to an amazing variety of wildlife - flora such as primroses, bluebells and wild garlic and fauna such as field voles and shrews. Verges sometimes serve as a wildlife network, enabling less mobile species to move safely along them to link larger areas of conservation value. Verge plants may also provide vital seed for wintering birds. There are more than 100 roadside verges in Dorset that are good for wildlife and all are vulnerable to damage from poor management, so local people are needed to keep a watchful eye on them.

Volunteers are needed **now** to check on verges at least once a year, noting such things as species of interest, invasive scrub or cutting taking place at the wrong time. You *don't* need to be an expert to help out - just keen to protect our wildlife. If you can help, please contact *Dorset Wildlife Trust* on 01305 264620 or *Jay Wallis* on 01305 269059.

