

# CHAR CHAT

## Char Valley Parish Council Newsletter

Whitchurch Canonorum, Stanton St Gabriel, Wootton Fitzpaine

Issue 7

March 2005

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## Safer Village Lanes

The Parish Council has asked DCC Transportation Dept whether there is a possibility of getting speed limits in our villages. If the answer is "no", other traffic calming ideas will be looked into (probably not speed bumps!).

"Playground" signs are now in place in Wootton and Whitchurch. The hope is that these will help to slow traffic approaching the entrances to the playgrounds.

The possibility of speed limits for Whitchurch and Wootton will be on the agendas at the Parish Meetings. For dates, please see above centre.

## Stockham Bridge

Work near Stockham Bridge, Whitchurch Canonorum will start in March 2005. This is to provide flood relief for this stretch of Watery Lane.

## Annual Parish Meetings

The three Annual Parish Meetings for Whitchurch Canonorum, Wootton Fitzpaine and Stanton St Gabriel parishes will take place soon. These meetings are an opportunity for residents to discuss issues that affect people locally, in an informal atmosphere. In all three parishes there will be a short report by a Parish Councillor and reports from village halls and other community groups. This is where democracy starts, so **please** come and make your views known. Any resident who would like to put an item on the agenda for discussion may do so through the contact person for each parish at least ten days in advance and you are also welcome to raise issues at the meeting directly. Agendas will be posted on village notice boards nearer the due dates.

**Wootton Fitzpaine - April 14<sup>th</sup> at 6.45 p.m. Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall.** Agenda items will include: reports from village organisations, Village Hall, Social Club and Playing Field committees, Best Kept Village for 2005, A possible village speed limit. Chairman Lord Bradbury. **Contact:** Mrs Marion Brooks (Secretary), Manor Garden Cottage, Wootton Fitzpaine, DT6 6NH Tel. 01297 560807.

**Stanton St Gabriel - May 16<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. James Hargreaves Hall, Morcombelake.** Agenda items will include: Tetra masts in the parish, village speed limits, footpaths, the state of roads and the crossing for A35 in Morcombelake. **Contact:** Cllr. John Bridle (Chairman), Cold Harbour, Morcombelake DT6 6EP Tel. 01297 489711

**Whitchurch Canonorum - May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7.30 p.m. Whitchurch Village Hall.** Agenda items will include: renovations to the Well House, possible village speed limit, affordable housing and reports from village organisations. **Contact:** Cllr Robert Andrews (Chairman), Befferlands Farm, Whitchurch Canonorum DT6 6RD. Tel. 01297 560203

## Community Planning in West Dorset Bridport Local Area Partnership

The Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP) has been formed to identify local views, issues and needs and to take these common issues and concerns forward to help influence decision makers.

This is grass-roots community planning, and involves Bridport Town Council and surrounding parish councils along with voluntary organizations, community groups, businesses and residents.

The aim is to strengthen the voice of communities when giving their views on services that are needed, issues that affect the area and also to help local projects to address problems.

Local area partnerships have so far formed in the **Bridport, Dorchester, Lyme Regis** and **Sherborne** areas.

The quarterly steering group meetings lead to recommendations, if needed, to the West Dorset Partnership. At the next meeting, the Partnership plans to develop working groups in areas that have local interest, such as the South West Coast Path and World Heritage Site.

The BLAP has already responded to some issues raised by the Char Valley Parish Council by writing to the appropriate authorities with our concerns about the South West Coastal path and the location of the Tetra masts planned for this area. Some other local matters that have been discussed were the possible closure of Bradpole's Post Office, the relocation of the medical centre, and the local news coverage of this area.

For further information contact Susan Anders on 01308 456722 or email [s.anders@bridport-tc.gov.uk](mailto:s.anders@bridport-tc.gov.uk)

# The Budget

	<u>ESTIMATED</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
	<u>FINAL SUM</u>	
	<u>2004/2005</u>	<u>2005/2006</u>
Parish Council administration & costs	5,372	6,760
Burial Grounds (donations to PCCs)	807	800
Playing Field and Playgrounds	622	1,000
Repairs	25	100
Village Improvements: notice boards, salt bins etc.	1,608	1,000
Donations to charities and public services	245	150
Annual maintenance donations to 3 Village Halls	N/A	900
Grant aid to Village Halls		
James Hargreaves	2,800	NIL
Whitchurch Canonorum	1,750	NIL
Wootton Fitzpaine	800	NIL
Access to Information: Char Chat & Website	1,182	1,300
Transport Scheme: Bopper Bus	350	350
Contingency for budget		2,000
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>£15,562</b>	<b>£14,360</b>

We predict that about £3,500 will be carried forward in our bank account to next year, leaving a sum of £10,860 as our 2005/2006 precept (Parish Council Tax), a reduction on the previous year.

**Parish Council administration** covers: **Insurance; the Audit fee; the Clerk's salary; Office Expenses; Quality Status & training; Hall Hire; Councillors' expenses.**

**Burial Ground Donations.** The Parish Council gives a donation towards the maintenance of all our burial grounds. Some of these are in churchyards and some are cemeteries but any parishioner has the right to be buried in their parish burial ground.

**Playing Field and Playgrounds.** This covers the maintenance of the Wootton Fitzpaine playing field and Whitchurch Canonorum playground. The Parish Council also arranges an annual Health and Safety inspection, which is provided free by WDDC.

**Repairs.** We will have some larger repairs to the Well House at Whitchurch in the coming year for which we might be able to apply for a grant. Later, possible improvements to the inside of the Well and to the door will be discussed at the Whitchurch Canonorum Annual Parish Meeting.

**Village Improvements.** We provide new notice boards and salt bins when necessary. We have also purchased a seat in memory of Wilf Barnes, which will be placed in Whitchurch Canonorum churchyard.

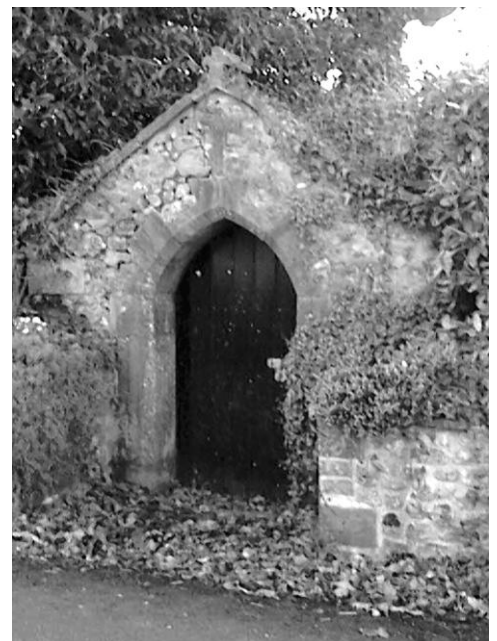
**Donations.** 2004/05 donations: Dorset Air Ambulance, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Axe Valley Ring & Ride, WATAG (Western Area Transport Group), The Samaritans, the WRVS and Whitchurch Playgroup. The Parish Council tries to choose, from the large number of requests, services that directly support our residents.

**Village Halls.** The Parish Council has decided to give an **annual maintenance grant** to each village hall to help towards their costs. In 2005/06 it will be £300 each. The sum will be reviewed each year. In 2004/2005 sums were paid out to support **grant applications** and repair work to each hall.

**Access to Information.** It is difficult to access information in this area. We have tried leaving Char Chat newsletters in places such as Village Halls and Church porches but it was not a success. We have added more money into the budget for our newsletter and website for next year to cover the costs of delivery.

**The Bopper Bus.** This bus, which takes youngsters to Bridport Leisure Centre on Friday nights, is a resounding success. More and more children are using it. Many thanks to Counsellor Kate Geraghty of Chideock Parish Council who organises the bus.

**Contingency.** The budget has to be decided nearly six months before the financial year begins in April and it is difficult to think of every expense that may arise. Any sum not spent from the contingency budget will be carried forward to the following year to reduce the precept (Parish Council Tax).



*The Well House, Whitchurch. Photo Tim Heap*



# *Report by the Rights of Way Officer*

**Lyme Regis Golf Course (LRGC).** Negotiations with LRGC have started as a result of campaigning and lobbying of DCC members and the Roads and Rights of way Committee (RROW). The negotiations concern the rolling path on the cliff approximately on the line of the old coast path. Ros Love of South West Coastal Path (SWCP) team (based in Exeter and with central govt. funding) has taken over from DCC in the negotiations. She has commissioned Prof Denis Brunson for expert geological advice on rates of erosion, and a golf course architect to suggest a new line for the cliff-top path. The Coastguard Agency and the National Trust (NT) are advising on the feasibility of locating the coast path on the under-cliff ledge from the Spittles to Black Ven. Deadline for the reports is the DCC RROW committee meeting in March. While it is inexplicable that none of this was started in 2000 when the slips occurred, at least real preliminary work is now under way. Pressure from all of us is essential because the outcome is still in doubt. DCC officers will continue to think that they can get away with imposing the inland route (unanimously rejected by local people in August 2004) if there are no positive results by the new March deadline.

**Stonebarrow.** At the DCC RROW committee meeting of 17/1/2005, the DCC officer put forward a confusing scheme comprising 32 pages of old and new reports and plans received after the deadline for comments. CPAG had e-mailed comment, even though the DCC deadline had passed, and attended the meeting. He proposed to move the coast path inland between Charmouth and the summit of Stonebarrow. Members (councillors) deferred this because he had not carried out consultations with landowners and other interested parties.

An unnecessary landward diversion through the steep slope at Cains Folly (at the western end of the NT Golden Cap estate) and previously approved by the committee, seems to have been withdrawn. CPAG welcome this U-turn and will press for more reappraisals of unnecessary official closures.

NT sent DCC a letter of intent to roll back their fences to give the coast path a wider corridor as and when necessary. CPAG has contacted NT to thank them for their initiative.

The coast path from the river Char to the summit of Stonebarrow is well used although the blanket closure order has not yet been reappraised and lifted. The barbed wire barricades have been removed.

Because of the deferral of the 17<sup>th</sup> January DCC ROW meeting, another took place on 27<sup>th</sup> January on site at Stonebarrow. CPAG were invited and made several points and comments. Mister Loosemore's agent was present and confirmed that Mr Loosemore does not object to the purchase of a 25 metre margin for the coastal path. The NT confirmed that they would be rolling their fences back to whatever point the DCC require and made the point that this meeting should have taken place 3 years ago. We hope this section will be officially opened this year and will continue to pressure the DCC.

**Seatown.** The coast path (footpath 22) from the west beach up to the NT Golden Cap estate has been officially closed and diverted inland. The path is comfortably walkable, has been used continuously since closure, and could be re-opened at minimal cost. It is likely that the DCC are going to spend a huge amount of money in an attempt to close this path because extinguishments cannot be pushed through without a public enquiry. CPAG believe that taxpayers' money should be used to keep footpaths open.

**Raffey's Lodge.** DCC officers use this name for the coast path from Charmouth beach huts to old Lyme road on the way to LRGC. Again as at Seatown this section can be officially re-opened at little cost. This section is easily walkable and frequently used. All barriers and warning signs have been removed, though the closure orders have yet to be lifted.

All the closure orders around Charmouth expire on 2 February 2005. If last time is anything to go by, it will be several months before DCC realises and reinstates them.

**St Gabriel's** CPAG have been liaising with the NT to get a path open from the coast path down to the beach at St Gabriel's mouth after falls at the steps. The NT has identified a new route, which we hope will be open for the summer. Volunteer support will be needed to do the spadework. CPAG have offered active on-the-ground help. We will keep you informed.

**New ranger.** John Hayes is the new ranger for our section of the coast path. CPAG have asked to meet him to discuss low cost, low tech. sustainable solutions to keep the paths open for 2005.

**Circular walks.** CPAG have proposed the creation of two circular walks: the first on the Spittles and the second up through Raffey's Lodge, the NT Black Ven land, and up to the three acres of DCC land on the eastern (Charmouth) side of the LRGC. Circular walks are part of a marketing bid by the SWCP team to promote "Walks through Time". These two west Dorset coast walks would give visitors and locals circular walks on the Jurassic cliffs while the gap in the coast path at LRGC is resolved.

*John Bridle, Rights of Way Officer*



# Reports from Village Halls

## *Report From Wootton Village Hall:*

Two big projects are about to start at Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall. The concrete at the entrance to the car park and in front of the village garages is breaking up and will be replaced shortly. This will cause some inconvenience for a few days but the Committee will try to timetable this to avoid large events. The funds will come from the Village Hall, the Social Club and the Parish Council (who are responsible for the maintenance of the Playing Field).

The oil fired heating system has been playing up for some time and has been particularly inconvenient during the recent cold spell. The Committee have now arranged quotations for an upgraded system with a more powerful pump and more sophisticated controls. This, together with an improved hot water supply for the kitchen, will be installed as soon as possible.

There have been many good Artsreach events in the Hall, organised by Sue Beckers and Biddy Savage. We are sure that the programme for 2005 will be as exciting as last year. The Parent and Toddler Group is flourishing and other bookings have been steady. The hire rates have been reviewed and the cost of heating will be included in the rate in future, as it was inconvenient to separate the charges. Residents of Wootton Fitzpaine get a 25% reduction on the basic rate set.

Next year, 2006 will be the centenary of the Wootton Village Hall so we are hoping to have the whole place in good shape for great celebrations.

## *Report From The James Hargreaves Community Hall*

In January 2005, the James Hargreaves Community hall entered the most important phase of its development since purchase in May 2004.

The hall needs complete refurbishment after many years of neglect. The hall committee decided that it could do nothing until the old chapel was removed. The demolition needed careful planning because of the chapel's condition, its closeness to neighbouring properties and difficult access for contractors' vehicles. At the time of writing (March 18<sup>th</sup>), the chapel has been demolished and work to create new doorways and make the back of the hall weatherproof is complete. In parallel with this development, the old stage, steps and 'pink' wall at the back of the hall have been removed and two internal walls of the hall waterproofed ('tanked').

The next phase involves building a small extension on to the hall, improving pedestrian access, building new toilets and kitchen and improving heating, lighting and windows. The Char Valley Parish Council has supported the plans for this phase and we recently gained full planning permission from WDDC.

The funds for the project have come from several sources - Dorset Community Action, the Char Valley Parish Council, private donations and many years of hard fund-raising. The hall has been closed since this work started but we expect to be open again by the beginning of April in time for the second Morcombelake Spring Flower Show.

## *Report from Whitchurch Village Hall*

The refurbishment programme for the main hall is almost finished. The major work was undertaken by local builders and other craftsmen and the decoration was done by local people from the extended village. With a new kitchen and cloakroom facilities and access for the disabled, we have a meeting place which can be enjoyed for decades.

However, some tasks are not finished. The anterooms require decoration and we need new furniture which will reflect the quality of the hall itself. To that end the members of the WI have organised some ploughman's lunches, the next one being on Saturday 16th April.

Clare Colby has organised a series of displays of art with excellent coffee and snack lunch facilities. The Art Cafe is open at the hall on Mondays from 10am to 4pm.

Finally, Wally Holmes has organised a 75/25 auction at the hall for Sunday 24th April.

## *Historical Snippets*

Unfortunately, our local West Dorset dialect will eventually become history with television, radio, schools etc affecting the way we speak nowadays. The following is written in dialect as told by George Diment nearly 20 years ago.

This be a story I ganna tell 'ee bout what'append to oi when oi was a boi. Wun day oi and my maet was playin outsoid the vicarage garden and as we were playin theur we found a woo tin kiddie in the garden 'edge. Moy maet looked at oi and zed, "Oi gonna 'ave 'ee". Oi zed, "Noo you baint; oi zid en fust, oi goina 'ave 'en". "Zoo" he said "alright then, oi'll tell ee what we'll do. The wun oo tell the biggust loies can 'ave the kiddie". Zoo we started tellun loies, sum vury baa wuns, when ahl uf a suddun the vicur looked uver 'is garden 'edge an ee looked at us an ee zed, "You nawghty you rascals," "Janoo," ee zed, "tis vury wicked to tell loies loike you've bin doin, Janoo oi nevr told a loi in moy loife." Moy maet look at oi and zed, "Gee un the kiddie, Garge, "Ee've wun."

Sylvia Creed-Castle, Ancient Monuments Liaison Officer.

*Editors note: If you are interested in regional accents, you may find the Radio 4 web site of interest: [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/routesofenglish/storysofar/series3.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/routesofenglish/storysofar/series3.shtml)*

