

CHAR CHAT

Char Valley Parish Council Newsletter

Whitchurch Canonorum, Stanton St Gabriel, Wootton Fitzpaine

Issue 11

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Contents:

Front page:

- The Budget

Centre pages:

- Litter in Rural Areas
- Parish Meeting Dates
- Improvements to Planning
- BOATS and TROs - Mill Lane

Back page:

- Village Hall Updates

Side panels:

- Affordable Housing - Consultation
- Kerbside Recycling

Affordable Housing - Village Consultation

A Village Consultation on affordable housing for Whitchurch will take place between 3.30 pm and 7.30 pm on Thursday 30th March in the Whitchurch Village Hall.

Please drop in to discuss the options and to give your views on the sites that have been proposed for affordable housing in the village.

Char Valley Parish Council Budget For 2006/2007

Running Expenses	Salary, Administration expenses, Subscriptions, Insurance, Audit, Hall hire	6,880
	Char Chat and the Char Valley Website	920
	Maintenance Grants for 3 halls	945
	Grants to Parochial Church Councils for the maintenance of Burial Grounds	818
	Wootton Fitzpaine Playing Field and Whitchurch Canonorum Playground maintenance	725
Donations to organisations who provide a service or advice to our residents	Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance, Citizens Advice Bureau, WATAG, Samaritans, Axe Valley Ring & Ride, WRVS (meals on wheels), The Bopper Bus for children	550
Village Halls Capital support grants	Whitchurch Canonorum, James Hargreaves, Wootton Fitzpaine	2,600
Village Improvements	The Well House, salt bins, playground surfacing etc	3,100
Contingency		1,000
Total		17,538

We predict that enough money will be carried forward in our bank account to April, to allow a sum of £14,000 as our 2006/2007 precept (Parish Council Tax).

We will be providing support grants totalling £2,600 to our three Village Halls in 2006/2007.

As part of our Village Improvements we have budgeted £1,000 for repairs and improvements to The Well House for which we hope to obtain matched funding in the form of a grant.

The precept (Parish Council Tax) is a tiny proportion of our total Council Tax. West Dorset District Council Tax will go up by 2.49% this year and will remain the same in the following year too.

Litter In Rural Areas

The amount of litter found in rural areas continues to grow, as common experience can confirm. Besides litter's visual irritation and potential health threat, its very presence encourages further additions to it. In this article, we highlight three activities aimed at reducing this problem.

1. DCAL - DORSET CAMPAIGN AGAINST LITTER

For several years, the Dorset branch of the *Campaign to Protect Rural England* (CPRE) has made informal attempts to improve matters with regard to the dumping of litter, especially in the North Dorset District area. Because of this effort, CPRE Dorset last year formally adopted a countywide campaign called the *Dorset Campaign Against Litter* (DCAL). The DCAL committee includes representatives from county and district councils and meets quarterly in Dorchester. The stated aim of DCAL is 'to improve the state of litter in Dorset, especially in rural areas.'

DCAL believes that involving Parish Councils will help greatly in its campaign, through both publicity and active support. It is also considering involving schools, as it believes that education can play an important role in preventing litter in the first place.

DCAL has been much encouraged by the experience in the village of Wool. Here, for the last five years, a 'Parish Orderly' has collected litter, reported fly tipping and carried out other similar useful duties. He works twelve hours a week and follows the same route every day. He is paid by the Parish Council but half of his salary is funded by a grant from NITA, the waste management company. If other parishes are interested in setting up a similar scheme, CPRE may be able to provide partial funding.

2. Dorset 'Best Kept Village' competition.

The aim of the competition is to encourage tidy, well-maintained and litter-free public areas such as the church, churchyard, village hall and play areas. Individual properties and gardens are *not* judged. Entry is free and prizes are awarded for both large and small villages. In this context, 'large' is defined as a village having between 500 and 2500 on the electoral role, 'small' as having fewer than 500. The competition is organised by *Dorset Community Action* and has several sponsors from both the public and private sectors. Wootton Fitzpaine has won or been runner-up in the Small Village section for many years and has found the scheme to be very beneficial. Full details with entry forms are available from Dorset Community Action, The Barracks, Bridport Road, Dorchester DT1 1YG, telephone 01305 250921..

3. Adopt a Path.

This scheme was set up in 1991 by Dorset County Council to encourage volunteers regularly to walk, ride or cycle a path of their choice, report problems such as faulty stiles or gates, remove litter, carry out limited clearance of nettles and brambles and assist the Parish Rights of Way Liaison Officers with way-marking. Over three hundred volunteers have now joined the scheme, adopting nearly fifteen hundred paths around Dorset. There are more than three thousand paths left to adopt, so there is still time for you to join this scheme.

If you would like to know more about adopting a path, the contact details are: -

Bethany Redley, Countryside Access
Administration Officer, Environmental
Services, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1
1XJ. **Tel:** 01305 224463 **Fax:** 01305 228533
Email: b.redley@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Annual Parish Meeting Dates

Each of our parishes has a separate annual meeting for local residents and community groups to discuss their own local concerns. These are separate from the Char Valley Grouped Parish Council meetings. Please come along and air and share your views.

Wootton Parish Meeting will take place in the Village Hall on Wednesday, April 19th 2006 at 7pm.

Whitchurch Canonorum Parish Meeting will take place on Monday, 24th April at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Stanton St Gabriel Parish Meeting will take place on Monday, 22nd May 2006 at 7.30pm in the James Hargreaves Community Hall. Matters concerning the A35 will be discussed at this meeting.

Improvements To The Development Control Process (Planning)

West Dorset District Council (WDDC) has recently introduced improvements to some of its planning procedures. The aim is provide better information for 'those who are interested in and comment upon planning applications.'

There are three areas of improvement: -

1. Third parties who have commented on an application are now told in writing of WDDC's decision on that application. They are directed to the Council's website for details of 'any conditions or reasons for refusal.' This applies to all decisions taken from 1st February 2006 onwards.
2. WDDC now sends an information leaflet with letters notifying neighbours of planning and related applications. This was introduced on 13th February 2006. The leaflet explains where details of the application under consideration can be found, advice on how and to whom comments on the application should be made, matters relevant and irrelevant to the planning decision, how the decision is made, what you can do if you do not agree with the Council's decision, and where further information can be found.
3. The Council's website at dorsetforyou.co/masts provides information on telecommunications developments for this district. The information available is: -
 - a. Telecom Operators' **current rollout programmes** for this district.
 - b. Council's **planning policies** with regard to telecommunications development.
 - c. Extracts from **National Planning Policy**.
 - d. **Web links** to adopted and revised local plans, Government Planning Policy Guidance Note 8, the Stewart Report (see *Char Chat*, December 2004) and ICNIRP.

We stress that information on the progress of any given application can be obtained by telephoning the Bridport office of WDDC on 01308 422248. Alternatively, visit <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp>, and click on the link to *planning applications and decisions* in the right-hand column.

BOATS AND TROs

A BOAT (Byway Open To All Traffic) is defined as a route available to walkers, horse riders, cyclists and motorised vehicles and is indicated by a red arrow and the sign 'byway'.

To date, Dorset County Council have received 58 applications for BOATS. Of these, many are from specific interest groups: 4X4 vehicles, quad bikes, off-road bikers etc., seeking to get old byways opened up for use by all traffic.

Anyone can submit evidence for or against an application but it must comply with current law. It cannot refer to desirability, suitability or necessity to upgrade, environmental damage, disturbance or disruption of the peace. The evidence must relate to whether there have ever been vehicular rights, even before the invention of the automobile.

DEFRA have issued guidelines for regulating the use of motor vehicles on public rights of way and off road and much is being made of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to control behaviour.

One of the more recent applications has been for Mill Lane - the bridleway leading down from Charmouth Tunnel to Champernhayes Mill - to be opened up for use by all traffic.

Because of the importance of historical evidence and use, people who have information on old tracks and/or bridleways and the use to which they have been put that may be relevant are asked to contact the Clerk to the Council, Charlotte Hughes on 01308 421410.

Relevant evidence in favour of a claim might include, "I have used this route for 20 years as a footpath/bridleway open to all traffic. Nobody has tried to stop me or put signs up to dissuade me. I have never asked permission to use this route and have always done so openly".

Relevant evidence against a claim might include, "I made a statutory declaration under the Highways Act in 19../20.. to prevent any more paths being created on my land', or "I put 'Private - Keep out' signs up 20 years ago and they were there for 5 years before they fell down'.

Kerbside Recycling

From March 20th, a fortnightly kerbside recycling service will begin in our area.

If you have not already received one, within the next few weeks a green recycling box for bottles and cans (duly washed and squashed) together with a bag for papers will be delivered to your door. You will also receive a diary setting out when collections will take place.

The recycling bins will continue to operate in the car park at Charmouth for cans, bottles and papers. In addition, plastic bottles can be recycled in the Morrisons car park in Bridport, a clothes bin is situated in the Market car park in Axminster and Tescos have a plastic bag recycling system.

As they say, the possibilities are endless!

Village Hall Updates

Report From The James Hargreaves Community Hall, Morcombelake

The hall was re-wired late last year and a new 3-phase supply installed, despite a serious accident to the electrician at the beginning of the work. New electric heaters mean that we now have available over 15 KW of heat on demand. This has allowed us to schedule a better winter program of events than was previously possible.

We have awarded a contract for the building of a new kitchen shell and new disabled/ladies toilets. The work is scheduled to start this month. At last we can look forward to the time when we do not have to rely on our old outside chemical toilet. We have won a grant from the 'Awards for All' scheme for £5000 as a contribution to the costs of this development.

We have started to replace the old wooden chairs with much more comfortable equivalents. We are grateful to Les and Audrey Smith of Crooch Farm for their generosity.

Less pleasant news is that an unknown vehicle caused serious damage to the guttering on the north side of the hall. We are assessing whether to patch up the damage or claim on the hall's insurance policy.

Progress Report from Whitchurch Village Hall

The electrical connection to the new oil fired heaters is about to be made and the stage has been re-curtained. Soon we can be entertained in comfort.

We are having a buffet and dance to "One Night Stand" on Friday 5th May and intend to hold a Race Night at the hall which will be a twinned event with our friends from the James Hargreaves Hall.

Report from Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall

The AGM of the Management Committee was on 9th March. Representatives from the regular user groups were appointed, four Trustees elected and three co-opted. Sophy Burleigh was elected Chairman and John Payne Treasurer.

The Hall is now licensed under the new licensing regulations for Public Entertainment and for the sale of alcohol. The Licensee is Mrs Sophy Burleigh. There will be no smoking on any part of the premises.

The Hall hire rates have had to be raised as heating costs have risen. The new rates will come into force on 1st May 2006: £15 per session, £40 all day. Local residents: £12 per session, £30 all day. Regular users: £10 per session. Kitchen only £5.

This year is the centenary of our Hall and a calendar of events to celebrate has been put together. All fundraising will go towards refurbishment of the Hall. If anyone would like to know about the events or decisions on refurbishment projects please ring Sophy Burleigh 678555.

Hall bookings are now managed by Sue Payne, 2 Longlands, Westover Lane, Wootton Fitzpaine. Tel. 560871.