



Stockbridge Parish Council Newsletter

Newsletter Date: December 2023

Christmas in Stockbridge



Stockbridge High Street now has a delightful sparkling display. The trees are decorated in an imaginative festive manner, the railings with fairy lights, and the roundabout trees with coloured lowlighting, creating a Christmassy feel for all the community.

Stockbridge Christmas Committee would like to thank the following organisations for their support, financial and physical: Fair View Farm; Greengrocers of Stockbridge; Mary Matthews; River Dental; Robinsons; St Peter's Church; Stockbridge Business Association; Stockbridge Community Cinema; Prego, Stockbridge Town Hall; The Hub; The Owl and the Pussycat; The Little Whisky Shop; The Three Cups; The White Hart; Robjents and Test Valley Borough Council.

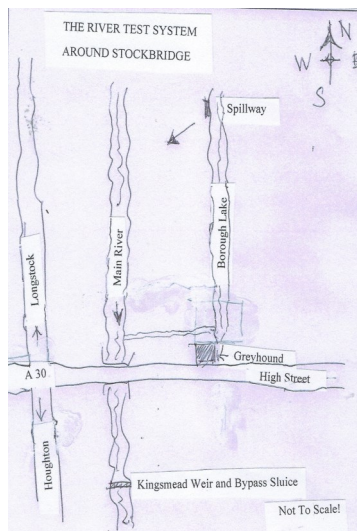
Stockbridge Parish Council would like to thank the members of the Christmas Committee who gave their time to make the "turning on event" a success and to ensure that the High Street looks good for Christmas—Alyson Lownie, Revd Philip Bowden, Dave Buck, Kim Candler, Cllr Richard Foord, Mrs Jefferies, Paul Kidd, Adelle Sharpe, Cllr Derek Smith and David Williams.

Test Valley
Borough Council





Flooding Concerns



This is the time of year when concerns are raised about flooding in Stockbridge. A combination of high ground water and continuous rain may create concern that flooding could occur. However, Stockbridge is very well protected both by the mitigations that were installed in 2016 and by the attentions of the River Keepers at Houghton Fishing Club. The importance of the availability of the River Keepers to step in, open spillways and raise barriers should not be underestimated.

Stockbridge is protected by two flood relief devices one above the town and the other below. The spillway installed in the carrier above The Greyhound, when opened, will direct the flow of water across the meadow. The sluice alongside the Kingsmead Weir consists of boards that can be raised to direct excess water onto the flood plain. Both these flood-

ing defences are managed by the River Keepers who liaise with the Environment Agency and understand when the mitigations need to be deployed.

Nevertheless, it is worth being prepared. Sign up for email news alerts from the Parish Council website. This is where any updates from the Fishing Club will be posted. Be aware of where your valuables are and be prepared to take them upstairs. Take precautions to block doorways with boards wedged in place with towels. Purchase sandbags or other defences to place at your front door.

If you consider yourself vulnerable in the case of flooding email clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk for your name and address to be held and passed to the emergency services should that prove necessary.

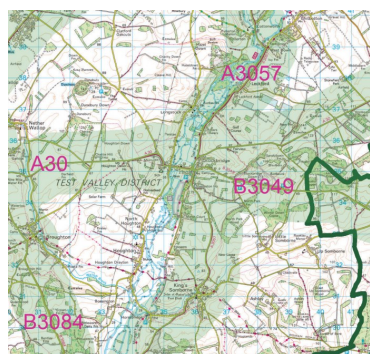
*Come and meet
your Parish
Councillors —
3rd Thursday of
the month at the
Community
Market*

Parish Council Surgeries

The Council will be holding community engagement "surgeries" at the Thursday Community Market at the Town Hall. Councillors felt it was important to make themselves available for residents to be able to share their concerns at times other than the formal Council meetings. The Surgeries will start in February and will be held on every third Thursday of the month.

Do come down and have a chat with a Councillor and feel free to raise anything you feel can be improved or discuss any concerns that you have. The Councillors can also advise on communications with HCC and TVBC. Community groups will also be welcome and the Councillors will be able to help with grant applications.

Shoots along Routes



Shoots along Routes is an exciting new initiative by HCC to create nature corridors through the countryside. The aim is to create natural pathways that benefit the local eco system by supporting tree planting on land that will develop a 2km wide corridor spanning selected road routes across Hampshire, while fostering connections between wildlife habitats. The A3057, A30 and B3049 are among the selected routes.

Shoots Along Routes will fund new hedges, individual trees, linear features, shelter belts, standard trees in hedges, and trees within areas less than 0.5ha. of the road.

To bring this vision to life, a Longstock group is seeking the participation and support of passionate individuals from our community to work towards the successful implementation of this initiative. For information email cllrSarahjohnslpc@gmail.com.



River Test Pollution

Stockbridge PC has been approached by Houghton PC to become part of a pan-River Test group of Parishes to monitor sewage discharges into the River Test. It was acknowledged by both Councils that these discharges have increased recently and that their unpleasant contents have been noticed flowing down the river by a number of residents. The Councils are in agreement that polluting this internationally renowned river, used regularly for leisure activities such as fishing and bathing, is completely unacceptable.

The pan-Parish Working Group aims to look into the causes of the spills, determine how they can best be monitored and explore ways the problem can be

tackled. It was agreed that as a pan-Parish WG they will be able speak to those discharging the waste with one voice and lobby Southern Water and other relevant bodies to stop further pollution of the river.

It was recognised that although landowners and those with fishing rights are among those most immediately affected by the condition of the water in the river, there was considerable impact on the river's ecosystem, fish, insects and other wildlife. This form of pollution should of a concern to the community as a whole. The Councils felt that this is an important issue that needs to be tackled in the interests of preserving this important local amenity.



Stockbridge Neighbourcare

With little public transport in our area, Stockbridge Neighbour Care Service (SNC) provides much needed transport to health appointments for residents of Stockbridge, Houghton, Longstock & Leckford. The service is free of charge.

With only a few volunteer drivers currently, SNC desperately needs more people to step forward to

help. If you are a car driver and have a little free time on weekdays, could you help share the load as part of our drivers' team? Fuel costs are reimbursed and you only volunteer to drive when it fits into your schedule.

Please call Sally and Derek Smith on 01 264 811631 to find out more.

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Lancaster House (The Old Workhouse) Site

The Council has formed a Working Group to be responsible for the site and to ensure that it is looked after and properly managed. The Council is reaching out to other bodies who will be able to provide advice and support such as the Woodland Trust and Test Valley's Nature Reserve officers and will be looking into suitable training for the members of the Working Group.

It is hoped that the Working Group will be able to form a plan for the use of the site which can developed

and amended as the Council's experience of the site increases. The Council would welcome involvement in the WG from other members of the community as it feels strongly that the project is for the benefit of residents.

The Council asks that residents refrain from visiting the site as there are at present parts of the old foundations that are not considered safe. Part of the WG's objectives will be to ensure these safety concerns are dealt with.





What's on in Stockbridge

| When | Where | What |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 18th January | Town Hall | Parish Council Meeting |
| 19th January | S'bridge Cinema | Good |
| 21st January | Town Hall | Community Table Top sale |
| 24th January | S'bridge Cinema | Oppenheimer |
| 15th February | Town Hall | SPC at the Community Market |
| 15th February | Town Hall | Parish Council Meeting |
| 16th February | S'bridge Cinema | Past Lives |
| 21st February | S'bridge Cinema | The Old Oak |
| 1st March | St Peter's Church | Stockbridge Music |
| 15th March | S'bridge Cinema | Alacarras |

Blandford Row Park Designs



Councillors visited Sparsholt College to view the proposed designs of the new community garden in Blandford Row (behind the toilets) by the horticultural students at Sparsholt College. Each student was asked to produce 3 separate designs based on the likely cost. It was exciting to see how the students developed the space with

flowers, scents and alternative seating in different ways and how they intended to create a pleasant space for residents and visitors.

The Cllrs chose one design from each student for them to develop further. It is hoped these further designs will be presented to Cllrs in March and the community at the Parish Meeting in April, when a final decision on the design to be taken forward, will be made.

A Quick Round- up of News

A **Table Top sale** will be held on the 21st of January 2024 in the Porter room at Stockbridge Town Hall. Please come along and have a rummage as there will be something for everyone. If you're planning a bit of a clear out next year and might be interested in joining a future sale email soosoojackson@gmail.com for more details. The installation of the **crossing between the Co-op and the Greengrocer** is progressing but HCC needs the agreement of the Co-op. The Council would like to ask anyone who is supportive of the initiative to email the Clerk. **HCC has refilled the salt bins** and has its gritter fleet is on standby. Road salt goes a long way – one tablespoon treats up to a square metre of road or pavement. HCC's website has information on the best way to clear snow and ice. **Andover has been awarded £18.3m** to build a new multi-purpose theatre and cultural hub. The funding will enable TVBC to transform the town centre. The **NHS in Hampshire** is holding a consultation on the plans to build a new hospital near Basingstoke and what that means for Winchester Hospital. Go to www.hampshiretogether.nhs.uk. A reminder that **Meals on Wheels** is available through HCC for residents who find it hard to shop or cook for themselves. Go to www.hants.gov.uk/news/20231030mealswheels.

