

Village Hall Updates

James Hargreaves Community Hall

With events such as the Christmas Lunch, Party Pop-in and the Carols Around The Tree, a distant memory, further events are planned at the Hall.

- We held our **Rummage Sale on Saturday 2nd March**. Many thanks to the generosity of the community who donated their unwanted items which meant keen bargain hunters were spoilt for choice. The event raised £175 for hall funds.
- The **Table Tennis Club** is planning a **Taster Day on Wednesday 3rd April, from 2.00pm to 7:00pm**.
- This is a chance for anyone of any age to try table tennis for FREE. Bats will be provided, so if you have never played or are a bit rusty, come along; it's great exercise! The present club has members aged from 11 to 90!
- The **Morcombelake Gardening Club Tenth Annual Spring Flower Show will be held on Saturday 6th April** in the Hall. The displays of spring flowers will be an inspiration to any aspiring gardener, so why not come along and enjoy the arrangements?
- Tickets will be on sale soon from Morcombelake Post Office for our **Spring Village Lunch on Sunday 14th April**. Anyone in the community is very welcome and as always, the food and company will be excellent!
- We are planning a **Car Treasure Hunt on Sunday 19th May at 2:00pm start**. There will be cash prizes for the first and second places and refreshments will be available back at the hall afterwards.

Whitchurch Village Hall

The Hall continues to be well used and coming events are as follows:

- **Gardening Club** has just started and open to all new members on Monday, March 25th at 7pm - subject "pruning" - and Monday April 29th at 7pm - subject "compost".
- **Family Disco** with the Flower Show Committee on Saturday April 6th from 7.30pm; tickets from Tina 489523 or Five Bells 489262
- **Entertainments Evening** with local entertainers and Marshwood Vale YFC on Saturday April 20th 7.30pm; tickets from Tina.
- **Auction of Promises and Wine and Cheese evening** with the Church PCC on Saturday May 11th 7.30pm. More details from Sue Johnson 01297 489375. Auctioneer Mr James Rowe. Offers of promises most welcome as all profits will be split between the Village Hall and Church.
- **Village Fete on Saturday** July 13th from 2pm in and around the Hall and Church; more details from Tina. All profits to Church and Village Hall.

The Hall committee are proceeding with grant applications for the extension of the old entrance and refurbishing the old kitchen/store room and work is due to start in the summer school holidays. Should anyone want to book the hall, please contact Carolyn on 01297 489185

Wootton Village Hall

- The Diamond Jubilee Tree, a malus royalty, was planted on Sunday, 9 December outside the hall. The event was well attended, and Guy Bryan, who planted the tree was ably assisted by some of the children in the village.
- The Toddler Group has bought some new equipment, and there will be a skittles evening at Wootton Social Club on Easter Saturday at 7.30 pm to raise further funds. In February, Waitrose in Bridport included the group in their "green coin" charity.

A35 ROAD CLOSURES

Maintenance work is to be carried out between Axminster and Bridport, beginning on 9 May:

Closures will be as follows:

May 9—11 from 2000—0600
May 12—15 from 2000—1530
May 16—18 from 2000—0600

Access will be maintained for residents but will be from one direction, depending on the location of the works.

Further information may be obtained from <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/roadworks>

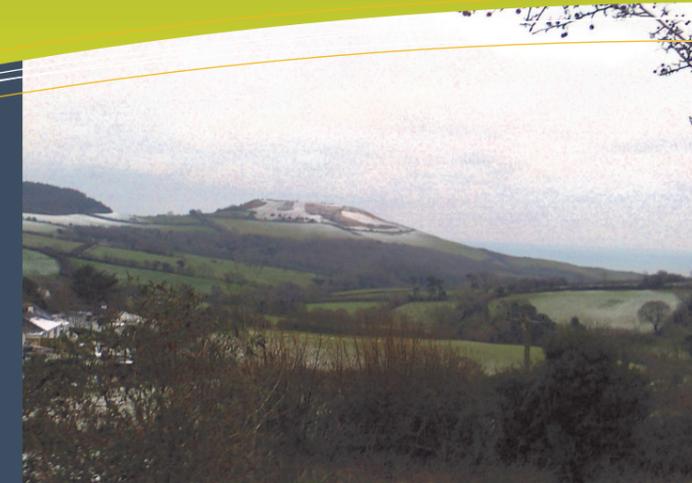
- In January, the Artsreach production "A love like Salt" by the Devil's Violin, was well attended and there will be another Artsreach production, "Dalla" by Dalla on Friday, 22 March, described as Cornish Celtic Music at its best.
- The Wootton Fete will take place on Monday, 27 May, starting at 1.30 pm, and there will be another meeting to discuss final arrangements on Tuesday, 23 April. The entrance fee is £1.50.

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Update on Affordable Housing in Whitchurch Canonorum

The planning application for Affordable Housing in Whitchurch Canonorum received consent on 18th March.

More details can be found at <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/planning/applications/search>



Golden Cap in the Snow - Trevor Chambers

Superfast Broadband for the Char Valley and Upper Marshwood Vale

Superfast broadband (SFBB) is coming to most of rural Dorset but probably not us. It is more likely that we will benefit from an upgrade to only 2Mbps - unless we do something extra to make it happen.

Upper Marshwood Vale - UMV - and Char Valley—CVP - are seeking Rural Community Broadband Funding (RCBF) which is part of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). This is jointly funded by Defra and Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), providing grants to establish superfast broadband in hard-to-reach areas.

DEFRA funding is expected to be opened for bids within March with a deadline around the end of April or into May. The monthly cost of SFBB should not be much more than the present 'up-to-8Mbps' service, which many of us don't get anyway.

The investment cost to install SFBB per premise in our area is higher than in urban areas; hence a contractor will normally justify delivering SFBB to communities such as ours only if there is a:-

- Substantial level of investment subsidy
- Certain minimum level of initial service take up - around 20% of premises passed

Grant funding available from DEFRA amounts to £300-per-premise compared to £100-per-premise from DCC.

Charles Somers

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Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride Service

The Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride service covers the areas of Axminster, Seaton, Lyme Regis, Bridport, Thorncombe, Beaminster and surrounding villages.

The minibus is wheelchair accessible and is available for the elderly, disabled or rurally/socially disadvantaged people.

The Axe Valley Ring and Ride runs weekly shopping trips to various towns and also afternoon trips out to places of interest.

The service picks up passengers from their homes and takes them into town for shopping or to use local services.

Seats need to be booked in advance and the driver paid on the day; for details of journeys and fares in your area call 01404 46520.

Care and maintenance of Septic Tanks

Mike Robinson

"I have not emptied my septic tank for 20 years and I have had no problems". If you said this to a prospective buyer of your house, or to your local Environment Agency officer, you may not get the positive reaction you were hoping for!

Currently there are no regulations on the frequency of emptying, or a process whereby they get inspected. This is not the case in Europe, and regular checking and emptying are part of the regulatory regime. Selling your home with a septic tank (fosse septique) in France requires a certificate proving its condition and adherence to the regulations. Whilst there seems no immediate likelihood of this being the case in the UK, a white paper has been published suggesting a regime of certification could be introduced in the future.

Septic tanks will eventually fail, for a number of reasons (generally at a very inconvenient time) -

- Soak-away gets blocked because of sludge and build up of sediment.
- Non-human waste gets flushed down the toilets
- Flooding of the system because of high rainfall
- Tree roots block either the pipes or outlets
- Over usage by household and tank not big enough
- Over use of bleach and other bacteria-killing substances
- Grease and fat being flushed down sinks.

The process of bacteriological breakdown of the waste is dependent on a certain amount of sludge being in the primary tank, but if this builds up too far there is a likelihood that waste will either flow back into the house, or block up the secondary "black water" tank, or the filter bed or herringbone pipe drainage system.

It is recommended to empty the primary tank and remove most of the sludge at least every two years. At the same time it is as well to empty the "black water" tank and any sediment that has accumulated.

This should obviate all of the common problems apart from misuse and accidents. However, at some point the soak-away system may fail and you will have to have another one constructed or laid within your property.

It pays to look after your septic tank, as to replace it with a modern small-scale sewage

treatment plant could cost you several thousand pounds. Emptying the average septic tank system should cost around £140.

The first recorded septic tank in full use was installed in 1896 under the supervision of Mr Donald Cameron, City Surveyor for Exeter and served the entire town. The tank was 64 feet 10 inches long and 18 feet wide and 7 ft in depth.

Garden Bonfires – the rules

According to <https://www.gov.uk/garden-bonfires-rules> there are no laws against having a bonfire. However, there are laws for the nuisance they can cause.

Burning domestic waste

You **cannot** get rid of household waste if it will cause pollution or harm people's health. This includes burning it.

You can get rid of household or garden waste by composting or recycling it.

Contact <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/384737> to find out how to dispose of garden waste and about recycling in your area.

Danger to traffic by smoke

You could be fined if you light a fire and you allow the smoke to drift across the road and become a danger to traffic.

Complain about a neighbour's bonfire

Your council can issue an 'abatement notice' if a neighbour's bonfire is causing a nuisance. A bonfire must happen frequently to be considered a nuisance.

Your neighbour can be fined up to £5,000 if they do not stick to the notice.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING DATES

Each of our parishes has a separate annual meeting for local residents and community groups to discuss their local concerns.

Whitchurch Canonorum Parish Meeting will take place at the Village Hall on Thursday, 24 April at 7pm.

Wootton Fitzpaine will hold its Parish Meeting on Wednesday, 18 April in the Village Hall at 7pm.

Stanton St Gabriel Parish Meeting is to be held on Thursday, 25 April at 7pm in the James Hargreaves Community Hall.

Report from PCSO Luke White

Since the last article in November there have been thirteen crimes in the Marshwood Vale area. Most of these have been acquisitive type crimes, with theft of lead from a school, three instances of heating oil being stolen, three thefts from vehicles and four instances of tools and machinery thefts from sheds. In addition there have been two dog bites reported.

While we enjoy low crimes rates in this area, there are still steps we can take to reduce crime further. Make sure that your oil tank is alarmed. Alarms such as the Watchman Oil Tank Alarm have proven to be effective in protecting your oil from thieves. Make sure that your garages, sheds and outbuildings are secure. They can be alarmed relatively cheaply and it helps to protect your tools and machinery. Please get in touch for advice and ideas. The better we are protected as a community then the less likely thieves are to visit.

At the start of March a theft warrant was executed at a property in Charmouth where suspected stolen machinery was found as well as suspected drugs. Two males and a female were arrested and are currently on bail while enquiries continue. We would like to encourage people who may have knowledge about people committing crime in the area to contact the police by calling 101 or by anonymously calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

At the start of the year the government launched Action Fraud, a new central point of contact for information about fraud and financially motivated internet crime. If you've been scammed, ripped off or conned, there is something you can do about it. Report it either by calling 0300 1232040 or by visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk

Lyme Regis Safer Neighbourhood Team can be contacted by calling 101 or by emailing lymeregissnt@dorset.pnn.police.uk. You can keep up to date with crimes and incidents by looking at our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/Lyme.SNT or by following us on Twitter @LymeRegisSNT



Spot the Pothole

They disfigure our roads like teenage acne. Pharmacists may offer over-the-counter-remedies to nuke a pimple but a sure cure for the pothole remains tantalizingly elusive. Holes are reported and filled but, like a child picking at a grazed and scabby knee, the next spell of heavy rain reopens the wound!

The editors of Char Chat view the parlous state of some roads in the Parish very seriously and have launched a campaign to find the biggest pothole in West Dorset. Currently, Crooked Lane in Whitchurch Canonorum heads the leader board with some very deep and potentially hazardous holes, but word has reached us that Councillor Mansbridge is considering a pothole near Marsh Farm as a would-be challenger for the top spot!

We are asking our readers to photograph contenders for the title and upload images onto the Char Valley Parish Council web site. We will be authenticating claims so provide the grid reference and, to give an indication of scale, the photograph should show you standing in the hole. It is suggested you work in pairs, take warm clothing, a thermos and leave details of your planned trip with WDDC Highways Department.

The closing date for entries is 1st April 2013..

Carolyn Peck

Charmouth Library

Volunteers have re-opened the library after two months of refurbishment. The newly painted library was packed with residents on the opening day, 28 February, when they were served tea and cakes. The library is now named Charmouth Central. It is open from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday, 2.00 pm to 6.00 pm on Friday and from 10.30 to 12.30 on Saturday. Building work on an extension will begin later in March thanks to a £50,000 grant from the Big Lottery Fund. Hazel Robinson, chairman of the Friends of Charmouth Library said that there were a lot of volunteers, but they could always do with more.

