

Village Hall Updates

James Hargreaves Community Hall

- We want to improve the events held in the hall and find enthusiastic and supportive new members.
- **Quiz Night on 16th March.** Several local teams battled it out to take the top honours. All participants enjoyed a fish & chip supper and great company!
- **Race Night Friday 18th May.** Those who came along had a wonderful evening. The lucky ones went home with substantial winnings, the others enjoying the chase - bets on horses and greyhounds made it all the more fun!
- **Bank Holiday May Walk.** Up onto Hardown Hill led by Syd Green before returning to dry out and thaw out in the Hall, where hearty soups, hotdogs and cakes awaited us. Syd's knowledge of the history of the hill made the walk even more fascinating.
- **Diamond Jubilee Lunch on Sunday June 3rd** in the Hall where 44 people who were treated to a sit down meal. Prizes for the best button hole were awarded and substantial monetary prizes of Silver, Gold and Diamond were won.
- **Sunday 22nd July will be Strawberry Tea** at St Gabriel's, Shedbush Lane. An opportunity to get together and enjoy sandwiches, strawberries & cream, scones and cakes whilst sipping tea on the terrace - weather permitting of course!
- **A.G.M is on Thursday 16th August** at 7.30pm. Please come along and support our Hall.
- **Ryall, Whitchurch & Morcombelake Flower Show August Bank Holiday Monday.** If anyone has any unwanted gifts for our bric a brac stall or old crockery they no longer need, we would appreciate it. We can collect; please call Karen on 489191

Whitchurch Village Hall

All the organisations in the village helped produce a very successful Jubilee Celebrations evening party in the hall with a magician, music and bring and share buffet.

- **Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition** starts on Monday July 23rd and will be open every day during the week.
- **100th Birthday Disco** to celebrate the centenary of the Flower Show on Friday August 17th with Wessex Star Disco - music for all ages. Tickets from Five Bells Pub.
- **Harvest Lunch** on Sunday September 23rd from 12.30pm arranged with the Church to celebrate the Harvest Thanksgiving.
- **Christmas Dinner** on Saturday December 8th.
- **Christmas Bingo** (date to be arranged).
- **Annual Farmhouse Breakfast** January 20th 2013.
- **Film nights** are very popular; next dates arranged are July 19th, August 30th and September 27th.

Wootton Village Hall

- Eleven people attended the **AGM** held on 19 April. The Hall, Club and playing field are now fully registered with the Land Registry. Bill Taylor, the treasurer, was thanked for his hard work in achieving this. He reported that lettings income was up marginally, but oil costs had increased.
- The **Diamond Jubilee** fete was held on Monday, 4 June in dry but cloudy weather. It was a colourful occasion with Jubilee bunting and helpers dressed in red, white and blue with Union Jack hats. In the evening there was dancing in the marquee and a "bring and share" supper. The attendance figures were up on last year, and roughly the same amount of money was raised, the church and village hall being beneficiaries. A great success and a credit to all those who helped.
- At the committee meeting held on 3 July, Peter Sharp, chairman, reported that a minute secretary was still needed. He said that Sybil Snook, who died on 24 April, would be sadly missed. She had been a committee member for many years and her contribution had been invaluable, a real village stalwart. Louise Symonds was welcomed as the Toddler Group representative. It was decided to buy a tree to mark the Jubilee, to be planted in the autumn. The playground has been approved by ROSPA and the committee decided to purchase the telephone kiosk from BT at a cost of £1.
- Future events include the **Wiggle Jurassic Classic** cycle event on Sunday, July 8 in aid of prostate cancer, the village hall being one of the food stations. The Harvest Supper, Artsreach events and a Barn Dance are also on the calendar.

Report from PCSO Luke White

Since the last edition of Char Chat, there have been 9 crimes in Charmouth and 3 RTCs: 3 shopliftings in the village, 3 instances of domestic violence, a theft of materials from a building site, an assault at a caravan park and an attempted break-in to a garage. In the summer holidays there will be an increase in the number of visitors so please do not make yourself a target: Lock doors and windows when you go out and do not leave items in your car. Simply leaving a rucksack on the car seat makes it a target, as it could contain something valuable. During this period, there have been 3 reports of antisocial behaviour relating to "boy racers" on the A35 and Stonebarrow Lane. This is a big reduction on the number of complaints received about noisy vehicles and their driving; a result of us targeting of these drivers. The first elections for the new Police and Crime Commissioners are on 15th November. The Police Authorities, who currently run each individual Police Service, will be replaced with a single publicly elected person. Keep an eye out for more information over the coming months. If you want to get in touch, please call us on 101 or email lymeregissnt@dorset.pnn.police.uk

Issue 30

Char Valley on track for Olympic Triumph!

Many of us know Trevor Chambers. He co-edits Char Chat for a start and his commitment to and involvement with events at Morcombelake's James Hargreaves Hall have made him a much valued member of the community. As you see, I have no intention of sparing his blushes. But how many of you know that (apart from playing the guitar and knowing an awful lot about cricket!) he was picked to help the Olympic Flame on its way through Dorset? Unfortunately, his run was not local but he and his family enjoyed an incredible day in Hamworthy (in the sun!) on Friday 13th July. I am sure you will join me in congratulating him.



Flood at Becklands Lane, Whitchurch (06.07.12) by Clive Richards

Chairman's report July 2012

The year started on a negative note with a shortage of three Councillors. Fairly quickly, we were happy to co-opt Councillor Jim Rose from Stonebarrow to come and join us leaving us two short. On the positive side, the seat at the bus stop in Morcombelake was made and installed with the help of the Lengthsman by retired Cllr Ken Tubb. We are very grateful to him for the work he had to put in.

In June moves were made to reopen the bridleway from Cutty Stubbs to Mandeville Stoke, which had not been used for many years. Councillors walked the route and although not objecting, thought that the cost would be too great. The Three Counties Bridleway group are still trying to find a way forward.

During the year Councillors have looked at 38 planning applications, most of them not a problem. One, which has stirred up a lot of feeling, was for Affordable Housing in Whitchurch.



Although it is very sad that there is not a united front for the housing in the village, it has done good in that we had three people put themselves forward for the two vacancies in Whitchurch for the Parish Council and so we now have a full council. If we had had as much interest in the application before it was submitted rather than after it, there might have been a lot less friction in the village. To help with this we are installing a new notice board by the Five Bells but this does not necessarily mean that people will read it or come to Parish Council Meetings.

We end the year with Superfast Broadband and Localism high on the agenda and also, as we began, hopefully placing a seat for parishioners in the playground to mark the Queen's Jubilee.

When I was persuaded to be Chairman, I only took the position on provided that I had a lot of support from the other Councillors to attend the various meetings and committees that I have not got the time to spare to attend. This they have done and so I thank them all for their willingness in carrying out these duties.

The other thank you is to Kat who keeps us on the straight and narrow and has coped with a lot of extra work due to the bridleway and Affordable Housing issues. A big thank you to her.

Ken Mansbridge

New Local Plan for West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland

West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council have published their draft plan, which is available for consultation until 27 July.

The draft Local Plan sets out a long term planning strategy for the area up to the year 2031 and includes detailed policies and site proposals for housing, employment, leisure and infrastructure.

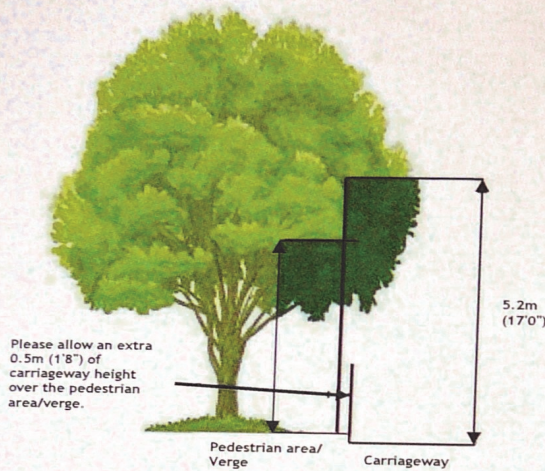
This is the first time that a single Local Plan has been prepared that covers both local authority areas. When adopted it will be used to assist in decision making on future planning applications.

Whilst the plan has been jointly prepared, decisions on land within the boundaries of each council area have been made by the council for that specific area.

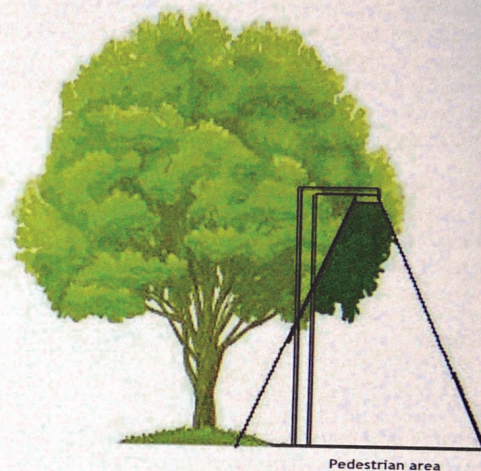
Planning applications will continue to be determined by each council for its own area. Drop-in events have been arranged for members of the public. A comment form is available on the website at www.dorsetforyou.com/newlocalplan/west/weymouth.

All comments must be received by 27 July.

Trees, hedges, shrubs, etc: Carriageway clearance



Street lamps



Good Fences make Good Neighbours

Or so says the poet Robert Frost and I am sure he would not have minded his words being used to introduce an article about hedges! The cutting back of highway hedges and trees is the responsibility of the landowner or occupier of the land on which the hedges and trees are growing. Hedges and trees should not be allowed to obstruct roads and footpaths, obscure streetlights or road signs. On bends, an overgrown hedge that obscures visibility can present a real hazard to all road users and drivers on our narrow country lanes can find themselves driving wide of an overhanging tree or bush, damaging verges and breaking up the edges of the road surface. So, please, I would ask you to manage hedges responsibly. However, at this time of year, please spare a thought for nesting birds before starting work. Nests that are either being built or in use are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and care should not be taken not to disturb the occupants.

A well maintained hedge is not only a stock-proof boundary, it is also a rich wildlife habitat and the extensive network of existing hedges gives the West Dorset landscape its distinctive patchwork appearance. The importance of hedgerows and hedgerow trees is well recognized and in the Marshwood Vale, a project is underway to encourage farmers and landowners, in the course of hedge maintenance, to leave some young trees - preferably oaks - uncut. The hope is that these will be allowed to grow up and replace those hedgerow trees now in decline. This is part of a bigger scheme to see young oaks being more to replace the old oaks which are such a familiar

feature here but which are now reaching the end of their long lives.

And that leads me neatly on to trees. Some readers will be aware that the conservation area in Whitchurch Canonorum has been extended. A map showing who's in and who's out is displayed on the Village Hall notice board. If you are inside the conservation area, there are restrictions about what tree work you can undertake without obtaining permission from the Council. Briefly, if you wish to fell a tree and its girth at 1.5 meters from the ground exceeds 75 mm, you will need permission and if you need to do any work, other than felling, permission is required only if the girth of the tree is over 100mm.

And finally, a word about Tree Preservation Orders. You will see from the illustration that the area around Whitchurch Canonorum is dotted with protected trees and groups of trees. As yet, I have no definitive map of the whole parish but I am sure I am not the only one who has spotted a tree with a little ticket stuck half way up its trunk signalling its status! There are severe penalties if such specimens are removed or damaged so I would ask you to contact either me or the Council if you have any queries about whether a tree or group of trees is protected or not. Most of these fine old fellows have been around a lot longer than we have. They deserve our respect. Go on - hug a tree today!

Carolyn Peck
Tree and Hedge Officer,
Char Valley Parish Council

The Localism Act 2011

Report of an update meeting attended by Carolyn Peck, Ivan Gollop and Debby Snook

Jo Witherden, Head of Spatial Policy and Implementation from West Dorset District Council, introduced Neighbourhood Planning. A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning policy document prepared by local communities (Parish Councils). It is complementary to a Parish Plan and is voluntary, but unlike a Parish Plan, which is aspirational, a Neighbourhood Plan has statutory status. The Localism Act received royal assent on November 15th 2011.

Neighbourhood Plans can cover location of development, new housing, employment sites, design standards, permitted development rights, and must conform to the National Policy Planning Framework and the strategic policies of the Local Plan (adoption due in 2013). They must also contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and have a clear time frame. The right to nominate and buy assets of community value is introduced.

The advice from West Dorset District Council about Neighbourhood Plans is sensible. Our Parish has to ask itself what it wishes to achieve and whether having a Neighbourhood Plan is the best tool to use. If we decide that we do want one, we will have the help of a link officer from West Dorset District Council. We will have to talk to adjoining Parishes, work out what resources we need and how to obtain funding, use local expertise and have a pool of enthusiastic and committed volunteers. A local referendum must be held before a Neighbourhood Plan can be implemented.

As well as Neighbourhood Plans, the Localism Act deals with the general power of competence, (councils qualify

by meeting required criteria), predetermination, the right to challenge service providers, and the setting up of a company to trade and make a profit.

A Council is deemed eligible if two-thirds of the Council have been elected (rather than co-opted), the clerk has obtained the necessary qualification (e.g. CILCA) and undertaken the relevant training, and the Council has passed a resolution that it meets the required criteria.

All of this requires a great deal of detailed regulation and consideration. The main thrust initially has been to outline the powers. It might well seem that given the costs of even relatively small projects, the Act will have only a marginal effect on most small Parish Councils and we have to recognise that these new rights are being outlined against a background of a financially constrained context and one, which we are told, is only going to get worse.

Simon Caundle, Monitoring Officer at North Dorset District Council, spoke about the new Code of Conduct and Standards Committees, introduced as part of the Act, and their likely effect on local and Parish Councils.

The current Code will no longer apply from 1st July 2012. All Parish Councils will need a new one, as they will not be allowed to keep the old. It must be amended or re-written. When an area's principal Council, such as a district Council, has a Code in place, the Parish Council may adopt it.

The only compulsory element of the new Code deals with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. It is expected that a Councillor's spouse or civil partner will also have to declare any such Interests. The Parish Council's register of interests must be on its web site, if it has one, and on the principal Council office's web site.

The Localism Act sets out seven principles of ethical conduct that must be reflected in an individual Council's Code whatever else is included. These are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership. It was clear that when Mr Caundle gave his presentation that the current membership and functioning of any principal Council's Standards Committee under the new legislation was still under scrutiny and there may be some further changes.

Full details of the Act can be found at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

