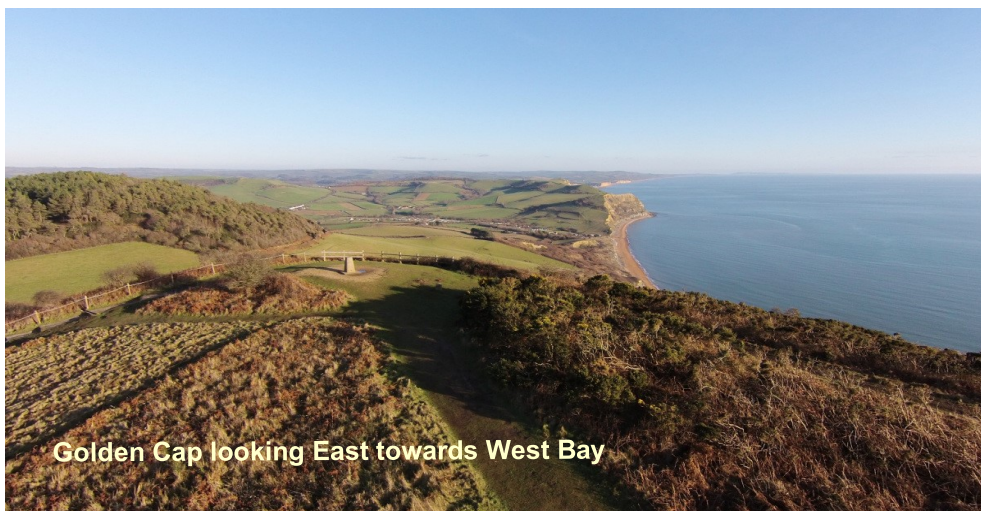


NEWSLETTER FOR CHAR VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL Whitchurch Canonorum, Stanton St. Gabriel, Wootton Fitzpaine



Golden Cap looking East towards West Bay

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DORSET NATIONAL PARK

As many readers will know, a proposal to create a Dorset National Park has been submitted to Natural England – the relevant Government agency. The National Park would replace the current Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and including the Char Valley stretch as far as what remains of Thomas Hardy's Egdon Heath to the east of Dorchester. The National Park would be the planning authority for its area and would work in partnership with other local authorities be they District Councils (as currently) or a shire Unitary Authority. The National Park aims to

- conserve and enhance our wonderful landscapes and heritage,
- promote greater enjoyment and understanding
- foster the economic and social wellbeing of its communities
- focus on providing much needed truly affordable homes
- promote higher value tourism
- put Dorset on the international map
- attract additional funding to be spent in our communities and on what we think is important.

The core costs of the National Park would be funded by central Government (and so not funded like existing local authorities from local people and businesses). The South Downs, our nearest comparator, secured some £90 million in its first 5 years from a range of sources. Its farmers secured 20% of agri-environment funding even though the National Park only covers 10% of the regional eligible area.

Dorset Councils are aware of the opportunities and many communities and organisations see the benefits. At their June Council meeting, Char Valley Parish Council agreed to support the request for Natural England to take the evaluation of Dorset's eligibility as a National Park to the next stage of assessment, and looks forward to the additional information this will provide. In August, Purbeck District Council unanimously passed a resolution to "note with interest the Dorset National Park proposal and the opportunities this could offer to keep Purbeck special; keep the proposals under review; and look forward to Natural England undertaking the next stage of its evaluation in 2018."

PROPOSALS FOR A35 AT CHIDEOCK

In the 1990s a proposal for a Chideock and Morcombelake bypass became the subject of a Public Local Enquiry.

The A35 Trunk Road Order 1996 was revoked and Revocation Order 1999 came into force on 30th June 1999.

The Chideock Bypass Working group was formed in 2016; proposing a bypass based on the original route to the north and without 'taking in' Morcombelake.

The group states "we intend to continue in our attempts to get the bypass that our village requires so badly. And in these attempts we shall bear no malice in our will; no anger in our resolve; no acrimony in our determination; and no weakening in our efforts to achieve a bypass for Chideock".

Char Valley Parish Council has stated that the clerk **MUST** be **regularly updated** on all developments and Char Valley Parish Council **involved in ALL** further proceedings and discussions. Sir Oliver Letwin has been informed of our wishes.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2018

DATE

VENUE

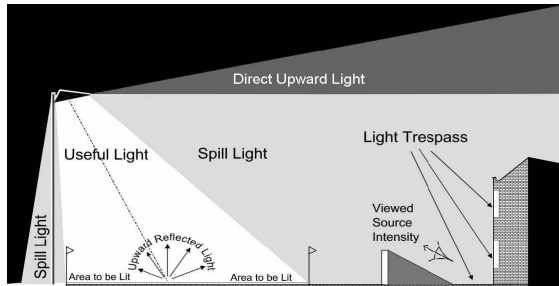
8 th January	Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall
12 th February	Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall
12 th March	James Hargreaves Community Hall
9 th April	Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall
14 th May	Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall (Annual Parish Council Meeting)
11 th June	James Hargreaves Community Hall
16 th July	Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall
August	No meeting
10 th September	Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall
8 th October	James Hargreaves Community Hall
19 th November	Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall
December	No meeting

All meetings start at 7.30pm - members of the public are welcome to attend

Char Chat

LED LIGHTING

Be Warned – Be Aware
In the Char Valley –
Stanton St Gabriel, Whitchurch Canonicorum and Wootton Fitzpaine
we MUST use and promote ecological lighting.



- Blue light, LED technology, is more scattered and causes more sky glow than other light sources.
- The impact on sky glow from LEDs is about 300% greater than that of traditional lights. Increasing sky glow makes it increasingly impossible to enjoy and study the stars.

During the day some LED lighting - blue-rich, high colour temperature – is said to improve well-being, alertness and concentration

At night, colour is often not needed; using blue-rich lighting, LAN, both indoors and outdoors, is believed to endanger our ecological balance for example by damaging bats and having a detrimental impact on insects.

Producing light for outdoor use has resulted in light pollution.

Choosing a technique that harms the environment and human health is **not** an option.

The Institution of Lighting Professionals, UK's premier lighting guideline body states

“Obtrusive light, whether it keeps us awake through a bedroom window or impedes our view of the night sky, is a form of pollution and can be substantially reduced without detriment to the lighting task” (www.theilp.org.uk)

To save energy and preserve the night sky;

1. Keep light to the minimum AND shining only on your property
2. Have lighting with colour and intensity appropriate for our rural setting
3. Use shielded lamps to direct the beam downwards only
4. Install switches and sensors ensuring that lights are 'on' only when necessary
5. Shut off lighting when not in use

In lighting up—check the facts

1. Does research here show that light reduces crime?
2. Does that night-time light affect human health and pollute the skies we boast?

Sources;

Extracted from the proceedings of the 13th European Symposium for the Protection of the Night Sky by the BAA Commission for Dark Skies www.britastro.org/dark-skies

British Astronomical Association Commission for Dark Skies

Facilitated by Bob Mizon

ROAD VERGE UPDATE

In the last issue of CharChat we explained about the red (knotweed) and blue (wildflower conservation) posts which you may see on road verges.

As a reminder, Dorset County Council (DCC) is responsible for cutting road verges for 1.2m from the edge of the tarmac whether the verge is flat, vertical or somewhere in between. Hedges and trees are the responsibility of the landowner who must do the work outside the bird-nesting season (early March to end August), ensure that trees and hedges are not obstructing the highway and that, for safety, there are adequate sightlines.

Within DCC, responsibility is now with the Countryside Rangers, who also look after rights of way. The local officer for our area is Russell Goff. If you notice a problem, you can report the matter yourself on the Dorset for You website where there is an interactive map, or, if you prefer, you can inform CVPC and we will pass it on.

In autumn 2016 we learned that, partly because of the need to save money, DCC were no longer carrying out a regular autumn cut. We felt that in our narrow lanes, more than one cut a year was essential for safety reasons and have been liaising with DCC to try to ensure that our lanes were safe throughout the year.

In 2017, all but the blue post (conservation) verges were cut in late June and we notified DCC of a few problems where the cut had not been as effective as we would like. As a result, some of the narrowest lanes were recut in early September along with the blue post verges which need to be done after mid June to avoid the flowering and seeding season for wildflowers.

It is likely that in 2018 all verges, including the blue post ones, will be cut in late June. We are still liaising with DCC to try to ensure that there is a regular autumn cut, at least in the narrowest lanes. Otherwise, DCC will only come out in response to specific complaints.

Clare Mahaddie 9 Oct 2017

THE PARISH PRECEPT

There are over 9,000 parish and town councils in England. They have a limited number of duties, some of which include:-

Maintain burial grounds, cemeteries, and monuments
Provide and maintain bus shelters
Provide contributions towards village halls
Support local recreation grounds
Maintain, repair, protect and adapt war memorials
Support local community groups.

In order to carry out their functions an annual precept must be raised, a tax on the residents within the parish area. The parish must produce a budget for the next financial year and detail how they intend to spend the money. The Char Valley finance meeting, where these decisions are made, usually takes place in the autumn. Notices are posted and members of the public are allowed to attend. The precept amount is requested from, and paid by, West Dorset District Council. CVPC undertakes to have an annual audit of the accounts, which run from April to March. After the completion of the annual audit, the parish publishes a "Notice of conclusion of audit and right to inspect the annual return". Currently there is no limit on the size of the parish precept or any percentage increase.

The amount of the parish precept depends on the size of the local council, the population of its community and its assets. Char Valley is not asset rich, but assets include Wootton Fitzpaine playing field (held jointly with WDDC), Whitchurch Canonorum playground equipment, 10 noticeboards, 7 benches, 30 saltbins, 2 war memorials, a village pound (Wootton) and a Wishing Well (Whitchurch).

For the year 2017/2018, the parish precept is £20,404. A glance at your council tax bill will show you that the tax from the parish council is the last on the list which includes county council, district council, adult social care, Dorset Police, the fire service. This year, the precept is £35.79 per household. Details of the precept and budget for 2017/2018 can be found on the Char Valley website at www.charvalleyipc.co.uk.

Debby Snook October 2017

SCAMMING

There has been an increase of scamming in West Dorset. Scams target people of all ages, backgrounds and income levels. One of the best ways to protect yourself from scammers is to understand how to identify a scam.

If you want to stay on top of scams, visit the Dorset Fraud Alert pages on the website for Dorset Police. Here you will find current information on the different scams affecting the residents of Dorset.

Scams come in many forms; uninvited contact is received by email, letter, and telephone or in person making false promises to con victims out of money. There are many scams but the most common are fake lotteries, deceptive prize draws or sweepstakes, clairvoyants, computer scams, and romance scams. The criminals attempt to trick people with flashy, official looking documents or websites, or convincing telephone sales patter, with the aim of persuading them to send a processing or administration fee, pay postal or insurance costs or make a premium rate phone call. Doorstep Scams are crimes carried out by bogus callers, rogue traders and unscrupulous sales people who call, often uninvited, at people's homes under the guise of legitimate business or trade.

Dorset Police is issuing the following advice:

- Children, grandchildren, relatives and friends of the elderly and vulnerable please warn them of the scam.
- Taxi company owners and drivers to be vigilant, especially if approached or asked to courier small packages to London on behalf of elderly people.
- Banks and other financial institutions, in particular counter staff, to be suspicious if elderly customers uncharacteristically draw large amounts of cash and to query this.

SCAMMING (CONTINUED)

Anyone who receives a suspicious call is urged to:

- **Hang up immediately**, dial 1471 and note the number that called you.
- If you need to use the same phone, **wait five minutes**, as the fraudsters could still be on the line or use another phone on a different line.

Report the call to Action Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040.

Simple guidelines to help you to prevent yourself becoming a victim of courier fraud are:

NEVER give your personal details e.g. birth date, PIN or bank details out over the phone
NEVER withdraw cash and send it anywhere via a courier or taxi

- **NEVER** send bank cards anywhere via a courier or taxi

UPDATE ON FINGER POSTS RESTORATION



We would like to update our readers on the progress of the finger posts restoration project since our last edition of Char Chat. During the financial year 2016/2017 Char Valley Parish Council spent £3,475.20 on restoring a number of finger posts and we were fortunate enough to receive donations from local residents amounting to £1,005.00. During the current financial year to the end of September 2017 we have spent £2,288.63 in restoration works and have once again received donations amounting to £590.00.

And once again can CVPC express their gratitude to the volunteers who have signed up to help with the restoration work. The Council would like to thank all those who have generously given time and / or money to the project. John

Day is our newest recruit and Betsy and Michael West in Ryall have raised funds locally to help with the restoration of the post at the Ryall end of Pitmans Lane. The project has also benefitted recently from generous donations from Tony and Cynthia Hall and the Whitchurch, Morcombelake and Ryall Flower Show committee. Alex Brooks is generously donating some of his time while working on the posts in the Wootton Fitzpaine area.

The Parish Council is now responsible for more than 20 posts and the restoration project is reaching the half way mark. Bakers Cross and Cockwell Cross are next and work is underway on the post at The Five Bells in Whitchurch Canonorum. The post at Peter's Gore, Fishpond, is the latest to be restored to its former glory. The Ryall post is just waiting for its roundel to be fitted having undergone some emergency repair work this summer after an over-sized delivery vehicle side-swiped it.

We were lucky enough to have a finger post display on the Bridport Local Area Partnership stand at the Melplash Show this summer which helped raise public interest.

Please read the article relating to finger posts on our website – www.charvalleypc.co.uk - and if you are able to offer any assistance please get in touch with us,

Does anyone know what was written on the left hand arm of the Cockwell Cross post?

Annette Marks



I would like to introduce myself to the readers of Char Chat. My name is Annette Marks and I was appointed to the role of parish clerk for Char Valley Parish Council in February 2017. I moved to Bridport in May 2016 having lived in South West London and Surrey previously. I have many reasons for moving to beautiful West Dorset, my sister has been living in West Dorset for many years and I have always envied her living in such a picturesque part of the country and whilst many parts of Surrey are very scenic, I am finding the pace of life in West Dorset is less stressful.

I have spent most of my working life in finance and administration, although following the birth of my son in 1995 I worked as a childminder for 7 years, which I found to be far more demanding than any office post!

Since living in Bridport, I have become a member of U3A as well as joining the local Women's Institute. I am also a member of the West Dorset Flower Group and enjoy watching the magnificent floral displays that the visiting flower arrangers produce.

My interests include gardening and as I live in a new property I have had a great deal of enjoyment in laying out my garden this summer, I cannot go into town without buying yet another plant for the garden. I also enjoy cooking and baking, walking with my energetic West Highland terrier and visiting places of interest especially historical properties. Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding any parish council matter that you wish to discuss and if I am unable to provide you with the information you require immediately then I will investigate the matter and provide you with an answer as soon as possible. My contact details can be found on our website www.charvalleypc.co.uk.