

Char Chat News

For residents and our guests in

Whitchurch Canonicum, Wootton Fitzpaine, Morcombelake

Stanton St Gabriel, Fishpond, Ryall and Monkton Wyld

December 2023

Welcome to the Char Valley Parish Council newsletter

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Welcome to our local parish council newsletter for the Char Valley. This is our first 'digital only' edition but paper copies are available on request.

There seems to be a wealth of great local activities being organised by our local village halls, churches, pub, and other local groups. Our local 'WhatsApp' groups are a good source of information on these and many other activities.

Having had one of the wettest years for a long time, we are now facing the problems caused by many years of underspending on local infrastructure. Our drains and gulleys have been filled with stones and mud running down from the hills and off the fields, and these have been further blocked by the verges which have been squashed down by traffic. Most of these haven't been cleared for a long time and now the roads are flooding and washing into homes. The floods are already disrupting local lives, often dangerously so, but when the winter really bites with freezing weather, then we will face potentially lethal conditions.

CVPC have been recording as many flooded areas as we find, but we need you to do the same. **Please report every blocked drain and gully, flooded road, and dangerous hazard to Dorset Council** and then let our clerk Tamsin know the details and reference numbers please. See page 3 for Dorset Council contacts.

We no longer live in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) ! Fortunately, we can't all dash out to build tower blocks, new roads, and fields of solar panels, it's only a name change to become 'Dorset National Landscape'. For now, it's business as usual but with a new name. Enjoy... <https://national-landscapes.org.uk/>

Hope you all have a good holiday season
The Editor's best wishes for 2024,

All the information in this edition is available on our website: <http://www.charvalley.org/>



Char Valley Parish Council (CVPC) is a group council made up of the civil parish councils of Stanton St Gabriel, Whitchurch Canonicum (North and South), and Wootton Fitzpaine.

Because each separate council is small, we join up for meetings so we can take decisions together and achieve more.

The combined civil parish stretches from the Jurassic Coast to the Marshwood Vale, all falling within the West Dorset National Landscape (fka: Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)).

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Wishing you all a happy and safe
festive season

Opinions expressed by individual contributors do not necessarily represent the views of CVPC as a whole.

CVPC Meetings

Our meetings are open to the public and held in our local village halls at 7:30pm on Mondays. A full list of dates for our meetings is available on our web site. <http://www.charvalley.org/pcmeetings.html>

The next meetings are:

8th January - Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall

12th February - Wootton Fitzpaine Village Hall

11th March - James Hargreaves Community Hall

CVPC COUNCILLORS

www.charvalley.org

Representing: WHITCHURCH CANONICORUM (NORTH)

Sylvia Creed-Castle	07876 820585	E: sylviabluntshay@btinternet.com
or	01297 489064	
Sue Johnson	01297 489375	E: suejohnsoncvpc@outlook.com
Juliet Busby	07976 369323	E: julietbusby@googlemail.com
<i>vacancy</i>		

Representing: WHITCHURCH CANONICORUM (SOUTH)

Nick Ziebland	07831 898366	E: nick.ziebland@googlemail.com
Charles Stanbury	07812 075781	E: copsgatefarm@gmail.com
Chris Noon (chair)	03333 030963	E: chrisnooncvpc@outlook.com
<i>vacancy</i>		

Representing: WOOTTON FITZPAINE

Tara Hansford	01297 560624	E: tarahansfordcvpc@outlook.com
Joanna Kewley	07824 492586	E: joannakewleycvpc@outlook.com
Robert Cook	07496 024413	E: robertcook340506@outlook.com

Representing: STANTON ST. GABRIEL

Andrew Carey	01297 560057	E: acarey@charvalleypc.com
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CLERK

Tamsin Ely	07786 086038	E: charvalley@dorset-aptc.gov.uk
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Footpath Officers:	Wootton Fitzpaine	Sarah Dewe	E: sarahdewe@mac.com	07973 920001
	Whitchurch	Christine Peat	E: christine_peat15@yahoo.co.uk	
	Stanton St Gabriel	Andrew Carey	E: acarey@charvalleypc.com	01297 260057
Tree Officer:		Emma O'Bryen	E: emma@obryen.co.uk	

Representing DORSET COUNCIL: Councillor for Marshwood Vale ward

Simon Christopher	07798 833715	E: cllsimon.christopher@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
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There are two ***vacancies for a parish councillor*** to represent Whitchurch South (Morecombe Lake and Ryall) and Whitchurch North. If you know of anyone who is interested, please contact our parish clerk, Tamsin, to discuss. This is a good opportunity for someone who is unsure as the commitment is only until May 2024 local elections.

Flood Wardens needed for Wootton, Morcombelake, Monkton, Fishpond, Whitchurch, and Stanton St Gabriel.

We have a flood warden for Ryall—**BUT we still need wardens for our other areas!** Char Valley covers 37 square kilometres and that's impossible for one person to cover—so we don't. It's down to you.

Whitchurch Hall, Wootton Hall, and Felicity's Farm Shop have agreed to storing about 15 sand bags at each location. There are more in Bridport behind Balsams Butchers.

To Report Flooding

If an emergency, call 999 immediately. If your house or the road is flooded, or drains and gulleys blocked, use the Dorset Council Flood Reporting service:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/emergencies-severe-weather/flooding/report-flooding>

Or call: [0345 988 1188](tel:03459881188) (normal call charges apply).



River Char Community Project

It's been a busy year for the River Char Community project. Working with local farmers and landowners, Dorset National Landscape (formerly Dorset AONB) and Dorset Wildlife Trust – we've been busy with our mission to clean up our river. If you joined any of our events over the last year – thank you! This is what we've been up to:

- ↔ We played an important part in the Charmouth River Dragon Festival in May
- ↔ We organised a public meeting in Wootton Fitzpaine last February, with talks on our work with farmers, the unseen impact on river life caused by dogs' flea collars and other insecticides, and the regulations on septic tanks.
- ↔ We have a new coordinator for our water quality testing efforts.
- ↔ We lead the CROWD (Clean Rivers of West Dorset) group. Meetings are held in Wootton or Charmouth, and are regularly attended by Wessex Water, the Environment Agency, our MP (Chris Loder), Dorset National Landscape and representatives of the rivers Char, Winniford, Simene, Brit, Asker, Mangerton and Bride.
- ↔ We have organised River Walks, led by Nick Gray (DWT) and Ian Rees (Dorset National Landscape), at Babers Farm and Louma (formerly Spence Farm).
- ↔ We held a working party to root out Himalayan Balsam at Stockham Bridge in July.
- ↔ We have joined in Daylighting and Natural Flood Management working parties near Shave Cross and at Babers Farm to slow the flow of the river after rain.
- ↔ We are helping to compile a proposal for how the £3 million allocated to Charmouth and Swanage by the Coastal Resilience Fund should be spent.

The next event is a **Daylight Working Party** on **Thursday 25th January 2024** and we're having a **Community Meeting at 7pm on Thursday 22nd February at Whitchurch** to discuss a range of issues. For full details of all these projects, our plans for 2024 and how you can help, see our [January 2024 newsletter on our website here](#).



Rural Mounted Volunteers Launched to Help Tackle Rural Crime

Dorset Police are enlisting support from local horse riders to help tackle rural crime by using their elevated positions in the saddle to report on anything unusual while out riding.

More information: <http://www.charvalley.org/>



Harvest Festival at St. Andrews, Monkton Wyld

Around 60 people attended the recent harvest festival at St. Andrews, Monkton Wyld on the 22nd October.

Traditional harvest hymns were beautifully played by Maja on the organ and Catherine and Ruth (part of Spindle musical group) provided a really lively musical entertainment which included the congregation singing along as well. Some relevant poetry and prose completed the service which was conducted by Rev. V Lockett.



Simon Fairlie lived up to his reputation as a brilliant auctioneer for the sale of the harvest bounty for which a total of £580 was raised.

A huge 'thank you' to cleaners, flower arrangers, providers of cider (from Greenlands) cake bakers and all those who kindly brought donations for the auction.

It was so lovely to see people of all generations getting together to celebrate this special time of year and we hope to welcome everyone again in 2024

Author: Joanna Kewley

Planning updates

We are receiving perhaps slightly fewer planning applications at the moment. But as always many of them are related to holiday accommodation of one sort or another. Our overall view on such applications is not to be prescriptive, but we are aware that such applications can affect residents in a number of ways. In particular it can remove accommodation that might otherwise provide housing for residents. It can 'hollow out' villages where second homes predominate. And it can lead to considerable extra traffic. On the other hand, it can provide a livelihood and extra trade for local businesses. So as ever, we try to strike a balance! We also pay a lot of attention to the impact of any new developments on our AONB (now Dorset National Landscape) which is always under pressure .

Links to the latest planning applications for CVPC area can be found on our website:

<https://www.charvalley.org/planning.html>



Author: Nick Ziebland

Councillor Hilary Joyce retires

After over 30 years working for Char Valley Parish Council first as a clerk, then councillor and chair person, Hilary has decided to retire from the council. Her tremendous local knowledge and understanding of the scope and limitations of the parish council have been invaluable in sustaining the Char Valley. Hilary will continue her volunteer work with the River Char Community project. Many thanks to Hilary for all her time, dedication, and patience!

Footpaths—your help is needed

Our footpaths are a wonderful asset and CVPC would like to encourage their use through the development of mapped walks. We are looking for suggestions from yourselves and also volunteers to help us to address challenges such as how should we improve access and protection for our local footpaths? How should we help landowners maintain access but protect their land, crops, and livestock? What would make these footpaths more useful and encourage their safe use by visitors and locals? Email or call our clerk Tamsin:

charvalley@dorset-aptc.gov.uk Tel: [07786 086038](tel:07786086038)

A Selection of Local Sayings from West Dorset and a Sample of the Dialect

It is sad to say that the following is very hard to find nowadays. Even thirty-six years ago when I listed them in my book for posterity there were few people who spoke with a strong Dorset accent and used many of the sayings. Younger generations were better educated than their forebears and parents wanted their children “to speak better” than they did. Inevitably teachers didn’t want to hear their pupils sound like “country bumpkins” either. Of course television has had a lot to do with it using the “Queen’s English” with a neutral accent. Even when some local accents were “allowed” one rarely heard a West Dorset accent among them.

So here is a selection for you to try:

LOCAL WEST DORSET ACCENT

a crooped down – midwife announcing the birth of a girl

bad job bout you – its a pity about you [in a joking way]

bickety – arrogant

bide up – stay up late

cor jiggard – well fancy that

don’t ave no time for ee – I don’t like him

don’t gie hissself time to dress hissself – he is untidily and scruffily dressed

ee do look a sketch – he looked awful, stupid or ridiculous

ee want some ginger up his bum – he needs to be given a jolt

gayking – going out a lot socially

half an hours worse – are you as ill as you think you are?

idn’t wuff lookin at – it isn’t worth considering

muss draw on now – I must leave you now to go somewhere else

nish – tender, as in eating meat

oi’ll ave no truck wie ee – I’ll have nothing to do with him

picked a goose – plucked feathers from a goose

pulled me round – made me weak (as in an illness)

rough colby – a tramp

sar’d him rough – served him badly, mistreated him

she has no tassel on er – midwife announcing the birth of a girl

she be getting red eaded – she is maturing into a young woman [as in a hen getting red headed when ready to lay]

she’s falling abroad – she is putting on weight

taint much odds – it doesn’t really matter

they were called wum – their banns were called in church

uncle Fred do already ave is ead down – Uncle Fred is dead

wasted – spilt as in milk

well oim blowed – well fancy that

wheelbarrow news – second hand news which has been enlarged in transmission

LOCAL WEST DORSET SAYINGS

A green Christmas makes a full churchyard – a mild winter allows more fatal germs to generate, so a hard spring may prove fatal to the sick and elderly who had survived a mild winter

Creaking doors last the longest – a hypochondriac is likely to outlive a healthy person

Ee cum to visit us in his sittin down birches [breeches] – a visitor who overstays his welcome

Ee do hang up his fiddle when ee do come wum – he is charming out in company but is a misery and obnoxious when he comes home

If you do burn elder (in your fireplace) the devil do sit on your chimney all night

Oi thought you were drivin the pig back – you have taken a long time to return

No-one be goin to get off a galupin horse to zee that – you are being too fussy about anyone noticing that

She do swing her tongue around too much for oi – she is too much of a gossip/chatterbox

She'll be soon sucking daisy maws – she will soon be dead and buried

They do go the way the water do run – they take the easy way out

Tis bad luck to bring pheasants' feathers into the house

Tis unlucky to pass on the stairs OR On the stairs of success may you never meet a friend

To ave good luck when there be a new moon you should curtsey three times

All the above and many others can be found in Sylvia's republished book 'Dorset's Western Vale' available at sylviabluntshay@btinternet.com or at the Little Toller Bookshop, Beaminster (closed Mondays) on [01308 863 442](tel:01308863442).

A Lot of Rain

Here's some measurements taken at a local farm in Char Valley:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
mm of rain	1040	992	866	844	840	955	947	841	837	1105

The total for 2023 is up to December 19th.



Dorset National Landscape

"Dorset National Landscape is the 'wildlife capital of England' – with 83% of all British mammal species, 48% of bird species and 70% of butterfly species present. There are patches of landscape that are home to the most variety of plants and mammals in the UK, and the relatively warm climate also offers a home to species new to the UK. The unique geology here gives rise to habitats that exist incredibly close to each other, which is why species such as sand lizard, overwintering birds, dolphins and red squirrels are neighbours – only in Dorset." quote from National Landscapes.

<https://dorset-nl.org.uk/>

