

Char Chat News

For residents and our guests in

Whitchurch Canonorum, Wootton Fitzpaine, Morcombela

Stanton St Gabriel, Fishpond, Ryall and Monkton Wyld

August 2021

Welcome to the Char Valley Parish Council newsletter

Late Summer 2021...

Its late summer and some of us are back on the beaches, in the restaurants and pubs, and maybe even in cinemas and theatres. With as many opinions as fish in the sea, our progress towards a post-covid 'normality' was always going to be difficult and cause anxiety.

As the Covid restrictions are gradually lifted, it is now firmly on us as individuals to take responsibility for how we respond and behave towards others. Lets hope that we can continue to show the respect and care towards our friends and neighbours that has made this one of the safest parts of the country, and extend that to the many visitors who join us here in West Dorset.

Tourism and hospitality are key contributors to our local economy, and many, many local businesses depend on visitors being able to come here—not just those in the front line, but also the shops and services supporting them. All of us can contribute to welcoming local visitors.

Do you know where our local defibrillators are? or how to use them? See page 4.

On other matters—did you respond to Dorset Council's Car Parking strategy survey? CVPC is very concerned that Dorset's drive to make money from visitors will be punitive for West Dorset residents with parking charges quadrupling. Without a useful bus service, we are compelled to use car parks—do Dorset Council care? No buses and increased car park charges will hurt our communities but neither our MP nor Dorset Council have come to listen to you—or talk to us.

We are all very aware of the climate emergency, and that Governments and big businesses could have done more to reduce the impact, and hopefully will do, but there *are* things we can do ourselves to help locally —see page 8.

We have some updates on Dorset Planning, and an interesting article on the house history of a local farm.

As always, we welcome your feedback on any and all subjects,

The Editor

Char Valley Parish Council (CVPC) is a group council made up of the civil parish councils of Stanton St Gabriel, Whitchurch Canonorum (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 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Newsletter: August 2021

- CVPC Meetings 2
- CVPC Contacts 2
- CVPC Information 3
- Defibrillators 4
- Beyond the Map 5
- House history: Little Bluntshay .6
- Climate Crisis—what could you do 8
- Update on Planning system 9
- Dorset Car Parking 10
- Dorset Buses improvement plan 10
- How Can I? 11
- Char Valley combined parishes .12

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

CVPC Meetings

CVPC meets monthly except in August and December. Being a group council, our meetings are held in each of our village halls in rotation—James Hargreaves Hall in Morcombelake (JH), Whitchurch Canonorum village hall (WC), and Wootton Fitzpaine village hall (WF). The meeting minutes and agenda are posted on parish notice boards and website. All our meetings are open to the public and we welcome public participation.

Our meetings start at 7:30pm, with the following schedule:

2021 Meetings:

13 September (WF) 11 October (WF) 15 November (WF)

Following Government Covid-19 guidelines, our meetings have been held on-line but we anticipate a return to physical meetings from September. As always, our meeting is a public meeting so please come along if you wish to take part.

CVPC COUNCILLORS

www.charvalley.org

Representing: WHITCHURCH CANONICORUM (NORTH)

Sylvia Creed-Castle	07876 820585	E: sylvia bluntshay@btinternet.com
or	01297 489064	
Sue Johnson	01297 489375	E: cardsmillfarmholidays@gmail.com
Hilary Joyce (chairman)	01297 560298	E: becklandsorganicfarm@icloud.com
Carolyn Peck	01297 489185	E: carolyn56peck@gmail.com

Representing: WHITCHURCH CANONICORUM (SOUTH)

Christine Bailey	01297 489714	E: chris--bailey@live.co.uk
Julia Eager	01297 561688	E: juliaeager@me.com
Clare Mahaddie (vice chair)	01297 489813	E: cmahaddie@charvalleypc.com
Chris Noon	033 3303 0963	E: chrisnooncvpc@outlook.com

Representing: WOOTTON FITZPAINE

Tara Hansford	01297 560624	E: taz.hansford@googlemail.com
Joanne Jones	01297 678330	E: gummershaye@gmail.com
Kit Vaughan	07778 525816	E: kitclimate@gmail.com

Representing: STANTON ST. GABRIEL

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

Representing: DORSET COUNCIL: Councillor for Marshwood Vale ward

Simon Christopher	07798 833715	E: cllrsimon.christopher@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
-------------------	--------------	---

CLERK

Tamsin Ely	07786 086038	E: charvalley@dorset-aptc.gov.uk
------------	--------------	----------------------------------

Char Valley Parish Council information

New Clerk for CVPC

CVPC have a new parish council clerk, Tamsin Ely. Mike, our previous clerk, provided excellent support and service but unfortunately has had to step down.

Parish Noticeboards for local community use

CVPC maintain eight noticeboards around the parish and, apart from Parish Council notices, suitable items of relevance to our residents may be posted on the CVPC Boards by anyone.

If you have a notice, an event, or a local request that you want to publicise on our locked noticeboards, please contact one of your local Parish Councillors.

CVPC Website

The Char Valley website at www.charvalley.org has dedicated pages where you can find contact details for local councillors, details of Parish Council meetings (agendas and minutes), information about planning applications, and copies of the submissions to National and Local Government that CVPC have made **on your behalf**.

The Char Valley website also has information on local history, local environmental initiatives, back issues of this newsletter, news about transport in the area, early warning of road closures and lots more.

Char Chat News

The **paper copy** of Char Chat News will be distributed to all residents and local organisations or businesses unless we are specifically asked to only distribute the digital copy.

We aim to produce 3 issues per year, and will be using our website and separate email notification lists (see below) to update information, post traffic and other urgent updates, and notify residents of any non-urgent matters arising between the issues.

However, we recognise that some of you will be happy to receive a purely digital copy through email. If this suits you, please email our clerk with your name and home address and we will remove your address from the physical circulation list.

Apologies if you have already done this and we have not responded, but please could you email us again, and include your physical address in your email so we can correctly identify your request.

Your Address

We use the local electoral roll as our primary source for addresses. However, this may not be up to date, so we also update the names and addresses based on local knowledge. If the address used for your copy is not correct,

PLEASE TELL US HOW YOU WANT TO BE ADDRESSED.

For example, we have over 70 addresses that say 'The **OCCUPIER**' - is this right for you? We also recognise that personal circumstances can affect the addressees, so please inform us if we need to change the name or title of any one on our list. Contact our Clerk, Tamsin, with your changes.

E-mail notification lists

CVPC receives notifications about road closures, flooding, Covid, etc. We post these notifications on our website and we send these out to our email circulation list. If you are not on our notification lists but would like to receive immediate updates, please send an email to our clerk, Tamsin, to be included. This is a separate list from those that want to receive char Chat News electronically and does not affect that list (see above for how to do that).

Interested in becoming a parish councillor? Contact one of us to find out what's involved .

Defibrillators

My daughter-in-law is a nurse and on a recent visit she asked if we have a defibrillator in Whitchurch. When I said we have two, she said that was even better! In fact we have 3 locally—one at the **Five Bells Pub** in Ryall, one at the **Whitchurch Village Hall**, and one at **Felicity's Farm Shop**.

It then occurred to me that, whilst I know where the machines are, I have absolutely no idea what to expect if I was ever required to use one. What happens when you access the machine?

She assured me it was very straight forward and that I should just do what I was told. I wasn't convinced but it seems, unsurprisingly perhaps, that she was right! And, she made it clear that knowing how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on someone who is in cardiac arrest is also very important and certainly worth learning how to do.



An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) or Public Access

Defibrillator (PAD) is a portable life saving device that you take to the casualty. It is a machine that can give the heart an electric shock if it has stopped beating normally due to a sudden cardiac arrest. This shock is called defibrillation. By using a defibrillator before an ambulance arrives, you may be able to improve someone's chance of survival significantly.

Once the defibrillator pads are placed on the casualty's chest, the machine works by checking the heart rhythm and giving the person's heart a shock **if necessary and only if necessary**. Defibrillators can be used on adults or children over one year old.

Should any of us find ourselves having to deal with someone in cardiac arrest there are a number of things that we are advised to do:

- 1) Dial 999 immediately
- 2) Start CPR
- 3) Ask someone to bring a defibrillator. Do not leave the casualty, the emergency operator will talk you through what to do if no machine is available.
- 4) If a defibrillator is available, turn the defibrillator on and follow its instructions

Further information, advice and instruction can be found at www.bhf.org.uk and www.sja.org.uk

Author: Carolyn Peck

Local Amenities in Char Valley Parish

What would you like? Local amenities for 2022 will be discussed at Char Valley Parish Council (CVPC)'s September and October meetings. These include benches, shelters, grit boxes, noticeboards, playgrounds, etc

So, if you think something could be installed in your area which benefits the local community or environment, please let us know.

Suggestions please by email to sylviabluntshay@btinternet.com and/or becklandsorganicfarm@icloud.com

BEYOND THE MAP

Creatively Capturing the Char Valley

During September and October, artist Emma Molony will be working within the Char Valley on a project for the Dorset AONB to creatively "map" the villages and communities in the valley.

Beyond the Map is one of several projects celebrating 60 years of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, capturing what people know and love about their local landscape. It is inspired by Common Ground, the Dorset charity founded in 1983 to seek imaginative ways to engage people with their local environment. Common Ground have always placed Local Distinctiveness at the heart of everything they do. They explain this...

"Distinctiveness is about particularity in the buildings and land shapes, the brooks and birds, trees and cheeses, places of worship and pieces of literature. It is about history and nature jostling with each other, layers and fragments, old and new. The ephemeral and invisible are important too: customs, dialects, celebrations, names, recipes, spoken history, myths, legends and symbols."

Emma is a local artist printmaker who will run creative sessions to gather individual views to form a collaborative "map" of prints, words, images, stories, sounds. This will be shared on Dorset AONB's website and will also help shape projects in the future.

As well as working with Charmouth Primary School, Emma will run free drop-in sessions for people of all ages at Morecombelake, Whitchurch and Wootton village halls.

Come and monoprint a leaf from your favourite tree, screenprint a map tote bag, print textured materials that hold special memories, record a story with an oral historian, print your own collagraph map, explore huge old 1902 maps of the area, print a poem with wooden letterpress type.

Emma was also involved in the local West Dorset Coast Path Parish Boundary project. Working with local craftsman Alex Brooks, Emma designed the silhouette images for the waymarkers at Ware and Charmouth featuring Viking ships and significant women featuring in Lyme's legacy of palaeontology.

www.emmamolony.com

If you can't attend, there will be creative activity packs you can complete at home and email your work.



Image of Parish Maps from the Common Ground archive at Exeter University

Emma will be at the Whitchurch Village Fete on August 30th – come and say hello, pick up an activity pack and have a go at printing.



Emma with her portable printing press at Aylesbeare Common last week

Event details will soon be listed on the project page:

www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/project/beyond-the-map/

to get in touch: beyondthemapproject@gmail.com

Beyond the Map is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of a participation programme celebrating 60 years of the Dorset AONB

A House History: LITTLE BLUNTSHAY, WHITCHURCH CANONICORUM

We know that Little Bluntshay Farm used to be part of the Medieval Manor of Bluntshay along with Great Bluntshay Farm, Crabbs Bluntshay Farm and Bluntshay Mill. The accounts for one year in the 1330s listed the name of the bailiff at the time and many other things, but because the number of ploughs and oxen were not



The front of the farm house in 1900

listed it was impossible to know how big the manor was. The name of Bluntshay derives from the Haeg of Blundell, meaning the

land owned by a person called Blundell. Over the centuries this gradually changed from Blundell's Haeg eventually becoming Bluntshay by the mid 1800s.



Little Bluntshay with Evelyne & Simon today

The new owners of Little Bluntshay Farm House have done some research into the origins of the house and discovered that one inner wall dates back to at least the 1400s, and more recently a door which had been rendered over for centuries was discovered when bits of plaster starting falling off. The same lathe and plaster structure can be seen going up the stairs. It is thought that this part of the house could be a contemporary building with the Shave Cross Pub just up the



road which some believe to be dated from 1320. An original bread oven has been encased in modern brickwork which obviously used to be an inglenook fireplace. As is often the case Evelyne and Simon found a much older fireplace behind a more modern one. The beam under the mantelpiece could be recycled wood from a shipwreck. Queen



Elizabeth I was very keen on conservation it seems. The front wall of the house is very thick and built of stone with inset window seat. This probably dates from the 18th century. A very old hand pump for drawing water (possibly from the River Char which flows adjacent to the house) is still in the house and an ancient well was discovered at the top of the garden. An outdoor toilet still stands in the garden, complete with a bucket.

Prior to Evelyne and Simon moving into Little Bluntshay it was rented by the Huxter family who came there in 1925.



The 90 years that the Huxters lived at Little Bluntshay were full of tragedy. They lost a baby son Herbert, aged only a few days, a short time after they arrived. The doctor attributed it to the strain on his mother moving house so close to his birth.

Herbert Senior and his wife Lily went on to have 3 more children Monty, Betty and Oscar. In 1934 Herbert was killed when he fell through the shafts and was driven over by the wagon he was driving because the horse mounted the roadside bank and tipped him off his seat. Lily continued running the farm and employed a worker to help with the farm. This must have been very difficult in such a man's world.

In the early 1940s Betty gained a place at Beaminster Grammar School. This made her mother very proud because, even though Lily had been privately educated at a Dorchester school she never gained a profession. Unfortunately Betty had to leave the school when she was just 15 without gaining any qualifications. She spent the next 21 years working hard at Bluntshay under the supervision of her brother Monty until she married in 1966. Oscar unfortunately took his own life in 1952 aged 22. Lily lived into her early 80s and Monty died in 2015 aged 87. By this time Little Bluntshay house was getting rather dilapidated.

Lily bought Little Bluntshay Farm during the 1950s. Previous to this the rent on the property had paid to a trust that had been set up by the Helyar family at East Coker Manor, in Somerset. This money went directly for the upkeep of the Almshouses in the village.



East Coker Almshouses

William Helyar, Canon of Exeter Cathedral and Archdeacon of Barnstable, became the new Lord of the Manor at East Coker in 1616. The story goes that he was riding down Bluntshay Lane some time in the 1620s when he espied Little Bluntshay and decided to buy it. Not only that, he bought the field on the opposite side of the road. To reach this field one has to cross a short distance over someone else's field. It is thought that he may have built a house in this field because during WW2, when farmers were encouraged to plough every acre they could manage, several large foundations stones were unearthed in what was known as Court Orchard field.

Sadly Archdeacon Helyar died of the plague in 1645 but in his will he instructed that the rent from Little Bluntshay be paid towards the upkeep of the East Coker almshouses. So this arrangement continued for

over 300 years. The building of the almshouses started in 1640 by the Archdeacon. Unfortunately the completion was delayed until 1660 because of the Civil War and the plague. They were built to house 11 women and 1 man. In 1868 the almshouses had an income of £48 per annum. That is equivalent of £4,169 in 2019. The building is still used as almshouses to this day. The Helyars obviously had great influence in the village as there is a pub called the Helyar Arms and a memorial to the family in the local church.



The Helyar Arms

On William Helyar's death the manor passed to his grandson William. The Helyar family stayed in East Coker until 1950.

In summing up it is hoped that more research can be done on the Manor of Bluntshay and whether it had ecclesiastical connections. The neighbouring farm Crabbs Bluntshay has ridge and furrow fields dating back to the Middle Ages, water systems specially dug out for supplying water to a sheep wash, and a flax/hemp mill. It is also thought to have been a graveyard where the rick barton is now situated. This area has a stone wall running around three quarters of it and there is a yew tree growing in one corner. Normally one would not have a yew tree in a farm yard as yew is poisonous to animals. Could this have been where monks or people from the manor were buried? Can it be assumed that the Manor was split up after the Dissolution in the mid 1500s?

There is also an area on Crabbs Bluntshay Farm that has been confirmed to be the site of a Saxon settlement near the River Char. Many of the hedges in the Marshwood Vale date back to Saxon times. I should have asked Time Team to visit before it disbanded!

There are so many questions to be answered. I may have to employ a professional researcher to find out all the answers!

What can we do in the Char Valley about the climate crisis?

As I write this, the latest IPCC report on climate change (the current consensus of hundreds of leading scientists and researchers) describes the devastating effects of the climate disruption that has already happened and warns of the frightening future that awaits us if we don't take action.

But what does 'taking action' mean in the Char Valley? We can't stop the Amazon rain forest being cut down, or wild fires across America, or the Great Barrier Reef being destroyed, or the loss of insects, fish and birds world-wide.... that's the job of politicians meeting at the UN's COP26 climate talks in Glasgow in November.

Because it seems we can't do anything, it's easy to turn away in fear or disbelief. It's easy to hope for some technological solution, to carry on as we are and say "let's just enjoy ourselves while we can".

But, in fact, there's a huge amount we can do to help the planet and the climate in very small, personal ways and to work together to achieve large-scale change in our county... and, in the process, to improve our own family's health, lifestyle and state of mind.

Where can I start?

For you or your family, start with **Giki Zero**. Giki stands for **Get Informed Know your Impact**. It was set up because most of us want to do the right thing, but it's hard to know what 'right' is. Giki has a simple carbon footprint calculator which you can use to work out, track and reduce your environmental footprint. The calculator is online and easy to use, and Giki will suggest dozens of personalised steps that you can take, depending on your lifestyle and budget.

Steps cover everything from what you eat to where you shop, how you travel, what you recycle, how you use your garden if you have one, how you heat your home.

It doesn't ask you to stop flying or cycle to London or buy an unaffordable car or give up meat... but it will ask you to think about how often you fly, whether you can use less plastic, whether you can repair tools, whether you can buy vegetables and meat grown or reared locally and so on.

It's simple and inspiring, you get to measure and reduce your impact on the planet, you can do it with friends and you and your family will have the satisfaction of knowing that you really are doing what you can to help, not just burying your head in the sand.

To get started, search **giki zero**

or visit: <https://zero.giki.earth>

What else can I do?

Doing things together can be fun and keep you interested. If you start using Giki Zero and want to join with other families, let us know. Email our new clerk, Tamsin, and she can put you in touch with other Char Chat readers who are using Giki Zero.

If you're inspired by this to join-up with others to have a broader impact, consider joining the Dorset Climate Action Network (DorsetCAN). It's a non-political organisation that works with Dorset Council, town and parish councils and families and employers across the county. It coordinates schemes to improve home insulation, get better public transport, reduce the use of pesticides, get sustainable houses built with more that young people can afford. Membership is free and you can do as much or as little as you like. Just joining makes our voice stronger when we talk to Dorset Council about roads, homes, buses, verges, farming and food. Please join, it only takes a minute.

To join DorsetCAN go to: www.dorsetcan.org

10 possibilities—could they work for you?

*Use public transport or cycle or walk a little more often than you do now (try the fortnightly Wednesday bus—01258 287980 pick up/drop off). *Buy locally grown fruit, vegetables and meat a little more often. *Switch to a renewable electricity supplier – then turn off appliances, turn down the heating and do what you need to keep your bill below what it is now. *Insulate your home better. *Create a compost heap, put your food waste on it and use it to feed your plants instead of buying fertiliser. *Stop using chemical pesticides/weedkillers. *Buy dry food, veg and washing-up liquid in shops where they are sold loose or where you can take your own container. *Buy food that's in season: e.g. local plums in autumn, not plums flown from Chile in March. *Switch your bank account, pension or savings to an ethical provider. *Take tap water with you in a reusable bottle instead of buying bottled water or fizzy drinks.

UPDATE ON the PLANNING SYSTEM IN WEST DORSET

The Local Plan

You may remember that Dorset Council published their draft Local Plan for consultation last February, and CVPC was among the many organisations which sent comments. Our response is on the CVPC website. The final version of the plan was intended to be published for consultation this September.

However, the Bridport News of 24th June reported that the publication date has been postponed to spring 2022. Dorset Council is under pressure with unprecedented numbers of applications and a shortage of staff due to the Covid restrictions, so this is not surprising.

Local Planning Applications

Dorset Council is introducing various measures to tackle the current backlog of applications, including not sending officers to visit every site but using a 'desk-based approach'. As Parish Councillors we find that visits, or at least local knowledge, can be very important. Our views can sometimes change radically when we turn from the paperwork to reality on the ground.

One of the main limitations of working from drawings is the difficulty of appreciating the conditions in 3D. We deal with a lot of steeply sloping sites which are hard to describe accurately on paper. Also, it is only by visiting a site and seeing its surroundings that one can appreciate how a new proposal would affect the area as a whole.

For these reasons we devoutly hope that DC's new system is only temporary.

Another new way of working, according to the newspaper, will be encouraging applicants to use a 'pre-application advice service'.

Theoretically Councils have always been expected to

provide such a service, but many people are unaware that it is currently available. You may find it worth while to pay for one of these services before putting in a full planning application.

The expense may well prove good value allowing you to find out in advance whether or not your application is likely to succeed and make adjustments if necessary. These are informal enquiries between the applicant and the Council, not disclosed to anyone else or available on the Council's website. In all cases you should get a written reply within 4 weeks.

Permitted Development Order (PDO)

There are certain types of development, changes of use and minor works that can be carried out without the need to apply for planning permission. (cost at least £200) These types of work/development are known as "Permitted Development".

1) You can make a PDO enquiry (Cost £97.50) to check whether or not you need planning permission. This is particularly appropriate if you are intending to build an extension to your house or a new building within your garden. Very often such developments do not require planning permission but within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, like Char Valley, the rules can be more onerous.

2) Pre-application Advice

For other types of development (including work affecting historic buildings) you can apply for Pre-application Advice. Again, you should get a written reply within 4 weeks. Fees vary according to the specific type of proposal.

We have contacted DC who have kindly provided the standard emails which are sent to enquirers. These give details of the services and how to apply in each case. You can find them on the Char Valley PC website.

There is currently an 8 week delay in processing planning applications

Author: Clare Mahaddie

River Char project flows on...

The Char Valley Parish Council's (CVPC) River Char Project survey is now complete and the initial draft written. It is hoped to discuss it at the 12th September CVPC meeting and to transform its findings into an action plan.

CVPC Responses to National Government and local Dorset Council Consultations

More consultations from Dorset Council and National Government this month. *These will affect our way of life here in West Dorset either directly or indirectly.* CVPC have responded to these with comments and submissions that we believe represent the majority view of our local residents.

You are urged to read these on our website www.charvalley.org and please let us have your feedback

Dorset Council Car Parking Strategy

Dorset Council announced a review of their car parking charges, with major increases in all car parks and some quadrupling to increase their revenue from visitors but also to encourage more use of public transport. A key part of the review will be to rationalise the many car parking permits available across Dorset.

CVPC are very concerned as the almost total lack of any usable form of public transport, the continued loss of nearly all local services and suppliers within walking distance of any of our villages, and the stated desire of Dorset Council to focus development of any kind on local town hubs, means that, as local residents, we have no choice but must use personal cars to fulfil our work, social, healthcare, and shopping activities.

CVPC have written to Dorset Council and believe that the proposed rationalisation of car parking permits needs to address the following critical challenges for our local residents:

- 1) Working: residents working in lower paid jobs in towns, eg hospitality services, cannot afford to pay £8 and upwards daily to park. This is particularly relevant to our younger residents and those on minimum wages – and is equivalent to a deduction in wages of over £1 per hour. Our residents are forced to run a car because there is no public transport at the times they are needed, but they cannot then afford the increased parking charges.
- 2) Shopping: local residents should not be driven out of town centres and away from our small traders to supermarkets and other shops with free parking because of high car park charges in towns – this will kill the unique characters and success of our local town centres and could cause many small traders to close.
- 3) Social: Adding up to £8 to the cost of going to visit friends, or the theatre, or to a restaurant or café, is a prohibitive cost that will lead to more social isolation and further challenge the sustainability of local entertainment and arts centres. This is in direct contradiction to the Dorset Culture strategy which seeks to encourage more diverse and local activities.
- 4) General: Our residents live here all year, we pay local taxes, we maintain services, we generate revenue, we run businesses, and we help support Dorset's tourist and visitor industry. We should not be penalised when we need to use those same services and facilities that we have already contributed so much towards.

Bus Back Better—Dorset's response to HMG's call for bus service improvements

Dorset Council must develop a Bus Service Improvement Plan in response to HMG's Bus Back Better strategy or they will lose access to key subsidies and grants. They have set up a survey, both online and paper, which closed on 27th August. If the car parking strategy is designed to encourage more use of public transport by increasing the costs of using private transport, then we need to have a useable public transport service in West Dorset. If we want to reduce the carbon footprint of transport, then we need a viable and effective public transport service. If Dorset Council's aim is to place development in Bridport and Lyme Regis as our local services hubs, then we need a viable and reasonably priced public transport system to access them.

If you would like to respond, the contact address is busbackbetter@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk or let us know your views by writing to our clerk, or myself at chrisnooncvpc@outlook.com.

How Do I...? Useful links to local questions

CVPC has introduced a new information page on our website www.charvalley.org called "How Do I...?" to help you get answers to common local questions about living here in Char Valley. Here are some of them.

Let us know what other questions you'd like to see answered...

How do I find out where to recycle things?

There's a great site called recyclenow.com that tells you what to do with just about everything. Apparently the most common question is about batteries... more

How do I report an abandoned vehicle?

Visit the [Dorset Council website](#) [here](#) and fill in the form.

How do I report a dead otter?

If you find a dead otter, no matter its condition, please call the Environment Agency on 03708 506506 in the first instance, so they can quickly arrange to collect and transport the body: the relevant numbers are listed below. If possible, provide the *grid reference of location found by ... more*

Can I talk to the Parish Council about a planning application I want to make for my home/property in the parish?

The Parish Council does not make decisions about planning applications. That's the job of Dorset Council. But we are consulted about planning applications and we do have considerable experience. ... more

How do I get sandbags in the event of a flood?

Contact CVPC for information on your local stock of sandbags and other relevant information...more

How do I report possible unauthorised building work/development in the parish?

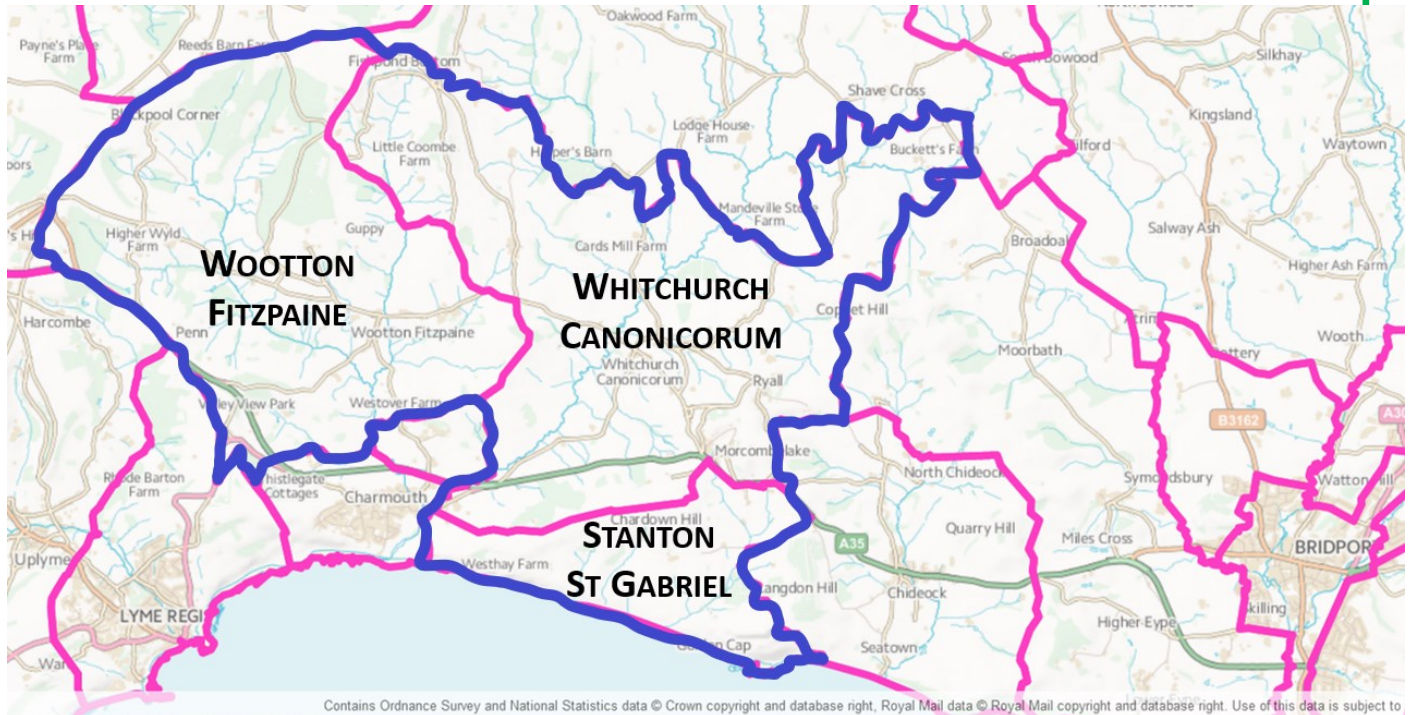
In the first instance, contact your local Parish Councillor. We have detailed knowledge of planning applications and can discuss what has been authorised before contacting Dorset Council enforcement officers...more

How do I protect myself against fraud?

Read this [Little Book of Big Scams](#) produced by South West Regional Organised Crime Unit (SWROCU), a Home Office funded, Law Enforcement body serving all the police force areas of the South West of England... more

WELCOME to the Char Valley combined parishes

Welcome to your neighbourhood. This area is in one of only 38 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the country and our civil parishes stretch from the highest point on the south coast of England, Golden Cap on the Jurassic Coast, to the Marshwood Vale covering about 37 square kilometres.



The civil parish has been part of local government since the mid-1800's when they were separated from the church parish councils. Civil parish councils have legal status and responsibilities, and are involved in local issues such as planning, transportation, and civic amenities. For us, balancing the needs of our farming, tourism, and residents with the planning laws of the local Conservation areas, the rules of the AONB, and the environment, whilst maintaining access to local services and amenities, poses particular challenges in this beautiful rural area.

Details of our activities and how these may affect you, can be found on our website www.charvalley.org.

Your councillors are elected in local elections by the parish residents, and the council meets once a month, each month except August and December, in one of our three village halls (or, in exceptional circumstances such as Covid, on-line). These meetings are open to the public to attend so please contact our Clerk if you are interested.

We publish a local newsletter three times a year, the Char Chat News. This has information on council activities, local interest, and public information. These are delivered to each household and can also be downloaded from our CVPC website.