
THE HUISH OBSERVER

The Huish Champflower Parish Council Newsletter

Fibre Broadband

There is a chance that many parts of our Parish will be able to receive a high-speed fibre broadband service by the end of the year. To register your interest please visit www.gigaclear.com. The more that register the sooner we will all benefit.

The Parish Council is working to obtain further information from GigaClear, including details as to where the service will be provided.

Parish Defibrillator

A defibrillator (AED) is located in the entrance porch of the Village Hall. This is an automatic device with easy to follow instructions. The Parish Council is keen to encourage residents to attend CPR/AED training, ideally annually. For many residents CPR will be the most valuable skill to learn. The most recent training was run in December.

Further training is planned for later this year. If you are interested in attending then please contact the Parish Clerk or one of the Parish Councillors.

Editorial

Welcome to the first edition of a newsletter specifically for Huish Champflower. The intention is to publish 3 or 4 times each year and attempt to fill the void for very local news created by the recent closure of the "All Around The Hills" magazine.

A copy of the newsletter will eventually be available for download from the Parish website. Ideally we would like residents to sign up to receiving the newsletter via email – helping to greatly reduce costs, the time of volunteers to distribute, and the forest.

Please send an email, with your name and address (house name will do) to Subs@HuishChampflower.org to receive your newsletter via email.

It is intended to produce two versions of the next edition, with the online edition being considerably more colourful.

The deadline for the next edition is 27th April. Please forward submissions (news, photographs) to:

News@HuishChampflower.org

In This Edition

- Your Parish Council
- An update about the Parish website
- Fibre Broadband before the end of the year?
- An important update on the Village Hall
- Parish Defibrillator
- Supporting the Village Hall via the Somerset West Lottery
- Volunteering opportunities
- Key dates for your diary
- Key local contacts

Parish Website

HuishChampflower.org is the website for our Parish.

"Live" since 2012, the site is maintained and managed by unpaid volunteers. The Parish Council only funds the web hosting (approx. £25 p.a.). Though primarily initiated to comply with Government legislation, the website has proved to be a useful communication tool - even for a small community such as ours. The Parish Council publishes agenda's and minutes of meetings to the website, along with other required information. Other Parish groups, including the Village Hall, also use the site.

At the time of writing the website is undergoing a long overdue update and refresh. The new website will hopefully be up and running by February.

Somerset West Lottery

The Village Hall has signed up as a beneficial charity of the West Somerset Lottery. If you wish to support the Village Hall fund raising effort then tickets can be bought online from the Somerset West website - www.somersetwestlottery.co.uk and then search for Huish Champflower. The Village Hall will receive 50% of ticket money, and supporters have the opportunity to win up to £25,000 every week

Your Parish Council

The Parish Council has scheduled meetings every two months (January, March, etc.) with our Annual Meetings held in May. The council has 7 members and receives valuable support from our West Somerset Councillor (Keith Turner) and Somerset County Councillor (Frances Nicolson). Administrative and regulatory duties are undertaken by the Parish Clerk (Brian Smith).

With minimal annual income (approx. £3,500 p.a.) the Parish Council is involved in a not inconsiderable range of activities, including:

Planning – reviewing plans & proposals, representations to Planning Authorities, etc.

Highways – co-ordinating collection & placement of road gritting material, reporting local issues, etc.

Footpaths & Bridleways – checking routes are maintained, liaising with County Council, etc.

Village Hall – supporting the Management Committee, contributing toward running costs, etc.

Parish Defibrillator – supporting the maintenance costs

The Parish Council is currently working on a number of initiatives; including:

- Review and agreement of numerous Mandatory & Administrative Documents
- Guide to Parish Footpaths and Bridleways

Other activities include close monitoring of the long promised arrival of improved Broadband (see front page) and Mobile provision, supporting the Exmoor Historic Fingerpost renovation project (more volunteers needed) as well as looking at how the Parish Council can encourage and best support community activities.

Our next scheduled meeting Tuesday 13 March, starting 7.30pm at the Village Hall. All are welcome.

Further information about your Parish Council can be found on HuishChampflower.org or by contacting the Parish Clerk (Brian Smith) on Tel: 629436 or email brian.smith639@btinternet.com

Village Agent Scheme

The Somerset Village Agent project uses paid, part time, highly trained individuals living in the parish 'clusters' they support. They help to bridge the gap between isolated, excluded, vulnerable and lonely individuals and statutory and/or voluntary organisations that offer specific solutions to identified needs.

Village Agents work with all ages dealing with a wide variety of issues, although a considerable number of their clients are elderly and involves social care issues.

Helping to solve these problems may, ultimately, help the elderly to remain living independently for longer. Village Agents also have the role of helping to shape services by feeding back to the appropriate body information about gaps in service e.g. transport provision. They can also motivate and support a community to respond to a local need by working together to address issues e.g. by helping them to set up a coffee morning for a group of lonely people or start a volunteer car scheme.

Our Village Agent is Gaby Bellamy - email:

gaby@somersettrcc.org.uk -

Tel: 07746 340 546

Village Hall Bookings

To make a booking either email hall@HuishChampflower.org or telephone 623857.

Village Hall News

As most parishioners will be aware, since 2012 the village has been raising funds, drawing up designs and consulting planners with a view to building a new Village Hall. This followed on from a 2011 structural survey of the existing Hall which reported the building as becoming 'un-sound' and close to the end of its natural life.

Two Parish Surveys determined that there is significant majority support for a Village Hall in Huish Champflower. Unlike other halls in neighbouring parishes, ours has the benefit of an adjoining (King George) playing field and enjoys spectacular views over the surrounding Brendon Hills.

In 2012, with Roy Phillips as the new Chair, the Huish Champflower Village Hall and King George's Field Management Committee was reinvigorated with active membership drawn from the various groups who regularly use the Hall and Field; the W.I., St Peter's Church, Cricket Club, fete, and children's group.

A separate "Working Group" was formed to focus on the "New Hall" project and has since worked to complete all the requirements for submissions to grant bodies.. Details of their activities can be seen on the Parish website. From the outset the New Hall Group sought clarity as to the availability of funding for our project. The Community Council for Somerset (CCS) told us that we would have a realistic chance of receiving "significant awards" from the National Lottery (Big Lotto), Viridor and other sources. A great deal of time and effort went into submitting our application to Big Lotto at the beginning of 2017. Though our application was accepted, we learnt in September that it had failed to win any funding.

Clearly this is disappointing for all, but particularly for Roy who has put in four years of hard work. Unsurprisingly he does not wish to take forward Plan B, and though happy to support a new Village Hall Chairman, he will be resigning as our Hall Chairman at the 2018 AGM.

Plan B - In October the committee was addressed by Jane Birch from the CCS, who informed us about alternative smaller funding providers. She seemed confident that approximating £185,000 could be secured from 7 or 8 smaller charities. This sum is significantly less than that hoped for from Big Lotto, though it can still deliver either a similar sized but pre-

Volunteering

Despite being a small community of around 100 properties, there exist plenty of opportunities for those interested and willing to volunteer, including:-

- Village Hall
- Fibre Broadband
- Fingerpost Project
- Village Fete
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Parish Defibrillator Group
- Village Signs Gardening
- Parish Survey Group
- Parish Litter Pick
- Cricket Team

If you are interested in any of the above or in forming a new activity group then please contact one of Parish Councillors or the Parish Clerk.

fabricated/kit timber hall, or a structural refurbishment of the existing hall.

The Village Hall committee needs to cut the funding cloth to fit a Plan B hall which means exploring all alternatives, agreeing one that suits, revising plans and cost and then starting the application process to funders identified. This process is time consuming and requires a great deal of commitment.

The alternative - It is a sad fact that much of the work required to keep our community amenities running is done by the few rather than the many. Despite all surveys evidencing that the parish wishes to save our Hall, there has been a lack of real commitment to help in the process which was undertaken to achieve this. Plan B, whatever this turns out to be, is a last chance to protect the future existence of a village hall in Huish Champflower. Volunteers need to come forward who believe in and desire the future existence of this community facility.

There will be a meeting of the Village Hall Committee on 27th February 2018 @ 7:30pm to discuss Plan B options, and to see who will steer this and how to proceed.

Please get involved, and bring your views, comments and offers of support to this important meeting. Without the support of everyone in the village, the village hall committee will not be able to make a credible bid to potential local grant givers.

Selection of Local Contacts

Somerset County Council	somerset.gov.uk
West Somerset Council	westsomersetonline.gov.uk
Somerset Waste Partnership (refuse & recycling)	somersetwaste.gov.uk
Clerk to the Parish Council	brian.smith639@btinternet.com
Village Agent - Gaby Bellamy	gaby@somersetcc.org.uk
Report Highways issues	roadsandtransportSD@somerset.gov.uk
GigaClear	gigaclear.com

Dates for Your Diary (February to April 2018)

Wednesday 21 February	Macmillan Coffee Morning	10am @ Village Hall
Saturday 24 February	Charity Quiz	7pm @ Village Hall
Tuesday 27 February	Village Hall AGM	7.30pm @ Village Hall
Tuesday 13 March	Parish Council Meeting	7.30pm @ Village Hall
Friday 16 March	WI Soup Lunch	Noon-2pm @ Village Hall
Saturday 17 March	Coffee & Cake	10.30-noon @ St Peters
Friday 20 April	WI Soup Lunch	Noon-2pm @ Village Hall