

Anyone wishing to submit articles for the January newsletter, please could you email me or post through my door by the 12 December due to the Christmas break. Many thanks. Sarah Moore

## **PARISH COUNCIL**

**We would like to wish residents a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

### ***Chair's Update***

#### **Methodist Church – Youth Centre**

We recently gave a presentation on our plans for the church to the local Methodist Circuit, along with the other bidders. We also took part in a question and answer session afterwards. We felt that our presentation went down well, and the feedback from the room was clearly positive. We understand that we now move to a Stage 2 process, where the national Trustees consider what decision the Circuit came to, and whether they wish to ratify it, or reject it. We remain very hopeful, but another wait!

#### **Potential West Street Development**

Many residents have contacted us about the recent information newsletter circulated by the developers. We understood that the links on the site for feedback were not working, and they were unable to submit comments. The newsletter also appears to have given the impression to some residents that somehow this publication had been endorsed or approved by the Parish Council, which is totally wrong. The website [www.stokesubhamdon.info](http://www.stokesubhamdon.info) has no connection with our village at all. We put in a formal complaint to the developers and they have now issued a mutually agreed statement on their site – and on a follow up postcard being posted out to you all. The statement reads “We would like to state that the Parish Council has not had any involvement with the preparation or the content of the newsletter and website. The Parish Council is entirely independent from this pre-application consultation process and will reserve its views until such time as a formal planning application is submitted, and South Somerset District Council invites the Parish Council to make its formal comments through the statutory consultation process”.

#### **Memorial Hall**

At our meeting Councillors agreed to give a grant which will pay for the Hall's annual insurance as we do each year, together with our usual £1,000 maintenance grant. Following some resignations on the Memorial Hall Committee, I volunteered later that week as Parish Representative on the Committee to support the Hall further by becoming the Bookings Secretary.

#### **Councillor Vacancy**

We still have one vacancy on the council. If you are interested in joining us, are open to new ideas, and willing to take an active role, please contact either our Parish Clerk Sarah Moore on 822455 or myself (details below) for an informal chat.

*Contact details: Barbara Brooks, Chair of the Parish Council*

*Tel: 824432; Email: [chairsshpc@hotmail.com](mailto:chairsshpc@hotmail.com)*

*Tamarisk, High St (opp Working Men's Club)*

## **P.C.S.O. REPORT**

For any advice and further/up-to-date information on incidents please go to the website: [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk). If you are a witness to or the victim of a crime then it is imperative that you report it to the police immediately whether it is during the day or at night. When reporting an incident please telephone either 101 for non-emergencies or 999 for emergencies only.

## **STOKE ACTIVE WALKERS**

*Tuesday, 6 December 2016*

Today's walk will take us along Bowey, then down across Shelves to Matts Lane. We will then follow the footpath to Broadmead Lane and across the field to Manor Farm in Chiselborough. From there we will take the footpath up past Chiselborough Church to the Cats Head pub and up to the Middle Chinnock road, turn left back towards Chiselborough then follow the footpath to the right along the back of the houses to pick up the Odcombe road. From there we will turn left into Chiselborough and back through Manor Farm then across the fields to the Lord Nelson for our Christmas lunch.

We meet at 10.30am at Sea Wall, about 50 yards on the Montacute side of Bonnies Lane. Please wear suitable boots or shoes and clothing according to the weather. All our walks are free and we welcome new walkers to our friendly group. Well behaved dogs are also welcome. ALL WALKS ARE UNDERTAKEN AT THE WALKERS OWN RISK. For more information please contact Norman on 01935 822792.

### **UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

After the celebrations in September to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church we have now sadly taken the decision to close at the end of the year. A service for the closure of the church will be held on Saturday 7 January 2017 at 2.30pm. Organist will be Mr Ray Brown.

Carol Service - There will be a service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday 11 December at 9.30am led by Mr Nigel Nichols. Music will be by members of Stoke Band and 'festive refreshments' will be served afterwards.

Morning Worship - On Sunday 18 December at 9.30am our Minister, Revd. Stella Hayton will lead a service including Holy Communion.

Everyone is invited to attend these services.

### **POP IN PROGRAMME**

- NOV 17 XMAS - Talk by Brian Wright
- 24 WINTER QUIZ by John
- DEC 1 12.30 XMAS LUNCH - Cat Head Inn
- 8 XMAS CHAT AND SURPRISE PRESENTS
- 15 XMAS MUSIC - Amanda & Choir
- 22 CHRISTMAS BREAK
- 29 CHRISTMAS BREAK
- JAN 5 NEW YEAR'S QUIZ - by John
- 12 AIRS AND GRACES

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

New Members very welcome at Oak Tree House

Contacts: Paul (826375) or Jennifer (882609)

### **FREE CHRISTMAS EVENTS!**

This December Little Fishes Baby and Toddler Group are hosting two free Christmas events. Parents and carers with children under 5's are welcome to come and join in. On Thursday 1 December we will make Christmas cards (expect lots of paint, glue and glitter!). Then on Thursday 8 December you are invited to our Christmas party, with party games, festive food and fun. Both events will be at the Memorial Hall at the usual time of 10-12. There will be no meeting on the 15 December. We will restart on the 6 January for the usual stay and play session, with toys, crafts and snacks – only £2 a family per session. Find us on [www.facebook.com/littlefishes.stokesubhamdon](http://www.facebook.com/littlefishes.stokesubhamdon). Come and join us!

### **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

We've had some changes in the Memorial Hall with two Trustees, Ruth Curtis and Anne Stuart, stepping down from the Committee. We thank them for all their hard work over the years.

As from now, Barbara Brooks has volunteered to be the new Bookings Secretary and Clare Sampson as Chair has temporarily taken over responsibility for Maintenance. We've not as yet been able to obtain the Bookings Diary or forms for future hirings from the previous

Secretary, so we need your help! Barbara will contact those organisations who have regular bookings to get a copy of their scheduled dates, but for all other individual and one off bookings, if you know that you have booked a date in the coming months, could you please ensure you contact Barbara a.s.a.p. to let her know dates and details. Many thanks! You can contact Barbara to make a booking on 01935 824432, or by emailing her at [bookings.stokememorialhall@hotmail.com](mailto:bookings.stokememorialhall@hotmail.com) or by dropping a note through her door at Tamarisk in the High Street (opp. the Working Men's Club).

### **REMEMBRANCE SERVICE**

What a beautiful morning on the Sunday 13 November, with clear skies and fantastic views as far as the eyes could see as we remembered the servicemen and women who have given their lives for our country and for today's servicemen and women who are currently in action and stationed around the world. Thank you to all who came to the service around the Monument which was again attended by a fantastic gathering of all ages. Many thanks to Brian Shaw for playing the bagpipes at the start of the service, to Anthony Russell for leading the service in such a quiet and sincere way, to Stoke Silver Band, to Andy Diplock for playing the Last Post and the Reveille which echoed over the hills to where others stood, and, to everyone who laid wreaths and crosses from the Parish Council, British Legion, the Brownies and Guides and, Peter Bullock's family. Also, thank you to Castle Primary School and Stanchester Academy for involving our children.

I would also like to thank all the businesses who very kindly gave space in their premises for the poppy boxes and to the ever willing collectors who give their precious time each year, a special thank you. I will let you know how much money has been raised for the Royal British Legion in next month's newsletter.

*Jon Moore, Poppy Appeal Organiser*

### **FOOD AND CRAFT MARKET**

The Food and Craft Market hosted by Stoke sub Hamdon Working Men's Club is on Saturday, 3 December 2016 from 10am to 4pm. We look forward to seeing you! For further information, please contact Denise on 01935 827793.

### **THE VILLAGE ARTIST GROUP**

Are you interested in Art or just wanting to take up a relaxing hobby? We are a small friendly group who meet in the Memorial Hall on Monday and Friday mornings between 10am – 12pm and Thursday evenings between 7 - 9pm. You can attend any number of sessions for just £20 per term. Why not call in? All abilities are welcome.

If you are interested you can find out more by visiting our website [www.yeovilarts.co.uk/villageartists/index.html](http://www.yeovilarts.co.uk/villageartists/index.html), or visit our new Facebook page - The Village Artists Group Stoke-sub-Hamdon or just come along for a trial session.

### **WALKING FOR HEALTH**

If you enjoy walking or would like to start walking with other people, then a warm welcome awaits you on the following walks, which are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of each month. The walks start and end at the Lighthouse café in Stoke sub Hamdon.

Every Step Counts starts at 9.30 am and is a 30 to 40 minute walk around the village, with drinks available at the Lighthouse after the walk.

Health Walks begin at 10.30am and the walks last 1.5 hours. Lunches and drinks are available after the walk.

December walk dates 12<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup>. Christmas social, after the walk on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

January dates 9<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

February dates 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

Please contact Walk Leaders, Penny on 822208 or at [pennyatrapnell@aol.com](mailto:pennyatrapnell@aol.com)

Mark and Jane on 07496 148756 or Anne on 826256 if you would like any more information.

### **PROJECTOR AND SCREEN AVAILABLE FOR HIRE**

Stoke Performing Arts Group has a brand new good quality projector and large portable screen available for hire at reasonable rates to local organisations, clubs and individuals. For further information or to book, please contact either Jeanie on Tel: 01935 823012 or Moira Tel: 01935 824784 or email: info@stokeperformingartsgroup.co.uk

### **CHRISTMAS BINGO**

Stoke Working Men's Club Christmas Bingo will be held on Monday 12 December. This will be a 15 house Bingo with lots of good seasonal prizes. Tickets on sale from 7pm with eyes down at 7.45pm. Everyone welcome. Come along and enjoy the evening.

### **STOKE BAND NEWS**

The band's Christmas Concert is on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December, tickets are £6 and Christmas puddings and pies will be served as usual. There will be a mixture of music from pop to shows as well as a selection of Christmas favourites.

On 17<sup>th</sup> December, we will be having carols sing along outside at the Prince of Wales from 4:00 until 6:00. Please come and sing along with us. This is an event for all the family to enjoy.

Our other engagements are, on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, the band will be performing at the Haselbury Plucknett Bible Society and later on 17<sup>th</sup> December we will be at St Catherine's Church in Montacute for the nine lessons and carols service. And of course, weather permitting, we will be around Stoke on Christmas Eve as usual.

### **HAMDON PLAYGROUP**

As you may be aware the United Reformed Church will cease to hold services at the end of the year. We were initially concerned that we may lose use of our Playgroup rooms but following discussions with the Church and Synod this is not currently in their plans. We will continue to keep close contact with the new owners (the Synod) to continue to make long terms plans for our future.

Hamdon Playgroup has been part of the community for such a long time (40 years+), we look forward to continuing to prove a safe and happy environment for your children to play and learn.

*The Hamdon Playgroup Committee*

### **HAMDON PLAYGROUP CHRISTMAS JUMBLE SALE**

Hamdon Playgroup will be holding a Christmas Jumble Sale on Saturday, 3 December from 2pm to 4pm. Please bring all your unwanted items to us or book a table to sell your crafts. There will be children's activities, a raffle and Santa will be there. Entry is £1.00 which includes a mince pie and tea or coffee. For more details phone 826832

### **CHRISTMAS COFFEE SHOP**

We will be holding another Pop-Up Christmas Coffee Shop in aid of Chester's fight against Cystic Fibrosis on Friday, 16 December at 23 Castle Street. We will be open from 2pm - 8pm. Bring your friends and call in for coffee, cake and a catch up. Looking forward to seeing you all again.

*Ina Law*

### **MARIE CURIE CHRISTMAS FAIR**

Thank you everyone for your support! The local fundraising group made over £700 at the Christmas Fair kindly hosted by the Stoke Working Men's Club on the 12th November. The day was a huge success and it simply wouldn't have been possible without you all. A special 'thank you' to Rachel, the committee and all the team at the club who did their very best to make us feel at home.

### **HAMDON YOUTH GROUP**

Hamdon Youth Group has now had to leave the Fleur as the kind landlords, who were so supportive, have moved on and we are still waiting to hear the result of the bid for the Methodist Hall, our previous home for our Stoke meetings. We are looking at all possibilities

for venues for the future as we were getting over 30 young people at our Monday meetings in a larger venue. Also we are working out a way to take on the Church Youth Club as the organisers are retiring. However we are getting great support for our young people as both Stoke and Norton Parish Councils have recently confirmed increased continuing support for HYG for which we are very grateful. Since HYG has become established the police report a dramatic reduction in antisocial behaviour by young people in the villages which we believe is a real benefit to all residents.

In view of the changing situation of the venue look out for posters regarding December Youth Clubs in Stoke. Norton Youth Club will continue on Wednesday evenings at Norton Village Hall 7 - 9pm and welcomes young people 11 - 16 for chats and activities. The HYG organisers wish all our young people and wonderful volunteers a great Christmas and we look forward to a whole New Year of working with you in 2017.

## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2016**

**Your Local Churches would love to welcome all of you to celebrate to birth of Jesus with us at these services.**

### **Sunday 11 December**

**9.30 am** Readings and Carols - Stoke URC

**4.30 pm** Christingle Service – St Mary's, Stoke

*Particularly appropriate for all children and families*

### **Thursday 15 December**

**2.00 pm** Castle School Carol Service – Stoke URC

### **Sunday 18 December**

**9.30 am** pre-Christmas Communion – Stoke URC

**6.30 pm** Carol Service – St Mary's, Stoke

### **Christmas Eve**

**3.00 pm** Crib Service–St Mary's, Stoke

*Particularly appropriate for all children and families*

**11.30 pm** 'Midnight Communion' – St Mary's, Stoke

### **Christmas Day**

**9.30 am** Family Communion– St Mary's, Stoke

*all very welcome to celebrate the birth of Jesus*

## **ST MARY'S ROOF**

You have all been very patient waiting for news about the Church Roof at St Mary's. Many of you gave very generously to our appeal some time ago. The suspicion that there might be Bats in the void between the ceiling of the church and the copper roof meant that the project, intended to start in February, was delayed until October. When the first sections of the roof were then lifted it was discovered that there were in fact no bats present. There was then some potential concern about Asbestos being resent in the same void - but after examination at a lab that was found to be asbestos free; however at some point bitumen had been applied to some joints and it was determined that there was some very low grade asbestos - but that that could be handled relatively easily. So after a few delays work began in mid-October and, at mid-November, is nearly complete.

A team of talented young men, under the supervision of Mike White and our Architect, had the benefit of generally good weather and very few hitches. They were welcoming to those they met and there was never any reason to cancel or move any of the planned events or services. A substantial part of the work has been paid for by a grant from the Roof Repair Fund of the Listed Places of Worship - but you, parishioners of Stoke, have also made a much appreciated significant contribution. Thank you. *Peter Thomas (Priest in charge)*

## HAM HILL VILLAGES BENEFICE

It is hoped that it will not be long before we can officially use this title to describe our group of 7 parishes. This consists of Stoke sub Hamdon (by some way the largest) and the six other villages of Chiselborough, Middle Chinnock, Montacute, Norton sub Hamdon, Odcombe and West Chinnock. At the moment the Parochial Church Councils are considering the legal document that will create the Benefice (the name for the group of parishes that has one "incumbent" - who might be called Vicar, Rector or priest-in-charge).

In practice we are already seeking to live "as if". Individually the 7 parishes will retain their own identities, and serve their own communities, but collectively we will seek to support and encourage one another as we also seek to serve Jesus Christ whose birth we are about to celebrate, and to share the Good News that the angels proclaimed to the shepherds "Today a saviour has been born".

*Peter Thomas (Priest in charge)*

## GROWING TOGETHER

If you would like an opportunity to discuss the Christian faith, what do you believe and other important questions, then join us in early 2017 for Growing Together; a short, informal, interactive course for seekers, enquirers and sceptics. These 1 hour sessions will be held at The Keep, 1 Castle Street starting on Tuesday 17 January 2017 (times to suit participants). If you are interested please contact Revd. Annie on 824167 or email [revgurner@btinternet.com](mailto:revgurner@btinternet.com)

## COUNTRYSIDE EVENTS

*Yeovil Country Park*

1st Rustic Rudolf  
8th Rustic Rudolf

*Ham Hill*

15th Christmas Crafts

## DIARY OF EVENTS:

### December

1<sup>st</sup> Little Fishes – Christmas Card Making  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Dunster in Candlelight  
3<sup>rd</sup> Food & Craft Market  
3<sup>rd</sup> Hamdon Playgroup Christmas Jumble Sale  
6<sup>th</sup> Stoke Active Walkers  
8<sup>th</sup> Little Fishes – Christmas Party  
10<sup>th</sup> Stoke Band Christmas Concert at 7.30pm  
12<sup>th</sup> Walking for Health  
12<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bingo - Stoke Working Men's Club  
17<sup>th</sup> Carols for all, Stoke Band at Prince of Wales at 4:00pm  
19<sup>th</sup> Walking for Health

### January

9<sup>th</sup> Walking for Health  
23<sup>rd</sup> Walking for Health

### February

13<sup>th</sup> Walking for Health  
27<sup>th</sup> Walking for Health