

Please can anyone help with the distribution of the newsletters? We are looking for some help delivering the newsletters each month to the top of North Street and North Street Workshops. If you would be willing to volunteer please could you contact Sarah Moore, Parish Clerk. Contact details are on the back of this newsletter. Thank you.

PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Precept: At the January Parish Council meeting a resolution was passed not to increase the precept for 2015/16 but to once again keep it at its current level of £49,195. Also, South Somerset District Council has again passed on the grant that they receive from Central Government and the amount allocated to Stoke is £4,125 which is over £1,000 less than last year. What this means to you is that the portion of your Council Tax bill for the parish precept, assuming a Band D charge for 2015/16, will be £72.86. Again, this is a decrease on last year's annual charge.

What some of the precept is spent on in the village: Village maintenance which includes the grass cutting and maintenance of the Memorial Hall grounds and the playground at Stonehill, keeping the rights of way clear, the cutting of some verges, hedge trimming, litter picking, maintenance of play equipment, seats and some signs, inspections and maintenance of the War Memorial and the maintenance of the United Reform Church clock; Rent to the Duchy of Cornwall for the allotments and the recreation ground; Insurances for the Parish, War Memorial and the United Reform Church Clock and, grants for the insurances for the Memorial Hall and Sports & Recreation Trust Pavilion; provision and installation of new playground equipment; monthly newsletter; provision of grit bins and waste bins; provision of gates to some footpaths; provision of a handyman; provision of a youth worker; salaries and allowances, including audits and affiliation fees; and grants and donations to village organisations such as Sports & Recreation Trust, Memorial Hall, St Mary's PCC towards churchyard maintenance, Youth Club, Hamdon Youth Group and others grants provided under the S137 of the Local Government Act 1972 such as Royal British Legion and Shopmobility. Also, the Parish Council have to ring-fence funds annually for the replacement of assets and the sports pavilion.

Bus Service Petition: Thank you to everyone who signed the petition against the possibility of a reduction to funding for our bus service and for all your comments. This has been sent to Somerset County Council where we hope they will take our comments into account when setting the budget for the buses.

Ham Hill: Once again it has been reported that vehicles have been broken into on Ham Hill. Opportunist thieves are keeping track of visitors who put handbags/property in the boot of their cars or under the seats for safekeeping. Please **do not** leave any valuables/property in your car – either take it with you or leave such items at home.

Emergency Plan: Over the coming months we will be looking into creating an emergency plan for the village and at present we are looking at flooding. We need some people with local knowledge to help us so that we can map out water courses, drains, wells etc. We will not ask you to carry out any onerous duties, only to part with the knowledge that you have, so please if you can help us and could spare some time to meet with some parish councillors we would appreciate your assistance. Please contact the Sarah Moore, Parish Clerk; contact details are on the back of this newsletter.

P.C.S.O. REPORT

For any advice and further/up-to-date information on incidents please go to the website: 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.

EMAIL SCAM

Some of you may have received an email stating that you have not paid your Council Tax bill. **THIS IS A SCAM!** Please **NO NOT** reply to this email or send any personal information or banking details. South Somerset District Council does not send emails when requesting payment; they only send letters via Royal Mail.

STOKE ACTIVE WALKERS

Tuesday, 3 February

Our walk in February will take us along to East Stoke and up Wambury Lane and along Long Ground; pass below the Prince of Wales to go along Double Ditch and up to the Monument. We will then follow the footpath past the Frying Pan in Fairy Land and go down through the woods to the land which will take us past Tinkers Bubble and back to the Lord Nelson for 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.

COFFEE MORNING

Come for COFFEE & CAKE on Saturday, 28 March between 10.00am and 1.00pm supporting the Memorial Hall & CLIC. Look forward to seeing you all there.

THANK YOU

On behalf of my mother, Kate Sharman, we would like to thank everyone who sent cards, letters, flowers etc. for her 100th birthday on 14 January. It was very kind and very much appreciated. She had a very enjoyable day with family and friends. Hilary Singleton

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

On Sunday, 4 January Nancy Dare celebrated her 90th Birthday. Her daughter Carol, Sister-in-Law, Wendy, and their families held a surprise tea at Oak Tree House and all the residents were invited. We enjoyed ourselves at the party and we would like to thank her family for inviting us. On Monday, 5 January the 'Flexacise' class also celebrated with Nancy, sharing a birthday cake which was left by her family.

POTATO DAY

The 8th Annual Potato Day will be held on Saturday, 7 February from 10:30am - 2:30pm at Drimpton Village Hall. There will be a complete array of products to meet your fruit and veggie growing needs for the New Year and we hope to help you kick start your Gardening Season. There will be 60+ varieties of seed potatoes, all for sale by the single tuber, plus onion sets, shallots, garlic, a range of heritage seeds, fruit trees, soft fruit, kitchen garden plants and so much more. Enjoy the renowned Drimpton food, with all day brunches, lunches and cakes, as well as warming drinks. The popular family activities will be here, fun for everyone. Please join us, whether you are an experienced grower or just starting out on veggies, you will find this a friendly and useful event. There is no need to book; there is a small entry fee of 50p, which includes a tea or coffee. Parking is available at the village hall and nearby. *We are on Chard Road (B3162), Drimpton, between Chard and Beaminster. For SatNav: DT8 3RF Clapton, Wayford, Drimpton & District Horticultural Society ~ cwdhortsoc.blogspot.com*

SPORTS AND RECREATION TRUST AGM

The AGM for the Sports and Recreation Trust will be held in Stoke Working Men's Club at 7.30pm on 3 February. We had a very good and successful year in 2014, with the May Fayre being the best to date and the Charity Shop continuing to provide a fantastic facility in the village that not only ran the shop six days a week but also organised some amazing fashion and fun events. We also supported other events including the new Sports Fun Day at the Recreation Ground, run by the Stoke Youth Football Club, and the increasingly popular and successful Spooky Walk, the Jazz Night, the Ceilidh and the Willow Workshop which were organised by the May Fayre committee. Our success is dependent on the hard work and commitment of an amazing team of volunteers; you may even be inspired to join them. Join us at the AGM to find out not only what we achieved in 2014 but also what our exciting plans are for community sports and recreation facilities in the future. Peter Hulett, Chairman, Sports and Recreation Trust.

LOTO CLUB

The Loto Club (for widows and widowers) continue to meet in The Lighthouse on the 2nd Monday of every month from 10am. Newcomers welcome. For more information please call Dru on 01935 822703

ACORN POP-IN PROGRAMME

February 5 Poems and Readings
12 Valentine Music - Terry Whitehead
19 Board Games
26 Fish & Chips Lunch Outing

Folks welcome from age 50 upwards. Please come and join us and enjoy our company, speakers, outings and games. Jennifer Kerr (01935 882609)

TAI CHI CLASSES

Tai Chi is an Eastern Asia exercise that involves slow controlled movements with controlled breathing. Tai Chi will improve your balance, lower stress and make you more agile. The class is for all abilities and lasts for roughly one hour. Come along to the memorial hall at Stoke Sub Hamdon on Wednesdays at 5.30pm, first session is free and £3 thereafter.

MONTACUTE PANTOMIME

Montacute Pantomime presents 'Puss in Boots'. Evening performances start at 7.30pm on Thursday 12, Friday 13 and Saturday 14 February. Matinee performance starts at 2-30pm on Saturday 14 February. Please ring 01935 822814 for tickets.

RECYCLING AND RAISING FUNDS FOR SOMERSET SIGHT

Thank you to everyone who has donated stamps so far over the years. As guide dogs for the blind no longer raise money this way we are now supporting Somerset Sight. I have just sent off 11.45Kg (2 years collecting) so the charity will soon receive the money from them.

Somerset Sight is the local independent charity for blind and visually impaired people. They have been operating since 1919 and are committed to working with blind and partially sighted people in Somerset and to provide services so that they may lead fuller, more independent lives.

We are collecting used stamps, stamp albums, postcards, tea cards, cigarette cards and mobile phones to raise funds for this charity. Every item you donate will be recycled and the funds will go directly to Somerset Sight. Just drop your items through the letterbox (in the garage

door) at Kaz and Mike's, 8 High Street, Stoke sub Hamdon. For more information about the charity, please visit www.somersetstight.org.uk; Somerset Sight are a registered charity, number 203296.

THE STOKE CHARITY SHOP

Spring is on the way and the Edelweiss is blooming in the mountains, so it is time to polish up the lederhosen and practice your yodelling because The Stoke Charity Shop proudly announce the village debut of *Sing along to the Sound of Music*. An evening of entertainment for all the family on Saturday 14 March at 6pm in the Memorial Hall so come dressed as your favourite character and join in all the songs. There will be prizes for the best fancy dress. Refreshments & Bar. Adults £4 and Children (under 12) £2.50. Tickets available from the Charity Shop from the middle of February.

READING SCHEME AT STANCHESTER ACADEMY

For some time we have had three adults who come in and read with individual children on a weekly basis for half an hour and we would like to extend this scheme as there are many other children who would benefit greatly from additional one-to-one reading time. We are looking for some more volunteer (unpaid) adults to help students with their reading on a regular basis during registration time at the school. It is a fairly early start at 8.15/8.20am and any volunteers would be required to have a CRB check. If you have some spare time which you would be willing to devote to helping young people then please contact Lisa Wilson, Librarian, at Stanchester Academy on either LWilson2@educ.somerset.gov.uk or telephone 823200.

MOBILE LIBRARY

These are the dates (until September) for this year's mobile library visits to the Memorial Hall car park on Thursdays from 11.25 to 11.45 am:

26 February	26 March	23 April	21 May
18 June	16 July	13 August	10 September

As the van only comes every four weeks you may keep your books for four weeks instead of the three weeks designated at fixed libraries. This can be a real bonus. Do please make it a New Year's resolution to try and use this excellent facility as it can be so convenient.

DIARY OF EVENTS:

February

3 rd	Stoke Active Walkers
3 rd	Sports & Recreation Trust AGM
7 th	Annual Potato Day
12 th , 13 th , 14 th	Montacute Pantomime
19 th	Somerset Sight Visit
26 th	Mobile Library

March

14 th	Sing Along to the Sound of Music
28 th	Coffee Morning

