

PARISH COUNCIL

Chair's Update

My update this month is a little different from usual. A week ago I received a letter from a resident about the West Street development, (potentially 27 homes) and I am so glad that she felt compelled to write. It's clear that she felt that we as a council are against any new all development in the village, holding narrow views, as evidenced in her eyes by our lack of comments about the developments at East Stoke. I am very grateful for her letter – for it's made me realise that we really ought to be telling you more about the responses the council regularly makes on your behalf on these 3 (possibly 4) new developments. And so we will in future be giving you brief details in this newsletter as they happen (as well as our detailed responses already included in our Minutes).

Councillors do in fact positively welcome new development. Why? Well, not only does it bring in new families in which helps to keep our village renewing itself, it also brings in more council tax towards our village facilities. Each of the developers will also have to pay a one off sum of money to the parish for sports and leisure facilities once 50% of the houses are occupied, and we have this year been successful in getting the District Council to add an additional sum of money towards community facilities in the village, which has never been applied for before – all useful stuff.

There are currently 3 active developments that are going through the planning process. All of these have been sold on over the years to different developers with yet more planning applications and amendments, and so it is a long process. District Council also obtain specialist views on highways, drainage, environment, landscaping, school, surgery, transport facilities and many more areas during this process. If you want to see our own comments in details, you can log on to the District Council site at www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control select "View a Planning Application Online" and type in one of the planning reference quoted here. Then select the "Documents" tab.

So what is proposed?

1. Land behind the Co-op, East Stoke. Now being developed by Stonewater, an affordable housing provider and all 14 houses will be affordable for sale/rent. Planning reference **16/04061/FUL**.
2. Old fruit farm next to Stanchester, East Stoke. Now being developed by Arc Homes, there are 18 houses of which 6 are affordable. Planning reference **16/04851/S73**.
3. Land opposite Southcombes, Great Field Road. Now being developed by Blue Cedar Homes, 14 "lifetime" homes for the over 55's, which are capable of easily being modified for those with mobility problems, with an annual management service charge to cover grass cutting, and maintenance etc. Planning reference **14/04476/FUL**.

Our main concerns are external building materials, drainage/sewage, and highway access safety. With the Co-op and the Stanchester sites we have voiced our objections to the external building materials that we feel do not blend in with our "hamstone" Conservation village. A mix is good, but some of the proposed materials are more "town" than "country". Very dark red brick and orange mottled brick looks out of place, particularly right next to East Stoke Lodge and House. The Co-op, Stanchester (and the potential West Street) sites would be seen from the top of Ham Hill. District are at this moment intending to have a new Heritage Strategy under which they "will assess development proposals on design quality, and the contribution a design will make to local character and context or street scene, and its impact in the wider landscape or any key views". We think the current design of these sites will spoil the view. So we have objected to the materials and asked for a more sympathetic colour brick/stone, or in the case of the Southcombes site, a dark buff render to match the partial stone walls, rather than a bright white, and developers here have agreed (verbally) that they are willing to agree to this.

On drainage etc., again we have voiced our concerns about the Stanchester and Co-op sites, as East Stoke has a bad surface water drainage problem, which starts at East Lodge corner all the way down to the far end of Windsor Lane, and adding an extra 32 houses to this would cause serious problems. This time around the officer in the Flood Risk Management Team has agreed with us, and asked for improved plans. If West Street gets

developed, again we know that there are again sewer and surface water drainage problems in West Street up to Matts Lane which would need to be addressed and we will continue to object on your behalf until better arrangements are agreed.

On highway access, again the Co-op and Stanchester sites are in a high pedestrian area with the school and shop, near a sharp corner at East Stoke Lodge, and we do not feel the current arrangements are sufficient.

This article can't possibly explain all the detailed work that we put in, but I hope that it helps you to understand better how we work quietly in the background on your behalf.

Vandalism again

We have recently had another spate of nasty and soul-destroying vandalism on part of the Stonehill play area that we paid for last year. Will everyone please keep an eye out and report any suspicious activity – we spent £40,000 for fantastic new facilities and a small number of mean-spirited people are ruining it for the majority.

Contact details: Barbara Brooks, Chair of the Parish Council

Tel: 824432; Email: 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. 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.

CHRISTMAS TREECYCLING

Start the New Year off sustainably by recycling your tree into mulch! Drop off your bare (free of ornaments, metal, stands), **real** trees of all shapes and sizes in the designated compound at the Memorial Hall Car Park before 16th January and South Somerset District Council will collect them and shred them free of charge.

STOKE ACTIVE WALKERS

Tuesday, 3rd January 2017

Our first walk for 2017 will be a Walk in the Park. We will begin by going along East Stoke, down Windsor Lane and then through Lower East Stoke Farm by kind permission of the Hill family. We will then continue into Montacute, down Station Road and into Montacute Park; we will walk around Montacute Park and back through Montacute towards Stoke, up Hatchcroft Lane and through Hedgecock Woods and back to the Fleur de Lis 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.

STOKE BOWLS CLUB

Stoke Bowls Club held their Annual Christmas Dinner and Trophy presentation at Ilminster Bowls Club on 7 December 2016. The Triples Cup winners were Austin Moon, Roy Watson and Roy Gosney; Runners up were June Hession, Malcolm Francis and Neil Middleton. The Pairs Cup winners were Sandra Webb and John Dicks; Runners up were June Hession and Chris Cailles. The trophies were presented by Norman Warry, Club Chairman.

If anyone would like to try their hand at Short Mat Bowls just come along to the Memorial Hall any Friday between 2pm – 4pm or 7pm – 9pm, you will be made very welcome.

SPORTS AND RECREATION TRUST

The AGM for the Sports and Recreation Trust will take place on February 7th 2017 at 7.30pm in the Working Men's Club. Come along and hear what the Trust achieved in 2016 and the exciting projects for 2017. Everyone welcome.

NEW TAI CHI CLASS IN STOKE SUB HAMDON

Tai Chi for Health. A new Tai Chi - Shibashi class will be starting on Thursdays in the Memorial Hall. Commencing Thursday 12 January 2017 from 4pm - 5pm weekly. For more details contact John on 01935 509593 or 07721 060901.

POP IN PROGRAMME

JAN 5 NEW YEAR'S QUIZ - by John
12 AIRS AND GRACES

New Members very welcome at Oak Tree House
Contacts: Paul (826375) or Jennifer (882609)

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Poppy Appeal. The total amount raised this year was a fantastic £2,903.68. Many thanks once again to everyone who gave up their time to help with the collecting. I would also like to say a special thank you to Ian and Carol Mathieson for helping me to collate the donations and to Louise Hann and the staff at Montacute Post Office for helping with the banking.

Jon Moore, Poppy Appeal Organiser

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, 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 2nd and 4th 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.

January dates 9th and the 23rd.

February dates 13th and 27th.

Please contact Walk Leaders, Penny on 822208 or at pennyatrapnell@aol.com

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

SOMERSET SIGHT

Happily, the Somerset Sight van is calling at the Memorial Hall car park between 1.30pm – 3.30pm on the following days in 2017:

Thursday 2 February, Tuesday 13 June, Wednesday 6 September and Thursday 16 November.

THE TRIANGLE TRUST

Thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas Bazaar on November 26. We made £660.45 for Trust funds. Supporting Hamdon Medical Centre.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: The Triangle Trust will be holding its AGM on Wednesday January 25th at the Reading Room, Norton-Sub-Hamdon at 7.30pm (Note the new venue). Everyone is welcome. Come and hear about the exciting plans for the future of the trust.

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

The final service to mark the closure of the United Reformed Church will be held on Saturday 7 January at 2.30pm. Everyone is invited to attend. Over the years many families have had connections with the church and some have donated items in memory of loved ones. The church will be open on Saturday 28 January from 11 am to 4pm if you wish to visit and reclaim anything or perhaps take photographs of plaques etc.

BROWNIE & GUIDES

Would like to wish you a very Happy and Healthy New Year throughout 2017. We have had a great winter term, helping others - South Somerset Mind, outings to Ready2climb for the Brownies and to Air Hop and Cribbs Causeway for the Guides. Remembering the fallen at the Ham Hill service as well as loads of fun along the way.

We are looking to recruit an adult helper for the Brownies. If you are looking for a rewarding New Year resolution to do some volunteering, and can give just 1 ½ hours on a Tuesday evening at The Memorial Hall, Stoke sub Hamdon to assist in delivering our fun programme, please get in touch to find out more or go online to register your interest: girlguiding.org.uk or contact Jackie Poole 01935 823606

CHRISTMAS POP UP CAFÉ

A really BIG THANK YOU to everyone who came to our Christmas Pop Up Café, it was lovely to see you all. We had a great afternoon/evening and an amazing £202.40 was raised for Cystic Fibrosis. Thank you for your continuing support; it is very much appreciated by us, Chester and his family. Let's hope that a cure is found in little Chester's lifetime.

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy New Year. With love and thank you again.

Ina Law and family

HAM HILL HERO

In order to avoid a larger vehicle coming down the hill I moved to the left – too far – and smacked into a stone bank. I carried on driving until I reached the top of Ham Hill to what I call 'Outlook Car Park'. I didn't have time to get out of the car when a voice said "You have a puncture, have you got a spare wheel?" I replied yes but no tools and with that he had opened my boot, found the spare wheel and miraculously tools too! He worked very efficiently changing the wheel and I learned he lived in Stoke and as a younger man had been a mechanic for a motor racing team. Now what super luck for me! No wonder he had been so quick.

He refused my offer of payment and gave me a lovely hug instead. Well young man, I want to publicly thank you so much, you are my hero. I also want to thank your mate who waited patiently in his car while you helped this maiden in distress. Thank you both. God bless you.

Shirley Richards, Langlands

DIARY OF EVENTS:

January

3 rd	Stoke Active Walkers
7 th	URC Final Service
9 th	Walking for Health
12 th	New Shibashi Tai Chi
23 rd	Walking for Health
25 th	Triangle Trust AGM

February

2nd
13th
27th

Somerset Sight
Walking for Health
Walking for Health