



5 ALIVE!

February 2024



**MELLS SHOP SEEKS
MORE VOLUNTEERS.
SEE PAGE 16**

**News from
Buckland Dinham, Chantry,
Great Elm, Mell's with Vobster and
Whatley**

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FROM THE EDITOR

OK IF I START MY CONTRIBUTION on a very personal note? Very many thanks to everyone who helped in any way after the floods a couple of weeks ago. It was amazing just how many people came not just to our assistance but also to our next-door neighbours immediately the word went round but also who continued to offer help in the days afterwards. We, Sara and I, were not as badly affected as next door but even a fortnight after it happened, we're still up to our eyebrows in stuff that's got to be thrown away, in the masses of paperwork associated with the insurance claim and in trying to bring a semblance of order back to our lives. THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH!!!

And, by the way, you'll appreciate I have had other things on my mind so many apologies if this issue of 5Alive is a few days late.

Peter

FROM THE RECTORY, WELL ALMOST!

THE FIRST EUCHARIST OF THE NEW YEAR. We're still in the wintry season of Epiphany, but the heating has softened the hard edge of the cold, and we have three visitors. No, not Wise Men, but children – two of them small, and one of them tiny. And their parents, too. So, we are eleven for the Sunday service, of whom nine are establishing qualification to wed in St Andrew's later in the year. It's wonderful for Diana and me to be joined by these young people. But I can't help doubting whether a 17th century liturgical text is the most effective instrument to welcome them. I plough through the litany of 'thees' and 'thous', through Cranmer's doctrine of *one full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world*, through the outlines of a microsermon. And I do all this with the memory of something like a trust that there remains warmth in the wick even if the candle is extinguished.

What a contrast with the joyous pop-up gathering of Christmas Eve. Nearly 30 people came to a service which they'd requested via Facebook. And what happened was largely decided not by a clergyman in his study but by the people who turned up.

Editor: Peter Corbett mellsmag@hotmail.com

Advertising: Peter Corbett, 01373 466536, mellsmag@hotmail.com

Deadline for March 2024 is Friday, February 16th but do check!

Printed by Frome Printworks 01373 800 300

CONTACTS

Mells Group of churches is currently in a vacancy. For any enquiries please contact the church warden in your parish. For weddings contact the benefice administrator, Mrs Catherine Brown, email catmellsgroup@gmail.com. She works on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

Church laymen and women Church wardens

Buckland Dinham Jenny Waller,
07887 556936

Chantry Hazel Tovey 836384
David Rawlins 836252

Great Elm Sally Rosa 07833
900947

Mells/ Vobster Mrs Diana
Sylvester 812386

Whatley Mrs K Gay 836175

Parish council chairs and clerks

John Reckless 01373 461841
Diane Sleigh 07907 156735
parishclerk@bucklanddinham.org

John Earl 01373 812450
Joy Book 07704 584953

Andrew Bramston 01373 836513
Rachel Nash
clerk.whatleyparishcouncil@gmail.com

Roman Catholic Services

Mells: Sundays at 11.30am Frome: Saturdays 5.30pm.
Wednesdays 6.00pm Sundays 10.00am

Somerset Councillor: Philip Ham 01373 812152

Others to be confirmed

Chantry and Whatley Francis Hayden 07970 839532

Police: PCSO Russell Ford, 07547 658018

A church building can seem at times to resemble an awkward bequest from a distant relative. It's like being left a carriage in a motorised age, a cruiser moored on a vanished shore. They're undeniably grand, but we have no horse, and the water has gone, and none of us can work out what to do with them. Then a couple of mums bring their children along, and their men, and they say – Look, what a lovely thing to sit in, to play in, and have picnics – maybe also to rest here, and read, and sing the odd song.

The church will never be, can never be, what it was. And perhaps that's no bad thing. But it can be something else. Indeed, it will be something else – hopefully, something like it was in St Andrew's on Christmas Eve.

Robin Fisherwood

JOTTINGS FROM A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

I HOPE EVERYONE had a joyful, peaceful Christmas in good company, as I did! A bit late to wish a Hapy New Year to all but I will anyway.

I am writing this during the dark, wet spell of early January when it seems to it will never stop raining. The new year so far seems much the same as the old one: floods and strikes in England while aboard ever more wars, destruction, and devastation. But most of us, fortunately, have many blessings to lift us above whatever "downs" we suffer. Personally, I feel that dwelling on and worrying over the world's tragedies do no good – only prayers and possible personal practical help. So I am inclined as a matter of self-preservation to think positively and cheerfully of the joys of spring which cannot be many weeks away. Is that selfish? Living alone, I am dependant on friends for any social contact or support and I am not strong minded enough to remain cheerful and "ungrumbling" if I

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dwell on the tragic events over which I have no control. Does anyone else feel the same? Or am I being hard hearted and selfish?
Having said that, in spite of the weather, signs of spring are everywhere as I am sure everyone has noticed. My earliest camellia, May Christian, has been in full flower since Christmas – a mass of large fragile looking yet so really tough single pink blooms. Daffodils several inches high everywhere, snowdrops showing white and primrose leaf rosettes among the fallen beech leaves. Also my winter sweet, chimonanthes fragrans, is covered in blossom but that is exposed to and hates frost so I must bring a few fragrant branches indoors to enjoy before they are blighted by the spell of frost and cold that is forecast soon. In the churchyard large clumps of snowdrops are in full flower already although there is little sign of the drifting carpets of them which appear annually. I have not noticed before that large groups of them appear in bloom before any sign of the rest. Perhaps we have different varieties and some are earlier than others? I believe there are hundreds of varieties but the visual differences in many cases are so slight that I couldn't tell one from another. However, I now find that we have a galanthophile (a snowdrop specialist) in the village who is interested in introducing new varieties to our spring snowdrop churchyard display. In years to come, perhaps our own Chantry Snowdrop Festival?

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Wandering from the churchyard – a popular area for dog walkers – may I include an item for dog lovers? I think I mentioned last year that I lost Frisky, my oldest cavalier, to cancer in October. I thought this would badly affect Ebbie, the younger rescue who had heavily depended on Frisky for support for support. Frisky, although much smaller than Ebbie, took the lead in everything as the senior dog. She in turn had been well grounded by Faye, her predecessor. However, after an initial 24 hours of slight bewilderment, Ebbie has gradually come into her role of senior number one dog. She has learned to open the back door, previously Frisky’s job, and even brings me “presents” of items which I now leave lying around on purpose, dusters, tea towels, old tights etc. She used to look on in puzzlement as Frisky brought her toys to me but has happily taken on the job, using her own chosen articles. Also, she has learned to bark when the post arrives, again always Frisky’s habit, watched quietly by Ebbie but who never joined in. It seems odd to have only one dog now. All my life we have had two or more together with one other animals and birds. But I really am too old now – for the dog’s sake really – to take on another now. I am just so thankful for Ebbie, short for Ebony as she is mostly black, unlike my previous tricolours which were equally back and white.

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Church services in February

4th	11^h	18th	25th	ASH
February	February	February	February	WEDNES
				DAY
				14th
				February

Chantry	10am: Group Service: Holy Communion David Clark	11am: Holy Communion Anthony Davies	11am Morning Prayer Valerie Rawlins	11am: Holy Communion Chris Hare	
Great Elm			9.30am Holy Communion Robin Isherwood	9.30am Informal Service Richard King	
Mells		9.30am: Holy Communion Robin Isherwood		9.30am Morning Prayer <i>Janet Caudwell</i>	
Whatley		9.30am: Matins Hazell Tovey		9.30am: Holy Communion David Gatliffe	

Hardington Vale Church Services - February 2024

DATE	TIME	SERVICE	
Thursday 1 February	6.00 pm	Norton St Phillip , Silent Prayer	
Sunday 4 February (green) Proverbs 8: v1, 22-23 John 1: v1-14	9.00 am	Norton St Phillip , Informal Breakfast	A & S Filkins
	10.30 am	Rode , Holy Communion	J Robinson/M Harrison
	11.00 am	Laverton , Holy Communion	S Kivett
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Meeting Place	
Monday 5 February	9.00 am	Norton St Phillip , Morning Prayer	
Tuesday 6 February	9.45 am	Rode Chapel , Eucharistical Holy Communion	
	5.00 pm	Tellisford Evening Prayer	
Wednesday 7 February	8.30 am	Hemington , Morning Prayer	
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer	
Thursday 8 February	6.00 pm	Norton St Phillip , Silent Prayer	
Sunday 11 February (green) 2 Kings 2: v1-12 Mark 9: v7-9	9.00 am	Rode , Informal Breakfast	B Day
	10.30 am	Norton St Phillip , Holy Communion	J Robinson/F Stewart
	11.00 am	Laverton , Matins	
	11.00 am	Buckland Dinham , Iona Service	
Monday 12 February	9.00 am	Norton St Phillip , Morning Prayer	
Tuesday 13 February	5.00 pm	Laverton , Evening Prayer	
Wednesday 14 February ASH WEDNESDAY	8.30 am	Hemington , Morning Prayer	
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer	
	7.30 pm	Norton St Phillip , Holy Communion & Ashing	J Robinson
Thursday 15 February	6.00 pm	Norton St Phillip , Silent Prayer	
Sunday 18 February Genesis 9: v8-17 Mark 1: v9-15	9.00 am	Farleigh Hungerford , Holy Communion	J Robinson
	10.30 am	Rode , Holy Communion	J Robinson
	10.30 am	Norton St Phillip , Informal Worship	R Stewart/M Harrison
	11.00 am	Laverton , Matins	
	11.00 am	Buckland Dinham , Holy Communion	M Weymont
Monday 19 February	9.00 am	Norton St Phillip , Morning Prayer	
Tuesday 20 February	5.00 pm	Tellisford , Evening Prayer	
Wednesday 21 February	8.30 am	Hemington , Morning Prayer	
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer	
Thursday 22 February	6.00 pm	Norton St Phillip , Silent Prayer	
Sunday 25 February (purple) Genesis 17: v1-7 Mark 8: v31-end	10.30 am	Norton St Phillip , Holy Communion	J Robinson/A Bowdman
	11.00 am	Laverton , Matins	
	6.00 pm	Buckland Dinham , Evening Service	
Monday 26 February	9.00 am	Norton St Phillip , Morning Prayer	
Tuesday 27 February	5.00 pm	Laverton , Evening Prayer	
Wednesday 28 February	8.30 am	Hemington , Morning Prayer	
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer	
Thursday 29 February	6.00 pm	Norton St Phillip , Silent Prayer	

But enough dog digression. The heavy winds of the past few nights don't seem to have done any damage to the churchyard trees, apart from bringing down a scattering of small dead branches. Sadly, I have lost a very old apple tree (a Newton Wonder) in the orchard and also an old dead holly tree. This, over the years, has become smothered in heavily berried ivy, so much enjoyed by the birds in winter, but it has at last succumbed to the weight of the ivy and the old trunk has snapped.

Before I ramble any further, I must mention Bishop Michael's' meeting with churchwardens and others to update us on the progress of our forthcoming application for a part-time vicar for our four churches. Bishop Michael concluded the meeting by advising us all to "pray our socks off" that the right person might apply for and be appointed to the post, planned for July. So, let us all do just that for the next six months, singly and collectively. And then we hope we can relax and rejoice.

See you in March.

Hazell

BUCKLAND DINHAM

CHRISTMAS AT St MICHAEL'S

Christmas Carol Service

On Sunday December 10th, we gathered together in the growing gloom to celebrate the coming of Christmas with our annual carol service. The church was beautifully decorated with red berries and flowers among dark green foliage, and lit up with candles. Mike Attenborough's team of bellringers from St. Margaret's Corsley rang us in gloriously and soon the church was full, with the steps at the back doing service as extra seats for children.

Unfortunately, the Reverend Penelope Swithenbank had contracted food poisoning and was not able to lead the service as she had planned, but members of the congregation stepped in to fill the gaps. We followed the service of six lessons and carols as it led us through the story of the nativity through traditional readings and carols.

Thanks to the Norton St.Philip choir for adding their voices, to Jonny Griffiths for performing one of his own songs, and to all our readers.

Thanks also to our legendary hospitality team, who provided mountains of mince pies and jugs of mulled wine as we socialised after the service before leaving in the darkness, ready for more Christmas festivities.

Christmas Eve Service

In contrast, our Christmas Eve service was a much smaller, quieter affair as we took time out to reflect on the meaning of Christmas. Jonny told the story of

the three trees who found their purpose in serving Jesus, while Meg led us through the Iona liturgy celebrating the crib story and all those involved in the birth of Christ. We sang some of our favourite carols and left refreshed, ready for the big day.

One member of the congregation noticed that the ear of one of the cattle in the crib was missing and offered to repair it for next year.

What a fitting Christmas gift!

Jenny Waller, Church Warden

Services for February

11th 11.00 Iona Service taken by Worship team

18th 11.00 Holy Communion Revd Martin Weymont

25th 18,00 Evening Service Worship team

COFFEE MORNING

I was so sorry to have missed all the activities at St. Michael's in December, but was able to enjoy meeting up with so many on 20th January and so look forward to seeing even more at the next on 17th February. See next notice. *Jill Wright.*

Setting up a Friends Group for St. Michaels

You're invited to join us on Saturday 17th February at the Coffee Morning at St. Michael's, where we'll be talking about setting up an official Friends's Group to support the church. The purpose of a Friend's Group is to maintain the fabric of the building and preserve it as an asset for the village, which is something I know we all want.

We'll try to keep it brief, so if you'd like to hear about what's happening and contribute your ideas and support, please do come along. As well as the coffee and cake, there's chance to have a voice in how best to secure the future of the church for the village. See you there! Jenny Waller, Church Warden

On Sunday January 21st, St Michael's hosted the baptism service for Isaac, son of Jenna and Andy Rossiter. The Revd. Jo Robinson officiated and this joyful ceremony focused on Light, Life and Love as Isaac was welcomed into the church and embarks on life's journey. Jonny Griffiths led the music on guitar and with St Michael's full to the brim and everyone singing with gusto, the sound was wonderful. Isaac naturally stole the show, not only wearing a treasured family heirloom in his beautiful baptismal gown, but

also showing keen curiosity and sunny miles throughout his service. The family of St Michael's sends all best wishes to the Rossiters for the future.

“An Evening to Ignite Ideas”

Buckland Dinham Parish Plan – January 17th 2024

On a bitterly cold January evening, our village hall was packed with an overwhelming turnout of over 60 villagers for the community launch of the Buckland Dinham Parish Plan project.

We began with a presentation explaining what a Parish Plan is, the benefits of developing our own and setting our own agenda, plus the various steps and overall timeline. Who’s involved? All of us!

Over refreshments we gathered in small groups to share initial ideas, both about our community’s concerns and about our community’s hopes and ambitions. The room was buzzing!

We ended with an open forum feeding back our initial thoughts, which in turn sparked further innovative ideas and lively discussion across the room. The breadth of topics and themes raised was impressive and exciting, leaving us all with much food for thought.

Significant Dates

17th January	launch of ideas-gathering phase!!	Village Hall
7th February	deadline for ideas submission	<i>online / or postcards</i>
27th March	launch of on-line survey	<i>online</i>
22nd April	deadline for survey submission	
20th May	initial results - Village Gathering (Annual Parish Meeting)	
1st July	draft report on survey results	
18th September	Action Plan Meeting	Village Hall
Mid-October	Funding Plan produced	
End November	Buckland Dinham Parish Plan published!!	<i>online and on paper</i>

Please continue to discuss and develop initial ideas between now and February 7th. Ideas can be submitted by placing your idea-postcard into the collection box (the Bell Inn or the Village Hall), or online at www.bucklanddinhamparishplan.org.

At the end of the event, we applauded ourselves in successfully igniting so many initial ideas, and retired to the Village Pub. A huge thank you to everyone, and especially to Roy at the Bell Inn!

Libby Kingwell, Jonathan Smith, Adrian McCabe, Susie Hicks, Sarah Barnett Parish Plan Steering Group.

CHANTRY

CHURCH SERVICES

February 4th David Clark, Group Service
February 11th Anthony Davies
February 18th Valerie Rawlins
February 25th Chris Hare

GREAT ELM

GREAT ELM CHURCH NEWS

The Christmas Eve Carol Service followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the Village Hall was a wonderful start to the Christmas holidays with the church packed to capacity.

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Looking ahead to our next family service – Mothering Sunday March 10th at 9.30am. The service will be at Great Elm and will be a combined service with Mells church.

The plan is to involve everyone in making posies during the course of the service which will be taken by Robin Isherwood.

Sunday January 28th, Richard King’s monthly Informal service will be attended by the Area Dean, Caroline Walker as part of his Lay Worship Assistant course.

DAMAGE TO HALL APPEAL

Great Elm’s Village Hall was seriously damaged in July and we are looking for funding. If anyone has any ideas, suggestions or a philanthropic friend we would be very grateful for any advice – 01373 673140. Further information about our appeal for finance is on page 30.

PATRICIA CRAVEN October 1938 – December 2023

On January 5th the funeral service and burial of Pat Craven was held. Her children, Helen and Brendan prepared the tribute which was delivered by Graham Witts who took the service. Pat will be greatly missed by her family, friends and all in the village.



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FREDERICK AUBREY STARR, 1928 - 2024

Fred moved to Manor Farm, in 1937, with his parents, brother Dennis and two sisters, Iris and Peg. They farmed the 149 acres with the children all helping their parents. Fred initially attended the original school in the village which was at that time in one of the barns at Manor Farm and this building is still known as the School House. Until the age of 11, Fred went to school full time and then left at lunch time to help his parents on the farm and aged 14 left school entirely to farm. After his parents died in the

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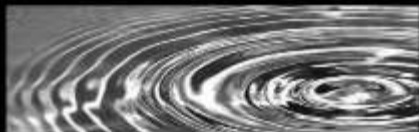
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1970s he farmed solo at Manor Farm. He was renowned among the farming community as an excellent farmer who took exemplary care of his livestock, so much so, that his animals when poorly, used to be brought into the house, into what is now part of the kitchen, so he could care for them overnight. He was also an able builder doing all his own stone and brick work to a high standard. He sold Manor Farm at the age of 70 and moved next door to a bungalow he had had built on his own land and then poured his considerable knowledge of plants into creating a beautiful and productive vegetable and flower garden. Fred had never been away from his home for more than four hours at any one time and spent his first night not in Great Elm, in his late eighties, owing to a brief admission to the RUH. Fred was a quiet, gentle, kind, family man and a really lovely neighbour. He leaves five nephews and nieces, Jeff and Heather, Mark and Lynn, and Chris. He will be fondly remembered.

MELLS WITH VOBSTER

At St. Andrew's we were only too aware of the wet weather as additional roof leaks appeared and were duly logged but now repaired! They certainly didn't spoil or diminish the various Christmas activities and celebrations. A number of the flower arranging team decorated the church at the beginning of the month, bless them, Jane Taylor held a lovely Christmas concert for a packed church that



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evening, and we held our Carol service the following week, with Rev. Martin Weymont, Jane and Mells Community Choir, Charles accompanying the carols, and then on Christmas Eve we hosted a “pop up” and informal celebration of carols and readings (from the children’s bibles we have in the church), accompanied by a joyous deafening (ringing) of the children’s handbells! We are very grateful to Lord Oxford for the donation of two fine Christmas trees, one for outside the church and one inside. Thank you to Chris Rose for delivering these. During the month, Mells School held their Christingle service, and, at the end of term a very special service marking the retirement of Head Teacher, Claire Chantler. A team of four people visit the school every other week, enacting stories from the bible with the help of the children, through the programme Open the Book. This is great fun, and anyone interested in joining the team is most welcome. A training session is due to be held on FEBRUARY 22ND 22ND February 22nd at St. Mary’s Church, Innox Hill. If you are interested, do get in touch: Anthea Kemp - akelm花园@gmail.com.

We still need help on our flower arranging and cleaning rotas, and if anyone is able to spare a little bit of time in this way, helping to care for our lovely village church, please do let me know, (Diana – 812 386). Your help is truly appreciated!

Bryon Axford

Bryon passed away at home in December – a much-loved, born and bred in Mells man who gave a great deal of his life in service to the village he loved. Rev.



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Martin Weymont led a simple service for the Cremation in Shepton Mallet, on December 20th . A special service for a celebration of Bryon's life and also that of Audrey his wife, will be held in the Spring. Our thoughts and prayers are with Andrew and the family. Rest in peace, Bryon.

Mells Village Shop

As most of you will know Mells Village Shop is not only the heart of our community but along with Mike, Jerry and Helen it is run by our wonderful community volunteers. We are looking for some more volunteers to lend a hand. It is a great way to feel part of our community, to meet new people and friends and to support our Village Shop. If you are interested in serving customers in the shop, please do let me know. It is easy to learn the systems and you don't have to commit to anything on a regular basis. Your help would be very much appreciated by the whole community. Please message me or leave your number at the shop if you are able to help: vickipike1@gmail.com

The ever-popular Mells Open Gardens will be held on Sunday June 30th this year. We are hoping for even more gardens to be open than last year, and refreshments will be sold in the cafe, Barn and elsewhere in the village. As usual, all funds raised will go towards supporting our community shop and cafe. Put the date in your diary!



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We are always very grateful for any offers of help on the day, selling tickets or refreshments, so if you are able to offer an hour or more of your time, please do .get in touch with Rosemary. rjworsdall@yahoo.co.uk

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL (mellsparishcouncil.Org.uk)

Notes of meeting held on Tuesday January 9th 2024

Council's Financial Position: As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, the Government announced a 6.1% increase in Core Spending Power for Somerset Council.

End of Charges for DIY Waste: Following a recent change of Government legislation current charges for disposing of construction and demolition materials including: asbestos, plasterboard, hardcore and rubble from household DIY projects have been removed. Each calendar month every household will be able to take up to eight, 50 litre sacks (or equivalent 2m sheets of asbestos or plasterboard) free of charge to a recycling site over a maximum of four visits in a month. Households will need to pre-book trips to dispose of this DIY waste, telling the council the amount of material they are disposing (up to 8x50 litre sacks per month) and the number of times they will need to visit (up to four visits per month). Disposal of asbestos, plasterboard or hardcore/rubble in excess of the free allowance can be paid for online.

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Health Research Grant: The National Institute for Health and Care Research has awarded Somerset £5m over five years to form a Health Determinants Research Collaboration – a new research partnership to improve health and reduce health inequalities across the county. Somerset’s HDRC will focus on the building blocks of good health such as housing, education and the physical environment to tackle the root causes of health inequalities and wider deprivation.

MATTERS ARISING

Pavilion lease and future of recreation ground: Discussions regarding the lease and financial way forward have begun as there is now only two years to run on the lease.

Overgrown bush by Honeysuckle Cottage, Vobster: Highways have inspected the area and are following the matter up.

Vobster noticeboards: Cllr Brady has inspected the boards and quoted £84 for all the repairs, which was approved. Many thanks were extended to Alan for all the work he has done for the PC and shop which is greatly appreciated.

HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane and area in front of Vobster Inn: Arrangements are being made to purchase the planters for outside Vobster Inn.

Accidents on Park Corner: The lines have now been re-instated.


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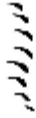
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HGVs – Top Road: Highways is looking into the matter.

PLANNING

2023/2397/VRC: Application to vary condition 2 of planning approval 2021/2442/FUL (erection of 1 dwelling and detached garage, formation of new access and associated development) – Land adjoining Acrewood, Little Green. The plans show that the porch area which will now be two storey to incorporate an additional bathroom – no objections.

09.01,24 CORRESPONDENCE: None

ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Finalisation of precept for 2024/25: In light of Somerset Council probably withdrawing services in the near future that the PC would need to cover, the precept would rise from £13,000 to £15,000.

ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Silt under Vobster bridge: Cllr Seviour to contact the River Authority.

Old GPO box on verge on road to Leigh on Mendip: Clerk to establish who is responsible for it and request its removal.

Drains – Rectory Corner: The drain has been cleared but the grid has been left at an angle with a cone on it. Clerk to follow up with Highways.



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‘Abandoned’ car – Selwood Street: The car has been present for several weeks and at first appeared to be awaiting a tyre repair but subsequently appears to be losing more pieces.

PCSO meetings in Café: Cllr Brady reported that these will recommence and be held monthly. PCSO Will Mortimer will attend. Café will advertise the date once it has been confirmed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday February 13th 2024 at the later time of 7.15pm in the Barn.

WHATLEY

It was lovely to see the church full for the Carol Service in December. Many thanks go to Richard King for leading the service, to those who decorated it so beautifully and the Dekker family for providing the drinks and mince pies afterwards.

Whatley also hosted the Benefice Group Service at the start of January. The collection from this service was £116.25 including Gift Aid tax and has been donated to Fair Frome.

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Mary Scott thanks the merry band of cleaners for their help throughout the year. Let her know if you'd like to join the team- it's a beautiful space to nurture.**St George's Church Whatley**

After three years in the planning work has finally started at St George's and builders are now on-site full time.

A trench for the water supply pipe from the road is complete. The toilet that will be located on the north side of the building, but accessed from inside, is already under construction. The kitchen area will be in the north transept where the organ was and some pews are due to be removed from the west end of the church providing a community space.

Once building work is complete in the summer the church will be available, not only as a place of worship, but also for wider social use by the whole village. At some stage a meeting will be called for us all to consider that wider use.

WACCA news

There was a good turnout for the gentle circular walk on Boxing Day to work off some Christmas dinner. After a short circular walk from the cabin in the Parish Ground and back via Vallis everyone enjoyed mince pies and hot mulled wine.

It was so enjoyed that James and Davin had requests for another walk on New Year's day. The rain held off but everywhere was very wet and boggy, so, again setting off from the Parish field they went by road to Chantry, along the bridle path for the amazing view of the quarry and back through the woods and Stoney lane. Refreshments this time were festive Pigs in Blankets and hot chocolate - with marshmallows! Big thanks to James and Davin for running these events.

Skittles! The alley has been booked at Tucker's Grave for the March 2nd, 6.30 for 7.00pm start. They allow well supervised young people to play alongside the adults, which should make for a happy family outing. There's a ploughman's supper arranged, £10 for adults, children free. It's payable at the door, but we need to know the total numbers, by February 17th, both adults and young, as the space is limited to 40. Please can you email Rosie Lunt at elizabethlunt01@gmail.com to book your places. Alternatively, leave a message with the names of those attending on 01373 836091.

Many thanks to Rosie and Giles Lunt, who have the unenviable job of organizing the teams and game!

Remember-**Deadline! February 17th.**

Whatley Common Good Trust

At the recent meeting of the Whatley Common Good Trust the trustees agreed a bid for up to £650 for improvements to the path from the field to the gate that leads into the farmer's field to make it easier for parishioners and walkers, as part of the overall upkeep and improved infrastructure of the field. Currently the path is very boggy and difficult to walk through in winter.

The NatWest current account was £13,217.49 as of September 29th. This includes the second payment for the playground improvements but not the £5,000 given towards a water supply to Whatley Church. The Skipton Building Society savings account balance is £23,945.01

The next meeting is on April 3rd at 19.00 in the George Hotel, Nunney, when the annual report will be presented. All are welcome.

Applications for funding should be made using the form on the Whatley and Chantry website, where all papers are published.



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