

All items for the
Autumn edition by
Friday 19th August

Stoke News

Summer 2016

Contact Jean House
jeanhouse@btconnect.com

VILLAGE HALL SOCIAL EVENTS

The Social Committee at the Village Hall is looking for new blood, to help manage and broaden the social events programme. We are aiming at a range of **events to appeal to ALL AGES**, so any new members from teenage to mature would be very welcome. This is a chance to **show what you can do**, to engage with new friends in the village, and to **support the social life within the village**.

If you would like to get involved, please contact our social committee chairman, Andrew Elfick on 01823698821 or at andrewelfick@aol.com He can explain in more detail how we work, reassure you about the level of effort involved, and discuss how you could contribute. We would make you very welcome - **DO PLEASE COME AND JOIN US!**

STOKE WALKING GROUP

The Walking Group meet on the first Tuesday of the month for a walk of approximately 4 miles followed by a meal at a pub.

Anyone is welcome to join us; we meet at 6.00pm outside the Shop to share lifts.

Dates for the summer are:

7th June 5th July 2nd August
6th September 4th October

All walks start at 6pm except for October, which starts at 5pm.

PC Announcements email list

We are now operating the email list set up for occasional announcements such as road closures. The more people in the village who receive these announcements, the more effectively we can disseminate important time-sensitive information. If you would like your name included, please email Becky, the Parish Clerk (ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk) with the subject line "SGG mailing list".

Wireless Broadband

There has been a significant development in the last couple of weeks for those in this area with no access to fibre broadband: CFB Solutions of Crewkerne have decided to extend their wireless broadband network to cover all of Stoke, Burrowbridge and Lyng. This is not superfast and it is not fibre: those of us without fibre would remain second class citizens paying twice as much for a lesser service, but it is still a game-changer in relation to what is currently available, and a huge improvement on satellite which is the only other alternative. The catalyst for this has been the recently announced CDS voucher scheme: Connecting Devon & Somerset is offering vouchers to anyone with broadband speeds below 2mbps (or, I am told, close to that: record your speed on a bad day!) to pay for the *installation* of an alternative form of broadband. The only alternative immediately available in this area is satellite, but that is a last resort which is not recommended.

Wireless broadband bounces the signal from a wireless source to various access points by line of sight across the land to a very small receiver on your roof. It does not suffer from significant lag. It is theoretically capable of fibre speeds. CFB is currently guaranteeing 10mbps, but they expect to increase this to 20mbps as the network matures (Superfast is 24mbps+). Prices would be £20/25 per month, with data caps of 30/60 gigabytes respectively. (Ongoing subscriptions would not be covered by the voucher scheme.)

It is hoped that trial installations will be set up in Stoke and Lyng within the next three weeks, and that CFB will then accept CDS vouchers with a view to completing other installations in the area within three months. For those with current speeds more than 2mbps but less than 10, wireless might still make sense, but they would have to pay their own one-off installation costs of around £150.

CFB is a homespun two-man outfit based in Combe St Nicholas, but they have been managing a successful wireless network along the south coast for several years and seem to know what they are doing. As an alternative to the corporate behemoth that is BT, I find the human scale of CFB rather refreshing. The contract period is only 12 months, so the stakes are in any case not too high. If anyone would like to know more, go to www.cfbsltd.co.uk or drop me an email: nick@curloadfarm.co.uk. In the meantime I recommend that you hold fire with the vouchers. I'll spread the word when there is more news.

ST GREGORY PLAYERS are

Delighted to announce that our next production in **October 2016** will be "**Wyrd Sisters**", a dramatisation of one of Terry Pratchett's best known Discworld novels. Some of you may know the Discworld - but if you don't, it's a madcap fantasy comedy with a touch of literature for good measure. And the Wyrd Sisters bear more than a passing resemblance to the witches in Macbeth - with touches of Blackadder.

Auditions will be in the village Hall on **Sunday 12th June at 2pm**.

Rehearsals will start in late August with the performances during half term week beginning 23rd October - number to be decided.

There are small parts, bigger parts and non-speaking parts, an ideal production both for those wanting to have a go at a drama and more experienced thespians

Wanted – Stoke News Sponsors

Are you a local business? Would you like to sponsor a future edition of Stoke News and have your business featured? For further details, please get in touch with Becky Goodchild, The Parish Clerk, on 690235 or at ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk

A note from your Village Agent:

Millions of older people are facing the ups and downs of life almost entirely alone. They have no one to turn to for the support that can make all the difference when times are tough.

Equally, they often have no one with whom they can share the good things that make life really worth living.

Age UK try to combat loneliness in later life in a number of ways, including befriending. If you think you could spare the time to become a volunteer and visit a lonely older person in their home please contact me. There are currently 137 older people on the waiting list of Age UK Somerset alone and all of these people would be so very grateful for any contact however little.

A shout out for Round Window Day Centre held at Curry Mallet Village Hall! This day centre, run by volunteers, runs from 10.30am to 2.30pm on alternate Wednesdays. It offers a hot lunch and companionship for older people, transport is provided and there are activities including music, poetry readings and outings. The volunteers are keen to recruit new members and helpers from other villages to join their thriving centre. If you would be interested or know someone who would benefit from this great group please contact either Heather Mealing on 01823 480947 or Roger Hughes on 01823 480044.

Audrey Mansfield Village Agent

Tel: 01823 331222 Mobile: 07870 577925

Email: audrey@somersetccc.org.uk

News from the Parish Church

We may be a small congregation in relation to the village population but we get quite a lot done – come to the Village Hall open day in June and some of the evidence will be there to see, along with a quiz about probably the oldest building in our village – YOUR Parish Church.

Before the celebrations of Easter a generous box of donated toiletries and groceries was delivered to the Bridgwater Food Bank. This is always gratefully received, and we are happy to take deliveries from anybody who cannot get there themselves.

The Queen's birthday was marked at Walkers Farm by about 120 people with a hog roast and the lighting of a Beacon and then barely a week later many of us assembled there again with friends from the Baptist Chapel for a Rogation tide service followed by tea – of course. More baking followed in May when we were invited to supply teas for the National Garden Scheme open day in Curload.

Forthcoming Events - Yet more baking will be called for on Sunday afternoon 5 June when we shall be serving Cream Teas at the annual Plant Sale held at the Church Room. We are also planning a Parish Walk on August Bank Holiday Monday – followed by, what else, tea! Posters with full details will be on the notice boards later in the summer. And one last thing - a group of us will be tidying up the churchyard on Monday morning of 13th June – any help with weeding etc would be very welcome! Start time 1030.

Alex Morrice

By the time this newsletter is published Alex Morrice will have stepped down from his role as Chairman of the Trustees of the Village Hall. It is sixteen years since Alex started to invest his time in supporting the Village Hall, during which time the new facility has been constructed, and become an important part of the fabric of the Village. I am sure there are many in the Village who would wish to thank Alex for the energy, enthusiasm and leadership he has invested over the many years. Graham Glead (Hall Management Committee)

**LOCAL POLICE – TAUNTON URBAN AND RURAL
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE TEAM**
Police Emergency Number – 999
Police non-emergency number – 101
Police Sergeant 1593 – Bob Manning
Beat Manager – PC 2898 Dean Chedzoy
Community Support Officers
PCSO 8466 – Eamonn Leniston – 07889655309
PCSO 8412 – Claire Escott

Stoke St Gregory Women's Table-tennis Club

We've celebrated our first year! Numbers are growing! Skills are gradually improving!

It has been officially proved that the sport of table-tennis improves the brain. It is also good for personal well-being and for social reasons. Join this fun group whatever your skill level. We play on Wednesday mornings at the Village Hall from 10am until 12 noon with a break half way. All refreshment and equipment included in the £2 cost. Why not give us a try

What's happening at The Willow Set

The Willow Set is continuing to do fantastic work for our children within our community, under the fantastic management of Rachel Parish and her wonderful team. The Pre-school has terrific facilities for 2 – 4 year olds. It helps many children to develop and thrive into happy, confident individuals, which ultimately is our goal as an early years setting.

This term they are preparing the rising 5's for the start of school in September, with fun activities at the Willows and Wetlands Centre (Forest School) with the current reception class at SSG School, visits to a local farm and learning through play, all geared at easing the children with the transition into school.

Our Sun up Sun down club (SUSD), which provides before and after school care is also continually expanding, with numbers increasing each term and on certain days is fully booked. This facility provides flexibility for busy working parents, which enables a good work life balance for a lot of our families and caters for children from 2 up to 14 years old. In 2015 we started a holiday club (Moor Fun Club), which initially opened for 3 days of each week of any school holidays. We are now open every day of the holidays including half terms (except one week at Christmas and one week at Easter). It caters for children, within our community, age between 2 – 14 years old and enables them to enjoy a fun packed couple of hours or a full day involved in various activities such as sports, music, cooking, crafts, gardening, roller-skating, majorettes and much more. This wonderful interaction between small children and older children has worked incredibly well with very positive feedback from both parents and children. A true credit to how The Willow Set is managed. On some days we are fully booked and with some great activities booked in for the upcoming summer holidays, we hope this success will continue.

If you would like to book your children into our holiday club (they don't have to normally attend SSG School or Willow Set) please contact the Willow Set office:

T: 01823 491 567E: info@willowsetpreschool.org.uk

Visit us at: www.willowsetpreschool.org.uk

Parish Council News March–May 2016

The Village Agent, Audrey Mansfield came along to the March meeting to give a presentation on her work in several local parishes. She can answer a variety of needs: helping people to receive benefits, directing them to helpful organisations and generally linking up people in difficulty with those who may be able to help them. Audrey may be reached at audrey@somersetcc.org.uk or by phone: 07870 577925

The search for a solution to the shortage of parking spaces at Polkesfield continues. The original proposal to add eight spaces at the bottom of the hill turns out to be of modest benefit, since it would displace almost as many spaces as it would add. Several other suggestions have been put to the District Council by the PC and we await their response.

The redesign of the village website is proceeding. It is proving a longer job than we had hoped, but many thanks to Tom Fyfe and Graham Gleed for all the work so far. Once it is ready to roll, the address of the original site will automatically point to the new one.

In response to concerns about leaning gravestones in the first row of the Burial Ground, the monumental masons Manning & Knight have kindly relevelled the four which they had installed. Strictly speaking, grave owners are responsible for maintaining their own stones, and while this is not a safety issue, leaning stones are an unwelcome sight. It is however a simple matter to relevel them. The mason who installed a stone will give advice or may even do the work without charge.

The PC agreed to adopt updated regulations and fees for the Burial Ground. These will be available from the Parish Clerk. One thing that was clarified was the requirement to maintain a level surface once a grave has settled, a year or so after a burial. This considerably simplifies maintenance of the burial ground.

Every household in the village should have received a form to fill in for the housing needs survey conducted by the District Council. Jo Humble, the Housing Development & Enabling Manager came to our Annual Parish Meeting on 26 April to speak about the background to this survey. It is designed to establish the level of need for affordable and low-cost housing in the village, so as to inform future planning decisions. The PC is conscious of the fact that as more and more houses receive extensions, the average size of a house in Stoke St Gregory is gradually increasing, while small houses are in particularly high demand. The results of the survey are being collated, and should be being reported at the June PC meeting.

The chairmanship and vice-chairmanship of the PC, as well as the PC representation on the Village Hall Committee and Playing Fields Trustees remains unchanged following the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 9 May.

Village Fete and Fun Day Saturday 17th September 2016

Did you think it wasn't happening this year? Following several years of holding this in July the Committee concluded that it might be good to return to a date in September when people aren't so busy with other summer activities. There will be lots going on again, including live music and the ever popular children's' races and tug-of-war. What we need is more people to help run them. If you would like to help, to promote your organisation or, even better, join the Committee, then please contact one of the following: Tom Duxbury 690116, Will Tilley 698229, Sarah Sollis 490069,

Stoke St Gregory Women's Institute

All meetings are held in the Village Hall at 7pm on the second Tuesday of the month. Future meetings:

14th June: "Birds of prey." Dr Karen Stead- Dexter

12th July: 85th Birthday Tea Party.

9th August: Tea afternoon.

New members are always made very welcome. Why not join us and become another official "inspiring woman"!

Village Hall Trustees

Do you use the Village Hall? Do your children participate in activities in the Village Hall? The Village Hall Trustees would welcome a participation of new members to ensure the long term success and viability. There are around four meetings a year so it is not a heavy commitment. If you are willing to contribute please contact Graham Gleed (490407).

North Curry and District Amateur Gardeners (including Stoke St Gregory)

We don't hold evening meetings in the summer months but we do have some good outings!

On **Thursday 9th June** we're off to **Cowbridge Physic Garden & Dyffren Gardens (NT)**. Both of these gardens have much to offer and if you are a non-member but would like to come along, please give Mary Ginger a ring on 01823 490527 to see if there are any spare places. Cost will be £16.50 for NT members and £23.00 for others.

On **28th June** at 2.30pm we have a Members Only afternoon and will be taking a look around Margaret and Alan Tomkins beautiful garden at Masseline, Borough Post, a good opportunity for a get together over a cup of tea and a chance to see just how accomplished some amateur gardeners actually are!

On **Tuesday 5th July**, we have an afternoon outing to NGS garden, **Bradon Farm** in Isle Abbots. This is a classic formal garden created in recent years demonstrating the use of structure. It sounds a really interesting garden and includes a parterre, knot garden and a pleached lime walk. Cost will be £8.00 to include entry to the garden and tea. Forms available from Mary Earley, 01823 490769.

Our final outing of the year will be the evening outing on **Thursday 4th August** which will be to **Milton Lodge Garden near Wells**, a Grade 2 listed garden with the most amazing views followed by a carvery supper at the Pipers Inn, Ashcott. The cost of this outing will be £24.50 and is open to non-members as well if anyone would like to join us.

Evening Meetings start again in September.

Allotments

The PC remains keen to set up allotments in the village. An Allotments Association has been formed, and anyone who would like an allotment is invited to register interest with Robin Ferrett or Graham Gleed. Attempts to use part of the Glebe field having failed, it was hoped that a slice of the field behind Church Close could be used. This has met with considerable opposition from the residents of Church Close, and while it may still be possible to address most of their concerns, any suggestions of alternative sites would be very much welcomed.

(grahiamgleed@gmail.com,
robin.ferrett@btinternet.com)

Check out more events in the village Stores, on the website www.stokestgregory.org and at www.facebook.com/StokeStGregory

NOTICEBOARD

Events for September, October and November by Friday 19th August

Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club

Great British Tennis Weekend – Play Tennis for FREE - June 11th/12th

- **Saturday - Free Play for All 10am – 12noon**
Club members will be around with advice (if wished), rackets will be available & balls provided.
- **Sunday - Free Junior Play/Coaching - “Bring a buddy”**
9.00am – 9.30am Tennis Tots (2 to 4 years)
9.30am – 10.30am Mini red (5 to 8 years)
10.30am – 11.30am Mini orange & green (8 to 11 years)
11.30am – 12.30pm Yellow (11+ years)
- **Sunday – Family time 1.00pm – 2.00pm**
Come & enjoy some fun play with your children. Charlie, our coach, & club members will be on hand, rackets will be available & balls provided.
- **Sunday - Cardio Tennis session 2.15 – 3.00pm**
This is a fun fitness class on the tennis court. With music playing, you can have a great cardio workout while hitting lots of tennis balls. All abilities including non-tennis players welcome. Come & give it a go!
- **Free Play for All 3.00pm – 5.00pm** on Sunday.
- **Refreshments** will be available throughout the weekend - + giveaways!

Check the website www.lta.org.uk/gbtw for details /to book sessions in advance. Nos. for some sessions limited – but still turn up & see on the day if you haven't booked.

Tony Pryce Racket Test Evening – Wednesday June 15th from 6pm

Open to All. Come along & try a selection of rackets & play a few games of tennis. No obligation to buy – but special deals will be offered on the night. For further information, contact Kathy Davidson 490575 kathryn.davidson7@btinternet.com

STOKE ST GREGORY PLAYING FIELD
Raising money for new play area equipment present

SNAPPA

1950's to present day from rock and roll classics to modern day indie anthems

FRIDAY 15 JULY 2016

AT THE WILLIAMS HALL
DOORS OPEN AT 8PM

Come Along and strut your stuff in aid of new play equipment
Tickets £10 – hog roast included
Bar available

Tickets on sale from Friday 10 June 2016
Available from Village Stores or via Sara Sollis

*Stoke St Gregory
Baptist Church*

*A warm welcome
awaits you at our
Summer Tea
On
Saturday 18th
June
3 pm onwards
at the
Baptist Church*

WILLIAMS HALL 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The Williams Hall is 10 years old at the end of June. We will be holding a special event to celebrate this occasion on **SATURDAY 25th JUNE**. Included in this newsletter is an additional insert giving you all the details. This is a **FREE** event but as we need to know numbers of people attending for catering purposes you will need to obtain a ticket in advance for each member of you family from the village shop and bring this ticket with you on the day to receive your free food. This ticket will be entered in a free prize draw if you have written your name and contact telephone number on the reverse of the ticket. Throughout the event there will be a cash bar run by the Royal Oak. NB Under16s must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Starting at 4.30pm Events to include Games, Music with 'John and the General', Hog Roast, Prize draw, Barn Dance with Bridgwater Folk Band. Close – 11pm. Look forward to seeing you all at the event and **THANK YOU** for supporting the Hall over the past 10 years. Any question contact Louise Grinter (077612389330) or Tony McKenzie (490932)

**Friday July 29th
at 8pm
The Royal Oak
Stoke St. Gregory**

A Night at the Races
(In aid of Newmarket Carnival Club)

Transition Athelney Presents

HERE COMES THE SUN

**The future of solar
The future is solar**

The Village Hall, Greenway, North Curry
Tuesday 31st May 2016
7.30 for 7.45pm

This 50 minute film will be followed by refreshments and discussion. The film is for public information and concludes the celebration of North Curry Community Energy's three installations. Entrance free, donations welcome.

ST GREGORY PLAYERS

Auditions

for 'Wyrd Sisters'
Sunday 12th June
2pm Village Hall

Join us for....**Messy Church Friday 24th June at 3:30 pm Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church**. Come after school and enjoy crafts, stories and singing and we cook your tea(Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult) Messy Church is not just for children, anyone who'd enjoy these activities or just like to find out what it's all about is very welcome.