

## STOKE ST GREGORY MEALS

is pleased to sponsor the Spring issue of the Newsletter.

Established in 2005, twice a week we deliver homemade, freshly cooked two course meals to houses in Stoke St Gregory and North Curry. We are non-profitmaking, are all volunteers and our cooks have food safety certificates. Currently the cost is £3.50 per meal. We have continued the service during the current pandemic, with strict safety regulations in place.

Our customers range from those who are elderly and appreciate the support of a hot meal cooked in the cooks' own kitchens and delivered by friendly local people, to those who have used the service whilst recovering after an operation.

If you think we could be of help to you, a relative, or neighbour, please contact Carole Joll (490077), Judy Blair (490222) or Vicki Fielding (490565)

**Somerset Sight** is a local charity which has been supporting sight impaired people across Somerset for over a hundred years and in 2019 won the Queens Award for Voluntary Service.

One of our services is the Volunteer Visiting Service whereby volunteers are matched locally with a sight impaired person for regular visits for company and support, and also helps alleviate their loneliness and isolation.

Volunteers help with a variety of tasks such as reading, correspondence, or making appointments, going out for a drive or just a cup of tea and a chat. Many volunteers get great satisfaction and enjoyment from their voluntary work, many friendships are formed and the people they support very much look forward to their visits. At the current time as face to face visits are not permissible, the service continues with regular phone calls until such time as a visit is allowed again.

For anyone who is sight impaired and would like to know more about our services or if anyone would like to volunteer for the Visiting Service, please contact us on [01823 333818](tel:01823333818) for further information. We look forward to hearing from you soon!



**Somerset Sight** Working with people who lack sight, not vision



## Parish Council Report

The PC continues to **meet virtually** using the Zoom platform. We have welcomed members of the public to several recent meetings. We continue to emphasise that all are welcome to join us. If it is the technology that worries you, we would be happy to arrange introductory sessions if you feel you would like to participate.

Our daily lives continue to be greatly modified by the **ongoing pandemic**. While we must consider ourselves fortunate to live in an area where incidence of the virus is relatively low in many respects this tends to make us more vulnerable as it is easier to be caught off-guard on the basis of 'it can't happen here'. While it is heartening that people in the village are receiving the vaccination, the PC would encourage everybody in the community to continue to remain vigilant, even as the current wave declines. Please continue to take the necessary precautions and abide by the guidelines, bearing in mind that 'anyone can get it; everyone can spread it'.

It is with great regret that the PC announces that **Nick Sloan** has decided to stand down as a Parish Councillor. For nearly ten years Nick Sloan has served on the PC with distinction, four years were spent as Chairman; a role to which he brought dedication, energy and not least fairness and balance in reconciling sometimes fractious discussions with diplomacy and tact. It has been a period of profound change in the Village, coming to the end of which few would disagree with the proposition that Stoke St Gregory is a better place, in no small part due to Nick's stewardship of the PC. The process of co-opting a new Councillor has already been initiated with a first call for applicants which closed on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

To the surprise and anger of many residents in the locality, SWTC Planning **approved the application** for completion of the partially constructed large agricultural building at Lower Huntham Farm. This decision was based on a recommendation from the Planning Department, despite a process that appeared to be flawed and in contravention of its own guidelines.

### Wanted – Stoke News Sponsors

If you would like your business featured in the next edition, please get in touch with Jean House; or Kelly de Silva, Parish Clerk, at [ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk)

## Parish Council Report (Cont. from pg 1)

The PC also considered an application to replace the **railway bridge at Athelney**. Although this is permitted development the PC raised strong objections on the basis that the opportunity to raise the soffit of the bridge and thus alleviate upstream flooding had been missed. With the increasing risk of flooding from the impact of climate change over the life of the new bridge, it was felt that this is a major flaw.

Work continues with SCC highways to implement the **30mph limit along the length of Meare Green**. It was agreed at the February meeting that, the village sign at Denman Hill, will mark the start of the 30mph zone. We now await detailed costing proposal from SCC Highways. The new 20mph warning for the School has been installed, however, significant concern has been expressed around considerable hazards associated with the increasing lack of discipline for drop-off and pick-up at the school/Willowset. When school returns, parents are to be reminded of the need for better practices in order to avoid an accident, which many believe is inevitable with current behaviour. Parking is available at the Royal Oak, the Church and the Village Hall all of which are a short distance from the school entrance.

With the completion of the housing development in Willey Road in the coming months, the PC will have at its disposal funds from the **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**, paid by the developer to SWTC. These funds must be spent on projects that benefit infrastructure for the whole community. Notification has already been sent to all community groups in the village, but ideas would also be welcome from individuals as to how best to use this money for the benefit of all. Unfortunately, we are legally prevented from using these funds for the school.

**Climate change and the Role of the PC** in promoting activity to offset its impacts is taking an increasingly significant part of the PC agenda. The PC resolved to set up an advisory group to address what can be achieved at a community level to offset climate change. Please refer to SSG and Climate Change elsewhere in this Newsletter.

It was resolved that the PC would make a partial contribution to the installation of two **Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points** at the Hall. These will be made available to both Hall users and local residents following installation.

Finally, it was agreed not to pursue a **name change** for the Willey Road development due to the cost and complexity, but also in deference to the new householders who purchased their properties in good faith against deeds that state the name of the development is Broomfield Park.

**Thank you** to everyone who delivers the newsletter around the different areas of the village. Several people came forward in answer to the request for extra volunteers, which is great, and we will keep names in reserve for any help needed in the future. Editor. ☺

## Stoke St Gregory History: Origins of Egg Shackling

The derivation of egg shackling remains a mystery, although it has been suggested that it is a survival of part of the Saturnalia which preceded Lent in medieval England. We have a written record from Langport in 1840, when the later famous Walter Bagehot was taking part, and it was certainly alive in Stoke in the 1860s. We plan to carry out this year's ceremony when the children return to school - hopefully in March. The full story can be seen on Stoke's history website, [www.gregorystoke.org](http://www.gregorystoke.org). Here are some verses written for the occasion:

Oh! Little egg please don't crack  
As you roll around the track  
For if you do they'll laugh at me  
And a pancake you will be.  
*Trevor Boon*

Eggs, eggs, here we go  
Into the sieve and round we go  
Some will crack and some will stay  
But I hope mine goes all the way  
*Michael Patten*

Little egg so nice and brown  
I hope you will not let me down  
If you crack I shall be sad  
But in a pancake I'll be glad  
*Gordon Chedzoy*

**Poppy Appeal 2020** Despite the fact that house-to-house collections could not be conducted this year, I am delighted to be able to announce that we managed to raise a grand total of £1108.87 during this year's annual Poppy Appeal collection period. I would like to thank the Lemon Tree café, the Village Stores, Stanmoor Garage and the King Alfred Pub for agreeing to host collection boxes despite the difficulties caused by social distancing. I would also like to thank the Parish Council for their generous donation and of course, the school children of Stoke St Gregory School and everybody in Stoke St Gregory, East Lyng and Burrowbridge for their generosity. Without you, it would not be possible to achieve such a terrific result.  
Richard Dobson

### **The End of an Era** From Irene and Ron Browning:

It was November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1979, a very cold day that Ron and Irene moved from Ascot, Berkshire to take over the 'Rose and Crown' in the rural village of Stoke St. Gregory.

They built up a thriving business very well known in the area for their food.

When they retired their sons Stephen and Richard, and their wives Sally and Leonie took over and carried on the good name.

Richard and Leonie went on to pursue their own catering career leaving Stephen, Jo and Hayley to carry on for in total 41 years.

Finally deciding to call it a day, the Rose and Crown was sold as a house and we do hope that the new owners have a happy life in their new home.

All of the Brownings would like to say a 'Big Thank You' to all of our loyal customers and for all the wonderful memories you made for us.

## **Census 2021**

### **will provide a snapshot of modern society**

*The census is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941.*

*It will be the first run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets.*

*A successful census will ensure everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed, which is why it is so important everyone takes part. While it has been made it easier for people to participate online using any device, paper questionnaires will be made available for those that need them.*

*Census day will be on March 21, but households across the country will receive letters with online codes allowing them to take part from early March.*

*The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.*

*Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations.*

*For more information, visit [census.gov.uk](https://www.census.gov.uk).*

## **HOTV Report**

After opening at the end of November in its new location at the Royal Oak the Village Shop has enjoyed spectacular success, not only in the period immediately prior to the festive season but also in the traditionally slow period following the New Year. Users of the shop have been complimentary not only about the range and quality of the goods available on display, but also the exemplary customer service offered by Jo and Carolyn. Our customer base continues to grow, as does the range of goods offered. Look out for special promotions coming up soon.

The shop has been shortlisted by the prestigious Grocer Magazine for the Southwest region shop of the year awards. We are one of twenty-five candidates for this award which will be announced in July. Merely making it on to this shortlist is a considerable achievement and reflects on all who have contributed to making the Shop the success it is. Look out for further announcements.

With the lockdown in the hospitality industry anticipated to continue until at least March work on renovating the Pub will proceed with a steady purpose, in anticipation of a possible opening towards Easter. The bar has been cleared and refurbishment will start shortly. It is not anticipated that the work required will be as great as that needed for the shop.

Preparations are already being made in anticipation of providing service from the café.

Repointing of the external brick work will be completed shortly which will then permit removal of the scaffolding and installation of awnings at the shop.

The HOTV Committee wishes to express a continuing debt of gratitude to all volunteers both supporting shop operations and those who are helping with the pub renovations. Without your effort our success would be significantly diminished.

## **SSG and Climate Change**

Did you know that on average every household in Stoke St Gregory causes emissions of 21.6t of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per year amounting to 9218t per year for the whole Parish. These numbers are derived from a national study conducted by the Centre for Sustainable Energy and Exeter University. Within these numbers, at a household level 2.3t is as consequence of personal travel and energy consumption for housing is on average 7.1t per year. While these numbers are averages based on national statistics, they paint a clear picture of the impact each of us makes to climate change on a daily basis.

In order to co-ordinate local activity both at a Parish level and across neighbouring parishes the PC has commissioned an advisory group. This group, made up of both PC representatives and concerned members of the community will meet monthly. Notes from the meeting can be found on the Village website. Coming out of the first meeting it was resolved to adopt a more rigorous approach to planning applications with regard to climate impacts as well as exploring with the school how best a local overlay on the existing curriculum can be used advantageously.

Future meetings will explore how to identify projects and activities that have a clearly defined positive impact, are affordable and not least feasible.

**Members of the public are welcome at the meetings. Meeting details can be requested from Graham Gleed ([grahamgleed@gmail.com](mailto:grahamgleed@gmail.com)).**

Look at the village website  
[www.stokestgregory.org](http://www.stokestgregory.org)  
[www.facebook.com/StokeStGregory](https://www.facebook.com/StokeStGregory)  
for more news and information

Due to the Covid19 Lockdown and restrictions there are no notices of village 'events' for the period covered by this issue. However if there are any events planned for the next quarter (June, July, August 2021) please send details in to the editor by Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021. Thank you very much.

## Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club

At the time of writing we are still unable to play tennis due to the pandemic & imposed Government restrictions. However, we are hopeful that the easing of lockdown restrictions, when announced by the Government, will include allowing the return of play at outside tennis court venues.

Our new tennis season is due to begin on the 1<sup>st</sup> April, when membership renewals are invited & new members can join. If you are interested, then please get in touch & we shall provide you with information, or check out our Club website on the following link:

<https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/StokeStGregoryTennisClub>

Tennis is important for people's physical & mental health & the LTA regularly liaise with the Government to ask them to allow players back on court as soon as possible. So we hope that in the not too distant future, play for members & Pay & Play can resume!

*For more information, contact Stuart Mark*  
490541 [stuart.w.mark@btinternet.com](mailto:stuart.w.mark@btinternet.com)  
or [ssgtennisclub@gmail.com](mailto:ssgtennisclub@gmail.com)

## **Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church News**

During lockdown we are back to hosting our church services on Zoom at 10.30am each Sunday. If you would like to join us one Sunday, please email [ssgbaptists@gmail.com](mailto:ssgbaptists@gmail.com) and we will send you a link.

In January, we began a new initiative of offering a '**Messy Church in a bag**' session to any families in the community who would like to receive one. The first one was based on the story of the Good Samaritan and included 3 crafts to do at home. I have a few left, so if you would still like one, please email [ssgbaptists@gmail.com](mailto:ssgbaptists@gmail.com) We are planning to do an Easter one in March so if you would like that, please email.

As you will all understand, it is difficult to plan for Easter as it is difficult to know what the government guidelines will be. These are the current plans, but please check our website: [ssgbaptists.com](http://ssgbaptists.com) or email to get the latest info:

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April: Easter prayer stations for quiet prayer and reflection.**

**The church building will be open from 2-4pm and 7.30-9pm.**

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April: Good Friday service 10.30am in chapel or on Zoom**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April: 6.30am Easter sunrise service outside chapel**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April 10.30am Easter Sunday service in chapel or on Zoom**

Please also look out for details about our special Easter willow cross and how you can leave a message on it.

**Spark Somerset** runs the county wide volunteer service. We have recently launched Spark a Change: a new free digital volunteering platform designed to help people use their time and skills for a good cause. Take a look at [www.sparkachange.org.uk](http://www.sparkachange.org.uk)

Whether you're an individual who would like to volunteer, or an organisation looking for people to support your work, you can use Spark a Change to:

- Register as a volunteer or charity and create a profile
- Discover or share volunteering opportunities
- Make a connection and begin your volunteering journey

Spark a Change is easy to use and has lots of great features for both recruiters and volunteers. It was developed with help from the team behind the Corona Helpers website, through which over 1,300 people signed up to support their community during the pandemic.

Recent events have inspired many people to want to give something back, and there are hundreds of local Somerset charities and community organisations who would love to hear from new volunteers - so there's never been a better time to get involved! Visit [www.sparkachange.org.uk](http://www.sparkachange.org.uk) to find our more.

For any enquiries about our volunteering service contact [volunteer@sparksomerset.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@sparksomerset.org.uk) Join our Volunteers in Somerset Facebook group or sign up for our regular Spark newsletter on our website [www.sparksomerset.org.uk](http://www.sparksomerset.org.uk)

