

All items for the
Winter edition by
Friday 19th November
2021

Stoke News

Autumn 2021

Contact Jean House
jeanhouse@btconnect.com
For more news look at
www.stokestgregory.org

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FOOTPATH PROJECT - this has arisen from the recently
formed Stoke Environment Group.

I have been in touch with landowners offering our help to
cut back brambles and nettles from stiles, bridges and
footpaths using secateurs and shears. All have accepted this
help as it is the farmers' busiest time of year and maintaining
footpaths cannot be their priority, but it does mean a lot of
complaints come their way. Doing this may well uncover
broken or unsafe stiles and bridges. I'll have to report these
back to the landowners as we do not have the equipment to
deal with such problems.

Signing is also a problem which will need attention over
time. Similarly, some footpaths have disappeared partly
because they haven't been walked and sometimes due to
crops being planted over the footpath.

A lot of new people have moved into the village. Some are
keen walkers and they, and some locals, need to know
where paths are to prevent any straying into fields without
footpaths. As time goes on and paths are better signed, some
of us may be able to give clear instructions for some of the
village walks. There are four that were written some years
ago which we could use as templates. All of these started in
the Square.

Anyone interested in helping, please contact Sarah Evans on
srs@bopenworld.com or 07970 856798

Parish Council Report

The June Meeting was the first to be held **face to face**
following the lapse of dispensation to hold virtual
meetings. A full risk assessment was conducted by the
Parish Clerk and social distancing was observed. Even
though rules have now been relaxed we will continue
to operate in line with the former instructions. This
caution was emphasised when following cases of
Covid 19 at the school it was decided to postpone the
July meeting given the uncertain contact status of
members of the PC and the closely interconnected
nature of our community. The meeting was
rescheduled two weeks later during which time there
were no further reported cases among PC members or
their immediate contacts.

Among **Planning Applications** reviewed two are
worthy of comment. Firstly application 36/21/0015 is
a complex document describing changes in the
conditions relating to the Broomfield Park
development. In general, the PC did not support the
proposals suggested by planning as they were deemed
detrimental to the overall site. The PC did support the
change of curtilage allowing the proposed buffer zone
to be incorporated into the adjacent properties in
Church Close. The application to construct welfare
facilities at the site of the vineyard in Curload
(36/21/0012) generated considerable discussion. While
the Parish Council commended the initiative being
taken to enhance this site, objection to the proposal
centred on concerns around effluent disposal in a flood
risk area, and vehicular access to the site.

With the Parish council reduced to eight members
following the passing of David House, the opportunity
was taken at the July meeting to **co-opt a new
councillor**. Three candidates presented themselves for
this position. Following a vote of PC members present
Anne Merritt was elected to the vacant position. The
PC welcomes Ann and looks forward to her
contribution.

How best to determine the allocation of Community
Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds has been on the
agenda for the past three PC meeting. A **survey**
addressing this is included as a supplement to this
edition of Stoke News.

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

Parish Council Report (Cont. from pg 1)

The PC is greatly encouraged by the **Climate Initiative** which has recently been launched. This is an important, even vital, initiative which cuts across the whole community. The PC would encourage all collaboration between groups to maximise the opportunity to make positive improvement. To this end the PC agreed to provide a start-up grant out of discretionary funds in order to support initial activity.

At a 'drop in' event for local residents, a total of seventeen expressions of interest in the **social housing** in Broomfield Park were noted. This is encouraging in one regard as the original justification to support the original Planning Application was based on fourteen applicants for social housing, but it also reinforces the need for this type of accommodation.

There has been a marked increase in the number of dogs in the village and the vexed question of disposal of **dog waste** was again a topic in the July meeting. While it is desirable to install more dog waste bins, to do so comes at a significant cost. The combined cost to install and empty such a bin is close to £2000 per annum. This is not to deny the need, but such expenditure will need to be budgeted in our next planning cycle.

We continue to struggle to move the project to reduce the **speed in Meare Green** forward. We are entirely in the hands of SCC Highways who have repeatedly delayed conducting a survey due to resource limitations resulting in reassignment to other work. There are however grounds for optimism, that survey work will start soon.

The Royal Oak - The Early Years

In 1841 the building that became the Royal Oak was occupied by Samuel Dare Loveridge, a farrier from Curry Rivel, who had married Martha, daughter of local shoemaker John Pipe, three years earlier. By the 1861 census Samuel was described as 'Farrier and Innkeeper', the couple now having nine children. We know that the Royal Oak was certainly open as a 'Beer House' by 1853, as Samuel took Thomas Langdon to court for stealing some of his beer. Six years later, Samuel was in trouble himself for allowing a fight to take place in the orchard (now the car park). He obviously redeemed himself somewhat in later years, as he was highly praised for the spread he had laid on at the Oak for the Harvest celebrations. Reported in the Taunton Courier, Wednesday 29 September 1869: "*Stoke St. Gregory Harvest Home . . . a sumptuous dinner laid out by Mr Loveridge, the host of the Royal Oak. The visitors and farmers, to the number of 80, and the labourers numbering 176, sat down to do justice to where justice wanted to be done. The tables groaned under the viands upon them.*" Samuel died in February 1877, but Martha continued to run the pub until her own death in November 1881.

Read the full story at www.gregorystoke.org/royaloak

ANNOUNCEMENT: Congratulations to Dr. Jo Parish who has been granted a chair as Professor of Tumour Virology at Birmingham University. She was educated at Stoke Primary School, Heathfield, Richard Huish College and Bristol University. She has previously undertaken research at the University of Massachusetts, and St. Andrews in Scotland. Daughter of Trevor and Jane Williams, sister of Simon Williams. She is married to Sam Parish, also formerly of Stoke, and has two sons Aidan, 15 and Liam, 11.

Autumn is nearly upon us!

For several years now we've helped many people press apples, producing lots of apple juice to take away. This normally takes place at our home on various days through the Autumn with several people coming on each occasion; last year, however, was an exception due to Covid resulting in very little being done in that way. This year we hope we'll be able to do more but we are also still encouraging as many as possible to hire the equipment to press their own at home, perhaps working with others.

Everything you need from the apple mincer to pasteurisers can be hired for £25 per day. Bottles can also be supplied if needed.

Please get in touch if you'd like to take part, letting me know roughly when you think your fruit will be ripe so that I can do my best to coordinate you with others

For more information contact: Brian on 490623 or email bandk@bkjeanes.co.uk (Climate Action Athelnev)

Stoke Environment Group News

Have you heard the news! Following an initiative by the Parish Council, in response to the global climate emergency, the Stoke Environment Group has been formed and is now undertaking a number of projects.

At our first meeting, we asked residents what projects they felt would benefit the community and, ultimately, make a positive contribution to tackling the issues that arise from climate change. We are now starting some of those projects where every member of our community can be involved. We are particularly keen to encourage young people to make their voices heard.

A number of our neighbours are adopting areas or roads in the village and are undertaking regular litter-picking. Then there is an enthusiastic group who, with the support of landowners, are clearing over-grown footpaths and stiles. We are hoping to spruce up the bus stop at the top of Dark Lane and we are working with the Village Hall Trustees and the Parish Council to plant a hedge along the boundary of the village hall to improve biodiversity, create a 'wildlife corridor' and, in time, increase our carbon-capture capability. This will be followed by an investigation of the small coppice at the village hall to see if biodiversity can be improved by installing animal and insect habitats. There are, literally, dozens of projects in the pipe-line!

We have established a good relationship with Somerset Wildlife Trust, The Woodland Trust, Somerset Beekeepers and many others to ensure our projects are appropriate and beneficial to all – humans included!

In October 2021 we are organising an environment fair (see separate article) where we invite everyone to come along and look at some of the projects and talk to experts. If you would like to be involved with the group in any way, please contact us through our Facebook page or email us at envirostoke@yahoo.com. We would really appreciate your support so that, as a community, we can make things happen – we are not a talking shop, we are 'doers'!!

HOTV Report

It is worth reflecting that just about one year ago the purchase of the Royal Oak by the community was completed. Since then, it has been an amazing journey to where we are now. While there were sceptics at the time of the sale, I think it is fair to say very few of those who expressed concerns would now dispute the success of the project, as evidenced by the segment broadcast on Points West on the 17th of August.

From the initial open day, through the shop opening in November, to the café and pub opening in April it has been a year of spectacular progress. None of this would have been possible without the dedication and 'can do' spirit of all in the community who have contributed, and not least the energy and inspiration of Jo and Carolyn. In total nearly one hundred people have helped in some form, from clearing and restoring the garden, painting, decorating, tile hanging, through baking, shelf stacking and cleaning. Not to mention those local trades people who have contributed to the effort. A truly whole community effort in which everybody can take pride. I feel it is also worthy of mention that the Management Committee are also volunteers and without their dedication and leadership we would be in a different place.

However, the work is not finished. We need to supplement the offering with the capability to provide food. We plan to complete the last tasks to bring the kitchen to completion by the end of the month. We also recognise our obligation to create a space for young people which we plan to address after the summer holiday.

With the Annual Members meeting approaching on September 27th one of the items on the agenda will be to elect a new Management Committee for HOTV. The Rules determine how long elected committee members remain in post without needing to be re-elected. This year we will need at least one new member, and two existing members will need to seek re-election, thus at least three places will need to be filled. There may be further vacancies if any existing members choose to resign.

At this stage we do not know if we will need to hold an election, since we cannot tell if the number of those standing will exceed the number of places. Irrespective of this, we invite anyone who would like to offer their time and skills as a member of the Committee to complete a nomination form and return it to the Secretary (secretary@hotvssg.org) by the end of August.

ENVIROFAIR

Are you concerned about the environment? Can you make a difference? We all can, even if it's only in a small way, and it can be enjoyable. Meet new friends, connect with the environment, and help ensure our village is a good home for future generations.

That's what the first **ENVIROFAIR** is all about [**Saturday 16th October, Williams Hall, 10 - 4**]. Some village organisations are already committed to taking part, and small groups will be reporting on environmental activities already under way. Perhaps most importantly, there will be a record of the early stages of work being done by the pupils of Stoke School on the subject.

The **ENVIROFAIR** is about sharing. There will be information available, but what we need is to know what you are doing already, as individuals, families, and village groups, whether it's using the bus more, buying your electricity from a green supplier, or finding a use for bits of household waste. Please get in touch and share your experience, ideas and hopes, so that we can use this event to ignite the interest and concern we know is there. More details can be found on our website at www.envirostoke.org/envirofair or Facebook page 'Stoke Environment Group'. Contact us on envirostoke@yahoo.com or get in touch with Janice Pearce, who is helping to co-ordinate the event: pearcejanice@hotmail.co.uk or **490545**

Getting ready for action.

Climate Action Athelney -towards a greener community

With the IPCC report in the news lately, our two forthcoming events are very topical.

On **Thursday September 9th at 7.30** we are showing a **forward-looking film, 2040**, in **North Curry Village Hall**. This looks at how the world could appear if we all grasp the issues and take urgent action **now** to curtail climate change and the consequential environmental catastrophes which even now we see occurring around us with an increasing frequency.

Just two days later on **Saturday September 11th** in conjunction with the **Stoke Environment Group** we're running an **Eco-tour** in the local villages where people with existing and planned improvements to their properties will be sharing their experiences and results. Nearer the time you'll find details of what can be seen and where on posters, on our website, www.climateactionathelney.co.uk and on social media.

For more information contact: Brian (CAA) on 490623 or email bandk@bkjeanes.co.uk

Or Trevor (Environment Group) on 490829 or email trevor201@btinternet.com

Information for Village Groups: Community grants from the Clark Foundation

The Clark Foundation is an independent charity that was set up in 1959 to provide grants to support community projects mainly in education, health, leisure, recreation and wellbeing in the communities where Clarks employees, pensioners and their families live and work.

Last year, the Foundation awarded almost £300k in grants to community groups for village hall refurbishments, arts projects, youth work, sports facilities, nature reserves, play equipment, open spaces and health initiatives.

Small grants (£1,000 and under) are awarded throughout the year. You can apply at any time and we can usually make a decision and get a payment out to you within just a couple of weeks. Grants for over £1,000 are awarded for larger projects, usually in places where there are, or used to be, significant numbers of Clarks staff working in one place. This includes former factory sites throughout the West Country, as well as Street itself and the surrounding villages. The majority of our funding goes towards capital projects or equipment and occasionally we support organisation start-ups. We give to charities or community groups with charitable purposes.

So, if you have a need that the Foundation might be able to help with or would like an application form, do please get in touch.

E: trustgrants@clarks.com T: 01458 842553

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

NOTICEBOARD

Events for December
2021, January &
February 2022 by
Friday 19th August

WILLIAMS HALL SOCIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Following the lifting of Covid restrictions by the government we can now confirm our planned welcome back programme as follows

Saturday 25th September 10am to 12am
Welcome Back event
Coffee, books and bacon baps

Saturday 30th October 9am to 12am
Coffee and books

Saturday 6th November 9am to 11am
Bonfire Breakfast
Adults £7

*****CHILDREN UNDER 12 EAT FREE*****

NB All children must be accompanied by an adult
Come eat, socialise and let us cook your breakfast for you

We are also hoping to hold a Christmas Quiz in December. We are looking forward to welcoming you back at these events. More details on these events will be advertised on the Village Hall Website www.williamshall.org.uk and on posters around the village.

If you have any queries contact Louise on 07761238933. We are also looking for new members for our social events committee. If you are interested, please give Louise a ring on 07761238933

Follow us on social media



@williamshallevents



@williamshallevents

Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club Information

Club Sessions

The Club is open to members & non-members. Club session times for members are Mondays 10.00am, Wednesdays 6.00pm (2.00pm Winter months) & Sundays 2.00pm. Less experienced players are always welcome to join in the Rusty Racket session on Sundays at 10.00am (£4.00 charge for non-members).

Pay & Play

For non-members the courts are available to book for Pay & Play outside of the above session times.

P&P is a good way to introduce yourself to the game, or rekindle past skills, at a cost of £7.50 per court booking, allowing up to 4 people to play & have fun for an hour. Bookings & payments can be made online; this automatically generates a confirmation email, which will provide you with the court access code. (The access code is changed regularly.)

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

Or simply Google: Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club

Coaching

There are 2 tennis coaching sessions on Thursday mornings, one for experienced players at 11.00am & the other for Rusty Rackets/less experienced players at 12.00 noon. Both are run by our Club's tennis coach, Rachel Apsey, an experienced LTA accredited coach. If interested, please contact the Club as below. Private 1:1 lessons may also be arranged, depending on Rachel's availability.

For more information, contact Stuart Mark 490541 / 07956 981679

stuart.w.mark@btinternet.com or ssgtennisclub@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Stokestgregorytennis>

WILLIAMS HALL, STOKE ST GREGORY SATURDAY 27TH NOVEMBER 2021

Steve Mitchell brings you his brand new theatre show.

Tickets are selling well for 'George Michael Live'.

This joyous new show celebrates the music of one of the most iconic and best singer songwriters of all time, the incredible George Michael.

This ultimate tribute concert features full live band and is a heartfelt and authentic tribute that takes audiences on a musical journey of George's greatest hits and high energy Wham tracks. The show is based on George's 25 Live tour and audiences are treated to stunning musical arrangements and exciting versions of songs such as Fastlove, Faith, Careless Whisper, Outside and Freedom.

Join us for an unmissable evening as we pay homage to one of the most loved artists of our generation.

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/carltonentertainmentsandeventmanagement/495661/>

www.georgemichaellivetrIBUTE.com

www.facebook.com/georgemichaellivetrIBUTE

Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church News

Dates for your diary:

Messy Church outdoor event

Sat 4th September 4pm in the church grounds.
Crafts, trail and picnic for families. Please email sonyacsethell@gmail.com with numbers of adults & children attending.

Harvest celebration service

Sun 26th Sept 10.30am

TWiGS Babies and toddler Group

Restarting on 9th Sept for toddlers and their carers and then every Thursday in term time 9.30 to 11.30am.

Messy Church: Sun 10th October starts at 10am with breakfast. Crafts, singing, Bible stories – fun for all the family!

Tear Fund Big Quiz

Saturday 20th November 7pm

Teams needed for a fun quiz with refreshments. More details to follow.

Luncheon club

Every other Wed 12noon

For more info, please contact Liz on 490828 or Alison on 490380.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

The Parish Church News Stoke St. Gregory

We are delighted that life is slowly but surely returning to normal. The following diary dates are an outline of our Autumn/ Winter programme. They will be amplified as time goes on. In the meantime, please keep an eye on Village Noticeboards, particularly the one in the shop for up-to- date information.

October 3 **Harvest Festival**

October 4 **Harvest Supper.**

Tickets: £10. Numbers will be very limited so please book early. All non-perishable items will be sent to the Bridgwater Food Bank.

October 25 **Charity Lunch**

In Church Room in aid of the British Legion Poppy Appeal.

November 14 **Remembrance Sunday**

December 19 **Carol Service**

December 23 **Carols in the Square**

December 24 **Christmas Eve**

December 25 **Christmas Day**

Please keep an eye on the Parish Magazines for October/ November/ December for further details of all our activities.