

All items for the
Winter Edition by:
20th November

Stoke News

Autumn 2023

Contact:
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stokenewseditors@outlook.com

Firstly a big thank you to Jean House for all of her work on the Stoke News over the last 8 years. We have taken on the role of editors for the publication and do not intend to dramatically change the format. Our Focus will be on providing an information sheet with what is happening in your village over the next 3 months.

We will welcome any thoughts or inclusions for the next edition which will be in early December.

Breaking News Post Office

Regrettably HOTV has just been informed that we are losing the visiting post office in its current form. The reasoning is that the equipment for this service is now no longer supported. The service will be replaced by a van, which will offer the same range of transactions, but for one hour on a Friday from 11:30 to 12:30, starting in October.

Village Breakfast

Williams Hall Saturday 11th November 9.00am-11.00 am. £8 per head and under 11's free with paying adult

Useful Asset: The Parish Website

Don't forget to check out the calendar on the Stoke St. Gregory Parish Website for event information.

Sponsorship

We need sponsors to ensure that we can continue to publish this valuable newsletter, delivered to over 500 local households. Please contact the editors for details.

Job Vacancy

Stoke St Gregory Parish Council – Parish Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Stoke St Gregory Parish Council is looking for a new Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer.

This post is part-time, and home based for an average of 29 hours per month, some months are quieter and some busier. Payment is currently paid monthly – as per the local Government Salary Guide (NJC PayScale's) and commensurate with experience and qualifications.

The working hours are very flexible other than the post holder must be able to attend the monthly evening council meetings, currently held on the second Monday of each month.

The applicant must be computer literate and will be responsible for organising all meetings of the Parish Council, publishing agendas and minutes, and dealing with all correspondences via mail, email, and telephone.

The Clerk is responsible for maintaining all Burial Ground records and administering the burial ground.

As RFO, the Clerk is also responsible for all aspects of financial administration of the Council.

This is a precis of the job which will also include various and ad hoc items which keeps the job varied and interesting.

Whilst it is not necessary to hold the "Certificate in Local Council Administration" qualification, it will be a requirement that it is undertaken. A good local knowledge of the Parish would be an advantage.

Should you wish to discuss the vacancy further please contact either the current clerk Kelly de Silva (ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk) or the Chair Janice Pearce (pearcejanice@hotmail.co.uk) who would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

To apply, please send your CV and covering letter by email to ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk

The start date for the role will be as soon as possible, although there can be some flexibility on this.

Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club

See our website for full details of all memberships available & Pay & Play offers.

Special Winter membership offer of 6 months adult membership from 1st October thru to 31st March (Family members children 18 years & under, of a paying adult member are free). Also Club Junior Membership offer for £10.

Coaching is available for adults on Thursday mornings. Junior Coaching sessions are available every Saturday during term time: 1.30pm under 10s & 2.30pm 10+ years.

Half term & Holiday Camps are also frequently available.

Book junior coaching via Luke Andrews on: Latennis@hotmail.com or call Luke on: 07437 404242

Why not come & join in at one of our regular Club sessions: Mondays at 10.00am, Wednesdays at 2.00pm (5.30 during the Summer) & Sundays at 2.00pm. Our Rusty Rackets also play on Fridays at 10.00am & Sundays at 11.00am.

For further details please check our website:

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

For more info. contact Stuart Mark 01823 490541 /07956 981679 or ssgtennisclub@gmail.com

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

Parish Council Report

Our top priority at present is to fill the 3 Parish Councilor vacancies we currently have and to find a new Parish Clerk to replace our much loved and respected Clerk, Kelly De Silva. Kelly has begun a new full time career and is unable to continue in her role.

We are looking for candidates who are keen to promote village life and preserve and protect our environment. We welcome applicants who currently live or work in the village.

If you feel that you can make a difference, please contact Janice Pearce or Kelly De Silva (ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk)

There was no Parish Council meeting in August

We plan to co opt our new members to the Council at our next meeting on the 11th September at 7.30pm in the village Hall

We would like to thank Graham and Helen Lofting for taking on the task of Editors of Stoke News.

A reminder that everyone is welcome to the training session on CPR and using the defibrillator in the village on Saturday 9th September at 10.30am in the village Hall.

This training is free of charge sponsored by the W.I and the Parish Council

We are completing the Emergency and Incident response Plan for the village which will be available on the village web site in September.

Parking in the village square continues to pose a threat to public safety, particularly parking on the blind bend outside the Old Bakery opposite the Royal Oak. Please can we respectfully ask that people avoid parking on this spot.

If anyone is interested in joining our Village Fete Committee to plan this much enjoyed annual event please let us know. The next fete is planned for Saturday 6th July 2024

HOTV News

Despite the varied weather the summer holiday season has provided steady trading although our costs continue to increase.

The food offerings in the Royal Oak are receiving very favourable reviews. This success is due to the tremendous effort by Jenna and Phil. The shop is undergoing a few changes and Jo and our band of volunteers are putting in a huge effort to ensure that the shop is viable and a valuable asset to the community.

We have successfully secured a grant of £15,976 from the Valencia Communities Fund for improvements to our kitchen equipment. As a result, we are upgrading a number of the older appliances and equipment in the kitchen. These changes can be carried over into any wider improvements we make to the building in our phase 3 plans. We have Nick and Olivia to thank for their sterling work in submitting this application.

The skittle alley is being refurbished (thanks to volunteers) and we are looking at options for further improvement of the building to support our future needs, particularly the toilet facilities, disabled access, kitchen, dining and cafe area. Further details can be seen at - @<https://www.stokestgregory.org/businesses/hotv-2/hotv-news/> Simon Dauncey has now left the HOTV management committee and we are very grateful to him for his contribution. In particular his experience, skills and perspective have been crucial in relaunching the Royal Oak as a successful pub and food venue. He will be sorely missed as we consolidate the success he has helped create.

We are looking to add to our team of paid pot washers and bar staff and need new faces to join our enthusiastic team of volunteers. We aim to make volunteering fun, friendly, stimulating and to give a real sense of doing something to benefit the village.

If you are a HOTV member, would like to actively contribute to the running of the Royal Oak, and feel that you may have relevant skills such as financial, retail, marketing or just pots of enthusiasm, please consider volunteering for the management committee.

If you can't offer specific help but want to support the enterprise, please consider helping behind the scenes, sorting newspapers in the mornings, setting up, cleaning, helping to unpack deliveries etc. These are all vital activities that underpin the running of the Royal Oak business and keep it open!

If you are interested in helping, please pop into the Shop, Pub or email at contact@hotvssg.org or telephone 07842992825 to find out more about the roles.

Contacts General enquiries – email contact@hotvssg.org
Shop - email shop@hotvssg.org - Facebook Hotvshop - phone 07842992825
Pub - royaloakssg@gmail.com - Facebook Royal Oak Stoke St Gregory - phone 01823490602

TABLE TENNIS - WEDNESDAY MORNINGS OR EVENINGS - JOIN THE CROWD

Think you are too old for table tennis? Unlikely - most of our players are 60+! Or too young? Again, unlikely - we encourage youngsters from age 12 and up, with our current youngest aged 15. Not played for a few years (or decades)? Not a problem - most of us are returners after playing in our younger days. We find players of all ages and standards mix together for an enjoyable time for all.

No membership required - just come along when you are available. All equipment provided. Charges are £3 for Wed morning (WOMEN ONLY SESSION), or £2 for Wed evening all-comers (£1 for youngsters). First week no charge.

So why not give it a try? Join us at the Williams Hall:

WEDNESDAY 1000-1200 (WOMEN ONLY) - more info from Jo Valentine (tel 01823 698529)

WEDNESDAY 1900-2100 (ALL COMERS) - info from Paul Fielding (tel 01823 490565)

COUNCILLOR VACANCY – NOTICE OF CO-OPTION

Stoke St Gregory Parish Council

North Curry and Monkton Ward

VACANCY FOR THREE COUNCILLORS TO BE FILLED BY CO-OPTION

Are you passionate about your community? Can you spare a few hours a week for the benefit of your village? If so, your Parish Council needs you!

The above Parish Council will consider filling by co-option a casual vacancy for a Councillor at its meeting to be held on

Monday 11th September 2023

7.30pm in The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory.

Anyone interested in serving the community in this way and wanting to become a candidate for co-option should obtain an application form for candidacy from the clerk

ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk (also available on the parish council website www.stokestgregory.org)

Completed application forms should be returned to the clerk by: 8th September 2023

Information on eligibility, the role of the parish council and its schedule of meetings may be obtained from the Clerk.

Kelly de Silva Clerk to Stoke St Gregory Parish Council

ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk 07701 053 903

The Willow Set

**Preschool, Sun Up Sun Down Club and Moor Fun Holiday Club
Charity Number: 1014565**

We are an Outstanding rural Preschool, Wrap Around Care and Holiday Club established for more than 30 years. We have spaces available from September 2023.

We offer:

5 day a week opening all year round - Monday to Friday 7.30am to 5.30pm

A rich and diverse learning environment for 2 – 4 year olds at Willowset Preschool

Free places for Government funded eligible 2, 3, and 4 year olds
Places for children aged from 2-14 in our Sun Up Sun Down wrap around care

Moor Fun Holiday Club which opens every holiday for children aged 2-14 from any school

Fully qualified staff (EYPS/BA HONS/NVQ's/Forest School etc)
Ofsted OUTSTANDING three inspections in a row
Special needs provisions

Why not have a look at our website: www.willowsetpreschool.org.uk, Facebook page, e mail us for more information or just pop in and meet the staff

E mail: admin@willowset.org.uk Telephone: 01823 491567

North Curry Youth Football Club

Come and join our aspiring community football club!

To support our ambitions we are seeking volunteers in the form of football coaches, social media and marketing support, fundraising, volunteer co-coordinator and support from anyone willing to visit us on a Saturday or Sunday.

In particular this coming season we are really keen to find someone to help cut grass and line the pitches, we have some of the best facilities and equipment in the area and have applied to include the Stoke St Gregory football pitch for training and fixtures, fingers crossed!

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Vince Jeffery (club welfare officer) via email v47j@icloud.com or phone 01823 490486

For any other enquiries please contact: Jon Carter (chairman) email jonathan.carter@hotmail.co.uk or phone 07852007299

St Gregory Players "Tons of Money"

Looking forward to the autumn, we are putting on a new production later this year - Tons of Money (by Will Evans and Valentine, adapted by Alan Ayckbourn).

This hilarious play is a traditional "Aldwych farce", set and first produced in 1922. It's a classic tale of debts, inheritances, impostors and mistaken identities, set in Aubrey Allington's Marlow home. Ayckbourn updated the script in the 1980's, changing some gags but essentially keeping the basic story. The revised version was produced by the National Theatre in 1986 starring Michael Gambon and Simon Cadell.

The production will be staged at the Williams Hall, as usual on 30 November – 2 December.

Any questions – please contact Mike Wolfman (Chair – mikewolfy@talk21.com) or Neil Morgan (nmorgan117@aol.com) The play is cast, but additional backstage help is always welcome. We look forward to seeing you! Online ticketing will be announced in due course.

Stoke Environment Group

In early June SEG held its third Envirofair which was very successful. Many more people visited, and we had very encouraging feedback from our exhibitors. All – without exception – asked if they could return next year. We have started planning Envirofair 24 and we hope you will support this family event.

In July we held a bio-blitz session in cooperation with our friends at Somerset Wildlife Trust and Somerset Botany Group. Those that attended learned about citizen science and how, by using our smartphones, we can collect data that will be used nationally and regionally to help protect our wonderful environment. On 2 or 3 September (weather dependent), we will hold a family 'Bat Detective' evening. Again, with the help and guidance of SWT, we will use our smartphones to track down some of our local bat population, identify the species, hear a representation of their high-frequency calls and save the data as part of the national Big Bat Count. Go to the SWT website and look for the event under 'What's On' – tickets are free so do please come along.

We have recently taken over the management of the Community Orchard and have plans how we might make it more accessible and attractive. It will take a few months, but we hope that everyone will want to go and enjoy this quiet green space – and pick some fruit at the same time!

SEG is also working on refurbishing the bus stop near the Royal Oak and re-purposing the Telephone Box in Willey Road – go and have a look!

Finally, SEG can report that it is actively working on actions arising from the Community Plan that was published in March 2023. This was a well-supported exercise with many residents completing the questionnaire and offering suggestions on how they would like to see improvements made in our community. Importantly, every single student at our School contributed and put forward their ideas – could there possibly be a better reason to roll up our sleeves and act? We will be examining closely the actions to which SEG can contribute and we urge all other community groups to do the same.

If you would like more information on working with SEG or are just inquisitive, please contact us on envirostoke@yahoo.com or 07837 764367. More information can be found on our Facebook page,

Envirostoke.

2nd 3rd Sept. Bat Detective. 13th Sept AGM. 17th Sept Orchard Cleaning

18th Oct Monthly Meeting. 21st 22nd Oct Bulb Planting.

15th Nov Monthly Meeting. 18th 19th Spinney Weekend

Church of St Gregory Urgent Repairs in the Lady Chapel

If you have been into the church in recent weeks you will have seen scaffolding in an area towards the front of the nave where a section of the wall is crumbling. The problem has been examined by our Church Architect, a structural engineer and a firm of Restoration builders and the cause appears to be the two very large stone memorials which we believe were suspended from the wall way back in the 19th century. These have now been removed but, as yet, no estimation of the repair work involved has been offered and we have no idea how much the cost will be. Updates will be available in due course but most readily in Benefice magazines.

Hire of the Church Room

The Church Room has had a new electric heating system installed and is available for hire for meetings, classes etc, at £12.50 per session (morning/afternoon/evening) plus any additional electricity through a meter. It is also suitable for children's parties, small family gatherings/wedding receptions etc; prices on request which will include use of crockery, cutlery and glasses. We are happy to arrange a visit for you to see the facilities.

Book by email to Diana Silk (email@dianasilk.co.uk)

Pat Sollis - The End of an Era

For well over 40 years Pat Sollis has been the treasurer of the Parish Church. She has seen at least five Vicars and two Interregnums come and go, plus many Wardens and PCC Secretaries. She has been the corporate memory and guardian of continuity in Church affairs for these many years, a veritable pillar of strength. It is difficult to find suitable words to describe her contribution because it has been immense in every sense of that single word. She will be hard to follow but we welcome with confidence Steve Loveridge, our organist for many years, as he takes on the additional task of PCC Treasurer. Thank you Pat, for your decades of faithful and diligent service to the Church and the wider Village community.

Changes in contact details will be in the Benefice magazines and on the church noticeboard.

Harvest Festival – Sunday 1st October at 11 o'clock

Our Harvest Celebration service this year will be conducted by Rev Rob Walrond, the Diocesan Rural Advisor. As we are slowly returning to slightly lost traditions following the pandemic, this will be followed on Monday 2nd October by a Harvest Supper (hopefully, with an auction of produce). If you would like a ticket to this event (£12.50) please contact Pat Sollis on 490750 or Jane White on 490508.

Monthly Patterns for Services through the Autumn

First Sunday	1100	Eucharist
Second Sunday	0830	Prayer Book Eucharist
Third Sunday	1100	Eucharist
Fourth Sunday	1100	Eucharist

Services in the other churches of the Benefice are on the Athelney website.

Remembrance Sunday (12th November) – separate arrangements will be displayed on the church and village shop notice boards.

Petanque for Everyone.

The Stoke St. Gregory Women's Institute is proud to announce the completion of the Petanque Court at the Village Hall. This community facility is available to be used by anyone, so whether you have played before or just want to try the opportunity is there. Boules is a simple game rather akin to arial bowls but with less walking. Its main characteristic is that it is a game for social pleasure, so why not give it a go. The court is available to use at any time, no booking is required, but you need your own boules.

There will be a grand opening at 4pm on Saturday 2nd September at the Village Hall with an informal tournament, but with the incentive of a prize for the winning team. Teams of three are invited to participate in what we hope will be an enjoyable experience for all. There will be a bar and a raffle.

The WI would like to thank the Parish Council for the allocation of funds, and all who have been involved in bringing this community facility to reality.'

Women's Institute

CPR Demonstration

Saturday 9th September,

10:30am in the Village Hall.

Stoke St Gregory WI and Stoke St Gregory Parish Council are holding a joint venture for all local Villagers.

A CPR demonstration presented by Dr Hickman and Dr Winter from North Curry Health Centre.

Aspects of how to deal with Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation will be displayed at the Village Hall starting at 10:30am.

All Villagers are welcome!

No admission fee but donations please to SAVES

Refreshments available

Stoke St Gregory Women's Institute meet back in the Village Hall after the summer events on Tuesday 12th September at 7pm.

There will be a talk on who and what The Samaritans are. October is an open meeting so anyone can attend (both male and female) as a visitor to hear Dave Evans give us the history of Stoke St Gregory WI - a presentation not to be missed if you have a local history interest. Followed by the November meeting which should be filled with laughs while we play Christmas bingo with prizes. Members are reminded that at the November meeting there will be the annual craft display.

Fancy coming along to see what the WI is all about? Visitors are most welcome for a £4 entrance fee.

Amelia Holt President 07985317252

All Villagers are invited to a charity lunch being held by Stoke St Gregory WI at the Parish Room on Monday 25th September from 12:30pm in aid of ACWW.

The Associated Country Women of the World is a charity founded in 1929 to bring together rural women and their organisations all over the world. The membership now spans 82 countries and the priority is to empower rural women in all their diversity. Come along for a warm welcome, soup and a cheese board and in return provide a donation to ACWW.

Parish House to Workhouse by Dave Evans

Stoke's 'Church House' is mentioned frequently in the parish records. This would have been where most village entertainments took place, although there is no record of an attached brewery. Collections would be made at events, which would be given to the 'common stock' for the benefit of the village. The building was in the Square, approximately astride the front gate of Stoke House. It is feasible that the field opposite the church would have been the local 'butts' at a time when archery was compulsory in every village. It may be coincidence, but part of that ground was once called 'bottoms'. In 1739 it was decided to convert the Church House into a Workhouse for the village, as reported in the Parish Book:

"On Sunday ye 10th February 1739, ye Churchwardens and overseers of our Parish of Gregory Stoke spake of a Vestry meeting to be on Wednesday ye 13th of the same instant, concerning a workhouse for ye Poor of the same. Then ye Ch.Ws. overseers with other inhabitants of ye said Parish whose hands are hereunto subscribed did consent and agree at ye said vestry meeting to have the Parish or Church House thoroughly repaired to or for a workhouse for the use of the poor of our said Parish and to this agreement we have hereunto sett our hands the day of the Vestry meeting above said." Various payments are recorded, including "Tho. Crease glazing ye WorkHouse: £1.17.9d"

In 1785, there were 18 people in the workhouse, and James House, overseer, received 6 shillings (30p) per month for each inmate. However, at a vestry meeting in May 1793 it was: "... agreed upon to put down the Poor House and allowing the people abiding therein a monthly pay each person according as need shall require." In 1820 it was agreed to sell the building. It was bought by two local entrepreneurs who used the stone to rebuild Stoke House.

Williams Hall

Regular weekly activities:

Monday evening - Brownies and Cub Scouts

Tuesday evening - Scouts

Wed morning - Women's table tennis (contact Jo Valentine 698529)

Wed afternoon - bridge (contact Tom Stobie 490609)

Wed evening - All-comers table tennis (contact Paul Fielding 490565)

Thursday evening - yoga (contact Karina Middleton 07786 436599)

Regular monthly activities:

Parish Council - 2nd Monday evening

WI - 2nd Tuesday evening

Levellers - 3rd Tuesday evening

Coffee & Books - last Saturday morning

1 Sept Charity band event

2 Sept Petanque opening

9 Sept 1000 Defibrillator training - public event

12 Sept WI monthly meeting (evening)

19 Sept Levellers meeting (afternoon)

24 Sept Big Breakfast (Argyle Players)

30 Sept Coffee & Books 1000-1200

28 Oct Coffee & Books 1000-1200

11 Nov Stoke St Gregory Village Breakfast

25 Nov Coffee & Books 1000-1200

30 Nov-2 Dec St Gregory Players production

Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church

Dates for your diary:

Messy Church: starts at 10am with breakfast. Crafts, singing, Bible stories – fun for all the family. Next dates: 3rd Sept, 8th Oct & 5th Nov.

Harvest celebration service

Sun 24th Sept 10.30am

Tear Fund Big Quiz: Sat 7th October at 7pm. Teams of up to 6 people.

TWiGS Babies and toddler Group

Restarting on 7th Sept for babies and toddlers and their carers, and then every Thursday in term time 9.30 to 11.30am.

Joint Remembrance service at Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church on Sunday 12th November at 10.45am.

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!

Your nearest

Brownie Group



Brownies
1st North Curry Brownies
interested Tel 07761238933

Girls have nonstop fun, learning and adventure
for ages 7 to 10

At Brownies, we welcome all girls to explore their creative side, get out into the great outdoors and start to learn to look after themselves, others and the world we live in.



Girlguiding
Registered charity number: 306016