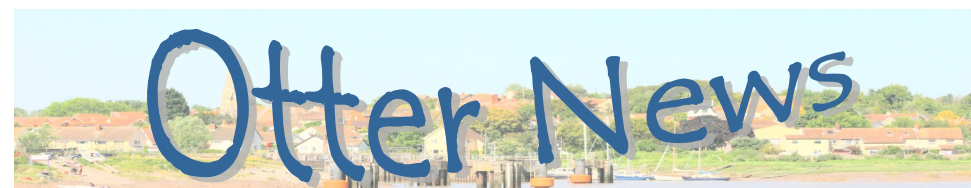


## YOUR GUIDE to WHATS ON in COMBWICH

Activity	Date & Times	Venue	Contact Details
Short Mat Bowls	Every Mon & Wednesday 7.30 - 9.30 pm	Otterhampton Village Hall	
Art Class	Every Monday 2.00 - 4.00 pm	Otterhampton Village Hall	John Bailey 652540
Brownies	Mondays Starts 5.45 pm	Otterhampton School	Liz Brown 652687
Badminton Adults	Every Thursday 6.30 - 9.00pm	Otterhampton School	Colin Beasley 07531808303
Badminton Teens (Limited Num- bers)	Every Thursday 5.30 - 6.30 pm	Otterhampton School	Gary Perret 652958
Talks (winter only)	Monthly, Every 3rd Thursday 8.00 - 9.00 pm	Otterhampton Village Hall	OPRA Secretary 652399
Walks	Monthly, every 3rd Sun 10.30 am onwards	Various	Barry Leathwood 652399
Chat & Chill	Every Friday 7.30 - 9.00 pm	Otterhampton Village Hall	Reg Wilkes 652339
Combwich Village Market	Monthly, every 2nd Sat 10.00 am - 12 noon	Otterhampton Village Hall	Elizabeth Marriott 653308
Coffee Morning	Every Friday 10.00 am - 12 noon	Otterhampton Village Hall	Helen Jowett 652322
Little Otters	Every School Day (see school website for times).	Otterhampton School	Julie Salter 653052
Patchwork and Quilting	Every Wednesday 10.00 am - 12 noon	Otterhampton Village Hall	Liz Browning 653889
Choir	2nd & 4th Thursday monthly 7.00pm to 8.00pm.	Otterhampton Village Hall	Nicole Wigley 653431
WI	Monthly, every 3rd Thursday 7.30 pm	Stockland Village Hall	Pam Woodley 653908
Harbour View Social Club	Every Fri. & Sat. 7pm - 12 pm Every Mon. 7 pm - 11.30 pm	Otterhampton Village Hall	Andy Turnbull 653222
If your organisation would like to be added to the 'What's on Guide' please contact John on 653308.			



Find us on [www.combwich.org.uk](http://www.combwich.org.uk)

January 2014

### Otterhampton Parish Council Newsletter

#### DEAR VILLAGERS

**VERY BEST WISHES FOR 2014**

**FROM ALL YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS**

What an end to 2013 and start to 2014, howling gales, non stop rain and floods everywhere. The common was quite a sight with the pavilion apparently 'marooned' in the over flowing River Parrett. A good job it was on 'stilts'! With all this adverse weather have a thought for any of your elderly neighbours or anyone who may have mobility difficulties. Pop round and say 'Hi' and make sure they are 'OK'.

The Coffee Morning and the refurbished Harbour View Social Club are a good place to meet up and have a chat with friends and to make new ones. If you have difficulty getting to either of these, just contact any of the organisers, they will be delighted to help, their telephone numbers are on the back page.

The smell of new paint will greet you when you go into the Village Hall, what a difference, with yet more to come. The committee has worked hard in 2013, with the hall being awarded Hallmark 1 & 2 which are national quality awards for excellence. Our congratulations to all those involved in this achievement.

We can look forward to further changes to the Steart wetlands with the opening of further paths, the breaching of the River Parrett and the changing landscape, something new for everyone.

Remember if you would like to feature your club/organization in our newsletter please contact any Parish Councillor or email to: [jwmarriott@talktalk.net](mailto:jwmarriott@talktalk.net)

## **PARISH ISSUES**

As everyone understands, our parish villages are and will be subject to a great deal of change. In adapting to this, the Parish Council will seek to ensure this is done in a manner of least disturbance for residents, upholds the safety of villagers and restricts the pressures to urbanise our rural environment. The opening of the new bridle way is welcomed for walkers, horse riders and cyclists. Issues have arisen, including a large increase in vehicles on the track way and Common in Combswich. Whilst some landowners and user groups are perceived to have a private right of access, we remind everyone that, from leaving the metalled surface on Riverside there is no public right of way for vehicles, both along the track and across the common. This restriction includes no parking on the common land. The Common is owned by the Parish Council and is registered as a village green which imposes severe restrictions on what legally can take place. Unfortunately due to the real and possibly future increase in use (and miss-use) the council are obliged to restrict vehicular access. So far this has been carried out in a low key manner which it is hoped will suffice. We acknowledge and regret any inconvenience for residents who are affected.

The popularity of the area for dog walking has also produced problems. The bin for dog waste on the Common is now full after two days and the council is looking into purchasing a larger bin. If the bin is full please do not dump your waste bags in the grass but take it home or use some of the less pressured bins provided in the village. We will be working with the dog wardens to possibly impose fines and prosecutions if necessary, for all the 'doggy' problems so evident, on any less considerate owners.

The bus shelter has been repaired and the cracked stonework is being monitored. This is only a temporary solution but it is safe to use at present.

EDF and the District/County Councils are conducting a feasibility study into a safe cycle route for Hinkley Point workers. It appears two of the preferred options would entail commuter cyclists directed through Combswich and onto the new bridle way network.



# **Questions about... Housing, Employment, Money Management, Benefits, Debt?**

**Get Help and Advice from:**

- Sedgemoor Citizens Advice Bureau**
- Sedgemoor District Council**
- Bridgwater and District Credit Union**

**Every Wednesday 1 - 4pm at  
Cannington United Reformed Church**



Sedgemoor Citizens  
Advice Bureau



## **AFFORDABLE HOMES**

The provision of six affordable homes moves a little closer as your parish council and Sedgemoor District Council search for suitable land. More details on the enclosed leaflet and on [www.combwich.org.uk](http://www.combwich.org.uk)

## **VILLAGE AGENT - UPDATE**

Hello everyone – where has this year gone?

It only seems five minutes since I last sat down to bring you up to date on how I have been spending my time and now, by the time you read this, Christmas will have gone and we will be into the new year.

Winter can be a very lonely and worrying time especially with the ever present worry of mounting fuel bills. If you are feeling a little isolated please do not hesitate to contact me, if I do not answer the phone and you would like to leave a message please do so and I will get back to you as soon as I can.

A simple way to help those who are elderly and lonely in your area could be by volunteering. Do you like hosting tea parties, would you be prepared to host a tea party for older people who have difficulty in getting out, or perhaps be prepared to give up a little time once a month? Then you might like to think about contacting Helen Ker who is the co-ordinator for CONTACT the elderly. Helen would love to hear from you by phone on 0800 716 543 or e-mail [Helen.ker@contact-the-elderly.org.uk](mailto:Helen.ker@contact-the-elderly.org.uk). This service gives so much pleasure to some of our senior citizens, you will meet some lovely people with interesting stories to tell and you will know that you are helping to make a difference.

In the meantime may I wish you All a Very Prosperous New Year.

And remember I am your Village Agent and you can reach me on 07572 023432 or by email: [ybulmanva@somersetccc.org.uk](mailto:ybulmanva@somersetccc.org.uk)

All advice is free and confidential.

We wish to assure residents that the PC will highlight any issues for residents that will arise should the 'project board' decide to pursue this concept. We may resist Combwich being used as a 'cheap' option, rather than a designated route alongside the C182, dependant on possible usage. The safety and amenity of Combwich residents is paramount. We must stress it is early days, with no funding available as yet.

These are all contentious issues and the PC are happy to discuss them with residents either at the monthly meetings held in the village hall, or by contacting the Chair (01278 653240) or the Clerk (01278 652626) of the Parish Council or indeed any Parish Councillor.

## **VILLAGE HALL**

Good and bad news from the village hall. The good news is that much needed redecoration has been carried out in many areas of the hall. Our very sincere thanks to Andy Turnbull who persuaded Balfour Beatty & EDF to provide a team of craftsmen, for a short period of time as part of a community project. Andy with Nick Tester & Andy Bryant have also worked in their own time as well. The VH only had to supply the paint 'by the gallon'. It has been a great boost to have such enthusiastic help from everyone.

The only area that can't be decorated is the main hall and here is the bad news. The VH committee have had a surveyor to inspect the damp wall in the main hall. The report indicated, that along with rising damp, we also have water penetration from poor guttering, inadequate felting and missing external wall tiling. Rainwater is seeping down inside the upper timber frame wall and causing the plasterwork to seriously deteriorate. Remedial work to repair and weather proof the wall will cost in the region of £10,000.

To raise this amount the committee will need to apply for grants and carry out fund raising events for match funding. They need the support of the whole community at these events.

Remember the village hall belongs to everyone and needs to be preserved for future generations to use.



## **THE END OF AN ERA**



Peter Shaw Clerk to Otterhampton Parish Council will retire in March after 25 years of service to the council and the community.

He was formerly a quantity surveyor with Sedgemoor District Council and then in private practice. In partnership with his wife Wendy who did all the typing and much more, Peter guided the council through a host of issues facing the community. Sadly Wendy passed away in 2009.

Looking back, Peter believes the campaign to have the Ship Inn 'listed' when developers wanted to pull it down, as one of the more significant achievements. It was finally won when he and Wendy together with Alan Choudry, then chair of the council, went to London to make their case. The pub closed, but the building remains as attractive private homes in Ship Lane. Another achievement was the purchase of Wharf Road from British Nuclear Fuels and the transformation from what was effectively a dump to a landscaped access road to the Parrett Trail and the Comwich Ponds, the latter unhappily closed to the public now.

Peter and the council, supported by local residents, took on Westbury Homes who had flouted planning regulations in the building of houses at the bottom of Nursery Close. They were forced to demolish one house as it was over a metre too high and start again. He also lists high among the achievements during his time, the welcome feature at the entrance to Comwich. Recent years have seen increased work for the clerk and the council with the proposed Hinkley Point C developments at Comwich Wharf and the Laydown area, and of course the more welcome developments at Steart.

Throughout the last 25 years and numerous changes in membership of the council, Peter has always been there to guide, service and support the councillors. His knowledge of the law and procedures and gentle persuasive skills has been of immense value to the council and the wider community in so many ways.

Peter is looking forward to having the time for more travel, but will be heavily involved in the process of finding his replacement. He will be greatly missed on the council but will continue to live in Comwich and maintain a keen interest in local affairs.

## **Harbour View Social Club**

Find us on facebook.com/harbourviewsocialclub



Opening Hours.  
Fri 7pm - 12pm  
Sat 7pm - 12pm  
Mon - 7pm - 11.30

After a recent refurbishment and the election of a new committee the new Harbour View Social Club is now open again with regular hours. Our staff will be offering a warm and friendly welcome to all of our customers and we are planning a wide variety of family events throughout the year.

Our member numbers have now reached 100 and the response has been overwhelming from the community. We welcome private functions if required and more skittle teams, if you would like to see our facilities please contact us to arrange a look around.

Following a survey that was carried out in the village, we now have a new selection of drinks in our bar, a good variety of bottled wines, and bottled ales from Butcombe brewery, we hope to grow this in the future if our customer numbers carry on increasing.

We have a facebook page and will update any new events and opening times as they happen, please be aware that we may open other days if a special request is made for parties etc. For those that don't have access to the internet please see our blackboards located in the club windows, and posters that will be displayed in various locations. We will also be updating our opening times and events on the village website [comwich.org.uk](http://comwich.org.uk)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has been involved in the refurbishment and the running of the club, also the village hall committee who have been very supportive in our quest to have the facility used in the best possible way.

We look forward to seeing you in the future, and would welcome any ideas that will help the club prosper in 2014 and beyond.

**Fri 7th Feb Open Mic Night 7 pm - 12pm**

**Please see our posters**

Contacts - Chairman - Andy Turnbull - 01278 653222  
Treasurer - Joy Simcox - 653172  
Secretary - Rod Williams - 651387