



Welcome to Combwich

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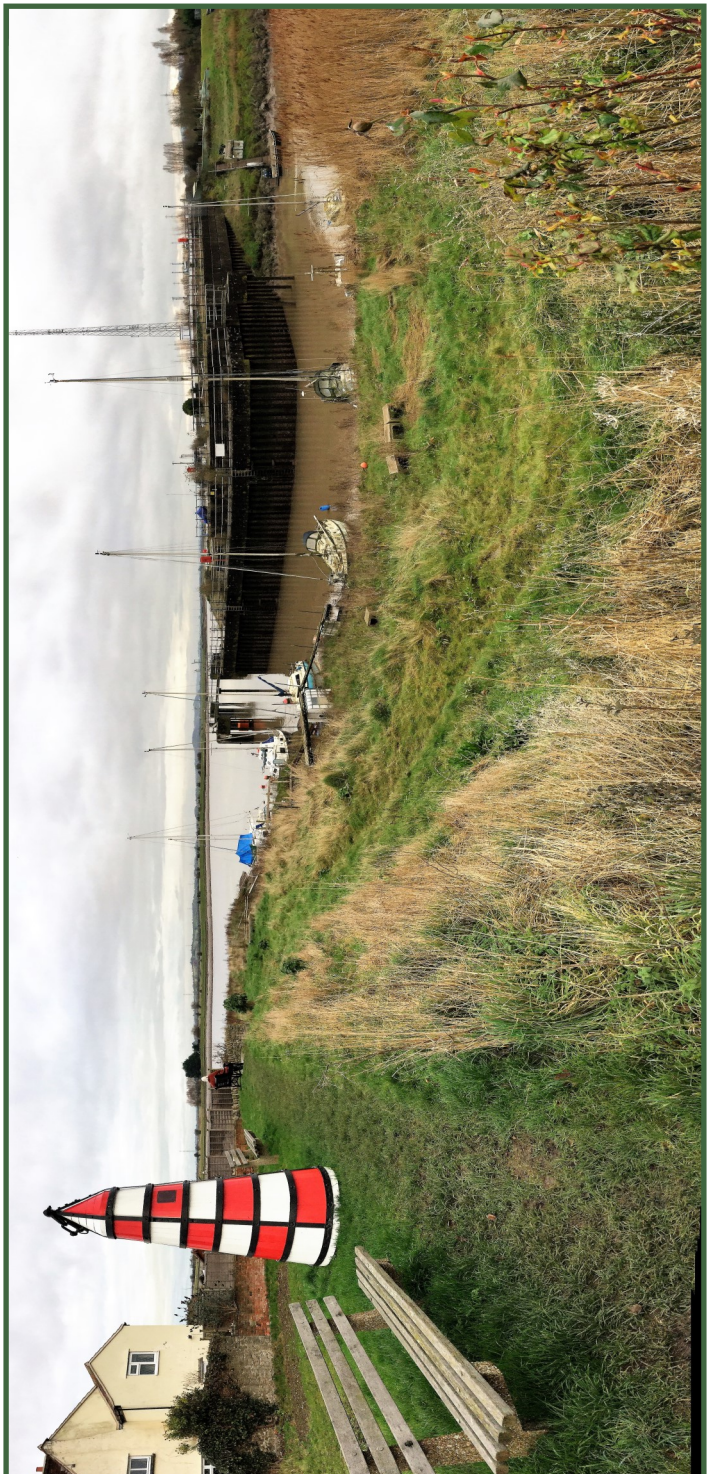
Your village website

www.combwich.org.uk is the place to go for up to date information on what is happening in the parish and much more. Take a look to see what you have been missing. You can subscribe by adding your email address to the home page to receive email notices of new posts to ensure you don't miss anything.

Hinkley Point C has the final go ahead as we all know and following a meeting of EDF representatives with the parish council it is likely that work on the redevelopment of the Combwich Wharf will start later this year, although the precise timing has yet to be confirmed.

This is an exciting project right at the heart of the village, with ringside seats (*see photograph*) to watch work on the remodelling of the wharf, and later the arrival of specially designed barges delivering the 'large indivisible loads' and other materials for the construction of Hinkley Point C. EDF has promised further meetings and will produce display boards explaining the process step by step so that we all know what is going on.

Work on the Wharf will trigger the opportunity for groups in the parish to apply for funding, as the £500,000 allocated to the parish will become available this year too



Otterhampton Offcuts

Snippets from the December 2016 and January 2017 Parish Council meetings

Combwich Wharf – Update by EDF

Ross Edwards and David Eccles (EDF) addressed the meeting supported by Will Barker (the Hinkley C Harbour Master) and members from the Wharf Contractor (Hochtief). Members of the public were also present.

Briefly, EDF expect to start refurbishing the wharf in the second half of 2017, some investigation work will be carried out before the start of the refurbishment. It is intended that the refurbished wharf will accommodate 90m x 30m barges bringing in Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) thus helping to reduce traffic on the roads. It is expected that the wharf will become operational within 2 years of starting the refurbishment.

Questions and Answers included:



Q Could the pile driving noise be minimised?

A There are very strict controls and limits on noise and vibration as per the agreed planning consent. There will be 3 noise monitoring stations set up in the vicinity of the build. Pile driving in the main, will be limited to 2 x 3 month periods plus other occasional ground works.

Q Size of the Laydown Area?

A Timescales for the construction and size of the laydown area are under review. It will need to be available when the wharf becomes fully operational. Size will be limited to that granted under the planning consent that EDF are looking to work within. The laydown area will be managed by a separate project manager.

Q How will the new wharf impinge on the pill?

A It exceeds the existing structure by 1 – 2 metres so it is not a major encroachment. There are no plans to dredge the pill.

Q Road and Footpath Access?

A There will be a new purpose built road behind Combwich labs, slightly raised re flood risk calculations. The Haul Road will be the access route and not through Combwich. The existing footpath will be diverted to the other side of the fence so should not cause any inconvenience.

Q Combwich Wharf workforce?

A There will be a small workforce. The compound car park is limited to 30 cars. If this is insufficient or if it may be otherwise appropriate to do so, the staff may be mini-bused in.

Finally EDF has undertaken to keep residents, the parish council and Combwich Cruising Club fully informed as progress is made. They will develop maps/boards to share with the parish council and it was suggested that the contractor attend the Friday coffee mornings so that any questions raised may be answered. EDF will also regularly attend future parish council meetings to keep the council informed.

Contact details for the parish council

PARISH COUNCILLORS

John Berry (Chairman)	01278 652682
Dick Best (Vice Chairman)	01278 651063
Barry Leathwood	01278 652399
Bob Birkenhead	01278 653127
Julie Evans	01278 652735
Rachel Perrett	01278 652958
Dave Cather	07720 313041
Mrs Aly Prowse (Clerk)	01278 652426
otterhamptonpcclerk@gmail.com	

County and District Ward Members

John Edney (County)	01278 653026
Mike Caswell (District)	01278 652043
Julie Pay (District)	01278 732956

EDF Community Impact Mitigation Fund & Otterhampton Parish Project Team (OPPT)

As a result of the work at Combwich Wharf, the £500k CIM fund is likely to be available from May 2017. Quite a lot of work gathering project ideas from the community took place in 2016 via various consultations and an Open Day. This work, led by OPPT members, established the Play Area as the number one project. The Play Area was completed using grant funding from elsewhere so we still have £500k to spend. We will be reconvening OPPT to revisit the remaining projects identified to determine if they are still required and seek any new projects which may have arisen in the intervening period. Whilst some parish council members are on the team, the parish council is keen for OPPT to be community led. Therefore if anyone else would like to be part of OPPT for this exciting and rewarding phase, please contact the Clerk as soon as possible.

£500k

New Parish Councillor

We are pleased to welcome Dave Cather as our new councillor. Dave lives at the Towers, Riverside, Combwich. He was co-opted on to the Council at the January 2017 meeting following the resignation of Heath Bennett.



Parish Precept (Budget)

Prior to the December parish council meeting we met to discuss the Parish Precept for 2017/18. This is the amount of money we require to discharge our duties within our remit and powers as a parish council. We reviewed the expenditure on a line by line basis in determining the need to increase the precept from £18500 to £20000. The rise of £1500 is required to meet statutory increases such as insurance costs, clerks' salary and annual audit fees. Other increases include weekly inspection costs for the play area (recommendation by RoSPA); increased grant to the Village Hall as per an agreed 5% of the total precept; additional litter and dog bin costs, and to ensure we retain 25% of the total precept in reserves (as recommended by the Somerset Association of Local Councils). The additional £1500 will increase the average amount paid by a Band D tax payer by £5.65 per annum.

Highways

We are in the process of arranging for Somerset County Council to provide a period of speed readings in Combwich. This will record the volume of cars and their respective speeds. This may help us determine whether speeding is a serious problem (or not) in the village.

The replacement reflective safety markers at Dame Withycombe Hill have been installed, but we had also been expecting chevron signage. This will be taken up with Highways.

We will be installing a couple of bollards across the entrance to the play area to prevent vehicles parking there which currently reduces the visibility of children entering and exiting the play area safely.

New Trees

Four trees were planted on the common adjacent to the play area, and another one opposite the village hall by the parish council as part of a village enhancement programme. Thanks to John Berry, Aly and Robin Prowse, and Barry Leathwood.



Happy New Year

We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year and to thank the community for its support over this past year which has been a very busy, but fulfilling one.

Notes from your Village Agent

Izzy Silvester

Nominate your policing heroes now!

The Be Proud Awards aim to highlight the very best of Avon and Somerset Constabulary, acknowledging and rewarding dedicated officers, staff and volunteers for all their hard work in ensuring our communities are safe and feel safe.

The awards recognise outstanding work in the following categories:

- Neighbourhood Officer of the Year
- Response Officer of the Year
- Investigator of the Year
- Police Staff Member of the Year
- Police Support Volunteer of the Year
- Special Constable of the Year
- Policing Team of the Year

Specialist Operations Award

Find out more and nominate someone today visit www.beproudawards.com

The closing date for nominations is **January 27, 2017**.

Nomination forms are also available in police stations, local community buildings, libraries and on request please call 01275 816377.

If you are finding life a bit hard going at the moment, I may be able to help.

Please phone me Izzy Silvester your village agent on 07931 018045, leave me your name and number and I will ring you back.

Or email me on izzy@somerset.rcc.org.uk

I do only work part-time so it may take a day or two for me to return your call.

Thank you



I have come to the conclusion that politics are too serious a matter to be left to the politicians.

Charles De Gaulle (1890 - 1970)

News from Combwich and District WI

Vanessa J Smith (President)

November was a very exciting time for Combwich & District WI with the celebrations at Otterhampton Village Hall on 24th November marking our 65th Year.

The '50's' themed evening was a great success and was very well supported. The Quantock Musical Theatre Company were on top form as usual and sang some songs from the 50's and rounded off with some Christmas Carols. The Raffle was fantastic and the table overloaded with party food. The bar was open and everyone was indeed in the party spirit.



Earlier this month on Thursday 15th November at our monthly meeting we welcomed Tom Jacobs to demonstrate the art of 'Water colour painting', and we all had great fun having a creative dabble!

On Thursday 15th December, members enjoyed yet another 'Knees up!' As if our 65th Party had not been enough!! This time to celebrate Christmas and the finalisation of 2016, and looking ahead to 2017, which promises to be another good WI year full of exciting, informative or creative speakers. This years programme is hopefully one to appeal to everyone with lots of outings planned or in the pipeline.



I was not able to join members on our Christmas meeting, but understand they had a joyful time with mulled wine and lots of party food and 'Sue's Santa Drive'! Carol Thompson won the competition for the best wrapped 'Secret Santa', which was carefully judged by Trevor Webb.

Many members attended the County WI Carol Festival at Wells Cathedral on 7th December, as usual making a day of it; we had a fantastic time looking round the Christmas Market, a chance to get some more interesting Christmas gifts and then had a wonderful luncheon before the service.

Also on Friday 9th December, several of our members attended The Group Carol Service at Stogursey, also a very enjoyable occasion.

Wendy Asplin and myself will be getting together in the new year to discuss a new 'Craft' section for our members and if the weather is pleasing possibly some Country Walks again. So don't be a 'couch potato' in 2017, come and join us, we are of mixed age group and all fun loving creatures, including our eldest member of 93 years young, whose zest for life puts us all to shame!!!!

Combwich & District WI, would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a very Happy and Healthy 2017.

For more information please phone us, we welcome your call – Vanessa J-Smith on 01278 652830 or Brenda Wasley on 01278 446279

OTTERHAMPTON PARISH **VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME-** **OTTER WHEELS**



A Happy New Year one and all; let us hope it will be a happy and peaceful one for our small community.

Otter Wheels, your own car scheme, has now been running for seven months and at the time of writing has completed forty five journeys which although not many compared with some of our sister schemes have been important for those who have used the service.

I am happy to report that we have also been able to welcome two new drivers to our scheme which means we will be able to help more people with transport problems in the months ahead. However drivers, if you have a few hours to spare occasionally and a reliable vehicle we would still love to hear from you; with the cuts in transport services to rural villages car schemes are becoming increasingly important, and drivers are worth their weight in gold so please don't be shy contact Yvonne on 01278 652713 or on our booking line 07925 154216.

Passengers – a reminder if I may, you must be registered with the scheme to be able to use it so please make sure you are registered, forms are available from the post office or any of our drivers.

Best wishes for the year ahead from all at **Otter Wheels**



Otterhampton Parish Recreation Association (OPRA)

Registered Charity Number 1124017



Our guests

OPRA Officers and Committee

Chair

Jacqui Sparks 652069

Secretary

Ann Leathwood 652399

Treasurer

Sue Francis 653663

Vice Chair

Barry Leathwood 652399

Committee

Mary Cornish 653868

Beverly Smith 652595

Di Davie 652141

Felicity Ashworth 653633

100 Club Organisers

Ann Leathwood 652399

Sue Francis 653663

The 100 Club draw takes place every month at the Coffee Morning Otterhampton Village Hall and the winning numbers are displayed in the Post Office and the parish website www.combwich.org.uk shortly afterwards.

If you want to join the 100 Club or become involved in OPRA activities please contact Ann on 652399 or any committee member.



Wine waiter Robert

Christmas is a favourite and busy time for OPRA. The highlight is the over-60's three course Christmas Dinner complete with wine, coffee and mints, all provided without charge, thanks to the OPRA 100 Club. And a host of committee members and volunteers.

A special thanks to Matt who cooked the turkey and roast potatoes, Ray Bollen, Chef Extraordinaire, who organised the kitchen and pulled it all together, and providing the entertainment were Murray Lister and Richard Navoy.

On Sunday following the dinner it was time light the Christmas Tree when quite a crowd, including many with lanterns, turned out to support Sarah Webb for the great switch on.

The unsung hero behind the scenes was Mike Gardener, who with a little help, erected the tree and decorated it, and organised the switch on.



The volunteers who made it all happen



OPRA is always looking ideas for activities and volunteers to help make them happen. If you have ideas to express or want to help, please contact the secretary or one of the committee members for a chat.

The funds which make all our activities possible are raised by the 100 Club whose members pay £1 per week to participate in the draw.

Happy New Year

Spotted a pothole or other road problem?



www.travelsomerset.co.uk

Click on 'Drive' and then
'Report road problems'

 For live travel alerts and information on roadworks follow **@TravelSomerset** on Twitter



Information on local weather and Roads

Somerset County Council's bad weather page:
www.travelsomerset.co.uk/badweather

Feel free to direct people there or to
@TravelSomerset on twitter if they're asking
a question or sharing information.

Also a direct link to Garth Crocker's
Combwich Website below

<http://www.combwich.org.uk/about-otterhampton/our-local-weather/>



Twinning Meeting

Now that the dust has settled after the decision to leave EU and to go ahead with HPC, it may be a good time to think about twinning Combwich/Otterhampton with a European village. Some interest was shown when this idea was floated last Autumn and if we are to take the first steps to make it a reality, we need a meeting.

Anyone prepared to work collectively towards this aim should come along to the Harbour View Social Club on Wednesday 15th March at 7.30pm. It would be helpful to know the response before the set date, but if you just want to turn up that's fine. For more information ring me, John on 652682.



Stay well this Christmas

Winter can be seriously bad for our health but there a number of things you can do to keep you and your family well this winter.

Don't delay in getting your flu jab. The vaccine takes around 10-14 days to be effective so getting vaccinated now will protect you into January when cases of flu are known to increase.



You are eligible to receive a free NHS flu jab from your GP if you:

- are 65 years of age or over
- are pregnant
- have certain medical conditions
- are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill

Here are some top tips about staying well this winter:

- At the first sign of a cough or cold, get immediate advice from your pharmacist before it gets more serious
- Speak to your pharmacist about medicines you should have in stock over winter
- Remember to pick up prescription medications in good time.
- It is important to keep warm in winter, so heat your home to at least 18°C (65°F), if you can, you might prefer your living room to be slightly warmer
- Don't delay, if you are eligible for a free NHS vaccination get it now, it is free because you need it.

Please also look out for the more vulnerable people you know this winter in your community and support them where you can with the Stay Well This Winter advice and make use of all the local help that's available – it could be a lifesaver.

You can watch the NHS Lewisham choir 'Stay Well This Winter' video here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Pzr02FikmU&t=25s>

There is full advice and information to Stay Well This Winter at <https://www.nhs.uk/staywell>

Good Neighbour (ed)

No-one sets out to make life difficult for others, but parking a motor vehicle without care can cause real problems for some. The car parked on the pavement in this photograph makes it impossible for pedestrians to pass without walking on the road, which can be dangerous and is happening all the time in Combwich and elsewhere. It is particularly difficult for parents pushing a buggy, or the disabled in a wheel chair or mobility scooter who are forced out in to the road. If you must park on the pavement, please leave enough room to allow a wheelchair through.



The pavements are essentially designed for pedestrians and not cars, but in real life we understand that streets are too narrow and many houses do not have parking spaces, but we all have to share the available space so a few simple rules for car owners.

Don't force wheelchairs and buggies into the road by indiscriminate parking on the pavement.

Do not obstruct dropped kerbs as these are essential access points for these vehicles.

Do not park across the entrance to the children's play area forcing children and others to suddenly emerge unseen from in between parked cars.

We are fortunate to live in such a lovely area, let us all try to be a good neighbour and try to make life easier for each other.

And the perennial dog fouling issue

This is an ideal place for dog owners with plenty of space to walk them and even to run free (under supervision). Most owners appreciate this and act very responsibly, but



Unfortunately a few don't. Not picking up after your dog is not just an offence it is very unpleasant for others.

The Dog Warden recently came to the village to see the problem areas. She believes, particularly along the Wharf Rd, that the main offender is likely to be the same largish dog.

She will present a higher profile in the village over the next two months and will leave her van in prominent places. If she is supplied with names of offenders she will go and see them to issue a friendly warning and advice. On the spot fines will follow if the offence is repeated. Names of offenders can be passed anonymously to the dog warden by ringing 01278 435210

Persons who allow their dogs to foul and do not remove the deposit are liable to be prosecuted under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and the Dog Control Orders (Prescribed Offences and Penalties, etc) Regulations 2006.

Combwich Community Choir

**Sing for fun in a friendly group
2nd and 4th Thursday of the month
7 - 8pm
Otterhampton Village Hall**

**Come and try us if you love to sing ...
free taster session for newcomers!**

**Any questions call: Nicole Wigley
01278 653431**

nicole@musicwithnicole.co.uk

Avian Flu - article written by retired veterinary surgeon *Dick Best*



The present spread of cases of Avian Influenza in the country is a matter for concern, especially for a community such as ours living as we do in close proximity to an important wetland area. Avian Influenza virus comes in various strains that can cause mild or serious disease in birds and occasionally mild or serious infection in humans. The virus is carried by birds, especially waterfowl. It usually originates in the Far East and is then carried westward by migrating birds, birds that spend the winter in Europe - including Steart/Bridgwater Bay!

The present strain of the virus has been recovered from a few dead waterfowl at various places in this country and has already caused serious losses on a few commercial poultry units and “backyard” collections. The current strain of virus has never transmitted to humans. In controlling this outbreak the main concern must be to prevent the virus gaining access to domestic poultry from wild birds.

The Government has issued a “housing order” requiring all poultry

keepers to keep their stock under cover; this is a legal requirement and been extended to the end of February. The virus can remain viable for long periods, especially in the damp and cold, and there is the real risk of it being picked up and carried on feet/wheels when visiting areas frequented by waterfowl. Hence the advice currently displayed on entry points to the WWT scheme, which is especially important if there is any risk of carrying virus to domestic poultry (Steart houses a large poultry unit). If



you are likely to go near poultry, pet birds, zoos or other nature reserves – anywhere likely to have birds present – please consider:

- cleansing and disinfecting clothing, footwear, equipment and vehicles before and after entering the area
- reducing the movement of people, vehicles or equipment to and from areas where poultry are kept

And if you keep poultry:

- keeping fresh disinfectant at all points where people

should use it, such as poultry enclosure entrances

- having a change of clothes/footwear to use whilst in direct contact with poultry and their living area
- minimising direct and indirect contact between poultry and wild birds, including making sure all feed and water is not accessible to wild birds.

The Government’s full advice is at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#biosecurity>

It is important that if you find a dead or sick bird you do not touch it. If on WWT Marshes, you should contact the WWT office - 01278 652090 /07717 505966 or, if found elsewhere, the Defra helpline - 03459 33 55 77.

Photographs of our parish



It is said we live in a Post Truth Era, but has it always been so?

All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788 - 1860)

Believe those who are seeking the truth. Doubt those who find it.

Andre Gide

French critic, essayist, & novelist (1869 - 1951)

The truth is rarely pure and never simple.

Oscar Wilde (1854 - 1900), *The Importance of Being Earnest, 1895, Act I*



MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library visits Combwich and Stockland every four weeks on a Tuesday morning (31st Jan, 28th Feb, 28th March)

Otterhampton School TA5 2QS 9.45 - 10.40

Harbour TA5 2QU 10.45 - 11.05

Combwich Post Office TA5 2QW 11.10 - 11.30

Stockland Bristol Captains TA5 2PY 11.40 - 11.55

Please make use of this facility, we have the advantage in Combwich of the school using the mobile library which helps us to retain the service. Unfortunately the service has recently been withdrawn from Steart due to lack of use.

DIARY OF EVENTS

(Otterhampton Village Hall unless otherwise stated)

REGULAR EVENTS			
Monday	Art Club	2pm - 4pm	
Monday	Brownies	5.45pm - 7.30pm	
Tuesday	Aerobics Pilates Move 2 Music	9.30am - 10.30am 10.45 am - 11.45am 12.15pm - 1pm	
Wednesday	Doctors Surgery	3pm - 4pm	
Wednesday	Combwich Crafters	10am - 12 noon	
Thursday (1 st of month)	Parish Council	7pm	Starts with public session
Thursday (2 nd & 4 th of month)	Choir	7pm - 8pm	
Thursday (3 rd of month)	Combwich & District WI	7.30pm	Stockland Sports & Social Club
Friday	Coffee morning	10am - 12 noon	
Saturday (2 nd of month)	Combwich Market	10am - 12 noon	
FUTURE EVENTS			
2nd February 2017	Parish Council Meeting	7pm	Starts with public session
9th March 2017	Parish Council Meeting	7pm	Starts with public session
15 th March 2017	Next Otter Tales		Articles by 5th March

Otter Tales

Articles for publication to Barry Leathwood (editor) Tel: 652399, email: barry.leathwood@btinternet.com

Events to Aly Prowse, Tel: 652426 email: otterhamptonpcclerk@gmail.com

Distribution. Bob Birkenhead Tel: 653127, email: bob@combwich.freemove.co.uk

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