



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.

Otter Tales



The dragon slain by St George at the end of the fabulous lantern parade which preceded the lighting of the Beacon by Revd Alison Waters and the annual Firework display on Combwich Common.

Too many people to thank for this successful evening, but a special mention for Sarah Webb for designing and constructing the lanterns.



For more see page 5

Otterhampton Offcuts

Snippets from the October & November 2016 Parish Council meetings

Play and Recreation Area

The “snagging” including repairs to the paths and extending some of the safety surfacing are now complete and the play area installation has been formally signed off as at 1st November 2016. The additional fencing has been erected which is part of the safety modifications we are implementing. Shortly we will be going out to tender to tarmac the surface in front of the play area entrance which will be “hatched” with yellow lining to prevent parking, which will hopefully improve visibility whilst entering and exiting.

There have been some minor behavioural issues which we would like to see eradicated such as stone throwing,



but hopefully this will cease once the grass has grown and the stones are no longer visible. **Please note** it has been mostly children in the 10 – 13 year old age group who have been witnessed doing this, perhaps parents could have a word please? Some children are also climbing on the roof of the shelter - the parish council cannot be held responsible if any injuries occur as a result. Generally though, there appears to be a great community spirit at the play area and children are mixing and playing very happily together.

Wharf Road Vegetation Maintenance

The vegetation clearance on both sides of the Wharf Rd will commence soon, so neighbouring properties may experience some noise whilst this work takes place. The work should only take one or two days, but we apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused.

Planning Matters - the role of the parish council

Many of you may not be aware of the role we play in dealing with planning applications from Sedgemoor District Council (or Somerset County Council). As a formal consultee, we receive copies of every planning application and we are expected to respond to each one. Occasionally if we need to better understand an application we will make a site visit. This is often a “visual from the street” but if we wished to enter a site, we would either contact the applicant’s agent or contact the applicant direct. During a site visit, we can gather information to make an assessment but must not offer an opinion.

There are three responses we can make; to support, to object or to make observations. If we support or object to a planning application, we must do so against valid planning grounds (which incidentally, individuals should also do if responding); these include:- traffic generation and road safety; impact of the building on its neighbours (e.g overshadowing, overlooking, loss of privacy); effect on the landscape; compliance with national, regional, local planning policy and guidance; impact on character and appearance of the area or street, including the appropriateness of design, materials, landscaping etc; other environmental issues such as noise. Invalid planning grounds include the impact of development on property values; loss of a view; civil matters such as ownership and the fact that the development may have already begun. By responding as per the valid planning grounds, it ensures an ‘objective’ response rather than a ‘personal’ one.

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
Mrs Aly Prowse (Clerk)	01278 652426
Vacancy	

otterhamptonpcclerk@gmail.com

County and District Ward Members

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

When planning applications are received, we place details on the notice boards. This includes the date of the parish council meeting at which the application will be discussed - which we are obliged to do. For further information, please consult the SDC website www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/planning

No 14 Bus Service

As most of you are now aware the No 14 bus service, the rural route from Cannington to Minehead, ceased on 31st October 2016. We have been working with all the affected parishes and the district and county councillors trying to retain or seek alternative solutions to ensure this vital service continues. Disappointingly, letters to Ian Liddell-Grainger, John Osman



(Leader of SCC) the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, remain unanswered, although we have just received letter from the Rt Hon Chris Grayling’s office. However we attended a meeting on 28.10.16 at West Somerset Council where a number of suggestions were put forward including talks with school bus suppliers to see if they might be interested in providing a service between school journeys. We await the outcome of these discussions. Of course we are fortunate that we have a Community Car Scheme (Otter Wheels) which means our residents are not totally without transport, albeit we know it doesn’t necessarily satisfy everyone’s needs.

Highways Issues

Bollards at Brookside Rd / Crossways – no sooner were these erected than we had phone calls to advise the inner bollards had been erected in the wrong place. We immediately

sent photos to Highways, but were told that discussions between the Contractor, land owner and the nearest house owner determined the positioning of the bollards. Obviously if there are problems, we will need to pursue.

We are also advised by Highways that the safety work at Dame Withycombe Hill and the C182 junction at Biffen's Corner has been ordered which means the work will now be scheduled (although we are waiting to be advised when this will take place!).

Precept

We will be holding a meeting to discuss the precept (budget) for 2017/18 on Thursday 1 December, at 6.30pm (prior to the parish council meeting) at the Village Hall. Members of the community are welcome to attend.

EDF Community Impact Mitigation Fund (CIM)

As you already know, Hinkley C has been given the go ahead. When the work at the wharf commences, it will trigger the £500k CIM fund allocated to the parish. Although the programme of work is not expected until early 2017 we have arranged a meeting with Justin Sargent (Somerset Community Foundation who will administer the CIM fund) to commence discussions. Once more information is available we will need to kick-start the previous work of the Otterhampton Parish Project Team (OPPT) which of course resulted in the enhanced play and recreation area.

The Bristol Port Company (TBPC) Scheme - Steart and Stolford

At the Steart Forum on 20th October 2016, we were advised that TBPC has extended its planning considerations from 2020 to 2030. This means the scheme will need to start before 2030. Although this is a long way off, the fact that the Company will exercise its options to purchase the land before the end of 2017, does suggest its commitment to the scheme. In addition if there is a sudden upturn in the global container market, which leads to an extension of the Port, the scheme could then commence at any time. Meanwhile the Environment Agency will continue to maintain the sea defences along Wall and Catsford commons.

Revd Alison Waters

We welcomed Alison to her first parish council meeting. She outlined her hopes and plans for St Peter's Church following completion of the ongoing repairs. We will maintain a close dialogue with Alison as we wish to offer our support. We also share her enthusiasm for the future plans of St Peters.

New Cycle/Footpath

Cyclists and walkers alike will welcome the completion of the new path from Combwich to Cannington. This will provide good safe access to Cannington and beyond, particularly when the Cannington to Wembdon path is completed next year.



Sue receiving the award from SCC Chairman

Nominated by the parish council, Sue Aley received the Somerset County Council "Chairman's Award for Service to the Community" at a ceremony in Taunton recently from SCC Chairman Mrs Christine Lawrence.

The citation reads: -

Sue has been a stalwart of the village of Combwich for decades. She is a busy quiet person who goes by unnoticed – that is until she hears of someone who is ill or can't get about. She is always there to take an elderly person to the hospital when they are ill, and staying with them if they need reassurance.

She collects friends every Friday to take them to the coffee morning in the village and makes sure they get home safely.

She came to live in the village with her husband Brian in 1973 and put her efforts in to the village social club. She has made sure this facility remained open, attending to it when no one else was available. She managed the bar, ordered stock and did the accounts. In the '80's she led a successful campaign to encourage larger vehicles to use a private road in the village to keep the roads safe. She was also clerk to the parish council and continues to be good neighbour to all who need a helping hand.



**Sue Aley
for Service to the Community**

News from Combwich and District WI

Vanessa J Smith

Our Summer meetings and outings have been most enjoyable starting with a lovely social meal together in **July** at **The Babbling Brook** when much merriment went on with some very revealing humour!

In **September**, Alys Laver, the Site Manager of **The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust** came and gave us a very enthusiastic presentation about the continued development of the Steart, Stockland and Otterhampton Marshes. She invited members to get involved and highlighted how valuable and vital the help was that they received from various bodies of volunteers including involvement from school and college students and the local community. Alys was delighted with the number of visitors to the marshes – human, wildfowl and mammals. Also the role of the grazing cattle and sheep.

We also had an outing in September, a very informative guided tour of **Coleridge Cottage** at Nether Stowey. What a charming National Trust property it is, full of 17th century atmosphere with lots to discover, see, do and listen to. The garden was a step back in time to nature with wild flowers, willow and wire sculptures and a wonderful tranquil lime tree bower to sit under and listen to poetry from one of the many audio posts. We completed this outing with a lovely 2 course lunch across the road at The Ancient Mariner.

In the same week, a few members played our first match in **The Annual WI Skittles Tournament** at The Globe at North Petherton against Bridgwater Firecrackers. Unfortunately it was to be our last because we lost by a very respectable 4 pins! The scrumptious buffet afterwards more than made up for it, but we had a great evening.



In **Octobers** meeting, we were joined by Rosie Best from Steart, who gave us an insight into some incredible **'Women in Aviation'**. Not just Amy Johnson and Amelia Earhart, but many lesser known brave and fearless French, Russian, American and English women. Many of these women used their skill, expertise and flying experience to full use during vital wartime missions.

Rosie talked of her own 20 years experience as a fully qualified pilot. She shared with us her love of flying, what had inspired her to want to take up flying, the process she went through to achieve her pilots license and some humorous and some hair raising moments along the way.

Rosie judged our parade of 'decorated Bra's' which was this months competition, the winning entry was Pinky and very Perky!

On 22nd October several members attended the **Annual Meeting of The Somerset Federation** at Wellsprings, Taunton where we met with many WI members from the Quantock group. Both guest speakers were 'side splittingly' funny - what a great day we had.

Next month on 15th **November** we will be **'dabbling with water colours'** under the expert guidance of our local artist Tom Jacobs.

Also this month we will be celebrating a special occasion on :-

Thursday 24th November when we will be celebrating

THE 65TH BIRTHDAY OF COMBWICH & DISTRICT WI

@ COMBWICH VILLAGE HALL
(Harbour View Social Club)

for a 50's evening
(dress optional)

ENTERTAINMENT BY 'QUANTOCK MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY'

There will be a Raffle and light Buffet

So ladies, if you would like to come along and help us celebrate our 65 years please do not hesitate to phone Vanessa on 01278 652830 or Brenda on 01278 44679

RSVP essential for catering



Otterhampton Parish Recreation Association (OPRA)

Registered Charity Number 1124017

OPRA is now well into its winter programme. The Lantern Parade and the Fireworks display were a great success and enjoyed by more people than ever. This is in part due to the excellent lanterns which were made in a series of workshops over the half term. Thanks to the children (and adults) who took part and produced some wonderful creations which were paraded immediately prior to the firework display. None of this would have been possible without the irrepressible Sarah Webb, whose artistic talent, craftsmanship, enthusiasm and organising ability made this possible.



The fireworks display depends on fully trained volunteers to create a seamless display. These have to be carefully orchestrated and setup in the hours before the display, protected from the weather and at the appropriate time set off safely and in sequence for us all to enjoy. The team this year were Adrian Floyd, Warren Cornish, Simon Briggs and Paul Cadmore. Thank you guys!



We should also mention Ray Bollen our volunteer chef and his team in the Burgers and Hotdog tent for rustling up delish food in a timely manner under very difficult circumstances. John Devlin for supplying the burgers and sausages. Mike Gardener who sets up the beacon (and repairs it after every event) organises the lights and PA system and much more. And finally the OPRA committee and all the other volunteers too numerous to

mention, but without whom the event would not have been possible.

Of course all this costs a lot of money, some of it is recouped from the collection buckets and the sale of food on the night, but not all. Thanks to all who have made a contribution, but if you still have to do so, there is a collection jar in the post office. If you want to make regular a contribution to OPRA funds, all of which is spent in the parish why not join the 100 Club for a £1 a week and a chance to win in the weekly draw (drawn monthly)?

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.

Christmas 2016



The invitations have all gone out for the over 60s to attend the Annual Christmas Dinner to be held in the village hall on Saturday 3rd December. This is a free event which comprises a three course meal plus mints and coffee and of course wine. It is a great social occasion when friends and neighbours can meet in a convivial and seasonal atmosphere which is sometimes over subscribed. A seasonal sing song is always very popular and the 100 Club Christmas draw takes place during the evening.



Sarah Webb will switch on the Christmas tree lights at 6pm on Sunday 4th December and hopefully children will turn up with their lanterns to make this a great start to the Christmas festivities

Finally, for those who would like a little exercise before the festivities start there will be an OPRA Walk on Sunday 20th November meeting at the Anchor at 9.30am to share cars. More details by email and the poster at the entrance to the village.

More or Less - John Berry, Chair Otterhampton Parish Council

There is a Radio 4 programme called 'More or Less' that examines how numbers and statistics are regularly used to confuse, deceive and obscure facts. Guilty parties include the government, advertisers, pressure groups and corporations. It has become a part of life in the 21st century.

In Combach we have had our fair share of confusion and obfuscation associated with numbers recently. Prime examples are the C182 and our struggles to rationalise the approach to this suddenly important route, the differences between 20 and 30 mph within the village and the number 14 – the bus service that links Bridgwater and Minehead and the numerous villages between the two towns. There is also of course the question of number 2's, but more (or hopefully less) of that later.

The second of our numbers – 14 – raises a series of questions that are of acute interest to people living in Combach and other local villages. The Service 14 bus has been operated by a number of companies since privatisation, of which First Bus is the most recent. Its cessation of the service is attributed to the fact that the route is not 'commercially viable'. As we know, the first loyalty of any corporate entity is to its shareholders and shareholders demand profits. But a bus service is a social necessity, without which significant numbers of people in rural communities are deprived of a basic human right. In response to this situation, the idea of helping to finance the continuation of the route through parish councils' precepts has been floated. This would involve increasing the precepts of a number of parishes, including this one, to plug the gap. The villages affected would subsidise the service by increasing the most local of taxes – the parish precept – sufficiently to do this. Practically, this would require a doubling of the present level, taking the contribution of the average household in Combach to something approaching £100.00 per year.

This would no doubt start a debate about why people who do not intend to use the bus service should pay for its maintenance? An old argument of course and one that could be applied to any taxation for any purpose. Why, says the pacifist, should I pay for weapons to be used by my government, when I am opposed to violence in any form? Why says the relentlessly healthy person, should I pay the same level of contributions to the NHS as a sick person when I have never been in hospital? Why say the childless, should we pay towards the cost of education for children when we have no children? If we are to consider this option in this parish the PC needs to have some ideas as to how it would be received. The meeting to look at the parish precept for the next financial year is on December 1st at the village hall. Why not come along and make your views known?

On speeds through the village, the PC is investigating with SCC if we are eligible to install SID's (speed indication devices) that would register how quickly vehicles are traveling and flash the figure to the driver – green for 20mph and below – red for speeds above 20mph. What do you think? Bear in mind that at 20mph and below you are much less likely to kill or injure a pedestrian in any collision than if you're traveling between 20mph and 30mph. Again we need to know what you think of this idea. Again it would mean spending your money. The contact details for all your Parish Councilors are on page 2 of this newsletter and the website.

Finally, the vexed matter of number 2's, deposited by dogs and left by their owners for others to avoid or step in. There have been improvements since the installation of poo bag dispensers and extra bins. However, some people still refuse to clear up after their dogs and we now need urgently to consider enforcement. Failure to clear up after your dog is a **criminal offence**. It is difficult to understand why anyone would behave in this way, but the fact is that some of our neighbours consistently leave their foul messes on our pavements, verges and footpaths. The local dog warden will be attending a PC meeting in the near future, to discuss enforcement, along with our Police Community Support Officer. Is this an important issue for you? Please let us know.

Twinning with a village in Europe

In or out of the EU, we will remain about 26 miles from our nearest continental neighbours. Twinning with a village in France, Germany or elsewhere in Europe provides a chance to understand more about how they manage their affairs, as well as social contact with people facing many of the everyday issues that affect all our lives.

We are in the process of setting up a group to look at the practicalities of twinning for the parish. If you are interested, please get in touch with me John Berry tel: 652682 I will then arrange a meeting early in the New Year.



As part of the ongoing restoration work at St Peter's Church Combach, the bells are all set to be sent away for retuning which will take about 3 months

EDF UPDATE - *Tim Jones*

So finally a final decision on HPC. It has certainly been a bumpy road and a very on off one for the personable Hinkley C Construction Director, Nigel Cann. It appears he has now moved on to even greater things, namely Programme and Construction Delivery Director. His successor is Rob Jordan.



Work on the site is obviously racking up and the workforce increasing in size judging by the increase in the number of worker buses travelling the C182. Waiting at traffic lights by the roundabout on that very road recently, it was very evident that, other than HGV's, most Hinkley traffic still insists on going through Cannington rather than use the pristine new by-pass.

Word has it that while work on the temporary jetty at Hinkley Point is about to start, it may be 2018 before work starts on Combwich Wharf. Although some exploratory work may go ahead next year, the contract has still to be let. Seems to have gone very quiet on the huge lay down area. I am sure much more information on the whole project will soon be available.

Going off at a slight tangent, I see our local BBC TV News has been running "what if" stories about the integrity of Hinkley B's graphite core. I believe it's called graphite depletion and has been known about pretty much since nuclear power stations started generating. It was a recurring story at Oldbury Power Station and is so old that even the "anti" nuclear expert rolled out by the Beeb looked like he could have been collecting his pension for a good number of years. With work now well under way in Somerset on what will become Europe's biggest construction site, I would have thought there are much more relevant and new "nuclear" stories around.

Surviving Winter



Expecting your Winter Fuel Payment? Don't need it? Donate it! Surviving Winter is an award-winning campaign that encourages people to donate some or all of their unwanted Winter Fuel Payments to other people in their communities who need it most. A Surviving Winter grant

doesn't just pay for extra heating. It's hand delivered by one of our small number of trusted local partners, like Age UK and the Village Agents from Community Council for Somerset. A Surviving Winter grant becomes the foundation for a new relationship that can help overcome the isolation and loneliness that many older people experience. With the support of over 300 donors, Somerset Community Foundation was able to provide vital grants to 390 older people to help them through last winter. Please help us grow this campaign to reach every isolated and vulnerable household in the county.

To find out more about Surviving Winter, please visit: <http://www.somersetcf.org.uk/winter>. To donate some or all of your Winter Fuel Payment, please send a cheque made out to Somerset Community Foundation (SW written on the back), Yeoman House, Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallet, BA4 6QN. You can also donate online or call 01749 344949. Gift Aid forms are also available to download on the website. Thank you for making a difference to an elderly person in your community this winter!



Recently Robin Prowse of Steart opened up his cider press for local people to bring their own apples for pressing in return for apple juice or cider. The weather wasn't great, but the cider was and as the afternoon wore on the enjoyment increased.

The Morris Dancers put on a great show, inside when it rained and outside when it didn't. Robin demonstrated his dancing skills, after all it was his 65th birthday and



he'd had a few glasses of his excellent cider.

Ally produced wonderful food for all to enjoy which raised the question when can we do it again?

No Morris Dancers or 65th birthday, but Robin says he will open up the facilities for a day next year when local people will be invited to bring their apples for pressing again.

OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR VACANCY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

Pursuant to section 87(2) of the Local Government Act, 1972, that a casual vacancy exists in the office of parish councillor for the above Parish due to the resignation of Cllr H Bennett.

If within 14 days* (i.e 25 November 2016) after the date of this notice, a request for an election to fill the said vacancy is made in writing and delivered to the Returning Officer (Electoral Services Office) at Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 3AR signed by TEN electors for the said Parish, an election will be held to fill the said vacancy, otherwise the vacancy will be filled by co-option.

Dated: 7 November 2016

Clerk of Otterhampton Parish Council

Dowells Farm

Steart

TA5 2PX

Otterhamptonpcclerk@gmail.com Or Tel: 01278 652426

As per the above notice, it is intended to fill this vacancy by co-option and anyone interested in applying for this position should contact the clerk for a 'simple' application form. This should be returned to the clerk by **25 NOVEMBER 2016**.

The work of the parish council is varied, interesting and very rewarding. If you think you would like to be involved in making a real difference to our community (such as the enhanced play and recreation area) please do apply. Please contact the Clerk or any councillor if you would like further information.

OTTERHAMPTON PARISH VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME- OTTER WHEELS



We are well into autumn and winter is just around the corner and your car scheme is ticking along nicely. But now that there has been yet another cut in our rural bus service we anticipate an increase in calls; so please let me remind you that to use the car scheme you really must register beforehand – as long as you are a resident of Otterhampton parish or Stockland Bristol you are eligible to use the scheme, but if you are not registered we cannot help you. Passenger Registration Forms can be obtained from the Post Office, the coffee morning or ask any member of the scheme and we will be happy to provide you with one and registration is free.

Are you a driver? Do you occasionally take a neighbour to an appointment? If so, would you consider becoming a volunteer driver for the car scheme? If you are on our list of drivers you will be paid 45p per mile to cover the cost of your petrol for every journey. You will make new friends and you will be helping the community. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer driver, or just want more information, please telephone Yvonne on 652713 and she will be happy to let you have an application form and talk you through the procedure. We look forward to hearing from you.

For more information please contact Yvonne Bulman (Secretary)

Tel 01278 652713 email: Yvonne.bulman@zeb.myzen.co.uk

Otterhampton Village Hall

News from the Otterhampton Village Hall Committee

The hall continues to be a popular venue and a variety of activities take place. These include Brownies, Craft Group, Art Club, Aerobics, Pilates, Keep Fit for the Over 40s, Bridge Club and the choir. If you are interested in joining any of these groups check the notice board at the Village Hall, or look at the website. There was a very successful 'Evening In Provence' in September with a brilliant 7 course meal expertly cooked by Maggy Layton and Helen Jowett, French music and a very relaxed ambience



and much wine! Maggy and Helen cooked for 45 guests, organised a quiz and a raffle and raised £340 shared equally between the Village Hall and Burnham on Sea Rescue. Many thanks to Maggey and Helen for a lovely evening and to their helpers Carol Ring, Julie Cadmore and Julie Evans. Special thanks to the Youth Team consisting of Lisseth Ring, Evie Cadmore, Alex Mockridge, Amelia Cadmore and Grace Bennett who volunteered to serve the meal and were brilliant.

Other events at the Hall since September included a return of bingo and another beetle drive which were enjoyed by all and again raised funds for the Hall.

Over the next few months we will be holding another bingo session, beetle drive and a quiz. On 26th November between 10 and 2pm we are organising a Jumble Sale and an indoor 'Car Boot' Sale early in the New Year. The Village Markets take place on second Saturday of each month so keep Saturday 12th November, Saturday 10th December and Saturday 14th January free between 10am and midday and come along and buy some of the wonderful craft work (great Christmas presents) and have a hot drink and bacon sandwich or piece of cake and chat to friends. Look out for the blackboards advertising these and other events. We look forward to seeing you.

The Otterhampton Village Hall 2017 Calendar will be on sale very soon full of family favourite recipes and photos of wildlife. You will be able to pre-book your calendar at the monthly village market, Friday coffee morning, Harbour View bar or by contacting Sue Barton on bartonbs@btinternet.com or 653531.

Harbour View Social Club

The Club continues to be very popular; new members and guests are welcomed. The bar is open from 7pm to midnight every Friday and Saturday and some Monday and Tuesday evenings if skittles or darts teams are playing. A monthly 'Open Mic' session on a Sunday afternoon has just started and proved very popular. If the 'Open' sign is outside then just come in and enjoy yourselves. New membership cards are now available for only £2.50 to expire at the end of 2017 - just ask at the bar. However, the club must ask non-members to pay a £1.00 fee each visit.

The Club provided some great entertainment for youngsters with a Halloween special on Saturday 29th October. It was a great success with children and their parents walking through the House of Horrors, having their photo taken and getting a fridge magnet and then enjoying a drink/crisps and sweets in the club. Many thanks to Jude Cound and Chris Ponka for setting everything up and for the volunteers who dressed up and helped make the evening a great success. Further events are being planned so watch out for the advertisements. This includes opening the Club to show the Autumn International Rugby Union games including all of England's matches. Christmas events will include a party and luxury Christmas hamper raffle.

If there are any darts players around who fancy playing for the club on Friday nights for the Quantock Mixed Darts League then please contact Brian Hawkins on 01278 651193 or Peter Wright at the Post Office.



Our very own PCSO 8044 Georgina Long will be leaving Avon and Somerset Police as of 18th November this year to pursue other interests. I'm sure on behalf of the whole community we express our thanks for the contribution she has made to our community and to wish her well in the future.

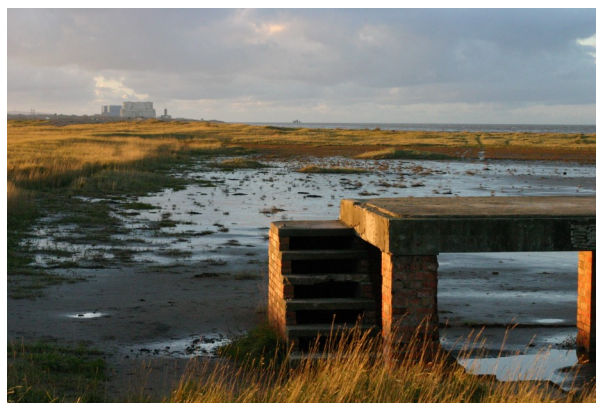
Georgina will be replaced by **PCSO Nick Mizon**, who she had the pleasure of joining with 10 years ago. Nick has a wealth of experience on the Wembdon/Durleigh area and she is hoping to give him a whistle stop tour of the Cannington and the Quantock side of the local policing area.

If you have any questions for the local policing team, the team mail box is available and checked daily - SomWestNPTSedgemoor@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

News from Steart - Dick Best

Steart Forum

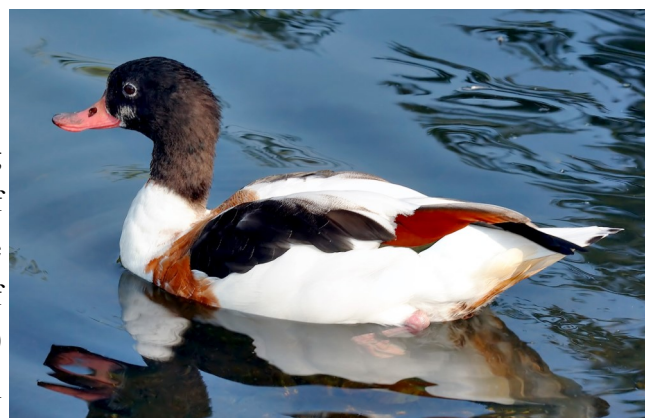
The Steart Forum is an informal talking shop for representatives of groups with an interest in the Steart peninsula and its hinterlands. It is run by the local parish bodies and meets quarterly. The October meeting was given a presentation on “fracking” by Oliver Taylor a geologist from South Western Energy, a company licenced to explore possible sites within the local area. John Chaplin representing The Bristol Port Company reported that permission had been given for a ten year extension to the planning consent for a deep water harbour at Avonmouth



and that existing options would be exercised to purchase land between Wall Common and Stolford as mitigation for losses due to this development. The annual report from the Environment Agency on the monitoring of the development of the Steart Coastal Management Project was presented, which showed that the changes at the breach and within the creek system were generally in line with those predicted.

Bridgwater Bay NNR

The autumn passage of waders has now passed and moulting flock of Shelduck is dispersing, while the build-up of wintering flocks of waders and waterfowl have begun. The most spectacular feature so far has been the numbers of Avocets in the Parrett Estuary with record counts of up to 600 birds. These are best seen from the WWT Steart Marsh breach on a high tide, or from the Huntspill bank (or even better from a boat - in previous winters trips have been run from Burnham marina, worth keeping an eye on local media). Out on Stert Flats and within the WWT Steart Marshes the flocks of Dunlin, Lapwing and Golden Plover have started to increase, and by December the sight of these flocks in flight around the time of a high tide beats anything the Starlings on the Levels can put on!



The recently opened England Coast Path is well sign posted around the peninsula and together with the paths around the Steart Marsh embankment form a network of attractive circular walks.



What with good weather and an unprecedented glut of wild mushrooms this has been a great autumn on the peninsula.



The new school year has been busy and highly productive, with our new teachers, Miss Martha Day and Mrs Zoe Llewellyn, quickly settling into life at Otterhampton and to their new classes. The Little Otters Pre-School have made good use of the fantastic new steel canopy that was installed outside their building over the summer break. This has provided a wonderful outside area that can be accessed in all weathers, and has further enhanced the learning environment for the children at both the Pre-School and the ever popular Breakfast and After-School clubs.

As well as enjoying the fun of International Talk like A Pirate Day, the children at the school have been working hard to raise awareness and money for a range of charities this term. We all Dressed As Farmers for the day before Half Term to raise funds for Farmlink, and are currently participating in the Rotary Shoebox scheme to provide boxes of gifts for impoverished families in Eastern Europe. Plans are currently in place for Children In Need day on November 18th and we are also collecting bags of old clothing to support both BIBIC and our own school funds. Please look out for bags coming through letterboxes soon for any old or unwanted items!

Operation HAROLD and the Hinkley Road - Dick Best

H.A.R.O.L.D (Hinkley Alternative Routes Operating Local Diversion) is a catchy acronym for a contingency plan to prevent chaos in the local network of narrow lanes in the event of an emergency closing the Cannington to Hinkley road (C182). The plan has been made by Avon and Somerset Constabulary working in conjunction with EDF and Somerset County Council.

Details of the plan have been mentioned before in *Otter Tales* but, with the construction of the new power station going ahead and the inevitable increase in traffic on the Hinkley road, this is a good time to raise awareness of the plan.



In the event of a closure of the C182 diversions will be activated by a mixture of manned junctions and signage. In-bound traffic to Hinkley will be routed via the A39 and out-bound traffic routed along one-way diversions in the local lanes.

Once Operation HAROLD has been implemented the police have emphasised the need for all road users to follow the indicated routes - failure to do so could rapidly lead to chaos.

At this point it might be worth mentioning the fact that once Hinkley C is well under way, and the work on the wharf at Combswich complete, some massive loads will be moved to Hinkley along the C182 causing a rolling closure, which might be short-lived for Combswich traffic to Cannington but long delays for west-bound traffic. It is hoped that sufficient warning of such delays will be given by EDF to local residents.

MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library visits Combwich and Stockland every four weeks on a Tuesday morning.

Visits are on Tuesday Nov 8th and Dec 6th

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.

Harbour-View Players, Combwich
Proudly Present Their 3rd Annual
PANTOMIME!

Dick Whittington
AND HIS CAT

FRI 20th & SAT 21st January
7.30pm (SAT Matinee 2.30pm)

TICKETS ON SALE FROM
SEPTEMBER!

Tickets: £4 Adults
Children £2.50
From Combwich Post Office & Store

VILLAGE HALL, COMBWICH TA5 2QZ

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	Discontinued until further notice
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

1st December 2016	Parish Council Meeting	7pm	Starts with public session
5th January 2017	Parish Council Meeting	7pm	Starts with public session
15 th January 2017	Next Otter Tales		Articles by 5 th January

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