



Welcome to Combwich

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Our thanks to Hinkley Point B, EDF Energy who print this newsletter without charge

Happy New Year

to all our readers.

2017 ended with a flurry of activities in the parish including a wonderful lantern parade and firework display in November. At the beginning of December the free Senior's Christmas Dinner (below) was enjoyed by 64 of us followed by the lighting of the Christmas tree the day after by Liz Brown. The Combwich Community Choir put on a wonderful evening and raised £450 for BARB, and the Quantock Musical Theatre Company (QMTc) entertained us all in the village hall. There was much more including the Christmas Market.

2018 will provide more opportunities as the much heralded £500k becomes available. Already expressions of interest have been received from several organisations with projects which will enhance the life of our parish.

If you want to get more involved in our community scrutinise these pages for details of local activities and organisations.



Otterhampton Offcuts

Snippets from the December 2017 Parish Council Meeting

NEW CHAIRMAN:

John Berry advised a couple of months ago that he will be moving to Cyprus in late March so we would need a new Chairman. To allow a smooth changeover, John stepped down at the January meeting (but will remain a councillor until March). We thank John for his sterling efforts and contribution during his tenure as Chair during a very busy period. We are delighted to announce that Dave Cather (right) was unanimously elected as the new Chairman.



Asked to introduce himself as the new chairman, Dave said "I've lived in Combech for six years along with my wife, Mandy, and a varying multitude of children and animals. I'm politically independent, slightly cynical yet also hopeful for us humans. I love being alive, watching skies, reading, learning and laughing with family and friends. I'm looking forward to the next year".

PLAY AND RECREATION AREA:



The Parish Council formally wrote to Wicksteed (play area contractor) re the ground settlement issues, because we believe some if not all the responsibility to make good the play area rests with them. At the time of going to print, we are still awaiting a response. Until Wicksteed come back to us we cannot begin to make the necessary repairs, which we know are urgent.

At our Precept meeting in November, we increased budgetary provision for maintenance and replacement of play equipment from £1000 to £2000 per annum, and at the January meeting decided to increase the Precept again, to incorporate potential costs of remedial works should we receive a negative response from Wicksteed.

NHS FREE HEALTH CHECKS:

We have arranged these for Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd March in the Village Hall on the Thursday, and the Social Club on the Friday. All those who initially expressed an interest have been notified so that appointments can be booked. There will be a couple of free slots, so if you are interested, please contact the Clerk for information, or alternatively you can book direct at www.somersethealthchecks.co.uk/Otterhampton or telephone 01823 261 794.

PRECEPT (Annual Budget):

Members voted to increase the Precept from £20000 to £23000 per annum. This will increase the average cost of the parish council element (of the Council Tax) for an average Band D taxpayer from £64.58 to £74.20 (a rise of £9.62) per property per annum.

The increase is necessary mainly to cover items such as Play and Recreation provision as above, urgent tree maintenance works and £1000 to provide match funding opportunities for local Community Impact Mitigation projects. Members also decided to increase the Clerk's hours from 6 to 8 per week because of the

Contact details for the parish council

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Dave Cather (Chairman)	01278 313041
Dick Best (Vice Chairman)	01278 651063
Barry Leathwood	01278 652399
Bob Birkenhead	01278 653127
Julie Evans	01278 652735
Rachel Perrett	01278 652958
John Berry	07720 352682
Mrs Aly Prowse (Clerk)	01278 652426

otterhamptonpcclerk@gmail.com

County and District Ward Members

Mike Caswell (District & County)	01278 652043
Julie Pay (District)	01278 732956

much-increased workload. This will equate to an additional £1200 per annum. Our expenditure this financial year (ie to 31.3.18) will total approximately £23000, some of which are one-off costs.

A detailed financial statement of our costs and projections is available for inspection at any time. Please contact the Clerk if you would like a copy or wish to discuss any element of the finances.

HIGHWAYS:

This has been a high priority for us over the last few months and will continue to be so whilst we consider safety issues, particularly along the C182.

Bolham Lay-by. We complained strongly for remedial works to be completed at the Bolham lay-by on the C182, mainly because of the mud being dragged on to the road by the HGV's which is a risk to road users' safety. Remedial works will be carried out in early January.

Bus Stop. Complaints from residents re the disruption and inconvenience caused by the Hinkley C buses at the bus stop led to meetings with EDF staff to try and reduce the issues. The new timetable shows a big reduction from 37 to 9 buses picking up staff from the bus stop. All drop-offs should be at the nearside lay-by on the C182. This is a difficult balance for the parish council because we could in theory, refuse to let Hinkley use the Stop, but there is no doubt that crossing the increasingly busy C182 to use the lay-by across the road is dangerous.

Dame Withycombe Hill (DWH) Lay-by and Biffens Corner



We met with the Highways in November to tour the parish highlighting our concerns. This included parking in the lay-by in front of the DWH cottages to experience what the residents endure on

a daily basis, i.e trying to get out of their cars with HGV's and other traffic whizzing by and also trying to cross the road to get to the village. Highways agreed to additional signage approaching the bend and slow markings on the road prior to Combwich junction. We will be pursuing longer term safety actions through this whole stretch. Highways also witnessed the difficulties exiting the Biffen's Corner junction and discussions are ongoing re possible safety improvements here.

50mph speed limit (Rodway to Clayland Corner). The Road Traffic Order consultation closed 4.1.18, so the speed limit is on target to be introduced in the Spring.

Road Traffic Accidents. A further accident occurred on 4.1.18 at the Combwich junction; this now takes the total of accidents in the last year to 9 between Rodway and Biffens' Corner (7 between the Combwich junction and Biffens). Fortunately, no-one has been seriously hurt. We report every accident that we are aware of to SCC and Highways as evidence, because we want to maintain pressure on Highways, ultimately to make and keep the road as safe as possible.

Additional 250 HGV's on C182 from 1.1.18. We held an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting on 18.12.17 to consider a response to this announcement. We were disappointed that no consultations were held

and that the impact to our parish aside from increased traffic and delays, included access and egress at the junctions along the C182; HGVs 'waiting up' in the lay-bys re mud on the road as above; increased difficulty for residents at Dame Withycombe Hill; C182 too narrow in places causing HGV's when passing each other to force one or the other off the road damaging the verges, causing ruts and also leaving mud on the road. We further believe that the transport infrastructure is inadequate and incomplete and should have been in place before the start of the Power Station build. A strong letter expressing our dissatisfaction has been sent to all the authorities concerned including SDC, SCC and EDF. A copy has also been sent to the Mercury. We plan to fight as strongly as we possibly can for upgrades which we believe are necessary to ensure the safety of all persons using and affected by the C182.



Transport Forum 1.2.18 (7pm). Time has been dedicated at the start of the Transport Forum for parishes with highways/other issues to discuss the impact of Hinkley C with the relevant authorities. We will be putting together a presentation to reflect the issues above. (Our February parish council meeting will be delayed by ½ an hour to enable us to attend the Transport Forum beforehand).

COMBWICH WHARF UPDATE:

Alan Lynch (Hochtief) advised that the first stage is complete, generally to time and budget. The contractors tried to keep the noise and disruption to a minimum. Only 8 of the 10 days usage of the barge were required and nothing untoward was found that would prevent use of the wharf. Prior to the next phase, advanced notification will be given to enable communication with residents and the School regarding parking on the Wharf Rd. EDF advised there was no further update regarding the laydown area.



NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on Thursday 1 February at **7.30** pm in Otterhampton Village Hall. Please do not hesitate to contact any of your councillors or the Clerk if you need any information or wish to raise any issues. Alternatively, you will always receive a warm welcome at our parish council meetings.

EDF comment on additional 250 HGV's on C182

Sir – Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond. We will be working hard to limit the inconvenience this temporary increase in road deliveries to Hinkley Point C will cause.

We are keen to maintain momentum at site and the temporary increase is needed while work continues on the project's jetty.

The jetty will enable 80 per cent of the aggregates needed to build the power station to be brought to the site by sea rather than by road. It is expected to be completed at the end of next year and fully operational in 2019.

The application for the increase was made to Somerset County Council, West Somerset Council, Sedgemoor District Council and Highways England and we continue to work collaboratively with them.

We hope the additional £4 million we are providing for traffic and transport projects will help to offset any impact. We would like to apologise for any inconvenience the temporary increase might cause.

David Eccles,

EDF Energy's Head of Stakeholder Engagement for Hinkley Point C.

250 extra HGVs a day

The decision to increase the number of HGVs on the C182 (Cannington to Hinkley Point) by 50% to 750 a day from this month, without any consultation with the local communities outraged many people, not least your parish council who penned an urgent letter of protest to the Chief Executive Officer of Somerset County Council Mr Patrick Flaherty. Of most concern was the fact that the county council and district councils had made this agreement without consulting those most affected by the increased traffic, all for increased mitigation money offered by EDF for the councils.

Readers will be aware that this is not the first time the district and county council has abandoned the needs of local people for a bundle of cash from EDF.



CHAIRMAN
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OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK
Mrs Aly Prowse
Dowells Farm
Stear
BRIDGWATER
Somerset TA5 3PX
Tel 01278 652426
otterhamptonpcclerk@gmail.com

24 December 2017

Mr Patrick Flaherty
Chief Executive Officer
Somerset County Council

CC: Ms Paula Hewitt
Lead Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure
Somerset County Council

Mr Andy Coupe
Strategic Manager, Major Programmes
Somerset County Council

Dear Mr Flaherty

Decision Report - Key Decision date 18.12.17
Hinkley Point C - Variation to Construction Traffic Management Plan and New deed of Development Consent Obligations (S106 agreement)

I refer to the decision to permit the additional 250 HGV movements to Hinkley Point C. The parish council held a special meeting on 18.12.17 to consider a response.

We are extremely disappointed that this decision has been made without any consultation and due regard to the communities who will be most affected, regardless of the need to formally consult or not. This decision is of great concern to communities adjacent to the C182. It is apparent that due process within the workings of the Traffic Review Group does not involve consultation with local district and parish councils which to our minds is a basic law in its constitution and would need amendment.

This decision affects thousands of people. It is not encouraging that we are not very far into the programme and already significant changes need to be made. Why was this not anticipated - after all, the jetty has been planned for years. We acknowledge that the jetty will allegedly take 80% of the traffic from the roads, but what is the reason why it is behind schedule and what other options have been considered?

This does not inspire confidence in the Developer. As a parish council, we are losing faith with EDF and also the planning authorities for the way this issue for example, has been addressed.

It seems that the factor taken into consideration for this decision has been how much mitigation will be awarded. We believe the transport infrastructure is wholly inadequate and incomplete. It begs the question as to why the development was allowed to start in the first place before the infrastructure had been completed to a standard fit for purpose. It is clear the mitigation fund will not be able to address these shortcomings in parallel with the commencement of the increased HGVs on our roads. Moreover, how can we be sure the mitigation is going to be allocated to the priority areas - because this has been decided without consultation?

The arrogance of EDF and its total disregard to the community (particularly those that live adjacent to the C182 who experience living with HGVs and A18s day in day out) is absolutely astonishing. I quote D. Eccles comment on the BBC website on 12.12.17 "there were (sic) around 1600 vehicles a day on the A39 and on Cannington to Hinkley Point". This is a "C" road and it is simply not wide enough especially beyond Combs, along which 2 HGVs often cannot pass in opposite directions without forcing one or both off the road increasing the movements will accelerate this deterioration.

In addition, the parishes whose only access is via the C182 do not have roundabouts or traffic lights to aid their progress onto the road and their onward journeys. We are concerned for the safety of road users and residents. We have already experienced 6 accidents in just under a year along a half a mile stretch of the C182 just beyond Combs. A 50mph speed limit will be implemented early 2018 which is welcomed, but it will not address all the issues such as the HGVs cutting into the verges leaving a trail of mud on the roads thereby illustrating the inadequate width of the road.

There is already more disruption, inconvenience, unhappiness and stress than was anticipated before the commencement of the HPC project. An additional 250 heavy vehicles a day may be a trifle to David Eccles but Combs and no doubt other communities along the C182 are unlikely to appreciate his complacency. Mitigation monies are of course welcome and it is always easy to be wise after the event, but it hardly compensates for the misery this parish at least, is experiencing.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

John Berry

John Berry
Chairman, Otterhampton Parish Council

SE
Mr Hon Ian Liddell-Grainger MP
Mrs Alison Griffin, Chief Executive Officer, Sedgemoor District Council
Members of Transport Review Group:
Andy Coupe (Chair), Andrew Goodchild (West Somerset Council), Andrew Jones (EDF), Brian Buckingham (EDF), Claire Pearce (SDC), David Watson (Highways), John Bower (EDF), Mark Lewis (EDF) Rachel Lister (EDF), Steve Blackmore (Highways), Samuel Harper (SDC)

Cabinet Members
Cllr David Hall, SCC Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development
Cllr John Woodman, SCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Local Members
David Hall, Mark Healey, David Loveridge, Leigh Redman, Ann Bown, Mike Caswell, Bill Revans, Hugh Davies.

Opposition Spokesperson
Cllr Mike Ripley, Cllr Simon Coles

Relevant scrutiny Chairman
Cllr Tony Lock

A more readable copy of the letter can be obtained by going to the parish council section (notices) of www.combswich.org.uk



Otterhampton Parish Recreation Association (OPRA)

Registered Charity Number 1124017

Once again Senior Citizens of this parish were treated to a wonderful Christmas Dinner (see front page picture) with good food, wine, entertainment and most important of all, the good company of friends and neighbours.

A good time was had by all as evidenced in the picture right.



This is only possible due to the success of the 100 Club which provides the funds, and the army of dedicated volunteers, some of whom are pictured here.



The following day the Christmas Lights were switched on by our own Liz Brown, Brownie leader, Otter Wheels treasurer and the maker of fine jams and marmalade!



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

Tina Gardener 652642

Melvin Fooks 651323

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.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our Annual General Meeting is not as formal as it sounds, but is a legal necessity when we elect our committee and officers, review the last year and plan for the future. The whole thing takes less than half an hour then we relax with a drink and something to eat.

The provisional date for this years event is Monday 19th March in the Anchor.

In the meantime OPRA is considering projects using some of the CIM funding allocated to this parish to enhance community life.

Finally, if you have ideas about future activities or want help in anyway, even perhaps joining the 100 Club then get in touch with one of the committee members



Quantock Walk

Sunday 21st January

Meet 9.30am at the Anchor to share cars

This will be the first of the 2018 series of OPRA Walks and will be led by Mike Gardener

More information - 652399

COMMUNITY IMPACT MITIGATION (CIM) FUND

The Otterhampton Parish Project Team (OPPT) in conjunction with the Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) approved the CIM Guidance Notes and the Expression of Interest forms for CIM projects. These are available from the Clerk, Aly Prowse. There are three projects currently being progressed – Refurbishment of the Village Hall (registering an interest) a Training Gig (boat) and a Defibrillator for Steart. The Gig and Defibrillator projects were submitted for consideration at the OPPT meeting on 11.1.18 and approved. In addition, both received a £150 match funding contribution from the parish council. As OPPT approved the projects, they have now gone forward to the SCF CIM panel who will have the final say whether funding will be awarded.



If you have either an existing or a new project in mind but perhaps don't know where to start, please contact the Clerk. Our £500k fund is not time limited.



Co-opted Governor Vacancy

The Governing Board of Otterhampton Primary School has 3 vacancies for Co-opted Governors. Co-opted Governors are appointed directly by the Governing Board and anyone can apply.

We are looking to connect with people from the local community who have a desire to continue the success of the school.

The Governing Board's overarching responsibility is to work in partnership with the Headteacher but also play an important part in raising school standards through fulfilling the three core functions:

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

We understand that all our Governors have other commitments in their lives; however we ask that at least two meetings per term are attended, that one training session per academic year is attended and a visit to the school during the working day at least once during an academic year. Our Governors all agree that seeing how the school runs and the impact of their decisions on the school community is the most enjoyable part of being a Governor.

If you are interested in the above position, please contact the Clerk to Governors; Siana Frampton SFramepton@educ.somerset.gov.uk

Notes from your Village Agent

Izzy Silvester



January can be the hardest month, dark, cold and lacking in money. Give yourself a mental boost by planning! Take your mind away from the cold and lose yourself in how you are going to spend those long summer evenings! Perhaps engage in some mindfulness by spending time marvelling at the beauty of the sun setting on the flooded moors and the starling murmurations.

Many villages have weekly groups to join such as coffee mornings (great cake and biscuits – I can personally vouch for it!) and special interest groups. Perhaps you could join the gardening group and get inspiration on planning some changes to your own patch. Many groups are free or low priced and will have someone who can come and pick you up. I can support you in making these links.

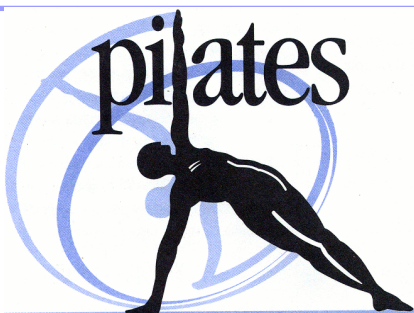
There are lots of opportunities to join an exercise group, which is proven to help depression. If you can't understand where the "fun" is in a "fun run", start gently, you could try walking football, health walks, classes to aid balance and prevent falls, and sitting games such as boccia. You don't need a leotard or mankini, just some baggy trousers and a pair of trainers! You are most welcome to go and watch a session first to see what it is all about. Look for local adverts or phone me for more information. Zing will also help you to start your own group, contact Catherine Devonshire 01935 462347. Perhaps you could call on a neighbour who lives alone and arrange to go with them. People can go days without seeing someone in the winter when there is no chatting over the garden fence.

There are lots of small grants available to help your group develop, perhaps you could plan a special group trip or buy some equipment. I can support you with this.

Don't forget that we can also advise you on keeping warm in the winter and the new SMART meters.

Not sure who to turn to? Village Agents are a charity that work with individuals and social groups to give confidential support and advice. We can enable people to be more independent in their home, manage personal finances, care for family members and advise on just about anything!

Please phone me Izzy silvester your village agent on 07931 018045, leave me your name and number and I will ring you back. Or e mail me on izzy@somersetccc.org.uk I do only work part-time so it may take a day or two for me to return your call. Thank you.



Otterhampton School will be holding Pilates classes for all ages and abilities every Tuesday evening from 6.30-7.30pm.

Pilates is a gentle paced class, mainly floor based and helps improve core stability, muscle tone, strength, posture and

balance. All of which we require our bodies to have to stay healthy, whatever our age!

Classes are taught by a qualified and experienced Instructor and cost £5 per session. You are welcome to attend and see if it suits you before you commit and then payment will be required in advance for that term. For anymore information please contact

Callystephens17@icloud.com

Tel: 07555302145/651214



Cumbwitch Short Mat Bowls Club

(Established 1987)

First floor Otterhampton Village Hall Combwich.

**New members welcome
why not come and give it a try**

Mon: 7.15pm for 7.30 > 9.30

Tel: Brian: 01278 652747



1st Combwich Brownies

To celebrate Christmas our latest venture was to cook and serve an excellent three course Christmas dinner for parents which was a great success and meant everyone gained a cooks badge. This is just one of the many activities including we become involved in during the year.

We have a few vacancies for girls this term. We meet on a Monday evening at the village hall during term time from 5.45-7.30pm

If you know any girls between 7 and 9 years old, please encourage them to come along and visit us. Please contact Liz Brown 652687 or Karen Barton 652673. THANK YOU.



Otterhampton Village Hall

News from the Otterhampton Village Hall Committee

The Village Hall Committee would like to wish everyone a very happy and healthy New Year. We hope to see more of you at the hall during 2018.

Over the last few years the Committee have been considering how to renovate the hall in the wake of the long promised EDF mitigation funding for the village. The end is finally in sight as money is now available and the Committee are currently organising funding and quotes to support our bid to the OPPT group. The changes to the hall will be significant to update and improve the whole building.



In the meantime the many clubs and activities available in the hall are open to all. If you would like to try the Friday Coffee Morning, Art, Craftwork, Keep Fit, Darts, Indoor Bowls, Bingo, Beetledrive or perhaps fancy starting your own club - like a Combwich Skittle, Table Tennis or Badminton team - come along. Just check out the contact details on the notice board at the front of the hall or contact Di Davie on 01278 65214 or email her on dianadavie@hotmail.co.uk **Everyone is welcome - in fact it is YOUR hall so please use it.**

Look out for posters and blackboards in the Village for future events and if you have any ideas or would like to plan something just get in touch with any Committee member or email Sue Barton on bartonbs@btinternet.com

Of course the **BIG** event in January is the ever popular pantomime by the Harbour View Players - '*oh Yes it is!!!*' This year's production is Cinderella so make sure you get your tickets early from the Village Shop.

The monthly Village Market opens 10 til midday on the 2nd Saturday of every month; come along and buy, or simply come along for a cup of tea or coffee and a bacon roll and have a chat.

Look forward to seeing you!

HARBOUR VIEW CLUB



Seasons Greetings from the Harbour View Club Committee and wishing everyone a happy and prosperous New Year.

The Club is open Fridays and Saturdays from 7pm to midnight with additional opening when skittle and darts teams are playing. **If the OPEN sign is on everyone is welcome to come in for a drink or two!** Annual membership is still only £2.50 with £1 charged for visitors - **membership renewal is now required for 2018 please.** The Club has a fully stocked bar including Real Ale all at very competitive prices.

Dates for your diary include:

First Saturday of each month brings the monthly quiz with a cash prize for the winner and various prizes for each round. Cost is £1 per person and starts at 8.30pm. Come along and test your brainpower.

Look out for the blackboards and posters for details of the next event and come along.



Love Musgrove MRI Million Campaign

We aim to raise £1 million by April 2018 (we already have £600K).

We are raising Funds for a third MRI scanner (the two existing scanners are working at full capacity and we wish to keep the waiting lists down).

The ways to give are:

BY POST: send cheque made payable to "Love Musgrove MRI". To Love Musgrove MRI, Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton TA1 5DA.

ONLINE: <http://bit.ly/MRIMillion>.

TEXT: MRIMOI £10 or £5 to 70070.

DIRECT DEBIT: Contact Edward Heath 01278 732913, who has the necessary forms for completion.

Charity Number: 1059922



Your hospital needs a new MRI scanner

Can you help us raise £1 million?

An MRI scanner provides high quality images for diagnoses and monitoring of treatment for our patients who may have:

Breast Cancer

Prostate Cancer

Tumours

Liver Issues

Spinal Injuries & problems

Arthritis

Cardiac Issues

Neurological Conditions

Musculoskeletal Disorders

Can you help us raise £1 million?



The Combwich Village Market was set up in 2011 by some enterprising and very talented locals who wanted to provide a stage for home produced food and crafts from the Otterhampton. area. The Market continues to thrive with a variety of goods for sale. Villagers can buy locally grown garden plants and vegetables as well as homemade jams, chutneys, cakes, pasties and homemade sausages from pigs living a lovely free range life in Wembdon.

In addition to the food, the market offers a wealth of craftwork. This ranges from paintings, handmade glassware, bespoke wooden garden containers, artisan willow items, a variety of goods from the Combwich Crafters and much more.



The Market also offers a refreshment area serving tea, coffee, cake and bacon rolls where everyone catches up on the latest village news. The Market is held on the 2nd Saturday of every month between 10am and midday. Come along



News from Combwich and District WI

Vanessa J Smith (President)



Members of Combwich & District WI wish you all a very healthy and happy New Year 2018 and trust you all see your New Year Resolutions through to 2019!!!!

The monthly meeting in November, was our **Exhibition night**, which was a fantastic success with such an abundance of beautiful craft work displayed by members, showcasing their various creative talents, we were running out of space and tables! Everyone enjoyed the evening including our guests. Maybe next time we will host it in Combwich hall.

Unfortunately in November we lost our Skittles match against Bridgwater Firecrackers WI, so we are out of the Tournament. However, a very enjoyable evening was had by all.

Several members attended the Annual meeting at Wellsprings in November and were very impressed by the Guest Speakers and entertainment. The Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset, **Andy Marsh**, spoke proudly of his police force and the sterling and courageous work they do and also the invaluable benefits that have been achieved since the introduction of body worn video cameras.

We were entertained by **Two Blokes and a Piano** who added a touch of musical fun and jollity to the day, their song about the WI was brilliant and hilarious. They had members singing along causing much merriment.

Finally a truly inspirational lady, **Mandy Hickson**, talking about her experiences as the RAF's first female pilot to fly a Tornado, GR4 squadron on the front-line which she did for many years, finally by then a mother of two, she retired and now shares her knowledge and experiences with interested groups.

The last month of 2017 was a very busy one in our WI calendar, starting with the Group Carol Service hosted by Cannington WI, which was most enjoyable. This was followed the week after by the Somerset Federation Carol Service at Wells Cathedral. Several of us made a day of it with a soggy perusal around the Christmas Market and the enticing shops of Wells, then a very nice lunch before joining Somerset WI members for a fantastic candle lit service. The WI choir gets better every year, and despite the weather, the Cathedral was packed.

On 9th December, several members held a stall at the **Combwich Christmas Market**, and what an amazing array of goodies we sold. Thank you to all members who donated cakes and craft and who turned up on the day to help.

Our **Craft Club** met on 11th December for another most enjoyable few hours making festive cards under the expert tuition of Sue Jacobs who showed us the art of Decoupage. Our next meeting will be on Monday 5th February, topic, time and venue to be arranged.

Our monthly meeting on Thursday 21st December was also a fabulous occasion with a large turnout of members to enjoy a culinary delight of festive food and an intoxicating aroma of spicy mulled wine, helped along by my husband's alcoholic offering to the mix!!!! Thank you to Sue again for organising our party games!

The first meeting of 2018 is on January 18th when our guest speaker will be Jenny McCubbin discussing **Plastic Waste in the Marine Environment**, which is one of the resolutions of 2017 that was voted at the AGM in June for the NFWI to campaign on.

If you want to know more about our programme of events for 2018, it has been printed in the December issue of The Gatepost and it will be re-printed in this edition also. There will be lots more events throughout the year with outings, workshops and our new Craft Club, but this programme is just the monthly meetings at Stockland Club.

For more information or to become a member of Combwich & District WI, please do not hesitate to phone either Vanessa (President) on 01278 652830 or Brenda Wasley (Secretary) on 01278 446279, we would love to hear from you.



Planning Renovations This Year?

If you're thinking of a new extension, a bit of remodelling, or finally knocking down that old garage, have you checked for asbestos? Any property built or refurbished before 2000 could potentially contain ACMs (Asbestos Containing Materials).

Commonly found in corrugated roofing sheets, it was also widely used in artex-type paint coatings, insulation material, floor tiles, other construction material, fixtures and fittings. Left undisturbed, these materials don't present a health risk. However, when damaged the fibres easily become airborne and can be inhaled. Exposure to these microscopic fibres can lead to severe lung disease and cancer. In the UK, around 5000 deaths a year are linked to asbestos exposure, and it can take years for symptoms to develop. Invisible to the naked eye and normally blended with other substances, professional testing is needed to ensure asbestos is dealt with safely.

Somerset Scientific Services, part of Somerset County Council, offer free impartial asbestos advice as part of our commitment to public health and safety. We also offer an expert service to identify and project manage the removal of any ACMs. Samples of suspect material can be sent to our lab for analysis and we'll provide impartial advice on your next steps if asbestos is identified. For larger projects surveys can be completed on site by our specialist asbestos team if needed.

Call the team or visit our website for expert advice – and to find out what other services we provide.

somensetscientificservices.co.uk

01823 355906

SSSmailbox@somerset.gov.uk



Otter Wheels

Your local car scheme always there for You

Is lack of transport a problem?

Can't get to the dentist, doctor, hospital, shopping, visit a friend?



Ring - Otter Wheels on: 07925 154 216

This not-for-profit car scheme has been running almost two years now, with over 200 journeys to date. If you haven't tried us why not give us a go? Door to door service with friendly experienced drivers all, DBS checked and happy to help.

The rates are reasonable and are per car, not per person and those with a bus pass travel half price.

Typical return journey prices are: -

	With bus pass	Without bus pass
Cannington Health Centre	£2.25	£3.50
Bridgwater Bus station	£4.50	£8.00
Musgrove Hospital Taunton	£10.25	£19.50

Please note when you renew your bus pass you must let us have your new number.

Ring Otter Wheels 07925 154 216 for more information and to book a journey

The success of the scheme means we need additional drivers. If you are interested please ring 07925 154216. Expenses are paid

Happy New Year to all our volunteers and customers



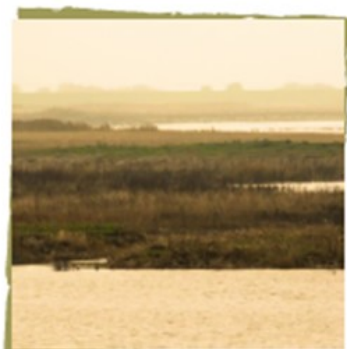
WWT Steart Marshes

working in partnership with



**Environment
Agency**

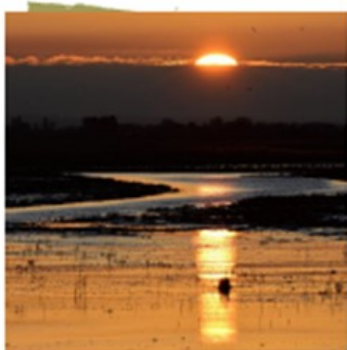
STEART MARSHES EVENTS



STORY OF A LANDSCAPE **Friday 19 Jan. 10am - 12**

Enjoy a guided walk around WWT Steart to explore how the area has changed through the ages.

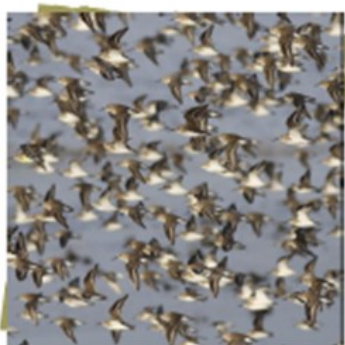
WWT Members £3/non-members £5



NIGHT WALK **Friday 2 Feb 7:30pm-9:30**

Enjoy a walk through the reserve after dark to hear the sounds of the saltmarsh at night. Hot drink included.

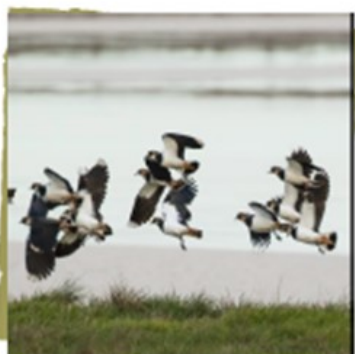
WWT Members £3/non-members £5



HIGH TIDE BIRDWATCHING WALK **Sunday 4 Feb. 8:30-10:30**

High Tides are the best time to see flocks of wading birds. Suitable for any age and ability.

WWT Members £3/non-members £5



BIRDWATCHING FOR BEGINNERS **Sunday 18 Feb 8:30-10:30**

Join a local expert and learn to identify some of the birds visiting Steart Marshes.

WWT Members £3/non-members £5



COMBWICH COMMUNITY CHOIR



Raised £450 for BARB



Thank you to everyone who helped!

MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library visits Combwich and Stockland every four weeks on a Thursday morning from 4th January

Otterhampton School TA5 2QS	10.05 - 10.40
Harbour TA5 2QU	10.55 – 11.15
Combwich Post Office TA5 2QW	11.10 – 11.30
Stockland Bristol Captains TA5 2PY	11.20– 11.40

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.

If you have an interesting hobby, or interest which you would like to share in these pages, please contact the editor

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.

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 Gentle movement to 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			
1st February 2018	Parish Council Meeting	7pm	Please note later start time . Members will be attending a Transport/Highways meeting in Bridgwater at 5.30pm
1st March 2018	Parish council meeting	7pm	Village Hall
1st March 2018	NHS Free Health Checks (booking Essential)	9am - 4.30pm	Village Hall
2nd March	NHS Free Health Checks (booking Essential)	9am - 4.30pm	Social Club
Distribution 12th March 2018	Next Otter Tales		Articles by 4th March

Otter Tales

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Our thanks to Hinkley Point B, EDF Energy who print this newsletter without charge.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information published in Otter Tales, some of the views expressed are those of individuals or organisations.