

Welcome to Combwich

COMBWICH, OTTERHAMPTON AND STEART NEWSLETTER

March 2018

Issue 17

# Otter Tales

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

# Sealife in Combwich Pill Photograph Tom Jacobs



First impressions of our stretch of the Parrett estuary are of a "muddy old river" with very little signs of life. Far from it, this river is full of life, although most of it is not as obvious as the recent visitor to the Pill - a Grey Seal, presumably a youngster. Although seals are occasionally seen in the lower reaches of the estuary, they are more frequently found off the local coast, especially around the cooling water outfall from Hinkley B. Presumably seals enter the river following fish and I have occasionally seen them in the estuary struggling to swallow really big fish. It is amazing that they can find anything in such muddy water; however, there is evidence that seals are able to detect the small eddies in the water created by fish while swimming. Recent surveys within the tidal creeks and lagoons on Steart Marsh have shown the presence of a wide variety of marine fish in the estuary, confirming coastal marsh to be an important feeding and nursery habitat.

Like it or not mud in river estuaries has been shown to be one of the richest habitats on Earth with a great range of biodiversity, mainly small creepy-crawlies, that provide rich feeding for bigger animals -crustaceans, fish and, of course, birds. The Parrett Estuary is a fine example of this wealth of wildlife, especially with its huge flocks of wintering waders and wildfowl. This makes the estuary a significant conservation area of national importance, and this "muddy old river" is on our door step!

Article Dick Best

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# **Otterhampton Offcuts**

#### Snippets from the February & March 2018 Parish Council Meetings

#### **WINTRY WEATHER:**

NHS Free Health Checks – we had to postpone this event on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> March because of the adverse weather. We have arranged new dates for Friday 6<sup>th</sup> and Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April; sessions are between 9am – 4.30pm in the Village Hall. Please arrange a booking either by phone 01823 261794 or somersethealthchecks.co.uk. There are a few available slots if anyone is interested (please refer to website to confirm if you are eligible).

**Parish Council Meeting** - we also had to postpone the meeting from  $1^{st}$  March to  $8^{th}$  March.

**Snow Clearance** - (Steart to Otterhampton) – We wish to record our thanks and appreciation to Andy and Simon Darch and his team who worked tirelessly to clear the road between Steart and Biffen's Corner (Otterhampton) on the Friday morning.

**Salt Supplies** – Bags of salt are stored in the parish council garage for times such as these. Thanks to Cllr Bob Birkenhead for delivering supplies around the village.

#### **PLAY AND RECREATION AREA:**

We believe we have established a suitable method of repair for the ground settlement issues. We will be requesting the contractor carry out repairs as soon as possible. The Play Area may have to be closed for a day or so whilst the remedial works are carried out. Notices will be erected at the play area advising of the date for repairs.

#### **HIGHWAYS:**

Transport Forum 1.2.18 - As reported in the last Otter Tales, the parishes west of Bridgwater put together a presentation detailing the impact of Hinkley Point C on the individual parishes. The collaborative approach was very effective. Issues included traffic delays, rat-running through lanes, speeding, the SPS buses, verge erosion and parking issues. EDF and SCC have responded to these issues and a number of parishes have arranged meetings with the various agencies to try and find solutions. We have arranged a meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> March with EDF, SCC and the Police to discuss our issues which mainly feature the C182 between the Combwich junction and Biffen's Corner.

**Double Yellow Lines (DYL)** at Brookside Rd – following consultation with residents it has been decided not to pursue this suggestion (submitted to Highways by a parishioner). None of the residents we spoke with wanted DYL outside of their properties. In addition, the conversion of a resident's garden for parking seems to have alleviated the pinch point near the Brookside Rd garages together with the continued efforts of EDF to combat fly-parking

#### 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 01278 652043

(District & County)

Julie Pay (District) 01278 732956

# BRIDGWATER TIDAL BARRIER SCHEME:

The Environment Agency has asked for dates of the next few parish council meetings as it would like to provide a further update on the Scheme, and in particular the flood defences at Combwich. Look out for notice boards and the website, which will confirm the date and time.

#### **SOMERSET LIBRARY CONSULTATION:**

Have your say on proposals for potential changes to how future Somerset Library services could be delivered. Visit the website <a href="https://www.somerset.gov.uk/librariesconsultation">www.somerset.gov.uk/librariesconsultation</a> 29.1.18 - 22.4.18

#### PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY:

Following John Berry's resignation we start the formal process to advertise the post of councillor. We first have to give notice of the vacancy to give the opportunity for residents to request an election for the post which would need to be signed by ten electors. If no such request is made we can then go ahead and advertise the vacancy to be filled by cooption. Please look out for the notices on the notice board and website (Combwich.org.uk)

#### **NEXT MEETING:**

The next meetings will be on Thursday 5 April and Thursday 3 May, both at 7.00 pm in Otterhampton Village Hall. Please note the May meeting is our Annual Assembly and Annual Meeting.

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.

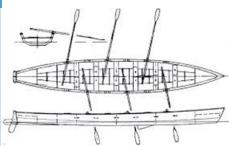
# **Combwich Motorboat & Sailing Club**

http://www.combwichboatclub.co.uk/

This year is turning into an exciting one for the Combwich Motor Boat and Sailing Club with members due to host a major water ski racing event in May and an order being placed for a brand new training gig.

To mark the arrival of the new gig which will have the traditional six rowing spaces, Combwich Motor Boat and Sailing Club would like to invite readers of *Otter Tales* to submit names for the boat. The winner of the name chosen will receive a small prize and be asked to officially name the gig at a ceremony. Names to club secretary, Trevor Reason (trevorreason@yahoo.co.uk) by 15 April 2018.

Long serving club member Bill Johnson first floated the idea of a rowing gig and the suggestion won support from the Parish Council, a number of villagers and members alike. Club secretary Trevor Reason picked up the baton and thanks to grants from the council, Somerset Community Foundation (CIM) Fund and the club, a new £20,000 gig is being built in St Austell, Cornwall. It is being made out of fibreglass, will be ice blue in colour and should be delivered in the next few weeks.



Trevor said: "This is an exciting time for the club and the village. We have received a lot of encouragement and support in this venture, not least from Burnham-on-Sea Gig

Rowing Club."

The Cornish Pilot Gig was recognised as one of the first shore-based lifeboats that went to vessels in distress. Its history can be traced back to the 17th Century and it was traditionally

used to ferry pilots out to incoming vessels off the Atlantic. For many years the Isles of Scilly has hosted the World Gig Racing Championships although racing gigs are of a slightly different Cornish design to training gigs.



#### Ski Racing

Combwich will be the venue for a South West Water Ski regional event on Sunday 20 May. There are due to be 12 boats competing in a number of spectacular races over high tide (around 10am to 12 noon). It promises to be an exciting day and similar events in Cardiff, Torquay and Weston-Super-Mare have proved very popular.





arrived barge Combwich Wharf Sunday 28th February with abnormal loads (generators) bound for EDF Hinkley B power station. The last leg of the journey from the Wharf, along the private road and the C182 to the power station was on



following Sunday morning. This delivery was delayed for several

days due to bad weather. The picture on the right shows the 2 generators and the one on the left shows the barge leaving the wharf.

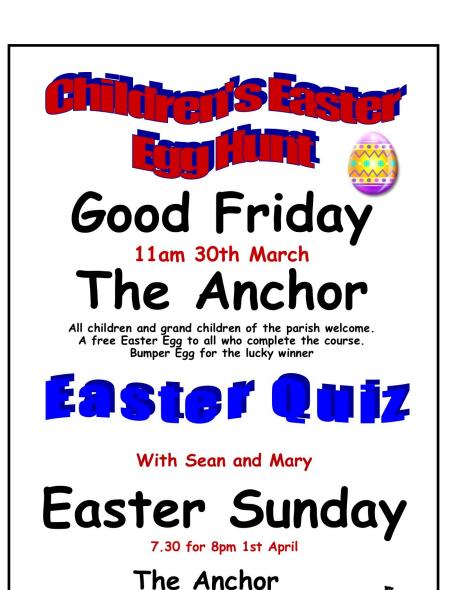


## Otterhampton Parish Recreation Association (OPRA)

**Registered Charity Number 1124017** 

For many years OPRA has been at the forefront of village and parish life, organising a range of events including a Biennial Fete, walks and talks, race nights, Easter egg hunt for the children, a summer ball and quizzes. We have also provided grants to assist other local organisations. OPRA also produced a parish newsletter until we merged our operation with the parish council to create Otter Tales in 2015. The Combwich website www.combwich.org.uk was set up and is maintained by OPRA.

That is the past; we now need new ideas and new people to take the organisation forward. If you have ideas for activities, or want to get involved why not come along to our AGM at 7.30pm on Monday 19th March at the Anchor, for a free glass of wine and nibbles and join in the discussion. We will spend just a little time (less than half an hour) electing our committee and officials, and the rest of the time will be spent socialising, getting to know each other and maybe planning an event or two. Don't worry, you will not be pressed into anything.



All welcome

**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 <a href="https://www.combwich.org.uk">www.combwich.org.uk</a> 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.

### Did you Know?

Bridgwater was the first town to petition Parliament for the abolition of slavery.

Bridgwater once had four cinemas operating at the same time; the Odeon and the Palace in Penel Orlieu, the Arcade in Eastover (later known as the Rex) and a regular cinema in the Town Hall.

Henry VIll declared
Bridgwater to be a county in its own right.

Source Bridgwater Town Council

#### **News from Revd Alison Waters**

The Rectory, 27 Brook Street, Cannington TA5 2HP cannington.benefice@gmail.com 01278 652953

#### SERVICES AT EASTER

(photographer: Jean Fitzpatrick)

Do join us for the Easter Sunday celebrations on 1st April 2018.

We will gather again at St Andrew's Church, Steart at 5.30am for the DAWN EUCHARIST, followed by a shared breakfast. This moving and dramatic service begins with the

lighting of the first flame of Easter, which is carried into the church.

For those less keep on an early start, there is a FAMILY

For those less keen on an early start, there is a FAMILY COMMUNION SERVICE at 11.15am at St Peter's, Combwich, with less fire and more chocolate (I hope).



1st Sunday

11.15am Family Service St Peter's, Combwich

2nd Sunday

11.15am Family Service St Mary Magdalene, Stockland

3rd Sunday

11.15am Eucharist St Peter's, Combwich

4th Sunday

11.15am Eucharist St Mary Magdalene, Stockland

I am delighted that the clock and bells are back up and running. Thank you so much for your patience during some

teething problems with the chimes, and thank you also to the winders and ringers and to all who have donated.

The fabulous and much loved Mem Myatt enjoyed a special 93rd birthday party in a rare visit to

her own bungalow in Combwich with friends last month.

Mem is being cared for in the Rosary Nursing home in Bridgwater, but was able to make a first visit home since her stroke, to share the occasion with friends.

She enjoys having Otter Tales read to her and asked to use the newsletter to express her thanks to all those who sent cards, flowers, plants and gifts for her 93rd birthday which helped to make it a very special occasion.

OT is happy to oblige and wishes Mem many more happy birthdays to come.





# Notes from your Village Agent

Izzy Silvester

Stories are an amazing way to enrich our lives. Whether we watch them as a TV drama, share a sofa and a book with the younger members of the family or curl up and read or listen to a talking book alone.



There are plenty of exciting ways to enjoy stories at libraries around the county too. Try a shared reading group, where poems and stories are read aloud together, followed by discussion into which everyone is encouraged to participate.

If you are unable to get to the library, you can ask for a volunteer to visit you on a regular basis, bringing books of your choice and stopping for a cuppa. It is a lovely volunteer position to take too. Contact your local library if you are interested.

Libraries often have events and groups such as author talks and children story times. Check out local adverts and online. Libraries will also support you with internet access which is necessary for those changing to universal credit and to compare your utility bills. They are also a great place to find local adverts. It is a safe and welcoming place to visit for all. They are also warm in the winter!

It may be useful to know that libraries keep book collections on autism, self-help for people with mental health issues and a dementia collection to help people steer their way through their changes and promote understanding of the issues involved. We also have books on prescription – self- help books that a doctor can prescribe for borrowers or that people can take out for themselves.

Have your say on this remarkable free resource by going to your local library and filling in a survey by 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Ask your librarian about the changes that are planned. The consultation document is also on line <a href="http://somersetlibraries.co.uk/consultation/">http://somersetlibraries.co.uk/consultation/</a>

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@somersetrcc.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

# **Spring is here,** or is it? a series of photographs of the parish taken on 1st March 2018 by local residents. This aerial view was taken by Luke Perrett from a hight of 300 feet using his drone.







Pictures left by Elizabeth Marriott (Sarah Webb having fun)

Below pictures by Aly Prowse (Merlin and sheep at Steart)



















Thank you to everyone who submitted photographs. Sorry I am unable to print them all. Many more will appear on the website

## **Otterhampton Village Hall**

News from the Otterhampton Village Hall Committee

Over the next couple of months every household in the Parish will receive a short confidential questionnaire from the Community Council for Somerset (completely independent of the hall) asking what changes to the hall you would like to see. **PLEASE** make sure you complete this questionnaire as it will help in our bid for substantial funding to make the hall a more attractive, environmentally friendly and accessible building for the whole community to use. We want and need your views.

#### **Future events:**

Look out for the noticeboards advertising the next Beetledrive and Bingo nights - fun for the whole family and prizes!

Saturday Village Market is held on the 2nd Saturday of every month between 10am and midday. As well as locally hand crafted goods and home made sausages you could have tea and cake, or coffee and a bacon roll to pass away time with friends and neighbours.

The Village Hall Committee hold their AGM on Wednesday 9th May at 7.30pm. Please come along and have your say and perhaps volunteer to join the Committee. New members are always needed and would be warmly welcomed. If we manage to get the funding to refurbish the hall there will be many decisions to make on behalf of the whole community and the more input the better: exciting times!

If you have any ideas for events or would like to plan something just get in touch with any Committee member or email Sue Barton on bartonbs@btinternet.com The Hall is

# OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL

AGM

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 7:30 p.m.

# WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US

Please come along to the AGM to meet the OVH Committee and find out what we have done over the past year and our plans for the coming year.

available to hire and ideal for parties; arrangements can be made for the Harbour View Club bar to be open . If you would like more information contact Di Davie on 01278 652141 or email her on dianadavie@hotmail.co.uk

### HARBOUR VIEW SOCIAL CLUB



The Club is open Fridays and Saturdays from 7pm to midnight, and Monday evenings during the skittle season. Annual membership is only £2.50 with £1 charged for visitors. Everyone is welcome so why not come along? The Club has a fully stocked bar including Real Ale (on a handpump); a darts area and skittle alley are available for social events.

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.

# TURN TO US

116 123 FREE
This number is FREE to call
01823 288998\* (Local)



Someone to talk to – people contact us when things are getting to them. They don't have to be suicidal.

We're always here - round the clock, every single day of the year.

A safe place – as volunteers we're ordinary people, and keep all our conversations private.

People can be themselves – whoever they are, however they feel, whatever life's done to them.

We're a charity – it's the public's kind donations that keep our helpline open.



# To All Event Organisers

All to often we find that events in the parish are organised without regard to what else is going on, and we grumble at the lack of support for our event.

We respectfully ask that if you are organising a local event, you check with the website

www.combwich.org.uk/'whats on' page, to avoid conflict with other events. Please then email Bev Smith at

beverly64@me.com who will ensure your details are on the website and that other organisation are informed.

By working together we can maximise the support for all local community events. Thank You.



#### **News from Combwich and District WI**

Vanessa J Smith (President)

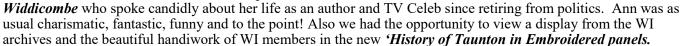


January started with a very thought provoking Monthly Meeting with our Guest Speaker, *Jenny McCubbin* discussing concerns relating to *Plastic Waste in the Marine Environment*. This has been a much debated topic within the WI and it was chosen as one of the resolutions with the highest votes to go to the AGM in June when it was given the go ahead for the NFWI public affairs team to campaign about. Members debated with each other about plastics being dumped in the ocean and thus entering the food chain, causing a danger to human, animal and marine life. This is an issue that has recently attracted lots of media coverage and many TV programmes in recent months.

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, members enjoyed an evening out at *The Malt Shovel*, *Cannington*, to celebrate *The New Year*. We all had a fabulous time with great company, scrumptious food, lively conversation, and a very attentive staff. What a perfect evening we had. Roll on next year!

Our *Craft Club* met on February 5<sup>th</sup> when we tried our hand at 'Decopatch' hearts – following the WI February for 'Feel the Love' campaign and the making of 'green' hearts of any form with a view to encouraging discussion about looking after our environment. Dee Turner, stuck fully to the brief with her totally green hearts while the rest of us added a few extra colours – some minus green completely, but then some of us are renegades!!!!

On 10<sup>th</sup> February, several members went to a Centenary Lunch at Taunton Cricket Ground to see the Guest Speaker, *Ann* 



Talking about hearts and environment, on February 14<sup>th</sup> – yes, Valentines Day - WI members, partners and friends went on an organized Tour of Hinkley C Power Station. This was a most interesting and extremely well run tour, and free, just book one at the EDF office. The tour was conducted from the warm and comfortable bus that takes you to and around the site and what an eye opener it was, well worth going.

At our Monthly Meeting on February 15<sup>th</sup>, we were treated to another fabulous display of *Art, Craft and Cultural Nostalgia* with our Guest Speaker, a local artist, *Caron Coldwell*. Themed images of beautifully hand painted paper cast spoons from Alice in Wonderland, Cowboys and Indians, Kings and Queens, Sport etc. Carons unique craft was inspirational and set many members eager to challenge both their imaginations and patience – 15 paper layers allowing each to dry before applying any art work! We had a fabulous evening with several visitors, one of whom became a joining member.

We are very much thinking of our dear Mem Myatt as she has just reached her 93<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, surrounded now, I am sure, by cards and flowers and hopefully many visitors. Mem now resides at The Rosary Nursing Home, we all wish her well.

Our *Craft Club* will meet on March 5<sup>th</sup> to learn or improve our *Crotchet* techniques. The aim is to create a blanket or two, to be auctioned off.

Our Monthly Meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup> will see us possibly, tied up in knots and in strange positions as we are being given an *Introduction to Yoga* by Guest Speaker *Becky Foyle*. I have a feeling we will earn our refreshments on this night!

If you want to know more about our programme of events for 2018, and more events throughout the year with outings, workshops and our new Craft Club, then please ask a member or phone the numbers below. We meet at Stockland Sport and Social Club on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the Month (except August) and our Craft Club meets at different venues. We are offering one free evening, so seek out a member who will accompany you to a meeting. You can be sure of a very warm welcome.

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.



#### More local snow photographs





# **Otter Wheels**



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



This not-for-profit car scheme has been running about 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 <u>per car</u>, not per person and those with a bus pass travel half price.

Ring - Otter Wheels on: 07925 154 216 to book a journey, but please give accurate details of the requested journey, especially your telephone number.

The rules that Otter Wheels operates under, requires passengers with a bus pass to show it to the driver whenever travelling with Otter Wheels – so please make sure you have it with you whenever you use the service.

Somerset County Council has also requested that if you are a bus pass holder and you change your address – for example from Steart to Combwich you must let **County know**. You can do this either on line at <a href="mailto:sjshaw@somerset.gov.uk">sjshaw@somerset.gov.uk</a> or by phoning 0300 123 2224

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



#### MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library visits Combwich and Stockland every four weeks on a Thursday morning from 22nd February

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.

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

And if you would like to receive Otter Tales by email as well as hard copy please email barry.leathwood@btinternet.com

Your village website <a href="www.combwich.org.uk">www.combwich.org.uk</a> 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

### 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 <sup>st</sup> of month)	Parish Council	7pm	Starts with public session	
Thursday (2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> of month)	Choir	7pm – 8pm		
Thursday (3 <sup>rd</sup> of month)	Combwich & District WI	7.30pm	Stockland Sports & Social Club	
Friday	Coffee morning	10am – 12 noon		
Saturday (2 <sup>nd</sup> of month)	Combwich Market	10am – 12 noon		
FUTURE EVENTS				
5th April 2018	Parish Council Meeting	7pm		
3rd May 2018	Annual Assembly Annual Parish Council Meeting	7pm	Village Hall	
6th & 9th April2018	NHS Free Health Checks (booking Essential)	9am - 4.30pm	Re-arranged from 1st & 2nd March	
Distribution 16 <sup>h</sup> May 2018	Next Otter Tales		Articles by 8th May	

#### **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
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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.