



Welcome to Combwich

Otter Tales

Published with the generous support of Otterhampton Parish Council

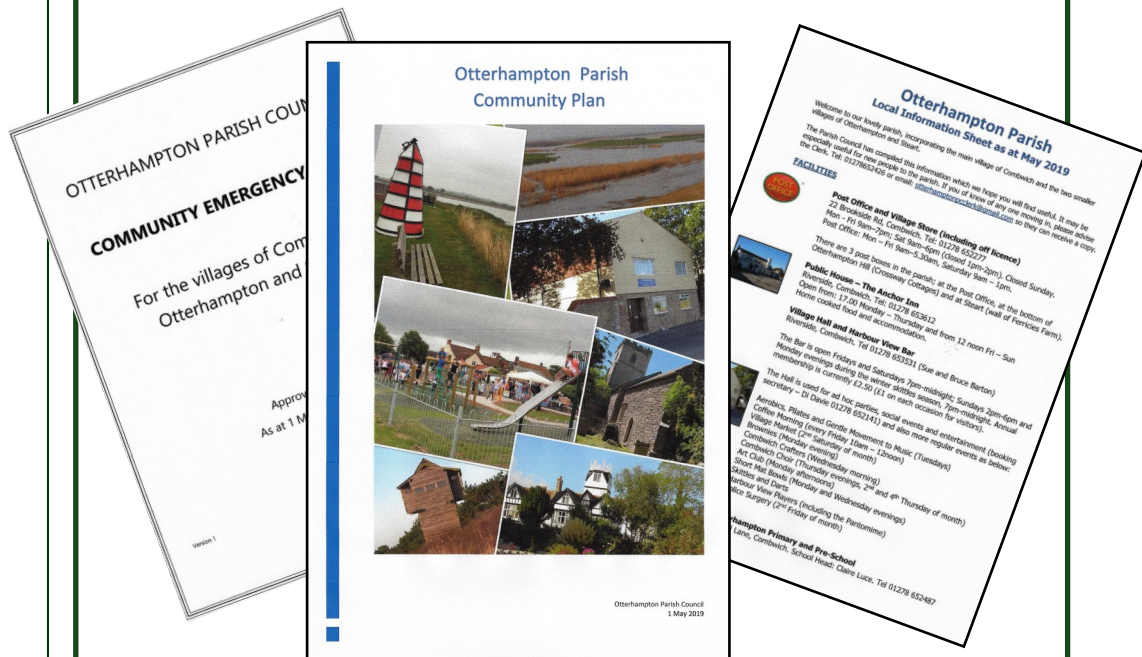
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With this issue, copies of the Community Plan, Community Emergency Plan, Local Information (Welcome) Pack

These documents represent months of work by the Otterhampton Project Team (OPPT) and the Otterhampton Parish Council.

The Community Plan provides a description of our parish and vision for the future, whilst the Emergency Plan indicates what can be done if the safety of residents is at risk. The Information Pack is a very handy list of services available and will be particularly useful for new residents. Finally there is the Hinkley C Community Fund project list.



Please keep these documents safe for future reference

Otterhampton Offcuts

Snippets from the February & March 2019 Parish Council Meetings

EDF Combwich Wharf Refurbishment Update (April)

Approximately 60 parishioners attended the update. EDF advised that enabling works will commence in the spring through to the summer 2019, immediately followed by the construction work. The wharf handover is due to take place during winter 2020. It is anticipated that once the work commences monthly updates will be provided by EDF.

Hinkley C Community Fund

Three applications for funding were approved (by the Somerset Community Foundation Panel) during April. These were polo shirts for Combwich Choir (£295); A glasswasher for the Harbour View Bar (£1272) and the installation of a light at the Combwich bus shelter (£3275). Of the £500k fund for our parish, a total of £70000 has been awarded to projects so far. The latest project list is included within the Community Plan pack to be delivered to each household shortly.

Parish and District Council Elections

Following the first election in the parish for 8 years, we are delighted to welcome our new councillors (featured within this newsletter) and offer our commiserations for our parishioners who did not get elected. We thank Murray Lister for his efforts and contribution to the parish council during his year in office. We also congratulate our ward councillors Julie Pay and Mike Caswell on their re-election as Sedgemoor District Councillors.

Barry Leathwood and Dick Best.

Both Barry and Dick retired as councillors; Barry after 13 years on the parish council and Dick, representing Steart Ward, after 9 years. Both have given valuable and excellent service to the council and the community. We will miss their contribution and wise counsel but wish them all the very best on their 'retirement'. I am sure we will still see them involved in various community activities.

SCC Chairman's Award

This year our nomination for the award is Roger Musgrove, our 'postie'. The nomination is proving to be extremely popular throughout the parish so we are really pleased for Roger. The award's ceremony will be held on 4.7.19.

Combwich Ponds

After more than eleven years since we sent an appeal with written evidence to SCC to restore access around the Combwich Ponds (for generations previously, parishioners were able to walk freely around the ponds which ceased after the Bridgwater Angling Association arbitrarily stopped public access) the appeal is now being dealt with. See page 5

Footpath Diversion (Tucketts Clyce)

There will be a small project, starting in a few weeks, to rebuild Tuckett's Clyce. This is an outfall structure on the left bank of the Parrett, approx. 600m upstream from Combwich Wharf. The project will require a short temporary diversion of the footpath on top of the flood bank to take it around the works area. The area will be fenced and the route will be signed. A temporary crossing of the rhyne will be constructed just upstream of the Internal Drainage Board's tilting weir.

Contact details for the parish council

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Julie Evans (Chair)	01278 652735
Bob Birkenhead (Vice Chair)	01278 653127
Rachel Perrett	01278 652958
Tina Gardener	01278 652642
Marie Beckley	07748 154395
Lindsey Parsons	07843 604687
Andrew Darch (Stear)	01278 653495
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

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 9.5.19

Chair's Report

The Chair, Julie Evans read out her report during her brief tenure of only two months. Julie outlined the work of the council over the past year including our day to day responsibilities (planning applications, tree and grounds maintenance, enhancements, dog and litter bins, grant applications and other financial matters); the impact of Hinkley C on the parish (fly parking for example) and efforts with SCC Highways and other bodies for road safety measures including the 50mph speed limit on the C182. Julie welcomed our new councillors, thanking all the candidates whether elected or not, and gave a vote of thanks to both B.Leathwood and D.Best, our retiring councillors. Finally, she mentioned our target to encourage wider participation which started on a small-scale, culminating in elections where there were more candidates than positions. We wish to see this gradual involvement with the community continue and increase. A full transcript of Julie's report will be placed on the Combwich.org.uk website and notice boards shortly.

Annual Accounts to 31.3.19

The Clerk presented the annual accounts which showed a net bank balance of £36656. This amount includes £24782 in 'Reserves' of which, £9877 is restricted funds set aside for the Steart Borehole project and new village notice boards (funds obtained from external grant funders). The other £14905 is for ongoing maintenance obligations e.g. £2000 is set aside every year for play area maintenance and eventual replacement; Combwich track repairs; buoy maintenance, election costs etc.

INCOME for the year totalled £41217, a net increase of £13786 over the previous year. £3000 of this was an increase in the Precept and the remaining variance is due to restricted funds as

above plus £5000 for the Dame Withycombe layby widening works.

EXPENDITURE for the year totalled £27541, a net increase of £4273. Again, the increase is mostly due to the restricted fund items, one-off grant funded expenditure which totalled £1123 in 2017/18 and £6333 in 2018/19.

The full and detailed set of accounts together with the Audit Return will be placed on the Combwich.org.uk website mid to late May. The Clerk will be very happy to answer any queries residents may have on any aspect of the parish council finances and supply an on-line copy of our accounts if requested.

ANNUAL MEETING

Election of Officers and Representatives

Chair – Julie Evans

Vice-Chair – Bob Birkenhead

Community Forum – Julie Evans (deputy Marie Beckley)

Transport Forum – Andy Darch (deputy Lindsay Parsons)

Hinkley Point Site Stakeholders Meeting (SSG) – Rachel Perrett (deputy Tina Gardener)

School Liaison – Rachel Perrett

Village Hall – Lindsay Parsons

Public Rights of Way – Bob Birkenhead

Defibrillators – To be confirmed

Keyholders for Garage – Marie Beckley, Bob Birkenhead, Julie Evans, Tina Gardener, Rachel Perrett.

Tree Strategy Group – Julie Evans, Rachel Perrett, Dick Best, Jim Doble (more parishioners welcome)

OPRA – Tina Gardener

Otter Wheels – Marie Beckley and Tina Gardener

Otter Tales – Barry Leathwood (written report)

OPPT – Sue Barton, Dick Best, Julie Evans, Tina Gardener, Barry Leathwood, Aly Prowse, Connie Sanders and Richard Stirling



The Chair and Vice-Chair will attend ‘Being a Successful Chairman’ course in July and our other councillors will be attending ‘Councillor Essentials’ training in June which is organised by the Somerset Association of Local Councils.

Next Meeting

We would love to see more residents at parish council meetings. You will be given a warm welcome and the opportunity to participate and give your views on the various topics discussed. In addition, tea, coffee and biscuits are available from 5-10 minutes before the meeting start time.

The next parish council meeting will be held on Thursday 6 June 2019, at 7.00pm, in Otterhampton Village Hall.

Contact for Clerk (Aly Prowse) otterhamptonpcclerk@gmail.com or Tel 01278 652426



Standing left to right - Tina Gardener, Rachel Perrett, Marie Beckley, Bob Birkenhead

Lindsay Parsons & Andrew Darch (Stear)

Sitting - Aly Prowse (clerk) Julie Evens (Chair)



Otterhampton Parish Recreation Association (OPRA)

Registered Charity Number 1124017

The OPRA AGM was held on 18th March at the Anchor. All of the committee were re-elected and the posts of responsibility remain the same. We were unable to persuade anyone else to join our extremely friendly committee. If you are interested, you can still join us by contacting any of the committee members. The treasurer reported a balance of funds at 31.12.18 of £4,500. This balance is greatly boosted by the income from the 100 Club (93 members at 31.12.18). Last year we received £4,862, from which we paid out £2,694 (55%) in prizes leaving a balance of £2,168 for OPRA to fund village activities.

At the AGM the chairman reported on the previous year's activities and thanked all the committee and volunteers, too many to mention here, who help OPRA throughout the year and without their support we wouldn't be able to hold any events including the popular firework display and the seniors' Christmas dinner.

For four years now we've had a lantern parade preceding the fireworks, courtesy of the hard work undertaken by Sarah Webb. Each year it has



grown and become more spectacular. Putting on an event like this doesn't happen overnight. This year we hope to organise the workshops differently. It is planned to concentrate only on the Children's workshops in October half-term. The large themed lanterns made by the adults will hopefully be constructed in September and early October. We will be contacting local groups to see if they would like to participate. More details to follow in the next issue.

This Easter the weather was kind to us, unlike last year when Good Friday was a washout! We had 61 children attend our Easter Egg hunt, each child who completed the hunt received an Easter egg and the winner also received a large egg. So many children got all the answers right we had to draw the winner out of a hat. On Sunday evening we had the traditional Quiz once again run superbly by Mary and Shaun Ryall. We had five teams who fought hard to win the prize of 4 bottles of wine. A great weekend of activities and a thank you to Matt for allowing us to host the events at the Anchor.

OPRA is looking to replace the pavilion on the common, which has become a bit of an eyesore and also floods occasionally on the high tides. It will be replaced with something more practical for storage and the pillars it rests on will have to be raised by about a foot if it stays in the same place. This work will be carried out in consultation with the Parish Council who own the common and be subject to getting the money from the CIM fund for Comwich.

OPRA Officers and Committee Chair

Tina Gardener 652642

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

Jacqui Sparks 652069

Melvin Fooks 322459

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.comwich.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.



Combwich Ponds - is there light at the end of the tunnel?

The delightful and much loved Combwich Ponds, the footpaths around which have been walked by generations of Combwich residents were arbitrarily closed (with padlocked gates) to the public by the Bridgwater Angling Association Limited (BAA) in May 2007. No reason were given for the closure.



During the summer of that year a leaflet was circulated in the village seeking peoples views and over 100 people responded opposing the closure.

In September 2007 the parish council chair and vice chair and the clerk, initiated a meeting with the officers of the Angling Club in an attempt to understand the club's reasons for the closure and to see whether a compromise was possible. The club refused to consider any possible compromise.

On Wednesday 3rd October 2007 a meeting in the village hall with over 90 people attending unanimously committed to campaign for the paths to be re-opened. A mass of evidence was collated and together a written legal submission was submitted to Somerset County Council SCC (the enforcement authority).

Despite numerous requests and two referrals to the Secretary of State for the Environment, the council refused to act on the basis that we were a long way down in a queue. We have now been informed that a decision will be made this year and there has been a call for further evidence.

In the words of William E Gladstone "Justice delayed is justice denied" which is particularly apt, as a generation of children have been denied access to this lovely part of our heritage. Let us hope that justice will finally be ours!



"Combwich, Otterhampton & Steart Memories"

On Facebook

This Facebook group is being launched for people to share memories and old photos, maps and documents relevant to our parish and community, so maybe have a dig around in cupboards and drawers, or ask older family members if they have anything they would like to show us? It can simply be old family photos, pictures of their homes years ago, school photos, posters or tickets for local events, Coronation or other national celebrations, living through the War and how we celebrated the end of it, funny or interesting stories from years ago, etc. Seemingly mundane memories can be fascinating now, such as how you summoned the doctor, watching the village blacksmith, seeing places built or demolished, local businesses and the people who worked in them, getting farm animals to market, etc. All help to paint a picture of our local history.



This is a closed group, but if you have any connection to the parish we would love you to join.

Pictured is the Combwich Farmers Trading Company which owned small ships that plied the Bristol Channel until it was taken over by the Morgan Brush Factory at the beginning of World War 2.

There is also a newly formed local history group. if you are interested in joining email barry.leathwood@btinternet.com

Being a Care Dog - by Emmi (pictured)



Hi, I'm Emmi, I am a Canine Concern Care Dog.

I started my care dog career as a Pets As Therapy (PAT) dog. I had to be assessed to check I was suitable. Mum was really nervous – she thought I was suitable but then Mum thinks I can do anything; however, I still had to prove it to the lady. I passed the tests and the next step was finding somewhere to visit. I'm afraid I did have to leave this bit to Mum to sort and she soon found a care home for us to visit in Bridgwater, Somerset.

Sadly Pets As Therapy made the decision last year that they wouldn't allow dogs who were fed a raw diet to be PAT dogs so Mum contacted Canine Concern Care Dogs and they accepted me immediately. Mum then arranged for Miika to be assessed and then later on Jaana so now we are all Canine Concern Care Dogs and we take it in turns to visit the residents at the care homes.

I see a lot of different people at the care home; some are in their beds, some are in enormous chairs and some are waiting for me in the activities room. On our first visit we met a dear lady called Doris. Doris loves dogs and was very excited to see me. I backed up to Doris and she started stroking my back and then reached around to tickle my chest and then she put both arms around my neck and dragged me back and up for a big cuddle – it was a bit of a shock but she didn't hurt me so I just let her do it. The next time we visited the home Doris was quite poorly so I didn't get to see her for a few months but on one visit a few weeks ago as we were passing Doris' room she called out. I backed up to Doris and then put my head back and up ready for a Doris hug, it was lovely to see her again.

We also visit people at another care home which is in Stockland Bristol. Most of the residents are up and watching TV in the lounge but when they see me they forget the TV and watch me do my tricks. I show them how to sit and lay down, how to do Dog Parkour and I also show them how I help by picking up things for Mum. I think Mum is getting very clumsy as she is always dropping stuff and asking me to pick it up for her.

At this care home a while back there was a new resident who was very poorly. It was very difficult for me to get close enough for the lady to reach me. I am not allowed on the beds at the care homes so when Mum and the carer told me to get on the bed I wouldn't do it, so the carer made the bed drop lower down and Mum pushed a chair next to the bed and told me to get on the chair. Then I laid down with my chest on the bed so that the lady could reach me. I did give the lady some special licks on her hand which the carer said was good for her as it meant she knew I liked her and was happy to be tickled.

One of the best things about visiting the residents at the care homes is making them smile. On one visit we went into one lady's room and she looked so sad but as soon as I went up to her and gave her a kiss she started to smile. I heard her tell Mum that she had been really depressed but that after seeing me she felt cheered up.

Mum is trying to get Jaana a placement in the local school as a read-to dog. Mum thinks Jaana will prefer that as she can just lay on her back having her belly tickled while the children read to her.

We have been visiting care homes for over two years now, as soon as Mum gets out our special bandana and lead from the drawer we all get excited because we don't know which one of us is going.

Visiting the care homes really is lots of fun and gives you a lovely warm feeling in your tummy.

Emmi



Otterhampton Primary School.

Head Teacher, Claire Luce



Otterhampton Primary School -- Highlights from Summer 1.

We have had another busy half term at Otterhampton Primary School.

- Raised money for Red Nose day
- Cross country final event at King Alfreds
- Year 4 Sports morning at Nether Stowey School
- Easter Stay and Play - Easter cards
 - Easter Bingo raised £260 for the School
 - Brook Class visited Rodway Farm
 - Easter egg competition
 - Celebration assembly
 - Mobile Library visiting monthly
 - Sports coaches have started athletics coaching across the school



Pre-school coffee morning raised £230

Quote from Pheobe, Year 6, who took part in the Cross Country finals in Yeovil and came 11th in Sedgemoor and 50th in Somerset (pictured).



' I was picked to run for Sedgemoor at the Yeovil Cross Country finals because I came in the top 10 when I ran at Brymore. It was a hard course and I was competing against Year 5s and 6s from all across Somerset. I really enjoyed it but it was hard work running up and down the hills which were slippery and wet. I am thankful for the opportunity would love to do it again!'



Helen Jowett- Profile



Catch her if you can as she doesn't stay still very long! Rushing about doing this and that, always for other people. She is one of those people the whole village relies on, particularly when they are sick, or have problems of some kind, she is the first to help in her unassuming way. She runs the ever-popular Friday Coffee Mornings with her team of helpers in the village hall; this isn't a profit making group, the surpluses generated support local charities as well as providing a much needed opportunity for residents to get together with friends and neighbours in a convivial environment. She also organises coach trips to places of interest, including musical events.

Tending the flower trough opposite the post office, or looking after someone's dog whilst they are in hospital is just part of who she is. Helen is currently a member of the village hall committee and is keen to see the refurbished building serve new generations of residents. She organises fund raising events such as bingo and beetle drives for the village hall, and on top of all that she is a volunteer driver for the village car scheme Otter Wheels.

In the past she has run the village youth club and later Chat & Chill to give young people something positive to do. She is very

supportive of her family and loves caring for her grandchildren

But what of Helen's past? She was born in Belfast towards the end of the second world war, but raised in the Black Country. Many of her neighbours and friends she remembers fondly, were the Windrush generation. As many did at that time, she left school at 15 and went to work as a telephonist with the GPO, where she obviously made a good impression as she was soon sent to various parts of the country as a relief telephonist. Following this she worked as a secretary at BUPA.

In 1964 she took advantage of the Government of Australia's Assisted Passage Migration Scheme (£10 POM) and travelled around the country doing various jobs including secretarial, waitressing and working on cattle stations as a Jilleroo (female equivalent of a Jackeroo).

In 1971 she married Phil and lived in Leeds before once again getting itchy feet and set off hitching and working in Italy together. Following this they spent 2 years working in a small hotel in Austria.

Returning to the UK they lived for a time in Ripon, Yorkshire where she worked as a private secretary to the principal of a teacher training college. Phil's jobs took them to Bath followed by Cheddar where Fred and Lorna were born, and then to Newnham Bridge where Phil was an engineer and Helen was a pest control officer on a hop farm.

Phil's job propelled them to New Zealand for 4 years. Their return took over 6 months, educating Fred and Lorna on the way back to Powick in Worestershire where the twins were born. Before long they moved to Steart after Phil got a lecturing job at Cannington Agricultural College. They lived at Coxs Farm for 22 years where she was a pillar of the community, representing Steart on the parish council for several years before moving to her current address in Combwich.

In addition to her very active role in the community, Helen loves a variety of musical genres and sings with a West Gallery Group. Helen writes poetry and "Voices from the First World War" was published and used in a musical works "Fragments", performed in Minehead for Remembrance Day last year and will be again this year.



Helen in Melbourne, Australia aged about 22

Help at hand for disadvantaged children

Have you ever wondered what would be the best way to help children who are living in difficult circumstances? Most of you reading this lead comfortable lives. But there are hundreds of children across Somerset growing up in families which are struggling to cope, due to unemployment and a wide range of personal problems.

Research shows that providing a mentor for a young person from a disadvantaged background can make a significant difference for them. PROMISEworks is a Somerset charity which recruits, trains, matches and supports local volunteer mentors, each of whom then builds a close, long-term relationship with a disadvantaged youngster.

When asked about their own experiences, the responses of the young people have been heart-warming: "She takes the stone from my heart", and "Mentors are like pillars. If they weren't there the roof would fall in".

We have more than 60 mentors already operating in Somerset and are looking to double this number over the next year or so. Many of the children and young people we support are on the edge of, or have recently left, the care system.

PROMISEworks is keen to find more people to volunteer as mentors, and to raise funds to support our work. If you could help with either of these, please visit our website at www.promiseworks.org.uk.

NETHER STOWEY LIBRARY



Full steam ahead for the Thomas Poole Library. Volunteers are now running Nether Stowey's Library

The threat of closure to Nether Stowey's library has been averted. On 5 March a Community Library Partnership was signed by Roger Stacey, Chairman, and Mary Reece, a Trustee, of the Thomas Poole Library, Nether Stowey (TPL), and Ollie Woodhams of Somerset County Council, thus ensuring the survival of the library.

Nether Stowey Library was one of those designated for closure by SCC. The Friends of Nether Stowey Library (FoNSL) have been supporting the library for a long time, encouraging and supporting its use, especially by families and children, and welcoming talks, events, and clubs and societies. The library has become a vital community hub. When the news of the threatened closure came, FoNSL redoubled its efforts. It formed itself into a Registered Charity, the Thomas Poole Library, Nether Stowey; it mobilised the village, recruited volunteers and helpers, and convinced SCC that in partnership with them it could run the library on a volunteer basis.

Volunteers have received intensive training, and took over the running of the library on 1 April. They very much hope that regular library users, people who have never visited the library before, and people from neighbouring villages will come and see how well they are doing! Opening hours remain the same: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am to 5 pm, and Saturday from 10am to 12 midday.

As soon as TPL have got used to the job of running the library, they hope to make it a centre for local people and tourists. They have plans for information and displays on Tom Poole, Coleridge, local history, and Quantock natural history and walks, for example.

Special events and exhibitions are very welcome, so if your club, society or group would like to hire the library for an event, do get in touch with the Hon Sec of TPL, Eliza Sackett: elizasackett@yahoo.co.uk

Everyone at the Thomas Poole Library is looking forward to your visit!

OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL

News from the Otterhampton Village Hall Committee



THE PAST

The Village Hall Committee held their AGM on Wednesday 8th May and the Committee now comprises:

Amber Austin, Sue Barton, Pete Cashin, Helen Jowett, Audrey Rowley, Laura Valentine-Slack and our new Parish Council Trustee Lindsay Parsons. Warmest thanks to Liz Sidebotham, Pat Priest and Sarah Webb who have all worked very hard on the Committee and stepped down this year. We are still able to co-opt additional Trustees so if you are interested in helping to keep the Village Hall running please get in touch.

Work continues on the planned refurbishment and we hope to have full plans ready for people to see very soon. We are working closely with the Community Council for Somerset (CCS) on our Business Plan and they will also help us to apply for various grants in addition to the main Hinkley Point C Fund. We have also been advised that since a change in the law it would be beneficial for the Committee to alter the existing governance document to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) as this will protect the Village Hall Trustees from being personally and financially liable – especially important during the refurbishment when thousands of pounds are at stake. This process will take a few months via the Charity Commission; the essence of the existing governance document will remain the same. As the Hall ‘belongs’ to the residents of Otterhampton Parish we will be sending a letter to every household within the next few weeks to explain what the CIO is and asking for your agreement before we apply formally.

We would still like your assistance if you agree that the refurbished hall should have a accessibility ramp installed. This would obviously make it easier for anyone with a mobility issue and also to parents with young children to access the Hall. The Committee believe that the Hall should be easily accessible to everyone and also think that the ramp is also needed to prevent youngsters running straight onto the road. To date we have only received 4 letters of support so please do take a little time to **write a short letter to the Village Hall in support of installing an accessibility ramp**. This will help enormously with our request to the Somerset County Council Highways Department.

Similarly, it would be very helpful when we apply for grants to have individual letters of support for the refurbishment. So if you visit the hall to attend any of the groups please take a few minutes to send a letter or email saying why the hall is important to you.

Please send your letters or emails of support to Village Hall Committee via me, Sue Barton, 10 Nursery Close, email me at bartonbs@btinternet.com or drop your letters in the Hall postbox

If you have any queries about the refurbishment please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Village Hall Committee: write to us at the hall, email me on or phone me on 01278 653531.

Date for your diary:

a planning meeting for the 2019 Combwich Fun Day will be held in the Harbour View Bar on Friday 17th May starting at 7.30pm. So if you have any ideas for attractions or would like to be involved in running the Fun Day please contact Amber (652111/07980 101968) or Audrey (07876 028061). ***We need all the help we can get to make this a fun event for everyone so please come along!***

On Saturday 8th June between 10 and midday at the monthly market we will be showing the final plans for the Village Hall and be available to discuss the new Charitable Incorporated Organisation status.

The 2nd Combwich Fun Day will be held on the Common on **Saturday 6th July** so make sure you keep the date free!

We are planning to organise a monthly Big Breakfast in the Hall starting in September. We propose that this will take place on the last Saturday of the month – a time to get together with friends and neighbours.

We would like to put on more events at the Village Hall to help raise funds for the refurbishment. If you have any ideas, can recommend any stage acts that could perform at the Hall, or have any special requests please contact anyone on the Committee. Whether its bingo, talent show, race night, casino night or an entertainer please let us know.



THE PRESENT



THE FUTURE

HARBOUR VIEW BAR



The Bar is open Fridays and Saturdays from 7pm to midnight, Sundays between 2 and 6pm, and Monday evenings during the winter skittles season 7 till 12pm. Annual membership is only £2.50 and new members are welcome; £1 is charged for visitors so why not come along? The Bar has a fully stocked bar including Real Ale (on a handpump); a darts area and skittle alley are available for social events.

The Indian Food night in April was a great success with over freshly prepared dishes including beef, lamb, chicken and vegetable dishes with rice, poppadoms, naan bread and chutneys. Everyone enjoyed the delicious food prepared by volunteers, and eighty seven pounds was raised on the night. This makes a brilliant total of some two hundred and fifty pounds raised for Comic Relief.

Dates for your diary include:

the Harbour View Bar AGM will be held later this month. All members are invited.

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.

Celebrate Eurovision! Come along and listen to Eurovision on Saturday 18th May from 7pm. Dress up as your favourite competitor, or country and win a prize!

On Saturday 13th July we are celebrating 34 years since the astounding 1985 **Live Aid** performance. Come along and watch the entire show. Look out for the blackboards and notices. Wear something 80s!

The annual Paella day will be held in August with chicken and vegetable paellas cooked freshly on our own impressive paella cooker.

Check out the Harbour View Facebook page for future events, or look out for the blackboards and posters for details and come along.



GET FAMILY FISHING

Try a fishing taster session with your family on the 13th and 20th July
10am - 3pm at Combwich Ponds

Register your families **FREE** place by emailing: dean.asplin@anglingtrust.net

Everything provided completely **FREE!**

WWW.GETFISHING.ORG.UK

Friendly, safe and fun sessions to get you fishing straight away!



Angling Trust is the representative and governing body for angling in England. Our angling participation work supported by Environment Agency fishing licence income and Sport England funding, helps to introduce thousands of people to fishing each year.

OPEN DAY SUNDAY 19TH MAY

10.30am - 3.30pm

Meet the Steart team & livestock
Walks, talks & 4x4 tours
Pond dipping
Art for sale
Spinning & weaving demonstrations
Have a go at willow sculpture
Local wildlife groups
Refreshments & ice-creams
Combwich Community Choir




WWT
Stewart Marshes

Note - donation for some activities please
Please drop in and say hello!

t 01278 651090 e info.steart@wwt.org.uk
WWT Steart, Stert Drove, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA5 2PU



Reserve – New Screens on Stockland

You may or may not have noticed some posts have been knocked into the ground around the back of Stockland, where the permit path goes. With the main body of water being in the centre of the marshes, it can be challenging to



get good views of the birdlife using the area, particularly as the water levels recede during the spring and summer months. Over the next few weeks we will be adding the screening to the posts and some additional fencing to ensure the wildlife isn't disturbed. There's one at the top of the access track behind the houses, where a natural opening appeared after the clearance works and another at the top of the new path that runs through the wooded area towards the reeds.

These screens will also assist with the surveying we carry out on site. The photos show how the posts were knocked in using a post rammer. **Written by Alys Laver (WWT Site Manager)**

Funding for Wildflowers



We have just received confirmation that we have been successful in a funding bid to the Greater Quantock Landscape Development Fund. This will allow us to purchase wildflower seed, typical of clay wetland areas to sow around the entire 5km of flood bank around the main intertidal marsh. We will also be sowing the 3 meadows on the Eastern edge of Stockland Marshes, near the pond network, providing an invaluable wildlife corridor that will benefit insects and birds, not to mention the local farmer who takes hay cuts from both of these areas. The seed mix was piloted at the back of the main car park, which once arable is now a sea of cowslips and

later on in the year will become a beautiful hay meadow. The pictures above depict how these areas will look after a couple of years. **Written by Alys Laver (WWT Site Manager)**

Birds on the reserve

March marked the end of the winter period, with all but a few wildfowl remaining on Stockland and Otterhampton Marsh. But with most of the wintering birds now gone, summer migrants are moving in and breeding season has kicked off. Cetti's warblers can be heard around the reserve, with their distinctive low bubbly call coming from the reed beds and a pair of coots have started building a nest within the wetland walkway. Summer breeding wader species have also moved in on Otterhampton Marsh with Avocet and Oystercatcher prospecting amongst a few. **Written by Sam Wall (WWT Reserve Warden)**



Cetti's Warbler (Lyn Newton)

WWT Steart Marshes *continued*

Engagement

A date for your diaries - our annual Steart Marshes **Open Day** is **Sunday 19th May** from **10.30am-3.30pm**. This year we have an impressive list of activities including:

Meet the WWT Steart Marshes team and try out our Working Wetland model

4x4 tours

Meet the livestock

Art for sale with watercolour demonstrations and have-a-go-at charcoal

Try your hand at willow sculpting

Spinning and weaving demonstrations

Walks and talks

Come and talk to local wildlife groups

Bridgwater & Taunton College

Refreshments provided by Hill House and Styles ice-cream

Entertainment with the Combwich Community Choir

We hope to see you there, please drop in and say hello... here's hoping the sun will shine! **Written by Nicole Turnbull-Wigley (WWT Engagement Officer)**

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer at Steart Marshes please contact us at info.steart@wwt.org.uk to arrange a taster day, or complete an application form on our website wwt.org.uk/wetland-centres/steart-marshes/visiting/.

Please come and talk to me if you have any questions or comments about Steart Marshes. I can be contacted on 01278 651090 / 07717 342061 or email at nicole.wigley@wwt.org.uk

Any further queries please don't hesitate to contact the Site Manager, Alys Laver on 01278 651090 / 07717 505966 or email on alys.laver@wwt.org.uk

Volunteer Car Drivers Needed

Otter Wheels is a hugely successful local volunteer car scheme which transports residents who do not have access to a car, to medical appointments and much more. It is made up of volunteers with various skills all who give of their time to provide this local transport service.

Approximately 550 passenger journeys have been undertaken over the last 3 years and the scheme is still growing. **More drivers are urgently needed.**

The lack of a bus service in the parish has made this an essential and much appreciated service by all our passengers. Drivers enjoy it too, as evidenced by our occasional meetings/social gatherings.

If you are interested in becoming one of our drivers, or just want more information without obligation, please contact Richard on 01278 652503 or email stirlings.greenacres@hotmail.com.

A mileage allowance of 45p per mile is paid.





FUN DAY IS HERE

Saturday 6th July 2019

2:00 p.m.

**JOIN US BY THE
PLAYGROUND FOR FUN
AND FROLICS**

**Fun for ALL the family:
BBQ, Skittles, Bowls, Bar, stalls,
prizes and more!!!**

ANCHOR INN @ COMBWICH

Traditional Village Inn and Guesthouse

OPENING TIMES

Monday to Thursday 5pm to 11pm

Saturday Sunday 12pm to 11pm

Food served Tuesday to Friday 6pm to 9pm

Friday Saturday Sunday 12 to 2pm and 6pm to 9pm

Tuesday burger night all burgers £6.50

Wednesday steak night steaks from £7.50

Sunday carvery 12.30 to 2.30 £9.50 each

01278653612

www.combwichanchor.co.uk

Combwich ANCHOR

With this voucher you can get 2
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**COMBWICH P.O.
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Bridgwater (Saltlands) Recycling Centre

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(entrance off Western Way)

Telephone 01278 444877

Opening hours

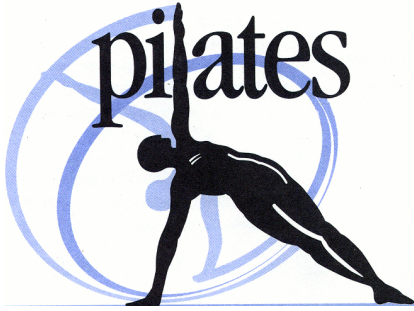
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00
am - 6:00 pm

Saturday - Sunday

9:00 am - 4:00 pm



Post Office and shop just before Rob and his dad took over!!



Otterhampton Village Hall 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 Cally on

Tel: 07555302145/651214

And email: callystephens18@icloud.com.



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

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?

Volunteer drivers needed. Mileage allowance paid. For more information contact Richard on 01278 652503 or stirlings.greenacres@hotmail.com

Ring - Otter Wheels on: 07925 154 216 - but please try to give us 48 hours notice

This not-for-profit car scheme has been running arround 3 years, with almost 500 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. **Though this is mainly a week day service, we will do our utmost to provide a driver at weekends, especially for hospital visits.**

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	£1.25	£2.50
Bridgwater Hospital	£4.35	£8.50
Bridgwater Town Centre	£3.50	£7.50

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



MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library visits Combwich and Stockland every four weeks on a Thursday morning at the following times.

Otterhampton School TA5 2QS	10.05 - 10.40
Harbour TA5 2QU	10.55 - 11.15
Combwich Post Office TA5 2QW	11.20 - 11.40
Stockland Bristol Captains TA5 2PY	11.50 - 12.05

Visits on Thursdays - every 4 weeks

2019	2019	2019
17 Jan	9 May	29 Aug
14 Feb	6 Jun	26 Sep
14 Mar	4 Jul	24 Oct
11 Apr	1 Aug	21 Nov
		19 Dec

Please make use of this facility if you can. 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 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 Brownies Short Mat Bowls	2pm - 4pm 5.45pm - 7.30pm 7.30pm - 9.30pm	
Tuesday	Aerobics Pilates Gentle movement to music	9.30am - 10.30am 10.45 am - 11.45am 6.30pm - 7.30pm 12.15pm - 1pm	
Tuesday (2nd of month)	Police Surgery	10am - 12 noon	
Wednesday	Combwich Crafters Short Mat Bowls	10am - 12 noon 7.30pm - 9.30pm	
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 Police Surgery	10am - 12 noon	
Saturday (2 nd of month)	Combwich Market	10am - 12 noon	

FUTURE EVENTS

Issue of Parish Documents	Community Plan, Hinkley C Fund project list, Welcome Information and Emergency Plan		Delivery with May Otter Tales
Thursday 6th June Thursday 4th July	Parish Council Meeting Parish Council Meeting	7pm 7pm	Village Hall. Public welcome - tea and biscuits provided
Saturday 6th July	Combwich fun Day	2pm - 4.30pm	Combwich Common
Articles 7th July 2019	Next Otter Tales		Distribution by 14th July

Otter Tales

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Published with the generous support of Otterhampton Parish Council

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.