



Welcome to Combwich

# Otter Tales

Published with the generous support of Otterhampton Parish Council

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This will not be the Christmas we all hoped for but we are fortunate to live in a lovely area. Look after each other and, if you can give a little to help others who are less fortunate particularly during this Covid-19 year.

To all our readers - Stay Safe, for next year will be better!

HM Government **NATIONAL COVID ALERT** **STAY HOME** **5 NOV - 2 DEC** Find the latest guidance and exemptions at [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus) **STAY ALERT CONTROL THE VIRUS SAVE LIVES** **NHS**

# Otterhampton Parish Council

Otterhampton Offcuts

Snippets from your October and November Parish Council Meetings

## **BROOKSIDE RD – POTENTIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Following our report in September's Otter Tales, Walsingham Planning (WP) attended the October meeting to present an illustration of a potential housing scheme to enable a dialogue to commence. This identified 60 houses (36 open market and 24 affordable); the majority in the field behind Brookside Rd, and a small number in the field on the right-hand side as you enter the village. A village hall is shown near to the School.

Of course, this is speculation at the moment and until a planning application is submitted there is little that can be done. Subject to Covid-19 we will continue to communicate with our residents via Otter Tales, notice boards, Zoom parish council meetings and the Combwich.org.uk website – not ideal for everyone we know – but we have little option currently.

### **Councillors and members raised the following points (at both October and November meetings)**

1. Significant concerns about flooding and drainage issues on both sides of Brookside Rd. It is questionable whether houses could be built on the south side of Brookside Rd because it is in a flood zone 3 and is a 'rejected site outside of the development boundary' by SDC.
2. Position of the village hall is not suitable as no access to it via School Lane. The community was consulted on a potential village hall on level ground at the entrance to Brookside Rd.
3. Conversely, access is not wanted via School Lane because of the existing congestion on School Lane and Church Hill. Access to the school/village hall through a development could alleviate these problems through the village.
4. The suggested location of the village hall could lead to the opening up of further fields and additional subsequent development.
5. A small development would be acceptable if its need can be demonstrated. Almost a thousand new houses have recently been approved west of Bridgwater in various villages.
6. Would not like an estate full of designer houses, must be a suitable housing mix.
7. The Public Right of Way (PRoW) must not be extinguished.
8. Whether a car park could be provided at the bottom of the village with access from where children could walk to school.
9. Access to the new development is too close to the Combwich/C182 junction; an increase in parking problems and parking must not spill over into Brookside Rd.
10. We asked how the 36/24 housing split was arrived at. This would be tested against the SDC Local Plan Policy Tier 3a (which largely states a development must be appropriate to the scale, design and existing character of a settlement). As this proposal is outside of the local settlement boundary, the affordable housing provision is key to determine the number of houses permitted. Potentially, there are a number of other criteria for consideration including a development appropriately contributing to local infrastructure priorities in agreement with parish councils.
11. A Housing Needs Survey will be paramount before any development continues. We continue to put pressure on SDC for this to be progressed.

At the October meeting, Mr Jewson (WP) advised that if a planning application is submitted it will need to demonstrate how a development won't advance or be detrimental to existing houses or flood conditions in the area; the PRoW will not be extinguished; other issues can be negotiated during the course of any planning application.

## **VILLAGE HALL REFURBISHMENT**

The parish council is very pleased to support the amended bid to refurbish the village hall on a smaller scale at a cost of £198,000 from the Hinkley Point C Community Fund, subsequently approved by the Somerset Community Foundation Panel on 30.10.20. We acknowledge and appreciate how much hard work and effort has been applied in getting the refurbishment plans to this point.



## **PLAY AREA**

### **Covid-19 Arrangements**

During this latest lockdown, the play area is permitted to remain open, but safe distancing measures are to be maintained. However, the 3 items of outdoor gym equipment must not be used.

### **The Seesaw**

Unfortunately, the seesaw had to be taken out of action as the spring mechanism and bolts were broken. The cost to repair it was quoted at £1200 by the manufacturer. We are considering whether to replace it with a different item and will consult with the school children. However, it is unlikely a replacement will be installed before the surfacing issue is resolved which is still being pursued with potential legal action.

### **Wooden marker posts and replacement damaged concrete bollard**

Subject to the tendering process, it is planned to replace the existing temporary posts along the verge adjacent to the play area with substantial wooden posts concreted into the ground, and to also install new ones on the verge at the entrance to the Common track. The damaged concrete bollard at the entrance to the play area will be replaced. The work may be delayed due to Covid-19.

## **FINANCE**

The external audit for the accounts to 31.3.20 was approved with no issues. The six-monthly accounts to 30.9.20 were approved at the November parish council meeting.

The Precept (budget) for 2021/22 will be discussed during December for approval on 7.1.21.

Please contact the Clerk if you have any questions relating to the parish council finances.

## **BROWNIE COPSE**

Conservation ideas were discussed for the Brownie Copse. The Parish Shores Project team will be presenting some possible ideas at the December parish council meeting for further discussion.

## **PROPOSED CYCLE PATH FROM COMBWICH TO HINKLEY POINT VIA STEART MARSHES**

We are yet to find out the details for this proposal which we understand will be subject to planning permission instigated by EDF in conjunction with Somerset County Council. We are expecting more information towards the end of November.

## **NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING(S)**

The next parish council meetings will be held on Thursday 3 December 2020 and Thursday 7 January 2021 at 7.00pm. Venue to be confirmed (look out for notifications on notice boards and the website).

Please note that we aim to place draft minutes on notice boards and the [combwich.org.uk](http://combwich.org.uk) website within 10 working days of parish council meetings.



## **MOBILE LIBRARY**

The mobile library visits Combwich and Stockland every four weeks on a Thursday morning. The next visit is 3rd December.

Combwich Harbour TA5 2QU	10.20 – 11.00
Combwich Post Office TA5 2QW	11.05 – 11.25
Stockland Bristol Captains TA5 2PY	11.35 – 12.00

For information about this service, contact Somerset Direct 0300 1232224 or visit [www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries).

Please support this service

## **SUPPORT FOR SOMERSET RESIDENTS DURING LOCKDOWN**

Help is available for anyone in Somerset who may need additional support during the second national lockdown.

Residents are reminded they can call 0300 790 6275 if they need any help themselves or are concerned about relatives or neighbours.

**STAY SAFE**





# Otterhampton Parish Recreation Association (OPRA)

Registered Charity Number 1124017

*Tina Gardener Chair wrote*

At the time of writing we find ourselves in another lockdown and hopefully it will be our last. As mentioned in the previous Otter Tales, OPRA was hoping to be able to provide some festive activities to replace the Seniors' Christmas dinner. At an OPRA meeting we considered hosting 2 or 3 lunches with limited numbers. We subsequently canvassed our invitees and we had a large response. 28 were in favour of having a lunch in December and 48 preferred to defer until after Christmas. We would like to thank everyone for taking the time to respond. At a recent meeting we agreed not to do anything in December but to perhaps do something at Easter. In the light of the current restrictions it was a wise move.



The 100 Club draw usually 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](http://www.combwich.org.uk)

If you want to join the 100 Club or become involved in OPRA activities please contact Ann on 652399 or Tina on 652642 or any committee member.

We will be putting up the Christmas tree and have purchased more lights and baubles to make it more spectacular. The switch on will be at 5.00pm on 6<sup>th</sup> December and if restrictions have been lifted you are most welcome to attend.

OPRA received a request from Combwich Brownies to give financial assistance with the annual capitation fee of £32 per brownie which is due in January to the Girl Guiding Association. The committee were unanimous in awarding £250.

We have received a windfall of £690. There were 2 ancient charities set up for the benefit of the residents of Otterhampton Parish; The Revd Dr Jeffrey's charity set up in 1863 and the Jane Evered's charity set up in 1888. As there had been no recent movement activity with these the Charity Commission instructed them to be closed down and the monies moved to a charity with a similar area of benefit, and OPRA fitted the bill.

Let us hope that restrictions are lifted after 2<sup>nd</sup> December and we can once again socialise with friends and family, enjoy going to our clubs at the village hall, visiting the pub and social club in our lovely village.

Finally, OPRA would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy, prosperous and healthy new year.

## CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL



### St Mary's Church Church St, Cannington

Thursday 17th - Wednesday 23rd December  
10.00am to 6.00pm

Admission £2  
Children free

#### LOCAL BUSINESSES, CHARITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

If you would like to sponsor or decorate a tree to advertise your services or business, or just to support this community event, please contact Revd Alison Waters for details:

[cannington.benefice@gmail.com](mailto:cannington.benefice@gmail.com)  
01278 652953

by 1st December. Thank you.

## Christmas Services



#### Christingle Service

6th December at 4.00pm at Combwich Church

#### Carols by Candlelight

20th December at 6.00pm at Stockland Church

#### Christmas Night Communion

Christmas Eve at 9.00pm at Combwich Church

#### Christmas Day Family Celebration

Christmas Day at 11.00am at Stockland Church

## Nick Carter - Profile

Nick was born and raised on a farm in Worcestershire but moved to Clent when he was 5, close to where his Great Great Grandfather, Charles William Pinkney had lived. Charles was a gas engineer and inventor who, amongst other things, pioneered the 4-stroke gas engine.

The family then moved to Stourbridge, where his mother was a headmistress for many years and where Nick attended King Edwards Grammar School.



In 1971 he successfully applied for a cadetship with British India Steam Navigation Co. After training at Warsash Nautical College he joined his first vessel in Calcutta, a cargo ship called MV Carpentaria and sailed via South East Asia to Australia and New Zealand. As glamorous as it sounds for a young lad setting off on his travels, a Cadet's first job back then was to try and rid the cargo holds of very large rats!

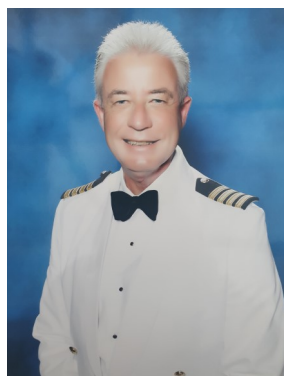
Nick's first professional certificate saw him sail as Second Officer on various cargo ships around the world, one of those being the Atlantic Conveyor which was later sunk by an Argentinian missile en-route to the Falklands, with the sad loss of the Captain.

With the achievement of his Chief Mate's ticket he then spent three years on a sheep carrier, sailing from Freemantle to the Persian Gulf with 25,421 sheep as shipmates, looked after by 30 Ceylonese stockmen and an old Welsh shepherd who had lived in the outback for many years, which made for some interesting yarns during their travels!

"It was hard work and the aroma could be quite pungent at times especially when temperatures reached the high 30's. Camaraderie was great though and we often enjoyed lamb steaks on the BBQ. Finding a sheep in your cabin was a regular occurrence, much to the hilarity of the crew who put it there!

"Even when the engine room had a huge fire, everyone managed to keep up their spirits. There was little else you could do really whilst we spent 24 hours drifting at the entrance to the Gulf, with officers sleeping on the bridge and with the lifeboats swung out ready to abandon ship. The fire was eventually extinguished and we limped into Bombay for repairs."

There was no modern technology back then and Nick had to actually draw a scale chart of the approaches to Bombay. A sextant was the only main form of navigation in those waters, stars in the morning and evening and the sun at noon. Nick thinks that young officers today rely far too much on technology, sometimes even forgetting to look out of the bridge windows for traffic.



After obtaining his Master Mariners Certificate in 1982 he transferred to Cunard Passenger Ships, spending seven years in the Caribbean on the Cunard Countess, followed by two years on the QE2.

In 1991 he came closer to home and worked for P&O Portsmouth ferries, operating to Le Havre and Cherbourg, spending 7 years as Captain. He has spent the last 12 years back on cruise ships for Princess, P&O UK, Cunard and P&O Australia. Away from home 3-4 months at a time he drove the 78,00 tonne ships in and out of ports all over the world, with a crew of 700 plus around 2000 passengers.

The last five years of his working life were spent with P&O Australia, operating out of Brisbane and Sydney. Nick's wife Lynn, his children Adam, Matt and Jasmine were able to join him on numerous occasions and enjoyed cruises all over the world including up and down the Gold Coast of Australia and out to the beautiful South Pacific islands.

After 47 years at sea, Nick "swallowed the anchor" in 2018. He is now retired back in Combwich and has renewed his interests in painting, drawing, cooking and DIY. A much bigger project is the holiday cottage that he and Lynn have renovated near Tintagel.







## Atomic (Nuclear) Power viewed from almost a century ago!

Bill Johnson (pictured above), well known local history buff, has been digging into his files and found the article, right, predicting the splitting of the atom and the potential for atomic (nuclear) power. The Rev S. M. Morris of Liverpool speaking at the National Free Church Council annual conference in Bridgwater in 1929 was outlining a future that must have seemed something like science fiction at the time.

Apart from the subject matter it is interesting to note that the article was written by Bill's father, Charles H V Johnson who was a journalist for the former Bristol Evening World and later the Bristol Evening Post. He started his career as a journalist on the Sheffield Telegraph before moving to Somerset. Born in September 1907 he started his career in journalism in Sheffield before moving to the Bristol Evening World and settling in Bridgwater where he was married at the Bridgwater Baptist Chapel in December 1930.

Some of his best work concerned the frequent flood stories that would crop up regularly on the moors around Bridgwater and Taunton.

On his retirement in 1973 he was awarded life member of the National Union of Journalist for services to journalism and his union.

*(Future issues of Otter Tales will feature more of Bill's life in Comwich and the history of the of the area)*

## VAST POWER AND ITS USE

### ATOM SPEECH AT BRIDGWATER

### NEW WORLD BETTER THAN WARFARE

*"There is enough energy in this tumbler of water to drive a liner across the Atlantic. In a few tons of water there is enough energy to remove Somerset into the middle of the Pacific."*

These are a few of the outstanding possibilities within the power of man when he can split the atom, according to the Rev. S. M. Morris, of Liverpool, who spoke to a crowded meeting at Bridgwater in connection with the National Free Church Council annual conference.

"When we can break the atom man will be invested with unlimited power—power at his disposal of such dimensions that he will be able to change the whole geography of the world," he continued.

"He will have artificial heat to convert Arctic regions into a pleasant Somerset resort. This is not a fantastic dream, for some of these gigantic possibilities are already within the reach of engineering skill.

#### NOT WARFARE

"Armed with cheap power, this becomes an economic proposition. Once man can smash the atom and release its energy, he will have power with which to create a new world."

Mr. Morris pointed out the enormous dangers with such power.

"There was a great scientist recently who approached his government for money to carry on experiments of this nature," he said.

"He was told that all the resources needed would be at his command if he would agree to devote the result of his investigations to scientific warfare.

"It is almost incredible that this could really happen, and that he could have been given such an answer. It is for the Free Churches to see that such terrible things never happen, and that war is outlawed for ever.

"With such enormous powers lying at his disposal when he can smash the atom, man will be able to create this new world for which we all long."





## Remembering Owen Charles Ingram

Our Dad Owen was born 1st October, 1920 in The Cottage, Church Hill, Combwich (Tom and Sue Jacobs live there today). He was the youngest of eight children plus one adopted son. The family moved to a bigger house on top of Church Hill and Ship Lane called The Old Post Office, Top Maypole, Combwich. Today, it is known as 2, School Lane. Dad and his siblings attended Combwich school.

Dad joined the army when he was 18 at the start of World War II. He went into the TA Centre in Bridgwater with his mates, Bill Manchip, Buster Stone and Percy Ford to 'sign up' to fight for King and Country. Dad served with The Seventh Battalion The Somerset Light Infantry. He became Lance-Sergeant Ingram. He was mentioned in Dispatches with this passage in 'The Story of The Seventh Battalion The Somerset Light Infantry From Normandy to Hanover June 1944 - May 1945'.



*"On the report of a local saboteur, Lance-Sergeant Ingram (in charge of the Pioneer platoon) took a jeep and a couple of men two miles beyond the village to examine some serial bombs.*

*As a precaution, he also took with him the saboteur. It was late evening as they approached down a straight road, and as they arrived, they saw two Boche on the road about three hundred yards ahead. These men at once made off cross-country. On the road, he found a place where a bomb was obviously buried, and leading into the ground was a fuse which was already smouldering. He considered that the men would have allowed themselves a safety margin to get away, so he seized the fuse in both hands and pulled. About five feet of it came out of the ground. They then set out to round up the two enemies and caught them near a farm. Sergeant Ingram tried to persuade these two to dig the bomb up, but they indicated that it was much too big. He returned to headquarters just before dark. The next morning, he was given a squad of six prisoners with a jeep and a truck to return and get the bomb out. Two dozen enemies had occupied the position during the night and were armed with automatics and bazookas. Seeing the prisoners, they at once gave themselves up, together with their officer. The bomb, and another one further along, was then uncovered sufficiently for Sergeant Ingram to remove the detonators and primary charges, both were thousand pounders. After taping off the areas, he returned to his Company with his twenty-four prisoners and his six old ones."*

Dad married Mum in January 1943. He was discharged from the army at the end of the war due to ill health and at the age of 28 was diagnosed as having MS. The family, now with four children, were living back at The Old Post Office. At the age of 40 Dad and Mum purchased the Fish and Chip Shop in St Mary Street known then as The Blake Fish Bar.

Dad sadly passed away at the age of 75 and Mum at the age of 90, they would have both celebrated their 100th Birthdays this year.

After the year that we have all experienced with Corona Virus, Lockdown and the 75th Anniversary of World War II, we thought it is a good moment to reflect on our memories of our Dad Owen Ingram.



The Ingram family x

## New Defibrillators

The parish council has secured funding for three new defibrillators for the parish. One has been installed in the BT telephone box replacing the old one. An additional one is located on the accommodation block wall at the Anchor Inn off Ship Lane. The third defibrillator is located in Steart village.



### VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED PLEASE

Currently there is a new small band of volunteers organised by Amber Austin and Parish Councillor Rachel Perrett who check the defibrillators each week. Many thanks to those already helping and those that have already volunteered, but we are seeking a few more volunteers particularly to check the one at the Anchor.

Although a very important role it is neither difficult or onerous to carry out the checks. Amber and Rachel will guide you through what is required and will support you until you feel confident in what you are doing.

*(Photo top right shows councillor Bob Birkenhead renovating the old telephone box for the new machine and the other photo shows the defibrillator at the Anchor as it joins Ship Lane)*



## Readers Contributions

### WHAT IS A SENIOR CITIZEN???

*A senior citizen is one who was here before:  
The pill, television, frozen foods, contact lenses,  
credit cards...  
And before man walked on the moon.*

*For us 'Time Sharing' meant togetherness, not  
holiday homes,  
And a 'chip' meant a piece of wood.  
'Hardware' meant nuts and bolts  
and 'software' wasn't even a word.*

*We got married first, then lived together,  
And thought cleavage was something that butchers  
did.*

*A 'stud' was something that fastened a collar to a  
shirt,  
And 'going all the way' meant staying on a double  
decker to the bus depot.*

*We thought that 'fast food' was what you ate in lent;  
A 'Big Mac' was an oversized raincoat  
And 'crumpet' we had for tea.*

*In our day, 'grass' was mown; 'pot' was something  
you cooked in,  
'coke' was kept in the coalhouse  
and a 'joint' was cooked on Sundays!*

*We are today's SENIOR CITIZENS.*

*A hardy bunch when you think how the world has  
changed*

*Submitted by Helen Jowett*

## SORTIE

Huddled in gloom, fixed faces aglow in dark  
concentration on windows of pain.

A swept, looming essence; a ghosting of threat.  
Precisionless pinpoint resonates.

Hearts leap aflutter, suits scatter cross baize.  
A brush of grey lips pinned.  
Scramble in haste.

Chinstraps aflap, scaling and settle.  
The pulsing and throbbing; the roar and begone.

Assemblance of eight in formation precision,  
no mission inaction, grey cloaked.

Watching and waiting, distraction of hope.  
The filling of silence, voicelessly chant.

Gravity.

Wait so oppressive.

Clock watching: second hand stalls to bargain with  
time...

...with lesions of honour, victors the lesser, two-  
down half-dozen returns the few.

*Dedicated in gratitude to the wartime fighter pilots  
of the R.A.F.*

*P. D. Bradbury*



# OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL CIO: NEWS



## UPDATE ON THE REFURBISHMENT

Following the recent rejection of our bid to fully refurbish the village hall, the modest revised bid to secure funds to make significant improvements to the existing building has been fully approved! Numerous changes will be made to make our village asset a warm and welcoming venue to be enjoyed by local parishioners and visitors from outside of the area. The planned works will improve the efficiency of running the hall (heating, lighting and solar panels) along with cosmetically enhancing/updating both the hall and bar areas (flooring, décor and new furniture). Most importantly, we will be installing a ramp, electronic door system, Stannah stairlift and hearing loop in the main hall to ensure the venue is more accessible to all of our community members.

We are now applying for additional funding from other organisations and work will commence in early 2021

## COVID-19: CLOSURE OF THE VILLAGE HALL

Due to the 4 week lockdown which commenced on 5<sup>th</sup> November, relating to the current pandemic, the Village Hall is currently closed. Hopefully the lockdown will deliver the desired impact in reducing Covid-19 cases and the hall will be able to re-open in early December. The Village Hall Committee is carefully monitoring the situation and in the meantime, the building is monitored regularly and the necessary health and safety routines undertaken.

## Extraordinary AGM and CIO AGM

The final AGM for the village hall, under its previous governance status, took place on 20<sup>th</sup> October where key updates on current issues were presented to members of the community. Following the update, all trustees retired from office and were re-elected to serve as trustees for the newly formed Otterhampton Village Hall CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation).

## FUND RAISING Christmas Raffle



OVH will be teaming up with the Harbour View Bar to run a Christmas raffle, sharing the proceeds. If anyone has suggestions for companies or organisations who will be willing to donate a generous star prize then please contact Sue or Bruce Barton on 01278 653531. Tickets will be on sale post lockdown.

**#easyfundraising**

With the current move to being at home and not shopping in stores as freely as before, you can help the village hall to raise more funds from the comfort of your own home. If you shop online you can support Otterhampton Village Hall CIO on *#easyfundraising*. When you sign up as a supporter, 4,000 shops and sites will donate their money to the Hall every time you shop online. This includes big brands like John Lewis & Partners, Argos, ASOS, Expedia, eBay, M&S, insurance, IT, holiday companies and many more! It will not cost you anything and your details are not recorded. The website address is <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/otterhamptonvillagehallcio> and you can download an app to make shopping on line easier.

Amazon run a similar scheme. Visit <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1186747-0> to register.

So please have a look at the sites and use it when you are shopping online. Every 1p counts and will be spent on maintaining the Hall and the refurbishment.



## Harbour View Bar

We reopened in July with all Covid 19 restrictions in place. Tables are set out to comply with social distancing requirements and we now operate a table service system.

When we reopen after the latest lockdown, please ensure you wear a mask when entering the bar, and when walking to and from the toilet facilities. We are currently open from 5pm -10pm on Friday and Saturday evenings and from 2pm-6pm ish on a Sunday

afternoon.

The committee, bar staff and a number of members have been working hard to keep the club open and running effectively. We do understand that some people may be concerned about going out during these difficult times, but would highlight, we are doing all we can to comply with current guidelines and make your club a safe and enjoyable place to come to.

There are currently 110 club members but recently only around 25 have regularly attended .We would like to thank those who have been able to support the club, either in person or behind the scenes, but would love to see some more faces, old or new.

We had a great afternoon watching Exeter Chiefs win the European Rugby cup final, with plenty of chatting, cheering and laughing, making a fantastic atmosphere. As a result we will be showing further live rugby matches over the next few weeks and would very much look forward to seeing you there.

We are also going to be running quiz nights on the first Saturday of each month, with cash prizes. Additionally we are looking to run Bingo Nights and other themed evenings in order to re-ignite interest in our club.

The clubs purpose is to provide a social space for the community to enjoy. However without the support of the community it will not viable to continue and we may sadly be forced to close.

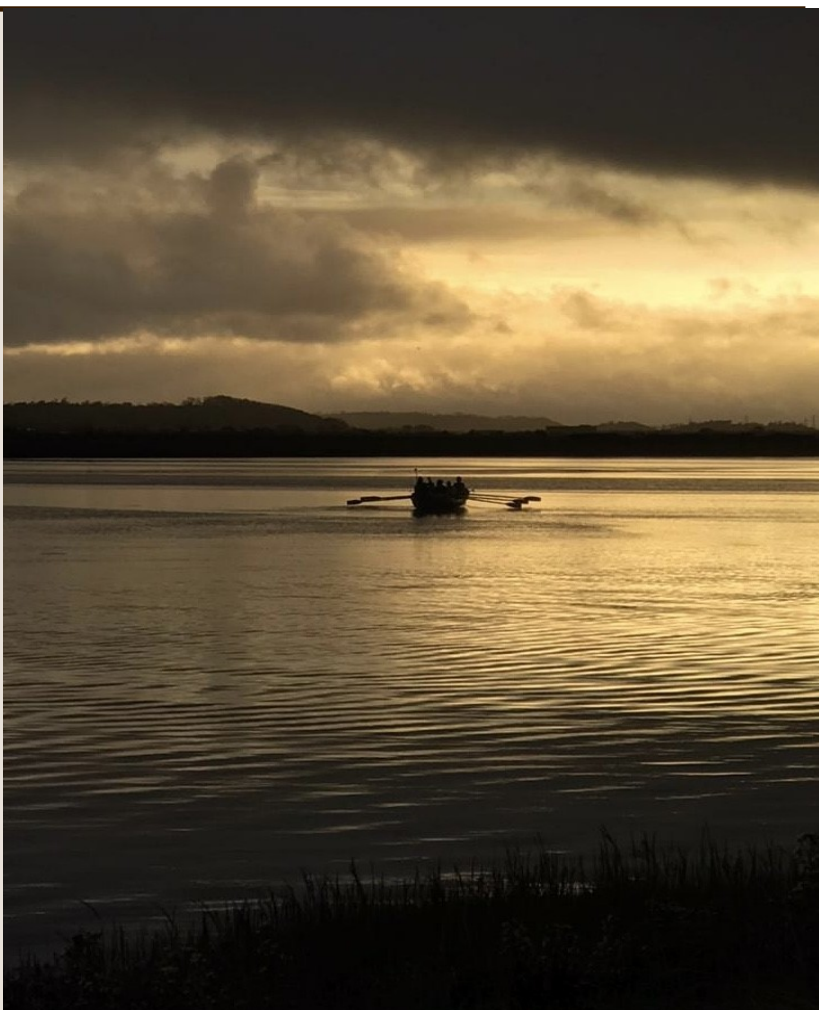
Please do whatever you can to help ensure this does not happen.

We look forward to seeing you there soon.

## Combwich Boat Club Gig Rowing Section

The Combwich Boat Club Gig Rowing Section have been taking to the water very early recently to catch the tide. For their last row, ahead of this current lockdown, they were able to enjoy the serenity of the morning's sunrise.

We will be welcoming new members in the near future. Please contact Marie Beckley on 07748 154395 for further details.







# Otterhampton Primary School.

Autumn term highlights

Head Teacher, Claire Luce



## AUTUMN DAY

On Wednesday 14th October Otterhampton Primary School celebrated 'Autumn Day'. The children and staff were asked to come to school in Autumn colours and prepare themselves for a packed day of Autumn inspired activities. All classes spent time in the Forest School area, created Autumn poems, produced all kinds of Autumn art work and even did some Autumn related maths work! The day ended with a virtual harvest assembly.

During this week families were asked to donate food to the Bridgwater Foodbank and I was overwhelmed by the generosity. During half term I have delivered our collection to the Foodbank and they were very appreciative, especially during these hard times.





## HPC Plans to Scrap Fish Deterrent - *Tim Jones*

Hinkley Point C has blocked the Environment Agency from making a decision on whether the company can remove plans to install a potential fish saving measure in the Bristol Channel.

Instead the matter will now be decided at a Public Inquiry where the Planning Inspector's decision will be final.

NNB Generation Company (HPC) Ltd no longer wants to install acoustic fish deterrent measures at the cooling water intake for HPC in the Bristol Channel. Together with other measures, it is designed to reduce the number of fish drawn into the cooling water system.

The Environment Agency had been consulting on the application and it is understood the move to scrap this part of the scheme had resulted in numerous objections. The EA had not made a final decision on the application, but its provisional conclusion was that the acoustic deterrent should not be removed unless additional mitigating measures were put in place to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

The company now appears to have "jumped the gun" by appealing directly to the Secretary of State for the Environment claiming its application to the Environment Agency should be regarded as refused because the Agency had not completed its determinations. This means the Agency's role changes from decision maker to one of providing evidence to the Inquiry Inspector and responding to any questions that might be raised.

Whether the company's move is based on science or even possible 'cost cutting' remains to be seen, but the fact the matter will now be decided at a Public Inquiry may raise additional concerns, particularly as it could possibly even result in a "virtual inquiry" because of Covid 19.

A company called Pisces Conservation Ltd has been carrying out fish monitoring at Hinkley Point for decades examining dead specimens trapped by fish screens. The company publishes regular reports on its website ([consult.pisces-conservation](http://consult.pisces-conservation)) and as far back as 2000 it had identified the Bristol Channel as a far more important fish nursery for certain species than had previously been thought.

More information is available on the Environment Agency website ([environment-agency.uk.com](http://environment-agency.uk.com)).



**BUY YOUR  
CHRISTMAS  
PRESERVES  
LOCALLY AND  
HELP TO RAISE  
MONEY FOR THE  
BRIDGWATER FOOD BANK**



I have a large selection of marmalade, jam and chutney previously sold through the village market. Would make good gifts and is also ideal for all your Christmas needs. Please ring Liz Brown 652687 for further information. I can take orders for special requirements including mincemeat and lemon curd.

**All money raised will be donated to Bridgwater food bank to help them over the Christmas period. Over £100 already raised through lockdown sales.**



### 1<sup>st</sup> COMBWICH BROWNIES

**Brownies**

Brownies are still holding virtual meetings on a Monday evening. From now until Christmas we will be engaging

in a range of activities including making a cake in a mug, creating a mini golf course, celebrating Thanksgiving with American pancakes, making Christmas decorations and having a virtual Christmas party. Any girls aged between 7 and 10 who wish to join in contact Liz Brown 652687.

We are also very pleased that two of our older Brownies have nearly completed the highest achievable Brownie award. They are due to leave us soon, so we are pulling out all the stops to try to cover everything needed. Thank goodness for modern technology – we may not like Zoom very much but it has been a godsend!

We do not envisage returning to face to face meetings until the spring.



## The Chapel of St Leonard, Comwich 13th to 16th century.

Submitted by Patrick Connolly

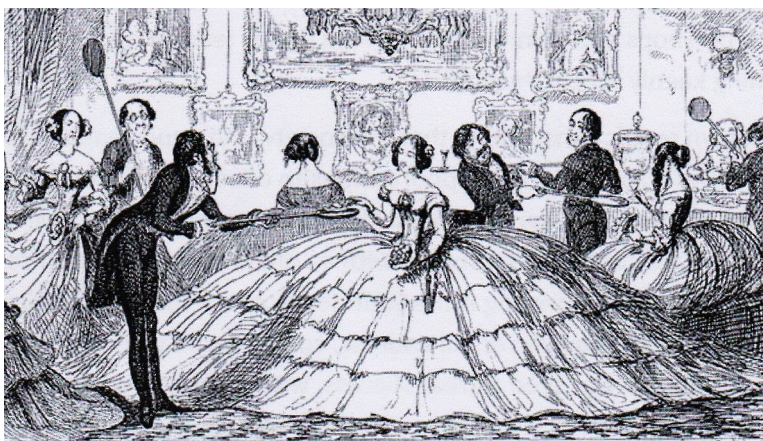


Patrick's illustration of how the Chapple may have looked

### The not so lost Chapel of St Leonard Comwich.

The Chapel named after one the most venerated of saints credited with miracles, the patron saint of prisoners feast day 6th November. The Chapel stood proud on the hillside above the village for over three hundred years and then lay undisturbed under the rich soil of Comwich for another four hundred years. The precious secret was kept by the quarry workers who left it safe from further disturbance. The remains of the Chapel lay in the back garden of number 9 Church Hill Comwich and the garden of 11 Church Hill. This was only found when an archaeological excavation was carried out in 2016 prior to a \*planning application. In this excavation the skeletal remains of an infant was found placed under the floor after the Chapel presumably had been de-consecrated. St Leonard had also helped women in labour. You could imagine that the distraught parents may have thought the saint would help in some way. Over time the Chapel fell into disrepair and finely demolished 16 c but for hundreds of years it must have been the centre for hope in dark times.

\*Sedgemoor Council planning portal app 39/20/00001.



A Punch cartoon, c 1860, poking fun at crinoline wearers. Might be useful now ... Louise Bailey

### The Environment and Climate Change

Life is not being tidy! Life is for caring, nurturing for people and wildlife. Stop kidding yourself we are in control. So be kind to nature and she will care for us. Respect her and she will help us, physically and mentally.

Spare a little patch in your garden for "weeds" wild flowers and grasses to grow. Without insects we die. If we all died out wildlife would say hoorah!

But don't listen to me, listen to Sir David Attenborough. Listen and do what you can before it is too late.

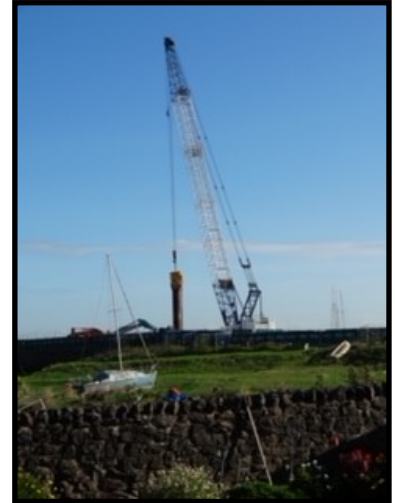
Louise Bailey

## Combwich Wharf Noise *by Tim Jones*

Work on Combwich Wharf in late summer prompted a number of noise complaints from villagers to the Parish Council, Sedgemoor District Council and EDF.

The main problem was caused by a concrete breaker used to smash up the existing transfer slab which is being rebuilt to provide the main offload area for barges.

Although an improved acoustic barrier was in place, the noise was transmitted over the top of it making it very uncomfortable, if not impossible, on many occasions, for some households to sit in their gardens and enjoy the late warm spell. It is also worth remembering that quite a number of elderly households were still pretty much staying at home because of Covid.



Some weeks after the increased noise started EDF undertook a letter drop to some local residents to say test piling would commence soon. The company said they expected this would actually increase noise levels and they had worked with Sedgemoor to obtain the necessary increase in noise levels limits to allow this to happen.

What was also surprising is that Sedgemoor District Council no longer directly monitors noise levels at Combwich Wharf, but leaves it to EDF. The company provides the council with a weekly summary which is considered by its Pollution Control Section.

According to Sedgemoor, permitted noise limits exceeded due to work have been rare, while on other occasions they have been caused by rain, wind and bird noise almost certainly in close location to the monitoring stations.

Possibly prompted by the complaints, EDF was well represented at the October virtual Parish Council meeting when they gave a detailed presentation of the many noise reduction measures they have in place on the wharf. The company appeared to accept they could have done more to warn residents in the vicinity of the wharf about increased noise levels during the concrete breaking.



Test piling using vibrating and drilling techniques started in mid-October and in all 42 piles are due to be installed by early January 2021. A number of representatives from Sedgemoor and EDF attended a site meeting to monitor the test piling. Not long after they left, concrete breaking started up again.

The piling process is at times noisy, but so far does not appear to be quite such a penetrating and obtrusive noise as the concrete breaking. Time will tell.

Autumn colours off School Lane - *Photo Bob Birkenhead*







## Engagement by Nicole Turnbull

A quick covid update that we continue to ask visitors to wear face coverings inside the toilets and hides at Stearth Marshes. You will find hand sanitiser stations at the leaflet point on the decking by the main entrance, also outside all 3 hides. We continue to work with reduced staff numbers due to furlough, and very few volunteers back on site, but I am delighted to say we have managed to return a few practical volunteers over the last couple of weeks.



The habitat improvement works at the northern end and on Otterhampton Marsh are now complete. These have been funded by BIFFA Awards via the Landfill Communities Fund. The work has deepened the saline lagoons and created new shingle islands for winter and breeding waders. A new water structure has been installed on Otterhampton Marsh which will give us greater control of the water levels. We have also

increased the height and area of the shingle islands for breeding waders such as oystercatchers, avocet and little ringed plover. The picture shows the new tilting weir in the middle of Otterhampton Marsh.



You may have noticed that the Polden hide has been moved across the site to the river bank. If you haven't visited for a while it is well worth a trip across to the new Parrett Hide which was officially opened recently. The screening has been completed and now offers views of the saltmarsh and the river.

Here is a picture of Polden hide moving to the river bank in August. You can find a video clip of the move on our Stearth Twitter and Facebook accounts – it was our own mini Stearth carnival procession.

These pictures give you an idea of the view of the river at high tide from the new screens.



We hope you enjoy this new facility. We will be installing some outside benches soon, but it will be a little while before we are able to update all our signage as unfortunately the design team at Slimbridge are still all on furlough.

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments about Stearth Marshes.

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**Engagement Officer:** Nicole Turnbull 07717 342061 [nicole.turnbull@wwt.org.uk](mailto:nicole.turnbull@wwt.org.uk)





@ The Anchor Inn, Comwich

### BURGERS & FRIES

<b>Little Lydz</b>		5.00	
Pattie - Gherkins - Beer Cheese Sauce - American Mustard			
<b>Keen Bean</b>		6.00	
Spicy Bean Pattie - Hot Sauce - Garlic Alioli - Rocket - Beer Cheese Sauce - Veg Crisps			
<b>Little / Big Max</b>	5.50 / 7.50		
Single / Double Pattie - American Cheese - Big Max Sauce			
<b>Do Lillie Lally</b>		8.00	
Double Thigh - Sweet Chilli - Beer Cheese Sauce - Onion Rings			
<b>Brooklyn Brown</b>		8.50	
Double Pattie - Candy Bacon - BBQ - Double Cheese - Crispy Onions			
<b>The VIV</b>		8.50	
Pattie - Thigh - Hot Sauce - Candy Bacon - Jalapeño Beer Cheese Sauce			
<b>The Rev James</b>		8.50	
Double Pattie - Candy Bacon - Crispy Onions - Garlic Alioli			
<b>The Guvnor</b>		9.00	
Double Pattie - Stilton Cream - Rocket - Candy Bacon - Crispy Onions			
<b>Fries</b>	2.00	<b>Nam Nom Gone Fries</b> 6.00 /Curly 7.00	
Curly Fries	2.50	topped with Beer Cheese Sauce	
Garlic Butter - Fries	3.00 /Curly 3.50	Thigh Bites - BBQ - Gherkins	
Beer Battered Onion Rings	2.50	<b>Scottie Hottie Fries</b>	6.00 /Curly 7.00
Extra Cheese Sauce / Candy Bacon	1.50	topped with Beer Cheese Sauce	
Extra Beef Pattie	2.50	Jalapeños - Hot Sauce	
Extra Spicy Crumbed Chicken Thigh	2.50	Burger Bites - Crispy Onions	

### STONE BAKED FRESH DOUGH PIZZAS

Make your own with 4 toppings from below ingredients for £9.50  
Chicken, Ham, Meatballs, Peperoni, Jalapenos, Goat's Cheese, Mushrooms, Red Peppers, Red Onion, Olives, Hot Sauce, Sweet Chilli Sauce, BBQ Sauce.

### FISH & CHIPS

Cod and Chips	£7.00	Chips	£2.50
Battered Cod	£5.50	Beer Battered Onion Rings	£2.50
Scampi	£6.00	Beer Battered Sausage	£2.00
Chicken Thigh Strips	£4.50	Plain Sausage	£1.50
Battered Halloumi	£4.00	Peas	£0.50

Takeaway Orders on **07713 098147** FREE DELIVERY IN COMBICH



@ The Anchor Inn  
Comwich

### STONE BAKED FRESH DOUGH PIZZAS - £9.50

Margarita	Peperoni
Meatball & Red Onion	Hawaiian
<b>The Goat:</b> Goats Cheese & Caramelised Onions	<b>4 Cheese Pizza:</b> Mozzarella, Stilton, Parmesan, Cheddar.
<b>The Veggie:</b> Pepper, Mushrooms Red Onion, Olives, Sweetcorn.	<b>Meat Feast:</b> Chicken, Meatball, Ham, Peperoni.
<b>Spicy Veggie:</b> Pepper, Mushrooms, Red Onion, Olives, Sweetcorn, Jalapeno.	<b>Spicy Meat Feast:</b> Chicken, Meatball, Ham, Peperoni, Jalapenos.

Make your own with 4 toppings for £9.50  
from a choice off: Chicken, Ham, Meatballs, Peperoni, Jalapenos, Goat's Cheese, Mushrooms, Red Peppers, Red Onion, Olives, Hot Sauce, Sweet Chilli Sauce, BBQ Sauce.

Additional toppings - extra 50p

Takeaway Order on 07713 098147 or Facebook  
Wednesday to Saturday night 5pm to 9pm  
PRE-ORDER HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

To keep up to date with all that is happening in the parish check the village noticeboards, log on to our own website, [www.comwich.org.uk](http://www.comwich.org.uk) or visit "All Things Comwich" and the "Comwich, Steart and Otterhampton Memories" Facebook Groups

## Otter Wheels



We are sorry we cannot offer the normal service to our passengers due to the Covid 19 restrictions, but as soon as we are able we will resume normal service.

Thank you for your understanding

However

**Essential journeys for medical appointments will be undertaken when no alternative transport is available**

**Ring 07925 154216**

**For more information**

### Otter Tales

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