

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT MAY 2016 FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Local groups and organisations have reported their activities for the past year, some will present their reports to you this evening and others are on display for you to read.

Before I get on to the main part of my report I would like to use this opportunity to express the thanks of us all to a number of people who do jobs around the village. The Clock continues to give good service and this is thanks to a dedicated crew of Tony Edney, Steve Scarrott and Ian Faris. To those who open and close the gaol: Heather Coates, Louiza Pearson, Mike Henry, Terry Sackett and Colin Penny. Thanks also to Chloë Frost for opening and closing the public lavatories every day, and Colin Falla for his work as Footpaths Liaison Officer. I'd also like to make a special mention of Terry and Eliza Sackett who have contributed their skills generously for many village projects – including the Tom Poole panel, for Coleridge groups as well as those of the Parish Council

CRICKETER

Obviously the news that cheese making was to cease at Cricketer after so many years was greeted with dismay and sadness by the whole of the community, not least because for many of our community it meant the loss of jobs – in some cases for several members of a family.

We understand that the management of Cricketer are actively pursuing other possible uses for the site that may in the future mean some local employment.

Cricketer have told us that there will shortly be a public consultation on some proposals when they will reveal what is planned and discuss these plans with those who are interested.

BUS SHELTER

A number of people expressed concern that the children and others waiting for the bus on the junction of A39 and Stogursey lane were exposed to all weathers and to passing traffic.

We looked at this and agreed that something was needed, therefore we undertook to provide a bus shelter at this bus stop.

C J Lynch should have started laying the tarmac base today, but this has had to be delayed for a couple of weeks owing to a last-minute problem with the manufacture of the shelter.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

In early December 2015 the Parish Council undertook to work on a Neighbourhood plan.

Once approved and adopted this would provide the village with a greater say in future planning issues and also how the village would continue to evolve in the future.

Although the Parish Council understood the need for a Neighbourhood plan we also understood that as a Parish Council we did not have the expertise or the time to commit fully to this task. Therefore in the first instance we agreed to employ on an “as-needed” basis planning consultant Amada Goddard to assist and guide us in this venture.

A working group of around twelve people from the Community have come together to carry out the core work whilst being guided by Amanda, this group meets on a monthly basis or more frequently if needed. I am grateful to Kevin Ferriday who took over the reins when Malcolm Hogg’s commitments elsewhere meant he had to step back for a while.

Leaflet drops took place in the village November 2015 informing people of the proposed NHP and again just prior to the May Fair. The group also manned an information stand at the May Fair. A Questionnaire will be delivered to every house in the village, hopefully over the late May Bank Holiday weekend, which should provide the data as to what the people of the Village would like to see happen to their Village over the next 20 years.

The Neighbourhood Plan is important to all of us as, once it has been approved by the Parish and adopted by Sedgemoor, it will give us control and a sense of direction as to how the Parish should develop.

MAY FAIR

This year saw the ninth May Fair and also the largest so far with over seventy stalls and pitches through the village. The weather treated us very well only raining on the day after.

The day went reasonably well with only one incident of totally inconsiderate parking and two incidents of people believing the road closure did not include them.

As you will be aware the roads are closed by an official road closure order issued by Sedgemoor District Council, part of the rules for this is that the barriers enforcing the road closure have to be attended at all times.

As usual we suffered with a lack of volunteers on the day of the May Fair with some people not turning up at all, however sufficient people did volunteer to make the day viable and to those we offer our grateful thanks.

PLOT 173 AONB GRANT

or the Old Orchard is a plot of land used by people of the village as an amenity to relax etc. Sedgemoor District Council carry out some maintenance work on this land and we as the Parish Council also provide further maintenance to top up that done by Sedgemoor.

As part of this we were able to obtain a grant from the ANOB under their Greater Quantock Landscape Development Fund for the planting of new trees on the land and elected to use this money for the purchase of local heritage fruit trees. When they get there the fruit can be picked by anyone - but please leave enough for others!

These have now been planted. It is however sad to relate that a couple of these trees have since been subject to vandalism.

PUBLIC TOILETS AND CAR PARK

You will be aware that the Parish Council owns the public toilets and car park on Castle Street, during the last year work has been undertaken on the car park to remove some of the overgrown trees and generally tidy the area.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AT MILL LANE AND LIME STREET

Somerset County Council submitted proposals for this project which were displayed and subject of a meeting in the Village Hall. Following the meeting and suggestions made by the people who attended the Parish Council held further talks with SCC in December.

As a result, SCC are taking a fresh look at the scheme hopefully taking into consideration the suggestions that have been put forward. This has unfortunately been delayed by the 5-month illness of the designer but he is now back and working on the plan.

RAILINGS

Work on re-painting the railing at the entrance to the village is now complete.

A NEW VILLAGE HALL AND PAVILION FOR THE PLAYING FIELD.

Peter Greig will say more on this.

REFERENDUM

There appears to be either some confusion or deliberate misinformation surrounding the need to register by June 7th to be eligible to vote. Those who are on the electoral roll and or correctly registered as electors do not need to re-register for the referendum. If you received a polling card for the Police Commissioner elections (or the 2015 General Election) at your current address you are registered and should receive your polling cards this week.

Those people who are not registered as electors, or who have moved recently will need to register by June 7th to enable them to vote. It takes five minutes to do online.

VILLAGE INFORMATION PANEL

You may have noticed a Village Information Panel on display in the Tea Room window. In the next week or so it will be installed in the Gaol to replace one of the rather elderly AONB panels. This was an idea put forward by Colin Penny and the Parish Council agreed to fund it, given our heavy reliance on tourism in the village. We are, again, indebted to Terry and Eliza Sackett who put in a huge amount of work in the design and arranged the manufacture.

BUSES

On 13th May Webber Bus announced that they were to cease trading, this company was an important part of the public transport facilities that serve the village.

Some of the routes that Webber operated have been taken over by other companies and the County Council is working with those companies for the future.

Although reliable information has been scant and inexact so far we will continue to monitor the situation and advise people as and when we have further reliable information.

GENERAL

Tuesday November 24 a devastating fire caused severe damage to the George Hotel and this has remained closed since that time, although some work has taken place progress appears slow, we can only commiserate with Bill on what has happened.

This together with the Open/Closed nature of the Rose and Crown has obviously impacted on the social life and well-being of the village. It must be remembered that whilst businesses in major towns can rely on huge catchment areas for their customers the shops, pubs etc. in rural villages need to be supported by the people living in and around those communities.

If we do not support our local shops and businesses, we will lose them and our village will be that much poorer as a result.

HINKLEY C DEVELOPMENT

Councillors continue to attend numerous meetings organized by EDF and the District Councils to discuss matters concerned with this development. However with the uncertainty that prevails with regard to a start date and or finances we are unable to offer any further news on this subject.

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

We were delighted to welcome Kevin Ferriday and Malcolm Reid on to the Parish Council in December, finally bringing us up to full strength after the election.

After a bit of a hiatus earlier in the year, Mel Catchpole joined the office as Assistant Clerk in September and is becoming a valuable member of the team.

We were pleased to be able to set a budget for the year from April 2016 with a reduction of 2%. Although in monetary terms it doesn't amount to much of a saving for each household we hoped it would offset the increases expected elsewhere. Despite this we shall be able to continue to provide the services we do at the same or better level, and we have put more emphasis in to generally keeping the village more neat and tidy. We would of course be helped in this by people being more careful about litter, dog poo and vandalism.

As usual there is a continuous stream of new legislation that we have to digest and then put into effect.

GRANTS

In a community such as ours it is important to encourage, help and support worthwhile groups that contribute to the life and well-being of the community. In the past twelve months the Parish Council has approved and provided grants to various groups within the village.

Active Living - to help reduce membership costs and pay for speakers

Friends of Nether Stowey Library – contribution towards the Tom Poole Panel

Short Mat Bowls – for new mats

Stowey Bears - two Tablets and dedicated software to improve communications with parents

Stowey Walkers – towards their bid for accreditation with Walker are Welcome

Recreation Ground – contribution towards the Play Area

Recreation Ground – contribution towards CCTV at the RG

Village Hall – Audio-visual equipment

Nether Stowey School Meals Service – trolleys to help with service/clearing up

In addition we have had a report from the Pottery Club who received their grant at the end of March 2015, they have now sent a thank you and provided pictures of the kiln in use – their report is on the table – everyone loves the tortoises!

REPORT FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Neighbourhood Plan was stated up in early December 2015, we have employed a Planning consultant Mandy Goddard to assist us with this plan.

The NHP should take approx. 2 years to complete, we have a Working Group of about 12 persons, we try and meet on a monthly basic, we have so far had 2 leaflet drops one in November 2015 telling people of the proposed NHP and then we had one just before the May Fair, we also had a stall at this year's May Fair.

We are doing a Questionnaire drop hopefully over the late May Bank Holiday weekend this should help us to gather data as to what the residents of the Village would like to see happen to their Village over the next 20 years.

So far the NHP is working out well and running to plan, but as always we could do with more Volunteers.



Parish Report June 2016 Nether Stowey CP. Paths

There has been an encouraging increase in the use of the paths within the village boundaries. The path parallel to the A39 which runs from the Village hall gate through the small wood by the lay-by has most noticeably seen more foot traffic. This is the path which the Parish Council occasionally maintains as the landowners - the County Council do not, and I would like to thank them for the continued work done on it.

There are over 20 public footpaths wholly within the parish boundary and a further 3 partially within it. Throughout the previous year there were eight new faults reported and six of them resolved. Three of these resolutions involved the construction of new stiles or kissing gates.

Currently there are seven issues or faults logged, of which only one actually inhibits access. There is a known problem with access of path BW22/27 (east side of Pinnacle Hill), however, easy access is possible on the other side of hedge. This fault is not being escalated because there is a long term intention to divert the path.

Three new initiatives concerning paths are either in the proposal or planning stage:

- A new national trail is in the development stage. This will link Stogursey Castle and Nether Stowey Castle via a circular walk. Approximately half of this route would incorporate paths within Nether Stowey parish. Should this trail be completed it will add considerably to the status of our parish for encouraging walking.

- On this same theme, there is a group set up to investigate and possibly apply for the village to be granted Walkers Welcome status. I believe this proposal will be outlined by the group mentioned at this parish meeting.
- Also a new permissive way has been proposed which will link a walk through Stowey Wood with two existing rights of way. This would create a short, pleasant circular route incorporating woodland and field edges, to the east of the village.

Finally, I would encourage everyone to use the paths as often as possible. This is the most assured way of maintaining them.

Any information concerning village rights of way, please contact the Parish Office.

Colin Falla
Path Liaison Officer

Books For Life Registered Charity No. 1074748 Report 2014-30/9/2015

I believe that the chairman's report and the AGM should be a time of rejoicing whether it has been a good year or a bad year financially. I was minded to look at the original trust document when we first became a charity. On the third day of February 1999. Many people rush into being a charity without counting the cost of the responsibility and time that has to be sacrificed.

The first paragraph of our schedule reminds us, "there has for some time that existed in and around the county of Somerset herein after referred to as the said county, a Fellowship of Christian people known as Books for Life Charity who are committed to the advancement of the Christian faith and the extension of the kingdom of God and other charitable purposes hereinafter set forth.

At the time, we did not have any project, country or direction other than the above in mind but felt it was essential for us to include in our mandate-education-health, and to trust God for the direction and provision that He would provide. In the subsequent years we have seen doors open that we would not on our own strength dared to pass through.

The opportunity to teach in a Bible school based in Goa and Mumbai gave me the opportunity to learn about the people, their customs and faiths. It was a very steep learning curve as I had to cast out my preconceived impressions, mostly manipulated by the media as I saw the many religions living mostly at peace with each other. Our next step was raise £18,000 to cover the cost of equipping seven seven wards of a new wing to Bosio hospital so that they could increase their care for the poor. I ended up staying in the convent and that was the most wonderful experience.

Again from this safe environment. I was able to learn about other Western charities operating in Goa. Some of them were very good and others disturbed us very much in the way that they were used and paraded in front of the tourists to gain sponsorship.

I was asked by the mother Superior if I would sponsor a child, something I had never done before in my life. Though I had contributed to the well-being of others. I agreed and my next visit thought I would see how this boy was getting on. I walked into the playground of a very large school with about 500 boys and girls running around. To my surprise, not one of them approached me or ask me for chocolate and I immediately realised that this was something new and different to me. The boys home was being supported by an American charity and they were pulling out and the challenge for us was how would we possibly be able to pay for so many children. I knew the Lord will provide though I had no experience in this type of fundraising and neither had the other trustees. However, I was one of the chief stewards at the Cliff Richard concert in Glastonbury and an appeal was made from the main stage to come and see us and help to sponsor. Again the Lord provided all our needs.

Montfort Brothers, who ran the boys home and school were very humble and hard-working and it was two years before I found out that St Joseph's boys home and school had won the top accolade from the Indian government as the best boys home in India. This dedicated organisation concentrated on educating, healthcare, child and women's rights throughout India, especially in the rural districts. There are over 360,000 children who look towards them for care and education. They were not tainted by the Western values and it was difficult for me to get them to understand the importance of regular financial sponsorship, that was available from the thousands of visitors who came to Goa. Most of the areas where the Brothers operated in were rural and these were supported by a number of schools in Hyderabad and other cities where the parents paid for their children to come and get a better, higher quality education. All profits were then used for the rural areas.

When the school holidays come around. The children from the boys home have the opportunity to stay with the families of the day school children. This reduces our funding considerably, but the most important thing is that this educates them on the reality of family life and integration into the community. The advantage of this system is that the children are already familiar with the local businesses and have a far better chance of obtaining a job and accommodation. Therefore our children on leaving school are not "abandoned" again.

Whilst all this was going on. We were still very active with Bosio hospital and sponsored one of the nurses to go to a training school for three years. The cost of this came from, mainly one sponsor here in the UK which we did not even approach. There was a need for a resident doctor, especially overnight and we agreed to pay 50% of his salary. He was an excellent experienced Dr. and the hospital has never looked back as it has gone from strength to strength.

In all the years that we have worked alongside these two organisations. There has been not one instance of dishonesty. We are aware that many charities run into great difficulties in these areas were unfortunately, corruption thrives.

We expanded into the vocational training centre because there was a desperate need for girls to be educated with a skill which would give them high income which would be enough to support their children. This has been so successful. Since 2002. There has been 100% pass rate and the vocational training school is now recognised as the top vocational training school in Goa by the Indian government.

In the latter years we have struggled for the funding of the extra girls that need this type of education and are so eager to learn new skills. Once again it is most rewarding to all of us that are involved, as we receive from the accounts of some of the students that left 10 years ago and are now making a successful contribution to India.

We are very fortunate to have Dr Andy Douglass as one of our trustees for as a young doctor he gained a lot of experience of working in Uganda and now regularly visits a hospital in Borabora and we are delighted to have the privilege of being able to top up his own initiated funding. Again we are involved in the topping up of salaries, to enable them to stay at the hospitals and schools instead of leaving to go to higher paid government funding organisations.

We equipped many schools in Africa and India, with educational books, but such is the advancement, especially in India. That requirement is no longer needed.

In Hyderabad, the Montfort brothers established at the invitation of the inhabitants of the slum areas creches for the young children whilst their parents were at work. On returning it had become commonplace, that their children had disappeared and been trafficked. These creches are in the top of houses in 29 areas and were supported by the UNESCO and WHO. Because of the recent Ebola crisis and refugee demand is their funding stopped at the beginning of last year. This of course is a great concern because there are a lot of teachers that need their wages paid. We initiated a just giving campaign, which perhaps because of our inexperience was not successful, however, our appeal for used stamps, including GB has brought in some income and we are now getting individuals holding tea parties in their homes and this is producing in excess of a hundred pounds each time. So once again we have progressed into a new area.

Here at home. We have continued supporting Eurovision, which has a very evangelistic impact whenever they have a mission. Also Care who have a good impact with MPs and placement of mentors. We have continued our support for local charities in the area.

As we have grown, so has the number of trustees who have a vast array of gifts, experiences, which is created a strong team which I know will grow stronger in the coming years. So our thanks go to them and all the other willing contributors that support us financially and in prayer. It is always good to appreciate and acknowledged these individuals and to encourage them so that they do know that they make a difference.

As a charity, we may not be unique, but we certainly have been able to achieve our goal of changing people's lives and encourage all those that have supported our vision.

Village Hall - Report to the Village Meeting - May 2016

Another year has passed and I am pleased to be able to present the 2016 report to the Village Meeting.

This has been another successful year for the village hall. Lettings have continued to be buoyant but like many village halls we still have slots available particularly during the day on Thursday and Friday.

Our regular fund raising events are well attended with regular quiz evenings being popular and the flower show remains a village high light. Following the success of our Christmas market we have added a spring market to the calendar both of which contributed to village life & our funds.

The Bouncy castle continues to attract children's parties helping occupy the hall at weekends and providing a much needed facility to parents allowing children to have fun without any risk to the home.

Richard Digence made a return visit in September and although attendance was down it was another great evening.

We are seeing more visiting Brownie troops enjoying camping in the hall and having the amenities of a village just outside the door.

The village cinema introduced last year has continued to thrive, providing a convivial evening out once a month for villagers and people from our neighbouring villages. We have (with the help of the Parish council) invested in more of our own equipment which has reduced the work load on our volunteers and improved the quality of the show. The result has been noticed in both the attendance and audience comments. The choice of films is still challenging to the cinema team with poor attendance on three occasions but we will still try to offer films that are attractive to all ages, however our attempts to interest parents and children in children's films have not been a success so for now we have discontinued matinee showings.

Our regular club hirers continue but I know that some struggle to find volunteers to organise them even when the work involved is not onerous. This is a theme I will return to.

After the new curtains, our new china and glasses have been well received by hirers and we shall be looking at new cutlery for next year.

Looking forward we are still working with the playing field charity on the possibility of a new combined facility but I will leave that to be reported on separately.

Like all village halls we rely heavily on volunteers and without the regular suspects we would not be able to provide the regular events or raise funds to help keep the hall moving forward. We continue to have difficulty attracting people to help either on regular fund raising events, attractions like the village cinema or as committee members. We have suffered again from having to cancel a committee meeting because we were inquorate but have managed to press gang two new members to bolster our numbers. It is disappointing that more the village members do not value the village hall enough to be prepared to give up a little free time to help and rely on the regular people who are prepared to volunteer.

Ray Brooks
Chair
Nether Stowey Village Hall
23rd May 2016

Nether Stowey School Pottery Club

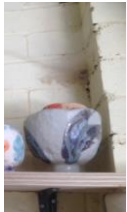


Since we received the Nether Stowey Parish Council grant, as well as grants from some other sources, we have managed to clear and refurbish a small unused brick building on the school site to use as a pottery room. New windows were installed, together with sink, purpose-made workbenches and the floor was painted to create a lovely, light environment in which to work. Nether Stowey Parish Council donated money towards the new kiln which is of a generous size and allows a lot of products to be fired in one firing session.

Each term we have a group of six different children who attend weekly to explore and create interesting clay items. These can then be fired, glazed and glaze fired, producing durable items for presents or for use in the home. (See pictures).



We also have a group of adults who have formed their own pottery group. The pottery teacher who was working with them is no longer available and we would welcome the help of another experienced helper. We are also hoping that it might be possible to set up some pottery classes for the elderly so our next appeal for funds will be to allow us to purchase some adjustable stools for the pottery room.



We sincerely thank the Parish Council for their support and would appreciate consideration being given to a further donation for stools at some time in the future.

Thank you from all our young potters - they absolutely love their clay.



Quantock Players ▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼

TREASURE ISLAND - ANNUAL REPORT

Treasure Island, our 2015 panto, was a very successful show and from the comments received it was certainly enjoyed by all who came to see it. The first night audience is usually very sparse so it was a welcome surprise this year to see how many people came along and bought their tickets on the door - we had an excellent first night which certainly lifted the spirits of our cast. People do not seem to want to buy their tickets before the show run begins, and many find out that they have left it a bit late.

We continue to have a great group of Under-16s who come back again and again for our panto. Our very supportive parents continue to help and support us, and without them we would be unable to put on a show. Legislation regarding chaperones has to be complied with, and again most parents are very supportive with the necessary paperwork that always has to be done to enable chaperone licences to be kept up to date. Without these licences there would be no show.

We again entered the Somerset Fellowship of Drama Cinderella Trophy. We have received an encouraging adjudication for Treasure Island, and in particular praise for our scenery, lighting and sound. The results of this competition were announced on 7th May, and we were absolutely delighted to hear that we have won a lovely trophy for Best Village Stage Management, and a certificate for Best Sound Effects.

Although we have a fantastic group of Under 16s we are sadly lacking in adult members. Some parts, being panto, can be played by our youngsters, but makeup and costume can in no way enable these youngsters to play some of the important adult parts. If you think you could be interested then why not come along and join us?

This year's panto will be Beauty And The Beast, and having decided this year's show so early on will give our great group of back stage helpers, more time to design, construct and paint our scenery sets and to organise costumes. Auditions are taking place this May, so our show will soon be cast.

The village continue to support our panto and we thank them again and again for their unstinting support - it makes all the hard work worth doing!

Wendy Hobbs,
Secretary
Quantock Players

Nether Stowey Short Mat Bowls 2015/16.

I would like to thank Nether Stowey Parish Council for the grant to purchase slip Mats for the club.

We meet every Tuesday evening at 7pm in the Church Centre. Cost is £12 subs for a year and £3 every Tuesday. Contact Cath Roberts 732789, if you would like to have a go.

Margaret Harris
(Chairperson)

Nether Stowey WI 2015

The WI meet the 2nd Thursday in the month at 7pm at the Village Hall, Lime Street. Subs for a year to date is £37.50, visitor's pay £2.

We have a speaker each month, a programme for 2016 is attached to this report.

2015 was 100 years of the WI, the Queen attended the AGM at the Albert Hall, one of our members went on behalf of our WI another member attended the Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

Other things we did in 2015, cake stall at the May Fair, County Fun Quiz, Flower Show, Women Walk, a trip to Sherborne Castle, Afternoon Tea at a members house, ending the year with a Christmas Buffet.

Margaret Harris (President)

NETHER STOWEY W. I.

Committee

Mrs. Barbara Carter
Mrs. Ann Bass
Mrs. Jenny Alexander
Mrs. Jo Forrest
Mrs. Janice Miller
Mrs. Molly Bradner

Programme 2016



Telephone Numbers

Mrs. M. Harris 01278 734 613
Mrs. B. Carter 01278 732 959
Mrs M. Bradner 01278 732 166

President Mrs. M. Harris
Secretary Ann Bass
Jenny Alexander
Treasurer Mrs. M. Bradner

Meetings start at 7pm

January 14th

The Secret of your Wellbeing

Barbara Oliosio
Tea Hostess Wendy Ebdon/
Margaret Adam
Raffle Wendy Ebdon
Flowers Margaret Adam

February 11th

Spirit of Wood

Emma Duke
Tea Hostess Vi Adair/
Pauline Smith
Raffle Vi Adair
Flowers Janice Miller

March 10th

Desert Island Discs

Veronica Andrews
Tea Hostess Pam Palmer/
Cath Roberts
Raffle E. Knapp
Flowers V. Came

April 14th

Interior Design on a Budget

Ruth Brazier
Tea Hostess Tanya Mather/
Raffle Margaret Harris
Flowers Emma Sparkes

May 12th

AGM & Resolutions

Tea Hostess Emma Sparkes/
Janice Miller
Raffle Barbara Carter
Flowers Jenny Alexander

June 9th

Two Steps Behind

Dawn Lawrence
Tea Hostess
Raffle Cath Roberts
Flowers Jacqui Fowler

July 14th

Floresty Flowers & Fun

Katherine Taylor
Tea Hostess
Raffle Molly Bradner
Flowers Molly Bradner

August

No Meeting

September 8th

Disabled Riding

Teresa Wort
Tea Hostess Tanya Mather/
Raffle Margaret Wells
Flowers Jean Parry

October 13th

Story behind the Signs

Bob Musgrave
Tea Hostess
Raffle Jacqui Fowler
Flowers Margaret Lindner

November 10th

Fuse Glass Jewellery

Margaret Harper
Items for Sale - Money going to SURE
Tea Hostess Irene Bullock/
Judy Neal
Raffle Judy Neal
Flowers Irene Bullock

December 8th

Members Christmas Meal