



March 2017



Welcome...

to the Spring edition of Chilcompton Matters, and may the metaphorical lambs frolic through the daffodil strewn gardens of your mind. Ahem, and Happy Easter too.

We've quite literally had to squeeze every item into this issue, maybe should have gone to four more pages. So thanks to all the regular contributors but also, which is really refreshing and reassuring, to all the new contributors who are eager to be a part of the magazine - that is so gratifying. But please do keep it coming, any young aspiring writers out there, for instance? Good to see new advertisers too.

I would like to declare (tongue firmly in cheek) that although the planned reorganisation of MP constituencies means that we would be lumped with Midsomer Norton rather than Wells, the rumours of a CHEXIT organisation are entirely false, the Parish Council is firmly committed to Somerset. The PC have also expressed their determination to maintain a green space between Midsomer Norton and Chilcompton, but there are no plans to build a wall between the two communities and make Midsomer Norton pay for it. We are Chilcompton. Hurrah.

Within the pages there is news on the Lynch Hill pavement, the reopening of the Somerset Wagon, new play equipment and the washrooms of the Village Hall. Features on mining, flower arranging, technology and Chilcompton individuals, including the truly heart-warming story about David and Sylvia Rogers winning the Volunteer/Good Neighbour Award for Somerset - well done them. Also updates on the various clubs around the village, beavering away producing art, embroidery and cricket balls disappearing over the boundary. Howzat!

Of course not everything is rosy; there are the perennial dog poo problems and the frustration and fear that comes from pedestrians walking around the village. Slow down! I feel a petition coming on. If you have any concerns put them down in writing, I can't solve them but I can publish them, and the exercise of writing will probably be very therapeutic.

Once again thanks to Mike Hughes and his sterling job with the desktop publishing, Kathy Hughes for getting all the adverts organised, and all the brilliant distributors.

Life, hey, but don't let it bring you down, keep Chilcompton smiling.

Bless your hearts

Malcolm Rigby

Parish Clerk. **E-mail:** parishclerk@chilcompton.org

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Saying it with flowers

“If you think squash is a competitive activity, try flower arranging” – Alan Bennett.

After 30 years of a hectic life in the health service looking after adults with learning difficulties you could understand someone turning to the more gentle restive and creative art or profession of floristry.

Following her early retirement Sandy Yeates, who lives at the bottom of the Pitching, did precisely that. Already a keen gardener she was looking at college courses that would provide her with employment all year long to supplement her pension. She crammed the two year course at the Centurion into one and started to do work for family and friends.

She said: “I was very inspired, I was very surprised how naturally, easily, it came to me.”

A workshop was constructed at the bottom of her garden and Sandy’s Flowers was up and running.

She does weddings, funerals and corporate work – cafes like Holy Cow that require table arrangements – she also helps out one day a week at Saltford Flowers, doubling up with a colleague to do large weddings or funerals.

The differing seasons are obviously a challenge. “But the biggest challenge,” Sandy said, “is when the customer has something in their head and it’s for them to relate it to me so what I get in my head is the same as what they are picturing. Men are usually the easiest to deal with because they are quite happy to leave it to the florist, which makes it a lot easier because I know what flowers are in season.

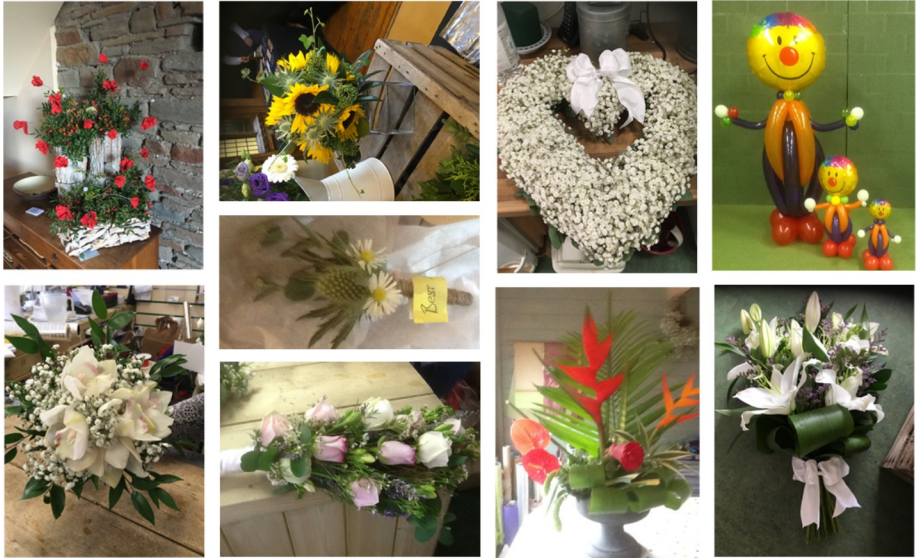
“If I’m doing a wedding I do consultations, meet the bride and groom, get a rough idea of what they want and cost it up for them, but they can change their minds right up to the day I order the flowers. You expect it to change, its one of those things with weddings. Obviously funerals are slightly different because they are usually quite quick.”

When it’s a wedding her inspiration normally comes from the bride. “What the bride says triggers things off in your head; you have to get to know the bride because she needs to trust you.” >>

Somerset Wagon Re-opens For Mother

Under new tenant, Debbie Templar, the Somerset Wagon pub is aiming to re-open on the 24th March with the restaurant opening the following day in time for Mothers Day at the weekend.

Debbie said that the pub would be family friendly offering traditional home cooked pub food – “nothing fancy”.



She can also incorporate balloon sculptures into her arrangements.

According to Sandy every florist has their own style. "I tend not to use a lot of colours, maybe two colours or three. Obviously you have to do what the customer wants; they're paying for it at the end of the day.

"I've never had a complaint yet, that doesn't mean to say it's not going to happen. Generally people are very pleased, especially people who weren't sure what they wanted. I know what flowers go together, I know what colours go together. They always come back very positive."



The business has been going for three years now, getting work largely through word of mouth, but she is starting to advertise. "I'm trying to keep it as local as I can."

Sandy can be contacted on 075050 11586

Sandy's top tips for the amateur:

- When you are putting flowers in a vase make sure you strip all the leaves off the stems under the water, it will stop your water from going horrible.
- When you buy flowers and there is a feed packet, always use the feed - it will prolong the life of the flowers.
- Always cut the stems at an angle so that the stem does not sit flat on the bottom, a flower stem is like a straw and if it's flat on the bottom it won't be able to suck up the water.

Volunteer of the Year Award

Sylvia and David Rogers travelled to the Haynes Motor Museum function room in December for a presentation lunch for the 'Believe in Somerset Awards'. They had been nominated along with hundreds of others and shortlisted in the Good Neighbour and Volunteer category.



Their list of good deeds is impressive. Many will remember Sylvia as the Chilcompton Guide Captain for 22 years in the 1970s and 1980s and recall her stalwart work looking after St. Aldhelm's church until it closed; she was in great demand as a baby sitter for friends and is still always willing to help with lifts to the surgery or hospital.

Both Sylvia and David worked hard on the Chilcompton Society committee and have organised the flower show for 21 years, David being the chairman for all that time. The village hall committee benefitted from their energetic input when funds were being raised for the new hall in 1981. Sylvia is still on the committee. The couple have clocked up 22 years with the Golden Hour Club, making teas each month and arranging funding and venue for the Christmas meal; Sylvia is the Treasurer and David the Entertainments Secretary. A few years ago they set up and still run the indoor bowls club. Sylvia and David also find time in their busy lives to organise delivery of this newsletter to you twice a year.

When Sylvia retired from the sewing room at Downside in 2006, she began helping to run the Friday coffee club and is still actively involved. In recent years she has masterminded the refreshment provision for Chilcompton Celebrates calling on her many friends for home baking and serving teas.

As if their volunteering in Chilcompton isn't enough, they are both on the Bath History Group committee and Sylvia is the Treasurer. David volunteers for the Silver Street S & D railway and the Bitton Heritage railway. Before coming to Chilcompton David collected and recycled newspapers to raise funds for Bath Canal restoration.

Apart from all the effort they put in supporting village activities, this lovely couple are so

caring of others and are always willing to help out at any time with practical tasks or just a listening ear.

The couple were shocked but pleased about gaining the award. David said modestly, "We just do what we do and we don't expect any recognition".

I am pleased to say that Sylvia and David Rogers won the Good Neighbour, Volunteer of the Year Award, which is much deserved and recognises all they have done and still do in the village. Chilcompton would be a poorer place without them. Well done both of you and thank you!

Marlene Pickford

Valentine's Day - by Andrew Morris

Tuesday shrives to St Valentine,
Not in a cold winter pew.
But on tables and in bedrooms,
With a free bottle of wine.

A love confessed in food and drink,
Not God's love mingled with death.
But Eros playing games in the sun,
Warming us in its own heat.

No belief in miracles or bodies rising,
Or death by burning or arrows.
But a suit and a dress, clean shoes,
And the smile of a familiar stare.

No priestly promise of heavenly bliss,
No cold rules to remember and keep.
Just a meal for us two,
And the dreaming of a kiss.



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Chilcompton Lives - Ronald Strawbridge



Ronald was born in 1926 in Radstock. The family lived on Frome Hill and Ron's father was a butcher and slaughter man for the Radstock Co-op. The family moved to Chilcompton in 1927 when Ron's father opened a butchers at the bottom of Tunnel Lane later moving to the premises vacated by Pearce at Orchardleigh.

Ron went to Downside Church of England School until the age of 11 when he attended Cannings College travelling to Bath by train from Chilcompton Station. Ron would help with the butchers round by delivering labelled parcels of meat in Chilcompton and Stratton by bicycle. Ron remembers two girls that used to help him push his bike up Tunnel Lane.

He received his call up papers in 1943 and having a preference for the RAF was accepted as a wireless operator /air gunner only to be sent home for 3 months because, following the end of the Battle of Britain, there was less need for RAF personnel. Ron was then called up to the Army. Ron remembers travelling to and from Bodmin to Inverness having completed his initial training, travelling through Chilcompton - but unable to stop - he could see his house from the train.

Ron joined the Somerset Light Infantry and saw service in Greece, Austria and Yugoslavia as Messing Officer. At 21 years old he was the youngest officer in the battalion. At one time Ron was in charge of a prisoner of war camp. This was an 'easy' job as the prisoners didn't want to escape!

In Austria Ron found the help of an interpreter and visited farms to trade corned beef and sardines for large quantities of fruit and vegetables.

He wanted to continue in the army after the war but was needed back at home and returned to Chilcompton in 1948 to re-join the family butcher business. Ron wanted their own business and eventually purchased the Old Bakery in Bakers Lane, building the butchers in the adjacent plot. When Ron's brother returned from national service they were joined by Mervyn Fowler to form the butchers 'Strawbridge and Fowler'.

Ron met Joan, his wife to be, before he went in the army and often cycled to Midsomer Norton on Saturday evening to meet Joan and visit the Palladium cinema with friends. There was always friendly competition over who would get to sit in the double seats! Ron and Joan married in 1950 and they lived in rooms in Wells Road and Stockhill before moving into the flat above the butchers.

He had a neighbour at the bottom of the hill that kept pigs in his garden. To get them to the butchers he would walk them down the street on a slip lead like a dog. These were hairy pigs and once they had been slaughtered they would be laid on a bed of straw and set fire to, to remove the hair. Ron remembers the children playing football with the inflated bladders that came from the pigs once they had been scraped and butchered.

Ron can remember the miners that used to walk to the New Rock pit in their hobnail boots. They would lose some of the hobnails and Ron helped the local nurse mend punctures on her bike on a number of occasions when he came across her on the butcher's round.

Ron has recently been presented with a medal for 60 years in the Masons and continues to take part in the Rifles - Light Infantry Association, the Village Society, the Probus Club Midsomer Norton and the Gardening Club. He has played golf at the Mendip Golf Club for over 50 years. Ron is very proud of the four children and all his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

If you have enjoyed reading this article and would like to share your memories or know someone who may, please contact Mike Newman on 01761 233838 or contact the editor.

Embroidery in Chilcompton

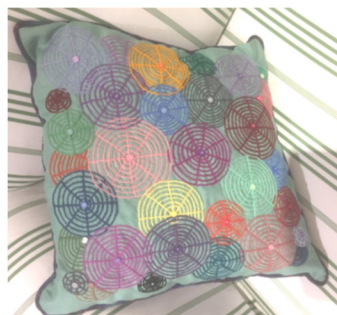
Do you live in the village (or elsewhere) and would like to do something really interesting, worthwhile and purposeful, whilst meeting and making interesting new

friends? Then I have exactly the right place for you. It's not far away and you can walk or come by car, so why not come to my 'Embroidery Classes' at St. John's beautifully light and airy Church Hall on a Tuesday or Thursday morning where I run 10 week x 2 hour courses for £55, which is actually £2.75 an hour for fun and enjoyment.



You can always complete the course by attending on the other day when you miss your normal day so you should never miss out.

The Embroidery Teaching is very personal and the course is for 'Real Beginners to the More Accomplished'. We usually end up with some wonderful pieces of work for each individual which go all over England and the rest of the world. I can guarantee you will meet lovely, warm new friends.



You can just turn up on the day at St. John's Church Hall or to be sure we shall be there or for further information please telephone Patricia Ardron, Beechwood House, Chilcompton. 01761 232466 or 07788 184 185.

Patricia Ardron

Flower Show 2017

Yes, it's time to think about the flower show and schedules are ready for this 38th show. If you are a photographer, craftsperson, cook, flower arranger or gardener there will a class in the show for you to enter. The more entries, the better the show, so have a go and make this year's show another great one. There are opportunities for children to shine too, with money prizes for the winners.

Schedules are available from 01761 233142.



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Our Mining Heritage

Almost 50 years since the local pit closed, any visitor to the area could be forgiven for not recognising that Chilcompton was, for a century and a half, a coal mining village. Though there is of course the slag heap (batch) semi-hidden by the New Rock industrial estate and the coal truck acting as flower planter on the main road.

People have been digging for coal in this area since Roman times but the Chilcompton New Rock pit is thought to have been established in 1819. In the early 1960s the colliery was producing

70,000 tons a year and it was still being proclaimed that the mines had a long term future.



New Rock pit - picture courtesy of Radstock Museum

The hallmark of the Somerset Coalfield is the notorious guss and crook. The guss was a rope which fitted tightly round the waist. This was attached to an iron chain and hook which in turn was connected to the putt, a sledge container for coal.



The image of young lads on their hands and knees hauling their putts through narrow seams with only a candle to light their way is enough to make you feel glad that mining like this is a thing of the past.

One ex-miner once described to me how his mother had taught him to rub urine into the wounds to help them heal and harden the skin.

Another former miner, Wilf Perkins, who used to live in Hoecroft, Chilcompton, but has now sadly passed away, told me in 1995 that when he was 14 he was the last boy to use the guss and crook. He said: "Your ribs were raw afterwards, but we were happy to do the work because there was no choice." The guss and crook disappeared in the 1940s.

Nationalisation of the coalfields in 1947 was welcomed by Somerset miners, not necessarily for ideological reasons but because there was greater investment in safety precautions. However, modernisation meant that money had to be concentrated on the more successful pits and by 1959 Chilcompton's New Rock was one of the last five pits left.

Following the second world war there were always manpower shortages, Poles and Italians were imported to the area and in the early 60s there was a major recruitment drive from the Durham coalfields. Some of the Geordies who came south returned after one shift because they were unhappy with safety. Many of those who stayed had to live with their families in a caravan for over a year until proper accommodation was found.

The New Rock pit finally closed in September 1968, five years before the final Somerset pits were wound down.

More about mining in the area can be discovered at Radstock Museum.

Malcolm Rigby

STEVE DAVIS

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Obituaries

The following residents, former villagers and friends have died recently.

Bronwen Strange (née Hartley), Ann Pratten (née Angell), Nigel Brooks, Doris Horler (née Chivers), Walter Frederick (John) Waite, Joyce Vango, Franco Bonfa, Raymond Wallen, Jessica Gregory, Maurice Clarke, Annette Horler, Catherine May, Hilda Hawtin (née Box), Donald Tetlow, Jean Tetlow, Peter Coombs.

Apologies if anyone has been inadvertently omitted. Please let me know of any others and they will be included in the next newsletter.

Marlene Pickford 01761 232774.

We send our sincere sympathy to relatives and friends.

News from St John's

Greetings from all of us at St John's Church. We continue to be a busy place down at the bottom of the hill in the village, with lots of Church activities going on as well as the usual services. We have Messy Church and teenagers club on Sunday evenings, the monthly Lunch Club, weekly coffee morning on Thursdays, Hope group (for anyone needing a bit of support with life's stresses), Crafting Group to name but a few.... Please see the diary dates or our website for full details. You would be very warmly welcomed to any of the activities or of course Church services!

Easter is just around the corner and we are looking forward to celebrating the Good News of Jesus's death and resurrection and the new life this gives us. Please join us as we celebrate. As part of our preparation for Easter, throughout Lent, we will be holding a course entitled "Hot Potatoes"- an opportunity to debate some of the often difficult issues within faith and our world - do join us for what I am sure will be very lively discussions!

For more details of our services, and other activities going on at Church, please see our web site: www.acny.org.uk/chilcompton or see our Facebook page www.facebook.com/StJohnTheBaptistChurchChilcompton or give me a ring on 01761 232219.

God Bless this Easter.

Rev. Chris North

Contemplative Prayer at St John's

Once a month the contemplation group provides an opportunity for quiet reflection and shared thoughts. The group leader introduces a theme and provides inspiration with things such as pictures, poems, readings, and small displays. Participants then spend half an hour of quiet time to reflect, sometimes to write or to draw, to read or to pray, which we do on our own. If we want to, we go off to different quiet spaces or to the lovely outside space for this time. Then we come together and those who want to can share their thoughts, writing

or pictures with the rest of the group. There is a really lovely atmosphere and everyone is welcome to come along to the sessions which meet, usually, at 11 a.m. on the 11th day of each month for an hour. New people always welcome.

More details from Linda 01761 439234

Messy Church



Messy Church meets at St Johns church about once every month. It is a style that is very different from the format of traditional church. It's aimed at children and their families who want to learn more about Jesus and the Christian faith in an informal and fun way. Children with their parents, grandparents and carers come together for an afternoon full of crafts, games, songs, stories, food

and lots of fun, and all activities that take place are linked to a Christian theme. Before our time together comes to an end we all share tea.

Messy Church is usually held monthly, from 3pm to 5pm in St John's Church hall and Church (dates in Diary pages). The best way to really find out about Messy Church is to come and give it a try! More details from Justine North 232219

The picture shows Callum building his house upon the rocks!



Memory Café

We are delighted that things are moving forward since starting up at Memory Café at St Johns Church. Sixteen people came to our preliminary meeting, all who would like to be volunteers and helpers in the group! The Alzheimer Society are supporting us to get the group up and running, and will be carrying out some training with the volunteers initially, and then we hope to launch the group after Easter... so watch this space for more news of the group.

If you would like to help, or would like more details please give me a ring.

Justine North (232219)

Crafts at St John's

Do you enjoy making things? Would you like some company while doing it?

If so, we would like to invite you to join us every 4th Monday of the month between 2:00pm and 4:00pm in St Johns Church Hall.

Currently there is a group project to make banners to hang in church; or you can bring along your knitting, crochet, patchwork or anything you fancy really! Bring whatever you happen to be doing or just yourselves and enjoy some company over a cuppa.

For further details please contact Marion Chivers on 012761 415909 or Kristin Marshall on 01761 241646

The Redan - 1st Birthday



Honky Tonks playing at the Redan birthday celebration

The owners of the new look Redan celebrated their first anniversary in style, as you would expect, with a small musical party in January.

The tin advertising plates, rustic rusting radiators and luxurious bedrooms have established the pub as a classy and classic addition to the village.

Kate Upson, for the Redan, said: “We love being part of the village and are taken aback by the support everyone has given us. We hope to continue to grow as a business and feel strongly about helping the community, any fundraising ideas will always be considered. Last year we held a village day here at The Redan and raised over £1300 for the Chilcompton school and the Church, we are running the same event this year on Saturday 8th July and are open to ideas for a Chilcompton focused cause we can donate money to, please email suggestions to kate@theredaninn.co.uk .”

David Strawbridge's books

With many new people moving into Chilcompton, the demand for David Strawbridge's books is rising. If anyone has any of these to sell, please contact

Marlene Pickford. 01761 232774.



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— BOOKING NOW FOR EASTER —

Council Matters

I will start this column with several issues that I mentioned in the last magazine which have either come to fruition or are moving, hopefully apace, towards conclusion.

It was mentioned in the last edition that following the recent floods we would be holding a meeting on the issue of flooding in the village. This saw a very well attended meeting in the autumn where members of the village raised their concerns over a number of problem areas in the village. From this we collated the information and sent it to Somerset County Council and the Environment Agency who then came to a drop-in meeting at the Village Hall. Over the period of three hours representatives from these bodies met with a number of villagers to hear these concerns. At the time of writing we don't know how well these concerns will be addressed, however I think the opportunity to raise these issues with the powers that be was very useful and I would like to thank the very many villagers who attended both meetings. Flooding remains a concern in the village, please let us know your thoughts.

We are moving forward with our plans to take over the ownership of three areas of green space within the village, we have submitted a business plan to Mendip District Council with our ideas, however, as is the way with these things, a number of unforeseen items came up and while they should not ultimately stop us completing the task it has caused some delay, we remain hopeful that we will complete by the summer.

In November, we held the first Remembrance Day service since the closure of the Roman Catholic Church, being adjacent to the war memorial it was the ideal venue for our service and its loss provided a challenge to us in how we would continue. We decided on a brief out door service followed by tea at the Village Hall, pleasingly the attendance was excellent, on face value the largest for several years which would suggest the format is welcomed by most people. The success of the day is due to very many people who helped in either large or small part, certainly too many to list individually here, suffice to say I would like to extend the thanks of the Parish Council to all of them. However, I would like to pay specific thanks to David Richardson-Aitken who played a very large part in organising the event and whose drive and enthusiasm were instrumental in the success.

We have installed the first wave of new play equipment at the old recreation field, this is aimed at a slightly older person than will use the existing play equipment. Excitingly we still have some more items we wish to install over the coming weeks and months. My thanks to the Parish Council subcommittee who have led on this piece. When we have completed we will have a really wonderful space for all of the village to enjoy.

In the autumn, we held the second of the two village clean up days we run each year. This year Christine Foster has taken ownership of this project and with her drive the numbers taking part were the highest ever. It was very pleasing to see so many people taking part. Litter around the village is one of those areas we know is a great concern for parishioners. With efforts like this, between us we can go a considerable way to removing this blight on our village.

Finally, as you will see, there are a number of projects, many of them costing not inconsiderable amounts, all of which is in addition to our everyday running costs. Therefore, it is pleasing to note that we have once again not raised the village precept. In spite of this we believe we can continue our high level of service to the village.

Jonathan Pike, Chairman of the Parish Council.



Walk the Walk!



Lots of today's health issues are related to sedentary lifestyles and so I am keen to encourage all of us to move. Walking to achieve both functional activities and to enjoy our local environment is important for well-being but it is a difficult thing to achieve in Chilcompton due to the dangers of traffic. So I thought I had better walk the walk, after talking the talk!

Shortly after expressing my traffic concerns to a friend I was co-opted onto the subcommittee for Traffic Calming on the Parish Council. I am particularly concerned about the safety of pedestrians outside the school and on Bowden Hill (connecting the lower and upper parts of the village).

The committee are looking at traffic calming schemes

for these areas as well as the Co-Op, Parsonage Lane and Rock Road; improving public rights of way to avoid the roads where possible is also being considered. The sub-committee is drafting a document summarising the concerns and possible solutions. I understand that Somerset County Council is proceeding with a footpath between the Old Court Hotel site and the rest of the village under the Small Improvement Scheme (SIS).

I have met with Clare Haskins from Rights of Way - Mendip East to look at improving the public right of way connecting Bowden Hill and Britannia Close to divert pedestrians off the road. She is arranging for the stiles to be replaced with gates over the next couple of weeks. Clare is also going to cost the required works for improving the ground surface and will let me know what funds might be available to proceed with this.

I have been in contact with the Consultant Engineer, Economic Community Infrastructure, Somerset County Council requesting a clear process and requirements to address traffic calming on Bowden Hill and outside the school. He has passed my request to the SIS and I await a response from them.

In recent weeks I have started talking to you all about your concerns and to gauge support. This includes members of the Parish Council, the Church, the School, parents and villagers. All of you have expressed shared concerns and a willingness to support a scheme, petition, community project, working party or fundraising, as required. I will keep you posted but in the meantime keep walking where you can safely and please drive at 20MPH by the school (at drop off and pick up times) and on Bowden Hill.

Christian Longley

**WINSLEY
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Tree Matters

*' Give me a land of boughs in leaf,
A land of trees that stand;
Where trees are fallen there is grief;
I love no leafless land....'* A E Housman

Confusion and uncertainty tend to abound when it comes to how things stand with regards to trees and The Law. For example -

All oak trees are protected - untrue
Sycamores are weeds they're not protected - untrue

Hopefully I can clarify a few facts...

We all love trees. Or do we? Whilst they undoubtedly contribute infinitely to the enhancement of our landscape they can also be a source of acrimonious contention. If I had been given a fiver for every time I've heard someone say, 'Don't get me wrong, I love trees - but...!', I would be retired by now!

First, some legal bits... Trees can broadly be protected by law in two ways; either by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or by virtue of the fact that they are growing within a Conservation Area. As Chilcompton does not have a Conservation Area, legislation in respect of the latter is not relevant. However, just for the record, and if this publication happens to be read by anyone living within a Conservation Area, it is illegal to carry out any works to a tree in a Conservation Area if its stem is greater than 75mm (3" in old money) in diameter when measured at 1.5m (4' 6") above ground level. Tree work is not confined to felling, it also includes pruning works such as crown thinning and crown reduction. One exception is the pruning of fruit trees grown for commercial purposes.

There are several trees protected by TPOs in the village. If you have a tree in your garden and it's protected you will probably know. If you're uncertain you can find out by going to the Mendip District Council online mapping page (maps.mendip.gov.uk); just enter your postcode and in the 'My Maps' tag tick the Tree Preservation Orders box in the Environment and Planning drop-down menu. Alternatively, just call Mendip Council (0300 303 8588) and someone at Customer Services will be able to advise you. The key thing to know is that with few exceptions, it is illegal to carry out any works to trees protected by a TPO without first obtaining consent from the local council.

And finally, for now, just a few words about trees and insurance. As the owner of a tree you are responsible for it and should take all reasonable steps to ensure it is not a liability to you or to any third parties. No-one can say 100% that a tree is safe. Regular inspections by a professional arboriculturalist or qualified tree surgeon will satisfy most insurance companies and should cover you in the event of any tree related incident. This is a huge topic and cannot be addressed in detail in this article, but to finish, slightly tongue in cheek, it could be summarised with the following immortal words...

*'Supposing a tree fell down, Pooh, when we were underneath it?
'Supposing it didn't', said Pooh after careful consideration'*

Alister Rankine
Arborist



*Alister and friend up close and personal with a
Kauri tree on a recent trip to New Zealand*

Chilcompton Gardening Club

We had a good outing in August around the Bishop's Palace in Wells on a lovely sunny evening and we were accompanied by the Palace cat all of the way. The last two meetings of the year were a talk on putting the garden to bed for the winter and growing flowers for cutting. The latter was delivered by Katherine Crouch who was voted the BBC gardener of the year a few years ago.



The annual Christmas dinner was held in the Village Hall which looked very festive with green and red balloons. The meal was excellent and after we were entertained by the U3A Ukelele band. Song sheets were passed around and a good sing song was enjoyed by all.

The A.G.M was held in the hall in January and attended by 60 members who all enjoyed cheese and wine after the official business.

A good programme of speakers has been arranged for the year ahead, to include a plant sale on May 6th in the hall and a half day trip to Mill Cottage, Wookey, the home of Sally Gregson. A further whole day trip has yet to be arranged.

We still have room for more members who are interested in all aspects of gardening and wish to join a very friendly club.

Terry Grist (chairman)



Chilcompton Fringe Festival

Fun, games, music, comedy, arts and literature are being planned for the Sports Ground in August.

Make a note in your diary for Sunday 27th August (Bank Holiday weekend) from 2.30pm to 9pm, a thrill-packed day is being promised with stalls, games, food, children's activities, teas, licensed bar, comedy, art exhibits and some fabulous musical acts to entertain you.

Anyone who would like to offer help on the day, or those wishing to book a pitch for stalls, please contact Tim Curtis on 07703 616965.



The Joy of Shrubs

I wonder if it is an age thing. In the past I took very little notice of shrubs, dismissing them all as dull, but slowly shrubs have begun to find their way into the garden as I have started to look at them more carefully and appreciate their value.

First came Daphne. Daphne, or Daphne odora 'Aureomarginata' to give her her full name, came into our garden about 8 years ago. Her brief was to provide early season scent, and boy does she do that. Flowering from around late February to April her perfume fills the garden in great wafts and makes gardening even on the duller of spring days a pleasure. She also has the added benefits of being evergreen with glossy, gold rimmed leaves and the flowers that provide the scent are pale pink and attractive. She is happy on Chilcompton's neutral or alkaline soil, can take some shade and as long as she has some shelter she should thrive.

Buoyed by the success of Daphne, I started looking for other winter flowering shrubs, and Daphne has now been joined by Sarcococca confusa or Sweet Box, which is another winter flowering evergreen with a honey scent. Sarcococca's flowers are small and unremarkable to look at but they produce shiny black berries after flowering and the plant scores top marks for usefulness being quite happy in shade.

Next to find their way in were the Viburnums. We already had the two native Viburnums – lantana and opulus in our small stretch of native hedge, planted nearly 30 years ago, and these have now been joined by Viburnum bodnantense 'Dawn' and Viburnum X burkwoodii 'Anne Russell'. Dawn flowers in the autumn, her pink, scented flowers appearing on bare branches providing colour for when the autumn leaves have all fallen. Anne Russell is an evergreen and her beautifully scented white flowers appear in spring. Anne Russell only moved into our garden this summer so I am looking forward to her first blooms.

With the addition of roses (try a 'Gertude Jekyll for superb perfume), the shrubs above have scent covered for most of the year, so what I next found myself wanting was some year long structure.

For sheer exuberance of structure you can't beat a Corylus avellana 'Contorta' otherwise known as Corkscrew Hazel or Harry Lauder's Walking Stick. As the name implies the branches are wildly kinked and twisted so even when they drop their leaves (try a red leaved variety for additional summer interest), they remain a joy in the garden. Once they are big enough, a few branches cut and brought into the house to decorate make the best Christmas tree ever.

For structure and colour you can't beat a Cornus or Dogwood. The native variety Cornus sanguinea has red stems that shine out of winter hedgerows (sanguinea meaning blood), but for really sensational colour try some of the garden varieties such as Cornus alba 'Siberica' or Cornus alba 'Baton Rouge' for spectacular reds or Cornus sericea 'Flaviramea' for golden stems. All are best where they get some winter sun to show off their colours and for real impact plant in groups of three or more.

I still can't decide whether it's my age or just 30 years' experience of gardening on the north face of the Mendips that has brought me to appreciate shrubs, but I can't help thinking that in another 30 years I will probably have abandoned all but the hardiest of herbaceous perennials and replaced them with solid, dependable and, I now realise, interesting shrubs. Sue Rankine.



The Village Agent - *Update*

The winter time has held its problems for many residents. At the top of the list seems to be nuisance telephone calls.

Recorded messages re free boilers seems to be the most prevalent with 5-10 calls a day in some cases. Please report them to the Information commissioner's office 030 123 1113.

The more people report these calls the sooner something may be done to stop them. If you do not have a call barring service on your telephone then call your provider to ask them for help to install one or call the Telephone Preference Service to register with them free of charge on 0345 0700707. These systems will help filter unwanted calls but in most cases do not prevent unsolicited calls altogether.

*There are also some calls from bogus call barring companies saying your subscription has run out and asking for bank details over the phone. **THIS IS A SCAM.** No one should ask for personal bank details over the phone.*

There have been a number of classes held in the area to help older residents get to grips with their laptops and iPad/tablets. If there are any other residents who would like to join one of these courses please do let me know.

Please do remember that if you have trouble getting your recycling to the kerb due to ill health or poor mobility, please contact me. If you think that your smoke alarms are not working or you do not have any then a free home visit from the fire service can be arranged for anyone over the age of 55 years.

Please do contact me about any of the above or anything that is causing you distress or worry - I may be able to help.

Jacky Smith Village Agent -07950 782436
or email jacky@somersetccc.org.uk

Or Facebook me [jackysmith.village-agent](https://www.facebook.com/jackysmith.village-agent)



Paths of Safety

After years of campaigning by the Parish Council, Somerset County Council have finally committed to building a pavement between Lynch Hill past the Mulberry factory to the centre of the village. Work is expected to start by the end of 2017.

In addition the Parish Council is upgrading the path from Greenditch Lane to the Broadway so that parents with pushchairs can access it thereby avoiding Parsonage Lane.

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~ LETTERS ~

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank our local farmers for the hard work they put into the land, which I appreciate on a daily basis as a dog owner. From the public footpaths through the fields I see hay is grown, or sheep and cattle turned out to graze, beautiful calves and lambs to enjoy, except for one thing! I am totally shocked I have to look where I am putting my feet when in a field, for dog poo, rather than gazing at and appreciating the beauty around! It seems to be becoming more and more of a problem too, hence my plea, please clean up after your dog, don't take advantage of the privilege of being able to walk in the fields and remember someone else has to follow where you and your dog have been! Also consider the animals eating the hay and the folks who have to handle it.

I probably appreciate it more because as an ex-townie I had to go visit my horse to enjoy the countryside but dog mess in hay, in and around fields and pavements was something I never had to deal with, dog owners please don't take the fields for granted.

Kathy Hughes

Flood Report

Suprise, suprise! There are no supprises in the recently produced report by Somerset County Council into the floods that hit Chilcompton in June last year. The words are: "heavy rainfall in a relatively short period of time." But if you want to look at the report in detail, use this link:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/flood-planning-and-investigations/>

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Then and Now - The Street



Do you like Spring Cleaning?

No, I don't either – but it's very satisfying once it's done.

I do hope you agree because I'm looking for a big turnout on Saturday 8th April for Chilcompton's Spring Clean. This is when we pick up all the litter around the village so come Easter, a week later, all will be spick and span.

Those wonderful stalwarts of the village who are on my list of regular volunteers should have been notified already – but if you haven't or you want to join the list, please contact me asap.

I'm hoping though that a few more individuals and families who are fed up with seeing our lovely village bespoiled by litter will come along to see how they can help. At 10am, outside the Village Hall.

New policy: if you see any posters on telegraph poles or similar and they are obviously commercial advertising, rip 'em down and put them in your black sack. Similarly, if it's for a village event – even other nearby villages – but it's been and gone, take it down please. In my time I must have put up 100s of posters but I always made a point of taking them down. Can you imagine what the place would look like if someone hadn't taken down all those posters over the years (not just me, lots of other village-lovers).

Another plea: If you see dog poo and if you can bear to pick it up, I'll provide dog-poo bags on the day. If you don't want to pick it up, let me know where it is, and I'll sort it out. Please don't think you have to pick up poo – I would be very happy if you just collect litter. Our regular volunteers who collect throughout the year whenever they can, are supplied with hi-viz vests, black sacks and pickers on permanent loan. I'm sure some of them would agree that using the pickers can be fun of a sort. Getting that sweetie paper out of the hedge, or the drinks can from under it, or the cigarette packet from the footpath, is strangely satisfying.

As I said Spring Cleaning is very satisfying once it's done!

10am: Village Hall: Saturday 8th April. See you there.

Christine Foster Tel: 01761 232158 Email: christine.232158@gmail.com

Wednesday Walkers

This small group enjoys good exercise and a chat with friends on their fortnightly walks, but they also encounter history on the way. One of the walks in the Coalpit Lane area (sometimes called Coal Lane), embraces mining history, as running along the south side of the lane behind the hedge was once a narrow gauge railway (built 1909) that carried coal trucks that were hauled up from Moorewood Colliery and along to the S & D at the other end of the lane. Evidence of this can be seen at the top of Church Lane (a track on the left of Coal Lane leading down to Crocks Bottom) where a pillar of stones still exists that supported the railway track.

A footpath from Crocks Bottom to the former S & D line reveals more of the past with stone walls and chimney breasts, remains of cottages still standing where a community once lived. They look like little one roomed homes and one can imagine miners or farm labourers setting



The remains of an old cottage



The fire place and chimney



Church Lane leading down to Crocks Bottom

off for work from here on the same footpaths that are still in use today.

Church Lane was the route the cottagers took to go to church, either St. John's across the fields, down Parsonage Lane and then another footpath which emerges by the church; or maybe they made their way from Church Lane taking footpaths that emerge on Stockhill Road to go to Christ Church, Downside.

While we use these footpaths for leisure now, these were once short cuts and vital links made by our forebears, which we still value today and should endeavour to keep open and in use for the future.



The Path off Crocks Bottom leading to the cottages

Walkers meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Village Hall at 10.30am.

Marlene Pickford 01761 232774

New text number to combat rural crime - 81819

Avon and Somerset Police are launching a new text service to help prevent and detect rural crime. They are asking rural communities and businesses to help by providing information and intelligence about suspected crime in their area. The new number will allow the public to text information directly to the Rural Crime Team, who will be able to assess and action the intelligence quickly and efficiently.

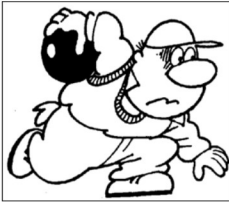
Chilcompton Wives

Our Autumn term saw us being entertained by various speakers ending with the traditional Carol service at Midsomer Norton. In December the Holcombe Ladies invited us to join them with their Christmas entertainment which was the Mindreading Magician, Tim Stracey. We had a very enjoyable evening and all came away believing in magic, what else could it be?

The New Year brings speakers from Vets to Rock and Roll, Auctioneering to Groceries, if you would like to join us for an informal evening you would be most welcome.

We meet the first and third Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. for 7.45 start. Dates etc. are advertised on the Village Hall notice board or contact Bridget Brookbank on 232039 or Maureen Evans on 233266.

Short Mat Bowls



This friendly group meet in the Village Hall on Thursdays at 2pm. and will teach any newcomer the rudiments of the game. So resist sitting by the fire, forego daytime TV and come along and have a go. You will be guaranteed an enjoyable afternoon and meet new friends as well.

Contact David 01761 233142.

Chilcompton Matters - Advertising

The Chilcompton Matters newsletter is produced in the form of an A5 size booklet twice a year, in Spring (deadline Mid-February) and Autumn (deadline Mid-August). For each edition 1,000 copies are printed and distributed throughout Chilcompton.

Advertisements can be accepted in the following formats and will appear in the newsletter in black & white / greyscale:

Quarter page - in 'portrait' format - Cost £15 per issue.

Half page - in 'landscape' format - Cost £30 per issue.

Full page - in 'portrait' format - Cost £60 per issue

If you would like to advertise or you would like further information, please call us on 01761 569863. If we are out, please leave a message with contact details and we will get back to you. In order to assist the publication of the newsletter, please inform us of your intention to advertise as soon as you can.

Thanks go to all who advertise in the newsletter, their continued support enables us to produce Chilcompton Matters for the benefit of everyone in the village.

Kathy and Mike Hughes



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– Ann-Marie Davis.

Community Justice

A representative of the Somerset Community Justice Partnership (SCJP) came to talk to the Parish Council in January about restorative approaches to crime and disorder.

Low level crime and neighbourhood disputes can blight small communities causing fear and distress particularly to the vulnerable. Often the incidents are not serious enough for the police to proceed, leaving the issues unresolved. This is when the SCJP can come in.

Helen Farley, of the SCJP, said: "The police refer such cases to us and we organise appropriate restorative approaches where the disruption is taking place. Run by our highly trained local volunteers we give the victims and offenders a safe and controlled environment in which to come together to communicate about the crime or incident. Often this results in better understanding and future action to put things right."

The organisation is always looking for donations and for volunteers, particularly those with 'people' skills. Contact 01935 415732.

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Mendip Brass Band



Mendip Brass Band playing carols at Radco superstore

We are a group of about 30 people, who love playing brass band music. We have a large music library of varied pieces and songs.

Throughout last summer, we performed at a number of village fetes and flower shows in the local area and played at Wells bandstand on one of their Sunday afternoon concerts in August.

In the run-up to Christmas, we played at various church carol services, and also at several supermarkets, where we collected donations to help with the running costs of the band.

We are now looking forward to repeating it all again this year. We rehearse on Monday mornings and Thursday evenings at St. John's church hall.

Jenny Gould

Chilcompton Art Club

We are a friendly and sociable club that meets every Wednesday and Friday between 10:00am and Midday at St John's church hall. The club welcomes everyone, no matter what their ability, just come along and have a go, we have several accomplished artists who are always willing to help those who are just beginning, and offering advice if requested. We also hold some demonstrations and workshops throughout the year.

For all the latest news and information visit our website: www.chilcomptonartclub.uk

Contacts:

Amanda Mayes (Chairperson) 01761 232475
or
Nigel Punchard (Secretary) 01761 413579



The Friends of St Chad's and Chilcompton Surgeries

Our efforts of selling Christmas Draw raffle tickets was well supported by the patients and staff at both Chilcompton and St Chad's surgeries. We have also received several donations from village patients in memory of loved ones and thanks for their surgery care. The result can be seen in the purchase of a new appointment check-in screen at Chilcompton which makes life easier when arriving to see a nurse or doctor. We are also in negotiation with a local company to make the outer surgery door automatic self-opening as many patients find this difficult to open.

Our Spring Medical Forum has yet to be arranged but details will be posted on our surgery notice boards when available. Can I appeal to all residents of the village, especially newcomers, that can spare an hour or so a few months in the year, to join the Friends as we are in desperate need of new and younger members.

Alan Webb 01761 232188.



History Corner

David Strawbridge for many years wrote such fascinating stories for the History Corner that I hesitate to put pen to paper or should I say, fingers to keyboard. However, here goes:

It is interesting that Marc Isambard Brunel stayed at the Manor House for seven months in 1843. He was the father of Isambard Kingdom Brunel and an engineer of note himself having designed the Thames Tunnel for which he was knighted.

In 1843, aged 74, Marc had suffered a stroke and retreated to Chilcompton to rest. Having travelled by railway to Bath and thence to Chilcompton, he described in his diary, 'Chilcompton, Fine but Hilly Roads'.

In July of that year he and his wife Sophia were able to watch the launch of their son's ship, the Great Britain, from Bristol dock.

The Manor House was occupied at that time by Sarah and William Marchant, Sarah being a niece of Marc's wife, Sophia Brunel. (The Marchants had earlier lived at Norton Green farm).

Marlene Pickford



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PTFA

St Vigor & St John C of E Primary School PTFA is a registered charity that was set up some 15 years ago with an aim to develop effective relationships between the staff, parents and others who help to provide facilities and extra resources for the school thus enhancing the pupil's educational development. Over recent years we have helped the school purchase new technology and classroom resources for the pupils as well as contribute to many extra activities and pay for their annual swimming coach to Paulton Swimming Baths.

This year we have been set an enormous challenge. Our pupils are very fortunate to have a great outdoor space and up until late last year, this included an amazing adventure castle and a large piece of climbing equipment. Unfortunately, the climbing equipment has had to be taken out due to rot and decay and the adventure castle needs replacement timbers. On top of our annual promises and commitments to the school, we have committed to help the school raise funds to replace this equipment – but it's going to be expensive and might take us a while to get there.

Perhaps there are ways you could help us with this challenge!

On Friday 24th March, the PTFA will be holding a Quiz Night at the School (7.30pm). Tickets are £5 each which includes a ploughman's platter. Tables will fit teams of 4-6. If you'd like to enter a team, please call Mark on 07825 845081.

On Saturday 1st April between 10-2pm, we will be holding an Easter Egg Trail and Easter Bonnet Parade in the school grounds. The Trail will take place throughout the morning with a prize at the end for all. The Parade will take place at 11.30am and there will be prize for the winner. A selection of cakes, tea and coffee will also be available throughout the morning.

During the year, we also run gardening days to help maintain the School's wonderful garden area. If you are a gardener we would welcome your advice and support on the day. These days are currently pencilled in for Saturday 18th March, 1st July and 7th Oct between 10am - 2pm. If you'd like to volunteer your help, we'd love to hear from you - svsjptfa@gmail.com or call Kate on 07917 832650.

We're in the process of setting up a Just Giving page. If you'd like to donate or for more information please drop us an email at svsjptfa@gmail.com and one of the team will get in touch when the page is live.



Thanks for your support.

Village Hall - Broadband

The free broadband coming to the Village Hall is not the first broadband available in the village but it is the first free broadband, available to all in a non-commercial environment. It's something I hope that will be enjoyed by all.

With so many mobile devices available now and with applications such as Skype which allow free video conferencing, I think the advantages of free broadband just got easier and more accessible. Think of the possibilities of talking to loved ones' face-to-face from the other side of the world. No need to wait to see pictures in the post of that new grandchild.

Kulwam Gill

Poo Corner.....

....Oh how I wish it WAS Winnie the Pooh land
(with acknowledgement to the current box-office smash *La La Land*)



I can't say that much has changed: but the season certainly has and, with the warmer weather, we're seeing the first buddings of Spring. But soon in our copses, fields and wooded areas, the leaves of those plants will be hiding - DOG POO!

We think it's safe for our dogs to defecate away from the footpaths and pavements don't we? Well not all of us obviously – if I thought it was OK I wouldn't keep going on about it, would I?

In 1991, America's Environmental Protection Agency labelled dog waste as an environment pollutant in the same category as herbicides and insecticides; oil, grease and toxic chemicals and acid drainage from abandoned mines.

It's been estimated that a single gram of dog waste can contain 23 million *faecal coliform bacteria*, known to cause cramps, diarrhoea, intestinal illness and kidney disorders in humans.

If you're scientific and want to test the truth of that claim, there are lots of samples in the woods and green spaces around Chilcompton. But hurry, the old stuff will soon be covered by greenery: still, I guess there will always be new specimens available – shame on us!

And if you think that it's OK to leave it there, see our picture of a new family just moved into the area and playing happily in the wood on the cinder path between the school and St Benedict's in Stratton. Dad and the toddler twins and infant older sister were delighted to find a ready-made tyre swing, huts made from branches and other evidence that children play in the area. Sunshine on that late Autumn day added to the attraction but I hope they didn't attract any of the dog poo that is often left by uncaring dog owners.

Please, please pick up your dog mess, wherever it lands. It's your dog, it's your responsibility.

If you disagree – or agree – with any of this, or have another point to make, please email the editor Malcolm Rigby at parishclerk@chilcompton.org. As long as you give him your name you can ask to remain anonymous. Or have a word with me.

Christine Foster 01761 232158

Adopting red icons



The Street

You may remember a year and a half ago there were plans to convert the telephone box down by the Pitching into a mini art gallery. Sadly those dreams came to nought but now the Parish Council is seeking to adopt both the village phone boxes.

The situation has been forced onto the council because BT are intending to remove them – it is simply a case of adopt them for the princely sum of one pound each or lose them.

The growth of the mobile phone industry has inevitably meant that phone box usage has dropped dramatically and almost half of the country's 90,000 boxes have been removed. Now BT are planning to take away a further 27 from across the Mendips.

The phone by the Pitching has been used just once in the last year and the one by Bennell, not at all.

Tina Sharpe, who lives by the Bennell phone, said: "The red phone boxes are important icons of the 20th century. They are an intrinsic part of the village landscape, we cannot afford to let them go."

There are plans to install a defibrillator in the lower Chilcompton phone box and although there are no specific ideas for the Bennell box, Tina has offered to look after it.



Bennell

Uggh!

One of the parish councillors' duties in the Autumn is to check the grit bins around the village to see if they need topping up. Without exception, the three that I inspected revealed bags of dog poo and litter!!!

The parish council spends time and money providing grit bins for residents to use in icy conditions. It is a pity that people living amongst us are misusing these bins, clearly a health hazard and unpleasant for us to clear. So come on dog owners, pick it up and take it home!

Marlene Pickford

IT Matters

Probably everyone who uses any sort of online services has had a concern about passwords, or will have in the future. It seems that every site or service we visit has different combinations of rules, for example length of password, use or non-use of capitals, numbers and punctuation marks.

We are often warned not to use the same password for multiple services. This is especially important for any sort of financial service because if your password is somehow intercepted, attempts could be made to use it to try to break into other services. We are also told never to write our passwords down, but to remember them.... but if a password is easy to remember, then it could be argued that it is also relatively easy to guess.

One solution to all of these nightmares that many people use is password vaults or managers. These range from being free to in some cases, being relatively expensive. Some cost just a few pounds, which for many people is a reasonable price to pay for improving their computer security, but as with many things, you get what you pay for. One thing they have in common is that you have to use one master password to access all your other passwords. This has to be a very well chosen and robust password. It has to be one - but only one - that you will remember. When your passwords are in a manager, you simply copy them then paste them into the website you wish to access. This is invaluable when using very complex passwords.

Depending upon how much you are willing to pay, password managers can come with useful features. Some are designed to be used on just one computer, while others will share their data over multiple devices, including phones, tablets, etc. Sharing can be very beneficial as you can have your passwords available to you at home or when you travel.

Password managers work in different ways, but the best of them encrypt your password file on your device. This means that even if the password file was intercepted, it would be extremely difficult for a hacker to decrypt. Some come with a facility that will destroy the password file after a set number of password failures. That's a good feature, but just be careful to remember your master password. Most of them also come with a password generator. That means if the next new site you visit wants a password with certain rules, you can just enter those rules in the manager and it will generate a random password that meets all of these criteria.

Using a password manager is a personal choice. There are people who do not recommend them. However, when properly used, I believe that they can help you use really robust passwords that can all be different and can be very complex, meeting the many security needs of today. They can easily be found on the internet - use your favourite browser and search for password managers, or ask friends or neighbours what they use.

Pete Sinclair

Diary Dates

- 22nd March** LENT "HOT POTATOES" COURSE 7.30pm at St John's
24th March PTFA QUIZ NIGHT 7.30pm at St Vigor & St John's School
26th March MOTHERING SUNDAY - Special Service for those who love us! 10.30am at St John's
27th March CRAFT AT ST JOHN'S 2pm at St John's Church Hall
29nd March LENT "HOT POTATOES" COURSE 7.30pm at St John's
2nd April MESSY CHURCH Family Fun, Activities and Tea. 3-4.30pm at St John's
5th April LENT "HOT POTATOES" COURSE 7.30pm at St John's
8th April TENNIS COACHING DAY 12noon-4pm at Chilcompton Sports Ground
11th April CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER 11am at St John's Church
13th April MAUNDAY THURSDAY Holy Communion Service 7.30pm at St John's
14th April GOOD FRIDAY CROSS WALK starting 10.30am at St Vigor's Church, Stratton-on-the-Fosse, and walking to St John's, Chilcompton. Bring a picnic. And HOUR AT THE CROSS, 2pm at St John's
16th April EASTER DAY Family Communion Service 10.30am at St John's
20th April LUNCH CLUB 12noon at St John's Church
24th April CRAFTS AT ST JOHNS 2pm at St John's Church Hall
30th April MIDSOMER NORTON YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE FINALS DAY at Chilcompton Sports Ground
11th May CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER 11am at St John's Church
14th - 20th May CHRISTIAN AID WEEK and house to house collections
18th May LUNCH CLUB 12noon at St John's Church
21st May MESSY CHURCH Family Fun, Activities and Tea. 3-4.30pm at St John's
22nd May CRAFTS AT ST JOHNS 2pm at St John's Church Hall
15th June LUNCH CLUB 12noon at St John's Church
25th June MESSY CHURCH Family Fun, Activities and Tea. 3-4.30pm at St John's
26th June CRAFTS AT ST JOHNS 2pm at St John's Church Hall
1st July CHURCH FETE 2.30pm at St John's church
1st July SPONSORED BIKE RIDE 11am start - Bands & BBQ from 5pm at Chilcompton Sports Ground.
8th July REDAN CELEBRATES CHILCOMPTON from 2pm into the evening
27th August CHILCOMPTON FRINGE FESTIVAL 2.30 - 9pm at Chilcompton Sports Ground.
1st & 2nd Sept BEER FESTIVAL at Chilcompton Sports Ground

A warm welcome awaits anyone who would like to come along to the following at the Village Hall:

Short Mat Bowls - Thursdays at 2pm 01761 233142

Friday Coffee Club - Fridays at 10.15am 01761 232774

Golden Hour Club - 2nd Tuesday each month at 7.30pm 01761 233142

Alone on Easter Sunday?

There will be lunch in St Benedict's Church Parish Room, Stratton-on-the-Fosse, for individuals and couples who would otherwise be on their own on Easter Sunday 16th April at 12.30pm. If you would like to book in for this lunch, for which there will be no charge, please call one of the ladies below as soon as possible, but certainly before the 10th April.

Margaret Reynolds 01761 434046 Rhona Carr 01373 228908 Peggy Found 01761 414458

Old Rec - Play Area

Over the past few months the Old Rec Subcommittee have been working hard upgrading the play facilities at the Old Rec.

Late last year we installed the large swing and sports wall, which were well used while the weather stayed dry, and we received favourable

comments from the younger members of the village community. There were also some additions to the smaller children's area and also we have had a new enclosing fence installed to replace the old wooden one that had rotted away in places. We have employed a specialist cleaning firm who will clean all the green mould off the play equipment and matting and give the place a new lease of life and make it look more attractive.

We hope to add to this with an exercise station along with an all-weather table tennis table. We want to encourage our young people to use the green spaces we have available and enjoy the outdoors and to do this we need to make our park areas as attractive and enjoyable as possible. So please take a stroll and come and take a look at what's been happening in this attractive village amenity.

Can the Parish Council make a polite point to the many people who walk dogs through the Old Rec? There is a footpath through the field but dogs should be kept on leads and please clear up behind your animal.

Just as we are going to press, depressing news has just reached us that a member of the public stopped the seating bowl of the large swing going up in flames by using a fire extinguisher to put out a deliberate act of vandalism. Hopefully the damage is largely superficial and will not result in the swing being out of commission for any period of time. The young people we have met in the park have been having great fun using the new equipment and we hope the actions of a few mindless idiots does not mean they can't use the equipment as the weather starts to improve.



Village Hall Refurbishments

Chilcompton Village Hall has undergone a refurbishment of the ladies and gents toilets. It has taken a number of years to save the funds needed but the committee are very pleased with the outcome and hope that the hall users will appreciate the new clean look. Local company 3 Solutions won the contract and were brilliant from start to finish.

Sadly this winter has taken its toll on the hall boiler and as such it has failed and is beyond repair. We are very thankful to our users for their support and understanding over the last week. The good news is that a new boiler will be fitted on the 20th February so by time you read this all will be well and warm once again! Thanks to JM Brown plumbing for numerous visits to us to try and fix it and for the upcoming fitting of the new boiler.

When the piggy bank is feeling better an update to the kitchen is planned. The committee are hoping for a quiet few months and no breakdowns! Please remember the hall is a village asset and there for you to use. If you think you'd be able to help with its running volunteers are always welcome.

For further information email: chaimancvhmc@hotmail.com

Chilcompton Sports & Social Club

Chilcompton Sports & Social Club has just celebrated two years in business and continues to offer a friendly welcome to the local community.

The Sports Club is open to non-members and also welcomes families in very relaxing surroundings.

All major sporting events (Including 6 Nations Rugby and Premier League Football) are shown on the 3 screens and the Club is mostly open at weekends.



Local Football and Cricket is also played on the Sports Ground 12 months of the year and the Chilcompton Sports Club now has many Youth Teams and Senior Teams.

Other activities regularly take place including a Sunday Quiz (2nd Sunday of each month) and Bingo.

Follow the Club on Facebook @ChilcomptonSportsClub for upcoming events

Anyone for Running?

There is talk within the village about the establishment of a running club.

Kate Upson from the Redan has been speaking to a few villagers who enjoy the occasional jog about the idea of setting up a regular night of the week to exert those legs.

Anyone who can confidently run two to three miles would be welcome with the expectation that they might do a little more. All speeds would be included as faster runners can loop back.

Someone has come up with the imaginative name "Chilcompton Runners". Hmmn.

Please express interest to Kate at The Redan kate@theredaninn.co.uk

Tennis Open Day

Tennis coach Simon Brand is running a tennis open day at Chilcompton Sports Ground on Saturday 8 April from noon to 4pm to encourage people to get involved in the game. The event is entirely free and there will be an opportunity for people to play on the courts with the rackets and balls provided as well as seek tips and advice from a qualified LTA coach. People interested in playing more will be invited to use the free tennis courts at Chilcompton more often with a view to establishing a regular group session. This represents an excellent opportunity to try a new sport, get fit and meet new people in the local community.

Chilcompton Cricket Club

On Sunday 29th January Chilcompton Sports Cricket Club held their AGM at Chilcompton Sports Club and it was well supported by Club Members.

'Dickies', 'Pethericks & Gillard Chartered Accountants' and 'Spectrum Form Design' were thanked for their Sponsorship in 2016.

The Club were also delighted to announce that Local Company "Parker Transport (SW) Ltd" will replace Dickies as the Club's Main Sponsor for 2017.

It is hoped that other Local Businesses will sponsor Match Balls during the Season (£25 per Home Game with good coverage in the Somerset Guardian).

The Secretary Dave Travis reported on another very busy year for the Club thanking the Committee for all their hard work during the year and Chilcompton Sports for providing such fantastic facilities including a Sports Club to welcome Teams from all around the area.

A special mention was made for Jacqui Nolan's fantastic efforts to get further grants for the Tractor Shed Extension, Outfield Mower, Artificial Wicket and Coaching for the Youth Team.

The Club were delighted to announce that Tom Baker will coach the Junior Section for 2017. Tom is renowned in the Area as an excellent Cricket Coach and was rewarded in 2008 and 2011 when he won Sky Sports Coach of the Year!

Junior training sessions will be held at Chilcompton Sports Club on Wednesday Evenings from Mid April to End July (6.15pm – 7.45pm). Details to follow on the Club Website and The Somerset Guardian.

Chilcompton Sport Junior section will once again play competitive cricket in 2017, with U11 and U13 Teams entered in the Bath & District Youth Cricket League.

Enrolment nights will be held at Chilcompton Sports Club at the beginning of March. Details again to follow on the Club Website and The Somerset Guardian.

Previously at a well attended Presentation at Chilcompton Sports Club on 20th January the following Senior Cricket Awards were handed out:

Players Player of the Year – Kieran Thick
1st XI Player of the Year – Kieran Thick
2nd XI Player of the Year – Mark Easterling
Sunday Player of the Year – Miles Hadnill
Young Player of the Year - Harvey Hadnill
Club Person of the Year – Jacqui Nolan

Winter Nets will Start on Sunday 5th March at Wells Blue School (3pm to 4pm) - Current, Old and New Players all welcome.

In 2017 the Seniors 1st XI will play in Bristol & District Saturday Div 6, the 2nd XI in Bristol & District Saturday Div 12 and the Sunday XI in North Somerset Sunday Div 4.

For further details contact Dave Travis 07725 458404 or email: dave.travis@hotmail.co.uk

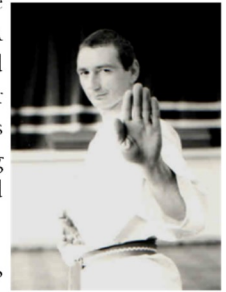
Unsung Heroes



We are very fortunate to have many volunteers in our village, who give their services and expertise with no thought of reward or recognition.

One of these is Gary Scammell, who for 40 years taught people of all ages and abilities the art of Shotokan Karate. He studied various forms of self-defence and joined Coleford karate club in the mid-seventies. At that time little was known about the martial arts and it was often taught behind closed doors.

He studied under world renowned Japanese masters including Y Ohta 7th dan, now the chief instructor of JKA England. Gary gained his black belt in 1983 and in 2009 achieved his yondan (4th dan) supervised by JKA World chief instructor master Ueki 8th dan at an international grading. He said, 'the training was mentally and physically demanding, but the foundations for life-long study were laid'. He was also given a Long Standing Member Award by the Karate Union of Great Britain.



While furthering his knowledge, Gary set up groups in Chilcompton, Stratton on the Fosse and Downside, later combining them to form Mendip Shotokan Karate, which became one of the largest karate clubs in the west of England. He witnessed dozens of black belts, who have and continue to bring medals and trophies back to Mendip.

Shotokan Karate fosters fitness, strength, determination, perseverance, flexibility, humility and respect for others. Gary certainly shows perseverance and humility with his constant dedication to teaching the art for 40 years and his humility and unassuming attitude means his huge contribution to the local community is largely unknown and unacknowledged, until now.

Gary commented, 'I feel humbled and privileged to have led Mendip Shotokan Karate down the years with the opportunity to teach and train with so many great characters'. Gary is now taking a well-earned rest but the club continues under former pupils, sensei Julie Morgan 4th dan and Andy Forster 4th dan. Well done Gary and thank you for your many years of service.

For more information about the club, contact Julie 01761 233268, visit the website: MendipShotokan.co.uk or Facebook: Mendip Shotokan Karate.

Annual Bike Ride

The regular summer bike ride that used to start at the Somerset Wagon will this year begin at Chilcompton Sports Ground.

The date is Saturday July 1st starting at 11.00am. The family orientated ride normally covers about 25 miles, finishing about four or five o'clock.

Chilcompton Sports Football Club

Adults

The first team are having their second season in the Premier Division of the Somerset County League which take them as far afield as Watchet. Following a tough first season at this level, this young team have adapted much better this season and are comfortably in a mid table position and with games in hand, are looking for a top 6 finish. They are also in the quarter finals of the League Cup.

The reserve side compete in the Mid Somerset League, Division 1. Having been promoted last season they are in the top third of the division. A couple of poor recent results looks to have ended back to back promotions. There are many cup competitions in this league and similarly it has been a mixed bag of results.

New players or anybody looking to get involved with the club, especially in support of match days, are most welcome. Training takes place every Tuesday, 7-9pm and Thursday 6-7pm at the Writhlington School's 3g.

Thanks to JD Carpentry and Northavon M&E for sponsoring their kit this season. See photo...



Youth

SoccerTots is an introduction to football programme that concentrates on skills and agility, balance and co-ordination. It is aimed at Year 1 children and below and takes place at the sports ground on Saturday morning between 9 and 10:15am.

The club are Charter Standard, run age groups from U7 to U15 and are one of the bigger clubs in the area, with some age groups running two squads. We are an inclusive Club, but at the same time are looking to provide opportunities to challenge our most talented players. Our sides compete in one of three leagues, Midsomer Norton & District, Hanham or Avon.

All age groups train on a Saturday morning from 9am, with age groups, from U9 and above, doing at least one more session in midweek and then matches against other clubs are on Sundays.

U15s have won their division and will be promoted. U14s have only lost one league game, so are in with a good chance of winning the division, but have a bit of a fixture backlog. They are also in the later rounds of the cup competition. At the time of writing our U12s are in the Cup Final and also have a chance of the league title. Tim Curtis

For more information: www.chilcomptionsports.com
Facebook: [chilcomptionsportsyouth](#)
Facebook: [chilcomptionsportsclub](#)
Mob: 07703 616965

No Egrets

No tears to cry



Anyone who regularly walks down The Pitching will no doubt have spotted that there are a pair of Little Egrets who have taken to hanging out at the small spinney by the stream.

These were caught on camera by Pete Sinclair, who said: “We have a least two which appear to be seasonally resident in Chilcompton. One was a regular guest last year, but now these two are often seen and enjoyed by people up and down the river. It remains to be seen if they will become a breeding pair, but they are a most welcome bright and cheerful sight as they explore the river looking for food. Let’s just hope that their presence does not result in the demise of the trout!”

Part of the Heron family, 25 years ago they would have been a rare sighting indeed as they only came to the UK in significant numbers in 1989 and first bred in Dorset in 1996. Since then they have spread from Northern France to become regular winter visitors and a breeding species. Hopefully, they have no concerns about Brexit.

Tree Down in Parsonage Lane !



The road was closed for a day in late January when strong winds brought the tree down.