

Spring Magazine February 2024

Chilcompton Matters

..... because it does

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Past

The future? See pages 4 & 5 for full story



Present

Events - Interviews - Lifestyle - News - History - Sports - Nature

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Pavement.....



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12 Bell Ringing
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Victory Somerset
Minor Cup Champions



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Front cover train photo copyright Roy Hobbs courtesy of Online Transport Archive.

Front cover 'Present' photo courtesy of Stephen R J Lacey.

Welcome...

...to the 2024 Spring edition of Chilcompton Matters.

This is where I normally talk about daffodils. They are all yellow. Spring is good. My wife says I don't deal with change well. In my defence, (a) change can be good or bad but usually both and (b) I'm an old fart. Curiously, people who don't like change, sometimes do, and people who do like it, sometimes don't. Ho hum. But that's enough talk about pavements and trains.

In this issue you could almost, *almost*, be forgiven for just looking at the pictures. There are some wonderful black and white shots of railways by legendary photographer Ivo Peters, some fabulous colour pictures of Stanton Drew by Mark Hayward, winning paintings from the children's first art competition and some excellent birdlife photographs from Pete Sinclair and Jon Crouch.

Do you know there is a vegetable called a kalette? Do you know you can make a football shirt from plastic bottles? Do you know what the old village hall looked like? Do you know how many bells your local church has? Do you know that hot water bottles have dates on them? It's almost all inside.

Special thanks to Tracey Withers who not only does all the desktop publishing but has also written several articles and organises the children's art competition. She's a star. Thanks to Mike Hughes who keeps the advertisers happy and thanks to the advertisers for being happy.

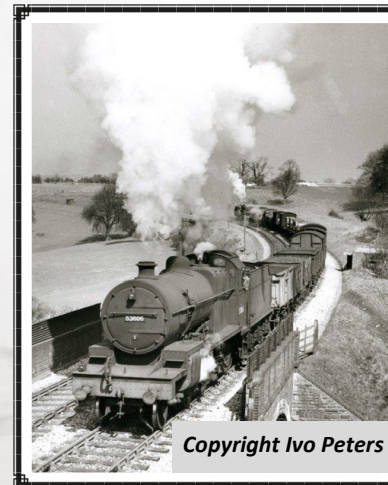
Ta so much to all the contributors and distributors et al who make this possible. You're great. And you, the village, thank you for reading.

Bendice tu corazon (bless your heart)

parishclerk@chilcompton.org

Slow and Dirty

News that the Somerset & Dorset have acquired the disused railway line has brought a flurry of interest, Malcolm Rigby talked to the Railway Trust about what it will entail



Copyright Ivo Peters

Courtesy of Julian Peters

For steam train enthusiasts nationwide it is an iconic piece of railway line with significant history; for many villagers it is an essential bit of land used enjoyably on a daily basis to walk their dogs. The question is, can it be used by everyone and for local community benefit?

Back in November, prior to public announcement, The Somerset & Dorset Railway Heritage Trust (SDRHT) sent a couple of representatives to tell the Parish Council that they had bought the line and an adjacent field, that there was a ten year plan to return trains to the edge of Chilcompton and that they hoped and intended to generate the full support of the local community.

According to Roger Burfitt, Vice-Chair of Trustees, the purchase was made possible because of a generous legacy from a former member and that

they were able to persuade the previous owner, a

villager, that there would be no building development.

People will have seen that track clearance has already begun but there is a huge way to go. Roger said: "It's a very loose 10 year plan, it's to set people's expectations. The moment we bought it, enthusiastic trust members wanted to know when the first train is running, we say ten years but who knows."

Before a complete line from Midsomer Norton to Chilcompton could be achieved there are three major obstacles in the way. There is the infill hill owned by the Duchy of Cornwall, there's the tunnel owned by National Highways and leased by the gun club and there is land owned by the gun club themselves.

Roger said: "We have been in discussion in the past and we plan to be again. The Duchy were reticent to talk about that until they could see that we had the possibility of extending further. Now that we do, their attitude has changed.

"All we have said to them is that we'd like to do some soil sampling on the infill so that we all know what's in there and that's likely to take place this year. Then we could decide the feasibility of what could be dug out and more importantly how it could be disposed of ecologically.

"The tunnels are the bigger problem only because the club have been tenants there for many years."

In the shorter term, maybe three years, Roger explained that if they get a track down on the 750 yards of the Chilcompton line they could possibly run a Wickham Trolley, a small engineer's vehicle, powered by a Reliant Robin engine, to go up along the stretch.

And ultimately what would be at the Chilcompton end? "It would be a simple halt, a

platform halt with a runaround facility so that a train could come in hauled by a steam locomotive, the engine would be uncoupled, run around the other end and then set off back down.

“No ticket office, no café. The reality is that it would be somewhere people could get off and rejoin the train later. We have to be realistic; volunteer resources are stretched at the best of times. We don’t envisage people (non-locals) joining the train at Chilcompton, we have travelling ticket inspectors on the trains. We don’t want to encourage lots of people coming and parking their cars at Frys Well.”

There are two potential benefits for residents not interested in vehicles that go ‘chuff’.

The SDRHT is committed, with suitable support from relevant councils and cycling organisations, to put in a cycle track alongside the railway line. Cyclists could have a safe and enjoyable journey into Midsomer Norton and then onto existing cycle routes. Also, the Parish Council has for some years been trying to meet the demand for allotment spaces, the extra field purchased could be used for this – though the Trust has yet to consider this option.

There are two public footpaths relating to the land, the Millennium Path and one running at right angles to it. Roger said: “We have engaged the services of a local land contractor to regularly keep the vegetation in check on these paths so that walkers can continue to enjoy these public footpaths. The trains will be of two or three carriages length. Trains will arrive and depart at little more than walking pace and will create low emissions. Full planning permission, including extensive ecology studies before any track can be installed. There will be secure fencing between the railway line and the Millennium Footpath as we have on the existing running line from Midsomer Norton.”

In terms of going any further through Chilcompton, that is highly unlikely, if only because there are 20 different landowners from Frys Well to the old Chilcompton station.

Roger said: “If you look at the articles of the association of the Trust it is actually to reopen the railway from Radstock to Shepton Mallet but of course that’s a pretty big ambition and impossible without the cooperation of many landowners, funders and so forth. The actual realistic situation is to get as far as Chilcompton, the Redan, that’s as far as we are happy to go.

“We couldn’t go further than that without the willingness of those along the railway line. It’s not even being thought of; it’s beyond any resources that we have. It would need to be a community project to go further.”

I asked, so is it toys for the crazy old boys? “No,” he said firmly, “we’re offering a popular community resource.”



Copyright Ivo Peters

Courtesy of Julian Peters

World Cup Final of Bellringing Comes to Chilcompton



One of the twelve

The nation’s premier campanologists will be gathering in the village on June 15th for the top event of the year.

The ten best teams in the country will be competing in The National Twelve Bell Contest Final at St John’s Church for the much coveted Taylor Trophy. The Chilcompton team will be in the mix.

Chair of the organizing committee, Matthew Higby, is urging local residents to come on down: “They will hear some of the best bellringing to ever take place in Chilcompton. It is worth listening out, it is worth coming, enjoying a pint and enjoying the festival atmosphere. It’s a bellringing festival; there will be drinks, there will be food (Mexican and hog roast), and children’s entertainment.

“The whole place is going to be abuzz. We’re expecting probably between five to six hundred people to descend on this small part of Somerset because it is the best ringing in the world effectively.”



Chilcompton will be competing against the likes of Birmingham, St Paul's and Cambridge; these are the Manchester Uniteds and Arsenals of the tower-grabbing world. Currently there are 26 teams still in the contest but semi-finals this month in Bristol, Portsmouth and Reading will see that whittled down to nine plus Chilcompton as hosts.

The competition takes place annually but this is the first time St Johns has hosted – so this is quite a coup. One of the reasons is that very few churches have twelve bells.

Wells and Bath, for instance, only have ten. The more bells the more difficult it is. On the day each team of carillonneurs will be given a half hour slot to produce their 'test' piece which will be then be judged by both computer and human ear. The human judges will be locked away in Manor Farm with a crystal clear audio link.

Matthew said: "There is a computerised programme called Hawk-Ear similar to Hawk-Eye in cricket matches, which will listen and mark it. This is to give the judges a hand, it's not gospel, but it helps them."

Outside, as well as the food and drink stalls, there will be stands for the international magazine, Ringing World, and a stand selling memorabilia such as T-shirts and bespoke beer glasses. "There is going to be a live radio station broadcasting the competition throughout the whole world via the internet so people on the other side of the world can listen in. They can hear live commentary, interviews and every single test piece by each team uninterrupted."

Matthew is born and bred in Chilcompton but now lives in Tisbury; he has been a bellringer for as long as he can remember. "I was first wheeled into St John's belfry when I was two weeks old. My parents were bellringers, my mother's father was a bellringer, so I am third generation and my son is fourth generation." His day job is running a company that conserves, restores and replaces church bells.

So how will Chilcompton get on?

Matthew said: "It would be nice not to come last. I'm under no shadow of a doubt we will be up against some really good teams of ringers. I can only hope that someone will make a mistake somewhere along the lines and we might pip them to ninth or maybe eighth place. We'll see."

Malcolm Rigby

Lets Go Out

Friday Club

It's hard to believe but this coffee club will mark its 40 Anniversary this year with a celebratory lunch. It was started in 1984 by Mary Hunt with a couple of elderly people dropping in to the village hall for tea and biscuits. It quickly grew to 40 members and six helpers including the cake maker, Sue Tandy, who is still baking for us. A monthly lunch evolved as well as occasional outings.

Without the input of committed volunteers over the years, this milestone would never have been reached. So thanks to them and supporters past and present and perhaps future ones who might ensure many more years of coffee, cake and companionship. For more details contact:

Marlene Pickford 01761 232774

Wednesday Walkers

The walkers meet fortnightly and follow various routes of 3 – 5 miles. Numbers fluctuate according to weather conditions, planned holidays or other commitments, so sometimes only 5 or 6 walkers and sometimes 14 or 15; twenty of us walked to Binegar for Christmas lunch at the Horse and Jockey and in October we made our way to Ashwick to partake of refreshments at the Oakleaf Café.

Marlene Pickford 01761 232774

Indoor Bowls

Indoor short mat bowls continues Thursdays at 2pm at the village hall. All welcome to come along and give it a try.

**Contact:
David
Rogers
01761
233142**



Golden Hour Club

2023 was another year of enjoyable talks, choirs and music culminating in a Christmas lunch at the Old Down Inn for members. More is planned for this year, although entertainment secretary, David, would be pleased to hear of any speakers, singers or musicians willing to entertain the group.

The AGM is on Tuesday 9th April at 7.30pm. at the village hall, when modest subscriptions are paid, although anyone is welcome to come at any time without becoming a member.

Sylvia Rogers 01761 233142



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The Highest Honour?

There are of course plenty of ways of receiving national recognition for great achievements and important contributions to society; there are Knighthoods, CBEs, OBEs and MBEs but perhaps the most notable accolade is the Blue Peter Badge.

Just recently that award went to **Lettie Holme, aged 8**, from Waterloo Farm on The Street. The venerable prize was given for her drawing of a rabbit in a forest. Lettie said she was both pleased and excited. Parents and grandparents even more so.



The only other resident in the village, that we know, with the 'Blue' title is **Alister Rankine** who lives on Bowden Hill.

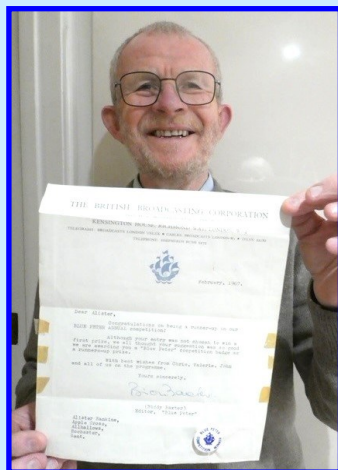
Alister, now age 67, won his 'Blue Peter Competition Winner' badge at the age of 10 in 1967. His achievement being a runner-up in a competition to suggest where Christopher Trace, Valerie Singleton and John Noakes should go on their holiday. His idea was visiting the castles of Scotland.

He has proudly retained his badge and indeed the letter from the legendary producer Biddy Baxter.

Alister said: **"Well done Lettie! When I got mine I was so excited. I can still remember the envelope arriving with the BBC logo on it (there wasn't much excitement in rural Kent in the 1960's). I entered the competition which was in the 1966 Blue Peter Annual that I had received for Christmas.**

"In hindsight and with the cynicism of advanced years, it seems likely that a badge was sent to every entry. Still, I was pleased to get it and it spurred me on to enter the next year's competition - and guess what, I won another badge."

There must be other folk in the village who have received this noble award, people who are proudly, but secretly, hiding their Badge away in their knicker drawer. Biddy Baxter would be appalled that you are keeping quiet about such a prize. So tell us, let us know if you have a Blue Peter Badge and how you won it. On the other hand, if you've got a Jim'll Fix It Badge, best keep quiet.



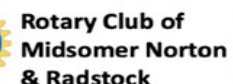
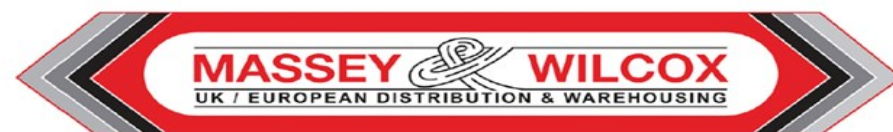
What Our Youth Club Brings to Our Village

The Parish Council values our young people and are currently supporting the new village youth club, which has been running for a year now on a Wednesday evening, normally from a mobile bus in the Village Hall carpark, and then in the old rec in the summer months.



Why do we need a youth club?

Safe environment for young people to engage in activity.
Building relationships.
Promotion of physical activities.
Engaging in community projects.
A sense of belonging.
Foundation in lives of many young people, offering guidance and support to navigate the complexities of growing up.



The youth club is delivered by Youth Connect South West who deliver youth clubs across several parishes in the county. The youth work team are well trained and experienced. The mobile bus gives youth workers a way to target areas where there is little or no youth provision. This service offers a proactive way of engaging with young people in their communities that is safe and accessible.

This youth club is for you

The trained youth workers deliver a variety of different sessions covering a wide range of important topics and challenges young people face.

They promote healthy living through cooking from scratch projects as well as multi sport activities to keep young people fit and active. They do workshops and sessions on issues young people face. These include school and home life, drugs, alcohol, sexual health, building and maintaining healthy relationships. They also deliver activities that are arts based to allow freedom of expression amongst young people using multi media.

Youth Connect South West also have an annual awards ceremony for young people who have exceeded in their learning journey with them. Two years running young people from Chilcompton have taken home an award for their recognised contributions.

This youth club is for the young people of the village and we want it to carry out the activities **you** would like to do. So come along and see what is going on.

Use it or lose it

New young people are always made to feel welcomed and eased into the youth work session. ***For more info contact Alex on 07977859707 or alex.monk@ycsw.org.uk***

We would also love to hear your views and those of the young people of Chilcompton on what you would like from this youth club to make it successful.

Contact : cllr Sue Manley ***sue.manley@chilcompton.org***

The youth club is free at the moment as it is supported by the Parish Council and we are very grateful to the local businesses that have also helped support it last year.

The Parish Council would also like to thank everyone that has supported this initiative, help get it off the ground and invested in our young people in the village.

Finding Calm in a Crazy World

My mind is very busy always thinking far ahead, plotting, planning and worrying about outcomes that may or may not happen. 2023 was a difficult year for me which included major life changes, and several losses of very cherished souls.

Grief is a tricky one, you are fine, you are coping and then along comes the festive season when everyone is excited and full of the holiday spirit and hope for the new year. Where has your excitement for this season gone? Why is it all you can think about is what you have lost? During this period everything comes to a head, some days you're absolutely fine then on other days you feel a black cloud of sadness and everything in your life which is not quite going as planned is magnified, this seems to cause emotional outbursts and in your mind everything spirals out of control. No one understands and there are no right words to make it better although those around you try.

I needed to find a calming of my mind, exercising helped for short periods and after a bit of research practising meditation seemed to offer a way of finding this for me. I attended a number of introductory classes over several weeks, sometimes not getting it and wanting to give it all up, however some weeks finding so much peace from the practice, and support from the group, it was life changing.

After the course finished I continued to practice and began to feel that this way was indeed a direction forward for me offering a step outside of my busy mind and enabling me to take control of it! Practicing left me with a sense of being in control and my fear of experiencing emotion was calmed. I still felt my emotions, however respected and acknowledged them, therefore reacting in a very different way. It was a very powerful technique to learn which has been used for thousands of years and by millions of people all over the world. Why had it taken me so long to find it?

I continue to practice for 20 minutes a day usually in the early hours of the day as the house is very peaceful. I have two favorite spaces to sit and an app on my phone to guide me timewise. I can honestly say I am in a much better place emotionally and mentally thanks to meditation and the support and love of my family. I will continue to use this practice as a tool to help me navigate the emotional rollercoaster which life seems to be.

***The local course I attended can be found at;
www.beando.co.uk***

Tracey Withers



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Southside Youth Hub, Kelston View, Whiteway, Bath, BA2 1NR. Registered Charity: 11860

Surprises on Your Doorstep:

Continuing the series of treasures/treats just outside the village, Malcolm Rigby visits Stanton Drew



Photo: Mark Hayward

It's not Stonehenge, it's not Avebury, it's just down the road. It's the Stanton Drew Stone Circles and every bit as impressive as anything Wiltshire has to offer. Having deposited my one pound coin in the honesty box at the entrance to the site I was passed at the gate by a woman leaving with her son.

"Wow, this place is magical," she exclaimed to me, "I've been here an hour and I feel so much calmer now."

Because of the narrow roads and the quirky curvaceous stone bridge as you enter the village you won't get coachloads of tourists here, and the locals won't mind. The Stones remain one of Somerset's best kept secrets.

Visually there's plenty to take in around the village; the iconic toll house, the impressive Stanton Court, the 13th century church of St Mary the Virgin, several 17th century listed houses, the Victorian 'lecture hall', the new war memorial and the curious bridge with pointed arches, but it's the stones that take the headlines. Showing me around was John Richards, a keen archaeologist with a self-confessed passion for the Stanton Drew Stones. When asked what are the purpose of the Stones, he replied loosely, ritual. Then admitted humbly: **"The answer to many of the questions about the stones is, we don't know."**

The megalithic complex is believed to be 4,500 years old with three circles and two avenues. The largest is the Great Circle, 113metres in diameter, smaller than Avebury but larger than Stonehenge. It has 26 surviving upright stones (but don't count them, folklore has it that you will get ill...or worse). Alongside it is the more obvious north-east circle. Two short avenues lead off from these circles in the direction of the river. More hidden away, in a different field, is the south-west circle. Three hundred years ago a man called William Stukeley, considered to be the father of British archaeology, made a brief visit to the site; did some sketches, put to bed the myth of Roman input and placed the stones on the proverbial map.

Last July to commemorate that anniversary John instigated a weekend event called Stukeley 300. He explained: "Stukeley came here just for one day. But the stuff he did here, he did five or six fantastic drawings which in years to come were to make the site extremely well known."

Legend has it that a wedding party was held at the location on a Saturday evening, at midnight the violinist called it a day but he was replaced by the devil, disguised as a violinist, who played faster and faster into the early hours of the Sabbath. Consequently all the party-goers were turned to stone.

John Wood, the Bath architect, noted that if you draw a line from the centre of the north-east circle through the centre of the Great Circle it takes you to another grouping of three stones known as the Cove. This is situated in the pub, aptly called The Druid Arms, garden. Continuing the theme of the legend these three stones are the bride, the groom and the drunken parson, passed out on the ground.

A final legend is that on the sixth night after a full moon the stones come alive and wander down to the River Chew for a drink.

Entering the Druid Arms at 4.30pm on a Wednesday I was met with a pleasantly convivial atmosphere. There were about 20 people present including one Mike Regan, the former England rugby hooker.

Before leaving the pub I was introduced to a trustee of the village hall, who explained to me that there was a rule that the hall could only be used for religious purposes on a Sunday and that Saturday night events had to finish at twelve on the dot.

With a smile, I suggested that otherwise everyone will turn to stone. Maybe no one heard me but there wasn't a flicker of emotion from anyone present.

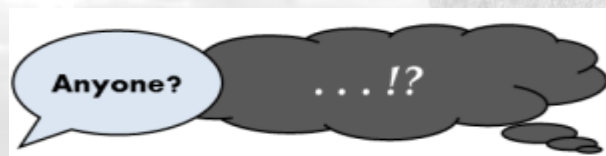


Photo: Mark Hayward

Competition Time



**Fantastic Prizes
£20 vouchers
for the
Entertainer
toy shop in
Midsomer
Norton**



My favorite thing about Chilcompton – Do you have a special place you love to visit in our village or do you have a favorite place to play or sit at home or in the garden, Put it in a drawing or painting and enter our competition for the younger residents of Chilcompton!

Age categories;
3 – 6
7 – 11

A winner will be
picked out in
each category by
our judge Lizzie
Morris*.

All entries must be received by 1st April 2024 competition winners will be contacted in May 2024 and featured in the next Autumn edition of Chilcompton Matters. Any size up to a maximum of A3.

Good Luck Everyone!



*Please note:
Children must reside in the village
of Chilcompton to be eligible and
only one entry per child.*

Pop your entry to Tracey Withers c/o 1 Mendip Fields, Stockhill Road, Chilcompton BA3 4LT and make sure you include your name, age and contact details on the back of your drawing. Or to make it really easy just scan your picture to;
traceywithers7@hotmail.co.uk

**Lizzie was a primary school teacher in Chilcompton for many years then she went on to get a degree in Art at Bath Spa Univ. She is still a resident of Chilcompton.*

THE STANDING STONES OF STANTON DREW

To marry with the ancients
amongst the sheep and the short grass.
The Stones worshipped and cursed,
a temple church in green.

Older than cathedral walls
all hallowed before the cross.
The ferns still sprout and sap rises
in supplication despite the sin.

Bless this ever-changing air
that evokes fire and water.
And purifies the ageless earth
welcoming us to the dance.

And we bow and hold hands
to Her and rejoice.
For She still runs in the forest
before the rock, before the cave.

Sing to Her your songs of love
Oblivious to life beyond the trees.
To the Still Standing Stones
of Stanton Drew

By Andrew Morris

Get Involved

All villagers are invited to attend the Parish Council meetings, to make an observation or just to view the machinery of the most local tier of government.

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month, 7.30pm at the Village Hall. If you would like to put some information up on the village website, contact the Parish Clerk by email: parishclerk@chilcompton.org or ring 01761 232974.

Website: www.chilcompton.org

PC noticeboards are by the Coop, by the Village Hall, on Bowden Hill and at the bus stop by Church House.

County Councillors: Tony.robbs@somerset.gov.uk & Cllr.hobbs@mendip.gov.uk

County Council: Telephone 0300 123 2224

Feedback

What are your views on the magazine? The team that put it together is always looking for your comments, be they good or bad. Is there something missing? What could be done better? Please let us know.

Contact the parish clerk: Malcolm Rigby, email: parishclerk@chilcompton.org

Next Deadline: Autumn Edition end of July 2024.

Digital Distress

Discussions with a local psychoanalyst concerning the subject of online Bullying



Firstly this article will only scratch the surface of what is one of the most worrying and growing problems of our digital age. Online bullying is more common than you think it can be carried out across the board of all social media platforms which includes gaming.

Why is it becoming such an issue? Because there is no ownership, responsibility or face to face consequence it is an easy and convenient way to become a bully. The power of this new wave of socializing and interacting with your peers is that if someone is vulnerable, alone unsure or inexperienced even an innocent comment online can be interpreted as negative and cause damage to their mental health.

This is particularly relevant to young people who are going through a transitional period in their lives, finding and pushing boundaries, exploring who they are, and worrying about not fitting in, therefore, to be targeted on line by an audience of their peers can be soul destroying.

Signs that someone close to you is struggling with online bullying may be extreme mood swings concerning any online activity, self medication, a lack of interest in life or there may be secrecy around any online activity or any unusual change in mood or behavior. Of course this could be general teenage angst, however given the popularity of these platforms it's worth bearing those points in mind.

How can you help? By making sure they understand the importance of keeping passwords secure and not sharing them and the consequences if they give access to their device to someone else. Keeping the line of communication open, talking about what's going on and what they are up to online. Knowing which platforms they are using and who they are talking to, asking to sit with them and get involved in what they are doing, generally showing an interest and giving reassurance that you are here to talk to.

Danger signs would be witnessing any abuse, grooming, doxing, trolling, enflaming activities which the user may not appreciate is going on as they maybe young and still learning about this problem. Educate them give them examples about what is acceptable and what is not.

Do not underestimate this problem. You only have to read the news to see how devastating for vulnerable people this can become if left unacknowledged or unnoticed.

If you suspect you or someone you know is a victim of this form of bullying, schools are a good place to start as they have a lot of knowledge about how to stop this and most have school counsellors who can help. Otherwise there are various organizations such as Childline, NSPCC and National Bullying Helpline, also the police as this practice is now perceived as a crime.

Communication is the key, if you're going to interact online you need to be aware what is acceptable and what is not in order to keep you and others safe.

Tracey Withers

Wassailing in January



Wassailing was believed to ward off bad spirits from the orchards. By firing guns, people aimed to scare away any malevolent forces that might harm the fruit trees or their harvest.

Cider making in September



When the apples start dropping from the tree, there are only so many crumbles and pies you can make. Step in the traditional cider brewers. **Roll on the Summer.**



News from St John's



It was a delight to see the new star up on the church roof this Christmas and to celebrate the season with a church full of happy faces. Much fun, singing and laughter was had by all as we told again the familiar story of Jesus' birth.

It was standing room only for the school Nativity play and every seat was full for the Carol Service where I am delighted to say people gave so generously towards combating homelessness. You raised just short of **£300 for the national campaign, Crisis at Christmas**. An awesome effort.

Once again the year has been a hard one for many families in the village. It is with sadness that we have held funerals or buried the ashes of **Terence Moore, Annette & Denis Horler, Janet Marke, Tracey Major, Linda Pegler, Olivia Walsh-Waring, David Padfield, James Powel, Michael Chedgely and Audrey Strawbridge**. Our condolences go to each of these families and you remain in our prayers. The church and its grounds are a peaceful place to sit and remember the church is open every day during the hours of daylight. Everyone is welcome to pop in and enjoy a few moments of peace. Babies continue to be born and to be baptised, and weddings are being planned for the summer months. If you are considering one of life's big milestones and would like to chat about how the church can help you with your arrangements please contact us via the website www.stvigorstjohn.church We would be happy to help.

Midweek Groups always welcome new members: Bell Ringing continues on a Monday evening; Thursdays in term time, Tea & Toast, our Toddler group meet for a morning of play and chatter, and Lunch Club offer a light lunch in good company the third Thursday of each month. On the second and fourth Monday evenings of the month at St John's Church Hall in Chilcompton, from 5:30pm - 7:30pm, there is Tea @ St John's, a space where families can gather with other families from the village to eat together, build community and a space for children to play. It is completely free of charge though any donations are gratefully received on the evening through our donations machine. The food is family friendly and it's a great opportunity to build community. For further information or to be added to the contact group, please contact Reverend Stephen D Miles on either curate@stvigorstjohn.church or **07708661800**.

There is much good news in our community this year and we feel blessed by God in many ways, but sadly the roof of our lovely church hall has reached its 'sell-by' date and has started to leak. In the Spring we will be launching an **appeal to help us raise £150K** to replace the original roof and the heating system so that we can continue to welcome all ages into a warm and bright space for years to come.

For all up to date information of groups and activities and ways in which you might give to replace the roof please visit the website www.stvigorstjohn.church

The regular pattern of services is as follows:

Wednesdays 9am Morning Prayer
Thursdays 11am Holy Communion (*traditional language*)
Sundays 9am Holy Communion (*traditional Language*)
 10.30am Family Service (*also on Zoom*)
 6.30pm Evening Prayer (*first Sunday only*)



Messy church continues to be as popular as ever at St Johns Church Chilcompton. So why not join us for another fun packed year. If you've never been, then come with an open mind and be prepared to be surprised!

Once a month, throughout 2024, we are going to be exploring some of the exciting stories of the Old Testament. We will do this through crafts games and family friendly worship. Each month, at 3pm on one Sunday afternoon, there will be 7 or 8 different craft activities and games to get involved with. Each month is different, each month is fun and each month there are activities for nursery and primary school children.

On 24th March join in with our Easter Egg hunt and on 21st April discover why Joseph had an amazing coloured coat.



March 24th Palm Sunday

9am/10.30am, St John's Holy Communion

March 28th Maundy Thursday

11am/7.30pm, St John's Holy Communion

March 29th Good Friday

11am, St John's Community reading of Mark's Gospel followed by an Hour at the Cross

March 31st Easter Day

6am Sunrise Service

9am Holy Communion (traditional language)

10.30am Family Holy Communion

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Services
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Chilcompton Playgroup



We have been enjoying seeing lots of new faces at Playgroup this year. As always everyone is welcome to join us from newborns to until they start school.

We meet in the Village Hall on Tuesday mornings **between 10 and 11.30. Cost is £2 per family** and that includes a hot drink for adults and a healthy snack for

children. We also try to have a singing, story or parachute session before we say goodbye.

At the end of last year we had to throw out lots of old and broken toys. Luckily we made around **£200 at the Christmas market** which we are going to use to replace the old toys. Thank you to everyone who came along to support us.

As always we are looking for people to join the playgroup committee. If you have time before and after playgroup to help set up and tidy away and time to meet a couple of times a year you could help us keep our playgroup going.

Feel free to contact Tina, Cassie and Beth at chilcomptonplaygroup@hotmail.com if you would like any more information.



Chilcompton Wives

Last Autumn we enjoyed speaker, David Moon with his tour of gardens in full bloom and sunshine to a musical tour of '80 days around the world' with Tim Lewis. The charity 'School in a Bag' came to us in November and the monies raised meant we were able to purchase bags and follow the children who received them.

During the New Year we were rummaging in our handbags for the handbag quiz (*we were surprised as to what we carry around in the depths of a handbag*).



If you would like to join us you would be most welcome, we meet at the Sports Recreation Ground on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2.15p.m.



Coming up in the Summer:

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Chilcompton Celebrates



Pictured with St Vigor's headmaster Chris Chorley are children at St Vigor's school receiving a cheque for £1,000 from Christine Foster, founder of Chilcompton Celebrates. The money will contribute to the resurfacing of the school's tennis court. On the right is Jane Winsley who looked after Chilcompton Celebrates finances and has recently revealed that, up to now, **over £20,000 has been donated to groups and clubs within the village.**

"A little late in the day, I know," says Christine, "but I should like to thank everyone who helped and supported Chilcompton Celebrates."



Stop Press
As we go to print, controversy is growing over the development of a Motocross course in a field at the top of Stockhill Road. No doubt, more next time.

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How to...find the meaning of life

If you look under the left hand cushion of your sofa it should be there. Stick your hand in really deep, right into the springs. It might look like a bit of fluff, it might look like a two pence piece, it might even look like a five pound note, it possibly, but unlikely, could look like the holy grail. But it's there. The meaning of life is tauntingly obscure and has questionable monetary and emotional value.

Many years ago, I was offered my own personal weekly column in the Bath Chronicle. Obviously over the moon, Brian. Proper writer. Anyway, they said that I could write about anything I want.

Really, I said, anything that I want? Anything, I was told. There was an element of youthfulness, naivety and a deep scar of fragile existentialism here but I wrote my first column about the meaning of life.

The article was no doubt a very humorous account of the meaninglessness of existence but (after numerous hushed discussions in hallways) they refused to publish it and the vanquished masterpiece is now lost amongst the bottomless and inaccessible world of floppy discs. (It still makes me smile to think that the real meaning of life is possibly on a floppy disc or a Betamax tape.) I mean, irony or what.

Meanwhile in the maturity of life, THE MEANING seems more like the dilemma of how to find a lost sock in a wash or how to get an NHS dentist.

In relation to the question, I would suggest there are three types of people.

(a) There are those who believe in God, whatever God. Or maybe a football team. They've got it sussed. The meaning of life is expressed through Him or Her or even They. Good on you and I hope you really enjoy your afterlife.

(b) Then there are those who just live life. The meaning of life is just what they do. It's life. You wake up in the morning and you change the baby's nappy, smile at the sunrise and you prepare breakfast. Maybe you get high when you are young and grumpy when you get old, perhaps you get grumpy when you are young and high when you get old. You live life and are far too busy to expect a meaning.

(c) Finally, there are the lost souls who require a meaning and can find none. These strange creatures have to wander through the ether of existence trying to justify every bowel movement to an incredulous and disinterested world. Not only do they not have a Maker but they haven't the foggiest idea what they would say to them. Perhaps babbling something about doing three water-colours on Wednesday, attending a Green rally on Thursday and having a really good crap on Friday.

At this point I should offer poetical illustrations: life is a pink rose petal drifting gracefully to the ground, life is a plastic bag blowing in the wind, life is walking home with family and friends, life is throwing up in someone else's toilet.

It could be considered conceited for mankind to require a meaning of life. Animals have a purpose and, with the possible exception of pandas, are pretty good at fulfilling it. Propagate that species.

Maybe check the bottom of your sofa again.



Next time: How to...make an omelette without breaking eggs.

Malcolm Rigby



One villager said: **"The trees are really sweet. So too is Mr Mattick."**

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SIP Approved 03/07/2022

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Then & Now



**A view of
Chilcompton
Village Hall
taken from
the Wells
Road**

Chilcompton Village hall was officially opened by Sir Cecil Clothier QC, Parliamentary Ombudsman, on **6th June 1981**, having been in use from March of that year. The hall replaced an old wood and asbestos building, pre-fabricated by Edgells of Westfield in 1926 as a Miners' Welfare hall and taken over by the parish council in 1967.



Obituaries

The following villagers', former residents and friends have died since the last newsletter:

Barbara Bush (née Bailey), Arthur Moon 94

Derek Swain, David Wilshire, David Promel

Rosalie Carpenter (née Williams) (95)

Robert Beck and Norrie Beech.

We send sincere condolences to their families and friends. If anyone has been inadvertently omitted, please let us know and they will be included in the next newsletter.

marlenepickford2@gmail.com 01761 232774

Be Careful What You Wish For...



The village was turned into turmoil for the early part of the winter with roadworks on the B3139 that took several weeks for the construction of a relatively short pavement.

Local businesses were severely disrupted; bus services were rerouted; car drivers were asked to do enormous detours; small rural lanes experienced absurd amounts

of traffic; angry residents attended Parish Council meetings; there were outbursts of emotion on the road; and children were left wondering how on earth were they going to get to school. Yet the main complaint was lack of communication.

But there is a history to be understood here. More than ten years ago there was a fatality on the road, a woman walking her dog on Lynch Hill. There was pressure on the Parish Council to prevent something like that ever happening again so naturally it became a priority on the PC's road safety wish list and there it has remained on the top of the minutes for more than a decade.

A couple of years ago a gateway sign was introduced at the entrance to the village, phase one. Then in the Somerset Council announced that they were going to

autumn last year start work on putting in

'It beggars' belief that a major thoroughfare can be closed for so long, causing incredible inconvenience for so many Health and Safety gone mad'.

Richard Mills

Chairman of the Parish Council, Jon Pike, said: **"First and foremost we would like to apologise to local residents and businesses for the disruption. In hindsight, if it had been our money to spend we may possibly have used it on something like raised zebra crossings, although I believe the pavement will be beneficial to the village with regard to safety.**

"Somerset Council Highways were repeatedly asked for traffic lights to be put in which would have substantially reduced the level of upheaval. However, we were told that the road was too narrow to accommodate lights and work being carried out in the road.

'The businesses in the village all suffer. Accidents are happening around lanes, just one big mess'.

Concerned Villager

"Communication was terrible. What little information we got we tried to disperse on the website and facebook but not everybody has computers. This has to be a lesson for us and other communities."

Somerset County Councillor Tony Robbins said: "I am obviously very pleased that the footpath project is finally finished but the circumstances around the must be investigated, the effect it had on local people and businesses cannot be forgotten. I will discuss it with Edric (fellow councillor) and take it from there. We are both genuinely sorry that the project was allowed to drift on for so long and have such an impact on people's daily lives."

Tony is hoping to organise a meeting with other councillors and officers to discuss what can be learnt for the future.

The original plan was for the pavement to go all the way up Lynch Hill. A pavement from Chilcompton to Emborough. Not likely to happen now. 'A pavement too far' or 'a pavement not far enough.'

Mother of schoolchildren, Lynn Kettles, said: "The bus to get to and from school was a nightmare - poor bus drivers never knew if they were able to get through the works as promised resulting in children being very late for school and coming home getting off at Mulberry and trying to find ways back into the village across muddy fields - it was the uncertainty that was very stressful for the children - especially those that had only just started in Year 7. And those that lived the Emborough side of the works who were trying to get to the primary school and the Mill had terrible journeys."

If this is what our country is spending our money on no wonder councils are going bust, it's a disgrace.

Maxine McCluskey

'Travel Somerset should be utterly ashamed of this work, poor planning is an understatement here. Taking longer and longer no wonder the villagers have had enough'.
Christopher Ruddick



Photo: Mike Newman



Generations of a musical family contributed to Viv Moon's passion for music. As a child her father inspired her towards a life which would include singing and music, blossoming into establishing 'Sing Your Heart Out' a 38 member strong

choir which is non profit making and has been raising money for various charities locally for fourteen years.

The group enjoys a wide variety of music with a number of pieces which include Miley Cyrus 'Flowers', 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by Queen and Evan Hansen 'You Will be Found' .

They meet at St John's Church hall in Chilcompton on a Wednesday night at 7:30pm to 9:00pm and enjoy a wonderful relationship with the local church. Over the years they have raised money for many charities and last Christmas the £800.00 profit from their concert was donated to the church for much needed repairs. They have applied and received several grants from the Sperring Trust which the group are very appreciative of and has helped them to keep afloat during testing times of lockdown.

Viv states: "We are always open to new members and would hope they find a warm and welcoming atmosphere."

The group has a large back catalogue and like to perform to several smaller community based groups throughout the year primarily working toward two major concerts, one concert in the summer and one at Christmas time.

This year is exceptional as they plan to make an album for charity and are currently making plans to record and distribute it, release of the album will be celebrated with a fun day for the choir which will include a party to celebrate.

The future looks bright for this group and profitable for the charities it aims to help, the mutual enjoyment of singing for its members and the money it raises for the community and charities is a winning combination.



If you would like to join this successful choir go to their FB page for information or contact Viv Moon direct on 0778 0861 868

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Flower Show

The Chilcompton Society Annual
Flower Show will take place on

Saturday 7th September 2024

Last year was a bumper year for entries,
the standard of exhibits improved and
there were a pleasing number of
newcomers trying their luck.

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Council Matters

One of the most important tasks of the Parish Council is to set the village precept, that is the amount that is collected from your council tax bill that comes to the Parish Council and is essentially our annual income. This money is what we then use to fund our activities across the village from cutting grass to paying the clerk's wages. Like every other organisation we are faced by the pressure of inflation and consequently therefore at the December meeting we made the decision to increase the amount we precept. This is not a decision we made lightly. However not only do we face the pressure of rising costs we also had to consider that, as many of you

will be aware, Somerset Council are facing severe financial difficulties. While they have yet to set a budget there will dramatic cuts to the services they provide and as a Parish Council there will be pressure on us to consider inheriting some of these; in addition we have been trying to do more to make our village even better and obviously need finance to do this. Given these reasons we believe that the increase in the precept is the right course of action. I can state that even with the increase the precept for Chilcompton is not above average when compared to other villages in the old Mendip area.

One of those areas that we are looking to support is the mobile youth club that operates at the Village Hall on a Wednesday evening. Elsewhere in the magazine my colleague Sue Manley will go into detail on what is being offered by the youth club and how we can support it. The number of participants is growing and we believe that this service is a vital area for the children and young people in Chilcompton; a service we are keen to support and help grow.

Another area where we have spent some of our precept is the Old Recreation Field; the debate a year ago about the old rec demonstrates what an asset it is to the village and how much it means to so many of us. We have in recent years spent money to improve the facilities on offer there and plan to continue to do so.

An old issue has been the pavement from Parsonage Lane along Lynch Hill. Initially we discussed this matter with Somerset County Council in 2012 but it was something that remained resolutely not being actioned. However, after numerous chasings of Somerset Highways for updates to future progress, to our great surprise and little warning, this was implemented last autumn. Or at least part of it was; initially the plan envisaged a pavement all the way to the old Court Hotel. However, what is done appears to be an excellent job. That is of course only half of the story, you will doubtless be aware of the chaos that the work caused in October and November last year. The estimated completion time was severely underestimated (although in defence of SC the discovery of a collapsed drain that needed to be repaired severely disrupted schedules.) We had always imagined that traffic lights would be the likely scenario so were surprised when told that this was not an option as the carriageway was too narrow, although there was a belated weekend lights system. Suffice to say the disruption was massive and took far too long; I can only apologise to residents and local businesses. As someone who drives to Glastonbury for work, I understand the frustration the road closure caused to people's daily commute. Well, it was frustrating, but we now have the pavement in place and for those people who walk that stretch of road they are undoubtedly safer and if the pavement saves one life, I believe the answer must be yes.

Finally, towards the end of last year the Somerset and Dorset Heritage line bought a stretch of the old railway track that runs from the tunnel to the bridge at Fry's Well. At the time of writing, they have begun some clearing of vegetation from the line, however it is very early on and there is no definitive information on what the next steps will be. Doubtless there will be more to discuss in the coming months.

Jon Pike, Chair of the Parish Council

Community Speedwatch

The aim of Community SpeedWatch is to make motorists who speed through residential neighbourhoods aware of the impact their actions have on local residents, as well as the danger they pose to other road users. This is something we volunteers in the village are working to address with the backing of our local PCSO's. If we have a session with no speeders we have done a good job.

Established in February 2013 when local SpeedWatch groups were initiated by Avon and Somerset Police, we are an interesting active group.

Recent posts on the village facebook pages have mentioned the amount of vehicles that are driving too fast around the village; we welcome anyone who would like to volunteer to join us so we can extend our coverage at our 10 assessed sites within the village. After having been police checked there is training, nothing too in depth with an online test, which you can't fail, before letting you loose with speed gun and clipboard. We are happy to meet up with those who would like to pop along to a session to observe, before committing, so you are aware of how SpeedWatch works. Please email the address below.

Despite the perception of how fast traffic flows in our village, we have a very low percentage of speeding vehicles, the stats we submit from 3rd January to 31st December are as below. To date we have not reported any village, or surrounding, heavy goods businesses for exceeding the speed threshold.

In 2023, over 61 sessions, we checked 11,296 vehicles of which 126 were above the threshold, which gives a percentage of 1.1% speeding vehicles. The top speed recorded was 54mph, the second highest being 49mph both in the 40mph area along the Wells Road into the village. The average speed being 34.4mph.

Email: cswchilcompton@hotmail.com

Meet Our Competition Winners

Congratulations

Harriet Sumbler Age 10



See left Harriet's picture of the wonderful Captain Jack Sparrow. Our judge Lizzie says: **"Thank you for your sensitive artwork, Harriet. You have used your pencils in this portrait piece very effectively, with a combination of light and heavy drawing and many tones in between, to create a lively and dramatic depiction of an extremely colourful character."**



Harriet Sumbler

A big thank you to all who entered and supported this new venture, you are a talented bunch. Look out for our next competition in this magazine on page 18.

Congratulations

Wilbur Handover Age 7

Our judge Lizzie says: "Thank you for your bright and beautiful drawing, Wilbur. You have used every bit of space to create a picture that is full of life and interesting things to see. We immediately feel warmth and freshness, because of the lively shade of green you have chosen for the grassland and banks of the river."

Congratulations

Bobby Handover Age 10

Our judge Lizzie says: "Thank you, Bobby, for your very interesting drawing. This shows how wild creatures live in a risky world, and you have used your pencil in a variety of interesting ways to depict how alert and vigilant they constantly have to be, and in this case, we will never know the outcome."



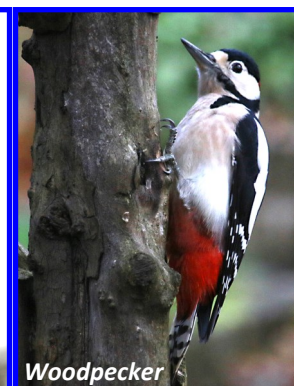
Wilbur Handover

Bobby Handover

Photos from a Chilcompton garden Colourful Common Birds Part 1



Goldfinch



Woodpecker



Blue Tit



Bullfinch



Jay



Great Tit

Birds in our gardens might not compare to those found in more exotic lands, birds that boast magnificent plumages and exhibit brilliant colours. However, there is real beauty in some truly colourful birds right here in our more temperate gardens.

They come to us in hope of a morsel or two, either through natural rummaging, or from our feeders. Let's face it, Chilcompton has no shortage of providers in both of these respects. In this article I just want to take the opportunity to highlight and focus on the magnificence of our own garden birds, common or otherwise. Forgive me, if I spread it over two issues.

Goldfinch

One of the jewels amongst our British birds. Generally seen in flocks amongst the wild thistle heads, but in our gardens they are more often in small groups and commonly in ones and twos. Strangely, being such a gloriously coloured and smart looking bird, they are one of the messiest breeders. As the young birds approach fledging, they are virtually housed in pure bird poo.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

If tasked with designing their own bird I would expect imaginative young children to paint something like this stunning woodpecker! They are a striking black and white with a brilliant red lower belly. The males have a red nape, and young birds also have a red crown. Peanuts, sunflower hearts and suet are great ways to attract a great spotted woodpecker to your garden, but they are very timid. The slightest bit of movement spotted through the window, and they are off.

Bullfinch

It's such a joy that we have a good population of Bullfinch in Chilcompton. More generally, it's just a flash of the white rump we see, disappearing through a hedgerow along the lanes. But this timid jet black headed bird is often seen on and around our garden feeders here. Bullfinch are nearly always seen in pairs. So if you see a brilliantly coloured male, or a toned down female, you know the partner is not far away.

Blue Tit

It would be interesting to know how many Chilcompton nest boxes there are that become inhabited by the humble blue tit each spring. The bright blue on a blue tit's head has to be high on the list of prettiest colours in nature. An acrobatic species and one of four Titmouse families commonly found in Chilcompton. Entice these pretty birds with sunflower hearts and suet and they will quickly arrive. Sometimes in astonishing numbers.

Great Tit

With the summer moult over there are few examples of a more dapper bird than the Great Tit. Another one of the four Titmouse families found in these parts. On bright autumn days and right through to the breeding season, these vibrant little birds boast their uniform-like plumage with black and white heads, yellow chest with a vertical black stripe, olive green shoulders and blue tinged wings.

Jay

When first learning about birds as a child, the Jay was renowned as 'The Guardian of The Forest'. It earned this title due to its tendency to sound out warnings of approaching predators, which includes the sound of people. It is surprisingly beautiful with its deep pink hue and that petrol blue wing flash. Jays are intelligent birds and will use twigs, and the like, as a tool to hook out insects from cracks and crevices. I watched one drop down to the base of my compost recently, and come back up with a field mouse in its beak.

Jon Crouch

Green and Pleasant Land

Malcolm Rigby talked to the team who cut our grass and trim our bushes

Our Parish is blessed with a variety of green spaces dotted around the village, enjoyed by us all, but of course those areas have to be maintained and kept tidy.

For the last nine years that job has been performed by Primrose Garden Maintenance, led by husband and wife team, Jim and Kit, with recent support from George Primrose and Mark Geoghegan. Work, paid for by the Parish Council, is completed on a pre-arranged monthly, bi-monthly or seasonal basis.

Vice Chair of the Parish Council, Rich Morgan, said:

“During all that time I can’t remember any complaints we have had of Primrose – they are reliable and thorough. Perhaps, most importantly, whenever we have a specific new task for them they are immediately on the job.”

Previously Kit Primrose has confessed to me that in their own back garden they have artificial turf – she told me that it would be too much of a busman's pastime to come home and cut their own grass. Yet clearly there are green fingers in that family.

Kit said: “We’ve lived ‘just down the road’ from the Parish for the last 26 years and have always had links with Chilcompton; frequenting the local pubs, attending Chilcompton Sports Club through children's football, Jim helping with coaching for several years, and many a wildlife-filled muddy walk across the fields, quiet lanes and footpaths in this lovely part of Somerset.

“The best thing about our work is being outside. Even after 24 plus years of working for ourselves, we enjoy the changing of the seasons and feel particularly blessed when spotting the first buds and blossom of spring, or a glimpse of wildlife as we go about our work. We also enjoy taking a quick breather to pass the time of day with a member of the public – usually to comment on the weather that day.

“As the saying goes ‘a change is as good as a rest’ and each season brings its own challenges and delights – spring as mentioned, although a cliché, does bring a feeling of hope after the dark winter months and as we go around our customers' gardens we enjoy seeing the bulbs emerge and that shrub you really had to give a good hard prune to late autumn, showing early signs of sprouting fresh leaf buds.

“Summer is full on and brings stability for us, grass cutting – 32 weeks of solid grass cutting for the grass team and the border team trying to keep up with the general garden maintenance.

“As you can imagine the weather conditions play a big part in how we complete our work and whilst we have noticed the ‘growing season’ extending over the years well into the traditional autumn and winter periods, the rainfall – especially this year – does make working conditions underfoot very difficult.

"Early autumn is beautiful with foliage changing colour, the weather usually settled and soil still warm but will say that leaf clearing is the worst part of our job, especially during a wet autumn. We were quite often soaked, even on the odd dry day we had this year, when lifting bags of wet leaves onto the vans to take away for composting. Then of course, the wind blows and another load falls from the trees.

"Late autumn seems to be the messiest time in the garden. Gone are the blooms and lush foliage which can distract the eye from those areas you've not found the time to tend properly over the summer, and with many perennials taking their turn to start looking bedraggled as they die back for the winter compounded with the falling leaves and poor light (and did we mention rain!) can just leave a garden looking sad for a while. We, of course, eventually catch up with the tidying and putting the gardens we maintain 'to bed for the winter'.

"We always stop for the school holidays at Christmas and take a proper break, giving us time to spend with our families and recharge our batteries.

"Winter is generally quieter as we don't get the daylight hours and is spent pruning fruit and other small trees, hedging and sorting any winter damage and of course prepping for spring on the days we can get outside to work. Machinery maintenance, repairs and staff training for the days we can't get out and before you know it you are looking forward to the next season."

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Farming Matters

Paul Mattick, cattle man on Duchy land at Manor Farm, explains what farmers are doing at this time of year.



This is a busy time for livestock farmers, all the cattle are in and so consequently there is a lot of routine work. Our winter will not finish until mid-April at the earliest. The general jobs, seven days a week, are feeding cattle, cleaning cattle out, bedding cattle up, and when we have calves, they need to be fed twice a day with milk.

By and large we will do most of our cattle work in the mornings. I get up at 5.30, have done for the last 30 odd years, I'm used to it and I love it. In the next couple of months you get totally fabulous sunrises. And in the winter, every now and then, well once in a lunar halo, you get a picture like this:

This winter when it was very wet, we couldn't do any outside work so we now have a couple of months of afternoon jobs to get all the hedge trimming done and by March we are starting on spring field work like harrowing the grassland and rolling; harrowing over the ruts and the divots from the previous autumn when the cattle and tractors were in the fields.

We record the rainfall for the Environment Agency and we've just notched up the second wettest year in the last 60, the wettest year was 2012. 2023 was just under 60 inches of rainfall or 1.5 metres. It doesn't necessarily help me farming because I farm with whatever the weather throws at me but for an historical record it's useful. We definitely live in changing climatic times with periods of very wet and periods of dry.



Anybody who walks or dog walks footpaths on a regular basis will know what a wet autumn/winter it has been – the paths have been a hard slog. Because of the mud and the slipping a friend of mine recently broke her wrist dog walking. I always take a stick.

Most people pick up their dog poo, most are bagging it and binning it, but I would be grateful if everyone did so. It would be helpful as it's not the best for cattle to walk in or to ingest in the grass. There are plenty of dog poo bins around now so if you bag it don't hang it on a tree or barbed wire. Please follow the highway code, shut gates, don't litter, keep to the paths and if there is livestock about, act accordingly. **Happy walking.**

Gardening Club



Gardens and gardening are things we can enjoy all the year round, there is always something beautiful we can discover or learn.

Gardening Club members have enjoyed talks on stumperies and ferns, the flora of the Cam and Wellow valley and the amazing variety of the humble holly and ivy.

Following on from our AGM in January which featured a quiz and buffet, we are looking forward to talks on, Prior Park Gardens in Bath (March) and the glorious gardens of Somerset (April).

Our plant sale will be held in the Village Hall on Saturday 4th May, this is always a hugely popular event.

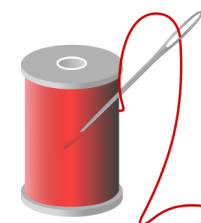
Then also in May, we will be looking into Gardening for Moths, Plant Names in June and Organic Gardening at Ammerdown in July.

Visits are planned to Fosse Farm Flowers in Stratton on the Fosse in June; Stowberry Gardens, Wells in July and Yeo Valley Organic Gardens, Blagdon in August.

Our meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Membership is just £8 per person for the whole year (January to December) and guests are always very welcome at £3 per visit. Why not come along with a friend or two and give us a try, we will always give you a very warm welcome. Contact me on 01761 233017, or see the Village Hall website, Chilcompton Past and Present, or our Facebook page.

Judy Youngs (Secretary)

Embroidery Experiences Group



This group is held at the Chilcompton Sports Hall every Thursday morning from 10.00am until 12.30pm. Here are some examples of recently completed work

.....ENJOY!

If you are interested in joining this very friendly group of ladies and learning new skills please contact: **Patricia Ardrone on 07788 184 185**

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Meet Helen Pugh - Chilcompton Born Author



Unsung Women in Somerset was born because I wanted to write a book that would explore the place I live in now, whereas my previous books were about where I used to live (*Ecuador, and so my books were based on South American history, with a particular focus on women*). This one is looking at the heritage of my husband and step kids since I'm only a first-generation Somerset person in my family. I grew up in Chilcompton, went to secondary school in Bath and then attended the University of Bristol (*only just over the border!*), where I studied Spanish and Italian. My studies took me to Genoa

for 5 months and Ecuador for over 7 years before returning to Somerset in 2018. I lived in Shepton Mallet with my husband, children and stepchildren for 4 years before moving to Midsomer Norton.

Another reason for picking Somerset is that bigger cities, such as Bristol, do get more focus in terms of history and things going on now. As a child, I felt that local, rural history is boring but it definitely isn't. If you look in the right places, you can find incredible things, sometimes even things that happened in the tiniest hamlets. It's exciting to get to know the spaces we visit day today, that we look at the same hills people in years gone by looked at, walked the same paths, even if a lot has changed over time.

In fact, one woman in the book was a 'Chilcomptoner' who would've known first-hand the struggles of going up and down Bowden Hill! A teacher at the Infant School in Chilcompton, she dared to ask for a pay rise in the year 1904. She was promptly sacked. Given the recent teacher strikes, we can see how some issues from bygone times still apply today, even though it is now illegal to dismiss somebody for requesting a salary increase.

I chose to focus on women because we have been overlooked in the study of history. There are so many books, news articles etc that focus almost exclusively on men. Hence, amazing women who lived in Somerset have often remained obscure. Countless women, imperfect and human just like us, have pushed boundaries, in big or small ways, so that future women could lead better lives— entering male-dominated spheres, demanding their rights, breaking gender norms, taking on positions of power... The list goes on. At times, these women's obscurity is just due to their gender but some women also faced multiple forms of discrimination, including social standing, race and disability. And so I was keen to investigate the hidden histories of "erased" women who lived, loved, worked and made a difference in Somerset.

Unsung Women in Somerset is made up of 23 chapters, most of which are short stories, the reason being to bring the women to life and to try to deepen our connection with them. It is available as an ebook, paperback and hardback from <https://books2read.com/unsung>.

Helen Pugh



Following on from our 2023 celebrations of being a Chilcompton community club for 30 years since formation, which finished with an exhibition held at the Somer Centre last November, the art club will once again be undertaking a full itinerary of events during 2024. In light of a very successful event last summer, we are already at an early planning stage to hold another 'Open Day' exhibition at the Chilcompton Sports Club during July. Once again visitors will be able to view and

purchase the works of the club members, as well as having a chat and some refreshments during their visit, so be on the lookout for the banners outside the club, and on social media for details in the summer. We are also anticipating holding another weeklong exhibition in the cloisters at Wells Cathedral in early October. During the year there will be various workshops and demos for the members to enjoy, and to expand their artistic horizons.



Our current membership is currently around about 30, and participation spread over two weekday sessions between 10:00am and 1:00pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. If you think that you would enjoy a relaxing few hours each week, painting or drawing, then you will be made most welcome, there are no constrictions put on ability, you can simply come along and do your own thing. The Chilcompton Sports Club has ample parking, disabled toilet facility, and a warm environment. Membership fees are very reasonable and allow you to attend on both days if you so wish. The club operates its own website www.chilcomptonartclub.uk as well as a Facebook group page, contact details are available on both.

Nigel Punchard

New Earth Women Gathering

Michele Bentley is hoping to establish a new innovative group for women to support women of all ages in the local community. Her dream is to ultimately create a women's hub to enable learning from others, celebrate creativity, have fun and take care of our well-being and happiness by supporting and empowering each other hopefully from this process meeting new friends.

The first meeting happened on February 6th which had a meditation theme. This was enjoyed by the group and they are looking forward to the next gathering.

Michele and her band of helpers have several talks and demonstrations planned for the spring/summer months and these include Morris Dancing, Wassailing and Emotional Freedom Technique EFT practice.

The idea is that after the talk/demonstration by the guest speaker they should all have a cuppa and an informal chat about other local courses and wellbeing events and catch up on how things are going for each other.

The next meeting will be held on the 5th March (*please contact Michele for future dates*) at Chilcompton village hall from 7:30 until 9:00pm there will be a small donation from those coming along to cover hall costs and refreshments.

Michele says: "Hopefully people will learn something new and the group will become about communication in the community."

If you would like more information about this new group please contact Michele
email: info@wildoakwellbing.co.uk FB: [New Earth Women Gathering](#)

Festive Cheer



On December 4th 2023 Chilcompton residents were treated to an afternoon of festive carols at the village hall. The music was provided by Mendip Brass Band and volunteers served mince pies to those attending.

The event was supported by the Parish Council and local businesses with the raffle raising **£386 in aid of the Somerset Air Ambulance**. There was great excitement as Mulberry had donated one of their expensive handbags for the raffle and this helped boost the money raised.

Thanks must go to Chilcompton Co-op, Mulberry, Veales Garage, Midsomer Quilting, Norton Green Garden Centre as well as all the volunteers and residents who supported the event.

Mike Newman

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Disruption at The Blue School



The discovery of serious structural damage to the school's Kennion block was the unexpected news that the head, Mark Woodlock, had to give us during the Christmas holidays.

Instead of going back to school in the new year, many children would have to start doing school work from home. I imagine that like me, most parents did not relish the prospect of home learning again. Even the children's initial excitement soon wore off when reality hit home.

The oldest parts of Kennion were built in the 1950s and you might have heard in the media about the problem of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) which has affected many schools in the country. Ironically, The Blue School received a certificate giving them the all clear from RAAC, just as most of Kennion block was being closed off. Structural engineers had found significant cracking amongst all the concrete floors, so extensive that they had to close 20 classrooms as well as various other vital spaces such as meeting rooms and catering areas. Whether the building is going to be fixed or completely rebuilt is not clear yet, but either way there will be a certain amount of disruption for a while; the school is making plans for temporary classrooms, which we hope will arrive by Easter.

Mark Woodlock and his senior leadership team have been excellent at communicating with parents throughout an ever-changing situation. The school has been looking at creative ways of using space, as well as looking for day trips to mitigate working from home. Millfield School kindly invited Years 7, 8 and 9 to three separate days over three weeks, which were very successful and were much appreciated by me and my two children, and I'm sure by many other parents.

Many of the younger children had to work from home in whole year groups initially, while GCSE and A level students have been at school throughout. Just before half-term, a new system whereby children would just work at home for one day a week was created. The students and staff have risen to the challenge remarkably and the whole community has responded with generosity and lots of practical help.

Although the Department for Education will be supporting the school with building works, the school's budget is being redirected into providing temporary and long-term accommodation. This means that the school might be unable to fund many of the precious extra-curricular activities, which are vital to the children. The PTA would be extremely grateful for any donations to the new JustGiving page, which has the additional option of Gift Aid (link below). This replaces a previous, hugely successful JustGiving page which was set up by a parent specifically for a much needed canopy to provide outdoor cover for the students. Every donation will support the school and its students during this period of unprecedented challenge

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/supporttheblueschool>

The children at The Blue School have already endured significant disruption to their education due to Covid and lockdowns. It's a huge shame that we are in this situation, but we are heartened by the moral support and kindness from a variety of schools, local businesses, families and friends.

Breaking News: It's just been confirmed that 'Kennion Village', a small group of temporary (but high quality) classrooms will be in place by the summer term.

Vivienne Wickham, Blue School parent

The Trains are Coming: One Villager's View

When I first heard Somerset and Dorset Railway Heritage Trust (SDRHT) plans to reinstate Chilcompton trains, my heart sank. In 1996 a similar proposal failed, as did a 2018 proposal to restore Chilcompton station. But this time it's different. The SDRHT now *own* the railway line from Tunnel Lane to Redan Bridge, and clearing has started.

Talking to villagers over several days, I found little had changed since those times. There was some support, but overall villagers were concerned about pollution, noise, disturbance, loss of privacy, wildlife habitat, and access to paths.

SDRHT suggested a new station could be built near the Redan Bridge, hardly any distance from people's home. Walk past Midsomer Norton station when the trains are running, and the noise, smell, and soot should convince you it wouldn't be a great neighbour. Owners of those homes must be reeling in disbelief right now as they read this.

Research shows diesel trains are overwhelmingly damaging to health; lung damage can occur in just 3 days, and DNA and immunity impacted*. 28,000 to 36,000 pollution-related UK deaths occur every year. Is that the environment we want to pass on to our children? Allotments are proposed in the field behind Bennell Close, but nitrogen oxide and diesel particulates are not great bedfellows for vegetables. A soil analysis would soon discourage growers. Might that field then be used for additional traffic and parking? At this stage anything feels possible.

Access was a frequent concern. The SDRHT are contractually obliged to reinstate fencing both sides of the line, permitting public footpaths but automatically blocking permissive paths. So Wells Rd residents will have to go to the playing fields, **no access for dogs**, or down Frys Well, to gain access to the line, and access will be reduced below it. A cycle path is proposed alongside the track but we don't need trains to have a cycle path. There are no trains along the Greenways in Midsomer Norton, and independent cycle-path organisations are clamouring for access to that path right now. Besides, who wants to cycle in diesel fumes?

The trains will never go past Midsomer Norton, or beyond the Redan Bridge, blocked both ends by insurmountable engineering feats or housing. So what is the point you ask? Heritage Railways are driven by passion for history and nostalgia - but is the reality of living beside one going to live up to the romance? The track goes through open countryside until it reaches Chilcompton, a populated area, so should the passions of the few dominate the lives of the many?

Let's face it, this is the biggest thing to happen in Chilcompton for years - and needs your action if you don't want it. We have roamed freely for decades through a peaceful wildlife corridor of deer, rabbits, kites, jays, butterflies and even bats. That will be replaced by blocked access, pollution, noise, traffic, parking problems, and loss of our peace and privacy.

Several planning applications by the SDRHT have slipped under the radar already. We cannot continue to sleep walk into this new reality. To be fair, the Trustees do *not* want to work *against* the village, but they have to know *what* the village wants. The Parish Council represent YOU, so galvanise them into repeating the 1996 public village meeting. Contact the Duchy, who own the field north of Tunnel Lane, where a vast lake of contaminated underground waste threatens to derail this project once and for all. Write to your MP. Look out for planning notices and alert the village. But do *something* if you don't want to live next to a station, or breathe in toxic air, as seven trains a day trundle up from Midsomer Norton on Sundays and high days.

chilcomptonrailwayissues@btinternet.com

Shannon Turner

<https://particleandfibretoxicology.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12989-019-0306-4>

History Corner

Recent history this time from the last century, all items are housed at the village hall.



This can be seen at the back of the stage; soon after the hall was built, the mural was painted by the Art group that was active in the 70s, and 80s, led by Rhona Rawson. It shows old buildings, St. John's and the Methodist churches and the old Post Office. Now demolished, the old asbestos village hall, St. Aldhelm's RC church and the Britannia Inn will be remembered by many of us. Also evident are Street Ponds and the former railway as well as local industries, coal mining, farming and the sawmills. The

principal of Bath College of Art came along to unveil the mural.

The parish council set up a committee in 1990 to twin Chilcompton with the French village of Montsûrs, Mayenne with John Lewis as chairman. In 1992, parish council chairman, Des Mattick exchanged scrolls* with his French counterpart. Flags of the two countries were painted in the village hall on the wall of the bar, then French visitors planted a commemorative tree at the new school on one of their visits. Many enjoyable exchanges followed including youth football teams and lifelong friendships were made. The group dissolved in 2014.



*Where is the scroll now? Does anyone know of its whereabouts?



This project was undertaken by the Chilcompton Society and masterminded by Joan Strawbridge. Each village group or club was asked to embroider a small square with a logo or relevant design, which edged the canvas. The centre was designed and sewn by Society members to record village events of the time. It shows new Millennium bells hung in St. John's church; children playing reflected the vision of the recreation pavilion, later opened in 2006. The

war memorial and Victorian lamp are also represented. Of the 30 clubs depicted, some such as Brownies, Twinning, Womens' Institute, Mothers' Union, Womens' Fellowship and CADS (drama group) are no longer in existence. Local novelist Janet Tanner unveiled the embroidery and reminded us that her children had been part of the Brownie pack.

Marlene Pickford

Notes From A Spring Garden



The signs of spring are all around and increasing by the day giving hope and optimism for the season ahead. Our snowdrops have been in flower and the crocuses are blooming in rich egg yolk yellow. As always with bulbs I can't remember what we have planted and where, so the little green shoots appear in tantalising clumps. These first spring flowering plants are extremely valuable for early flying insects and I have already seen a couple of precocious bumble bees beginning to seek out nectar. Down in the pond the water is stirring, frogs

and newts are coming out of hibernation and it won't be long until the first dollops of frogspawn appear.

The birds have started to sing too, a bit tentatively for now but we have heard the first blackbird and thrush of the year which really marks a turning point in the season. Over the winter we have had frequent large flocks of long tailed tits visiting the bird feeders, but today I saw just two together – they are beginning to pair up ready for breeding. We will continue to feed the birds until early summer, making sure that the feeders are cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis to prevent the spread of disease.



Kalettes or Flower Sprouts

To the casual observer the garden probably looks a bit of a mess at the moment – no, I'll rephrase that, it does look a mess – but it is intentional! We have left the dead stems of perennial plants standing and fallen leaves in the flower beds to provide shelter for wildlife. I'd like to think that somewhere in the garden there is a hedgehog hibernating, perhaps unlikely, but I can be confident that we are giving shelter to a host of invertebrates hibernating in hollow stems or keeping warm in the deep leaf litter. We will only cut back the dead stems when the weather warms up enough for the invertebrates to come out of hibernation which with luck will be before the new growth gets too tall.

The hedge that we planted this time last year is looking good and the buds are beginning to swell. The tallest of the plants in the hedge have reached the height that we are aiming for already and have been pruned accordingly which will encourage them to branch out and thicken up the hedge.

We are still harvesting kalettes. These, for those of you not familiar with them, are a cross between Brussels sprouts and kale, they look like open, frilly sprouts in dark green and purple and they taste as good as they look. We started harvesting them in early December and they should keep us going for another month. Meanwhile it's time to get going on this year's crops, the first broad beans have already been sown in pots in the greenhouse and we will soon be starting off other crops including tomatoes, chillies and peas.

Even if you haven't got a garden of your own you only have to take a walk through the village with your eyes and ears open to observe the changes, so I urge you to get outside and enjoy the full glory of spring as it unfolds.

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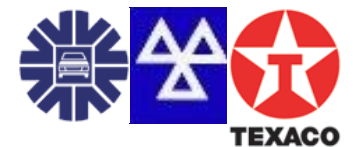


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Friends of St Chad's and Chilcompton Surgeries Great News

Our fund raising has paid for a Mobile Vein Scanner, a Bedfont NoBreath Feno Monitor, *(for improved asthma diagnosis, which the BBC reported in September was a real problem for many GP Surgeries)*, a Manual Doppler, 2 x Paediatric Oximeters, and several other items totaling over **£5,000**. Added to that we joined with the local Lions Club to **re-equip the Phlebotomy Room in Chilcompton Surgery**. We have staged talks on IBS, Bowel Cancer, Pelvic Physio, & Osteoporosis and we are now working on what can be arranged for 2024. The challenge is to find suitably qualified people who are not too busy and are willing to spend an evening in Midsomer Norton passing on their knowledge for free.



In 2024, we will see the merger of St Chads/Chilcompton with Somerton House Surgery, and we will be working with their Patient Participation Group to ensure we can all continue to support our local practices. The surgeries will issue a newsletter via their website very shortly and intend to issue monthly updates from now on.

Chilcompton continues to have a

GP on-site on Monday, Tuesday & Thursday mornings, and Nurse Clinics each morning – with Tuesday & Friday being the blood clinics.

It only remains for me to thank every person who bought a raffle ticket or supported the 100 Club again, and of course the local businesses and patients who donated prizes – **The Old Down Inn, Mitchard's the Butcher, Mechelle Barnes & Nicky Kays.**

It is a bit late, but The Friends wish all our patients and staff a
VERY HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

Please feel free to email me if you have feedback, questions, would like to volunteer to join in our efforts, know any speakers who may be available for a Health Talk, or simply want to join the 100 Club (£12 p.a.). 100 Club forms are also available in either surgery, or by email jsattlerevans@btinternet.com. Thanks again.

S

Email to the Editor

Subject: A long shot to say thank you



From: Sue Marsden

To: parishclerk@chilcompton.org

Today I have returned from Bath shopping at 3.30 and was unable to load up my sat nav (which had previously worked on my way there). I ended up getting very lost in Chilcompton with no alternative route and no workable sat nav. The road came to a close and no diversion signs. Cars were everywhere. The only thing I could do when it was safe was to stop the car and ask the first available person I met. This happened to be a lovely older woman called Rosemary from your village who not only helped me but insisted on getting in my car and directing me correctly to the right road to Shepton Mallet. Without her I would have wasted so much time. If you know of an older lady called Rosemary (she had a daughter) who would do such a thing please thank her from the bottom of my heart. I am so grateful to her. Obviously a complete shot in the dark (I come from a village of 400 and know everyone). Her kindness was outstanding and you must be justifiably very proud of having such a woman of this quality in your parish. She's done Chilcompton proud and I will forever have Chilcompton in my mind as a place that wins my heart.

Regards Sue Marsden



MENDIP BRASS BAND



Our Autumn/Winter programme began with a concert at Norton Down church, which was very well received. At the beginning of December we played at the village hall with Christmas music and carols. The proceeds of the raffle were donated to the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance. Everyone really enjoyed the music and carol singing. During December, we played at three carol services at Radstock, Chilcompton and Ashwick and also outside Kilmersdon church.

Although the weather was wet, we managed to play carols outside two supermarkets. On Christmas Eve the rain was so bad, that we were not able to stop at our usual village venues, but we went to the Somerset Wagon, where a good singsong was had by all.

Jenny Gould

We now begin to prepare for the Summer events.

Chilcompton Sports

Sports Club Update

This has been another busy year for the Sports Club which continues to provide a good meeting place for all of our sports sides, supporters and villagers.

The Club will be open through the year for all major sporting events on SKY, TNT and terrestrial TV in comfortable surroundings with no membership needed. This includes the Six Nations Rugby (February/March) and the European Football Tournament (June/July).

The Club also are delighted to be holding the Wessex Beer & Cider Festival on 7th and 8th June.

The Club continues to welcome participation in tennis, netball and athletics alongside the cricket and football. We are currently fundraising for a 3G surface for the hard-court area which we hope to start later this year. The Sports Club would like to thank the trustees, coaches and volunteers who all contribute to making Chilcompton Sports Club a venue to make the village proud.

Team with a lotta bottle

A Chilcompton Sports football youth side is playing with an eco-friendly kit made out of recycled plastic bottles.

These common environmental menaces are collected, cleaned, and repurposed into polyester yarn, the core material for the U-14 team's striking new kits.

This innovative process not only helps tackle the issue of plastic pollution but also promotes how grassroots sports can get involved in ethical and environmentally friendly initiatives.

When the team outgrew their kit, their existing sponsors, Sprout Consulting, wanted to go further and explore sustainable alternatives that aligned with the values of the business and its owners.

Chilcompton based Sprout provide flexible, down-to earth accountancy support services and strategic business advice to ethical, sustainable and purpose led businesses that have a positive impact on people and our planet.

Captain Adam Zalel says: *"It's very nice. It fits well, has a lovely design and is breathable."*



Chilcompton Sports

Football News

So far this season our U13s team are making fantastic progress in the Midsomer Norton Youth Football League. Since the start of the season in September they have won all five league matches played, quite the contrast from last season and are showing great promise for the second half of this season.



Chilcompton Sports u15 are currently top of the Avon Youth League in division 3 and have successfully challenged several teams in the higher division 2 this season. They are also in the quarter finals of the league cup and are hoping to bring the double win of cup and league winners home this season.



Soccertots

Soccertots is an introductory programme for Year 1 children and below. Concentrating on **Agility, Balance and Co-ordination** (the ABCs), this session is an introduction into ball mastery and the Coerver range of skills.



Soccertots is held on Saturday mornings 9-10am at the sports club and only £3 per week, the first session is **FREE**.

If you are interested in joining our Soccertots club please contact our manager **Matthaus Curtis** on **07704 243708** or email **matthauscurtis@outlook.com**.

Club Fund Raising

BINGO: Chilcompton Sports Club Wells Road, Chilcompton BA3 4EY, 1&2

Line prizes as well as fantastic cash prizes. Doors open 6:30 Eyes down

7:45. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** Contact **Hayley** on **07841 585289**.

FRIDAY 12TH APRIL (EASTER SPECIAL)



Our popular Horse Racing Night and main fundraising event will be held at the Sports Club on Friday 9th August from 7pm.

Hayley Fanning

Cricket News

Cricket Club – Senior Section

2024 will be our 10th senior season at Chilcompton Sports Cricket Club.

Indoor Senior Nets start on Sundays at Wells Blue Sports Hall from 2pm to 3pm (All new players welcome).

Outdoor Senior training will start on Thursday 28th March (6pm start) at Chilcompton Sports Club Nets.

The Senior Saturday 1st XI will compete in Division 4 of the Bristol & District League – First game Saturday 4th May home to Old Bristolians Westbury.

The Senior Saturday 2nd XI will compete in Division 8 (East) of the Bristol & District Division League.- First game Saturday 4th May away to Midsomer Norton Methodists.

The Senior Sunday 1st XI will compete in Division 4 of the North Somerset League – First game Sunday 5th May away to Old Down.

Cricket Club – Junior Section

In 2024 our popular Junior training sessions will be held at Chilcompton Sports Club on Wednesday evenings starting 17th April (Further details to follow on our Social Media).

No Membership required in advance, just turn up and join in the fun.

We have a group of Level 2 Coaches and helpers led by Kyle Gloudemans and are always looking for parents to help out.

We had a large number of Juniors play in the Senior sides in 2023 illustrating our smooth pathway from junior to senior Cricket at Chilcompton.

This season we will be running two sides in the Bath & District Youth League (U13 & U15) plus we will arrange some U11 friendlies.

In 2023 our U13s won the Bath & District Youth League which was covered in the last Magazine.



U13's with their Trophy & Medals

Main Club Sponsors, Main Contact & Social Media

Chilcompton Sports Cricket Club would like to thank our main sponsors for their fantastic support – **Kelvin & Caroline Parker, Spectrum Form Design Ltd, PG Owen Ltd and Parker Transport/Willmotts**.

Our Cricket Club is keen to recruit more senior and junior players for the new season. Please contact Dave Travis for further details on:

07725 458404 or **dave.travis@hotmail.co.uk**

Club Facebook - <https://en-gb.facebook.com/chilcomptoncc/>

Club Twitter - <https://twitter.com/Chilcomptoncc>

Club Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/chilcomptonssportscricket/?hl=en>

Club Website - <https://www.chilcomptonssports.com/cricket>

Cricket Club – Senior 1st XI Somerset Minor Cup Champions



Photos Nicky Clarke

Making up for a somewhat lacklustre league campaign, Chilcompton Sports' 1st XI enjoyed a fantastic T20 cup run that took them all the way to the final at the County Ground in Taunton.

Around 100 faithful Chilcompton fans and club members made the trip to Somerset's home of cricket on September 3rd for the potentially historic encounter. They were treated to a scorchingly hot day and a brilliant match against fellow finalists Chard. Batting first, Chilcompton made 169-4 from their 20 overs with captain Ben Futchter making a terrific 77 not out from 49 balls including four 6s. Tom Hancock and Adam Deverill also contributed with 43 and 23 respectively.

In reply, their opponents made a decent start, but were pegged back by disciplined bowling, committed fielding and the frequent fall of wickets. With Jack Ford and Tim Fussell taking two apiece, Chard only managed 154-7, falling 15 runs short and crowning Chilcompton as champions. "The final will be a day we will never forget and the performance on the day was superb," said skipper Ben Futchter, who was also named man of the match. "What an amazing achievement for the club."

Chilcompton T20 1st XI 169-4 v Chard T20 2nd XI 154-7 – Chilcompton won by 15 runs.



Beautiful Birds Enjoying the Village



Kingfishers have again been seen on the river but perhaps not as frequently as before.

Residents of Somer Lea have been treated to a magnificent Barn Owl hunting in the fields.

Pete Sinclair

Get up Close with Frog & Toad Spawn!



Running until **31 March 2024**, as part of the [Great Somerset Wildlife Count](https://www.somersetwildlife.org/wildlife/great-somerset-wildlife-count/), (our annual programme of citizen science events and activities), we need you to get out recording both toad and frog spawn in your garden ponds, local community ponds, and any ponds you come across in your adventures in the countryside.

DID YOU KNOW? In ponds from Frogspawn appears in ponds from January onwards, depending on the weather and the region (and here in the South West, we usually have the first sightings!).

Visit our **Frog & Toad Spawn Count web page**

<https://www.somersetwildlife.org/wildlife/great-somerset-wildlife-count/frog-toad-count> for information you need and to download your **FREE digital spotter guide**.

Let's do this. Please get spotting so we can ensure nature thrives. As well as recording, don't forget to share your findings with us on social media by using the hashtag **#spotthespawn**
Thanks so much for taking part.

