

Hinton Blewett Annual Parish Meeting 2017

CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S REPORT

We have a new face on the Council and I would like to welcome Simon Keith to his first Annual Parish meeting. Simon was co-opted following the resignation of Jonathan Layzell due to mounting workload. With Jonathan's resignation, it was with great pleasure that we were able to appoint Dave Duckett to the role of Vice Chairman.

I'll make no apology for repeating that the main job of the Parish Council is its role in responding to planning applications and development initiatives. Hinton Blewett is very much an unsustainable parish with its single track roads, lack of facilities and services and no daily public transport and it's important that the Council has the expertise and planning policies to back it up with which to respond on all development matters.

Whilst we are still waiting on the examining inspector's final report on the Placemaking Plan, started in 2013, the Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan has come together in little over three years and was adopted by B&NES on the 12th April. The Neighbourhood Plan now forms part of B&NES Development Plan and the policies in the Plan can now be given full weight when assessing planning applications that affect land covered by the Plan.

The inspector's final report on the Placemaking Plan which includes the Hinton Blewett character assessment is expected this month. It is hope that the report will also confirm designation of the three Locally Important Green Spaces put forward by the Parish Council at the Glebe, land South of Lower Road and the Playing Field on Hook Lane.

Regarding Highways, it was reported this time last year that there would be a site meeting with the Head of Highways. The meeting took place and we had a good response. Blocked gullies and drainage have improved as a result. However it seems that there still a reluctance to fill potholes.

The March litter pick took place again this year and although the turnout of residents was a little disappointing, the amount of litter collected was much reduced. The cumulative effect of the last four litter picks has probably helped as well as the relocation of one of our young residents.

I would like to thank all my fellow councillors for continuing to represent this parish and finally, and most importantly, the Parish Council would be nothing without the diligence and hard work of our Clerk, Emily. She has ensured that the Council is entirely up to date with all the relevant policies and procedures and that it operates the very best practice. The Council is anticipating qualifying as a Foundation Council shortly, with no little thanks to Emily who had worked so hard to ensure we succeed.

Liz Brimmell
Chairman, Hinton Blewett Parish Council
April 2017

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ST MARGARET'S CHURCH REPORT

During the past year we have had 1 Baptism, 1 wedding, 1 Internment of ashes with no service and 2 Burials, after services at St Lawrence.

In the continued absence of a volunteer to run the annual fete we again held a bazaar in December that featured a silent auction and a number of stalls which was well supported by the village and contributed just short of £1,000 to church funds.

Work on the repair of the remainder of the churchyard wall and the construction of the new path from the road to the porch were completed in 2016 and this concludes the works identified as needing doing to the churchyard.

Our efforts to encourage villagers into church has continued and whilst the Carol Service was not well supported, the Crib & Candle on Christmas Eve was more popular than ever, as the attached photo shows. We look forward to working with volunteers from the village this year in a bid to ensure that a well supported Carol Service can be held.

The flower ladies and grass cutting teams have continued to keep the Church and Churchyard look cared for with new villagers joining both teams, and we are grateful to them for all that they do to keep St Margaret's looking so loved.

Graham Sage and Robbie Drewett
Churchwardens



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VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

The main usage of the hall is by the Montessori Kindergarten, but it is also used for meetings of the Parish Council, the History Group and the Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. In addition, the hall has been used as the village Polling Station for several elections and referenda during the year, and for village social events such as the Christmas Bazaar and the Rustic Supper. The Village Hall Management Committee meet regularly to ensure that the fabric of the building is maintained, and that risks and legal requirements relating to health and safety, fire safety etc. are managed. Over the last year or so it has been necessary to spend considerable sums on repairs to the roof, a new water heater, floor repairs and new electrical wiring, and to update to a more efficient heating system.

This expenditure has been funded by money put aside from the rental income achieved over recent years.

David Huffadine
Treasurer
4 April 2017

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HISTORY GROUP REPORT

We are pleased to report that 2016 was yet another successful year in terms of membership and finances. The number of visitors increased over previous years, attracted by the excellent speakers: Mervin Wood spoke about the lost rivers of Bristol, Pip Osborne gave an update on the fifth year of excavations by the Community Archaeology Group at Chewton Mendip, Mike Hooper gave a slide presentation showing Old Market in earlier times, Dr Jodie Lewis interpreted recent research undertaken at Stanton Drew stone circle, Professor Ronald Hutton spoke eloquently about Henry VIII, Professor Alan Jocelyn gave a comprehensive account of the Bristol riots of 1831 and Tony Coverdale talked about the early copper and brass industry of the Avon Valley in the first half of the eighteenth century. At the members evening in December we enjoyed mince pies and mulled wine followed by an interesting presentation based on local cartography by Colin Budge.

We are indebted, to John Tansley for continuing as our efficient treasurer, to Maggie Beaton for reporting on our meetings to the local press and to all the willing members who help with refreshments and preparing and clearing the hall.

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LITTON & HINTON BLEWETT WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Our thriving WI now has some 50 members. At our AGM, in May 2016, Jenny Speed was voted in as president and Sue Fry as secretary. We now have 11 members from our village, still the most for several years.

June is WI outing time and 41 members and friends boarded the Bagheera in Bristol docks for a trip up the Avon. It was a warm summer evening as we toured around Bristol waterways looking at old buildings and new ones. We traversed Netham lock and out onto the Avon going as far as Hanham, noticing how green and rural the surroundings were. A black cloud suddenly shed its raindrops and the Perspex roofs were quickly slid into position! Our host, and boat captain, was a very knowledgeable young man who made the history of the waterways fascinating. He even spotted a peregrine falcon perched high up on a building. The committee organised a wonderful supper on board.

This was followed, in July, by a garden meeting at a member's house, held in the beautiful garden of Barley Brook house, the home of Georgina. We wandered around admiring the flowers and trees in the evening sunshine, sipping our Pimm's. No one ventured into the pool, although it did look inviting! A splendid supper was served indoors as the evening had cooled down.

In August, more of us gathered for a game of croquet in a member's garden, sitting in the sunshine together to have lunch.

The title of the talk in September was 'My Life at Sea' and so many of us were expecting to hear about the life of a female sailor. No such thing! Jan McNeil was an exuberant character who commenced her talk by bursting into song. It materialised that she was employed in ships' entertainment. Her talk was very lively and very entertaining. A child prodigy, her parents encouraged her singing talents and she sang professionally from the age of 14. With her accompanist, and later husband, they starred at clubs and music halls all over England and later turned to a life of entertaining on cruise ships. This life enabled her to visit many exotic places around the world and rub shoulders with many celebrities. Latterly, she was Entertainments Manager on the prestigious Seabourn liners where the highlight was the weeklong celebrations for Sir Cliff Richard's 60th birthday where many famous names were present.

Our speaker for October, Mike Spencer, gave an interesting talk entitled 'A walk in China', illustrated with beautiful slides. Mike, a supporter of St Margaret's Hospice, undertook a 50 mile hike along the Great Wall of China as a sponsored challenge. The wall dates back to the fourteenth century. The countryside was extremely rugged, the wall following jagged, precipitous hills and the whole walk was composed of steps both up and down. In places, the terrain was so rough it required going on 'all fours'. Health and safety does not appear to have reached China! The wall was frequently narrow, breaking up and having steep drops on either side with no hand rail! Needless to say this is not the part of the wall usually shown to tourists! He also showed us slides of modern China, Beijing and Shanghai, all high tech and new and compared it to peasant subsistence farming only half an hour away. China is a country of great contrasts.

In November, Maggie Campbell told us of her experiences working with the Samaritans. She is now the director of the Bristol branch of Samaritans, the organisation that is always available to listen confidentially to people in distress. Samaritans was started by a minister, Chad Varra after he had conducted the funeral service, following the suicide of a child who had no one with whom to share her anxieties. The organisation is non-religious, non-judgmental and totally confidential and it operates 24/7 in the Bristol branch. The volunteers listen but do not give advice. Bristol has 140

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volunteers whose initial training is 30 hours. As well as manning the phones, they go into schools and prisons to make people aware of the help they can give by just listening. Some of the calls can be very distressing and the volunteers sometimes need counselling to help them cope. A very interesting talk, if sometimes sad.

We finished the year in December when 23 of our members attended the WI Festival of Carols in Wells Cathedral where two of our members sang with the choir. WI ladies enjoyed a great Christmas meal at the Chew Valley kitchen. The combination of 36 ladies and a good supply of wine meant that the decibels crept up pretty high! Good food and good company put everyone into a festive spirit. Our normal meeting followed two days later. Our speaker, Elaine, demonstrated winter flower decorations making three beautiful arrangements, which were later put into a raffle. The lucky winners took home arrangements, which looked like a Christmas cake, a door wreath and a decorated cracker, all with lovely fresh flowers and foliage. Hopefully the rest of us took home inspiration!

2017 dawned and at our January meeting we enjoyed a social evening but we began by remembering our good friend Winifred Spencer who died in December. Winifred was a past president and a lively member of the WI and will be greatly missed. Our February speaker was Yvette Staelens who spoke about about the 'Lost Singers of Somerset'. The "lost voices" are the old folk songs of Somerset, which were passed from singer to singer, not written down because many rural singers were not literate. The songs were collected by people like Cecil Sharp in the 1800s. Cecil and a friend, Revd Martin, collected the songs, Revd Martin writing down the words and Cecil Sharp setting the music and photographing the singers. Many of the songs were collected very locally and Cecil came to Harptree Court at the invitation of Mrs Kettlewell. The singers also came to the Castle of Comfort to sing the Sheep Shearing song to Cecil Sharp. Gustav Holst set Somerset folk songs to music and many hymns are the tunes of old folk songs. Yvette gave a very interesting talk interspersed with her singing beautiful folk songs. At our March meeting, our speaker was James Cox and his talk was entitled, "A Head Gardener's Story". Early enthusiasm for horticulture was when his parents allowed him to plant a garden on the banks of the Severn where they had a chalet. The labours of Spring and the display of flowers in the Summer were washed away with the floods of winter. Undeterred, he became an apprentice gardener at Birmingham Botanic Garden, where his first working day involved stepping on cockroaches as they emerged from the roots of plants in the tropical house. This did not dull his enthusiasm! His next post was with Highgrove, followed by Anthony House in Cornwall and lastly Yeo Valley Garden where he was head gardener until 2015. For all these gardens he had colourful slides showing transformations and sometimes disasters. It was fascinating to see the stages of development of Yeo Valley organic garden over the years to its present splendour.

Our Wine Club and Diners' Club, which visits local restaurants on a monthly basis, continue to be well supported. We also have a sewing group making heart shaped cushions for the oncology department at the RUH and to date have made over 250 plus driver bags for portable drains. In the future, we are looking forward to a visit to the theatre in Wells.

A poster is displayed advertising the WI meetings on the noticeboard outside the pub. Through continued close communication, we hope many more residents of Hinton Blewett will be enticed to join our ranks in the future!

Chris Arnold
Retired President
Litton and Hinton Blewett WI

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REPORT FROM BEAT TEAM FOR NORTH MENDIP

Please find the yearly stats for the North Mendip Beat.

This year has seen a 10% increase on crime reported. There has however been a 29% decrease on ASB calls.

North Mendip still encompasses Timsbury, High Littleton, Hallatrow, Clutton, Farrington Gurney, Temple Cloud, Chelwood, Stanton Wick, Stanton Drew, Hinton Blewett, East Harptree & West Harptree.

In 12 months there have been 10 reported domestic burglaries. There were 4 in Clutton & 1 attempted. Temple Cloud reported 2 where 1 was reported in Farrington, East Harptree, High Littleton & West Harptree. Timsbury & Stanton Drew both reported 1 attempted domestic burglary each.

I've also looked at other Beats to see where that sits with other areas and found that Peasedown & Paulton reported 14 and Frome Rural North reported 8.

There have been 23 reports of non-dwelling burglaries. This includes burglaries at business premises, thefts from sheds & garages. There was a commercial break in Hinton Blewett and the Police have a suspect for that, enquiries ongoing. There were also overnight breaks reported in Timsbury at the supermarkets. It's likely that the supermarkets were part of a series of premises being attacked across the County. Hinton Blewett in 12 months has reported 1 non dwelling break & a domestic damage to a property.

Peasedown & Paulton reported 41 non dwelling burglaries & Frome Rural North reported 50.

There were 29 reports of theft from motor vehicles across the area. The general items taken were power tools but also Sat Navs, Lap tops were mentioned as items taken.

Peasedown & Paulton reported 45 & Frome Rural North 35.

There were 295 incidents reported in North Mendip, 397 in Frome Rural North & 696 in Peasedown & Paulton.

Your Beat Team still consists of Kate, Glyn and I. Your Police Service is committed to serving and keeping in touch with their communities. We're going into the Primary Schools in your area ensuring the children are made aware of staying safer on the internet. We're looking at starting new Community Speed Watches across the area. Glyn & Kate will be assisting the new groups. With all voluntary groups it needs numbers to survive rather than the same few faces. Hopefully that will happen.

Kind regards

PC 3455 Stuart Peard
Safer Stronger Neighbourhoods Team Radstock
Avon and Somerset Constabulary
General Enquires: 101 (Non-Emergencies Only)



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REPORT FROM THE MONTESSORI KINDERGARTEN

During this past year there have been many changes in rules and regulations within the Kindergarten. We have seen an increase in funded two year olds and all the changes to running the business. As many of you are aware we have collaborated with other nurseries for a better rate of pay for nursery funding and are awaiting the outcome of an amended agreement.

I have continued to add resources purchased from pupil premium funding which all the children have benefitted from.

I would like to thank the hall committee for the improvements made ie. the office and new shelving.

The children have enjoyed a variety of projects throughout the year including Chinese New Year. This term we are covering the seaside and road safety.

We remain optimistic that we will be here for many years to come.

Carmen Lyons
25th April 2017