

LOPEN EYE

Lopen Parish
Newsletter
FEBRUARY
2015



Breathing New Life into Lopen's Chapel

Due to sympathetic restoration by Weekes the builders, the Chapel is becoming once again a building that adds to the appearance of our village. The triple window has been fitted with stained glass which looks particularly stunning from the interior of the building.

Incidentally, wouldn't it be nice if the overhead cables were to be placed underground. (Ed.)



The chapel was built in 1864, at a cost of £250, for the local Methodist congregation.

(left) Work gets underway

Work begins on converting the chapel into a single bedroom dwelling with bathroom, sitting room, kitchen, office and workshop with garage space.

A lucky escape!

This car ended up on its roof after mounting the bank close to the Chapel in Holloway on Christmas morning. The photo, by Michael Canton, captures the scene with the emergency services in attendance. The young driver escaped without serious injury and, as far as is known, there were no passengers.



Parish Council Reports Back

Precept 2015/16

During our December meeting a budget was agreed for 2015/16 but the exact cost to the local taxpayer could not be confirmed as figures beyond our control (the tax base and Council Tax Reduction Scheme Grant) had not been published. We had hoped that the figures would remain as for last year, and so would result in an increase of 1.99%.

Since then, the outstanding information has been received and, disappointingly, the grant has been reduced and the tax base varied. With these changes applied, the same budget now shows a 3.59% increase resulting in an uplift in the precept charge of £1.66 per band D property per year, which was formally accepted during our recent January meeting.

South Petherton Local Plan

During Lopen PC's meeting on the 26th January, members of the recently formed South Petherton Local Plan Committee gave a short briefing on their plans going forward. Graham Gatehouse (Parish Council member) and Paull Robathan (Committee Chair) attended our meeting. Paull explained the trigger for this process was concern within the South Petherton community over the scale of development being thrust upon them and their wish to gain some control to limit the numbers and to establish the community's view on what is acceptable/preferred development.

The first stage would be to update the existing village plan which will deal with very broad issues (including aspects not related to planning) and he hoped this would be completed over the next 6 months. After this, if it was considered there was merit in proceeding to adopt a much more formal plan (more legally binding) in the form of a Neighbourhood Plan, this would follow on, and an application has

already been submitted to South Somerset District Council to approve and establish a Neighbourhood Plan area. In this case covering the entire administrative area of South Petherton PC. Over the coming weeks their intentions will be advertised followed by extensive community engagement and consultation including our PC where/if appropriate.

Eggwood Hill Site

Our attempts to acquire the lease for the Eggwood Hill site together with Hinton St. George and Merriott PCs continues. All three Councils have now agreed the draft lease subject to conditions (chiefly an indemnity from any unforeseen site pollution aspects and improvements to the condition/security of boundary fences). Somerset County Council have yet to respond to these conditions and the matter can not yet be concluded.

Election on 7th May

With the Local (and National) elections being held in May, the current Lopen PC team have only a few months left to serve and now is the time to encourage new potential members to put themselves forward for election. We have yet to receive confirmation that our request to increase the Council size from 5 to 7 members has been approved, but we should know the outcome of this soon.

I personally hope we have sufficient candidates coming forward (more than the Council size) to trigger an election within Lopen (we have budgeted for it). It is much healthier all-round if the local population choose their Council members rather than, as it was with the current administration, simply made up of those who applied. If anyone is considering standing and wants to find out more about the role and what it entails, I will gladly make myself available to do this.

Barry Davolls (Lopen PC Chairman)

01460 242 297

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LOPEN HISTORY GROUP "on hold"

It was decided by a unanimous vote at the Extraordinary General Meeting of January 20th that activities of the Lopen History Group should be suspended for the time being.

(The Group, founded some twenty years ago, will remain in suspension whilst two of its members work on turning the large amount of the documentation of Lopen's past into digital form.)

This regrettable turn of events is simply because the committee has retired after several years in office and, despite appeals in Lopen Eye and elsewhere, no one has come forward to manage the affairs of the Group. The History Group has a good number of members who have attended regularly the monthly talks and its finances are in a healthy condition. An alternative motion to disband the Group completely was rejected without opposition.



A volunteer drivers scheme for Lopen is under consideration - further details in the March EYE. Meanwhile, please give some thought to being asked occasionally to help a villager out by giving them a lift to a clinic or similar.

FREE MICROCHIPPING

Microchipping is an effective and permanent way to link a dog and its owner. Important in the case of lost or stolen dogs.

11am - 3pm

Wednesday 4th Feb. & Friday 20th Feb.

NINESPRINGS CAFE at
YEOVIL COUNTRY PARK

Just turn up with your dog!



DogsTrust

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

WEDNESDAY 25th MARCH

Lent Lunch in the Schoolroom

(the time, etc. will be in the March Lopen Eye)



Sally Ann writes...

Please come and enjoy a Ploughman's Lunch with friends and family and support this very worthwhile cause.

According to UNICEF figures, 20% of the world's child population will never attend school.

School in a Bag is a simple solution created to help poor, orphan, vulnerable and disaster affected children throughout the world. **Each SchoolBag is filled with stationery, learning resources and eating utensils that will enable a child to write, draw, colour, calculate, express themselves and above all learn.** An education for these children could be their passport to a life out of hardship and poverty.

All proceeds from the lunch will be donated to the charity School in a Bag based locally at Chilthorne Domer. www.schoolinabag.org.

SATURDAY 14th MARCH

2-4pm

at the Schoolroom

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP

Making Gifts for Mothering Sunday (15th)

Please call Angela on 240 921

to reserve places and to ensure that there will be enough craft materials



15 mother's day gifts from kids



Lopen JUST WOMEN

For further information
please call
Margaret Linton
Tele 241 162

TUESDAY 10th FEBRUARY
at 7.30pm in the Schoolroom

We shall be holding our AGM with election of officers for the coming year. This will be followed by a talk from a podiatrist who will answer any questions you might have.



CONTACTS

Village website <http://lopen.btck.co.uk>

PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman	Barry Davolls	242 297	b.davolls.lopenpc@btinternet.com
Vice Chairman	Nicola Norman	240 458	n.norman.lopenpc@btinternet.com
	Stephen Crane	241 412	scrane1@hotmail.co.uk
	Teresa Sienkiewicz	241 363	tslopenpc1@btinternet.com
	Sarah Mason	249 219	sarahmason6@yahoo.com
Parish Clerk	Kim McDonald	242 297	mcdonald.lopenpc@btinternet.com

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Barry Walker	242 894	barry.walker@southsomerset.gov.uk
Cllr Paul Thompson	240 510	paul.thompson@southsomerset.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr Christopher Le Hardy	01935 850 212	clehardy@somerset.gov.uk
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MEMBER of PARLIAMENT

The Rt Hon David Laws	01935 423 284	david.laws.mp@parliament.uk
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ALL SAINTS CHURCH Benefice Office

	73226	Issy Welsh
Rectors Rev. Julia Hicks, Rev. Bob Hicks	76406	
Churchwarden Angela Naunton Davies	240 921	nauntondavies@btinternet.com

Services are listed on the Church noticeboard

JUST WOMEN

Chairman	Lynn Benfield	929 205	lynn.ian@virgin.net
Treasurer	Zena Morgan	77259	zenam1@hotmail.co.uk
Secretary	Margaret Linton	241 162	margaretlinton79@yahoo.com

POLICE CSO

Ceara Sturt	101 and ask for PCSO 8340
	ceara.sturt@avonandsomerset.police.uk

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

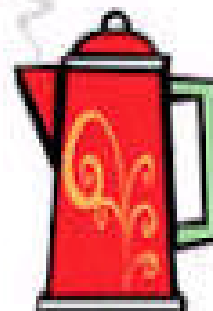
Martin Howell	241 765	samhowell@sky.com
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LOPEN EYE

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COFFEE MORNINGS at the SCHOOLROOM

**ALL WELCOME -
INCLUDING PARENTS
WITH YOUNG CHILDREN**



in **FEBRUARY**

Wednesday **11th & 25th**
10.30 until 12.00 midday.

Only £1 for a hot drink
(and refill) plus a slice
of home-made cake.

*The views expressed in Lopen
Eye are not necessarily those
held by Lopen Parish Council
and its members*