

LOPEN *Life*

JUNE - JULY 2023



*Local
Events
& Diary*

*Lopen
History
Casebook*

*Join the
Village
WhatsApp
group*

ISSUE 05

Location: Forge House, by Project 26, Oak supplied by: Hewins Oak.



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Edit this...

Knowing we may all be replaced by AI (artificial intelligence) at some point in the future could be depressing, but also quite exciting to know writing this could be delegated, and even better blamed on someone else! But we still will need people on the Parish Council!

In the meantime, welcome to the latest issue of Lopen Life. Lots to review from April and May, and even further back - some 2000 years, courtesy of a new feature Lopen History Casebook. Chapter 1, the extraordinary story of our Lopen Roman Mosaic.

There is an update on the Sunday School Room Appeal and highlights from the Annual Village Meeting from May 17th for those unable to attend, with key Village information.

Check-out the forthcoming diary dates for June and July, and we are pleased to announce the **LOPEN Village WhatsApp Group** is now OPEN - **Send the Editor (email below) your mobile number and name, and we will add you to the Group.** This will be for Village-wide messages, alerts, news and reminders. Hope you will find it useful.


Finally, a seasonal shout-out to dog walkers, PLEASE keep dogs on leads in the fields with sheep, especially with lambs, thank you.

Chris Marsh - Editor

Next issue deadline for diary dates, articles and stories is July 12th.

Contact Details:

Email: chrismarshlpc@gmail.com

 [/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/](https://www.facebook.com/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/)

Visit our village website: www.lopenvillage.org

PUBLICATION FOOTNOTE:

- **COPY Deadline** – for articles and photographs – **4 weeks prior to next issue.**
- Adverts need to be submitted in PDF format – details on sizes and rates are available from the Editor
- All comments and views expressed are the responsibility of the writer and are not those necessarily held by Lopen Parish Council and its members.

Lopen Parish Council

MONTHLY MEETING ROUND-UP WELCOME BACK:

- April 1 - New Council vesting day went well.
- New web site - www.somerset.gov.uk
- New phone number:
0300 123 2224
- **Local Councillor Adam Dance** will be leading Public Health, Equality & Diversity
- **Local Councillor Jo Roundell Greene** will be Associate Lead for Children's Services and Schools.
- **'Bus-It'** £2 single fare anywhere in Somerset programme is extended to the end of June 2023
- Free online support for unpaid carers available on mobiliseonline.co.uk/somerset
- **Volunteer Drivers needed** for medical appointments - over 18 with a 4 door car? Fuel re-imburement. Find out more on volunteering.somerset.gov.uk/drive/

To our 'new' Parish Council Clerk - Lisa Wilson. It is in fact a return for Lisa, who used to be our Parish Clerk, and has taken over from Jane Collins as of May.

COUNCIL RESHUFFLE:

As of May 17th Parish Council Meeting Nick Jones has been elected Chairman of the Parish Council, and Stephen Crane, after many years as Chairman, as taken on the role of Deputy Chairman.

NEEDED: 1-2 Parish Councillors

Okay we are small - but beautifully proportioned as they say - however we do need more people on the Parish Council to keep us ticking along and continue to make our Village the place we want it all it to be.

NEXT MEETINGS:

**Monday JUNE 26th
& Monday JULY 31st
at 7.00 PM** in the Sunday School Room.
Everyone welcome.

PARISH COUNCILLORS:

Chairman – Nick Jones - nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com - 01460 241643

Stephen Crane – scrane1@hotmail.co.uk – 01460 241412

Jenny Feeney – jfeeneylopenpc@gmail.com – 01460 419569

Chris Marsh – chrismarshlpc@gmail.com – 07951 239110

Caroline McKendrick – caroline.mckendrick.lopenpc@outlook.com – 01460 359201

Parish Clerk – lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com - Lisa Wilson - 07587 211150

OTHER CONTACTS:

District Council: Cllr Adam Dance - 07767 224213 - adam.dance@somerset.gov.uk

Cllr Jo Roundell Greene - 07341 560016- jo.roundellgreene@somerset.gov.uk

Member of Parliament - Marcus Fysh - marcus.fysh.mp@parliament.uk

Just Women - Pauline Rook - 240644 - prook12@gmail.com

Lopen Lads - Trevor Power - 07878 185537 - trevorpowermbe1967@gmail.com

Neighbourhood Watch - Carron Richards - 242640 - carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk

Caroline McKendrick - 359201 - carolinemckendrick@outlook.com

Police CSO - Mike Bell - Dial 101 and ask for PCSO 7954 - mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK

All Saints Church

All Saints Church in Lopen is an important centre for the village. Not only is it a place of worship, but a vital community building also used for concerts, meetings and events.

SERVICE DATES:

Every Monday at 9:00am

Morning Prayers lasting about 30 minutes is said for the people of Lopen.

JUNE Services:

Sunday 4th - Holy Communion at 9.00

Sunday 18th - Parish Communion at 10.30

JULY Services:

Sunday 2nd - Holy Communion at 9.00

Sunday 16th - Parish Communion at 10.30

Rev Bob and Julia Hicks 01460 76406

bobhicks66@gmail.com juliahicks1@gmail.com

Jonathan Delbridge 01460 240025

info@jonathandelbridge.com.

After many years of devoted service, Angela Naunton Davis stepped down as Church Warden at our APCM in May and some of our PCC members are also needing to step back from the roles they are currently undertaking. In order to guarantee the future smooth running of the church and the maintenance of this beautiful building, we desperately need more people to volunteer to help. While PCC members and Church Wardens do need to be actively participating in the spiritual life of the church, there are many other roles that don't require regular attendance at services.

If you appreciate the beauty of our church and graveyard and would like to play your part in helping to maintain this important part of our community then we would love to hear from you. Contact Bob, Julia or Jonathan



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**CONTACT - Chris - 07714 631007
- 01460 240506**

What you may have missed...

Village Clean Up... April 2nd & May 13th

The Lopen Loppers and Litterpickers started the challenge on April 2nd - 7 helpers cleaned the road signs, started on the Lopenhead roundabout, attacked some of the footpaths, and litterpicked. May 13, was just 4, but see what a difference a couple heads and hours make! Join us - check diary for next dates - more heads make light work and great Village!



L'Open Arms - Pop Up Pub Bingo Night - 31st March

Some 25 eager participants and imbibers at the L'Open Arms Pop Up Pub Bingo night had a great time and managed to raise over £100 for the Sunday School Room Fund. Look out for the next events and dates.

Lopen Lads - Walk-about/Talk-about April 15th saw the Lads head off to South Petherton and walk to the Old Dairy Cafe at Bower Hinton for some well earned brunch. And May 14th saw a visit to the Tinkers Bubble community for a guided tour and walk. New adventures each month.



Easter Treasure Hunt - some 22 children and 20 plus adults joined in the fun, hunting for the answers to the clues to win an Easter Egg, enjoying the cake and refreshments on Easter Monday, and raising £62 for the Lopen Village Fund in the process. Big thanks to Trevor Power for everything - the organising, energy, eggs, games and patience!

JUNE - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
10th Saturday	Walk for Water - 11.00am St Peters & St Pauls Church South Petherton	Charity Walk see Pg 11 - 'Always look on the bright side' for details
13th Tuesday	Just Women Outing 2.00pm Visit to Chideock Manor Gardens, Church, Village & Museum	£15 incl refreshments. Partners & Friends welcome
14th Wednesday	Coffee Stop Sunday School Room 10.30am	Tea, coffee, cake and a catch up - all for a good cause
17th Saturday	Lopen Lads - Meet 9.30am Sunday School Room Visit and walk to Burrow Hill Cider Farm	Tour & Tasting £10 per head additional Pizza Van offerings as needed!
24th Saturday	Wilder Open Gardens Tea and cake and all things wild 2.30-4.00pm, Oswalds, Church Street	Tea, coffee, cake and plants in aid of Somerset Wildlife Trust
24th Saturday	TBC - Village Clean Up No 3 2.00-5.00pm Meet at corner of Holloway and Frog Street	Bring tools, gloves and humour!
26th Monday	Lopen Parish Council Meeting Sunday School Room - 7.00pm	All Welcome
28th Wednesday	Coffee Stop Sunday School Room - 10.30am	Tea, coffee, cake and a catch up - all for a good cause
30th Friday	L'Open Arms - Pop Up Pub BBQ Night !! Sunday School Room - 7.00pm	Everyone welcome Contact Keith for details - 07852 614 179

July - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
4th Tuesday	US Independence Day	
11th Tuesday	Just Women Meeting 2.00pm Visit to Sherborne Castle	Members only £17 Contact Pauline Rook 240644
12th Wednesday	Coffee Stop Sunday School Room - 10.30am	Tea, coffee, cake and a catch up, all for a good cause
16th Sunday	TBC - Lopen Lads	Contact Trevor 07878 185537
22nd Saturday	TBC - Village Clean Up No 4 2.00-5.00pm Meet at corner of Holloway and Frog Street	Bring tools, gloves and humour!
26th Wednesday	Coffee Stop Sunday School Room - 10.30 am	Tea, coffee, cake and a catch up, all for a good cause
28th Friday	 L'Open Arms - Pop Up Pub Strawberries and Pimms Sunday School Room - 8.00pm 	All Welcome Contact Nicki for details - 07513 097 830
31st Monday	Lopen Parish Council Meeting Sunday School Room - 7.00pm	All Welcome

more you may have missed...

King and Queen's Coronation Weekend 6th/7th/8th May

The Coronation Weekend saw a mixture of weather, a host of televised activities in addition to the Coronation itself and a long weekend to get together and have some fun.

The Village Coronation Picnic at 3 pm on the Saturday was a great excuse to stretch the legs and get away from the television, just as it seemed to dry out. Some 50 villagers managed to get together in the Sunday School Room, the Church and outside. Lots of red, white and blue, food and bubbles all round. Many thanks to Nicki for getting it all together.



Lopen Plant Fair - 14th May

Many thanks to all those who donated or bought plants, we raised a total of £1630.00, which was split across 3 Ukrainian projects - supporting the rebuilding efforts in a neo-natal unit, a school and an apartment block in Irpin.



Lopen Village Annual Meeting - 17th May

A strong, vocal turnout, and we ran out of time - so more time needed next time!

Key points included the following:

- New Village Website up and running - but village groups and volunteers need to input events, diary dates and news to keep it up to date.
- Road Safety - SID speed camera reporting to be reinstated to track volume and speeds to support roadway actions.
- Highways to be contacted to unblock drains - esp. round Mill Lane
- Lopen Loppers & Litter Pickers, Footpaths Officer and the village Ranger work to be centralised to best effect.
- Steve Chapman and fund raising team have worked tirelessly and been successful in raising funds, but more volunteers, events and funds still need please.
- More people in the village need to get involved, as too much still depends on too few - an hour or two a week can make all the difference.

Always look on the bright side...

Join us for
tea, cake and a

Wilder
Open Garden



Sat June 24th
2-4.30pm

Oswalds, Church Street, Lopen TA13 5JX
(and 2 other church street gardens)

Join us for **tea and cake** in the garden to help us raise vital funds for wildlife, and see how you can make a few changes for nature in your own outdoor spaces.

Raising funds in aid of Somerset Wildlife Trust

Registered Charity No. 238372



Rainfall report 3rd May 2023:

March was a very wet month – to quote the Environment Agency “March 2023 is the third wettest March since records began in 1891, Wessex hasn’t received this volume of rainfall in March since 1947.” Rainfall occurred daily from the sixth of March every day to the end of the month.

April was on the damp side of average, with temperatures below average for the time of year. As gardeners know, plants have been slow to get going this Spring.

Calendar year to date we have had above average rain despite the dry February.

The hosepipe bans in Cornwall and West Devon seem a mystery given that those areas have had at least average rain in the last 12 months – I expect their reservoirs do not hold enough water and rely on Summer rain to top them up (which of course was deficient last year). Wimbleball reservoir is now full so there is no hosepipe ban for East Devon/ West Somerset.

JEREMY ROOK



Walk for Water 2023 June 10th
Start point - St Peter & St Pauls
Church, South Petherton @ 11am

Come join us to **walk for water** – enjoy a fabulous circular walk through woodland, meadows and riverside (6 -12 miles) or take a break at one of our excellent local pubs. Full map and details available at the start point.

Make it a family adventure! Dogs welcome! Bring a picnic!

WATSAN is a UK charity dedicated to the support of a water and sanitation programme in South West Uganda. Thanks to WATSAN's work, people in rural communities have access to life-saving clean water and hygienic toilet facilities. More details from website: <https://watsanuganda.org> or revgurner@btinternet.com

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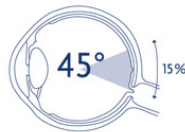
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Sunday School Room Renovation & Fundraising Update

We are so grateful to all those who have contributed to our fundraising campaign for the Sunday School Rooms (SSR). So far we have already raised over £18,500 towards our target of £60,000, which is made up of personal donations, gift aid (to be claimed), fundraising events, (The West Side Story Singalong raised over £750 for example), PCC reserves and a grant of £6,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation. Many thanks to all of you for your support!

BUT more is needed - please help in any way you can.

In addition to this, our hard working treasurer, Steve Chapman, has been applying for further grants, which we hope to hear back from soon. This fundraising really is vital to this important community building. The thatch is in urgent need of repair and is unlikely to survive another Winter. While temporary repairs have been carried out to the floor so that the building can continue to be used, a new floor is desperately needed.



A question has been raised over the ownership of the SSR and we are very grateful to the Rev. Preb. Stephen Lowe who has undertaken considerable research on this, including going through the Minute Book: School Board Parish of Lopen.

He has summarised his findings by stating “the building is a charitable trust of the Vicar and Churchwardens for the benefit of the Lopen Villagers and Church members, with legal ownership vested in the Diocese of Bath and Wells, and with the financial responsibility held by the PCC”. If anyone has any questions about this or would like to see the full report produced, please don't hesitate to get in touch

Lopen History Casebook

CHAPTER 1 - The Lopen Roman Mosaic

With the Roman equivalent of the M5 - The Fosse Way - running through what we call Lopenhead and Broomhill/Snapant, its safe to assume something Roman would crop up in the area. However the size and scale of what was unearthed was the real surprise.

Just over 20 years ago, a sharp-eyed digger driver needing to clear a new driveway, saw cube-shaped stones of various colours coming up in the space being cleared. The property owner realised they were something of note and contacted the County Archaeologist. His experience told him that they were likely to have been used for a mosaic pavement floor.

The story that unravelled over the next few weeks and the subsequent years have had a dramatic effect on our understanding of this landscape and village.



Further investigation made it apparent that this was a large and almost complete mosaic and was of major importance and subsequently of national significance. However it was autumn, and if left unprotected from the winter weather it would have broken up and been lost for ever.

In the following month using non-invasive archaeological techniques what was discovered was carefully cleaned, recorded and protected.



It was then expertly covered and buried again to make sure it was not damaged but remained in its original position where it had been for almost 2000 years.

The find generated an extraordinary level of the publicity. Nation wide news gave bulletins and even announced weather forecasts over Lopen. It extended internationally, including a feature in Time Magazine in the USA.

Then all went silent, as there was nothing left to show for the four short weeks of activity. However it was important to make sure it was not to be forgotten. A panel was reconstructed from the foot worn tesserae, and was placed in the only permanently accessible covered space in the village - the Church, and is all that is left to see of what lies beneath part of our little village.

This enables us to continue to touch the lives of the Romano-British inhabitants of Lopen of 2000 years ago.


BUT - it was all filmed, and a newly edited release of the story and the Lopen Mosaic is scheduled for the weekend of July 8/9th 2023.

We will show the film in the Sunday School and Church and will be displaying a variety of objects associated with the excavation and some aspects of Romano British life.

For timings and more information see lopenvillage.org or look out for posters.



Lopen Raj



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