

LOPEN *Life*

APRIL - MAY 2024



Local
Events &
Diary

Could this
be Lopens
new Village
space?

ISSUE 10



PROUD SUPPLIERS OF OAK FOR THE
HULLASEY GROVE & HEMLOCK BARN
DEVELOPMENT CONSTRUCTED BY



Edit this...

I promise not to mention the weather again - unless we see a radical improvement ! But in the meantime, Jeremy Rook gives us an update on the subject we dare not discuss!

Hopefully everyone had a good Easter and thanks to Jonathan and the team for the celebration of the event. A couple of specific call outs in this issue are the update on the Sunday School Room Fund - through the extraordinary efforts of Steve Chapman and the team we have managed to obtain additional Lottery Funding so the work planned can go ahead. Check out the update.

Also as teased on the front cover, the long held dream of the village to have its own 'public space' for events and getting together. Some details after the diary pages.

And as a segue from Joan Farris's history on our inns in the last issue, we need volunteers to host the Lopen 'Pop Up Pub' evenings - more details inside. Time for you latent Landlords to step forward.

Enjoy!


Chris Marsh - Editor

Next issue deadline for diary dates, articles and stories is May 10th 2024. I would very much appreciate anyones input on subjects, stories and photographs related to the village. It only needs to be a paragraph or two, or more. This platform is your (our villagers) voice, please feel free to input to it.

Thank you.

Contact Details:

Email: chrismarshlpc@gmail.com

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

Visit our village website: www.lopenvillage.org





ROBERT FRITH OPTOMETRISTS

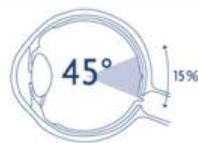
Experienced optometrists delivering outstanding eye care
in a relaxed and friendly environment.

A wide range of products and services including tailor-made
spectacle frames and lenses, emergency eye care and the
latest in 3D eye scanning technology.

Introducing the New **optomap**
ultra-wide field retinal imaging
technology, giving us a comprehensive
view of your eye health



with **optomap** ultra-widefield
retinal imaging



without **optomap**

28 Princes Street, Yeovil

01935 474333

We are happy to collect any unwanted glasses for us to use in our eye testing work in Kenya.

AUTOHOUSE



CARS

Looking to sell your car?

Talk to a real local market professional

- Not a registration machine
- Free valuation & collection
- No admin fees or hassle
- I pay what I say - instantly
- Family business since 2007

CONTACT - Chris - 07714 631007

- 01460 240506

Lopen Parish Council

MEETINGS ROUND-UP

- Somerset Council have announced a £100m budget gap in Council Plans, with some services being protected, but discussions with many areas including waste management are still under review.
- Voting is on the cards in 2024, so make sure your details are up to date. Aside from the likely General Election later this year, there is the vote for the Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on 2nd May. Check your details on

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/register-vote-and-update-your-details>

- Check diary dates for a round of Village Council Meetings in addition to the regular end of month Lopen Parish Council Meetings - a proposed Village Meeting on 26th April at 6.30 pm, and Annual Parish Meeting on May 20th.

NEXT LPC MEETINGS:

Monday 29th April 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

What you may have missed...

Snowdrop Planting

Many thanks to those who kindly donated snowdrops and to Mike from East Lambrook Manor Gardens who very generously gave us – at bargain prices – over 100 snowdrops for our churchyard. And thanks also to those who turned out on a damp Saturday to help plant them all. We hope next year to repeat the beautiful display that heralds Spring, for all to enjoy.



The Churchyard Eco Team

Sunday School Room - Update

In the previous edition I reported that the funding appeal had reached £39,444 towards our target of £60,000. The great news is that we have now received £20,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund taking us to within a whisker of our target.

The re-thatching contract was previously awarded and will be done later this year. However, with this award we now have the funds to replace the floor.

Water pooling beneath the floor and inadequate ventilation have been the main causes of the decay. Specialist advice has been sought and a specification of work is being drawn up in order to obtain Listed Building Consent and a tendering specification for a permanent solution. I am advised that the funds earmarked for the floor are adequate leaving the balance for the servery replacement and updated heating and lighting. It is hoped that the small group that Sarah & Richard Gibson are recruiting to help manage the School Room will be fully involved in this.

Although £43,500 has been raised in grants, some £12,000 has come from fundraising and PCC reserves so we do now need to replenish our reserves. Additional donations and further fundraising events will be most welcome.

Steve Chapman, PCC Treasurer

All Saints Church

SERVICE DATES:

Every Wednesday at 08.30

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

APRIL Services:

Sunday 7th - 9.00 am

Sunday 21st - 10.30 am

MAY Services:

Sunday 5th - 9.00 am

Sunday 19th - 10.30 am

Rev Bob and Julia Hicks

01460 76406

bobhicks66@gmail.com

juliahicks1@gmail.com

Jonathan Delbridge

01460 240025

info@jonathandelbridge.com

Please check the Church Porch notice board for latest information

All Saints
Church Lopen

Present a concert by the a cappella choir

**Parnham
Voices**

Directed by Stephen Tilton

**In
Springtime**

Sunday 12th May 3 PM

Music includes 'To daffodils' Farrar, 'My spirit sang all day' Finzi, 'It was a lover and his lass' Rutter, 'Thule, the period of cosmography' Weelkes, 'As Vesta was' Weelkes

Tickets £10 available from info@jonathandelbridge.com or 01460 240025

Booking in advance is essential as All Saints Lopen is quite a small venue and seating is limited. Wine and soft drinks are available during the interval.

APRIL 2024 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Monday 1st 	EASTER Monday	Public Holiday 
Tuesday 9th	Just Women 7.30 PM - Sunday School Room Dr Francis Burroughes History of Glassmaking and Collection	Details from Jean Morton
Wednesday 10th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and £1
Saturday 20th	Lopen Lads Out and About and Chat	Details to follow from Trevor 07878 185537
Monday 22nd 	POP-UP-PUB - 7.30 Sunday School Room The L'Open Arms is looking for Volunteer Landlords to help host the evenings once per month - go on - you know you want to!	 Contact Mary Chapman for details: mechapman2016@gmail.com
Wednesday 24th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Friday 26th	Annual Village Meeting 6.30	Sunday School Room
Monday 29th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome

MAY 2024 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Monday 6th	May Bank Holiday	Take the day off!
Wednesday 8th	Coffee Stop 10.30 - 12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for good cause and a £1
Saturday 11th 	Lopen Plant Fair The Old Bakehouse, Holloway	10am - 3pm 
Sunday 12th	Parnham Voices Concert 3.00 PM All Saints Church Tickets £10 Inc Refreshments	Book via Jonathan Delbridge 01460 240025
Tuesday 14th	Just Women 7.30 pm Sunday School Room David Mclean - National Trust on Martocks Priest & Treasures Houses	Details from Jean Morton
Saturday 18th	Lopen Lads Out and About and Chat	Details to follow from Trevor 07878 185537
Monday 20th	Parish Council Annual Meeting	SSR - 7.00
Wednesday 22nd	Coffee Stop 10.30 - 12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat all for a good cause and a £1
Friday 31st	POP-UP-PUB L'Open Arms ready and waiting for a new Host!	Contact Mary Chapman for details: mechapman2016@gmail.com

LOPEN SPRING PLANT FAIR

Saturday 11th May

10.00am to 3.00pm

**The Old Bakehouse, Holloway
Lopen TA13 5JU**

For a wide variety of outdoor and indoor plants. Our last sale so everything to go.

PLANT FAIR NEWS: This year's sale in May will be the last Plant Sale run by Marian and Christianne as they are stepping back to focus on other projects. Over the last 10 years we have held one, usually two and sometimes three separate plant sales each year and have raised over £20,000 for the village and other local and international charities. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported these events and help make them such a success.

LOPEN VILLAGE PUBLIC SPACE OPPORTUNITY



The Village has been presented with a unique opportunity to take a 25 year zero-rent lease from Somerset Council on a 2.2 acre plot on Kitchen Lane, opposite Manor Farm.

Outline details are:

- The Parish is waiting on a draft agreement from the Council before any commitments are made.
- There will be some initial costs - legal fees, some ground works, fencing, clearance etc, which would be Parish Council funded. In addition we will be looking for Village Volunteers support to make this happen.

- The plan is to then inform the whole village of the details and arrange a Village Meeting prior to finalising. So keep an eye open for more communication over the next month or two.

This is an exciting prospect and we look forward to full village engagement once the details are available, together with the Village Fund support.



BASED IN TINTINHULL



THE CURTAIN CABIN SOMERSET

SOFT FURNISHINGS FOR THE HOME
07402 898150

Hand made curtains and blinds,
Home measuring service, advice,
and fitting.

Contact Lottie Littlewood
lottielittlewood@gmail.com



trading post

FARM SHOP • SOMERSET



Trading Post Farm Shop
Lopenhead | Somerset | TA13 5JH

01460 241666
hello@tradingpostfarmshop.co.uk
www.tradingpostfarmshop.co.uk

Westcountry Cheese Deli
Large Organic Selection
Exclusive Gin Collection
Weekly Veg Box Scheme
Local Beers & Ciders
Fresh Eggs
Daily Fresh Bread
100+ Local Suppliers
Ample Car Parking
Refill Room
Garden Centre

"A Mini
Borough
Market"

-Sunday Times
May 30 2021

*Winners of the Muddy Stiletto Award
for The Best Farm Shop/Deli in
Somerset & Dorset 2021*



Always look on the bright side...

Rainfall report 29th February 2024

January 2024 was believe it or not slightly below the Long Term Average (LTA) for rainfall. However February has made up for that with almost twice the LTA.

The recent months of heavy rain have shown up the need to keep watercourses (ie rivers, streams and ditches) in good order and free of fallen trees, soil and rubbish. Road drains and gouts also have to be kept clear and in working order.

I may be dreaming about “the Good Old Days” but parish councils often used to employ part-time (usually retired) workers with a shovel whose job it was to go around the parish keeping drains and gouts clear. If they are not kept clear then not only does it increase the likelihood of flooding but it allows water to run down the road which make potholes much worse.

The problems of water courses in Somerset came to a head in early 2014 when there were very serious floods down the Parrett river towards Bridgwater. These floods were made worse by the inactivity of the Environment Agency which had stopped the routine dredging of the river - we were told it was “to save the newts”. Of course when the floods came the newts went out into Bridgwater bay with the rest of the stuff in the river.

After about 3 weeks of flooding, it took a visit by the then Prince Charles to stir the EA and politicians into action. In my opinion it would have done a lot of good to make every employee and board member of the EA come down to Somerset and fill sandbags, to remind them of their responsibilities to people not just newts.

In a sensible move (!) responsibility was taken away from the Environment Agency and given to the newly-formed Somerset Rivers Board . This was replicating the situation before the EA when there was a Parrett drainage board, consisting of local councillors and landowners with a couple of land drainage engineers to advise them. The locals of course knew their river and would be much quicker to respond to problems than EA bosses in London. Under the new River Board routine dredging and maintenance of the rivers has resumed.

JEREMY ROOK

Lopen History Casebook

Chapter 5 - LOCAL TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS.

Not that you would recognise much now, but historically the area in and around Lopen and the neighbouring villages was buzzing with trades.

The census was taken every 10 years from 1841, and the records give us a lot of information about what people did for a living . In the early centuries, Lopen was generally a farming community, and most people worked in agriculture and jobs related to it.

However, by the time of the 1841 census , there were still a lot of farmers and agricultural labourers, but there were also other trades and occupations, some employing women. There were a lot more cottages then (since demolished), with 88 people living in Frog Street alone!

A lot of flax was grown in the area, and this was used to make Dowlas, a sort of rough sailcloth. The weavers cottages were situated in Holloway, and weavers are now mentioned in the census. Other occupations were cooper, (maker of barrels), rope maker, carpenter, Inn keeper and miller. There were two mills in Lopen, both fed by the Lopen brook, which was much larger than now. The largest was in Mill Lane, and was used for Lopen. The other one was almost opposite, next to Hinton Road, and was called Hinton mill, as it was used to make the flour for Hinton.

By 1851, the village had grown, and the occupations were much more varied, and the village seemed to becoming much more self sufficient. There was a carrier, groom, shoe binder (or Cordwainer, someone who put cord round the edge of shoes), butcher, baker, mason, cheese maker, and a clergyman.

Women by this time also had jobs, mostly work they could take in and do at home. However, there was also a nursemaid, chairwoman, housekeeper, housemaid and dairy woman. (This may show the importance of some prominent people in the village.)

By 1871, there was a laundress, dressmaker and shirt worker. The latter due to two shirt making factories in Crewkerne, who gave out work to local women. Linked occupations included a shirt button maker and a button hole maker.

The other Industry was glove making. There was a glove factory in many villages around Yeovil which was the centre of the glove making industry. Gloves were taken out to the “glove workers” to be sewn and finished, and they were still doing it until about 50 years ago. The recent closure of Pittards in Yeovil being the final chapter of the local glove industry.

In the 19th and early 20th century, the village grew again, due mostly to the flax industry. The sailcloth making became industrialised, and many people were involved in sailcloth manufacture, rope and twine making.

The Lopen mill employed flax hacklers, flax spinners, sailcloth weavers, sailcloth bleachers, general workers in the twine factory and twine spinners.

In the early 20th century, we had two bakers, a blacksmith, a school mistress, shopkeepers, a bicycle repairer, three public houses and there were still farmers and farm workers. However, when the flax industry declined, the village lost a lot of its workforce, and now sadly, there are few people who work in the village, and we have lost our shops, school, and inns. So things have almost come full circle as we are but left with our farms. The occupants of the industrial units come and go, and recent operations like Hewins, and up at Lopenhead ADP Protexin and Altegra, maybe by definition more ‘company’ than ‘industry’. JOAN FARRIS

SECURE SELF STORAGE LOPEN

EXPERIENCE IN STORAGE
OVER 15 YEARS

- Secure, purpose built Self Storage
- 250 units from 20-260 sq ft
- For all your business & household storage needs

Lopen Business Park,
Mill Lane, Lopen, South
Petherton, TA13 5JS

Call now for more details
01460 243100
or visit our website:
www.beehive-self-storage.co.uk

beehive self storage

Hosted by
'1st Call Entertainers'
AS SEEN ON TV!

MURDER MYSTERY CHARITY SUPPER

- In Aid of St. George's Hall Renovations -

Join us for a special night of

'WHO DONE IT'

Welcome to dress 1930s if you wish

Saturday 20th April

Arrival 7.00pm until the murderer is found!



£25 per head

Bar - Cash and Cards accepted



TEAMS OF 8 WELCOME

We will put together teams if smaller groups attending

To book tickets please email:

events@hintonstgeorgehall.co.uk

Charity No. 308303