

# LOPEN EYE

Lopen Parish Newsletter FEBRUARY 2021



Due to the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown situation the Lopen Eye is reduced in size for this issue. We will continue to publish as a PDF version, which is emailed out or can be downloaded from the village web site. If you know of anyone who would like to be emailed a copy please let the editor know and they can be added to the mailing list.

## PLANNING APPLICATION FOR HOUSING

Just before Christmas a planning application was made for nine dwellings on greenfield land to the south of Lopen. Running along the main road to Merriott with a single entrance. The plan shows a gate at the end of each road that is supposedly 'field access' and yet there is already access to the fields in Mill Lane. It does seem that this is leaving the developer the option to add more dwellings.



Greenfield site as is today.



Proposed development



How it could evolve!

However upon deeper investigation it appears that the developer (Land Value Alliances - <https://www.lva.co.uk/>) also has options on the three fields that run across to Hewins Timber yard. Probably based upon the fact that the SSDC had, in the past, identified this site as 'suitable, available & achievable' for 48 dwellings (Planning History: 2011 HELAA).

So although this application (all aspects of which are reserved save the entrance) seems innocent enough there is obviously the worry that it may develop into a high density 'housing estate' on the southern edge of Lopen - see pictures opposite.

The architects who made the application (Boon Brown - <https://boonbrown.com/>) are the very same who were involved in the development at Lopenhead. This was Grade A agricultural land and was presented to Lopen village on the 'promise' that it would provide small-scale starter units for local businesses. As we can now see it has developed into large industrial units run by just two businesses who have no local

connection, and as far as we know don't employ anyone from Lopen.

If you visit the SSDC web site you will see that opinion within Lopen is that this application has been made without consultation with the village, with false claims about the facilities in Lopen and the consensus from residents is against the application.

If you have not already made comments or written to SSDC we urge you to do so:

- Visit - [www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)
- Search for planning application – 20/03160/OUT
- On this page you can view comments already made, plus documents regarding the application. You can add to these by posting your comments online or writing a letter to SSDC.

***Please act now to prevent this initial application slipping through - before we know it we may have a huge housing estate in our midst!***

# LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL

As this is the first Lopen Eye of 2021 we should like to wish you all a Happy New Year!

## LOPEN PC PLANNING COMMENT

Most will be aware of the outline application to build nine houses on an open field on the southern edge of the village. The Parish Council discussed this at the meeting at the end of December and took the decision to object to it for the following reasons:

- Nine houses is a disproportionately large development for a small village such as Lopen and the layout clearly indicates it is intended as the first stage of something larger.
- Would take the form of an incongruous clump of relatively high density building on the southern edge of the conservation area, where building density is much lower.
- Is outside the building line of the main village.
- Development here does not (in spite of claims made by the applicant) meet SSDC sustainability criteria as Lopen has very few readily amenities.
- Low lying site classified as flood zone 1 presents risk in the face of climate change.
- Application has not demonstrated need and is sized to avoid community levy and affordable housing allocation meaning that it offers nothing to the wider village.

Though the official deadline has passed we understand SSDC is still accepting comments for the time being, so please do comment!

## SAND & GRIT FOR FOOTPATHS

With the colder weather coming there may be times when the footpaths are icy and in need of salt/grit. There are bags of this strategically placed around Lopen for you to use, with Rod Page at Pound Cottage, Church Street, with Seamus & Marian at the Old Bakehouse, with Steve Chapman at Ballarat Farm and with Michael & Valerie Canton - both in Frog Street. There are bags outside the Church which are for emergency use only.

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

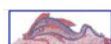
During the COVID lockdown LPC meetings are being held online using Zoom. The public are welcome to join these meetings. If you would like to join please see the village web site Home page ([www.lopen.btck.co.uk](http://www.lopen.btck.co.uk)) or contact Jane Collins (Parish Clerk) ([lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com](mailto:lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com)) and she will email you an invitation.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place in the Sunday School Room at 7.00pm on:

**- Wednesday March 3rd**

Please contact a councillor or the Parish Clerk at least one week before, if there is a matter you would like added to the agenda.

## WEB SITE HELP NEEDED



Lopen Village, Somerset

The screenshot shows the Lopen Village website. It features a navigation menu on the left with links to Home, Newsletter, Community Groups, Parish Council, History, Traffic, Police News, Contact Us, Local Links, Guestbook, and Roman Mosaic. The main content area includes a welcome message, a description of the village, a list of local links, and a section for information alerts and updates. A small image of a group of people is also visible.

Do you have web designing/building skills? **We need your help!** The current Lopen Village website is hosted free by BT as a community site, however BT have announced they are ceasing their free hosting from May 2021. Is there anyone who has the skills to either transfer our existing site to a new (preferably free) hosting service, or could build a new site and get it hosted for us?

Please contact the editor on 391 574 or email [lesmorton26@gmail.com](mailto:lesmorton26@gmail.com)

## DOG POO PROBLEM!



As we are in COVID lockdown more of us are out and about walking the paths of Lopen, and it seems there is an increase of dog owners NOT cleaning up after their dog leaves an unwelcome deposit! We know that wild animals such as foxes and badgers are also doing this but it is easy to spot the difference. So when out walking would you please be vigilant and keep a lookout for dog owners/walkers not from Lopen. And would dog owners please ensure they clean up after their dogs!



## COVID 19 Vaccine Scam/Fraud

Criminals are using the COVID-19 vaccine as a way to target the public by tricking them to hand over cash or financial details. They are sending convincing-looking text messages letting people know they are eligible for the vaccine or phoning people directly pretending to be from the NHS, or local pharmacy.

The NHS will:

- NEVER ask for payment – the vaccine is free
- NEVER ask for your bank details
- NEVER arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine
- NEVER ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport

# Lopen Spring Plant Sale

## Dates to be confirmed

We have decided that it is still too soon for our traditional plant sale within the church grounds, so are planning on repeating our online sale from last year. We are currently putting together an extensive plant list and will be circulating this at the beginning of April with sales commencing towards the end of April to early May depending on the weather. If you would be interested in receiving the list please email me at [christianne@lopen.me.uk](mailto:christianne@lopen.me.uk)

We will not be advertising the sale, however we are very happy for you to forward this notice to anyone in the area you may think might be interested.

## HINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL APPEAL

The school have launched an appeal to raise £75,000 to fund the purchase and installation of a fully fitted



building to house their pre-school. The building will allow access to children with mobility challenges who are not able to access the existing pre-school accommodation

(housed on the first floor of the main school building). It will be constructed from two used shipping



## UPDATE FROM SLOW

After having had some problems with our village SID we have at last been able to get the traffic data downloaded. The figures shown below cover the period from 9th November 2020 to 4th January

2020. It can be seen that we clearly still have a speeding problem through Lopen as approximately 57.5% of all vehicles passing through exceed the 30mph speed limit!

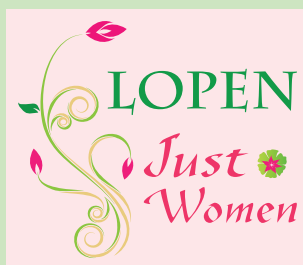
*Roger Gurner - Co-Chair SLOW*

<b>Total Vehicles Recorded</b>	<b>43,300</b>
<b>Number observing 30mph speed limit</b>	<b>18,379</b>
Vehicles between 31 and 39 mph	20,235
Vehicles between 40 and 49 mph	4,016
Vehicles between 50 and 59mph	571
Vehicles between 60 and 69 mph	84
Vehicles between 70 and 79mph	14
Vehicles between 80 and 89mph	1
<b>Number exceeding 30mph speed limit</b>	<b>24,921</b>

containers, and importantly, will allow direct access to the outdoors, which is not possible in the present situation - so important for the development of young children.

- This new facility forms part of a wider expansion of the school which is now a Primary School: the pre-school and school are now able to offer a really good level of education for children from age 2 -11 years.
- We are proud to have raised over £25,000 to date towards our target of £75,000, all from local people and organisations.

If you would like to support the appeal, please contact [jwheeler@hsgschool.co.uk](mailto:jwheeler@hsgschool.co.uk) (01460 76771) or go to JustGiving and search for Hinton St George.



With the Sunday School Room currently out of bounds it has been decided, the best way forward for the group to continue, is to hold Zoom meetings instead.

Very enjoyable talks were given by Pauline Rook and Sheila Seymour during January and this will continue for February:

**Tuesday 9th February from 7pm**

**Mike Hope - a talk about 'The Lost Houses of Somerset'**

**Tuesday 23rd February from 7pm**

**Pauline Rook showing her**

**'Photographic Adventures after the Mosaic'**

An email will be sent out to Just Women members with a joining link the day before the meeting.

*If anyone would like to join us who is not a member please contact  
Jean Morton at - [jeanandlesm@gmail.com](mailto:jeanandlesm@gmail.com)*

For further information please contact Pauline Rook T: 240 644 E: [prook12@gmail.com](mailto:prook12@gmail.com)

## A PLEA

There are so many people in the UK at this time suffering financial problems and so many different charities seeking



our support that amidst it all it is hard to find space for the plight of refugees. So, though refugee camps continue to exist in so many countries there is little information or photographs in the media to remind us of their suffering in tents in terrible winter conditions (cold, rain, snow and ice), nor of all the items needed if adults and children are to survive, and which now include protective equipment against coronavirus.



At present Refugee Support Group (RSG) and Raft are unable to provide practical means to pass on goods generously donated by supporters to those struggling in the camps. And neither can RSG

hold fundraising events for charities and volunteers working on the ground as we have previously done. Undoubtedly, many supporters will be unable to assist with financial donations, but I believe there may be others who are able to do so. Therefore, for those willing people I am suggesting a few specialist refugee charities, which can be found online and which would use your donations wisely:

- **Help Refugees/Choose Love** ([helprefugees.org](http://helprefugees.org)) is present in many countries supporting people in a variety of ways, and individuals are able to choose particular items to be purchased.
- **Refugee Community Kitchen** ([refugeecommunitykitchen.com](http://refugeecommunitykitchen.com)) speaks for itself and is highly regarded.
- **Safe Passage** ([safepassage.org.uk](http://safepassage.org.uk)) helps unaccompanied children and vulnerable adults to join their families in Europe safely and legally.
- **Care4Calais** ([care4calais.org](http://care4calais.org)) is in Northern France and Belgium delivering essential aid to stranded refugees mainly from war torn countries.

If anyone wishes to donate but is without internet access please phone me and perhaps we can arrange something.

Thank you - Geraldine Downey 01460 271358

Have you 'liked' the Lopen Events Facebook page? Have a look - [www.facebook.com/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/](http://www.facebook.com/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/)

## CONTACTS

Village website - [www.lopen.btck.co.uk](http://www.lopen.btck.co.uk)

### PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman	Stephen Crane	241 412	scrane1@hotmail.co.uk
	Nick Jones	241 643	nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com
	Valerie Canton	242 751	mvcanton@talktalk.net
	Jenny Feeney	419 569	jfeeneyloopenpc@gmail.com
	Chris Marsh	07951 239110	chrismarshpc@gmail.com

Parish Clerk	Jane Collins	07967 218478	loopenpc.clerk@gmail.com
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<b>DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	Cllr Adam Dance	07767 224 213	adam.dance@southsomerset.gov.uk
	Cllr Crispin Raikes	07968 291 588	crispin.raikes@southsomerset.gov.uk

<b>COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	Cllr Adam Dance	07767 224 213	adam.dance@southsomerset.gov.uk
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<b>MEMBER of PARLIAMENT</b>	Marcus Fysh		marcus.fysh.mp@parliament.uk
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### ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Benefice Office	Issy Welsh	73226	
Rector	Rev. Julia Hicks	76406	juliahicks1@gmail.com
Rector	Rev. Bob Hicks	76406	bobhicks66@gmail.com
Churchwarden	Angela Naunton Davies	240 921	nauntondavies@btinternet.com

### JUST WOMEN

Chairwoman	Pauline Rook	240 644	prook12@gmail.com
Treasurer	Christianne Long	249 766	christianne@loopen.me.uk

<b>POLICE CSO</b>	Mike Bell	Dial 101 ask for PCSO 7954	mike.bell@avonandsomerset.police.uk
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<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH</b>	Caroline McKendrick	359 201	carolinemckendrick@outlook.com
	Carron Richards	242 640	carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk

### LOPEN EYE TEAM

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## All Saints Church



Unfortunately, due to the current COVID-19 lockdown regulations, All Saints Church is closed for Sunday Services but we are still opening the church for 'Private Individual Prayer' twice a week:-

**Sunday 10am-12pm**  
**Wednesday 2pm-4pm**

The Sunday School Room remains closed.

*Revds Julia and Bob Hicks and Lopen Church PCC*