

## Leigh-on-Mendip Parish Council

Newsletter April 2012

*www.leigh-on-mendip.org.uk*

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 8.00 pm on Monday the 21st May 2012 in the Memorial Hall, all parishioners are encouraged to attend. This is an opportunity for you to hear what has been happening in your village and to raise any issues which concern you. The Annual Parish Council Meeting will precede the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm.

The Parish Council had between 1 and 3 vacancies all year. Jake Smith was co-opted in August and Alan Dagger in December. Rose Martin is resigning this month after 5 years, during which time she has also been an active PC rep on the Rec Field Management Committee as well as one of the village signs team.

Councillors have attended forums, Mendip DC and Somerset CC meetings where they have an impact on our village. We are pleased to have support from both our District Councillors (Philip Ham and Val Horner) at most of our meetings, as well as our County Councillor (Gloria Cawood).

Of course all of this only happens because of the efficient organisation and guidance by the Clerk. Sandrine has continued to keep us legal and dealt with ever-changing Local Government legislation, sharing knowledge and costs with two other parishes for which she is Clerk.

The present council is:

Ian Barnes	Haywards Cottage	812549	(Footpaths)
Chris Cudmore	2 Oak Leaf Court	813735	(Chairman & webmaster)
Alan Dagger	Townsend House	813115	
Rose Martin	2 Park Hayes	813680	(Rec Field rep & Police Liaison)
Jake Smith	Townsend Farm	07525 834616	(Highways)
Brenda Wigmore	Quillet, Park Hayes	813196	(School Liaison & Memorial Hall)

Parish & Cemetery Clerk

Sandrine Vaillant Burleigh Cottage 812563 Email: lom.pc@btinternet.com



**Aims** The Parish Council represents the parish objectively and without prejudice, to liaise with both county and district councils to ensure effective services, manage the spending of precept for the benefit of the parish and to protect and improve the parish's assets. We do this through consultation - Parish Plan, Village Design Statement, ad hoc open meetings and at monthly Parish Council meetings - and through delegation to management committees for the Memorial Hall and the Recreation Field. Representations can be made at any time to the members of the Parish Council or the Clerk.

Communication is by the two Parish Noticeboards and the Village Website. The Clerk has an emailing list for those who wish to receive Parish Council e-newsletters and events directly (contact the Clerk if you wish to participate). We have taken possession of the telephone box which will be converted into an "Information Exchange" (notices, items for sale, wanted, swaps etc).



**Precept** The parish precept for the present year is £6,100. This was the same as 2011/12. This budget allows for continued support to facilitate various options and choices which were popular responses in the Village Plan, but without reducing our reserves required to secure land for a new cemetery.

Expenditure in the last year was again split between (a) grants to support actions from the Parish Plan, (b) maintenance & administration and (c) salaries of Clerk and Cemetery Clerk. Part of the cemetery maintenance costs were covered by the cemetery fees. A grant from the Big Lottery Fund funded the new stone village signs.



**Cemetery** The management of the closed churchyard still remains with Mendip DC. The grass mowing and hedge trimming continue to be contracted by the parish. We have had no success identifying land suitable to extend the cemetery. If any owner has land available please contact the Clerk.



**Planning** Fourteen applications have been considered and recommendations made to Mendip DC. The Parish Council has only an advisory role to uphold the long-term interests of the parish within the current planning policies. Planning information is available on the Mendip DC website. The main issues have been to conform with the Village Design Statement, promote local business and to minimise street parking.

During the last year the Parish Council has continued to make responses to various Mendip DC planning documents, including further revisions to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. This currently proposes a further 16 homes in Leigh from 31 March 2011 to 2026. The local detail of the new Development Framework is not expected until 2013.



**Village Signs** Thanks to Vicki Taylor, Rose, Bren and Sandrine we now have three new village signs. The Village Plan identified the need to replace the aged & rusting metal signs for the village. The Parish Council requested replacement signs & were told there would be a charge for this. The PC sourced a fund opportunity from Awards For All (Big Lottery), which required the involvement of the community. The enthusiasm of the community sessions exceeded our expectations as did the artistic talents. It has been a really positive community project, led by Jeff Body.



**Highways** Pot-holes continue to appear. Please report them directly to Somerset CC as soon as possible (details on website) and they will be repaired. The initiative to turn off street lights between midnight and 5am was delayed by Somerset CC. The Parish Council will ensure that parishioners are consulted on this issue which has been controversial in some districts.



**Street cleaning** has continued 5 times per year. Dates are advertised on the noticeboards and on the website, but leaflets have proven to be the most effective way of reminding residents to move cars; unfortunately there are still a small number who ignore the request. Thanks again to the WI for organising the Village Spring Clean. Please help to keep our village and lanes clean throughout the year and report any fly-tipping to Mendip DC.



**Police Community Support Officer** Yvonne Mears has been replaced by Ben Green who regularly patrols the village and reports on incidents around our neighbourhood. Be especially aware of warnings of local criminal trends provided by our Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators (notices are on the website).



**Footpaths** Ian, our Footpaths Officer, has done a great job dealing with several issues during the year to ensure that our Rights of Way are accessible for the public and that the landowners' rights are protected. The increase in arable farming has presented a challenge to ensure the required accessibility. Mendip Ramblers have assisted in the repair of stiles. Dog owners, please remember to control dogs wherever there may be livestock and remember it is an offence to foul pavements & public areas. Dog waste bins are situated next to the churchyard entrance and on the Rec Field.



**Quarry** One Halecombe Quarry Liaison Meeting (chaired by our County Councillor, Gloria Cawood) has been held. Tarmac also attended a Parish Council meeting to present a recent planning application which included the construction of a balancing lake within the quarry. We are grateful for the continued support given to the village by Tarmac (e.g. sponsorship of the Fair, village sign stones).



**Website** The Village Website, at [www.leigh-on-mendip.org.uk](http://www.leigh-on-mendip.org.uk), is kept up to date with events, minutes, contact information and pictures. All are urged to make use of the facility to advertise events, submit pictures and any village articles, suggestions, and comments via the Webmaster (Chris Cudmore) or the Clerk. Thanks to Dave & Tom Turner for hosting the website and providing technical support respectively.



Finally, a "thank you" to the Councillors for their (unpaid) enthusiasm and efforts, additionally the Parish Clerk for her communications and organisation; and all those who work to keep the village organisations running smoothly.

We are looking for two more parishioners to fill Parish Council vacancies, so if you think you may be interested please speak to any of the Councillors or Clerk for more details.

Chris Cudmore, Chairman