

LEIGH-ON-MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2001

<http://www.leigh-on-mendip.org.uk>

The annual general meeting and annual parish meeting will be held on Tuesday 8th May at 7.30 and 8.00 p.m. respectively in the Hall. If you have anything that you would like to raise as being of concern to the Village the APM is your opportunity to do so.

No elections were held during 2000.
One councillor resigned, Nick Haskins,
and one councillor was co-opted, Peter Knowles

The Councillors are:

Tony Gould,	Firwood, Wyke Champflower	01749 812287
Gerald Jeanes,	Gatcombe House, Stocks Lane	813121
Peter Knowles,	20 Park Hayes	812149
Margaret Loten,	6 The Old Sawmills	812922
Paul Moore,	11 Bellfield	812392
Neville Park,	The Old Village Store & P O	812338
John Wright,	The Post House, Leigh Street	812317

Parish Clerk - Jackie Longley, Doors Hill Farm 812050
Cemetery Clerk - Mary Mears, Brookfield, The Old Sawmills 812415

Cemetery. The funding of closed churchyard maintenance, and the contribution from District Council in the form of a burial grant is currently under discussion and review. It has been agreed that a Burial Grant will be paid for the current year, and the Parish Council will place the mowing contract. It is anticipated that the high standards achieved last year will be maintained.

Planning. A number of planning applications were dealt with during the year, and reports on these were duly recorded in the published minutes. There are currently three planning matters which may be of concern to the parish.

1. The building of four houses at Townsend Farm. The parish council quoted the Village Design Statement in recommending that at least the front face of the houses should be of local natural stone. The VDS was ignored, or discounted, by the District planning board, and synthetic stone was approved behind a local natural stone wall. This wall, currently under construction, is of a bright yellow Cotswold stone, and we are currently protesting at its introduction.
2. The purchasers of Whitehole Farm have submitted extensive plans for the development of the property and our information is that there is currently some dispute with the District Council.
3. Tarmac have submitted an application for development at Halecombe quarry, which was the subject of a presentation to the village in February. This is a fairly voluminous document which we still have to study in detail.

Precept. The precept for 2001/2002 has been held to £2209. This represents an annual charge for a band D property of £11.94, which is below the average charge of similar councils. Grants were made during the year to WRVS - £50; Memorial Hall for the litter bins - £140; Mid Somerset CAB - £50; Victim Support - £20 and Leigh & Stoke Magazine - £90.

Web Site. The council determined to continue funding the village web site, which was one of the first in the area. It should be emphasised, however, that it is only really viable as a live, as opposed to an historic, site, if it is regularly updated with events, reports, opinions, and perhaps advertisements. It is being arranged that the Parish Clerk will be responsible for updating, and items for inclusion should be forwarded there.

Footpaths and Roads. The footpaths are at present, all closed to the public whilst the danger of Foot and Mouth Disease exists. In due course, it is the intention of the council to replace existing stiles at a rate of one or two each year with more people friendly designs, subject to the agreement of the landowners. The deterioration of the roads has been noted to County and District representatives, but a bare minimum has been achieved in necessary repairs.

General. There have been some misgivings about the behaviour of groups of teenagers in the village, including damage to outside projects in the school grounds. The bus shelter is used on occasion for group assemblies, which is no harm in itself, but when damage or nuisance is caused then lines have to be drawn.

The Council are enquiring what facilities/monies are available to provide some services and have asked a Youth officer to address the Parish Meeting. All teenagers, and parents of teenagers, are particularly invited to attend. Parents, it is felt, are in the best position to know the whereabouts of their children in the evenings.

The Parish Warden scheme is to go ahead with a proposed start date in May. Two wardens (37 hr. week, hours chosen by a steering committee) will cover the five villages of Coleford, Holcombe, Stoke, Leigh, and Mells. Their duties are not to duplicate Police work, but to monitor and help as required in the villages. It is anticipated that this will become clearer as it evolves.

Fly tipping appears to be on the increase on back roads in the Parish. Any information or vehicle numbers should be reported to Mendip.

The Rural White Paper has been published and has great expectations from parish councils. The emphasis is on giving greater power to the people, with parishes being encouraged, and assisted, to produce Village Design Statements in order to influence planning decisions. Training for councillors and staff is proposed, and money will be made available. The council looks forward to further developments.

Read the [Parish Council Newsletter - April 2000](#)