

Leigh-on-Mendip Parish Council

Newsletter April 2011

www.leigh-on-mendip.org.uk

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 8.00 pm on Monday the 16th May 2011 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 2 vacancies all year. Alf Smith resigned at the beginning of the year and Vicki Taylor resigned in September (now Chair of the school governors). Matthew Odolphie is also resigning at the end of April. Ian Barnes was co-opted in February. As there were only three nominations for the forthcoming Parish elections it will (again!) be uncontested. Many thanks to Vicki, Alf and Matthew who have all given the parish significant time and effort over the last few years.

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 (Claire Fleming and Philip Ham) 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 increasing amounts of communication. Sandrine is now a Parish Clerk to two other villages - to everyone's mutual benefit.

The present council is:

Ian Barnes	Haywards Cottage	812549	
Chris Cudmore (Chairman & webmaster)	2 Oak Leaf Court	813735	
Rose Martin Field rep & Police Liaison)	2 Park Hayes	813680	(Rec
Matthew Odolphe Footpaths Officer)	6 Bellfield	812893	(Parish
Marsha Read (Memorial Hall rep)	Grove Shute Farm	812917	
Brenda Wigmore Liaison & Memorial Hall)	Quillet Park Hayes	813196	(School


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).

During the last year the Parish Council has continued to make responses to various Mendip District Council planning documents, including a revised Local Development Framework Core Strategy following revised national legislation. This consultation process will eventually set the policies for local planning and the shape of our village up to 2026.

The spending cuts have threatened several village services and the Parish Council has been active in petitions, consultation and writing to the district and county council for those which have the greatest impact on the village. The Coleford Recycling Centre has been saved for now, but at a cost, so if you want to keep it - "Use it or lose it".

 **Precept** The parish precept for the present year is £6,100. This was an increase of 1.5%, but resulted in a decrease of approximately 0.5% in the annual charge for a property due to a small increase in the number of parish households. 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. Our largest grant supported the refurbishment of the children's play area. The Parish Council has recently obtained a grant from the Big Lottery Fund of £6,000 to replace the village signs.

 **Cemetery** The management of the closed churchyard still remains with Mendip District Council. The grass mowing and hedge trimming continue to be contracted by the parish. We continue to pursue the

purchase of land suitable to extend the cemetery. Thanks to David Pattison and John Davis, who are supporting this task.



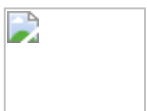
Planning

Nine 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. The Cookswood Holiday Retreat application was approved, but the detailed conditions are in the "S106" which has yet to be agreed.



Parish Plan

Following the issue of the Parish Plan in December 2006 actions have continued to be ticked off. Thanks to Vicki Taylor, Rose and Brenda, we have a grant from the Big Lottery Fund for replacing our rusting village signs with quarry stones augmented with plaques designed by village groups and produced by Jeff Body (The Shepton Sheep Man). Watch out for a flyer coming through your door to get involved. Cardboard and plastic kerbside collections have finally started and two dog waste bins have been installed. Unfortunately attendances at the Youth Club dropped to very low numbers so it has ceased operations. Hopefully someone will step forward to restart it with the equipment we have at the Rec Field. Thanks to Vicky Higgins and Vin & Rose Martin for starting up and running the club over the last 4 years.



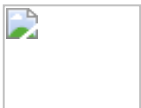
Highways

Our six new salt bins came in useful in December, although it was a disappointment when two on Whitehole Hill were stolen! The severe weather resulted in more pot-holes. Please report them directly to SCC as soon as possible (details on website). The street lights have been replaced, fitted with individual light sensitive switches. These also allow the potential of carbon reduction, dark skies and energy savings by fitting part-night lighting.

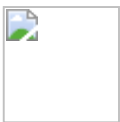


Street cleaning has continued 5 times per year. Dates are advertised on the noticeboards and on the website, but leaflets have proven to be the most effective way of reminding residents to move cars; unfortunately there are still a small number who ignore the request.

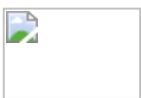
Thanks to all landowners who have responded quickly to requests to attend to hedges and trees where they gradually obstruct footpaths and/or visibility. A Parish Council team took advantage of the recent Village Spring Clean, organised by the WI, to give the pavement to Barns Close Quarry a makeover.



Police Community Support Officer Yvonne Mears 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.



Footpaths Matthew, our Footpaths Officer, has done a great job dealing with several issues during the year to ensure that our footpaths are accessible for the public and that the landowners' rights are protected. 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 The Parish Council have attended two Halecombe Quarry Liaison Meetings (chaired by our County Councillor, Gloria Cawood). We are grateful for the support given to the village by Tarmac.

Website The Village Website, at www.leigh-on-mendip.org.uk, is kept up to date with events, minutes, contact information and pictures. Graphics are minimised to provide quick access with dial-up, however this policy is to be reviewed as Broadband becomes the norm. 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 will probably be looking for more parishioners in June 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