



THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

We would like to wish our customers and friends of the village shop as merry a Christmas as possible and a very healthy and happy New Year

DECEMBER
2020
Issue 322

From the Gossip Tree Committee

Welcome to the December edition of the Gossip Tree which has been very kindly sponsored by the Village Shop.

We would like to wish everyone in the Parish a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, it will be unlike any festive season that we have experienced before, but will still be a time to celebrate and come together, even if it can only be through the power of technology!

Graham Eames on behalf of the Gossip Tree Committee

Fontmell Magna Village shop, post office and café



This Remembrance Day you raised £120.00 so thank you to everyone for your support. You also raised £63.00 for head smart <https://www.headsmart.org.uk/> the brain tumour campaign. Why not take a look at their website to see how you're helping.

Our Christmas and New Year shop hours are as follows:

21st – 24th December 9am – 5.30pm

25th – 28th December closed

29th – 31st December 10am – 2pm

January 1st – closed

From 2nd January – back to normal hours

We are running an offer on winter fuel this year – buy 1 bunch of local kindling and 1 bag of smokeless coal and get a free box of firelighters. In addition we have some lovely products in store for Christmas including a lot of local gift ideas!

Don't forget Christmas order forms will be on the shop counter on 1st December.

Christmas trees will be in stock by the time you read this – we only have nine left so please order as soon as you can if you would like one of the excellent non-drop trees.

Please note the last posting dates are as follows:

Country Standard & Tracked parcels Parcelforce

Australia 11th December 9th December

Belgium 18th December 15th December

Canada 12th December 11th December

France 18th December 15th December

Germany 16th December 15th December

Ireland 18th December 11th December

Italy 12th December 11th December

Netherlands 16th December 15th December

New Zealand 11th December 8th December

Spain 16th December 15th December

USA 12th December 11th December

We would like to wish everyone a safe, healthy and hopefully a family Christmas more than ever before.

Jan and Rick x



Notices – December 2020

St. Andrew's Church - Services for December

Please see announcement on page 2 for details

Parish Council Meeting

Next meeting Mon 14th December at 7.00pm by Zoom.

Parish Clerk: Marianne Wheatley
clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk

Local Councillor—Jane Somper

Email: cllrjane.somper@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Tel: 07710 395359

The Surgery

Tue 8.00am to 12 noon.

Enquiries: 856700

Village Shop & Post Office

Normal opening hours:

Mon - Fri 9.00am - 5.30pm

Sat 9.00am - 1.00pm

Sun 9.00am - 11.00am

Enquiries: 811201

The Tea Room Crafters

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Jenny White 812042

The Fontmell

Normal opening hours:

Mon - Thu 10.00am - 10.00pm

Fri & Sat 10.00am - 11.00pm

Sun 10.00am - 8.00pm

Enquiries: 811441 or john@thefontmell.com

St. Andrew's School

Enquiries: 811500

Fontmell Magna Toddler Group

Enquiries: Kelly Oakley 07792 425609

Fontmell Magna Under 5's

Enquiries: 812773

Iwerne Valley Walking Group

Walks cancelled until further notice

For more information please contact

Helen English: 07789 845498

Bell-ringing

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Caroline Rhodes 812002

Fontmell Magna & District Society

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Dick Stainer 811153

Sunday Breakfast

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Janet Smith 811904

Fontmell Films

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquires: Libby Gendall 811551

Events in the Village Hall

North Dorset Wildlife Trust

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk**Archive Society**

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Roger Hillman 811878

Garden Club

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Sue East 812349

Fontmell Magna Art Club

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Sandra Jelbart 812468

Carpet Bowls Club

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Gerry Bone 811814

Dru Yoga

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Kirsty Elliot 829281

Pilates Mon 5.30-6.30pm, 6.30-7.30pm. STOTT Pilates Matwork & props. Enquiries: Vicci Gillett 07940 961221 www.stable-bodies.co.uk

Pilates

Enquiries: Carol Pirie
07885 798 032 mail@pirieuk.com

Taekwon-do

Enquiries:
Sam Donohoo 07584 039351

Zumba

Enquiries Abby Down 850867
zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com

To book the Hall, please contact:

Sian Highnam on 811028 or email bookings.fmvh@mail.com

**St Andrew's Church, Fontmell Magna
CHURCH SERVICES****CHRISTMAS DAY.**

Numbers in the church will be limited to 40. To book a seat please add your name to the list in the church or email Lavender using lfuckland@me.com

There will be the midnight service (starting at 11.30pm) and also a Christmas morning service at 9.30am. To give more people the opportunity to attend we ask that you choose only one of these services.

6th No service

13th 9.30 Morning Worship

20th 9.30 Sung Communion

24th 23.30 Midnight Communion

25th 9.30 Christmas Day Holy Communion

27th 9.30 Online service only

www.iwernevalleybenefice.org.uk - Worship and Teaching Resources

* To keep the church within the distancing requirements set by the Government, we are asking everyone to book either the 11.30pm service or the 9.30am service using email via LF.BUCKLAND@GMAIL.COM putting Christmas in the subject line.

There will also be an online Carol Service video from St Andrew's on the Benefice website from 20th December

**Village weather
for October 2020**

A very wet start to the month, some relief from rain mid-month, but more at the end. Relatively mild, similar to 2019. 22 rain days, 0 air frost, 7 ground frost. 3 gales, no hail or thunder.

Comp. Figures	2020	2019
Rain (Most 31.5mm on 2nd)	171.4 mm	135.0 mm
Sunshine	62.4 hrs (ave 2.01 hrs)	58.4 hrs
Max mean temp. (highest 16.7 °C on 9th)	14.1 °C	14.4 °C
Min mean temp. (lowest 1.0 °C on 10th)	7.01 °C	6.67 °C

From the Fontmell

We are planning to re-open on 3rd December as per current guidelines, serving lunch and dinner with our normal opening hours.

Please support your local!

**Uses for Gin This Year—from Barbara Humphreys**

In some households, partners are both gardeners and in others it's a singleton hobby. I am not the gardener here, but I did order a gooseberry, a redcurrant and a raspberry in an amateurish way. When they fruited, there were three prolific redcurrants bushes in the bed. That's quite a lot of redcurrant sauce with a limited number of applications. Redcurrant gin sounded good in an experimental way and the berries went into a litre of it.

The little damson tree is always reliable and so it was again this year. What to do with damsons apart from feeding the wasps and tiring of crumble? The damsons tumbled into several litres of gin, the very best fruit gin and such a pretty colour. Better than crumble any day.

Our straggly 10-year-old pear tree, which reaches to the top of the telegraph pole standing next to it, rarely blossoms and has never had fruit on it – until July. This year it produced just one fat pear which swelled and grew with the alternate heat and the rain. The single pear was at the very top of the tree and anyway I'm not sure about pear gin. Now the pear relative, quince has appealing downy fruit. Hugh Fearnley-Wittingstall has a recipe for slightly gritty herby quince which is excellent with roast meats. But, on the internet, I searched for and found a recipe for quince gin which is maturing as I write

Put 1.5L of gin into a sterilised kilner jar with 750g of defurred, cored, chopped and blemish free quinces and 250 g sugar. Seal and shake regularly. After 5 or 6 weeks, strain through muslin into sterilised bottles. The longer it's left to steep the darker it will look and stronger it will taste.

Recently Moved to Fontmell?

Have you moved to the village or parish recently? If so why not join the Parish Council? We have some vacancies for councillors and it's a great way of getting to know lots of people and discover what makes the village and parish tick.

We live in such a beautiful place, with many amenities and with lovely open spaces all around us. However to conserve the character of the village and wider parish and achieve a vibrant and thriving community takes some effort.

The Parish Council contributes to the community in many ways:

- Addressing local issues of concern to residents, such as inappropriate development, potholes, fly-tipping or flooding;
- Representing the views of parish residents to Dorset Council in consultations on planning applications, the Local Plan, Climate Change, healthcare, transport and highways;
- Undertaking projects and initiatives to improve the facilities and amenities available.

We especially welcome new people and ideas to the Parish Council, particularly if you're interested in climate change policy or in developing our digital communications and community engagement or to represent younger people and address their needs.

Serving on the Parish Council is a rewarding way of contributing to our community with a small time commitment of just a couple of hours per week. Please join us, after all it's **your community** as much as ours.

If you would like to know more about what's involved, please contact the Clerk Marianne Wheatley at clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk or telephone 01305 873838.

From: Annie, Andy, Jeremy and Mike of Fontmell Magna Parish Council



November's Pottery Painting Workshop at the Village Hall was cancelled due to the second lockdown.

However, if you would like the chance to paint some pottery and create some unique personalised gifts for Christmas then Amanda is offering to drop kits direct to your door and then collect them for firing. Prices from £5. Ring her for details: 07951 062473 – amandarty@hotmail.co.uk



FREE RUNNER BEAN SEED

Variety: Moonlight (white flowers)

The seed has been collected and dried this autumn. There is approximately 7lbs of seed which should be enough to cover most people's needs in and around Fontmell.

The seed is only distributed by the good auspices of Rick & Jan at the village shop and may be collected from them from w/c 23rd November. For more info contact either Mike Courage on 812057 or Sue East on 812349.



Compost Corner

Christmas Cards are making a comeback this year - hurrah! And I expect many will feature The Star of Bethlehem sitting, all glittery, over the Nativity scene. But there's another Star of Bethlehem that you may not know, a delightful little Spring flowering bulbous perennial, *Ornithogalum umbellatum*. The flowers are star shaped and can be yellow, orange or my favourite, white. It is easy to grow in well drained soil in full sun or partial shade, possibly a little too easy as it can be invasive. It looks lovely forming a blanket of flowers underneath deciduous trees and shrubs and could be teamed up with fragrant *Viola odorata*. Another bonus is that it attracts bees with its pollen rich nectar and is pretty much disease and pest free. So consider giving it a home, take a snap of it next April and use it on next year's Christmas card.

Alison Main



FONTMELL MAGNA COMMUNITY LAND TRUST LTD

(a Community Benefit Society – FCA Reg. No: 8113)

email: fontmell.clt@gmail.com website: www.fmclt.org

Middle Farm House, Lurmer Street, Fontmell Magna, SP7 0NT

Village Shop Project – Members' Update – 14th November 2020

In our June update, we advised you we were satisfied with the due diligence to date. It identified no reasons why we should not proceed to prepare detailed plans for the purchase of the freehold of 'The Post Office House'. We informed you that the Shop Project Working Group (SPG), chaired by Mark Edwards had been tasked to produce a work plan for taking the project forward.

Unfortunately, the Covid pandemic has meant we have been prevented from calling a public meeting of our FMCLT Members, so this note is to bring you up to date.

We take this opportunity to remind you that we are managing this project on the Members' behalf and, most importantly, it is you the Members who have the final say on whether or not this project proceeds to completion. It is, of course, subject to FMCLT Rules, see website <https://www.fmclt.org/documents/>

Funding Requirements:

As stated, we have done the necessary investigations, business planning and due diligence into the project's viability and it continues to have our full support. We hope it will receive your support too.

It is estimated that the amount required to buy the freehold of the property noted in the Land Registry as 'The Post Office House' (aka our village shop), which comprises the Post Office, café, tea garden and domestic residence is circa £385,000 (*Note: this includes the capital cost of the freehold of the building, stamp duty, all relevant professional fees and a realistic contingency fund*).

We are continuing to research the options for funding, including mortgage finance, grants and, most especially, local community support. On the latter point we have decided, as part of the overall funding package, to form a specific Fundraising Team to work under the direction of the FMCLT Directors. The Team's brief is to work within the community to raise funds for this project.

We are pleased to report that the Plunkett Foundation has been most helpful and, more importantly, supportive of this project. They have agreed to fund the preliminary work regarding the legal aspects of the **Community Share Offer** which provides one of the key mechanisms for funding from local residents. We thank them for their support.

Your Help Please:

Regrettably, Mark Edwards has had to take a break from his role for the next few months. His huge contribution to this project in time, enthusiasm, and expertise have been much appreciated.

For that reason and as this project is approaching its mission-critical funding phase, the SPG urgently needs support from any Member (or non-member) willing to contribute time, energy and/or experience. In particular we are looking for support with **fundraising** and from those with expertise in **property finance** and **legal matters**.

If you can help in any way with this project please contact me, or email your contact details to fontmell.clt@gmail.com and we will contact you to discuss how you can help with this project.

The Next Steps:

We remain keen to hold a Members' meeting as soon as possible, however, being realistic that is unlikely to be before the New Year.

We shall be tasking the Fundraising Team to contact you to explain why this project matters to the community and to discuss with you how you can help.

This year has provided clear evidence that our village shop is a key community asset, providing a significantly expanded range of products alongside its Post Office facilities, which now include banking services.

Now is the time for our community to take the necessary action to secure and protect its future by acquiring the freehold to the property.

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As before, if you have any questions, concerns or would like further information on this project or other FMCLT matters please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the directors, details below.

Thank you and regards,

Dick Stainer - Chairman, FMCLT

Dick Stainer: 01747 811153 email: dickstainer@phonecoop.coop,

Robin East: 01747 812349 email: robinm47@gmail.com

Robert McCurrach: 01747 812077 email: robertmccurrach@aol.com

Please welcome the following people who have moved to the village:

Warren who has moved into Princes Field, Parsonage St from London.

Suzanne & Henry who have moved into Canon's Garth in Parsonage St with their 3 children from Scotland.

David & Marie who have moved into Fernlea, North Street from Blandford.



WELCOME BACK ZUMBA LOVERS TO THE VILLAGE HALL!



Can you spot any familiar faces in this fun picture? It was taken A WHOLE YEAR AGO, Nov 2019, before the C-word happened. When coming together to keep fit, be sociable and enjoy ourselves was our weekly 'thing'.

In April 2020 Zumba evolved and moved onto Zoom, a video conferencing application, becoming Zoom-ba and is still available 3 mornings per week direct to your home for all those keen fitness ladies in the village and all over the country.

Once the hall was designated as a Corona Safe Venue in September 2020 and broadband was available classes resumed briefly in October, as there were many ladies who hadn't wanted to use Zoom (for various reasons) but also still those who preferred to stay at home to exercise.

THE ANSWER: Dual classes. As you can see from the second picture, taken Oct 2020, the laptop transmits the same class via Zoom as it does to the real life ladies in the hall.

For everyone's physical safety there is hand sanitiser available throughout, Track & Trace is in place, air flows through the building and each person has their own 3m x 3m dancing 'box'.

The only down side is that we cannot sing out loud!

The hall committee and Abby have worked extremely hard to follow all guidance regarding keeping us all as safe as possible before, during and after an exercise class and it is working, meaning we really can have our cake and eat it.

We hope to resume classes in early December with a maximum number of 8 in-person participants plus whomever wants to join in via Zoom.

If you want a first-hand experience, have a socially distanced chat with one of the ladies pictured above, I'm sure they'll tell you about the laughter, silliness and fun that can be had in one of Abby's classes.

Everyone is welcome to give an in-person Zumba class a try, to experience the safe setup, the joyful atmosphere and see that moderate, low impact exercise can do wonders for your mental health and self-esteem by distracting you and changing your mood.

Contact Abby: 01747 850867/ 07901 597129/ zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com

In-Person Class Info:

THURSDAYS 9.30am max. of 8 spaces every week

There is a possibility of further classes of 8 being available on Mondays @ 9.30am and Thursdays at 10.35am if there is demand. That part all depends on you.

Zoom-ba Online Class Info:

MONS, THURS AND SATS @ 9.30am – please ask for further info.



The Gillingham Seed, Plant and Potato Fair 2021 - A Virtual Event

SAD NEWS - Covid-19 means that the annual fundraising Gillingham Seed, Plant and Potato Fair can not be a physical event in 2021.

But the GOOD NEWS is that our wonderful Partners, the amazing Pennard Plants (RHS Master Grower - 2019), can give us a variety of opportunities for a virtual event running now through to 31 March, 2021.

In 2021 we will be raising funds for GillShed CIC AND giving you the opportunity to benefit from a 15% discount on many items such as:

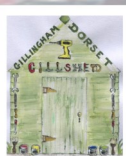
60+ varieties of UK sourced Potato Tubers
Onion and Shallot sets • Planting Garlic Bulbs
Rhubarb • Herbs • Fruit Trees and Bushes
Heritage Vegetable and Flower Seeds
and so, so much more!

visit

www.thegillinghampotatofair.co.uk

for full details

[gillinghamseedplantandpotatofair](https://www.facebook.com/gillinghamseedplantandpotatofair)



Stay better connected during lockdown with Dorset's Digital Hotline

A team of dedicated volunteers is on hand to help hundreds of Dorset residents stay connected during lockdown.

Dorset Council's Digital Champions, who used to hold regular surgeries in libraries, have continued offering their expertise throughout the Coronavirus crisis via the Digital Hotline.

From setting up Zoom meetings to FaceTiming friends and family on their smartphones, the Champions are there to assist with any digital enquiry.

Anyone can call the Dorset Digital Hotline with a digital question on 01305 221048 weekdays from 10am to 12noon.

When calling outside those times people can leave a message and a Digital Champion will get back to them.

St Andrew's church continues!

When asked to write about the impact that Coronavirus has had on the church in Fontmell, the simple answer was 'similar to the frustrations that we are all feeling under ever-changing lockdowns'. Some of the church family were shielding, while the remainder had continued attending between lockdowns 1 and 2.

In response to the first lockdown, services were offered online and we celebrated the run-up to Easter very simply with a cross in the churchyard at which everyone was invited to lay a stone, and this was transformed by flowers into a blaze of colour on Easter Day. In May the doors were opened for private prayer and subsequently for services, with Risk Assessments for every situation to ensure we were doing our best to keep everyone safe.

Once we were allowed to begin services again, we found that most of those who attended the 8am service of Holy Communion were still isolating, so this was suspended until further notice. The online services continue for those not able to get out or indeed for anyone who wishes to log on. It can be found at www.iwernevalleybenefice.org.uk (Worship and Teaching resources). The 9.30 service continues, but somewhat different with a very widely spaced congregation, while the communion service now involves sanitiser, masks and other changes which destroy any sense of the shared meal which the service is meant to represent. Fortunately, during the week, Zoom meetings provide an essential link for the homegroups, enabling these valued study sessions to continue.

The weddings which were booked for this year have been re-booked for next, when we all hope to be back to normal.

In November, the usually well-attended Remembrance service could not take place as it was during the second lockdown, so a simple Act of Remembrance took place at the War Memorial.

To avoid problems with social distancing at Christmas, we are asking everyone to book either for the Midnight service (11.30pm) or the Christmas morning service (9.30am), using the form in the church or online to Lavender on LF.BUCKLAND@GMAIL.COM putting **Christmas** in the subject line. As you will have guessed, this year we can't sing carols around the village due to the need to be adequately socially distanced in the dark and in restricted spaces! Similarly, we cannot have the traditional carol service as there must be NO SINGING by the congregation! But we will have a video Carol Service (available online as above from 20th) that everyone can view and sing along with at home!

So, in spite of the difficulties, much of church life has continued and we look forward to the future and a resumption of social contact, being able to offer reassuring hugs once more and especially being able to SING!

Litter Pickin' Protocol! Our community litter-picking efforts have been curtailed this year, first by adverse weather conditions and then by the social restrictions of COVID-19. However, this has not stopped some of our wonderful, committed and aware parishioners getting out there with a bag and some gloves and doing some of that litter-picking unasked and unorganised! Well done all those pickers, thank you! However, there's always more to be done. **Can you help too?** If everyone made a special effort every week or so just to pick up any litter that was lying around the borders of their particular property, we'd have the problem sorted! **Will you join in?**

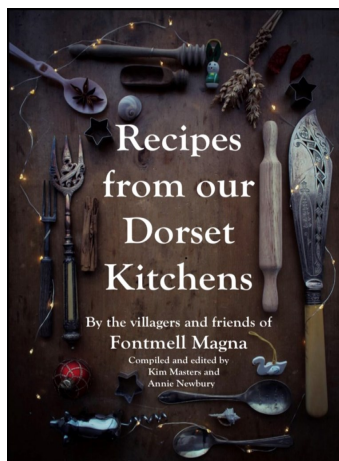
Could you clear up anything that's blown under your hedge or that is lying on the verge outside your garden? It might take just 5 minutes a week to make a huge difference and help to keep our beautiful Parish, beautiful.

Cllr Annie Newbury



[This Photo](#) by

Fontmell Magna Cookery Book - £10 - proceeds to the Village Hall Playground Appeal



Shabbat Seder Ring

225g Self-raising wholemeal flour
100g Unsalted butter, chilled
100g Chocolate, melted
1 tsp Baking powder
1 tsp Plain yoghurt
1 tsp Caster sugar
1 tsp Salt

Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6 and line a tray with baking paper.

Sift the flour, baking powder, mustard powder and caster sugar into a bowl and add the salt. Then rub the butter into small cubes and add to the dry ingredients. Using your fingertips rub the butter into the mixture until it resembles breadcrumbs. Heat grease in the chocolate and stir thoroughly before making a well in the centre and adding the milk. Gradually stir in the mixture from the edges into the milk until the ingredients are well combined and it forms a soft dough which should be the size of a tennis ball.

Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and roll out to a thickness of 2cm, then using a round cutter, stamp out 8-12 circles. Roll out the dough again and cut out more if you can. On the baking tray arrange the circles in a circle with each circle overlapping the next slightly. Brush the tops the butter egg and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Bake for 15 minutes or until they are golden brown on the top for 5 minutes then remove carefully to cool on a wire rack. Enjoy hot and with a nice bowl of tomato soup.



Vegetarian Meals



Tasty Tomato Cakes

200g Tomato paste
100g Plain flour
100g Soft cheese
100g Cheddar cheese
100g Butter
100g Oil

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4.

Heat butter in a pan and cook the pork chops gently over a moderate heat until golden brown. Remove and place in a separate dish. Add the onion, celery and carrot to the pan and fry until tender. Sprinkle with the flour and cook for 2 minutes.

Gradually stir in the tomato paste and stock and bring to the boil, stirring constantly.

When the sauce has thickened stir in the Worcestershire sauce, lemon juice, tomatoes and spring onions. Heat for 10 minutes or until the sauce is thick and the vegetables are cooked in the meat for 40 minutes or until the pork is tender.

Pork Chops in Ginger Beer

200g Pork chops
4 Thick slices, removed of
1 Large onion, peeled and
sliced into rings
100g Cheddar cheese
2 Carrots, peeled and thinly
sliced

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4.

Heat butter in a pan and cook the pork chops gently over a moderate heat until golden brown. Remove and place in a separate dish. Add the onion, celery and carrot to the pan and fry until tender. Sprinkle with the flour and cook for 2 minutes.

Gradually stir in the tomato paste and stock and bring to the boil, stirring constantly.

When the sauce has thickened stir in the Worcestershire sauce, lemon juice, tomatoes and spring onions. Heat for 10 minutes or until the sauce is thick and the vegetables are cooked in the meat for 40 minutes or until the pork is tender.

Joe Wilson, Fontmell Magna



This much anticipated publication is now available to buy from the Village Shop or direct from the Village Hall Committee just email: cookbook.fmvh@mail.com to order

This December issue of The Gossip Tree was edited by **Graham Eames**.

We apologise in advance if we have made any errors or omissions

Please would regular contributors for the January issue contact me via email:

[\(fmgossiptree@gmail.com\)](mailto:fmgossiptree@gmail.com)

Alternatively, contact the **Chairman, Barbara Humphreys**, email: blueletterbox@btinternet.com for further information.

Submissions for the January issue by Wednesday 16th December please.

The views expressed in this publication by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Committee of The Gossip Tree.

If you would always like to receive The Gossip Tree by email, please let us know at fmgossiptree@gmail.com