



THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

JULY
2020
Issue 317

From the Gossip Tree Committee

Welcome to the July edition of the Gossip Tree. As you will all be aware, lockdown is easing so whilst the information this month is as up to date as possible, some things may have changed by the time you read this!!

Once again this month's edition is a blend of local news and some (hopefully) interesting features, I hope you enjoy it.

Graham Eames on behalf of The Gossip Tree Committee



From The Fontmell

We are delighted to announce The Fontmell are opening as of the 4th July. Our beer garden and restaurant will be open for lunch and dinner on a reservation only basis so please book early. All of our rooms are now available to be booked as well.

Our new opening hours are;

Monday to Thursday 10am-9.30pm

Friday and Saturday 10am-10.30pm

Sunday 10am-6pm

Our kitchen hours are;

Monday to Thursday 12pm-2pm and 6pm-8.30pm

Friday to Saturday 12pm-2pm and 6pm-8.30pm

Sunday 12pm-4pm

Due to the popularity of our takeaways on a Friday and Saturday night we will continue to do these but please remember you must order 24 hours in advance on our website www.thefontmell.co.uk.

Thank you all for your continued support over the past few months. We look forward to welcoming you back but please do adhere to the social distancing measures in place.

Thanks

Ben

www.thefontmell.com info@thefontmell.com 01747 811441

ST ANDREWS CHURCH, FONTMELL MAGNA

With the relaxation of rules announced by the government, services will resume at the church on Sunday 5th July.

1st Sunday of the Month - 8am Holy Communion BCP

2nd Sunday Morning worship 9.30am

3rd Sunday Holy Communion Common worship 9.30am

4th Sunday Holy Communion C.W. 9.30am

No services on the 5th Sunday of any month at present.

Notices – July 2020

St. Andrew's Church - Services for July

Services will resume on Sunday 5th July, please see announcement below for details

Parish Council Meeting

Next meeting Mon 28th September at 7.00pm

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 8.00am - 6.00pm

Sat 9.00am - 1.00pm

Sun 9.00am - 11.00am

Enquiries: 811201

The Tea Room Crafters

Meetings cancelled till further notice.

Enquiries: Barbara Humphreys

blueletterbox@btinternet.com

The Fontmell

Enquiries: 811441 or john@thefontmell.com

See entry for more info on takeaway service and proposed plans for opening in July.

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

For details contact Claire on: 07708473568.

Enquiries: Helen English: 853472 or 07789 845498

Bell-ringing

Meetings cancelled till further notice.

Enquiries: Caroline Rhodes 812002

Bin Collection Dates – July

W/C 6th & 20th - Recycling & Food

W/C 13th & 27th - Rubbish & Food

Events in the Village Hall

Fontmell Magna & District Society
Meetings cancelled till further notice.
Enquiries: Dick Stainer 811153

Sunday Breakfast
Meetings cancelled till further notice.
Enquiries: Janet Smith 811904

Fontmell Films
Meetings cancelled till further notice.
Enquires: Libby Gendall 811551

North Dorset Wildlife Trust
Meetings cancelled till further notice.
www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk

Archive Society
Meetings cancelled till further notice.
Enquiries: Roger Hillman 811878

Garden Club
Meetings cancelled till further notice.
Enquiries: Sue East 812349

Fontmell Magna Art Club
Meetings cancelled till further notice.
Enquiries: Sandra Jelbart 812468

Carpet Bowls Club
Meetings cancelled till further notice.
Enquiries: Gerry Bone 811814

Dru Yoga
Meetings cancelled till 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

Village Hall – Annual Update June 2020

The Village Hall has been closed since Monday 23rd March but we are hoping that as lockdown measures ease over the next few months we will be able to welcome our regular user groups back to the hall. Sian has sent out a questionnaire to all our regular hirers and will be sending out updated hiring information as we get closer to re-opening the hall.

It was a pleasure to be able to re-open the Tennis Court in early May and we aim to open the Under 12's play area as soon as we can safely do so.

During this lockdown period many of you will know that our dear President, Leo Williams, passed away. He had been involved in the Village Hall at all levels and lastly in the role as President. He was a skilled operator and with his diplomacy and knowledge managed to merge the new and current members of the committee to be the active force we are today. He will be sorely missed by us all.

The 2019 Christmas Fayre raised almost £1,700 towards the Playground Appeal target of £20,000. £3,128.53 was spent in 2019 on maintenance and extra chippings so the Appeal Fund now stands at £4,393.25. The fundraising Cookbook is making steady progress and is due to launch in the Autumn. Applications for Grants towards new playground equipment continue.

We started 2020 with the launch of the Community Lunches which were exceptionally well attended and we would like to thank our volunteers for all their support with producing such delicious meals and St. Andrews and Clayesmore School for providing the musical entertainment and help with serving the lunches. We will relaunch these lunches as soon as it is safe to do so.

Improvements to the hall have continued. The leak in the roof has been fixed as have the plumbing issues. The interior of the hall will be redecorated with work due to start over the Summer.

The hearing loop was installed and has made a noticeable difference. We ran a drop-in session in January to demonstrate how the hearing loop works and once the Hall re-opens, we will provide training for the regular Village Hall users.

Superfast Fibre Broadband is due to be installed very soon. We successfully applied for a Government Voucher in April to cover the installation cost and are now waiting for the Wessex Internet Team to run the fibre optic cable through to the Village Hall. A good Wi-Fi connection is something that our user groups and hirers have been keen to have for some time now so we are very pleased that Wessex Internet will be providing us with fibre at 100mbps. Wi-Fi access will be included in the hire charges for 2020 and hire charges will remain the same as they were pre-lockdown.

We would like to thank everyone in the Village for their continued support and we hope to welcome you all back to the hall soon.

Rosie-Anne Yates, Chairman – Fontmell Magna Village Hall

For information about Hall Hire please contact: Sian Highnam, Bookings Manager: Tel: 01747 811 028 or email: bookings.fmvh@mail.com



Parish Council Annual General Meeting – 8th June 2020 at 7.00pm

Due to the Coronavirus restrictions this year's Parish Council AGM took place using the Zoom videoconferencing service. Draft minutes of the meeting are available on the PC Website http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk/FontmellMagna-PC/Meetings_and_Minutes_9778.aspx

Present: Cllrs Michael Humphreys (MH) Chair, Jeremy Long (JL), Annie Newbury (AN), and Clerk Marianne Wheatley (MW), DC Ward Cllr Jane Somper (JS), plus 7 residents and a journalist.

Public Questions:

A350 – a resident raised the issue of increased volume of HGVs using the A350 southbound contrary to the voluntary one-way scheme with the C13 route. The weight operated signs in Shaftesbury redirecting traffic to use the C13 had been suspended; JS undertook to contact Highways to have this re-instated.

Development at Land near Home Farm, South Street – a resident stated that developers had not yet contacted owners of the footpath from the site to West Street about installing a foul water sewer and laying a non-permeable surface. MH undertook to raise this with the developer.

Apologies – none.

Election of Officers – Cllr Humphreys was elected Chair and Cllr Long was elected Vice-Chair for 2020/21.

Appointment of Parish Officers – Marianne Wheatley will continue as Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

Co-options. Andy Main was unanimously co-opted to join the Parish Council.

Councillor Responsibilities for 2019/20 – A full list is available on the parish website. Andy Main will take over responsibility for trees and footpaths and contribute on Environmental Protection.

Minutes of the Meeting 9th March 2020 – these were approved unanimously.

Matters Arising

PC Website – The new website will go live soon, to comply with Website Accessibility Regulations.

BT Telephone Box – An electrical check has been completed and some minor work is needed. The Clerk will approach BT to get the work done before the PC takes ownership.

Road Flooding near Piper's Mill West Street – residents and councillors have been lobbying Dorset Highways to install new drains to prevent flooding of the road in winter.

Dorset County Ward Councillor's Report - Jane Somper's report is available on the PC website.

Reports from Parish Councillors

a. Planning – MH reported that 4 planning applications has been received for consultation.

The PC is supporting applications at 6 Marshlands, Penn Hill and Old Pump Cottage West St.

The PC is objecting to an application for 3 more dwellings at Gupples Farm Hartgrove, adding to 3 already approved; this is considered to be potential over-development in a rural setting.

Pennyfarthing Homes have submitted a full planning application for erecting 30 dwellings on land near Home Farm, South Street. This allocation of new housing development for the village is provided for in the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore has the Parish Council's support in principle. The PC has appointed a planning consultant to assist in compiling its response to the planning application (see post-meeting note below).

MH thanked the NP Monitoring Group for scrutinising the planning applications; all documentation is available on the PC website.

b. Trees – Dorset Council deals with all applications without consulting the parish council. All applications seen looked reasonable.

c. Highways – JL reported that an increased number of motorbikes are using the A350 through the village. A resident reported writing to the Police about this. JS advised the Dorset Highways were tackling some big projects while the roads are quieter, eg. at Iwerne Minster.

JL reported speaking to the owners of the carpark at the top of Fontmell Hill. Concrete blocks 2m apart were now guarding the entrance to prevent fly-tipping; some residents have found entering the carpark challenging but the owners are not prepared to move them. Concerned residents may wish to write to the landowner independently.

d. Environmental Protection – AN confirmed that the lime tree at Bedchester crossroads will be pruned further. AN said the “cut less, cut later” campaign to protect verges had produced positive results and remarked on seeing more wildflowers. AN has been clearing pavements in Orchard Close of moss growth; some residents will be asked to cut back some vegetation. New pads have been installed on the defibrillator in the School carpark.

e. Social Infrastructure – AN reported the tennis court has re-opened but the Village Hall and play area remain closed. The Village Hall is working to install a full-fibre broadband connection. The Village Shop will be installing new signage at points around the village.

f. District Liaison – MH remarked on the high volume of Coronavirus communication from Dorset Council and other agencies; the most relevant ones were circulated to the Village contacts list (please contact the Clerk if you wish to join the Village contacts email list clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk).

g. Footpaths – a resident has queried the re-direction of a public footpath that crosses the development site near Home Farm; MH has asked for clarification from the developer. JL advised that some walkers are leaving the gates open on the Lynchets.

h. Governance – The PC published its Annual Report, available on the Parish Council website. MH reported that the PC could not pursue a number of projects in 2019/20 due to the lack of councillors available, only 3 for most of the year. With Andy Main joining there will still be 3 vacancies; MH appealed once again for people to come forward to serve on the parish council.

Report from the RFO, approve End of Year Accounts and Audit Statement

End of Year accounts are summarized in the Annual Report. Total expenditure was £1275 over budget, mainly resulting from a grant of £2000 to the Village Hall for improvements to the play area. The internal auditor had audited the EoY accounts and found nothing material to report. The Audit Statements were read out and approved.

A modest pay rise of 2% was approved for the Clerk's salary with effect from 1st April.

Payments were authorized for the Clerk for Zoom and back pay (£42.80), SLCC Membership (£60.54), Vale Garden Service (£50), DE Scott Electricals (£80.72).

Other Matters

Development on Land near Home Farm – The PC has been contacted by a resident of The Mead to enquire about the possibility of homes adjacent to the proposed new housing development could be connected to the foul water drainage system provided for the new dwellings. MH undertook to raise this with the developer but it would be up to the residents to pursue this idea. It is not clear how the works could be funded but might involve some monies from the S106 agreement between the developer and Dorset Council; this would be outside the remit of the Parish Council.

War Memorial – MW reported the memorial hedge needed pruning; a quotation would be sought.

The meeting closed at 8.37pm. The next meeting is on **Monday 28th September 2020 at 7.00pm**

Post-Meeting Note:

Planning Application 2/2020/0577/FUL - Land at Home Farm, South Street

The Parish Council has now submitted its comments on this planning application. The Parish Council strongly supports the scheme in principle, but reluctantly it must object to the application as it stands. In our view the proposals are not sufficiently compliant with a number of Neighbourhood Plan policies. In particular, it considers more thought needs to be given to the designs of the homes and their layout to ensure that the scheme reflects the distinctive character of the village and its status as a conservation area.

The full comments of the Parish Council on the planning application can be found on the PC website <http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk/FontmellMagna-PC/planning-9778.aspx>. which hopefully residents will find of interest.

Digital Hotline volunteers 'do their byte' to get couple to friends' 70th birthday party video celebrations.

A highly experienced team of digital volunteers from the Dorset Digital Hotline have been praised for the way they helped a 'shielding' couple connect with loved ones and the outside world during the COVID lockdown.

The big 'thank you' from Wareham residents Arthur and Daniel Brown marks this year's #LetsTalkLoneliness Week (15-19 June 2020). The couple are keen for more people to know about the hotline which can offer support to anyone who wants to get connected with friends and family by video and provides help with any other IT or digital problem.

Arthur and Daniel, who are both 'shielding', moved to new sheltered accommodation with hours to spare before lockdown but their broadband connection didn't move with them. In a new town, with lockdown taking hold, the couple found themselves isolated, alone and no connection to the outside world save their GP surgery.

Arthur said: "We were on our own for 10 weeks in all. We have always been loathed to go digital but our motivations changed during lockdown. It became crystal clear that all essential services and human contact relied on us getting broadband and video conferencing.

"We tried some internet service providers but the cost was too high and neither of us are able to work. Our GP surgery suggested we call the Dorset Digital Hotline who immediately suggested we apply for the BT Basic Broadband package. This was installed extremely efficiently and with full safeguarding adhered to. Dorset Digital Hotline advisers have been on the end of a phone throughout to make sure the broadband and video technology works for us."

Daniel continued: "The BT Basic Broadband package is available for people on lower incomes. It was installed midweek and last Sunday we were invited to a 70th digital birthday party on Zoom. There were multiple screens so we could catch up with lots of people, many we hadn't seen for years, and all party together. It was wonderful. Anyone who needs IT or digital support should get in touch with the hotline now, we thoroughly recommend it."

A selection of some of the support the Dorset Digital Hotline can provide – no problem too small!

- helping families with digital applications for home schooling
- providing help to get online for home shopping
- support for all digital NHS services and e-Consult
- setting up video calls such as Skype and Facetime to keep in contact with friends and family
- support to use all digital appliances and solve problems

Cllr. Gary Suttle, Dorset Council cabinet lead for skills, said: "Without broadband or digital skills it must be incredibly difficult to shield. During the COVID lockdown, people without broadband have effectively been shut off. I am delighted we have been able to work as a team to find a good all-round solution for this couple."

Anyone can call the Dorset Digital Hotline with an IT question on

01305 221000 (Option 2) weekdays from 10am to 12 noon, or leave a message.

Village weather for May 2020

Only 4 rain days, with very small amounts, so very dry, but plenty of almost cloudless sunshine. An air frost on 12th May caught a lot of tender plants and even hedges.

4 rain days, 2 air frost, 6 ground frost. 2 gales, no hail or thunder.

Comp. Figures	2020	2019
Rain (Most 1.6 mm on 1st)	4.4 mm	22.9 mm
Sunshine	326.5 hrs (ave 10.5 hrs)	186.4 hrs
Max mean temp. (highest 25.1 °C on 28th)	19.3 °C	18.7 °C
Min mean temp. (lowest -1.7 °C on 12th)	7.8 °C	4.9 °C



Compost Corner

Hardy geraniums are such useful plants: they flower (colour range from white, pink to dark purple) for months on end, aren't nibbled by slugs or snails, and are disease resistant. They are also suitable for containers and last year I duly planted Geranium 'Mavis Simpson', an RHS Award of Garden Merit variety, in a container. It did magnificently well and quickly filled the pot. But this spring it looked very sorry for itself, seemingly sulking in the middle of the pot and not showing any new growth. I then did a bit of ferreting about in the compost and all was revealed - the geranium had only a few spindly roots and lurking nearby were little 'c' shaped white vine weevil grubs. Vine weevils are particularly problematic in pots the adults eating the leaves but it's the grubs that cause the lethal damage feasting on the plant's roots.

So what can be done? I managed to rescue Mavis, washing the roots down, repotting in fresh compost and after a period of nurturing and convalescence, she now resides happily in the freedom of a garden border.

Alison Main

Playground Openings – Under 12's Play Area at Fontmell Magna Village Hall

Following the Government announcement that playgrounds can re-open on July 4th we are doing our utmost to ensure that we can re-open the play area safely by that date.

Once the play area is re-opened we would ask parents, carers, supervisors of children using the play area to consider the following:

Please follow any additional or updated advice given on Notices in the Play Area.

Please bring your own hand sanitiser

Wash your and your children's hands before and after visiting. Ensure your children are using hand sanitiser frequently.

Follow the current social distancing guidelines when visiting and encourage your children to do the same.

If the playground is busy, consider coming back at a later time. Talk to your children about this possibility before visiting.

Follow and adhere to all current government advice in addition to the above guidance.

Finally, we ask you to be patient about returning to the play area and please do not use it until we have untied the gate and put up the new information and safety signage.

Thank you

Fontmell Magna Village Hall

THE SPRINGHEAD 24 CARROT GOLD SUPPORT SCHEME

Would you like to help The Springhead Trust to raise some much-needed funds this summer in a creative way by joining our 24 Carrot Gold support scheme? For a one-off donation of £50, which will go directly towards keeping our grounds and gardens maintained during this difficult time, you will receive three vibrant, organic seasonal produce boxes – one in July, one in August and one in September.



We will call you when your produce box is ready for collection. You can register for the scheme by emailing: productive-gardens@springheadtrust.org.uk or by calling 07963 172895. We can accept your donations by BACS, cash or cheque. We have just 24 slots for this particular initiative. Don't miss out! Register today!

Last autumn these two intrepid climbers attempted the summit of the cairn on Fontmell Down. There were somewhat hampered by the blutack on their feet but it did protect them in strong winds. After a couple of months they must have clambered back down, been swept to their fate or maybe nicked because they disappeared in the sad way that people do on mountains sometimes.



Now the second team are on their way up. Slightly more appropriately dressed but quite some way to go. We are cheering for them and their longevity.

BREAKING NEWS one of the valiant explorers has disappeared, please can search parties be sent out or a replacement found for the expedition!!



Tennis Court Hire

Village Hall Tennis Court

OPEN and FREE of charge

Key available at:

27 Orchard Close

(on West Street opposite Barn Cottage)

In the Greenhouse by the front gate

Both **singles** play and **doubles** play is now permitted with people from outside of your household, as long as you **remain 2 metres apart** as far as possible – meaning that **4 people** from different households can now play doubles.

Coached sessions should be limited to groups of no more than **6** people, including the coach(es).



Contact Louise Murchie on 811 478 or by email: murchie25@btinternet.com for further information

RECIPE CORNER— SPICY COURGETTE CHUTNEY

At this time of year, anyone who grows courgettes is faced with the problem of having them with every meal or leaving them to grow into marrows! I love chutney and this one is delicious with a vibrant colour and can be as spicy as you like depending on your palate. Ingredients Makes: 6 to 8 jars

30g salt
4 large cloves garlic, finely diced
2kg courgettes, diced
4 apples, cored and diced
4 large onions, diced
1 red pepper, diced
1 yellow pepper, diced
350g soft brown sugar
800ml vinegar
1 fresh chilli, finely diced
50g to 75g fresh root ginger, finely diced
2 dessertspoons mustard seeds
2 dessertspoons nigella seeds
2 dessertspoons turmeric
1 teaspoon ground coriander
teaspoon mixed spice
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1

Method

Prep:30min > Cook:2hr > Ready in:2hr30min

1. Put the salt and garlic in a pestle and mortar, and grind to create a smooth paste.
2. Add the garlic mixture along with all other ingredients to a large heavy bottomed pan. Mix together and bring to a simmer. Simmer for 1 1/2 to 2 hours, until the liquid has evaporated and the chutney is thick. Put the chutney into clean and warmed (in the oven) jars. Put a wax seal on the chutney and screw on the lid. Leave the chutney to cool. Store unopened jars in a cool, dark place. For the best results leave the chutney in jars for one month before opening.



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

We apologise in advance if we have made any errors or omissions—particularly as the current situation changes on a daily basis.

Please would regular contributors for the August issue contact us via email:

fmgossiptree@gmail.com or phone **01747 812195 (Ann Ashford)**

Alternatively, contact the **Chairman, Barbara Humphreys**, email: blueletterbox@btinternet.com if you would like further information.

Submissions for the August issue by Wednesday 22nd July please.

The views expressed in this publication by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editors 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