



THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

Sponsored by Joy Murphy in memory of her husband Patrick.

APRIL
2021
Issue 325

From the Gossip Tree Committee

After the further easing of lockdown restrictions, our ability to meet up and do normal things is increasing.

I realise that most of the clubs and societies in the village are not up and running again yet, but if they could let me know what their plans are then I will make sure that the information we give is as up to date as possible.

Graham Eames on behalf of the Gossip Tree Committee

St Andrew's Church, Fontmell Magna

CHURCH SERVICES in FONTMELL MAGNA.

2nd 9.30am Good Friday service (Please book with the Vicar Tel. 811291)
4th 10.00am Easter Day Holy Communion (Please book with David Fangen Tel 811176)
11th 9.30am Morning Worship
18th 9.30am Holy Communion
25th 9.30am Holy Communion

There will also be video services available on the Benefice website <http://www.iwernevalleybenefice.org.uk>

THE FONTMELL

We are delighted to announce our re-opening plans for April as lockdown eases.

We will be open Wednesday -Sunday from 14th April till 16th May

From 10am for coffee till 10pm except Friday and Saturday till 11pm and Sunday till 8pm

Food served Wed - Fri 12-2 / 6-8.30 and Sat 12-9 and Sunday 12-5

Support your local.



Notices – April 2021

St. Andrew's Church - Services for April
Please see announcement opposite for details

Parish Council Meeting

Next meeting Mon 14th June at 7.00pm by Zoom.
Parish clerk: Sam Smith
clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk

Local Councillor—Jane Somper

Email: cllrjane.somper@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Tel: 07710 395359

The Surgery

Closed until further notice.
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

Please see announcement opposite for details.
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

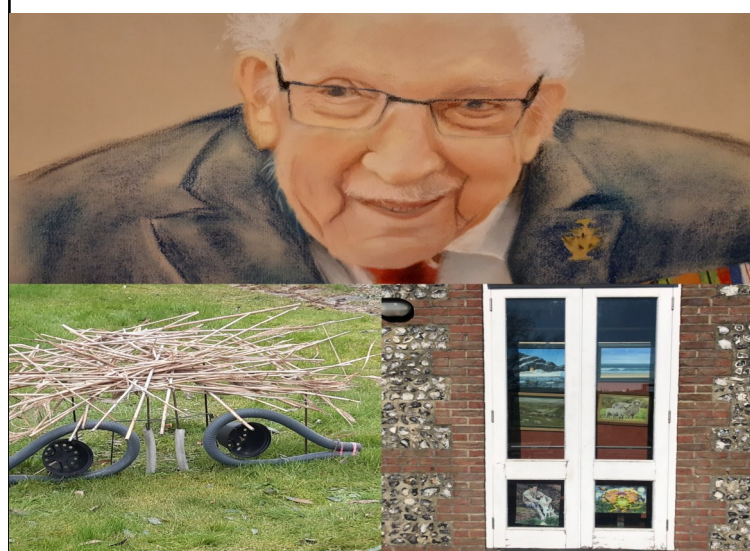
Enquiries: 812773

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



Captain Sir Tom Moore by Rosie Roberts, pictures in the windows by members of the Art Group and Boris sculpture by Barry Roberts whose idea it was to sign up to the Great Big Art Exhibition.



HAPPY EASTER

Events in the Village Hall

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

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 Jelbert 812468

Carpet Bowls Club

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Enquiries: Gerry Bone 811814

Dru Yoga

Meeting every Friday morning 9-11.

Enquiries: Kirsty Elliot 829281

Pilates Mon 5.30-6.30pm, 6.30-7.30pm and Tues 9.15.

STOTT Pilates Enquiries: Vicci Gillett

07940 961221 [www.stable-](http://www.stable-bodies.co.uk)

[bodies.co.uk](http://www.stable-bodies.co.uk)

Pop Up Play Village

Details for future events to come.

Contact: Helen Poll email: northdorset@popupplayvillage.co.uk

website: <https://popupplayvillage.co.uk>

Taekwon-do

Tuesday & Friday evenings

Enquiries:

Sam Donohoo 07584 039351

Zumba

Every Thursday at 09.30

Enquiries Abby Down 850867

zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com

To book the Hall, please contact :
Sian Highnam on 811028 or email
bookings.fmvh@mail.com

Councillor's Chronicles No.2— Hedgehog Highway

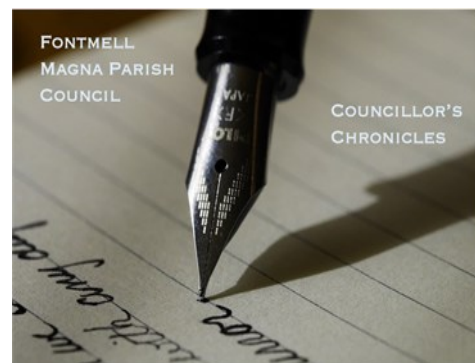
Being a Parish Councillor isn't a job, it isn't political, it doesn't need previous experience but what it does need is care and concern for our lovely local area. It's not all about planning and building more houses that we may or may not want, it's not all about potholes and broken stiles – although they are there in the mix and are important too. Being a Parish Councillor is also about caring for the natural environment. The Climate Change Emergency is scary and we all need to do our bit but we also need to support the creatures we share this Parish with.



Don't Fence Me Insang a choir of hedgehogs.

Help the hedgehogs, help the environment!

Spring has sprung, the grass is ris, I wonder where the birdies is! The birdies are busy nesting and being free as a bird all over the place. The hedgehogs, however, may need a little help. Hedgehogs in your garden are an enormous asset, eating slugs and snails and generally being rather attractive, although a little noisy when passionate! If they eat the slugs and snails, you won't need any of those nasty, harmful slug pellets. However, hedgehogs can't fly, you may have noticed this, so to help them visit as many gardens as possible during their nocturnal ramblings it's helpful if you ensure that there is at least one hedgehog-friendly entry/exit route between your garden and a field or the garden next door. This doesn't need to be a big, a gap of about 15cm square is good, a little piece cut out of the bottom of a fencing panel or a piece snipped out of a wire fence – quick and easy and the hedgehogs will love you for it!



SPRING BUDDLEIA CHOP

Anyone is welcome to help with the buddleias from 10-4, or anytime, from Monday 12th April to Thursday 15th April.

At Princes Field

(Judy 811302)



Village weather for February 2021

Rain continued from January then the "Beast from the East" reminded us that it was still winter—only a few flurries of snow/sleet. Another wild wet period ending with 3 welcome sunny days as high pressure took over

19 rain days, 1 day hail, 1 gale, 11 air frost, 17 ground frost. 2 days sleet and snow.

Comp. Figures	2021	2020
Rain (Most 17.1 mm on 14th)	71.2 mm	mm
Sunshine	63.9 hrs (ave 2.3 hrs)	hrs
Max mean temp. (highest 13.9 °C on 24th)	12.61 °C	°C
Min mean temp. (lowest —3.2 °C on 13th)	4.53 °C	°C

FONTMELL FRIENDSHIP GARDEN



It has been another busy and productive month for the Fontmell Friendship Garden and April will mark some real changes to the site. In the last month, seeds have been sown and re sown and we have a collection of cut flowers coming along really well- sweet peas, zinnia, cosmos, rudbekia, salvia, antirrhinum, gypsophila, godetia, amni, marigolds plus alchemilla mollis, roses, scabious, cornflowers, sunflowers, forget me nots, campanula and more. Thank you to all the 25 seed growers- some of the photographs are enclosed.

I have included a photograph of the stunning work of members of the art club. They have painted plant recognition signs which Sandra has had

printed on special paper to withstand our weather conditions (tested by Sandra). They are a beautiful addition to the garden - thank you.

The craft club have been so creative and made us some special bunting to decorate the garden once we are open.

The benches and troughs are assembled, water butts in place and irrigation system to come. A new gate is on order for entry into the garden from the village hall and new garden signs are being collected at the end of the month.

You will see some polyanthus brightening up the village hall - all were very kindly donated to us by Waitrose and provide some blooms into Spring. We have been supported by thisisalfred with regular updates from Keri and a few interviews and at the end of March the Village Halls Podcast, which supports the ten thousand village halls across the country are featuring our project on one of their episodes. The RHS (The Garden) magazine are popping us in the April edition with the offer of a feature article next year. Dorset Community Action are also kindly featuring us again in their newsletter - previous articles have featured the Christmas fair of last year.

Nic Andrews from The Potting Shed in Shaftesbury very kindly donated three large boxes of gardening books and a box of magazines for our gardening borrowing library which we will be opening with the garden.



WHAT NEXT? - REQUEST FOR HELP PLEASE

APRIL 24 th 10 am- 1pm. Garden work morning.

This is a preparation morning for the mass planting and the garden opening. We will be planting budleia very kindly donated by Judy Westgate, filling troughs, and setting up the staking for the plants for the future. I will make the mid morning cakes and provide take away style coffees. Please e mail me on sianhighnam@gmail.com if you feel you could come and help in any way. I have a good number of people- but never say no to help - even if it is just making take away teas and coffees for the gardeners.

TUESDAY MAY 18th - FLOWER DEMONSTRATION 1.30-4.30 pm.

Final year level four Kingston Maurward students, together with their tutor are coming to support the garden , completing five demonstrations on the theme of Spring/ early Summer . Tickets are £5.00 to include tea and cake with a raffle for the demonstrations. Numbers are strictly limited and we are operating under safe covid requirements.40 seats are taken and we have capacity for just 10 more. Please e mail me on sianhighnam@gmail.com if you would like to reserve one of those tickets.

MAY 22nd 10-1 pm- mass plant out

This is the day we will be planting out the seeds grown, finishing off troughs and any other planting which arises, plus putting out the art club plant identification signs . Again - there will be cakes and take away style coffee.

We will have a planting plan and would welcome as many of the seed growers who would like to come and plant as possible please. I don't anticipate people having to be there for three hours - it is just a drop in, plant and go...although anyone is very welcome to stay as long as they want. This is also open to any villagers who would like to come along to support the growing- we would welcome any help with the fun part of the planting. The planting in the garden will be intensive cut flower gardening style - so lots of potential future blooms to plant out to give us plenty of flowers.

JUNE 26th GRAND OPENING 1-4 pm

This is going to be a lovely event with live music from Clayesmore, country dancing from Steps in Time and potentially more live music at the end of the afternoon. John Crompton is running a BBQ and bar. We have a grand raffle- there are some fabulous prizes pledged already and we will be selling tickets very soon. Sue is running a friendship bracelet stand, we will have flower posies - " jars of joy" , plus a cake stall and the chance to be together.

There is already a huge amount of help pledged - but there are just one or two small gaps. I am requesting help please for the following:

9-11.30 Setting up marquees in the garden , tables for tea outside and inside the village hall, setting up the stalls ready. Looking for more helpers if you have NOT already contacted me . Many hands make light work and all that

One or two extra people to serve teas and cake from 2-3 and/or from 3-4 Two more people to man the raffle stall - to sell any extra tickets on the day Home made Cakes please for selling on the cake stall and for the teas and two additional people to man the cake stall and promote the village cook book.

Thank you to all those of you who have already offered to help- and those people will have received a table from me specifying their help. I am operating a shift system - so the duties will only be for an hour of the afternoon, to allow everyone to mix and enjoy themselves.

Update from the Village Hall – Preparing for Re-opening

Tennis Court – Step 1

We were delighted to be able to re-open the Tennis Court on **Monday 29th March** for social play, just in time for the Easter holidays. Singles and Doubles are allowed but players must maintain social distancing. 1 to 1 coaching is permitted but spectating is not allowed. Parents may supervise children (one parent per player). Fingers crossed for some excellent weather over the Easter Weekend.

To hire the court please contact Louise Murchie by email: murchie25@btinternet.com or visit the Greenhouse at 27 Orchard Close to make your booking.

We have been relying on donations over the past year during the various lockdowns but following quite a lot of maintenance, including the purchase of a new net, we are once again charging £1 an hour per adult, Students and Children just 50p per hour.

Under 12's Playground

The scheduled maintenance of the playground is underway. We have received a very generous donation to the appeal and are currently looking at some options for a new piece of play equipment for the under-fives. I hope to have more news on what has been chosen for the May edition.

Village Hall – timetable for re-opening

Step 2

Following the Government's roadmap out of lockdown, the hall will be re-opening on **Monday 12th April** as a Covid-19 Secure Venue. Only the activities and regular hirers listed below will be allowed to resume:

Taekwondo (under 18's)

Pop-up Play Village

1 to 1 Gym Sessions (not classes)

Funeral wakes up to 15 people

All supervised indoor children's activities (under the Childcare Act 2006) but not Birthday parties just yet

Outdoor gatherings or events organised by a business, charity or public body can be held under Covid-19 secure conditions

For work purposes where people cannot access reliable broadband from home

For digital access to public services to enable villagers to access the internet using the broadband available at the hall

To provide essential voluntary activities

For the purposes of education or training

For the purpose of support groups

If you organise groups or activities that are permitted during **Step 2** and are looking for premises to operate from or looking for a quiet space to get on with some work then please get in touch with Sian Highnam, Bookings Manager by email: bookings.fmvh@mail.com

The Hall will be in use as a Polling Station on Thursday 6th May for the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections.

Recreation Area

Good progress is being made with the joint venture Cut Flower Garden. Sian has received huge support from sponsors and villagers alike. Planters, hanging baskets, window boxes and water butts will begin to appear at the Village Hall over the next month or two, which is helping to link the Hall and the Fontmell Friendship Garden together. A gate between the two areas is due to be installed very soon.

The grass is currently roped off to help it recover and grass seed will be sown as soon as the ground is ready.

Look out for Sian's latest update on the Fontmell Friendship Garden in this edition of the Gossip Tree and our regular updates posted on Instagram and Facebook @villagehallfontmellmagna, @fontmellfriendshipgarden and Nextdoor.



We would also like to thank the Art Group and particularly Peter Mole, Sandra Jelbart and Pat Guy for organising the magnificent Art Exhibition in the Windows at the Village Hall as part of #Thegreatbigartexhibition – a virtual exhibition promoted by Firstsite which many of us have been participating in. It has certainly brightened up our winter walks. If you've not seen it yet you have until we re-open to go and take a look. The current themes are Colour and Humour.

Best wishes from the Fontmell Magna Village Hall Management Committee, we look forward to welcoming you back to the Village Hall soon.

Any queries - please email: secretary.fmvh@mail.com

Fontmell Magna Parish Council – Meeting on 8th March 2021 at 7.00pm

Due to the Coronavirus restrictions the Parish Council meeting 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, Annie Newbury (AN), Andy Main (AM) and Clerk Sam Smith (SS), DC Ward Cllr Jane Somper (JS), plus 5 residents and Keri Jones (press This is Alfred)

Public Questions - none

Apologies - none

Co-options – Christine Scott, West Street, was co-opted to the parish council; the Chair welcomed Christine and thanked her for coming forward. Christine will focus on social infrastructure issues, covering assets, home watch, defibrillators, village shop liaison, broadband and mobile network coverage, recreation, allotments, village hall liaison. The Chair confirmed there remain 2 vacancies on the Parish Council.

New Clerk – The Chair welcomed Sam Smith, now in post as Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer following a handover of files from Marianne Wheatley.

Minutes of the Meeting 14th December 2020 – these were approved unanimously.

Matters Arising

Community Land Trust– The CLT held its AGM on 4th March; AM attended for the parish council as a shareholder.

Hedge on Lurmer Street – Following complaints raised by residents, the parish council arranged for a protruding hedge along Lurmer St, to be cut back as it was a danger to traffic. It was found that an enclosed stand of 19 hawthorn trees contained 9 that were dead and could potentially fall into the road representing a significant risk to pedestrians and traffic. The landowner has yet to be identified and Dorset Highways was approached but declined to meet the cost of tree felling. Because it is judged as an ongoing safety risk the PC has decided to meet the significant cost and commissioned the works to fell the dead trees.

Speed Restrictions – The PC has discussed with Dorset Highways introducing tighter speed restrictions at the Bedchester crossroads and along the B3091. Highways has a published set of criteria in place (available on the Dorset Council website) to decide if this would be appropriate but these criteria are not met in either situation.

Variable Speed Indicator – A resident's suggestion to install a variable speed indicator along the A350 through the village has been researched. Highways has advised that the benefit would be marginal in reducing average traffic speeds and at over £3000 the cost is prohibitive.

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

JS reported on two successful ward meetings, to introduce Rico Dimarino as our Highways Community Officer and to discuss footpaths. JS also advised that Dorset Council has secured £19m of funding to update its housing stock for energy efficiency by installing better insulation and heating systems.

Reports from Parish Councillors

a. Planning – MH confirmed there had been nine new applications which were assessed by the Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group; their reports are available on the PC website. The PC had no objection to six applications: Barn Cottage, 2 North St., Orchard Corner, Dairy Cottage, 8 Collyers Rise. The PC objected to three applications: Springhead Farm, 54 West Street; Springhead, Mill St., Home Mead Cottage.

MH reported an update on the proposed large development near Home Farm, South St. The developer Pennyfarthing Homes is continuing discussion with Dorset planners on ecology mitigation and the infrastructure levy. A decision on the planning application is expected in the next 2-3 months.

b. Highways – JL reported that residents had asked if raised curb stones could be placed along parts of Lurmer St. to protect property, however Highways have stated there is insufficient road width to accommodate wider curbs. The road surfaces along West St and Gupples Lane are being reviewed by Highways as they are in a poor state. JS was thanked for arranging a very useful meeting with Highways to discuss various outstanding issues.

c. Environment Protection – AN reported that Wessex Water are continuing further works at Bedchester crossroads which is disrupting some residents; posts at the crossroads to protect the verges are now back in place. Following complaints from residents, improved "Clean it up" signs have been installed along Penn Hill.

AN attended two People's Assembly zoom sessions on environment and climate change issues. An invitation will go to Sustainable Dorset to address Fontmell residents on ideas to tackle climate change.

d. Social Infrastructure – AN reported that improved signage on the school defibrillator is in place. AN advised that the Village Hall has been redecorated and is ready to open for use as soon as possible. The PC has sponsored a planter for the Fontmell Friendship Garden.

MH reported that 10 responses had been received from residents interested in the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme which ends in March. Details of any new funding schemes are awaited from Dorset Digital.

Fontmell Magna Parish Council – Meeting on 8th March 2021 at 7.00pm (cont)

e. District Liaison – MH reported that the PC responded to the draft Dorset Local Plan consultation, with comments and suggestions made in several areas including housing and climate change. The draft Plan places Fontmell in tier 3 for housing development and proposes an allocation of 62 new homes over the planning period 2021-38.

f. Parish Communications – A new blog has been started, called “Councillor’s Chronicles”.

The idea is to communicate the workings of the parish council, the issues it tackles and problems it encounters, in representing the community of Fontmell Magna. The blog is intended to supplement the meeting minutes with more light-hearted and topical content http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk/Councillors_Chronicles_38120.aspx

g. Footpaths – AM reported that a stile has been renewed on a footpath leading up to Fontmell Down. Dog Poo signs have been placed along the path to the Lynchets. Thanks are due again to Gary Payne who has removed more of the weed covering Middle Mill ponds.

h. Governance – MH and SS have received training on maintaining the parish council website. With Christine Scott joining the PC, a revised list of councillors’ responsibilities is available on the website.

Report from the RFO and Bills Presented

The Clerk confirmed the income and expenses to date. The available balance as at 28th February was £9,790.13. It was agreed bills set out in the Schedule should be paid:

Clerk’s laptop - £454 Clerk’s laptop software - £53.48

Parish Online license - £40.50 Lurmer Street hedge cutting - £50

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

The next meeting, the parish council’s Annual General Meeting, will be held on **Monday 14th June at 7.00pm** via Zoom videoconferencing. Arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting are uncertain, dependent upon the lifting of Covid restrictions.

Compost Corner

Early spring is one of the busiest times for gardeners but I've been reflecting on some of the jobs that I won't be doing because they are no longer necessary or indeed desirable as we try and lead more environmentally friendly lives. I certainly won't be scattering slug pellets and leave frogs, hedgehogs and thrushes to control slugs and snails and if you can't bear a few holes in your hosta's leaves replace them with ferns which aren't affected by our mollusc friends. Nor, thank goodness, will I be doing any double digging, a task that was once considered so vital but has now been discovered to damage soil's complex structure. Instead I will quite simply add a thick layer of mulch which will reduce evaporation, control annual weeds and gradually be incorporated by worms into the soil. And I won't be spraying to control insect pests because insecticides don't discriminate between bees, ladybirds, hover flies, aphids and caterpillars - they kill them all. If left alone a happy balance between pest and prey will be achieved. Which leaves plenty of time to enjoy all the glories of a Dorset Spring.

Alison Main



Could you be my Foster Carer?

Fostering allowances up to £590* a week
*depending on the child's needs

Call us on 01305 225568 fosterindorset.com



Dorset Council

This April 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 May issue contact me via email:

(fmgossiptree@gmail.com)

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

Submissions for the May issue by Thursday 22nd April 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