



THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

Kindly Sponsored by MacLachlan Solicitors

MAY
2022
Issue 338

News from the Village Hall & Playground



We have started the process of removing the old play equipment from the under 12's play area. It is sad to see it all go, but the majority of the timber posts had rotted away at the base meaning the play equipment was dangerous to use.

Over the next few months we will remove all the remaining posts, equipment and concrete and start to prepare the ground for a new playground which we are aiming to have installed in the Autumn/Winter of this year. This is very much dependent on the village hall receiving funding from the new housing development in the village along with the fundraising money we have already raised thanks to your generous donations. Our extra funds will enable us to have a really excellent playground for the village.

Please look out for updates on Facebook and Nextdoor. Here is the plan of the playground as it will be once work is completed.



The Fontmell Friendship Garden team has come up with some games and activities for children on a Wednesday afternoon between 2 and 4pm as part of the weekly Pop-up Café at the Village Hall starting from 20th April so please come along with your children.

It has been great to see more bookings coming back to the Village Hall. If you are interested in booking the hall for an event please contact our Bookings Manager: Siân Highnam by email at bookings.fmvh@mail.com or by phone: 01747 811 028

Notices – May 2022

St. Andrew's Church - Services for May
1st 0900 Sunday Breakfast at Village Hall
8th 0930 Baptism service
15th 0930 Holy Communion with choir
22nd 0930 Holy Communion
29th 1000 Benefice Service at Sutton Waldron

Parish Council Meeting

Next PC meeting
Wed 18th May 2022 in the village hall
AGM 6.30-7.00pm

Annual Parish Meeting 7.00-7.30pm

Parish Council Meeting 7.30-8.15pm

Parish clerk: Sam Smith
clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk

Local Councillor—Jane Somper

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

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

Cafe 9-4 Monday to Friday and 9-12 Saturday
garden cafe from May - October

A2 licence for home-cooked meals, all day
breakfast, jackets toasties etc

The Tea Room Crafters

2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm
in the Tea Room.

Enquiries: Jenny White 812042

The Fontmell—opening hours

Mon & Tues—Closed
Weds to Friday—Bar 12-11pm Food served
12-2.30pm, 6-9pm)
Saturday 12-11pm, food served 12-9pm
Sunday 12-6, food served 12-4pm

Enquiries: 811441 or john@thefontmell.com

St. Andrew's School

Enquiries: 811500

Fontmell Magna Toddler Group & Under 5s

Enquiries: 812773

Iwerne Valley Walking Group

Next walk: Saturday May 21st, starting at
10.30a.m. from The Chetnole Inn, near
Sherborne DT9 6NU. Leaders are Jane and Neil
Davies (01747 811627).

Contact: Helen English 01747 853472

Bell-ringing

Enquiries: Caroline Rhodes 812002

Events in the Village Hall

Fontmell Friendship Garden—Pop up Café

Resumes 20th April 2022
Contact Sian Highnam 811028 or
garden.fmvh@mail.com

Fontmell Magna & District Society

1st Friday of the month, October to May from 7.30pm.
Enquiries: Dick Stainer 811153

Sunday Breakfast

1st Sunday of the month
Enquiries: Barry Roberts 811906

Fontmell Films

Enquires: Libby Gendall 811551

Archive Society

3rd Thursday of each month in the village hall 4.00 to 5.30pm.
Enquiries: Roger Hillman 811878

Fontmell Magna & District Garden Club

Thursday 21st April 7.30pm

Social evening for members

Enquiries: Sue Chippington 811520
sue.chippington@outlook.com

Fontmell Magna Art Club

Meetings weekly on Tuesdays between 2-4pm.
Enquiries: Sandra Jelbart 812468

Carpet Bowls Club

Thursdays 7.30-9.30pm
Enquiries: Gerry Bone 811814

Dru Yoga

Friday mornings at 0930 and 1100
Enquiries: Kirsty Elliot 829281
Kirsty@vhadevelopments.co.uk

Pilates

Mon 1730-1930 Tues 1000-1100.
STOTT Pilates Matwork with props Enquiries: Vicci Gillett 07940 961221 stablebodies@gmail.com

Pilates with Sam Whitford – Monday mornings term-time

Mondays 10.30 to 11.30am. Contact Sam Whitford 07740 906515 email: s.whitford@btinternet.com

Taekwon-do

Friday 5.30 to 6.30—suitable for adults and children from 6 years. Enquiries:
Sam Donohoo 07388 342625 or
sam.donohoo@hotmail.co.uk

Tennis court

Booking: Louise Murchie, 27 Orchard Close –
murchie25@btinternet.com Adults £1 per hour,
Children/Students 50p per hour

Aerobics

Thursday 1000-1100 Gentle/Low impact aerobics with Abby
Enquiries: Abby Down 01747 850867 07901 597129
zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com

To book the Hall, please contact :

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

Iwerne Valley Walking Group

March 2022 walk, Bonsley Wood and Okeford Hill



15 walkers gathered at the top of Okeford Hill to start the walk. We set off down the path that leads to the woods and then branched off to follow the fields down towards Bonsley Common Wood to the Jubilee Way. This gives lovely views down to the Purbecks which unfortunately we couldn't see as there was a haze, lovely and sunny, but lousy views. Following the Jubilee Way took us to Shepherd's Corner Farm. There are several industrial units at the farm including a carpenter's shop. Turning left we walked up through a lovely grassy field which is used as a camp site in the summer complete with earth closets where the photo was taken. At the end of the field you enter Bonsley Wood. Initially the path takes you through a pine grove but after crossing the main track through the wood you then go up with beech trees on either side. Turning right at the top we confronted the only bit of fairly steep track which goes up to the top of Shillingstone Hill. From here you can see right over to Cranborne Chase as far as Pentridge Hill and also down to the coast. Again haze limited the view. At the top we joined the Wessex Ridgeway back to the car park. The original idea had been to go through the field at the top of Okeford Hill but having dogs with us and there being horses in the field we took the Ridgeway right back to the car park. We instead admired one of the best views in Dorset across the Blackmore Vale from the parked cars before retiring to the Royal Oak in Okeford Fitzpaine for lunch. Jim Bird

Death Café for Fontmell?

Most people ask What on earth is a Death Café? and look appalled. In case you think I've taken leave of my senses, it is a Thing. The 'social franchise' concept of a Death Café was started by a Swiss sociologist, Bernard Cretaz. In England his ideas were picked up by Jon Underwood in Hackney, London and quickly spread world-wide. Since September 2011 the official Death Café has offered 13,908 in 81 countries. It is for people, often strangers who want to talk about death to get together and share delicious cake and a cuppa. The aim is to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their finite lives. It normalises a difficult topic that you might not even feel comfortable discussing with your family. There is no set agenda, no intention to lead anyone to specific courses of action and although not designed as bereavement support or counselling session, talking about the death of a loved one fits naturally in this context.

Given the year-round availability of the lovely Post Office café and the Community Garden's café facilities in the summer, I thought I would ask if anyone had any interest in my facilitating a Death Café once a month, perhaps? Quarterly? Biannually? Maybe a morning slot for an hour at the Post Office and then a separate summer Pop-Up Death Café coffee morning in the Village Hall with access to the Community Garden where I would operate on the basis that people pay £2 for tea and cake to go towards the Community Garden costs? I would not join the official Death Café movement and materials from Marie Curie charity would be available in case people want reliable information on, say, planning and thinking about your care and wishes ahead of time.

I am a singing teacher, gardener, writer, and child health campaigner who has lived in the village with my family for over twenty years. I am sometimes asked to speak to families and to palliative health care professionals about our lived experience of end-of-life care with our teenage son who died at home of a brain tumour ten years ago.

Please email me at langilks@btinternet.com if you think it would be good to have in the village.

Sacha Langton-Gilks

Spring Meadows – Official Launch

The parish council asked Pennyfarthing Homes about their plans for selling the new homes on Spring Meadows. Here's the response from Phil Hurring, Marketing Manager for Pennyfarthing Homes:

"We will be selling the homes off plan and would encourage anyone interested in purchasing a home to join us for the exclusive launch of Spring Meadows on 12th May, and if they have not done so already to register their information on our website. If any of the residents are interested in buying one of the new homes, the public launch will be advertised and invitations issued to those that have registered interest with more details on location and timing.

However, if any of the residents are just interested in knowing more about the development and houses, but not necessarily interested in buying, our website will be updated from the launch date with information such as the overall site plan, individual housetype floorplans, external CGI's of the housetypes, brochures and asking prices that they will be able to view."

Here's a link to the website:

<https://www.pennyfarthinghomes.co.uk/site/spring-meadows/>

From a local perspective, below are 2 photos from Gillian Darwall, who lives in the village, showing the site as it was in 1979 and how it looked a couple of weeks ago. As the Editor I hope to include future photos of the site development over the coming months.



BUDDLEIAS

I cannot thank the helpers enough for their efforts in all weathers last week. The mountain of prunings was successfully burnt before the rain.

Many, many thanks

Judy Westgate



FINLAY MURCHIE

27 September 1933 – 25 March 2022



Finlay was born in Ayrshire in but lived in England for over 40 years, including 30 years in Fontmell Magna.

Finlay was only 12 when his father died and life was tough for a number of years, yet this proved to be a motivating factor for him to create a good life for himself. Finlay attended night school to study sales and marketing alongside his day job at ICI. He went on to have a highly successful career in the drinks industry.

Outside of work, Finlay was a huge sports fan. He was a talented rugby player and an enthusiastic coach. In later life, Finlay devoted himself to helping his son Peter with his rugby career. It was a very proud moment for him when Peter turned professional and won his first cap for Scotland.

Finlay ran the village shop from 1990 to 1996 with his wife Louise. His sharp wit was sometimes misunderstood by the customers! He was a founding member of the Gossip Tree. He organised athletics training at the village school and was a governor at Shaftesbury School for many years. He was well known for running Wellie Whanging at the village fete.

Finlay loved to help others. After retiring from the shop his soothing Scottish voice was put to good use by retraining as a hypnotherapist. He took great pride in being able to make a difference to others. One lady he helped to stop smoking named her dog Finlay after him!

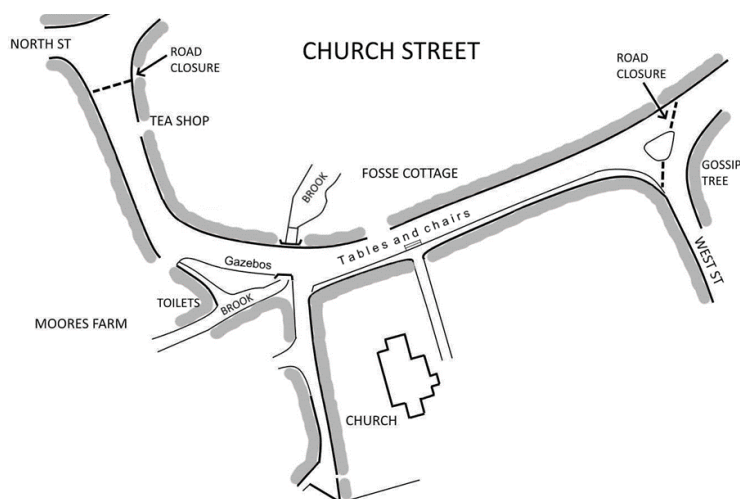
Above all, he was a kind, generous and funny man. He is greatly missed by all his family and friends. Louise and the family would like to thank everyone for their kind messages of sympathy, warm thoughts and memories of Finlay.



The Fontmell Magna Platinum Jubilee Street Party – Sunday 5th June

We held a very successful meeting at the Village Hall in early April. Thanks to all of you who attended and to everyone who signed up for volunteering roles on the day.

The event will take place on Church Street and below is the draft layout for the day:



We have a draft programme of events for the day ... a detailed programme of the day's events, detailed map and timings will be included in the June edition of the Gossip Tree which is being hand delivered to every household in the parish.

- 9.30am Church bells
- 10.00am Jubilee Service in St Andrew's Church (details awaited)
- 11.00am Refreshments in the church
- 11.30am Opportunity to see a Display of art by the children of St. Andrews School and the Fontmell Under Fives in the Church
- Crown-making workshop and arts and crafts in the church and churchyard
- Family Treasure hunt for 15 items in Churchyard and Church Street



12.00am The **Big Lunch** details:

Bring and share picnic – bring enough for yourself and some extra to share with friends
Tables and Chairs will be set out on Church Street, some under Gazebo
Or bring a blanket and picnic in the Churchyard

For those preferring to buy their lunch **The Village Shop** will open their barn doors onto Church Street with outside tables on Church Street and in the Garden. They will be selling sandwiches, hot and cold drinks, cake and **Ice Cream**

Bar: **The Fontmell** will run a cash only bar on Church Street serving beer, wine and soft drinks

- 2.00pm Visit the **Archive Society display** at the Village Hall with a 1950's Coronation Theme
- 3.00pm Afternoon Teas in the village hall till 4.30pm. Browse the archive displays and visit the Friendship Garden to see the flower beds especially planted by Village clubs and societies and the school children for the Jubilee.
- 5.00pm Live music at **The Fontmell**, serving pizzas and beer. Pizzas to be pre-ordered please via Sian Highnam – 01747 811 028 sianhighnam@gmail.com with a choice of toppings as follows:

Margarita, homemade tomato sauce, buffalo mozzarella, tomato, basil - **£14**

Meat, homemade tomato sauce, "The Real Cure" pepperoni, Nduja, mozzarella, wood fired red peppers, oregano, jalapeño, rocket - **£15**

Seafood, homemade tomato sauce, king prawns, anchovies, caper berries, pesto, parmesan, rocket - **£16**

Aromatic Duck, Homemade tomato sauce, smoked shredded duck, pickled daikon, spring onion, hoisin, coriander - **£15**

Vegan, Vegan pizza base, homemade tomato sauce, vegan mozzarella, fresh basil, rocket - **£12**

The Fontmell Magna Platinum Jubilee Street Party – Sunday 5th June (cont)

Prior to the Day our bunting team lead by Roy Foster will be doing the rounds of Church Street and West Street to bring some extra Jubilee cheer to our village. We are grateful to all who have kindly allowed us to adorn their hedgerows and roadside walls previously (for Fetes and other events) and hope that they, and our newer residents, will permit us to do so again on this special occasion. If there are any concerns or misgivings, please feel free to contact Roy Foster on 01747 812 502.

Volunteers Still Needed for the Jubilee

We have a good number of volunteers, but there are still things we need help with:

Driving Duties

With Church Street closed for the Street Party we are providing some car parking for those not living within walking/ cycling distance of the Village. However, Blue Badge holders will be given priority to park at St. Andrews School on West Street in the morning and at the Village Hall in afternoon. All others will be asked to park at the Doctors Surgery (SP7 OPS) and walk.

If you live in the village and will need a lift to/ or from any of the events of the day, or you live in the village and would be willing to drive villagers on the day, please let Robert Wellen know, preferably before Sunday 29 May, on 01747 811070 or by e-mail: robertwellen@btinternet.com and he will attempt to coordinate transport. This 'service' is only for those who cannot otherwise get to/ or back from village events that day (i.e. cannot walk, do not have a car or family or neighbours who can offer a lift).

Car Park and Road Marshals

With Church Street closed we do need volunteers to keep an eye on the traffic and direct drivers to the car parks or around the diversion. We only ask for an hour of your time anytime between 9am and 4pm.

If you can spare an hour to help please contact Sian Highnam on 01747 811 028 to be added to the volunteer list.

Gossip Tree Deliveries 1st June

5 volunteers are need to deliver the June edition of the Gossip Tree to a small number of households in the outlying hamlets of Hartgrove, Bedchester, Kit Hill, Blackven Common, and Fontmell Hill. An address list for each area will be provided. Please contact Graham Eames at the Gossip Tree on fmgosiptree@gmail.com if you can help.

Best wishes from the Jubilee Team: Barry, Siân, Lisa, Sue, Phyll and Graham.

Here are our contact details:

Barry Roberts: 01747 811 906 brfontmell@gmail.com

Siân Highnam: 01747 811 028 sianhighnam@gmail.com

Lisa Le Druillenec: 01747 812 500 lisa.ledruillenec@gmail.com



Memento of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee for all Children of the Parish aged 16 and under

At the Jubilee open meeting on 6th April, we were asked if we had any plans to give a gift to the children living in the Village as a memento of the

Platinum Jubilee.

We have given this some thought since our discussion at the meeting and we would like to present every child, aged 16 and under, who lives in the Parish of Fontmell Magna, with a Jubilee gift.

If you have children or grandchildren living in the village or the parish, please could you get in touch with one of our team listed below. We plan to present these gifts as part of the Jubilee Celebrations in Church Street on Sunday 5th June.

The Jubilee Team

Lisa Le Druillenec: lisa.ledruillenec@gmail.com

Siân Highnam: sianhighnam@gmail.com

Barry Roberts: brfontmell@gmail.com

Graham Eames: fmgosiptree@gmail.com

FONTMELL MAGNA VILLAGE ARCHIVE SOCIETY PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATION EXHIBITION

The Society will be holding a small exhibition in the Village Hall to mark the occasion with relevant material from the Archives. What was Fontmell Magna like in the early 50's? How was the coronation marked at the time? Where were YOU on coronation day? Those not born can just enjoy their youth!!

If anyone has souvenirs of the day or succeeding anniversaries and would be prepared to lend them to the Society for display, should contact Roger Hillman 01747 811878. Security will be of importance and items will be removed overnight to a safe house.

The exhibition will be open Thursday 2nd, Friday 3rd, Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th June 2022 In the Village Hall 2.00pm to 5.00 pm.

FONTMELL MAGNA AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB

After far too long we are happy to be meeting and socialising and getting back together and thought we would share some of our recent activities with the community!

Just to catch up with our activities since early in the year – in February we learnt everything there is to know about Epimediums (not to be confused with epidemiologists of which we have heard quite enough during the last two years!). Sally Gregson from Mill Cottage Plants was accompanied by an amazing collection of slides showing the plants grown in her own garden and their origins in China and Japan along with their discoverers. Such beautiful little blooms like fairy lanterns in every colour imaginable. They do have a tendency to hide beneath the leaves so the top tip was to trim back the foliage and let the flowers shine. Sally had some plants and her book for sale and these were duly purchased and hopefully there are now epimediums growing happily in their new homes.

In March Sally Morgan, who has a fascinating walled garden near Templecombe, spoke about 'The Healthy Veg Garden'. Once again this talk was accompanied by a presentation of pictures from her plot and fascinating stories about her gardening experiences. Ideas gathered over many years of botany and ecology education and much practical research were explained and shared with our members. Improving soil, weed control, natural pest remedies and questioning many of our widely accepted methods made for a very informative evening. A lively question and answer session followed and several books were sold so perhaps we can expect some 'No Dig' experiments and various non-chemical methods of pest control around the community! We can expect mulch, manure, nematodes, bug hotels, companion planting, compost heaps and all manner of diverse and natural garden activities to appear in our neighbourhood gardens!

We are looking forward to our social evening and raffle on April 21st and our annual shopping expedition to Castle Gardens in Sherborne in May. And The Garden Club Annual Show is back on August 6th – watch this space for details and updates – and if anyone has ideas for activities and events we welcome suggestions and comments. New members always welcome and for just £2 guests can come to our evening talks. We look forward to seeing you there!

Sara-Jane Glanville

1. POP UP CAFES

They start on Wednesday April 20th and take place every Wednesday until September 7th, APART FROM JUNE 1st.

We would welcome any help in these cafes- either to bake a cake or serve in the cafe or both. We are also hoping to welcome some help from Year 12 Clayesmore students and on occasions, students from Yewstock.

Please e mail me if you would like / are able to do any dates. I have a lovely list of volunteers already- but would welcome anyone who would be happy to help .

Obviously, we hope to welcome as many of you as possible for a cuppa and chat and there will be some optional activities on certain weeks.

We will be charging £2.00 for a cuppa and cake and £2.00 for a posy, with funds going to the Friendship garden for future seeds .

2. COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM COMPETITION 2022

I contacted the organiser of this event some time ago and am delighted to say we received a reply to say we were definitely eligible as our project satisfies the criteria involved.

Thank you so very very much to Sarah Jane Glanville who has spent a lot of time working through the application form and completing all the relevant details. Sarah Jane heard last week that we have been accepted for entrance for the award and we will hear in due course when the assessor will be visiting! We will be stepping up the time in the garden over the next few weeks in preparation for the season, the jubilee celebrations and also the assessor visit.

3. PLANTING

I had suggested a date of April 23rd for planting some blooms out. This date was a fundraising date for Abby Down, as detailed in last month's Gossip Tree and I would therefore re arranged to prevent a clash to her fundraising efforts.

I have moved planting to SATURDAY MAY 14th - 9-11 am. We will be safe from frosts and all the plants currently being grown around the village will be able to go into their relevant beds. If you are able to join me on that morning- please can you e mail me on sianhighnam@gmail.com .

4. CONTINUED GARDEN MAINTENANCE

The Year 12 Clayesmore boys will be back in the garden on Fridays from FRIDAY APRIL 29th 11.45-12.45 pm. I am with them most weeks and we happily welcome anyone else who might like to join us for that hour. They will be focusing on weeding, maintaining and planting .

5. WATERING AND WEEDING

As last year, I am now putting together a rota for the weeding and watering of the garden. We have irrigation in all the raised garden beds - the watering is just for the Fontmell Under Fives troughs and the tubs around the village hall.

I am proposing to start the watering and weeding schedule from May 14 th. It takes realistically 20 minutes maximum on a daily basis and last year, the number of people involved ensured your name came around approximately once every ten to twelve days.

The easiest option is to tag it on to a club - eg I typically did Mondays and/ or Fridays as I was there anyway for Pilates and yoga.

Please can you e mail me to let me know if you would be happy to be on a rota once a fortnight for twenty minutes please and I can start to put something together.

5. FINALLY!

If any of the clubs require any help from me re beds, please do let me know.

As Spring emerges, let me know what extra plants you might need , so I can allocate

Thank you to everyone as always for all the help in all these ventures

Siân



Parish Council AGM and Annual Parish Meeting

The Parish Council's AGM will be held on Wednesday 18th May at 6.30pm. The AGM is where the council's officers are elected – the Chair, Vice-chair and RFO. Perhaps you are thinking of joining the parish council; if so this would be a very good time to come forward to fill our two vacancies: 1. to lead on environment, and 2. to liaise with other organisations in Dorset.



The Parish's Annual Meeting will also be held on Wednesday 18th May at 7.00pm. This is an opportunity for the parish's clubs and societies to report on their activities through the past year and their plans for the year ahead. Reports can be made verbally at the meeting or in writing to the Clerk. Also the Annual Meeting is another opportunity for residents to ask a question on local matters or raise any issue of concern.

We look forward to welcoming representatives of clubs and societies, and interested residents, to these important events in the parish's calendar.

Councillor's Chronicles No.10

Communication Is Key by Laura Kurton

"To effectively communicate, we must realise that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others." - Tony Robbins

Hopefully you've read my previous two articles, about Community Spirit and more about my move to Bedchester in late 2020, so if you haven't yet met me in the community, you're already starting to get to know me a little bit better now.

And if you have read my previous articles, then I'm sure you can already see that I'd like to think of myself as a people person! With all of my years in the travel industry, you simply have to become somewhat of an extrovert - with new faces and names having to be learnt and diverse friendships to make every single week! So there's nothing I'm more passionate about than communication - as that is the secret ingredient to forming strong bonds. That's why when I was offered my role here at the Council Parish in "Communications", I couldn't possibly say no.

But how does communication tie into community? Well, it is the key - it goes hand in hand with community because great communication begins with connection - and that is what community is all about.

I help provide residents with information and news about the community to encourage those that are looking for an opportunity, to get involved with us at the Parish here in Fontmell Magna. However much or little support you are willing to give to your community is always greatly appreciated and your time will be well spent with the rewards being fulfilling. Whether it's taking part in the events themselves or offering help where possible, there is always a door of opportunity open to you and your family!

Reach out and connect with me if you would like to get involved in any way at all.

May we ignite each other's candles, may we burn brighter together, creating more light, more joy and more ease in this world for all.

Warm regards and well wishes,

Laura Kurton, Well Cottage Bedchester, 07977564585, 01747 812449



On the Shelf of the Friendship Garden Library

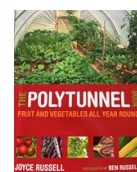
The Polytunnel Book, Fruit and Vegetables All year Round by Joyce Russell, published by Francis Lincoln 2011 Well, this is a tricky subject.

Gardening without plastic to reduce the environmental impact of manufacture, landfill waste and recycling or, grow fruit and vegetables at home in a plastic tunnel (preferably using your own compost) thereby ensuring variety of produce, reduced costs, freshness and being less reliant on fuel and large wholesalers/supermarkets. As Joyce Russell acknowledges, polytunnels are not beautiful; plastic wrapped fruit and vegetables on the supermarket shelves may have come from acres of polytunnel outside someone else's back door. Deciding to use one (or more) could be as much about the satisfaction of growing your own food as about worrying over where your veg comes from.

Setting concerns about plastic to one side the enthusiasm of the author is infectious. She says "A polytunnel is a wonderful thing! It costs a fraction of the price of a traditional glass greenhouse and it's put up quickly to cover a large space. It provides a warmer environment than the great outdoors; it blocks wind and shelters from rain. Tender crops that would have difficulty growing outside thrive in it and the gardener thrives too, when working and reaping the rewards of, such a protected space."

Chose the polytunnel route to grow your own meals and the first and most important question, after setting it up and buying necessary equipment on which the book has two chapters of advice, is what should I be doing in the polytunnel now? Turn to Part 3 for a month-by-month list of jobs and also of fruit and vegetables that can be grown in each. Part 4 is a 'how to' section, Part 5 looks at pests and diseases and Part 6 is an overall plan. Part 7 helps to mitigate the use of plastic by providing instructions on making your own feeds, composts and beds.

Russell's words on planning application might be out of date now, as might the list of suppliers but discussion on ventilation, condensation, orientation, supply of water and electricity and advice to buy "a big fat roll of repair tape" are relevant. Be prepared for rats and mice to find your polytunnel as conducive as your plants do but the mouth-watering photos of rows of brightly coloured, edible plants make the idea of plastic tunnels really rather attractive.





It is very hard to believe we are now entering our summer term at St Andrew's, where has the rest of the year gone? We love this time of year as we can get outside more and enjoy our fabulous grounds. We are enjoying developing our NEW curriculum which encourages the building of knowledge and progressively grows skills in every subject area from Reception to Year 6. We love being part of this wonderful village and getting involved here. We are also keen to be outward looking and help our young people to appreciate and have a connection with the world around them. The troubles in Ukraine became a sharp focus for us all last term as we sensitively attempted to answer the children's many questions. We chose to explore key themes through our values of COURAGE and PERSEVERANCE in assemblies. The children were moved to fundraise and together with other trust schools a massive £10,000 was collected and donated. Families in our community also donated much needed clothing, bedding and toiletries to send. Red Nose Day gave us another opportunity to think of others and explore how we could best help those with less than ourselves. COVID has given us a run for our money this term with lots of staff and pupils off from school; interesting and challenging times bring a community even closer together. We celebrated Easter as a whole school in our wonderful church and took the theme of light and new life into the holidays with us. We can't wait to see what adventures this term brings, and we look forward to celebrating the Platinum Jubilee with you all. Debbie Brown and all at St Andrew's Fontmell



Compost Corner

Whether it's for adding to Pimms, making raita and wafer thin sandwiches or soothing puffy eyes, cucumbers are such a useful vegetable but there's a problem this year: because, on a commercial basis, they require increasingly expensive heated greenhouses, cucumbers are going to be pricey and in short supply.

But all is not lost - grow them yourself! I asked a talented cucumber grower, Judy Westgate, for any useful tips. Judy grows both outdoor and indoor cucumbers and assures me they are very easy to grow - pop a couple of seeds into a pot, choose the healthiest one to grow on and protect from frost. Plant the outside cucumbers in a sunny, sheltered spot and the indoor ones should be kept at minimum 15c. They are hungry and thirsty vegetables, so feed and water well and keep an eye out for slugs. And with a bit of luck you'll get a good crop...and don't forget, if you have a surplus there are all sorts of recipes to use them up...cucumber soup, braised cucumber, pickled cucumber, Greek salad, cucumber fritters....

Alison Main



Village weather for March 2022

An unsettled damp start to the month but Spring was reinforced by a mini heatwave with unbroken sunshine. Back to normal with a cold wet end and some sleet/snow.

17 rain days, 1 day snow, 4 air frost, 14 ground frost. 1 gale.

Comp. Figures	2022	2021
Rain (Most 16.2mm on 11th)	72.5mm	41.5mm
Sunshine	158.4 hrs	108 hrs
Max mean temp. (highest 19.0°C on 23rd)	13.3°C	11.6°C
Min mean temp. (lowest -1.0°C on 17th)	4.0°C	2.8°C

This May 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:

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

Submissions for the June issue by Thursday 19th May please.

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

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