

NEWSLETTER – JULY 2020

Whilst we all continue to live and work through lockdown we thought you may be interested to know what a (new) ordinary day for the Parish Council looks like in these very these extraordinary time's

In response to a plea for help we arranged for a volunteer to take a soon to be Chalford mum down to a Bristol maternity hospital to give birth. Our heartfelt thanks to that volunteer and congratulations to mum!

Unfortunately, the next request was not so good; a report of a dead fawn in a householder's garden. A call to a contact at Stroud District Council led to the fawn being collected quickly. Thank you to Abii at SDC.

Residents who are still isolating phoned to arrange for volunteers to collect prescriptions. Such requests have reduced and shopping requests have slowed considerably. But our volunteers' enthusiasm has certainly not reduced and they are still eager to assist. And for this and all their help, we say a big thank you.

Whilst on the subject of thank-you's, can we also mention the great job Eastcombe Stores, The Chalford Village Shop, Old Neighbourhood Inn, Boots Pharmacy and Tesco Express have all done to help us through this difficult time. Their patience and willingness are much appreciated by all.

The Council cannot go through a day at this time of year without an email or two (or maybe more!) about grass cutting. This is such an emotive subject and we receive many resident comments asking us to cut back foliage overhanging footpaths and conversely, those who are passionate to retain the foliage. There are three bodies cutting different parts of the Parish; the County, District and the Parish Council and this is where the problem lies. We can manage our cutting and wherever possible will leave the flowers/grass to flourish but we have a population of 6,500 and need to take many opinions into consideration so please remember we do our best. To quote John Lydgate, *"you can please some of the people all of the time, you can please all of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time"*.

And what can we say about allotments! Tenancy of all three sites is full and we now have waiting lists. And requests for an allotment continue to be received on a regular basis. The cultivation that is being undertaken is tremendous; residents who have been on furlough have really taken to it with real gusto. Long will this enthusiasm prevail! As a result, we have this week installed two new water troughs at Middle Hill allotments as four troughs shared by over 100 tenants was just not enough. One concern we have been asked to mention is that dog fouling has increased at Middle Hill. If you are a tenant and witness a dog owner not clearing up after their dog, please provide us with details of the perpetrator and we will advise our Dog Warden accordingly.

France Lynch Pleasure Ground play equipment – Eibe are at long last installing the new play equipment in the pleasure ground so by the time this newsletter is published it should be completed. The not so good news is that play equipment is still out of bounds. It sounds cruel to put such temptation in full view of our youngsters but if we do not accept the installation now it could be delayed until later in the year. Apologies to parents in advance!!

Now that we have more freedom to meet with others outdoors, several residents are meeting and having picnics in our playing fields which is great to see. One request though, please

take your rubbish home or place in the bins provided. It is not safe for others to clear up someone else's rubbish. Thank you.

Footpath Volunteers have started work again

The Footpath Volunteers have slowly begun to get back to work on repairing and improving footpaths. Additional working conditions have been introduced to make sure everyone, volunteers and walkers, is as safe as possible and that government covid-19 guidelines are kept to. The conditions include travelling to the site independently (no car sharing), working in teams of no more than six, keeping two metres apart at all times (which limits the range of tasks that can be undertaken), having hand sanitiser on site, having warning signs on paths when there's work going on, and perhaps the biggest bugbear of all: Volunteers have to take their own 11 o'clock snack instead of having communal flapjacks.

The first post-lockdown task was finishing laying the stone on the canal towpath by The Round House. It was good to be getting going again.

Dear Readers – a message from Cllr Samaroo. As a Parish Councillor, I personally am very proud of our Clerks for the champion roles they have taken on voluntarily to assist with all manner of requests for help, some of which you would not believe, and this they have done 7 days a week to assist our community. Alongside the volunteers, they are working tirelessly for Chalford Parish. They deserve our thanks for the kind and dedicated spirit of community service they are constantly giving to us all. Thank you Christine and Kate.

My thanks must also go to Chris Attwood, our Groundsman, for his patience during this difficult time, replacing advisory signs in playing fields (that have been torn down), picking up litter and dog fouling that has been inconsiderately strewn about the Parish (not a nice job at the best of times) and trying very hard not to upset anyone when grass cutting! Thank you Chris.

We are so very fortunate living in this beautiful rural parish and so protected. It is important, however, not to get too complacent and continue to follow the advice from government so please take care and keep safe.

Council Meetings – although we are not physically holding meetings, councillors are still communicating and making decisions on issues as a group. If you have any concerns, please email us and let us know and we will consider them and agree the way forward.

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