

# LOPEN EYE

Lopen Parish Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2018



## £1,872 raised at December's Mistletoe Fayre!

Steve Chapman, Lopen PCC's Treasurer, said... 'On behalf of Lopen's Parochial Church Council I should like to congratulate **Victoria Bennett and her team** in achieving such an amazing result. The church looked beautiful with the stalls laid out so attractively. There were carols wafting from the organ loft and tempting refreshments in the Sunday School Room. It all made for a very welcoming and enjoyable occasion. And a big thank you to all who came and supported the event.

Half of the proceeds will go to supporting the Merriott Rainbows, Hinton Beavers, Scouts and Cubs with the other half going to the upkeep of All Saints and the Sunday School Room.

**A big thank you, once more, from the PCC.'**

### **The proceeds listed by stall -**

Raffle £526 Plants £436.20 Cakes £202.65  
Gifts £139 Scouts & Guides £127.40  
Competition £98 Refreshments £93.80  
Bottle Stall £92.90 Toys £80.20 Books £30.10  
Santa £21 Face Painting £15 Donations £10

## **Natural India**

**A talk on the environment, people  
and culture of South India  
(with lots of pictures!)  
by Revs Julia and Bob Hicks**

**7pm Saturday 3rd March  
The Tithe Barn, Church Street, Merriott  
TA16 5PS**

**FREE ENTRY**

**(donations invited for the Tithe Barn)  
Indian Snacks will be served,  
bring your own drink, all ages welcome!**

## **Update from SLOW Lopen's Campaign to reduce the speed of traffic through the village**



### **Speed Indicator Device (SID)**

In view of the threatened withdrawal of the County's SID scheme on the grounds of lack of funds, **SLOW** in conjunction with the Parish Council have been looking into the possibility of providing our own. See *Chairman's report overleaf*.

**SLOW** continues to press for a more realistic approach to the question of speed through the village and to further that end will be attending a meeting of local and national representatives in February to press our case.

Speedwatch continues to show significant numbers of vehicles exceeding the speed limit through Lopen. **Of the 11,608 recorded last year, 772 were travelling at more than 36mph of which 321 were over 40mph and 2 at more than 60mph.**

*On another topic, if you wondered why we've all been given a number painted on the road outside our houses, it is the result of the initial survey by GigaClear who have the current contract to provide Super Fast Broadband to the village. Nothing more than an investigation at this stage and the timespan for any probable work is the end of 2020. Meanwhile, BT/Openreach and CDS continue to provide no further information as to why the original scheme was not completed.*

**Roger Gurner**

itcs@btconnect.com 07831 597 611

Please contact Roger or Ben Goldsmith 01460 249 231 if you would like to help the **SLOW** campaign.

# LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL

**Chairman Nick Jones writes...**

## Happy New Year!

Yes, a bit late, I know, but this is the first EYE of the year.

## New Councillors

The Parish Council still has one position vacant so there is the opportunity to join if you wish to put yourself forward.

## Road Safety Improvements

We now have a good selection of quotes from SID (speed indicator device) manufacturers with quite a spread of prices. We've also got some serious interest from Merriott PC concerning a shared ownership scheme. I'm also pleased to report that our contact at Highways is being extremely supportive: all of which makes me optimistic for a good outcome. As it turns out, this is more necessary than we knew when we started the process as the County SID scheme is to end in March. While there is a possibility that it may re-emerge as a pay-to-participate scheme, initial indications are that owning our own will cost less per week and allow much greater coverage.

## Annual Parish Meeting

We have decided to hold the statutory annual village meeting entirely separately from any Parish Council meeting - as we did last year. The date has yet to be finalised, but is likely to be in late April or early May. It is an opportunity to come along and talk to councillors on a completely informal basis. Find out who we are, what we do and tell us what your local concerns are and tell us what you think we should be doing. This year, more than ever, we'd really like to see you, as we are going to be updating the parish plan and need your input.

## Planning

January proved to be another busy month for planning. There was an application by Probiotics for yet another very large warehouse at Lopen Head. This has provoked quite a bit of comment from both Lopen and Watergore and the PC has resolved to object. There was also a "notification for prior approval" for the former milking parlour and dairy on Holloway, near the Mill Lane turning. A change of use is wanted under permitted development rules. The PC felt that the buildings were unsuitable for conversion within the constraints of the permitted development rules.

On this note, and with new promises of increased house building coming from central government, local councils are going to be under even more pressure from development. While Lopen would not currently be considered suitable for housing development on any scale due to our minimal village amenities, this could change.

**Would you be opposed to any development at all? Would you consider conversion of existing buildings and infill development acceptable? Or would you consider larger developments acceptable if they brought additional facilities for the village with them?**

We would really like to know your views on this subject. Come to the Annual Meeting and tell us!

## Electoral Boundary Review

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England has recently released its draft recommendations. **Lopen is to remain part of the South Petherton Ward and not be transferred to Eggwood - as had been rumoured.** Dinnington is to be moved from Eggwood to the Windwhistle ward with Barrington and Stocklinch being moved into the South Petherton ward. The full report can be found at [www.lgbce.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/36803/South-Somerset-Report.pdf](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/36803/South-Somerset-Report.pdf)

## The Next Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 22nd March, 7.00pm in the School Room.

There are new residents in Lopen whom we propose to welcome in the March edition of LOPEN EYE

## RAINFALL IN LOPEN 2017

Statistics from Jeremy Rook.

**Total for 2017** was 802mm/31.57inches

**Wettest Month** was December 108mm/4.25inches

**Wettest Day** 19th October 32mm/1.26inches



## PETTY VANDALISM



Shortly after Christmas some silly person defaced a recently-built gatepost in Broomhill Lane with what could be taken as a threatening message. Fortunately, this kind of anti-social behaviour is virtually unknown in our area.

### COULD YOU DESIGN AND LAY OUT LOPEN EYE?

If so, please contact the Editor Les Morton [lesmorton26@gmail.com](mailto:lesmorton26@gmail.com) as a deputy is needed for the one or two occasions annually when Les is away. Tuition is available.

## NEW FEES FOR THE SCHOOL ROOM



The prepayment electricity meter has been removed because the new pound coins do not fit. Consequently, the average electricity usage costs have been incorporated in the booking fee making the new charges as follows:

Evening use £12.50/ Half day £25/  
Full day £25

To make a booking, or for loan of equipment, please contact either Liz Constable (240 912) or Angela (240 921).

*PS Removal of the chimney should be able to go ahead soon.*

## WARNING - ASBESTOS HAZARD

If you're thinking of a new extension, a bit of remodelling, or finally knocking down that old garage, have you checked for asbestos? Any property built or refurbished before 2000 could potentially contain ACMs (Asbestos Containing Materials). Commonly found in corrugated roofing sheets, it was also widely used in artex-type paint coatings, insulation material, floor tiles, other construction material, fixtures and fittings. Left undisturbed, these materials don't present a health risk. However, when damaged the fibres easily become airborne and can be inhaled.

Exposure to these microscopic fibres can lead to severe lung disease and cancer. In the UK, around 5000 deaths a year are linked to asbestos exposure, and it can take years for symptoms to develop. Invisible to the naked eye and normally blended with other substances, professional testing is needed to ensure asbestos is dealt with safely. Somerset Scientific Services, part of Somerset County Council, offer free impartial asbestos advice as part of our commitment to public health and safety. We also offer an expert service to identify and project manage the removal of any ACMs. Samples of suspect material can be sent to our lab for analysis and we'll provide impartial advice on your next steps if asbestos is identified. For larger projects surveys can be completed on site by our specialist asbestos team if needed.

Call the team or visit our website for expert advice – and to find out what other services we provide.

[someretscientificservices.co.uk](http://someretscientificservices.co.uk)

01823 355906

[SSSmailbox@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SSSmailbox@somerset.gov.uk)

• The SPRING CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP •  
• Saturday 10th March 2-4pm TBC •



We are putting together some ideas for the children to make for Mothering Sunday. There will be more information in the March LINK but watch this space in the next LOPEN EYE for more details.

We hope the workshop will be as busy and entertaining as the last one.

*Make a note in your calendar for your young friends.*



Annual Subscriptions will be collected at this meeting.



Tuesday 13th February
7.30pm in the Schoolroom
Our Annual General Meeting
will be followed by a talk and slideshow by Ann and Clive Barker about their recent travels.
Non members welcome.

STOP PRESS

HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR REFUGEES - COFFEE MORNING IN MERRIOTT CHURCH
FRIDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 10.30am - 12 midday
Refugee Support Group, South Somerset
Geraldine Downey 01460 271 358



Have you liked the Lopen Events Facebook page?
www.facebook.com/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/

CONTACTS

Village Website www.lopen.btck.co.uk

PARISH COUNCIL

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WEDNESDAY COFFEE MORNINGS at the SCHOOL ROOM



FEBRUARY

14th

10.30am - 12 midday

Fairtrade Stall

£1 only for a hot drink, refill and a piece of cake.

Everyone welcome including accompanied young children.

THE CHARITY TO BE SUPPORTED IS

AKAMBA AID

sight-saving eye clinics in Kenya www.akambaaidfund.org

The views expressed in Lopen Eye are not necessarily those held by Lopen Parish Council and its members.