

LOPEN EYE

Lopen Parish Newsletter

APRIL 2018



Lopen Village Spring Plant Sale

Saturday 12th May
10.30am - 12noon

In preparation for the Plant Sale, we would welcome contributions in April of unwanted containers, of any description, plastic flower pots of any size and any old gardening equipment.

As we get closer to the fair, donations of plants would also be most welcome, so please remember us when you are in the garden or greenhouse!

Donations please to Marian at The Old Bakehouse - 240 179.



After the 'Beast from the East' we had a second mini 'Beast from the East' over the weekend of March 17/18th. Michael Canton kindly supplied this lovely picture of the icicles hanging from their thatched roof.

OUR LOCAL LIBRARY UNDER THREAT

To ensure communities have sufficient time to explore these options the consultation period has been extended for a further 7 weeks, ending Wednesday 13th June (originally 22nd April).



Somerset County Council has embarked on a consultation exercise in regard to the Library

Service. Our local library at South Petherton is earmarked for closure. In summary, under the proposals, 15 of Somerset's 34 libraries would be seeking community involvement to remain open."

Full details are at www.somerset.gov.uk/librariesconsultation

For any questions about the proposals, please email: librariesmail@somerset.gov.uk

LOPEN FLOWER FESTIVAL

Planned for the weekend of 18/19th August,
10am-5pm both days.

The next meeting for flower arrangers will be on
Thursday 17th May at 4.30pm in the
Sunday School Room.

Anyone who would like to help with flowers
is welcome to join us.

For more information tel Liz Constable on 240 912.

Natural India

A talk on the environment, people and culture of South India with
lots of pictures!

by Revs Julia and Bob Hicks

*** NEW DATE ***

7pm Saturday 14th April 2018

The Tithe Barn, Church Street, Merriott

TA16 5PS

FREE ENTRY

(donations invited for the Tithe Barn)

Indian snacks served, bring your own drink, all ages welcome!

LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL NEW COUNCILLORS

Jed Burrows has recently resigned due to ongoing work commitments. We thank him for his work whilst on the council and wish him well. This means the Council now has **two vacant positions**. If you'd like to know more about becoming a councillor, we'd very much like to hear from you. Please contact Lisa or one of the councillors.

SUPERFAST BROADBAND

This will be covered in more detail elsewhere in this issue however, to summarise, we are aware that the new cabinet (17) has not meant that everyone in the village can get a superfast connection. This is partly due to the historical split between two service cabinets, which unfortunately remains. It is also due to incomplete work and very poor records keeping by BT OpenReach. If you are having trouble getting upgraded, please get in touch with Roger Gurner who is working very hard to get a complete picture of the situation and to get as many households connected as possible.

ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Somerset County Council recently announced their intention to resurrect their previously free SID service as a pay-to-play service. To equal the rather infrequent service (8 weeks total roadside time) we have been receiving for the last few years would cost £400 p.a. under this proposed scheme. They would be re-using the elderly units in service since 2009 and concerns have been raised about their reliability.

The parish council has therefore decided to continue exploring the possibility of owning and operating our own unit. While this will cost more overall, it would allow much more roadside time and actually cost less per day in operation. At the time of writing, we have no partner council in prospect, though there are still some options to be explored. This potentially means having to fund it completely ourselves which, while a bit of a challenge, is not unrealistic with a bit of additional fundraising. We'll be talking about this at the annual parish meeting in May and would like to hear your thoughts on the subject.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The statutory annual village meeting will be held entirely separately from any Parish Council meeting, as it was last year. The intention is to have a PC presence at the plant fair on Saturday 12th May, followed by a short meeting in the evening. We are

investigating the possibility of getting local food suppliers to come along to the evening session to provide some "bait"!

It is an opportunity to come along and talk to the councillors on an informal basis. Find out who we are, what we do, tell us what your local concerns are, 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. We would also like to get your views on the purchase of a speed indicating device and ideas about how to help with its funding.

LIBRARY CONSULTATION

Following on from my remarks last month, due to strong public response, the libraries consultation has been extended until June 13th. The questionnaire has also been altered to allow more area-specific responses. It is stated that previous responses remain valid, but you can also have another go if you wish, and South Petherton library in particular needs all the help it can get! More details, and the opportunity to have your say can be found either in the libraries themselves or by looking at the online consultation at <http://www.somersetconsults.org.uk/consult.ti/Libraries2018/consultationHome>

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The next Parish Council meeting will take place in the Sunday School Room at 7.00pm on:

- Thursday May 24th. (AGM)

Please contact a councillor or the Parish Clerk at least one week before, if there is a matter you would like added to the agenda.

MEETING MINUTES

Please note that Parish Council minutes, audited accounts and other statutory information, which must be made available to the public, are available on the village website -

www.lopen.btck.co.uk/LopenParishCouncil

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT FORTHCOMING LPC MEETINGS?

Forthcoming LPC meetings (listed above) are posted on the village notice board, which is located at the junction of Holloway (the main road) and Church Street and on the village page of the website. However, if you would like to receive email notifications, please contact Lisa Wilson, Parish Clerk, at lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com or telephone 07587 211150 and add yourself to the Parish Council mailing list.

SPRING CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP

This was held on Saturday 10th March and was well attended by children and parents. Gifts for Mothering Sunday were made with the ultimate being non-fattening cupcakes! There were also delicate jewel covered breakfast eggs, egg cups and trees for the new orchard in Lopen. These were produced and taken home following a very happy workshop. However only a few decorated biscuits survived until leaving time! There will be variations on these ideas to be made during Children's Workshops later in the year.



SUPER FAST BROADBAND IN LOPEN

In early 2016 Lopen was advised that SFB would not be available in the foreseeable future, since it hadn't been included by CDS (Connecting Devon and Somerset) in the current proposal. Further, it was unlikely to be part of the target of up to 95% coverage of rural areas funded by government and EU. Despite this, in December 2016, underground cable ducts and a concrete base were constructed in Holloway and in mid January 2017 a cabinet was installed to the base. Two weeks later cabling was connected from South Petherton exchange to the new cabinet 17 to upgrade it to SFB status and integrate it with the existing local copper cable distribution network. Some residents were soon experiencing much improved broadband speeds, but more were experiencing real difficulties attempting to update because the cabling had not been extended to cabinet 11 at Frog Street. Worse, the new connections were incorrectly recorded in OpenReach's database leading to much confusion.

OpenReach engineers attempting a new connection discovered these inaccuracies and made manual corrections causing even more confusion where customers previous connected to cabinet 17 were moved to cabinet 11 denying any upgrade. Not continuing SFB cabling to cabinet 11 has excluded about 40% village and all of the Mill Lane estate. Further complicated by awarding Phase Two to GigaClear, OpenReach did not tender, who will offer SFB to the premises - involving considerable disturbance and expense due to roadworks and higher connection costs for a service which may not be available before the end of 2019. Attempts to resolve the situation over the past 12 months finally resulted in

Matt Barlow - Stakeholder Engagement Officer for CDS agreeing to address the PC meeting on 22nd March. What emerged was a total rejection of any attempt to oblige OpenReach to enable cabinet 11. Instead we must accept GigaClear.

Surely, the only sensible solution, in terms of both time and cost is to oblige OpenReach to enable cabinet 11 and for CDS to fund this without delay. Meantime, Matt Barrow is to provide me with an accurate list of properties able to access SFB and with this I intend to approach more senior personnel within CDS and Government to attempt to achieve such a decision. Roger Gurner - itcs@btconnect.com, 07831 597611.



The pilot of a new film series called 'Gracemarch' is to be filmed by Artisan Films in Cross Tree House, Church Street, Lopen in April. They will be filming from 8-16 April with the episode due to be screened in the Autumn.

More details can be found:

Website:

www.gracemarch.co.uk

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/gracemarchseries/>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/gracemarchshow/>



Our next meeting will be on
Tuesday 10th April
 at 7.30pm in the
Sunday School Room



Kay Wych will give us a humorous talk on
'How I became a 16th Century Kitchen Maid'

New and non-members welcome.

For further information please contact Pauline Rook T: 240 644 E: prook12@gmail.com

FREE Beech Hedging

3 year old - 80cm whips - field grown

Following an oversupply, I have 150 Beech whips available. They have well established roots and are currently 'heeled in' so will be good for the next few weeks. If you would like one, some, many or the lot - please contact Christianne on 249 766.

LOPEN FUNDRAISING EVENT

On Friday 20th April a coffee morning will be held in Lopen Sunday School Room from 10.30 to 12noon by Refugee Support Group to raise money for refugees in the Middle East and Europe. Summer clothing is now requested along with shoes, bedding, toiletries, sleeping bags.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN DESKTOP PUBLISHING?

As our editor, Les Morton, is away from time to time we are looking for someone to prepare artwork for the Lopen Eye, maybe 2-3 times a year. Full tuition and software is available. If you are interested please contact Les on 391 574 or email lesmorton26@gmail.com



There is a Defibrillator in the porch of All Saint's Church, Church Street.

If you are interested in being trained to use the equipment, please contact Sarah Mason on 249 219 or sarahmason6@yahoo.com

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

CONTACTS

Village website - www.lopen.btck.co.uk

PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman	Nick Jones	241 643	nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com
Vice Chairman	Stephen Crane	241 412	scrane1@hotmail.co.uk
	Ed Moore	394 583	ed.moore.lopenpc@gmail.com
	Valerie Canton	242 751	mvcanton@talktalk.net
	Simon Frackiewicz	394 975	simon@toadhall.email

Parish Clerk Lisa Wilson 07587 211150 lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Adam Dance	07767 224 213	adam.dance@southsomerset.gov.uk
Cllr Crispin Raikes	07968 291 588	crispin.raikes@southsomerset.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr Adam Dance	07767 224 213	adam.dance@southsomerset.gov.uk
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MEMBER of PARLIAMENT

Marcus Fysh		marcus.fysh.mp@parliament.uk
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ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Benefice Office	Issy Welsh	73226
Rector	Rev. Julia Hicks	76406
Rector	Rev. Bob Hicks	76406

JUST WOMEN

Chairwoman	Pauline Rook	240 644	prook12@gmail.com
Treasurer	Christianne Long	249 766	christianne@loopen.me.uk

POLICE CSO

Amy Douch	Dial 101	amy.douch@avonandsomerset.police.uk
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ask for PCSO 8186

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Valerie Canton	242 751	mvcanton@talktalk.net
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LOPEN EYE TEAM

Editor	Les Morton	391 574	lesmorton26@gmail.com
	Les Farris	242 254	leslifarris23@aol.com
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Proof-reading	Penny Little	242 474	penelopejittle@gmail.com

COFFEE STOP
 at the
Sunday School Room

Only £1 for a hot drink
 (including refill) and a slice
 of homemade cake.

**APRIL
 DATES**

**wednesday
 11th & 25th**

10.30am to 12.00 midday



Everyone welcome -
 including parents with young children.

All proceeds to AKAMBA AID
 sight-saving eye clinics in Kenya
www.akambaaidfund.org