

THE WOODCHESTER WORD

Issue 76, Spring 2022



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NEW PLAY AREA GIVEN GREEN LIGHT BY PARISH COUNCIL

Woodchester Parish Council has given the green light to a new children's play area adjacent to the existing Woodchester Mountain Bike Trail on the cycle path near Selsley Road.

Following a six-week public consultation, which received feedback from many local residents, the Parish Council has taken account of some residents' concerns and has withdrawn its original planning application to pursue a site to the north of the Mountain Bike Trail, further away from The Millpond than the original plans.

The intention is to create a play area primarily for pre-school and primary school children and the Council were keen to create an area which fits in with its surroundings. A number of potential providers of play equipment have been consulted over recent months and three were given the opportunity to present initial concepts and costs. At its meeting

on 3rd March, the Parish Council chose to work with Touchwood, who create bespoke play equipment crafted from locally sourced durable woods which blend seamlessly with the local landscape.

"The choice of equipment and the environment we create around the play area is vital to its success and given the cost of the project it is essential we make the right choice in this respect" Parish Council Chair Peter Lead told the Woodchester Word. "Rather than traditional play equipment such as metal swings, slides, carousels and climbing frames, which tend to be proscriptive, and are focussed on specific physical skills, we wanted to offer

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New play area given green light by Parish Council continued.

our children a more “organic” play area, where the type of play is freely chosen by the children - driven by imagination, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. These are considered more challenging and allow for a mix of physical development, creative development, social skills and the development of independence and risk awareness. We are very excited about the initial concepts that Touchwood have offered us and will be discussing the final details with them in the coming weeks”.

The Parish Council are hoping that the play area will be completed later this year, though there is a lot of preparatory work to do on the site, including removing some unsafe trees, before the groundwork can commence.

“We also have the small matter of raising nearly £50,000 for the project” points out Peter, “so if anyone has any ideas in that respect, please let us know!”



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Can you help us achieve our play area dream?

Do you own a business or work for a company which might be able to help us fund our amazing play area project? We have a number of sponsorship opportunities for individual pieces of play equipment, from £1,300 for a talking stump to £6,000 for the fallen tree crown. And your business can have its name proudly displayed next to the sponsored item. If you think you can help and would like more information, please contact Cllr Iain Dunbar at iain@woodchesterparish.org.uk.

A letter from our Chairman

We have had a very busy start to the year, and it looks to continue that way.

Despite keeping our precept at a very low level, indeed one of the lowest per capita in our district, we have, over the years accumulated surplus funds. We have decided that we need to reduce this excess, using it to improve our Parish.

With Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council forever having their budgets cut, and Leyhill prison work parties no longer giving their very low cost services, we are having to spend more on village maintenance. But we can still do more and have identified some areas we can improve that have previously suffered neglect. However, I am sure there are some areas we are missing, and so if you are aware of any please let one of us know.

Many of you have been asking for more seating. I am pleased to say that as a result of the efforts of two of our Parishioners, the triangle near Frogmarsh now has a bench, donated by Stroud Valley Projects, that overlooks Nailsworth Stream. We are hoping

to follow this by placing some more benches around the village. Keep your eyes open!

Sadly, there have been several unpleasant issues arising from a few people using the path from the A46 to the cycle path that passes Millpond End, Rooksmoor, leaving adjacent residents feeling vulnerable and anxious. Recently, consent has been issued by Stroud District Council for a new footpath that joins the A46 and the cycle track through Rooksmoor Mills but further north. It would join close to our proposed play area. See Iain’s full report.

With Spring just around the corner, we all need to remember our green spaces, patios and balconies are all areas that can support pollinator and other wildlife as well as providing quiet areas for us to enjoy. We can improve these areas by keeping them free from chemicals and by planting plenty of pollen and nectar producing plants. We can also help by leaving areas unkempt as habitat.



A very useful and informative source for all ages can be found by referring to <https://stroudnature.org/garden-guardians/>, a locally produced guide to all that might be in your garden and how you can help.

Finally, I would like to remind you that we are dedicating the first half hour of each of our meetings for open discussion. This gives you an opportunity to support your Parish by bringing to us your ideas or concerns for us to hear, without the need to sit through the business part of the meeting. Your Parish Councillors give a great deal of their time for your benefit and it is always nice to enjoy personal interaction.

Cheers, Peter Lead

News from St Mary's Church

We have been returning step-by-step to "normal" in our use of St Mary's for church services, whilst still offering Zoom for those who prefer to stay isolated.

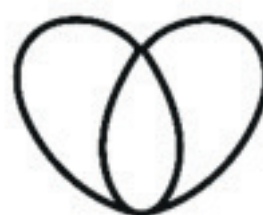
The kitchen is well and truly back in use, whether for after-service coffee, the monthly Lunch with Friends, or Messy Church and our toddler group Little Stars. But, like everyone else, we have been greatly disturbed by events in Ukraine and by the plight of civilians escaping the war zone. We have encouraged private donations for Ukraine humanitarian relief via the Tear Fund charity appeal (www.tearfund.org/campaigns/ukraine-crisis), and have also raised more than £600 at services and at our March Lunch with Friends event. If you haven't already given money to this cause, please consider doing so: there is a table at the back of church displaying suggestions for action and prayer, and our Monday morning 9am time of prayer has its focus on Ukraine.

We mark the Christian festival of Easter with the opportunity for everyone, young and old, to experience the Easter story, outdoors and in, on Good Friday morning at 10am; and on Easter Sunday we will be celebrating Jesus' resurrection – his overcoming of death, at our usual Sunday service time 11am.

Once you have recovered from your Jubilee celebrations, don't miss out on our concert bonanza: on Friday June 17th Five Valleys Voices bring their usual variety of songs to an evening of good cheer (not to mention some Estonian whistling and stomping) and then on Saturday June 18th we welcome back Capriol Chamber Orchestra for the balm of classical music in our wonderful acoustic.

If you would like to know what's going on at St Mary's, please keep an eye on our website www.stmaryswoodchester.org.uk, email cground101@gmail.com to be added to our email circulation list, or pick up a printed copy of the monthly "What's On" from the back of church – it's open every day.

Andrew Pemberton



LONGFIELD

Community Hospice

Remember a loved one by taking part in this year's Walk for Longfield.

Longfield Community Hospice will be hosting a spring walk at 10.30 am on **Sunday 15 May** and encourages locals to sign up for the perfect family day out.

The 'Walk for Longfield' will offer a choice of 5 or 10K routes, setting off from Longfield's beautiful hospice grounds in Minchinhampton and crossing Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons. Having taken in the stunning views, a cuppa and home-baked cakes will await you on your return. This is a great family event, which caters for adults, children and pets - dogs are welcome too!

All walkers will have the chance to hang a message in memory of their loved ones in Longfield's picturesque grounds.

A Covid-friendly event, with lots of fresh countryside air and outdoor space, it's the perfect opportunity to boost your physical and mental wellbeing.

Claire Ellis, from Longfield, will be organising the event. She said:

"Do join us on our Walk for Longfield. It's a great way of remembering your loved ones and spending quality time with friends and family in the local countryside."

This has been a popular event in the past so we'd urge you to register your interest now on our website so you can be the first to know when registrations are open."

All money raised will help fund Longfield's vital work providing care for adults in Gloucestershire with life-limiting conditions and support for their families and carers.

Register your interest at longfield.org.uk/event/walk-for-longfield.



The local community supporting Longfield's walk in 2017 – fun for everyone.

Woodchester Village Show – Vegetable and fruit classes

After having had to cancel the last two Woodchester Village Shows due to Coronavirus, the good news is that this year's Show is going ahead on Saturday 10th September 2022!

The vegetable and fruit classes for this year's Produce Show are listed below. As the weather warms, now is the time to source your seeds, dust off your spades, forks, rakes, etc. and prepare ready for planting. An added incentive is that the price of food is likely to soar this year and home-grown food does taste superior. We do hope that as many people as possible of all ages will participate this year as the more entries we have, the better! Further information and the classes for the other categories such as Preserves, Baking, Flowers, Photography and the children's classes will be publicised nearer the time including in the next edition of the Word.



Photo by Randy Fath on Unsplash



Photo by Jonas Kakaroto on Unsplash

1. VEGETABLES

- a. 3 Potatoes
- b. 3 Tomatoes (with calyx & stem)
- c. 3 Peppers or Chillies (with ~20mm stem)
- d. 3 Beetroot (leaf stalks trimmed to ~75mm)
- e. 3 Carrots (leaf stalks trimmed to ~75mm)
- f. 3 Parsnips (leaf stalks trimmed to ~75mm)
- g. 3 Onions (trimmed and necks tied)
- h. 3 Leeks (with roots and flags/leaves uncut)
- i. 3 Courgettes (max length of 150mm)
- j. 3 Runner Beans
- k. 1 Cabbage
- l. 1 Corn on the Cob (silks attached)
- m. Most exotic Squash
- n. Heaviest Marrow
- o. Most comical vegetable
- p. Any 5 different types of vegetable in a basket (judged on quality & presentation)

2. FRUIT

- a. 3 Pears
- b. 3 Dessert Apples
- c. 3 Cooking Apples
- d. 3 Figs
- e. 6 Raspberries (with calyx & stem)
- f. 6 Blackberries (with calyx & stem)
- g. Any 5 different types of fruit in a basket (judged on quality & presentation)



Trefoil Guild – Guiding for adults

Why should the girls have all the fun? Join us to make new friends, do new things, learn new skills. Most of us have been involved in Guiding as Guides, leaders, parents or helpers but it is not essential as long as you support the principles of Guiding.

Anybody over 18 can join – you can start now. Nailsworth and Minchinhampton Guild meet on the third Tuesday of the month 7-9pm in Nailsworth for a varied programme of activities. Speakers, crafts, games, outings, challenges. Support is given to units in various ways by teaching, testing badges etc. There are activities with other guilds at county and national level. So come and join the fun, we look forward to welcoming you.

More information from Liz Chapman on 883448 and on the national website www.trefoilguild.co.uk

Woodchester village show 2022- helpers needed!

After a two year break, welcome back to Woodchester village Show which will be held on Saturday 10th September in the Endowed School and on the church green.

Our traditional village show has a class for everyone, from bread bakers to wild fruit foragers. Classes include fruit, vegetables, baking and produce, flower arranging, photography and children's crafts. The school hall will be open in the afternoon for public viewing followed by a raffle, auction of produce and prize giving.

There are TROPHIES for both adults and children's classes and certificates for all prize winners. The more classes you enter the greater the chance of winning a trophy. Full class details will be available later in the summer on Facebook, the village website and in the village shop and on notice boards.

The afternoon also provides an opportunity to join in the always popular fun dog show, chat with your neighbours, enjoy tea and cakes on the village green and listen to some music.

But we do need people to HELP! Could you give us a hand to set up the school hall in the morning, take in entries, set out chairs and tables on the green and help clear up afterwards? We also need someone to organise our fundraising raffle or sell tickets on the day.

If you can help in any way, or have any good ideas about how we run the show, drop me an email on kathinwoodchester@gmail.com or phone 07514 024034.

Don't be shy of showing off your talents! Polish up your apples, trim your onions and stick your perfect rose in a single stem vase for a chance to show off your skills and win a prize.

Katharine McNealey
Chair, village events committee

Stroud and Cotswold Citizens Advice.... "We Are Still Here"



As we all try to recover from the effects of The Pandemic here are 5 important points about your local Citizens Advice:

- We are a local Charity, totally independent of government, providing free confidential impartial advice to everyone in Stroud District areas, including Dursley, Stonehouse, Nailsworth, Wotton-Under-Edge and Berkeley. The same service is available to everyone in Cotswold District, including Cirencester, Tetbury and Moreton-in-Marsh. The delivery of our Service relies on the dedication of our fully trained volunteers supported by a small team of paid staff. We have been providing a Service in Stroud since 1958, when we were known as the CAB.
- Your local Citizens Advice office continued to operate a limited service during the Pandemic with volunteer members of staff working from home. Now that restrictions are being eased, we are working very hard to manage face to face interviews again, which are vital to many people. We are also making every effort to reopen our outreach and community hub services.
- Our main areas of enquiry at this time are: Employment, Energy issues, Welfare Benefits and Debt issues. Since December 2021 we have given information and support to 705 members of our local community. We are extremely grateful for our core funding from The District, Town and Parish Councils, but we still need to raise an additional £25,000 every year to maintain the Service.
- Citizens Advice in Stroud has a very active PR and Fundraising Committee who continue to organise fundraising events to help finance such essentials as training and improved technology, as well as improved premises. We are extremely grateful for all donations, especially from our donors who provide us with annual standing orders, one off donations and legacies. This source of funding is vital to the continuation of our Service.
- **WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN HELP US - EVERY PENNY COUNTS!** Regular standing orders or one-off donations...Remembering us in your Will...Becoming a volunteer...Supporting our events.

If you would like to help us, or need advice, please contact us on:

freephone: 0808 800 510 or on our website at: citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk where you can find further information on Donating and Volunteering and Advice.

Woodchester Football Club

There has been a football team based in Woodchester since 1905, with some breaks for various reasons. After leading the club as chairman for the last 12 years, Stuart Harrison has decided to step down and hand over the reins to a younger person.

Currently, there is nobody who seems willing to take on the role and it is so important that someone is found who can take over from Stuart to help keep the club running. Stuart will naturally give a full handover and then we can hope that the club will continue for another hundred years or so.

The role of Chairman involves two meetings a year with the Gloucester F.A. and about half a day monthly (general admin) during the season, Stuart also speaks to sponsors and handles basic media etc. The actual weekly match duties are carried out by the manager and captain and finances by the club secretary. The Chairman can either play for the club or be non-playing.

As the club is a community charity (CASC) the ownership sits with the community, it has no debts and no liabilities.

If any reader is interested, please contact Stuart on **07977 455350** to discuss the role.



Woodchester Football Club

Our local village football club is looking for a new Chairman.

For Further Information please contact Stuart Harrison (after 12 years I am stepping down)

Email: stuartroyharrison@gmail.com
Tel: 07977 455350.

Woodchester Endowed Church of England Primary School

This term, the restrictions in place due to the Covid-19 pandemic have gradually relaxed enabling school to slowly and carefully return to something closer to the normality that we have all longed for.

The 'bubbles' which have been in place for so long now are no longer necessary allowing our children to enjoy socialising with pupils beyond their own classes. Glorious weather in March allowed us to take advantage of our amazing outside space and it was quite special to watch different year groups mixing and enjoying their lunch and playtimes together.

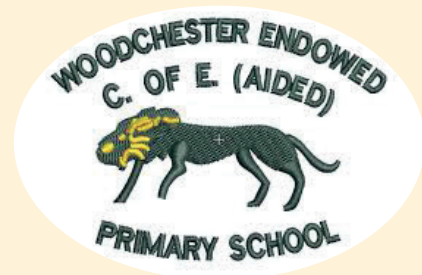
In the last few weeks, we have squeezed in many exciting enrichment opportunities including a trip to Westonbirt Arboretum and Slimbridge, and a celebration of reading during World Book Day. Music has always been a much-valued subject in Woodchester and children in Beech Class enjoyed learning about Peter and the Wolf as well as about some of the instruments which feature in this wonderful composition. We were delighted to welcome into school Mrs Pemberton with her oboe and Mr Tomlinson who very kindly played an assortment of brass instruments to the class. Some of our families attended a children's matinee of Peter and the Wolf which was, for many, a wonderful introduction to the live classical music. Juniper Class have had a series of lessons on the ukulele and they were able demonstrate their impressive learning to parents during a musical assembly last week.

There have been sporting opportunities too including a cross country event at Stratford Park. We were enormously proud of all children who put themselves

forward to compete as it was a long and challenging course and they represented our school with heart and spirit. One pupil, Poppy, deserves a special mention as she actually won her girls' race containing more than fifty runners – what a superstar and talented athlete she is! Other events have included a football tournament, swimming lessons, a panathlon challenge, as well as navigating an orienteering course at Westonbirt Arboretum. All children who took part rose to the challenge whilst demonstrating appreciative sportsmanship and an encouraging team spirit.

During this season of Lent, the Church of England's focus is LiveLent: Embracing Justice. Reflecting on the tragic events unfolding in Ukraine brings to the fore the importance of living in a caring community, a community which takes care of those who need help and where people 'love their neighbour'. There are so many examples of individual members of our global community trying to make a difference and support those in need and I am enormously proud of our Year 6 children who have organised an appeal for colouring books and pencils to send to children in Ukraine. I pray that these simple gifts bring the boys and girls who receive them a little respite and solace.

Mrs Lynn Pennington
Headteacher



Some of our cross country competitors



Visiting the site of the Woodchester mosaic



Learning about the natural world at Slimbridge.



The children learn in a school with a distinct Christian ethos



Westonbirt Arboretum display

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend in Woodchester

For the Queen's Platinum Jubilee we are planning a number of activities on the Bank Holiday weekend in June, as well as decorating the village with Bunting and we look forward to seeing you all!



Photo by King's Church International on Unsplash

Street party

We will be holding a STREET PARTY and all residents are invited. It will be from 12:30 to 2:30pm on Sunday 5th June and held along Church Road between the Village Hall and the corner of Southbank. The road will be closed from 11am until 7pm, with emergency vehicle access as required. Tickets will be on sale from committee members and in the Post Office for a small "donation", so we can track numbers and plan accordingly.

Tea and cake will be on sale by the WI and please bring along a plate of food to share with friends and neighbours – even bring your own comfy chair if prefer. It will be a relaxed informal event.

We are also investigating a "rainy day" alternative, as this is England after all, although we are sure the sun will shine!

Games and activities

Following the Street party, we will then be recreating some of the games from the 1953 Coronation event, to include egg and spoon, three legged and a sack race – details of how to sign up for the events will be shared nearer the time, either via our village facebook page or leaflet drop. The owners of Oakley House on Church Road have kindly offered to host the activities, straight after the Street Party, in their garden.

Bunting - Jubilee Bunting Gatherings

In preparation for the Platinum Jubilee Celebration on Sunday, 5th June we hope to decorate as much of the village as possible with bunting. We gather on Tuesdays, 10:00 - 12:00 in Woodchester Village

Hall. We need colourful fabric, and / or recycled fabric. So if any of you out there have fabric or can advise where we can

get hold of material that's suitable please contact Zillah at zillahboulton@hotmail.co.uk. If you are able to cut out the fabric or sew your help would be greatly appreciated?

Jubilee trail

From the Thursday to the Sunday of the Jubilee weekend, the village trail will be up around the village for families to follow, with maps and sign up sheets available from the school, so make sure you have your walking boots on to follow the Jubilee procession around the Village.

Village hall exhibition

We are also looking to host an exhibition in the Village hall on the Sunday, so if you have photos or clippings from the Coronation or any other Jubilee events (both Woodchester and other locations) please share them.

There will also be a large "selfie" Jubilee frame available on the day to take photos with – please upload to the Village facebook page or share with Caroline@woodchesterparish.org.uk and we will make sure they are added to the archive for future generations to see.

We would also like to hear from any residents who were in the village in 1953, so please get in touch – we want to hear your memories – especially if you participated in any of the events!

We will be sharing a copy of 1953 Coronation and 1977 Silver Jubilee programme, along with comments and memories shared on the village facebook page

Food bank collection

We will be arranging a food bank collection in the week before and will share details of what we will be collecting via a leaflet drop nearer the time.

Call to action

- 1: Come along to our next planning meeting and get involved: Village Hall, Tuesday 19th April 7 to 8pm – there's lots of planning to do so we need your help!
- 2: Please share any photos or memories so we can create the "Woodchester Village exhibition" in the Village Hall – email Caroline@woodchesterparish.org.uk or call 07980296865 and she will be happy to collect and copy as required
- 3: Do you have any spare unused fabric we could use for bunting?
- 4: Can you spare some food for the local food bank?
- 5: Remember to collect your tickets so we know who is coming along – these will be available from May onwards
- 6: Come along on the 5th June and get involved!
- 7: Sign up for the events when registration opens

Any questions please email Caroline@woodchesterparish.org.uk and we look forward to seeing you all soon!

PARISH bulletin

Events in the Parish

There is always a lot going on in the Parish and with Covid restrictions easing many clubs and societies are now back to meeting regularly at the Village Hall, Church, School or elsewhere. If you've wondered about taking up a new hobby now might be a good time. There are Brownies and Guides, a football club, art classes, yoga and a textile club, as well as the WI and Historical Society who meet regularly again. Also of course Messy Church and Lunch with friends, to name just a few. Further details and ways to get in touch can often be found on the Parish Council website or through local notice boards.

Christmas events included the annual carols with over 70 residents walking round the village singing together then enjoying mince pies and mulled wine on the Church Green. There was also a Christmas craft fair organised by Made in Woodchester with the Parish Council. Covid regulations meant the school hall was rather too 'well ventilated' and there was snow falling that morning, but that didn't put anyone off and the sale was well attended by residents, stall holders and local organisations (like Woodchester Mansion, Cotswold Wardens and the Village Shop)

In January volunteers in South Woodchester organised a Wassail in the community orchard, attended by over 70 people. A wassail is an ancient custom of visiting orchards, reciting incantations and singing to the trees to promote a good harvest for the coming year. It is traditional to also make some noise to frighten evil spirits away. There are traditional Wassailing songs, of which Gloucestershire has its very own!



Reminder....the village has both a website and Facebook page with information posted about local issues and the Woodchester Word will be available on the website too.
www.woodchesterparish.org.uk

Jubilee celebrations

Nationally there will be a four-day holiday to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June (Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th). Here in Woodchester residents are planning to hold a street party on Sunday 5th in Church Road or on Church Green. If you would like to know more or get involved please contact Cllr Caroline Noon on 07980 296865 or caroline@woodchesterparish.org.uk

National Trust seed project

Last year the residents of Woodchester took part in a pilot scheme with the National Trust to plant local wildflower seed in the Parish. As part of their 'Stroud Landscape Project' (to connect wild areas around Stroud) the NT donated 4kg of seed which was distributed free of charge through the clerk and Village Shop. The scheme was a great success and the NT have now decided to offer it more widely around Stroud. At the March meeting the Parish Council agreed to build upon this scheme for this year by identifying and creating wild flower areas in the village. If you know of suitable areas in the village, please contact the Clerk.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 12th May at 7pm in Woodchester Endowed School Hall. All Welcome. Do come along to hear more about plans in the village including an update on the new village playground and the Queens Jubilee celebrations.

You asked we did:

- There is now a new lidded bin at the bottom of Station Road to prevent litter being spread by wildlife
- Graffiti and the broken window in the Frogmarsh bus shelter has been repaired
- A key chain has been fitted to Rooksmoor notice board so residents can access it to put up posters
- In a collaboration between local residents and the Stroud Valleys Project a new bench has been installed in the 'wild garden' area at Frogmarsh. Residents have requested more places to sit around the village. The Parish Council are looking into this.



Local residents and volunteers installing and then enjoying the new bench at Frogmarsh

Grants available

Woodchester Parish Council have grants of up to £500 for local charities, voluntary groups or community organisations with projects of direct benefit to Parishioners.

Applications need to be received by 31st May for consideration this year.

Contact the Clerk or any Councillor for an informal chat. Full details and application form on our website woodchesterparish.org.uk (Policies) or from the Clerk

Email: clerk@woodchesterparish.org.uk Phone: 07863 098710

County Councillor's Report

Budget at GCC

At the recent Full Council Meeting of GCC the £521m budget was agreed with a 2.99 % increase which includes 1 % for Adult Social Care. Each political group was given the opportunity to include an amendment up to £500,000. The Labour Group asked for £300,000 to support rural bus travel. Also £400,000 to set up a Climate Change Jury for Gloucestershire. We were unsuccessful in both. The Liberal Democrats asked for funds for more rural charging points and were also unsuccessful.

Highways

Each County Councillor has a small Local Highways Budget and the majority of mine has been spent in Woodchester Parish during the last financial year. Residents may be interested to know that the two patching works in St Mary's Hill and Church Road cost £13,000. The hire of the equipment and the workers to cut back the vegetation on the pathway on the A46 from Culver Hill to the Shell Garage cost an unbelievable £5,000. When you read this article, hopefully Selsley Hill will be completely resurfaced from the main County Highways Budget. This should last for many years.

Childrens' Services

Residents may be aware that during the last 8 years GCC's Childrens' Services have been rated 'needing improvement' by OFSTED. Childrens' Services have recently been inspected and we are really hoping that OFSTED will come back with a 'satisfactory' rating.

Parking on St Mary's Hill

In early April the Senior Traffic Regulation Officer will be visiting the location, along with other locations in my Division. I am hoping to convince the officer of the need for double yellow lines on both side of St Mary's Hill, from top to bottom. I have been given some photos showing how inconsiderate some drivers are.

Report It

Please can I remind residents that they can go online to - Report It at Gloucestershire Highways.

You can report potholes, faults with street lighting, blocked drains etc

Cllr Steve Robinson 01453 834270

County Councillor for the Parishes of Amberley, Horsley, Kings Stanley, Nailsworth & Woodchester

Cycle Path etiquette

Most of us who use the Stroud to Nailsworth cycle path have witnessed conflicts between walkers and cyclists. This came to a head recently when a cyclist from Woodchester was assaulted by a dog walker. The cyclist, who is in his late 60's, came off his bike when a large dog suddenly ran in front of his bike. The dog owner, a younger male, came over and accused the cyclist of running over his dog (which was incidentally completely unharmed) and punched the cyclist before walking off leaving him lying in a heap with his bike. The incident has been reported to the police, and the cyclist is fine.



Photo by Kai Bossom on Unsplash

There have been numerous incidents when both cyclists and walkers are less than considerate about others using the path.

If you are a cyclist using the cycle path, you do not have any kind of priority over other users, and it is both good practice and safer to let people know you are coming if they cannot see you by sounding a bell. It amazes me that a cyclist coming up behind a pedestrian, especially one with young children, doesn't do them the courtesy of letting them know that a cycle is coming. Why would you not do that? Cyclists in the

UK are under no obligation to have a bell fitted to their bicycle, but all new bikes sold in the UK must be fitted with a bell. The Highway Code says that cyclists 'should be considerate of other road users' and must 'let them know you are there when necessary, for example by ringing your bell.'

Under Stroud District Council's recently renewed Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), **dogs must be kept on a lead at all times on the cycle path**. If you ignore a PSPO, you can be fined £100 on the spot (a 'Fixed Penalty Notice'), or up to £1,000 if it goes to court. Even if this bye law did not exist, it is against the law for your dog to be out of control in a public space. A dog is considered dangerously out of control if it injures someone (including knocking someone over or off a bike!) and the owner can get an unlimited fine or be sent to prison for up to 6 months. Throwing a ball for your dog on the cycle path when there are cyclists, older pedestrians or children about who might be knocked over, is not keeping your dog under control!

So, cyclists, please do not travel too fast when there are other path users around and do use your bell to let them know you are coming. Dog owners please keep your dog under control. And pedestrians keep an eye out for other path users, including cyclists. The cycle path is there for all to enjoy without fear of conflict with other users!

What do YOU think? Let the editor know by emailing woodchesterword@gmail.com

Selsley Road traffic

I am sure many of our residents are frustrated by the increase in traffic using Selsley Road, much of it through-traffic from outside the village. It's an issue which is regularly discussed by Councillors.

A couple of residents asked whether traffic calming measures could be introduced during the recent resurfacing of Selsley Road. Measures suggested include a chicane on the straighter part of upper Selsley Road, sleeping policemen throughout its length, and a zebra crossing near the shop to make entering and leaving those premises a safer experience. All good ideas, which in an ideal world would be worth consideration.

Council is delighted that the resurfacing is going ahead and grateful to Cllr Robinson for his efforts in progressing this. But approval for traffic calming or speed reduction measures would likely take years to achieve, so it would not be possible to do both at the same time.

We did try a '20 is plenty' campaign in the village and there is currently a county-wide campaign (20s Plenty Gloucestershire) to promote 20mph speed limits in all town and rural village settings. I attend most of their meetings, and Woodchester Parish Council is supporting the campaign.

The Parish Council has spent a lot of time over the last few years investigating the possibility of getting a 20mph speed limit throughout the village, and prepared appropriate documentation to formally request this, including traffic surveys and a public consultation. Unfortunately, it was not supported either by GCC or the Police on the grounds that average speeds on roads within our village are already around 20mph (see below), so there would be no benefit to the significant cost (in excess of £40,000 including the signage) and resource involved. They also pointed out that such a limit would most likely not be policed. Nailsworth Town Council has been trying to get a 20mph speed limit in the town for more than 5 years!

I attended the recent GCC Road Safety Policy Workshop meeting which was held to launch this year's 'refresh' of the County Road Safety Policy, with various forums and consultations due to be held, and a report to the full County Council before the end of the year. It will coincide with a new DfT Road Safety Framework to be announced by the Government this year, which will include a new 'Safer Roads' fund for local projects. At present we have no idea what the outcomes of these initiatives will be, but we will remain part of the process and see what happens. Incidentally, Wales are miles ahead of England here, with a

default national 20mph speed limit being introduced in 2023.

The traffic calming measures suggested recently have all been discussed by the Parish Council. A number of residents objected to the idea of a 20mph speed limit during the public consultation in 2018, so traffic calming may also not be universally popular. These would require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). The cost of a TRO starts at £15,000, and requires detailed surveys, public consultation, and the support of both GCC and the Police. The actual works required to implement these measures would be a very significant additional cost, all of which would have to be paid by the Parish. As we are a small Parish, with one of the lowest precepts in the District, we simply do not have the financial resources available to larger councils like Minchinhampton.

Regarding speeding, my work in recent years as Highways lead on the Parish Council and with the Stroud District Road Safety Group has highlighted that there is often a difference between perceived speeds and actual speeds. To quantify the actual speed problem on Selsley Road, the Parish Council has carried out several traffic surveys in recent years:

1. In March 2018, a survey showed that in the area of Selsley Road above Lawns Park, over 75 % of vehicles were travelling at less than 25mph, 97 % of vehicles were travelling below 30mph, with 2.4 % travelling between 30mph and 35mph. In the Blacklow Close area of Selsley Road, 86 % of vehicles were traveling at below 30mph, and 14 % were travelling between 30mph and 40mph. Between the Post Office and Southfield Road, 85.5 % of vehicles were travelling at less than 25mph, with the average speed around 20mph.
2. In November 2019 we deployed a VAS device on lower Selsley Road (below Southfield Road), registering speeds of every vehicle in both directions. There was over 98 % compliance with the speed limit and an average speed of around 22mph.
3. In January 2021 we deployed a VAS device just above Lawns Park, again registering vehicles in both directions, importantly including vehicles coming down from the top of Selsley Road. Over 23,000 vehicle movements were

monitored during this extensive survey. The average speed for all vehicles was 21mph. 95.8 % of vehicles travelling downhill complied with the 30 mph speed limit, whilst surprisingly only 91.8 % travelling uphill complied with the speed limit. 0.8 % exceeded the 35mph threshold for speeding prosecution in the downhill direction, whilst 1.8 % of uphill traffic exceeded the 35mph threshold.

We are all very mindful of the need to mitigate risk on our roads before we have a serious accident in the village. Unfortunately, the Highways Authority prioritises issues at areas where there is a history of 'killed or seriously injured' accidents. This seems to me to be a misguided re-active approach instead of a pro-active approach to road-safety, largely based on cost benefit. I can only say that the Parish Council takes these issues extremely seriously, and although Highways issues are beyond the scope of our direct responsibility, we are constantly engaging with the Highways Authorities, and putting significant effort into quantifying the problems to support our requests for action.

Another resident has asked if it would be possible to have double yellow lines on Selsley Road below the phone box opposite Southfield Road, with residents who currently park cars there having to park elsewhere. Their concern is traffic conflicts on the stretch from Southfield Road down to Beech Grove caused by parked cars, and the rationale behind the double yellow lines is to create a better line of sight for vehicles travelling downhill, and easier passing for vehicles in both directions. The Parish Council is aware of the pinch points on this area of lower Selsley Road, including for uphill traffic at the end of Beech Grove, where the sight line is restricted by the gradient of the hill over the bridge. Double yellow lines at either site would require a TRO because yellow lines have legal implications and road users who do not comply with them might be committing a traffic offence. This would cost the Parish in excess of £15,000, so the benefit of such a measure would have to be carefully considered. The Parish Council has spoken to some residents who park their cars in this area and will monitor the situation. Of course, local residents need to park their cars somewhere, and as the Highways team have pointed out, cars parked on this stretch of Selsley Road act as a traffic



calming measure – there is no doubt that a clear road would lead to cars travelling at higher speeds!

GCC have also made it clear that they do not have the resources to carry out the required lengthy consultations for single site requests for yellow line TROs but will keep any such request on file and 'look into it the next time there is a traffic management review of that area'.

Another resident has suggested that the S-bend below the junction of Selsley Road and Church Lane has some additional signage to help reduce the conflicts which occur every day on this bend between cars travelling in opposite directions, often because one or other is not sticking tight to their side of the road. We have made a request to GCC for additional road markings on this bend, as well as the bend at the top of Selsley Road near the National Trust gate. Although for administrative reasons these have to be done separately from the remarking of the road after resurfacing, the Highways team have confirmed that a request has been made for these additional road markings to be carried out as soon as possible.

Finally, we have heard that some residents are not happy about 'non residents' parking in their particular road. If the road is a public highway then anyone can park providing they are not breaking any traffic regulations and are not blocking a driveway. Individuals have no right to try to prevent people from parking legally and you cannot place cones, bins or any other obstacles on a public highway to prevent people parking, even in front of your own home. Placing such obstacles on the road could be construed as an offence under the Highways Act, if it "wilfully obstructs the free passage along a highway" and County Council officers or Police are likely to order the removal of any such objects.

We very much appreciate residents getting involved in issues of interest to them, and I hope that this puts some context to the points raised recently. As always, we are very happy to discuss any such issues at Parish Council Meetings.

(Cllr Iain Dunbar, Road Safety lead, Woodchester Parish Council)

Woodchester Playgroup

Woodchester Playgroup has been established in the village for over 35 years and is set in the beautiful grounds of the Ofsted 'outstanding' Woodchester Endowed Primary School with which we share close links. We provide a safe, happy, caring and stimulating environment where children can have fun and learn through play. A dedicated and wonderful small team of staff provide opportunities for the children to explore, be creative and develop their own ideas to help them flourish and grow into confident and independent individuals.

We have spaces available from September 2022, if you would like to arrange a visit or for more information then please visit our website or contact the Playgroup on **01453 873004** or email: **woodchesterplaygroup@eygloucestershire.co.uk**

We look forward to hearing from you!

Bev Fowler, Playgroup Leader



Understanding Rooksmoor and a bit of Interesting Social History!

I always had trouble trying to work out which houses the residents of Rooksmoor lived in as so few had names or indeed anything to help with location. Then I had a breakthrough with the 1909 Lloyd George survey. Basically, this was a survey of land values, undertaken to implement one feature of Lloyd George's 'People's Budget' of 1909.

Lloyd George (then chancellor of the exchequer) had introduced old age pensions the previous year and was faced with providing revenue not only for this purpose, but also for the naval building programme, designed to compete with Germany's expansion.

The Act (Old Age Pensions 1908) provided for a non-contributory old age pension for people over the age of seventy. It was to pay a weekly pension of 5s (25p) a week (7s 6d (37.5p) for married couples) with effect from 1 January 1909. The level of benefit was deliberately low to encourage workers to make their own provision for retirement. To be eligible, claimants had to have an income less than £31 10s a year – the pension was paid in full to anyone with an income of less than £21 and then on a sliding scale - and also had to pass a 'character test'; only those with a 'good character' could receive the pensions. Claimants also had to have been resident in Great Britain and Ireland for at least twenty years to be eligible, and those who had not worked habitually were also excluded.

Others not eligible were those in receipt of poor relief, those being held in what were then called 'lunatic asylums', those who had served a prison sentence and been released less than ten years before, those convicted of drunkenness (at the discretion of the court), and any person who was guilty of 'habitual failure to work', according to ability.

Lloyd George wished to tax the 'unearned increment' of land, that is, to tax windfall increases in its capital value due to chance factors such as development potential or the discovery of minerals. 'Land' included all agricultural land, allotments, land with barns, houses, cottages, or any other buildings on it. The focus of the survey was therefore on the owners of property (which explains why some houses are grouped together).

The House of Lords rejected the Budget and caused a major constitutional crisis. However, on 29 April 1910 the Budget was passed, one year after its introduction. Immediately, the Inland Revenue sprang into action and an army of surveyors was appointed. Because the survey was being undertaken in connection with taxation, it was organised in the areas termed 'income tax parishes'. Hence each

property is located in the civil parish and the taxation parish so some places may not be where expected!

With the help of a handy map (although be aware that the numbers do not always match up), it is now relatively easy to identify some of the owners and occupiers. For instance, the row of brick built cottages on the left hand side of the road heading towards Rooksmoor Hill were owned by William Dancey and even though they are grouped together, come with a useful description. We can tell that they are freehold, brick built and slated cottages and gardens in very good repair built around 10 years earlier. One is described as having 3 bedrooms, 1 attic, sitting room, kitchen and back kitchen. Modern conveniences are provided by an outside WC and water from a spring. The top house, occupied by William Dancey himself, has a lean to dairy and a larger garden.

The stone built cottages opposite were owned by Henry Charles Teakle and one occupied by

Oliver Knee is described as freehold, stone built and tiled cottage and garden in fair order with 1 attic, 2 bedrooms and living room. It had joint use of wash house, WC and pump water.

The block of houses consisting of Rooksmoor, The Nook and The Gables are also grouped together and owned by Henry Charles Teakle. One is described as a freehold, stone built and tiled house and garden in very good repair, consisting of entrance hall, 2 reception rooms, kitchen, larder and back kitchen with 3 bedrooms and 2 attics. It was well served with an outside WC, gas laid on and spring water.

The two parts of Rooksmoor House and Tyn y Rheol are easily identified and are all owned by Mrs Elizabeth Henrietta Higgins.

See <https://www.glos1909survey.org.uk/>

With thanks to the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society for their transcription work.



Contrasting buildings in Rooksmoor - 17th/18th century stone built houses with stone tiled roof (top) and Victorian brick and slate cottages (bottom).

Local businesses

Woodchester Shop and Post Office

Shop opening hours:
Monday to Friday 0730 - 1730.
Saturday 0830 - 1230.

Post Office Opening Hours:
Monday to Friday 0900 - 1730,
Saturday 0900 - 1230

Chim Cheroo Nailsworth

Professional chimney services; sweeping of stoves, open fires, inglenooks Agas, Rayburns, gas fires and more. Nest and blockage removal, full CCTV inspections, consultancy. Fully insured, Certificates issued. Clean, tidy, professional service.

Jos Fletcher

T: 07507638316

E: Chimcheroonailsworth@gmail.com.

Leopardpress

Litho, digital and letterpress printing offering print to private and commercial customers.

E: Stroud@leopardpress.com

Denis Brown and Son (Nailsworth) Ltd

Local family company established in 1927 for all your timber requirements. Gates, fencing, decking, hardware, timber treatments. Visit our yard and view the stock. Trade and public welcome. Broadmead Timber Yard, Woodchester, GL5 5EG.

T: 01453 873516.

E: enquiries@timber-yard.co.uk

Miss Daisy

Catering. Delicious food made well. Events, celebration cakes and hot meals ready to eat, delivered to your door.

T: 07864 018972

E: beckykoos@hotmail.com

Note: If you are a local trader and wish to be included in this listing for the next issue, please feel free to send your text (up to 50 words, including heading, listing the business type, and contact details) to the editor.

Love they neighbour

We are delighted to welcome a number of new residents to Woodchester, some of whom have moved from within the local area, others from further afield.



Photo by Sixteen Miles Out on Unsplash

We extend a warm welcome to you all, hope that you enjoy living in our beautiful valley, and that you will engage with village life – and maybe even come along to our Parish Council Meetings! Whether new or long-standing resident, you can find out what is happening in the village on our village website (www.woodchesterparish.org.uk) or Facebook page (@[woodchestercommunity](https://www.facebook.com/woodchestercommunity)), through posters on our village notice boards, and by reading the Woodchester Word, which should be delivered to your door 3 times a year.

Most of us will be aware of the controversy surrounding the new residential development at Rooksmoor Mills. Whilst the Parish Council were fully supportive of the derelict site being developed in an appropriate way, not everyone was enamoured with the final appearance of the proposed dwellings, with the recommendations of the Parish Council totally ignored by Stroud District Council throughout the planning process.

With the first of the new dwellings at The Millpond now occupied, we would hope that the new residents are being welcomed into our community with open arms – after all, whatever issues we might have had with the planning authorities or the developers are hardly their fault!

Unfortunately, that does not seem to be universally the case.

Residents of The Millpond at Rooksmoor Mills have reported privacy issues, with people using the current permissive pathway alongside The Millpond (connecting the cycle path with the A46) walking along the front of their property and looking into the new flats. This area is of course private property, and anyone using the permissive right of way does not have permission to walk around the site. A Permissive Right of Way is one granted at the discretion of the owner of the property. It is not a Public Right of Way and the public do not have a legal right to use it. A new permanent Public Right of Way is to be included further north in the Rooksmoor site

and once that has been established, it is up to the owners of the site to decide whether to continue the permissive footpath at The Millpond as well, or to close it to public use.

The Millpond residents have also reported being “verbally abused by individuals using the permissive right of way”, and subject to vandalism from eggs being thrown at their property. Both of these are criminal behaviour and are inexcusable. Anyone witnessing such behaviour should report it to our local PCSO (by telephoning 101 or going to www.gloucestershire.police.uk) or our Neighbourhood Warden (Carol Novoth, telephone: **07970250343**, email: carol.novoth@stroud.gov.uk).

One Millpond resident reports that they “were unaware of the bad press this development had received prior to our purchase” and is concerned that locals may view the residents of the Rooksmoor Mills development as the problem, as opposed to the developers who were successful in petitioning for the largely controversial planning permission for the site. “It is a real shame, because I and many others in the development would love to be seen as part of the local community without being the recipients of negative comments from locals just by virtue of where we have chosen to live” the Millpond resident told the Woodchester Word.

Perhaps the developers should be doing more to manage any current issues with local residents over noise and traffic, and to help integrate their new residents into the community. Residents of The Millpond have reported to us that they have been attempting to seek the support of the developers on multiple issues, attempts which have apparently largely been unsuccessful.

The Parish Council has now opened dialogue directly with The Millpond residents to try to help mitigate these issues. But the best thing going forward would be for Woodchester residents to greet our new neighbours and make them feel welcome in our community.

Woodchester WI – enjoying time together again



Meetings have returned largely to normal and we have enjoyed the opportunity to meet up again with old friends and to welcome a number of prospective new members. Our programme for 2022 is varied with something for all tastes and interests.

The year has got off to an excellent start as Mandie Cran who had spoken to us about her experience as an officer in the army, returned to share her wanderings on the water with us. At the February meeting members made fabric and felt flowers and in March we welcomed a speaker from the Stroud Valleys Project whose work is much more varied and far-reaching than any of us had realised. In April, Kirstie Bingham from Tewkesbury Museum returns to explore the role of women in early medicine in the intriguingly titled *Midwife, Herbalist, Witch*. Later in the year we hope to hear about the Long Table, aromatherapy, and hilarious hats. In keeping with the best of WI tradition, there will be plenty of chances to share food with a pudding night, a fish and chip supper and our Christmas party. A musical entertainment is planned for May, shared with our local group WIs at Minchinhampton and Nailsworth.

Our sub-groups continue to thrive. The book group has tackled novels from Barbara Pym to Candice Carty Williams. The walking group has strolled round Tetbury and Stonehouse, with extended pauses to visit local cafes for coffee. The craft group, an informal gathering where members and non-members share projects, tea and biscuits, meets in

the afternoon on the first Thursday of each month. Our Woodchester banner, a three - year project, is at last nearing completion and will be on display at each monthly meeting. The WI hopes to be involved in the village Jubilee Celebrations in June.

Several members were pleased to be able to take part once again in the Gloucestershire WI annual meeting at Cheltenham where we very much enjoyed two very different talks, the first on sustainable fashion and the second by a Gloucestershire singer who won the Chinese version of the X Factor while on her student year abroad. Princess Anne joined us for part of the meeting and sang the praises of Harris Tweed as a truly sustainable and indestructible fabric.

We have been delighted to see new faces at our meetings this year and will offer a friendly welcome to any local ladies who would like to see what the WI is about. Contact the Secretary, Sally Bull, on **873003** or the President, Gail Birch, on **873692** if you would like more information. You can try us out for up to three sessions before you commit to memberships. We meet on the third Thursday of most months at 7.30 in Woodchester Village Hall.

How do I find out what is going on in the village?

Apart from our excellent village website at www.woodchesterparish.org.uk, where there is a wealth of information about the village, there are lots of other ways to find out what is happening in our village.

The Woodchester Word is now delivered again to every household in the Parish. We have six Parish Notice Boards, where notices are posted about upcoming village activities. And of course, you are welcome to attend Parish Council Meetings.

There is an official Woodchester Parish Council Facebook page, which is used to inform people about Parish Council activities, provide links to SDC and GCC news, give notifications of road closures etc. The page currently has 638 followers and between 150 and 350 people typically see each post. We also have a less formal Woodchester Share, Swap and Support Facebook group. Anyone can post onto the group and it currently has 248 followers.

Heard in the pub:

By working faithfully 8 hours a day, you might become the boss and work 12 hours a day!

During a discussion on marriage - "It's impossible not to love someone who makes toast for you. Kissing doesn't last – cookery does"

Life is short – smile while you still have teeth

Common sense is like a deodorant. The people who need it most never use it!

Heard in a secondary school lesson on history:

If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant stands on the tail of a mouse, and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality (Desmond Tutu)

Orchard Pastures

We were delighted with the wassail in January. The weather was practically balmy and a large crowd of all ages came to sing and holler to ensure a good crop in our orchard this year. We were accompanied by the marvellous Rodborough Folk Orchestra, led by Fran Wade. The orchestra carried on playing at the Royal Oak, which hosted a gathering of wassailers afterwards. Many thanks to the orchestra and the Royal Oak, as well as to everyone who came along to make it such a jolly occasion.

Orchard Pastures is the land below The Ram owned by a group of villagers. If you'd like to find out more, please email: swalt.org@gmail.com or phone Bert Cossins on **872407**.



Thank you to our advertisers.

The Woodchester Word has been indebted to its advertisers for some years, allowing this community publication to keep delivering local news to the doorsteps of our residents for more than 20 years. However, with the recent financial constraints placed on many businesses, we have found it more and more difficult to secure sufficient advertising revenue to cover the cost of the publication.

For this reason, Woodchester Parish Council, who originally sponsored the Woodchester Word when it was first published, have stepped in with the help of generous local contributions, and are now guaranteeing the financial support required to safeguard the future of the Woodchester Word, eliminating the uncertainty of the last couple of years.

Although this means that we will not be offering display advertising in future issues, we are still committed to showcasing local businesses to our residents. We will have a 'Local Business' page where any local trader can insert a 'text ad' of up to 50 words (including heading, listing the business type, and contact details) free of charge. If you are a local trader and wish to be included in the listing for the next issue, please feel free to send your text to the editor.

Content for the Woodchester Word remains in the very accomplished hands of its current editor, Rod Harris.

Again, thank you to all the advertisers who have supported the Woodchester Word over the years.

Useful Village Contacts

PCSO:

Steven Phillipson
T: 101
or visit www.gloucestershire.police.uk

Neighbourhood Warden:

Chris James,
T: 01453 754512, 07753 725185
E: chris.james@stroud.gov.uk

County Councillor:

Steve Robinson,
T: 01453 834270
E: steve.robinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Village Hall:

Mrs. Kath Gay,
T: 01453 873348
E: wvh888@btinternet.com

Bookings: Rod Harris
T: 01453 872317/07775 652379
E: WVH2021@gmail.com

Parish Council:

Sylvia May, Clerk to Woodchester Parish Council
T: 07863 098710
E: Clerk@woodchesterparish.org.uk

Gloucestershire Highways:

www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/
T: 08000 514514
E: gcchighways@amey.co.uk

Woodchester Post Office and Village Shop:

Shop: 01453 873218
Post Office: 01453 872581

St Mary's Church:

Rev Peter Francis,
T: 01453 759680

Church of the Annunciation:

T: 01453 832120

Letters, articles and items for publication should be sent to the editor, Rod Harris, at woodchesterword@gmail.com.
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