

# The Tower

Churchill Parish Council newsletter

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## Planning update

**The Parish Council devote a significant amount of time and resources on considering planning matters within the parish.**

Individual and smaller scale applications are considered by members at their monthly meetings. A lead councillor will have considered the application and usually visited the site prior to the meeting. Members then consider the plans together with any submissions and objections from others, and makes a comment to North Somerset Council on the application.

The Parish Council has a 'Planning and Development Strategy Working Group' to ensure that the village is heard, and comments on matters such as the larger scale applications and the many consultation documents received from North Somerset Council.

Members of this group devote considerable time and effort to this area of their work and report regularly to the full council.

Churchill Parish is designated in local planning terms as a Service Village as are several others

around us. For a number of years, local planning policies have afforded protection from significant development outside the long established settlement boundaries of these Service Villages (PolicyCS32).

From late 2015 to date, local planning policies such as CS32 have been afforded less weight in planning decisions affecting Service

Villages as a direct consequence of North Somerset Council having to demonstrate that they were meeting the Government housing targets known as 'the five year housing supply'. North Somerset Council planners were put under huge pressure to meet these targets. The result has been the approval of large scale residential developments in Service Villages outside their settlement boundaries on greenfield sites.

In Churchill alone, two applications for developments of 141 houses on Pudding Pie Lane and 43 houses on Says Lane have been approved even with universal local opposition. The Parish Council have submitted fulsome objections to both applications.



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A third application for 35 houses also on Pudding Pie Lane has yet to be decided upon and the Parish Council again objected to this.

The two approved developments will result in a 33% increase in population and if the third application proceeds there will be an increase in population of over 40%.

The hope had been that once North Somerset Council had achieved the more immediate five year target, policies such as CS32 would be given full effect again. However, CS32 was one of a number of local policies recently considered as part of a review of North Somerset Council's overarching planning policy, the Core Strategy. The appointed Planning Inspector has insisted on more flexibility being built into the wording of CS32. A revised wording has accordingly been prepared by NSC planners and subject to a six week period of

consultation which came to an end on Tuesday 6 September.

Parish Councils and local action groups have all made submissions strongly objecting to the proposed flexibility or seeking that the policy be much more tightly worded to prevent further extensive speculative development and the urbanisation of the Service Villages. We await the inspectors' decision but initial indications are that the inspector's wishes will prevail and that the protection of CS32 for villages like Churchill will be significantly reduced. The Parish Council will continue to monitor the planning situation closely and liaise with the village's action group, CALRAG (Churchill and Langford Action Residents Action Group).

What can you do to help continue to protect our village? The Parish Council urge you to take a full part in the planning process as possible by:

- attending any consultations in the village organised by developers in respect of future developers and expressing your views
- submitting your views to North Somerset Council planners on any applications via their planning portal (as many of you have done in respect of the three major application affecting the village)
- supporting or joining the local action group, Churchill and Langford Action Group (see CALRAG website)
- offering to assist in the formulation of the Neighbourhood Plan, a process whereby the village pulls together a plan for the future of the village (including development) and obtains formal approval via a referendum of the village – the Neighbourhood Plan will have statutory weight and some influence over future planning decisions.

## Clerk's column

As you will see elsewhere in these pages, the summer has certainly been a busy time for the Parish Council. In addition to the substantial effort that continues by councillors to represent you, particularly on planning matters, the day to day tasks for the management of the Parish has been somewhat relentless. The hedges and grass areas seemed to like the weather and caused a considerable number of requests from some residents for action, most of which were implemented within a few days.

What with tarmac repairs resulting from a car fire, the need to install improved lighting at the Community Club, work needed on the play area, and the installation of fitness equipment being delayed by the installer (hopefully it will be installed by the time you read this) my views and perception of a 'very active Parish' that I made in the previous publication has not changed at all!

The Parish Council are always very conscious that they must continually strive to ensure value for money in all aspects of their function,

so, to ensure that this newsletter publication is well received and read by residents, it would be very helpful if you could just drop a quick email (or phone message) to me to indicate your thoughts / views / requests for future information – or simply to let the council know that it is being read.

For those of you that enjoy a good book in the longer evenings – a recommendation from me that should keep you entertained is a book on anti-gravity, I find I just can't put it down!

## Churchill Parish allotments for rent

**Half or full plots available – hurry, they're going quick!**

Did you make one of these your new year resolution?

- Get more exercise
- Live a healthier lifestyle
- Save money
- Make new friends
- Eat healthier foods
- Have more fun?

An allotment can tick all these boxes in one go.

Research by Westminster & Essex University has recently proved that tending an allotment for only half an hour a day has major benefits for both the body and brain. Digging, weeding and just pottering around helps lift feelings of tension and depression – leading to better moods and higher self-esteem.

The physical exercise involved also reduces body fat and the risk of health problems including heart disease. People also felt significantly more satisfied with life, a key indicator of mental health. 'Health organisations and policy makers should consider the potential of allotment gardening as a tool for combating ill-health'.

Our facilities include:

- Two allotment fields
- New water supply
- Composting and manure areas
- Community picnic and barbeque area
- A group of friendly helpful residents

**So what are you waiting for?**

Apply for an allotment now.

Martin Dolton, Churchill Parish Clerk  
Tel: **01934 316 333/07399 523 961**  
email: [clerk@churchillpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@churchillpc.org.uk)

## New councillor co-opted

Since the spring, the Parish Council has held a vacancy for a councillor. At their meeting held on 12 September 2016, the council were very pleased to formally co-opt Mrs Sarah Jarman into the role. Sarah resides with her family in Ladymead Lane and is a welcome addition to the future contribution of the council work in the community.

# A day in the life of a Village Agent

**Your local village agent, Tina Huckle-Mills, provides an insight into the resources and help available.**

So, what is a Village Agent and what do Village Agents actually do?...Well there is a little clue in the name 'Village' in that a Village Agent will cover villages in rural areas linking people with advice and support services to enable independent living. We understand rural living and normally come from a rural background ourselves with a wealth of knowledge and expertise that has been gained from this. We understand that the needs and wishes of people living in these areas may be different to those in urban communities. Our aim is to listen and work with those who need our help to achieve these wishes, enabling them to continue with their unique way of rural life.

Out travelling the rural roads and coastal paths our days can consist of issues and problem solving from diverse topics such as, heating, internet and farming issues to providing important opportunities for reducing isolation, such as setting up groups and coffee mornings.

These activities encourage important social opportunities that may be far and few between due to rural infrastructure and the lack of transport issues often encountered. They bring people that have known one another most of their lives, back together again thus keeping these communities connected. Once trust has been established within these communities, you will often find that people come back to the Village Agent time and time again stating they feel secure in the knowledge that there is someone there to help who understands specific rural needs and issues.

There are five Village Agents specifically designated to North Somerset's diverse rural areas, bringing their local knowledge and expertise to the Coastal and inland villages. This ensures that all people over the age of 50 are able to receive help and advice should the need arise, no matter where they live.

This service provided by the West of England Rural Network or WERN as it is better known is part of Community Connect in partnership with Curo and funded by North Somerset Council.



## Playing field award

Each year the Somerset Playing Fields Association judges the recreation fields and play areas provided by the Parish Council members. This year Churchill Parish Council has been pleased to receive a bronze award for the Ladymead fields and play area. The picture shows the Chair of the Parish Council, Councillor Jackie Bush, receiving the award from the Chair of the Association at an awards evening held on Tuesday 13 September 2016.

# Village Show 2016

**Saturday 10 September saw yet another increased attendance at the Churchill Village Show held in the Memorial Hall, Ladymead Lane.**

More classes were entered this year and over one hundred residents and visitors turned out to enjoy the day. The array of vegetables, fruit, flowers, art, and children's entries was indeed an incredible sight. In addition to the produce and product entries and displays, it has become a notable social occasion in the calendar of the village, with teas and cakes being available, and a very well supported raffle.

The village show committee wish to thank all the local businesses and individuals who gave so generously to the cause (all profits going to the village fund). Again, thanks are extended to those who took part by entering the various classes and particularly to those individuals who gave their time to make the event such a success. The pictures in this newsletter show some of the many displays. Keep an eye out in the spring for the date of the 2017 show.



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## Your councillors

**Mrs Jackie Bush (Chair)**  
01934 853 215  
langford.madhouse@gmail.com

**Mr Bill Carruthers**  
01934 853 066  
carr0208@gmail.com

**Mr Dev Clutterbuck**  
01934 852 219  
devereux.clutterbuck@yahoo.com

**Mr Graham Fortune**  
01934 852 825  
geffortune2014@gmail.com

**Mr Simon Glanfield**  
07957 174 058  
smg4299@hotmail.co.uk

**Mr Simon Hegarty**  
01934 852 678  
simon.hegarty@btconnect.com

**Mr Brenden Hill (Vice Chair)**  
01934 853 553  
brenden.c.hill@btoopenworld.com

**Mr David Hurst**  
01934 852 784  
davidhurst@btinternet.com

**Mrs Sarah Jarman**  
07710 185 079  
Sarah.jarman@yahoo.com

**Mrs Sue List**  
01934 853 568  
sue.list@interserveps.com

**Mr Alan Lovell**  
01934 852 249  
lovellalan57@gmail.com

**Mrs Trudy Silverton**  
01934 852 240  
trudysilverton@hotmail.com

**Mrs Elizabeth Wells**  
(District Councillor)  
01934 852 227

## Other contacts

**Clerk of the Council:**  
**Martin Dolton**  
01934 316 333/07399 523 961  
clerk@churchillpc.org.uk

**Parish Orderly: Michele Miles**  
07799 642 676

**Tree Wardens:**  
**Kate Johns** 07753 809 482  
**Ben Vosper** 01934 852 679

**Police: Non emergency** 101  
Police: Emergency 999

**War Memorial Hall booking**  
**Mimi Simpson** 01934 853 282  
inspector2006@hotmail.co.uk

