



SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER NO 9

JANUARY 2024

What do we do?

The Parish Council aims to represent the views of the community and improve the village, whilst preserving the setting and character of the heritage areas.

The funding for parish councils is allocated by the county council and forms part of the area's council tax. This is called the precept.

What we have achieved since last January

- Since taking over the recreation field we have updated the electrical system in the pavilion so it now adheres to current regulations
- We have set up a recreation field committee which looks at how improvements can be made – this includes members of the public as well as councillors
- Continued with the 100 Club run by the former Lethbridge committee to enable us to raise funds for improvements to the recreation field
- Produced a survey concerning the recreation field which was distributed to every home in the village
- Worked with Somerset County Highways department concerning safety issues near the primary school, which has resulted in the yellow road markings being repainted and a new SID (Speed Indicator Device) location near the school being identified to capture traffic speed
- Spent money on maintenance of the Platinum Jubilee Garden, with the help of our village volunteers
- Given grants to the following groups – The Shepton Playhouse; Shepton Art Group; Cowleaze Meadow Project and The Events Team.

Our plans for the future

Our plans include:

- To develop Lethbridge Recreation field as a village amenity to be proud of
- To carry out a defibrillator training session for villagers before April 2024
- To find alternatives to the Ranger Service

Ranger

We were notified by Somerset Council at the end of October that they would no longer be operating the Ranger scheme in this village.

We are attempting to find a private contractor to carry out the work, but this may result in increased costs, which will need to be reflected in the precept that is payable on your council tax bill. We hope to have someone in place by February.

Police Funding Survey

Avon and Somerset Police has launched a survey asking if people support a proposal to increase the policing part (precept) of the council tax by at least £10 a year for the average Band D household. Even with this increase, savings will still need to be made, which is likely to result in about 250 roles (police officers and civilians) being cut across the next few years. The survey and information about the precept can be found on:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/working-for-you/precept/>

The survey closes on 22nd January.

Mud on the roads

It was brought to our attention by a member of the public at our last council meeting about the amount of mud on the roads around the village. This is particularly hazardous for motorbikes and bicycles. Whilst we appreciate that we live in a farming community and so must allow for a certain amount of mud on the roads, especially due to the recent bad weather, we would ask that the mud is cleared as far as practically possible within a few days of harvesting crops, in order to make the roads safer.

Cowleaze Meadow

Three new benches, made of recycled plastic, have been installed in Cowleaze Meadow replacing old wooden ones that were rotting away. The new benches were purchased with funds from a Parish Council grant and a very generous donation from the Men's Institute.

Cowleaze Meadow is a Green Space managed by a small group of volunteers. Wildflowers and wildlife habitats are being promoted. The use of fossil fuels and chemicals is avoided. Instead, electric, battery-powered equipment with solar recharging is favoured whenever possible.

New helpers and donations are always welcome.



Councillor vacancies

At the time of this newsletter going to print, we have vacancies for two councillors. The closing date for applications is 8th January. If you are interested in becoming a councillor, please contact the Parish Clerk for more information.

Parish Council – get involved and have your say

We would like to do more in the village and would ask that villagers come along and give their opinions early in the process, so we can make better informed decisions. If we are aware of what you want to see in the village then that will help us decide our priorities. We have a public session at the beginning of each meeting where you can air your views.

Agendas for our meetings are put in our notice board by the church and also on the website about a week before the meeting.

Our local County Councillors (Adam Dance and Jo Roundell Greene) attend our meetings and update us on what is happening within the new Somerset Unitary Authority.

Allotments

We have one allotment available. If you are interested, please contact the Parish Clerk.

Parish Council meetings

Our Parish Council meetings are held on the third Monday of each month (except August) in the village hall at 7.30 pm and members of the public are welcome to attend.

Make a New Year's resolution and look at our website!

<https://sheptonbeauchamppc.org.uk>

Finally – Thank You

Last, but no means least, we would like to thank the working party that helped with the tidy up and the bulb planting at the Recreation Field – it is much appreciated.

The Parish Council can be contacted via the Parish Clerk on 07541 537681 or by emailing clerk@sheptonbeauchamppc.org.uk