

Chillaton Newsletter

No. 1: October 2012

Welcome to the first Chillaton newsletter. If you are reading this on the website and want to receive it by email in future, please click the 'Contact Us' button on the home page and ask to go on the mailing list.

The aim of the newsletter is to help keep local residents informed about what's going on in and around Chillaton. The newsletter is not produced by the Parish Council, although any reference to matters discussed at a Council meeting is checked for accuracy by the Parish Clerk and is written by one of your local parish councillors; Howard Asbridge, Ray Brewer and Amanda Westcott.

Anyone can contribute to future newsletters; please contact the Website Group via the website.

New village website

www.chillaton.net has been set up by some local residents who formed the Chillaton Website Group to publicise local news and events. Current members are; Howard Asbridge, Chris Beighton, John Nolan and Bridget Passmore.

The Group hope that if more residents are aware of things like, for example, the monthly quiz night at the pub [try this month's first round; it's on the website] or a special church service, then these aspects of village life will be better supported.

If you have unwanted items you want to give away or sell, then you can advertise them on-line at no cost. Local services such as a gardener/handyman or log suppliers, for example, can put their contact information on the website too.

Please feel free to let the Group know what you like and don't like about the website and what you would like to see there. You can contact them from the website, by email. Anyone with an interest in helping to run the site is very welcome to join the Group.

You may know that the 2Day organisation runs a national network of local websites, carrying a mixture of local and national news and information. As it is based locally, the Website Group was keen to ensure that the new site did not adversely affect 2Day. The Group kept 2Day informed of their progress and have included a link to 2Day, who regard what's been done as a positive step.

Traffic in Chillaton

The number and speed of vehicles travelling through villages in this area has been a cause of concern for a long time. In Chillaton, there was an attempt to resolve this some years ago, which was abandoned due to disagreement over whether speed 'cushions' were the answer. Since then, the number of vehicles has continued to rise and other villages have been more successful in dealing with the issue, leading to a further increase in traffic through Chillaton.

Individual residents have expressed their concerns recently and a petition is currently circulating, asking the Parish Council to do something.

The Police and the Highways Department of the County Council are aware of problems like ours and the issue generally has been getting a higher profile recently. Although any initiative by these agencies is to be welcomed, your parish councillors feel that it is very important that local residents and local businesses lead the way in finding solutions that match all our needs.

Chillaton parish councillors will therefore hold an open meeting, at which anyone is welcome to come along and put forward both their concerns about traffic in Chillaton and any ideas for improvement. The meeting will be held at Marystow Church Hall on Thursday 25 October at 7.30pm.

Please come along and express your views.

Other Parish Council News

The last meeting was on the 12th September and the next one is on the 7th November. Previous agendas and minutes from January 2011 onwards are now being added to the website. The September 2012 minutes will be there, once they have been approved at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

The following items concerning Chillaton were considered at the September meeting.

Chillaton Post Box: It doesn't have a very large opening does it? Not a problem if you're posting a letter, but it is for local businesses trying to send small packets, which would have fitted in the old box. The Parish Council is now going to respond to Royal Mail's refusal to provide us with a bigger box.

Dog Fouling: Amanda Westcott had reported to the Parish Council on a problem in Chillaton earlier in the year, which has since improved. If you think there is a problem at any time, please let your parish councillors know, either via the website or contact them direct.

Traffic Surveys: The Parish Council asked the Highways Department to measure the speed of vehicles on all three roads into Chillaton, at the beginning of the year. They originally only did the road outside Forda, but have now measured traffic on the other two. We hope to be looking at the results at our November meeting.

Windwhistle Corner: this is the sharp bend on the road from Tavistock as you come into the village, before the lane down to Hogstor. Several cars have gone over the edge here recently and the Parish Council has asked Highways to see if a safety barrier could be installed. We are waiting to hear what progress has been made on this.

Planning matters:

[i] The appeal against the refusal to grant planning permission for the change of use of the former village shop to residential has been lost.

[ii] The appeal against the refusal to grant planning permission for the retention of a garage at 4 Chillaton Court has been lost.

Local Plans: The Localism Act 2011 enables a parish council to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. This sets out what kind of development, if any, a parish wants to see in its area as well as policies designed to protect open spaces and community assets, create local employment and so on. They have to be in line with national guidance and district/county council policies and be prepared in accordance with strict guidelines. Neighbourhood Plans must be taken into account as a 'material consideration' by local planning authorities, when determining planning applications. They help local communities to have a direct influence on what happens in their area, but they are time-consuming and possibly costly to produce.

There are alternatives; Parish Plans and Local Plans do not have the same status as Neighbourhood Plans, but they are easier to prepare and can form a clear statement of what a community wants to see happen [or not happen] in its area. However, they do not have to be taken into account in the

same way as Neighbourhood Plans, although the local planning authority will no doubt have regard to them to some degree.

The Parish Council needs to consider what action to take, because the recent 'simplification' of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework means that communities that do not have up to date local plans will be more vulnerable to development being imposed upon them in future.

Parish councillors will be studying recently issued guidance on this issue before their November meeting, when they will give further consideration to the options available.

Towns and Parishes [TAP] Fund: The TAP fund was set up by the County Council and the Borough Council to help town and parish councils to finance small-scale local initiatives. The County donated £1.00 per head and the Borough 10p, which in an area as small as ours didn't amount to very much.

So, they have very sensibly amalgamated the money and made up to £28,000 available for joint projects within a cluster of town and parish councils in the southern area of the Borough. Ray Brewer and Howard Asbridge suggested that some of this money was used to re-launch the Community Speed Watch Scheme, as part of a project to reduce speeding in villages. They did so because the Police didn't seem to have the money to keep the scheme going. Now it appears that they do have funds and are prepared to extend the original scheme.

Up to six residents in each village would be trained in the use of hand held speed 'guns' which they operate in pairs at agreed times, at pre-approved sites. If a vehicle is recorded as speeding, a warning letter is automatically posted by the police. If that vehicle is caught a second time, the warning letter will be delivered in a police vehicle. A third occasion will warrant the vehicle details being passed to police units who will look out for it and prosecute, should they witness a further offence. At no time would there be any direct contact between Speed Watch volunteers and motorists. Insurance cover is provided.

We will be asking for volunteers to come forward shortly and if you are interested, it would be helpful if you would let us know at or before the meeting on the 25th October.

Howard Asbridge, Ray Brewer and Amanda Westcott