

Playing Field News

Much has been going on regarding the Queen Elizabeth II R. M. Smith playing field. You may have noticed the smarter new fence at the southern end at the border with the Sustrans cycle path – replacing the old fence which was in a poor state of repair having been subject to vandalism.

The recently introduced trial dog walker's route, between the car park and the entrance to the Sustrans cycle path now provides safe access to the path from the car park without having to walk along the busy Brent Road. Following a successful four month trial period and positive feedback, the decision has been made to upgrade the status of this route to a permanent thoroughfare. We would like to remind parishioners that dogs are only allowed in the field along this walkway and should be kept on a lead at all times.

June has also seen the formation of a new playing field committee after several years without any specific organisational focus. The committee comprises three members of the Parish Council - Joe Stradling, Martin Dare and Lynn Woodward – in addition to Andy Staunton from Red Tile FC (one of the current key users) and residents Pauline Hicks and Cam Downing – with Cam representing the younger members of the Parish.

The new committee aims to raise funds towards the continued improvement and maintenance of our award winning facility to make it even better – with a specific goal to greatly improve the area to the west of the car park (including the toilets and changing rooms) which is generally acknowledged to be in need of regeneration to bring it in line with the rest of the field.

In the meantime, issues with occasional fly-tipping and vandalism are being closely monitored and addressed.

Community Energy

Community energy initiatives come in many forms – ranging from promoting simple energy saving ideas to generating electricity and heat from the community's own facilities.

A resident recently alerted us to the potential benefits of having our own community electricity generation capability. Due to the large sums of money involved and the inherent risk we thought it prudent to investigate further prior to seeking the opinion of the wider community.

A small team has therefore been formed comprising George Terry and Nigel Downing from the Parish Council along with residents Ian Rix and Jenny Hawkins. The team will initially assess if community energy generation could potentially benefit the village– along with the scale and nature of benefits and associate risks. The team is currently compiling comparative financial projections based on recent live wind and solar community schemes – with input from the brains behind the team that put together the successful Wedmore solar installation and who have a wide range of experience in various aspects of community energy.

If it looks like there could be something of interest for us then there would be comprehensive consultation to gauge community interest and enthusiasm before taking any ideas to a firm proposal stage Watch this space!

In Short

- **Cossington Flood Group** – Wessex water are to start work to reposition their mains water pipe to help prevent future flood risk. This is a major operation which will hopefully start in August and will require some road closure and traffic management around the Triangle. The large diseased beech tree on the green opposite the school will also be removed be for safety reasons. Grant-funded watercourse de-silting work is also planned later in the year.
- **High-speed Broadband** – the “Connecting Devon and Somerset” group have announced that the Chilton Polden telephone exchange (the one that serves Cossington) will be upgraded to high-speed fibre broadband by October 2014 (“subject to engineering considerations”)
- **Cossington Village Fayre** – a reminder about the new look Village Fayre on Saturday 9th August (2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m, Village Hall). It combines the old flower show and “Cossington in Bloom” with much more. The entrance fee is £1.00 for adults (children free)
- **Parish Council Web Site** has been upgraded to also be accessible to tablet computers and smartphones. The site has had over 10,000 hits since it was established around 18 months ago
- **Overgrowing vegetation** – weather conditions have resulted in faster growing of hedges, brambles and other vegetation than in previous years. Residents are reminded of their responsibilities to trim back greenery growing from their boundaries onto adjacent roads and pathways before it becomes a nuisance or hazard.
- **Cossington Primary School** has been the subject of much recent discussion. Nothing is firm yet but it is likely that Somerset County Council will be commencing consultation on the school's future in September. The school has been an important and iconic presence at the heart of the village for the last 140 years and it is hoped that as many people as possible were able to attend the commemorative event on Sunday 27th July where many historical records and photos were on display.