

Newsletter March 2020

WHPC has a busy year ahead. We hope you find some of the following events of interest and will mark them on your calendar.

- Great news, WHPC have successfully bid for a **Landmark Tree** (a commemorative tree). This Devon CC scheme was created to encourage community awareness of the vital role of tree planting in tackling environmental threats, particularly climate change, but also the huge loss of native ash trees through ash dieback. The tree will be planted on the green at Courtfield Close to replace the "Coronation" tree that was removed in 2019 due to disease. Why not come along and join us for the tree planting on **Monday 23rd March at 9.30am**? Are you a landowner? Councillors are very keen to work with landowners to create opportunities for tree planting. Please contact the Parish Clerk.

23rd
March

- WHPC has established an **Open Spaces Committee**. It's aim is to enhance the village environment for the benefit and safety of the community and will focus on the Playpark, Broadoak Plantation (working in liaison with The Woodland Trust), hedges, footpaths, litter bins, Village Snow Warden etc. The Committee will meet on the last Tuesday of the month at 1.00pm at The Narthex, St Michael's, Bendarroch Road. The meetings are open to the public and public participation will feature on each agenda to give residents an opportunity to raise concerns with the Council. Next meeting - 1.00pm, Tuesday 31st March.

31st
March

- No, it's not an April Fool's Day Joke! On Friday 1st April there will be a meeting in the Village Hall giving information on bringing "**Ultrafast Fibre Broadband**" to the village possibly in Summer 2020. **Jurassic Fibre (JF)** will give information on their plans, products and prices during a **Drop-in session 3-7pm followed by a presentation and Q&A 7-8pm.**



JF have recently added Aylesbeare to their scheme. Subject to sufficient interest in West Hill and finalising the cable route into the village they hope to include us in their next phase. We now need to show sufficient interest to encourage our inclusion, and this is where you all come in! To register your interest go to <http://www.jurassic-fibre.com>. This is NOT a commitment but merely an indication of how many West Hill households would be interested. Please spread the word and encourage numbers to register and attend the event thus showing Jurassic Fibre that as a Community WEST HILL is very keen on achieving FTTP Broadband. We are hoping that Connecting Devon & Somerset (CDS) will also attend so they may give an Independent view of the Broadband sector, especially in East Devon. More details, including the JF tariffs can be found on our website.

- WHPC are pleased to support the **RBL's VE Day Garden Party on Fri 8th May 2-6pm**, School Lane. The theme is "coming home". Anyone from the village is welcome to join the party. Why not take along your own picnic, enjoy the 1940s music and wear period dress (optional!).



- The Annual Parish Meeting** will be held on Friday 15th May at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. This is an opportunity for village groups and organisations to get together. There will be a (very!) short annual report from the Parish Council and, new for 2020, a guest speaker to give us further information on how the **First Responder Scheme** operates in Devon, and how West Hill residents might become involved.

15th
May

We are some distance from the nearest ambulance stations (Honiton, Sidmouth, Exeter) and given ambulance response times, the Parish Council is keen to explore the possibility of setting up a **First Responder** scheme in West Hill. **First Responders** are volunteers who work with the Ambulance Service to help members of their local community in their time of need. Every day, Responders from across the South West attend emergencies within their local communities. Sometimes the difference is providing reassurance prior to the arrival of an ambulance; sometimes it is saving someone's life. People of all ages and occupations can volunteer to be a First Responder - you don't need to have a medical background and you will get training!



- Himalayan Balsam Bash** – We're hoping village volunteers will join us in June/July to remove the Himalayan Balsam along West Hill Road (and to help us celebrate the hard work). More details will follow nearer the time. Residents are probably aware that we hoped to start this work last year but the weeds really enjoyed the sunny weather and the volume of plants was such that we could not work safely next to the road. We're currently working with Highways on a traffic management scheme to ensure that the volunteers will be safe.

June

- St Michaels are hoping to produce a "**West Hill**" themed **Calendar and Greetings Cards**. They need your help. They need lots of photos of our lovely village taken throughout the year. Contact details www.stmichaelatwesthill.weebly.com/news.html

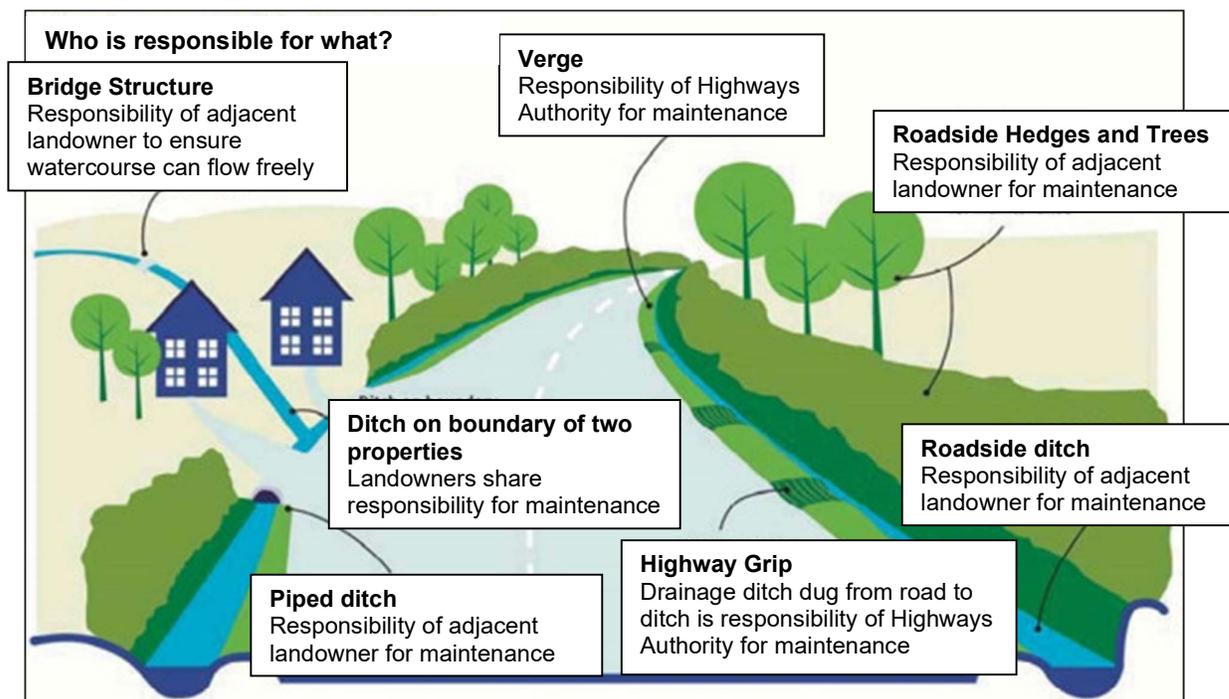


Other News

- **Traffic Study.** DCC Highways have approved a phased approach to install **Vehicle Activated Signs**. The VAS will flash the correct speed limit and “Slow Down” when they are triggered by speeding traffic. Some residents have asked for speed cameras to be installed in the village but Highways will not allow this. Phase 1: Signs will be installed at Bendarroch Road, Bendarroch Rd/West Hill Road junction, 2 sites on the B3180. Phase 2, West Hill Road, requires further consultation with Highways.
- **Road Safety:** The Parish Council was very sorry to hear of the tragic accident on West Hill Road. Councillors are working hard to deliver the Traffic Study initiatives but want to remind residents to “Be Bright – be Seen- Be Safe” on West Hill roads, especially dog walkers!
- **Traffic Study Update:** We now have a draft plan for the proposed **new pedestrian access to the Village Hall** from West Hill Road. We have been working closely with the Village Hall Trustees, Primary School, DCC Highways and EDDC. Highways will not permit the “stop-go” arrangement by the beech tree in West Hill Road that our consultant had proposed. They consider that the speed humps are essential for traffic-calming. The next steps will be to undertake a Road Safety Audit (carried out by an independent company) and a community consultation event before submitting a planning application. Watch out for details of this on our website/social media.
- **Time for a Picnic?** WHPC thanks residents for their feedback on the installation of Picnic Benches in Broadoak. Whilst some people had strong objections we received a majority of positive support, particularly from families. Two benches will be installed in Broadoak and another in the children’s Playpark.
- **Village Lengthsman:** Pro-Lawn Garden Services have been awarded the 2020 contract for the Village Lengthsman to continue the work started last year including cutting verges to keep road junctions safe.
- **McColl’s** – The S106 agreement was recently agreed and the planning application has now been approved. We’ll continue to liaise with the developer to try and minimise disruption.
- Often residents query “who is responsible for **verges and ditches**”? Your property deeds may show that your boundary is the middle of the road. However
 - Highways have authority over the highway and verges. Householders and landowners are responsible for ditches and hedges.
 - The Parish Council is often asked to tackle a problem ditch or flooding however we have no authority to take action on ditches or hedges without the householder’s permission unless there is an urgent safety requirement.



This helpful Highways diagram sets out the various roadside features and responsibilities. Further information is available on our website



If you are unable to access the Parish Council website for further information please contact the Parish Clerk