

Autumn  
2015

# Beneath the Vale

Published on behalf of Upper Marshwood Vale  
Parish Council

## Power to our people

**M**arshwood Councillors were amongst the concerned members of the public who travelled into Thorncombe to see a display of the plans for a new solar farm.

Most of us are familiar with solar farms from the many installations along the B3165 main road where it passes near to the National Grid switching centre just outside Hawkchurch. Up to eight solar farms have gathered there attracted by the proximity of the National Grid switching centre nearby.

The proposed, Sadborow Solar PV Farm, is sited at Gashay Farm on 17 hectares (42 acres) and whose postal address is Marshalsea, would provide 5 Mw of power, enough clean and renewable electricity for over 1,250 homes.

George Eyre, who owns Sadborow Estates, is in partnership with British Solar Renewables which itself was set up in 2010 by a Somerset farmer, Angus Macdonald, to support a better balance between power generation and the core business of farming. To date BSR Ltd has in built 340 Mw of power generation in 29 different projects varying in size from the present 5 Mw up to 50Mw.

Planning consent is sought for a period of 25 years,



A similar solar farm from BSR  
at Hawkchurch

the probable lifetime of such solar farms, when it would be returned to agriculture. BSR Ltd are hoping for swift planning consent to maximise their opportunity to start their build.

Some sites are also home to flocks of sheep that safely and happily coexist within the many panels over their heads. Sheep seem to be the precise height to allow them to meander around the panel support frames and graze the grass so are ideally suited for keeping the grass short and the site tidy.

Each photovoltaic panel converts light falling on it to electricity. An actuator rocks each panel to follow the sun so to optimise the power produced. From each panel the electricity is conducted to an inverter that changes the power to alternating current, ready to be added to the National Grid.

As solar power becomes more popular, the government is cutting back on their feed-in tariffs for home generation and commercial solar

### ***Do we want another solar farm?***

Some locals believe that farms are for providing food not power. However the area concerned is well known for its poor soil that limits what can actually be grown. Considering the marshy ground, one local farmer points out that there is no incentive for farmers to start to grow food or raise cattle in the present financial environment. Thus the sole economic benefit is the light falling onto their fields.

Comments for and against were heard from some visitors to the meeting. Topography of the land means the village is completely out of sight of this project; indeed Paynes Downs almost totally obscures the site from Thorncombe's villagers.

Also most of that village lies outside the 2km range ring centred on the site. (see map on p4)

The main village of Marshwood lies **within** the 1km ring and the site would be visible from the new affordable homes at Bramblehay as well as those houses on the west side of our main road.

However the site has been carefully chosen, is to be largely shielded by trees and would normally be visible only from the upper stories of these homes. One councillor estimates that the site would be visible from about 42 Marshwood homes, albeit without providing much of a visual nuisance due to considerate planting or use of existing hedges.

### ***Does this matter?***

Yes it does, since as part of the deal the company behind the project have already accepted that a community benefit contribution would support their application. This payment is to compensate for the use of the site as a solar farm and the slight loss of visual amenity.

Enquiries of the Dorset County Council environmental team indicate figures that are somewhat surprising: either an annual payment of £5,000 for the next 25 years or a single payment of £50,000 for a solar farm of this power level!

This unexpected compensation payable to Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council could provide the much-needed funds for a number of projects including the reinstatement of the



**At the public meeting  
in Thorncombe**

ever popular, highly successful and much admired Lengthsman Scheme operated by Stephen Lee and Councillor Bob Wyatt.

BUT the initial meeting took place at Thorncombe Village Hall, and the site lies within the bounds of that parish even though Marshwood village is more than twice as near and any views across to Thorncombe are screened by the height of Paynes Downs.

The only homes in Thorncombe within direct line of a sight of Gashay are part of the Sadborow Estate, compared with the many Marshwood homes, that will have clear sight of the installation.

Organisers originally chose Thorncombe village hall as the farm lies within that parish without considering the lay of the land, now it appears that further meetings are to take place, one at the Bottle Inn, clearly the nearest public-access hall to the Sadborow Farm Site on November 19th.

(See advert on page 11)

Councillors for Thorncombe Parish Councillors will have the chance to debate this as we go to the printers.

Many parishes including Thorncombe are supported by trust funds but Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council has earned the status of Quality Council yet has no such access to such funds.

Should this proposal come to pass, these funds will be most welcome. Your Parish Council was forced to cut back its popular and effective lengthsman scheme in order to remain within a reduced budget from Dorset County Council and now pays entirely for that project.

Therefore as both Thorncombe and Marshwood have the same District Councillor it would seem fair that any financial benefits for the communities are administered at district level and those that are more directly affected (including those houses past the Bottle Inn towards Lamberts Castle) be compensated for the loss of visual amenity and any monies received should be apportioned accordingly.

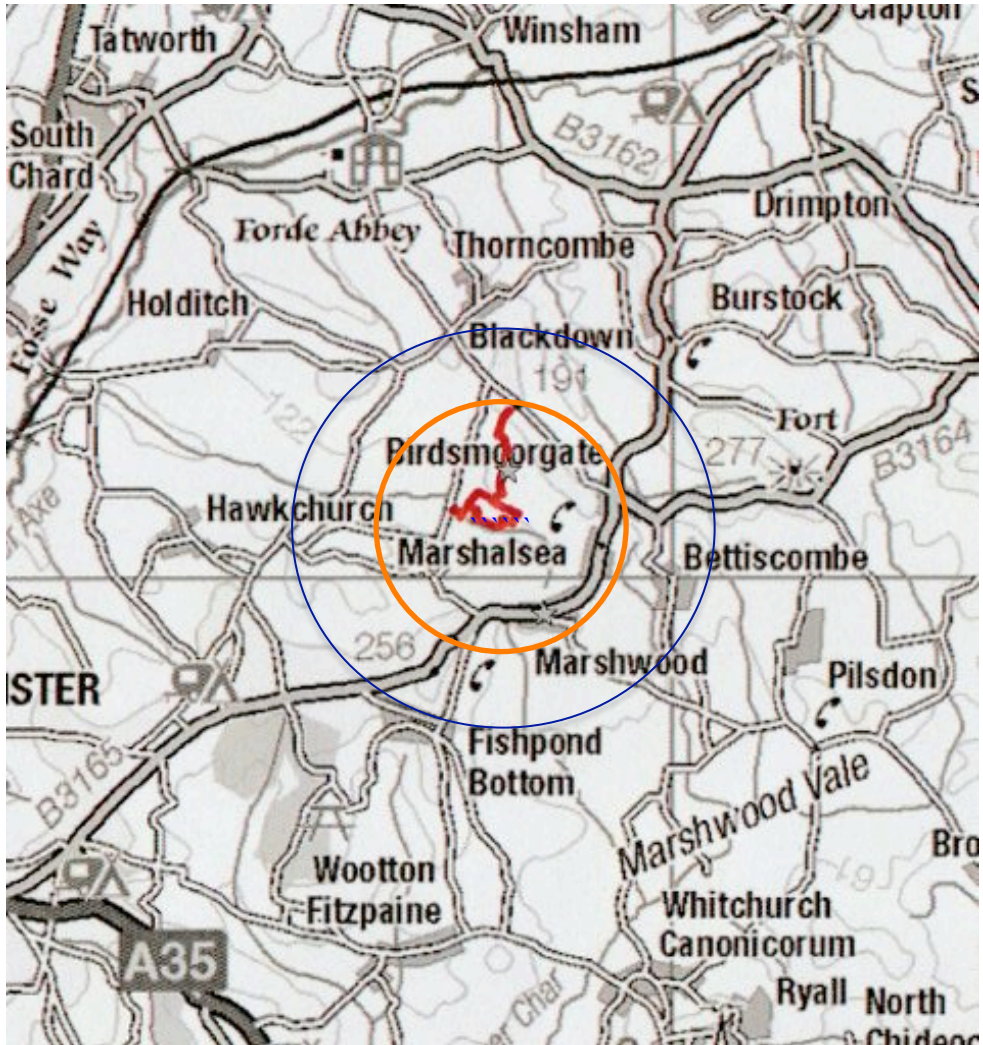


What solar is all about:  
Hawkchurch National Grid injection point



# Sadborrow Solar Farm

1 km radius  
2 km radius



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## Postie Badgered

**A** Joke by a local farmer somewhat misfired when a recently road-killed young badger was placed on the post box outside John Walther's Marshwood Store.

Some found the actions amusing with jokes such as 'Postman Pat and his black and white badger', or 'how much does a badger cost to post' gaining circulation.

Clearly overnight the unfortunate cub had been run over by a car and it had remained in the road, a not uncommon event as the next generation of young badgers start to leave home before becoming aware



of the extreme danger that roads pose for them.

Our farmer had picked up the body and placed it on top of the post box as though ready to be posted, perhaps not realising that the sight of the dead animal might cause upset to some members of our community especially for the younger ones.

But word sped round Marshwood even reaching the BTV team who photographed the sad body in situ before checking out with John to find out what had happened.

By the time BTV emerged from the shop, the badger had been removed, fortunately before the postman arrived to collect his legitimate mail.

However, as the animal had not had a stamp affixed it could not have been deemed as male.



## **Marshwood Community Land Trust 29/10/2015**

*Marshwood Community Land Trust's David Hitchcock reports:*

I have just returned from a site meeting at Bramblehay with Hastoe, the builders Pemberton Homes, and the Surveyor, Frazer Garner, who acts for Hastoe and has been keeping an eye on the site since the outset.

With so many Affordable Housing Schemes taking place around the country and all of them having to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 the story is one of woe. Many building firms have gone out of business and thousands of sub contractors bankrupt or in dire straights, most of them having quoted on costs of 2 to 3 years ago in order to get the work ~ cash flow being the problem. Our Brookvale Homes are just one of many who have gone as a result. Pemberton Homes tell me that they have picked up a number of contracts in the South West from such firms.

At Bramblehay it has in fact been the lack of an electric supply that has given Hastoe an extension of time beyond the 31<sup>st</sup> March in order to still be able to pick up the agreed Government Grant. Being "Affordable" always seems to bring a cost to someone and with



**Bramblehay gets electricity**

the Government calling for many thousands more homes to be built one has to ask, at what cost ?

Today I learnt that although the mains cable is in together with the transformer, the electric is not yet finally connected to each house. The Electricians have moved back in to finish off and E-ON will put the meters in on 5<sup>th</sup> November and each house will have electric by the 6<sup>th</sup> Nov. I will believe it when I can switch a light on.

What a long haul this whole saga has been.

To finish, all the houses will then be inspected and faults put right with the official "hand over" programmed for 9<sup>th</sup> December but it is hoped that the work will be completed a week earlier.

Hastoe are arranging a date towards the end of November for the new tenants to view their new homes and the hope is that some of them will still have a chance of being in by Christmas. The cabins will be taken away in the next day or so and then the last of the chain link fence will be erected. The remaining topsoil will be replaced where required and the remainder of the turf laid. Finally, when the site is clear, the top coat of tarmac will go down and the Bramblehay name signs will go up.

Having just come home from a great holiday, one of my fellow Directors suggested that when I heard all that had been going on whilst I was away that I would wish I had not come back.

The Bottle Lane issue has come to the forefront again with continuing disagreement over the right of way that exists along the lane. The CLT have been asked to help in any way they can. I hear that the new owners of OS No 8381 (1.05 acres) wish to claim the lane and have applied for outline planning permission to build two 3 / 4 bed houses with garages using Bottle Lane for access.

I am not at all sure that muddy tractors and trailers and private drives go very well together!!

The fact that a right of way exists for tractors, cattle and people on foot should not be in dispute as this has been the case for many, many years and I for one together with my children have enjoyed walking the dog down Bottle Lane.

Why is it that new people to an area feel differently?

One of the adjoining landowners has applied to Dorset County Council Highways, who are responsible for rights of way, asking for the Lane to be added to the Definitive Map and I on behalf of the CLT have written a letter supporting this move. Several of the locals have written to the DCC in support saying that they have used the lane over the years and that the new owners of the small piece of land have no right to put up a gate and notice telling us all to keep out. If anyone else wishes to write to DCC then please do so, I have copies of the form required.

Let us hope that the new tenants will enjoy living in our houses and will in turn make a contribution to local activities.

David Hitchcock, CLT Chairman.

**Suggestions needed by  
The Community Land Trust  
on how to spend the money  
come to a public meeting at Blackdown Hall  
on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm  
short AGM followed by open discussion  
Tea and coffee will be available**



## **Superfast Broadband - nearly there**

*As some may be aware BT engineers have been looking closely at SFBD detailed plans such as how it will get to Marshwood. Charles Somers who has led our campaign for decent Broadband comments.*

## **S**uperfast Broadband will arrive soon with activation early in the New Year.

Over the months leading up to Christmas you will be seeing BT Openreach installing new overhead fibre optic cables and green cabinets throughout our area. You can see on the Dorset County Council broadband map -

[www.dorsetforyou.com/broadband/map](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/broadband/map)

all of our local areas, now shown in orange, are due to get their broadband upgrade by early-2016.

Now type in your postcode and check your address from the list that appears.



Zoom in to get a clear image of the area and right click to get an options box displayed, right click (PCs) on 'search at this exact point' or spool

down and a highlighted text box should appear. *(I use an Apple but the procedure is similar - Editor)*

The text message should say 'Marshwood Vale Communities and Superfast Dorset have secured an extra £1m - - -', this means you will get Fibre to the Premises ie, the top of the range access up to 8 times as fast as common or garden superfast broadband as described in the last issue of Beneath the Vale! Most in Marshwood should get this welcome message.

Depending on your postcode, some of you may get the message 'Superfast Dorset is presently working to provide fibre broadband in this area - - -', then you should be getting Fibre to the Cabinet and the future speed will depend on your distance from the cabinet. Par for superfast broadband, and you will get improvements in speed and reliability, but not as good as FTTP.



BT Openreach will be working early in the New Year to activate this new network and will inform all Internet Service Providers (ISPs) who provide your internet service when each postcode area is ready. The quickest way to be informed about when your line is able to be upgraded is to sign up to the Dorset County Council e-mail service (see <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/broadband/registration>) and they will send you an e-mail as soon as the superfast service in your area has been activated.





Once you know the activation date you can contact your ISP to request detail on the cost and likely speed you can expect if you do decide to upgrade; many ISPs already publish superfast tariffs on their web-sites (e.g. BT's 'Infinity' service. Not all ISPs however may be willing initially to offer this new superfast service, although over the long term it is likely that they all will. So it may be necessary to change your ISP if you really need superfast.



For more detail on how-to-get-it see <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/broadband/how-to-get-it>.

You could look up [http://www.ispreview.co.uk/isp\\_list/ISP\\_List\\_Superfast\\_Broadband.php](http://www.ispreview.co.uk/isp_list/ISP_List_Superfast_Broadband.php) where a full list of ISPs can be found along with their performance rates, contract details and charges, but this relates to ordinary superfast broadband, not the superior quality fibre broadband most of us expect.

Talktalk, BT, PlusNet, Sky, Virgin and EE are all competing for your new business. Although Talktalk claim the cheapest price, they have an 18-month contract period not the more usual 12 months, but Talktalk do offer free phone



benefits realised by superfast broadband including TV services such as the new internet broadcasters such as Netflix, Amazon Prime and others, calls between their users, others offer free weekend calls.



Competition never hurts the customer so it will be worth while looking up those listed on the internet before phoning up to get the best deal. However most of us will stay with our present ISP. You have to make the change to get superfast broadband; if you do not you will be left with your present service with all its existing problems. The costs of going for FTTP, our version of superfast broadband, will usually be higher than ordinary superfast broadband, but the performance benefits will be much higher - just as described by BTV's article on the Cornish experience.

A new router is always part of the broadband package, but fibre requires a different device to bring broadband into your home.

By the next issue of the BTV we hope to be able to publish some examples of people who have switched and hopefully are happy with a much-improved service.

*We have tried to give you the most accurate picture we can of what is about to happen but BT may change the network configuration as they go along. So you will only know the actual broadband speed available to you from your ISP once the new network is fully installed and tested.*



## **Y**our Neighbourhood Plan can now get a move on.

With the elapse of the frustrating but mandatory period to establish the areas covered by the Neighbourhood Plans of Hawkchurch and Marshwood, project chairman, Mike Robinson called a meeting to reinvigorate the process of changing our villages.

The team behind the Plan came with a list of subjects we could consider, but it was decided to leave it to the public to tell us changes your village would like to see. So only a few headings will be initially displayed as guidance when we ask the whole village. But this all depends on involving villagers in the Plans, a process which will be our next major objective.

Teams from both villages will produce their own Plan; but with similar although not identical needs, co-operation will replace duplication of effort, with all working to a common steering committee.

What is needed now is for those living in both parishes to step forward and contact Mike Robinson so that their input can be best used for the Plan.

His address is shown below and he will welcome your ideas.

Those who have already indicated their interest need not reapply - we already want you!

We especially need younger people to join in; after all it is their future we are planning.

Giving your time is often seen as a limiting factor. So why not get involved with your particular interests - you may find that there are others with the same ideas.

The first meeting of our new teams will be December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Next we will involve the public in a series of open meetings designed to tell us what you really want. We need to produce coherent plans for official and village approval via a referendum. Plans passing these will then become law. However some areas for our consideration will be declared off the agenda to save wasting time debating things over which we have no statutory or financial access such as roads and transport.

So what can we actually achieve?

Here is a list of possibles:

Affordable Housing - ex  
Hawkchurch Parish Plan +  
input from Marshwood CLT  
Environment inc  
Business development  
Elderly support  
Green and child space

Sewage system for village  
Available land  
Village shops  
Communications  
School support  
Farming Diversification

If none of these ideas are important to you, at least let us know what **you** want for **your** Village.

On the other hand some of your ideas might be just what the future of your village needs.

Either way we need you to tell us.



## **PROPOSED SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC PARK**

**Sadborow, Gashay Lane**

### **PUBLIC EXHIBITION**

Tuesday 17th of November  
Thorncombe Village Hall 4pm-8pm

&  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> of November  
The Bottle Inn, Marshwood 4pm-7.30pm

Sadborow Estate Ltd in partnership with British Solar Renewables are holding two public exhibitions for the local community to find out more information about a planning application to develop a Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Farm on Sadborow Estate, Gashay Lane.

## Apple appeal

*Here are a couple of recipes to help use up the wonderful glut of apples we have this year.*



## Pigeon Pate with Cider

175g butter  
2 shallots, peeled and finely chopped  
125g apple, peeled and chopped  
8 pigeon breasts, skinned and cut into small dice  
1 teaspoon of apple jelly  
1 teaspoon of mild Dijon mustard  
1 pinch of dried thyme and rosemary  
Salt and ground black pepper  
150ml cider  
1 tablespoon of cream  
1 tablespoon of fromage frais  
Melted butter to cover  
Blanched apple slices to decorate

Melt the butter until foaming and cook the shallot and apple, then tip in the diced pigeon and saute until cooked but still pink inside.

Remove from the pan with a slotted spoon and transfer to the food processor and whizz until finely ground.

Add the jelly, mustard, herbs and seasoning to the pan then pour in the cider and allow to bubble for a few seconds, finally stir in the cream and fromage frais.

Switch on the food processor and tip the liquid in through the top and blend until really smooth.

Taste and adjust seasoning then spoon into a 600ml terrine. Allow to cool and then cover with the melted butter. Decorate with slices of apple blanched in boiling water for a few seconds.



## Normandie Pheasant

Brace of pheasant  
4 tablespoons butter  
2 cooking apples  
1 wineglass Calvados  
500ml cream  
Juice of ½ lemon  
Salt and pepper



*Apples and Calvados can be substituted with sliced mushrooms and brandy.*

Saute pheasant in half the butter.

Remove to oven dish and saute peeled and sliced apples in rest of butter. Add apples to dish with Calvados and cook for 1 hour in 190 degree oven, basting regularly.

Add cream, lemon juice and seasoning and return covered to oven until heated through.

Carve or halve pheasant as required and serve with the sauce. Alternatively, the pheasant can be deboned, added to the sauce and reheated.

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**FREE:**

**PRETTY COTTAGE PIANO**

For further  
information, please call  
Joy McClellan on  
01308 867410 or e-mail  
to [joy.mcclellan@sky.com](mailto:joy.mcclellan@sky.com)



## Editorial - unwanted Overheads

**G**ood news over unloved pylons emerged a few weeks ago:

**some are to go!** Yes that old-time promise to get rid of the power pylons seems to have been resurrected. But before we get too excited where will these changes be?



National Grid is to spend more than £10 billion to connect new power stations and wind farm centres to the grid. A heavy duty line from Hinkley Point in Somerset will vanish as it goes through the Mendip Hills as an underground link replaces overhead cables as one would have hoped.

More relevantly what about those 60+ year old and ugly pylons in areas of outstanding natural beauty?

Well there is plenty of competition for that honour and recently an even shorter list was published - and Surprise! Surprise! it includes Snowdonia, the Peak District, the New Forest and ...(cue drum roll)... Dorset!

But not our own vale vandals, these now must remain to blight our lives; but 18 pylons near Winterbourne Abbas. Glad some are to go but how and why has this 5-mile stretch been preferred over Marshwood Vale?

After all we have experience of underground cables being quietly and efficiently connected to our many solar farms to conduct the green electricity to the switching centre largely shrouded by trees just outside Hawkchurch. A centre of solar power such as this provides a perfect scenario for clearing the clutter and the 18 odd pylons to go would completely eliminate pylons from our beloved Vale.

Removal is not easy, nor cheap: National Grid say "Taking down high voltage pylons and replacing them with underground cables is a huge engineering challenge.

The underground cables must be spread out to avoid them

overheating: this can typically mean the cables taking up a width of 25 metres.

"During construction, we need to use a width of 50m for the spoil from the trenches and for a temporary road to bring the materials in. The underground cables must be heavily insulated and protected, making them bulky and expensive.

"At either end of the underground cable, we must build 'sealing end compounds' – an acre-sized site with a very heavy duty pylon and the equipment that allows the cable to leave the ground and go up onto the overhead line. And finally, we must remove the 50m pylons and overhead cables when the new underground cable is live."

So it is good that at last a better way has been introduced, and we should not decry the Winterbourne Abbas situation. But the high ground there is also home to a number of radio masts. These are not to go, so the net benefit to the eye will not be as great as the complete removal from our Vale.

How and why has the choice been made in favour of Winterbourne?

It would be facile and far too simple to

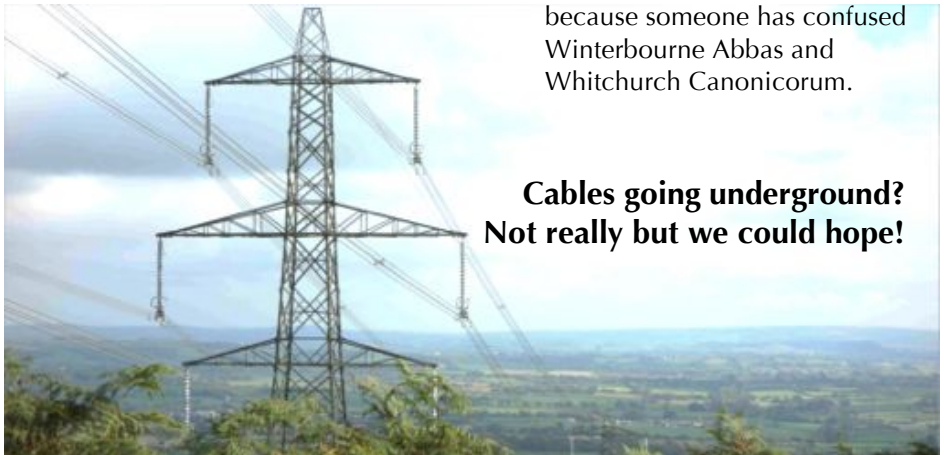
suggest that Winterborne is far nearer to that centre of power and home to our area of outstanding natural beauty, Dorchester. That little old Marshwood Vale is of no real importance as it is so far away from any centre of importance.

Campaign to Protect Rural England's Nick Clark, said there had been thorough assessment and consultation:

"Given these welcome efforts to mitigate the impact of existing lines, National Grid needs to make sure it is doing all it can to mitigate the impact of new ones."

But it looks like there is to be plenty of work with the present solar farms all using underground cabling feeds hereabouts, why not be consistent and get rid of the rest?

Marshwood may have been one of the last areas to be electrified, perhaps because it represented a true rural idyll. What has changed now, or perhaps it is simply because someone has confused Winterbourne Abbas and Whitchurch Canonorum.



**Cables going underground?  
Not really but we could hope!**

## Silly page

I'm 42 around the chest, 52 around the waist, 92 around the golf course and a nuisance around the house. Groucho Marx

I don't want any publicity – you get too many begging letters. If they're anything like the ones I send out I don't want to know! Tony Hancock

It's a sobering thought that when Mozart was my age he had been dead for two years. Tom Lehrer

His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork. Mae West

I'm so old I daren't even buy green bananas. Bruce Forsyth

I'm 59 and people call me middle-aged. How many 118-yr olds do you know? Barry Cryer

I was not a particularly small child. I was the one who always got picked to play Bethlehem in the school nativity.' Jo Brand

I had to go to the doctors last week. He told me to take all my clothes off. Then he said, "You'll have to diet." I said, 'What colour?' Ken Dodd

I can still enjoy sex at 75. I live at 76, so it's no distance. Bob Monkhouse

I thought I'd begin by reading a poem by Shakespeare, but then I thought, why should I? He never reads any of mine. Spike Milligan

The wife's mother said: 'When you're dead, I'll dance on your grave.' I said: 'Good. I'm being buried at sea.' Les Dawson

I was in love with a beautiful blonde once, dear. She drove me to drink. That's the one thing I'm so indebted to her for. WC Fields

Room service? Send up a larger room. Groucho Marx

Just because nobody complains doesn't mean all parachutes are perfect. Benny Hill

A class system is something you use to discriminate against someone who looks like you. Reginald D Hunter

How come Miss Universe is only won by people from Earth? Ross Noble

You know, I go to the theatre to be entertained... I don't want to see plays about rape and drug addiction... I can get all that at home. Peter Cook



## Parish Council Meeting September 16<sup>th</sup>

**A**fter a low key, somewhat nondescript summer our autumn also started with a low-key parish council.

All our farmers were hard at work so the list of apologies left just 6 councillors, enough to make up a quorum. And only 1 of the 4 senior councillors made it with Jacqui Sewell unwell and Rebecca Knox attending a school meeting, it was left to Daryl Turner one of our county councillors to keep us informed. However it has been a holiday time of year so he too did not have a lot to say, dealing with Council and Dorset Waste Partnership overspends.

With two members of the public present, both concerned with the Golden Cap View, this item promoted itself up the agenda. Here the parish council's view had been ignored and the requested lifting of the agricultural tie had been rejected undemocratically as this was a delegated decision taken by planning officials. It is very likely that, had this gone before the development committee, it would have been granted.

As your editor, I sought to complain that the planners had misinformed themselves over the value which they set as £125,000. They have omitted to consider a bungalow - Old Bidlake Farm, identical to Golden Cap View which sold for what is believed to be in excess of £300,000, albeit with a 6 acre smallholding.

This fatal inaccuracy and a number of other factual flaws and logical errors by Case Officer Sophie Maudsley 'proved' that the owners made no realistic attempt to sell the property. Being a delegated decision meant that no representative or member of the public could influence 'their' planning decision.

Unfortunately although the decision had been inflicted on the owners who have appealed against the decision, the parish council had not been formally told of their appeal by WDDC officers so we were not able to comment on the decision.

Yet!

An application to amend the Definitive map which lists rights of way has been made and evidence is needed of continued use of Bottle Lane by the public to prevent the new owners of the field behind the garden of the Bottle Inn getting rights of way over the lane, or claiming the lane as their own.

Our clerk, John Vanderwolfe, (who asks not to be confused with a similarly surnamed individual) is asking Marshwood individuals who have used the lane in the past to come forward and to tell the authorities of their use. Our Community Land Trust has taken an interest, as has Steve Bowditch and Peter Dear as this affects our whole

community. Failing that, why not stop your editor in the street and tell him.

Unfortunately an individual who was prepared to fill the vacancy for councillor at Bettiscombe had suffered a throat problem and was not able to be present. Your council was sympathetic and decided to ask the gentleman concerned to attend the next full council meeting.

With the areas set for our Neighbourhood Plan agreed a date has been set for meetings to get this plan under way. After a terse previous rejection - "It's all just a Tory plot" from a previous Corbyn-like Char chairman, it seems that Char Valley is once again interested in co-operation.

Councillors reported that: access to our affordable homes should be by end October - subject to Western Electricity connecting long overdue power to the site. Broadband: our spies report the presence of engineers planning where and when the fibre cables will be run. Now we await actual connections.

See also Charles Somers' guide to getting great broadband.

**Date of next meeting**  
**- 7.30 on 19<sup>th</sup> November at**  
**Bettiscombe Village Hall**

## **Stephen Lee**

### **Landscape Gardening**

1, Vale View, Salwayash, Bridport, DT6 5JB

Hi,

My team and I do most kinds of gardening from clearing overgrown acres to fixing fences, planning patios and paddocks to looking after your lawns and maintaining your landscape.

Oh yes! We are also the parish lengthsman so we fend off floods by clearing ditches, placing storage bins and looking after public places for your parish council.

So if you have a garden problem, why not give us a call.

**Stephen Lee**

**07971 116660**

**stephenlee93@hotmail.co.uk**

## **A last-minute change of venue and a delay sought by the clerk**

allowed your Parish Council a proper debate on a late second application from owners of the Shave Cross Inn to change the use of the pub and restaurant, to residential.

The change of venue was brought about because planning meetings are usually held in the skittle alley at Shave Cross Inn, the subject of this particular meeting; the delay was caused by the choice of dates for submitting the application, which coincided with the previous meeting.

So the meeting took place at Bettiscombe Village Hall, before a small but interested group of members of the public. Councillor Warburton, whose wife had applied a second time, immediately dashed back to Shave Cross to get the letter from his wife that put their point of view, so we started proceedings with a member of the public who opposed the application pointing out that the pub had been up for sale without success since the last application.

He added that the pub was listed as grade 2, was in an area of outstanding natural beauty and has been in existence for 700 years with great success under the last two owners. Several retrospective planning applications finally allowed for the already built increase of scale and size of the hotel, the pub and restaurant, but included a 106 agreement that tied the hotel to the pub and restaurant. Yet the sales document makes no mention of this vital agreement, strengthening the suspicion that there has been no real intention to actually sell Shave Cross Inn.



Shave Cross Inn awaits its fate

Indeed he quotes one valid buyer for both pub and hotel with whom the vendors refused to deal.

Another well reputed member of the public then spoke more generally against the application and made a number of key points from the vendors published claims such as the distances and times to other local pubs. These required such speed that one councillor hoped he would not be driving in the Vale if the quoted journey times of 10 minutes proved correct. As an example Hunters Lodge to Shaves Cross was set at the same 10 minutes.

Roy arrived with the letter from his wife which was then carefully read out to the meeting by Matthew Bowditch our chairman. This set the context of many efforts to market the pub and restaurant, which includes advertising in Beneath the Vale.

Councillors were not convinced by the Warburtons' scenario, and put their own perspective by pointing out

the intermittent opening of the pub and restaurant mitigated against the use of the pub by community and public at large.

It became noticeable that every councillor made comments on the use of the pub as did the members of the public, all in support of the present position, so it was no surprise that your council renewed their opposition to the move. Moreover we were asked to report the meeting to Oliver Letwin our MP so he can add his support to the status quo.

All this was recorded by David Boll of the Bridport News; we await with interest the report. Perhaps the only question that was left unanswered was why Roy Warburton who is a councillor should expect us to change our minds on something as dear to our hearts as Shave Cross.

It has been rumoured that the change of management at West Dorset District

Council planning office has allowed more flexibility this time around and the parish council can only advise. It is up to officers and district councillors to make the decision.

With a number of other planning issues in the pipeline some councillors were keen to debate these but the necessary procedures had not yet been completed so the agricultural tie status of Golden Cap View with District Council officials' known errors of fact in the matter, and the upcoming SADBOROW Solar Farm could not be mentioned.

As the council had amply justified its Quality Status with all present - chairman, councillors, clerk and members of the public - contributing to an effective and relevant debate; this was seen as a pity, but that's bureaucracy for you.





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