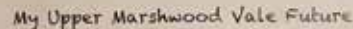


Winter 2016: Issue 22





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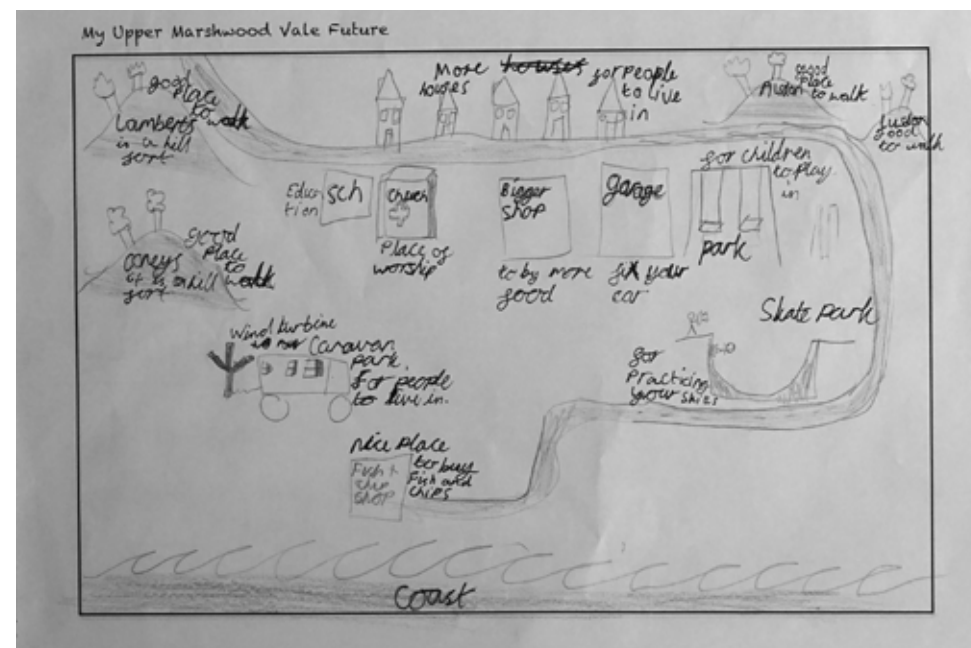
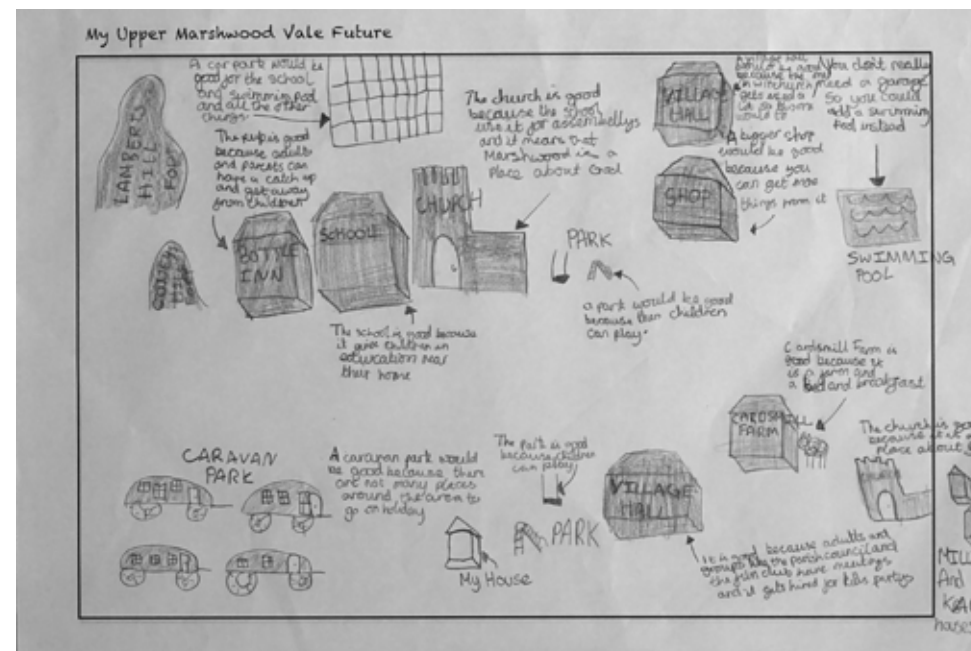
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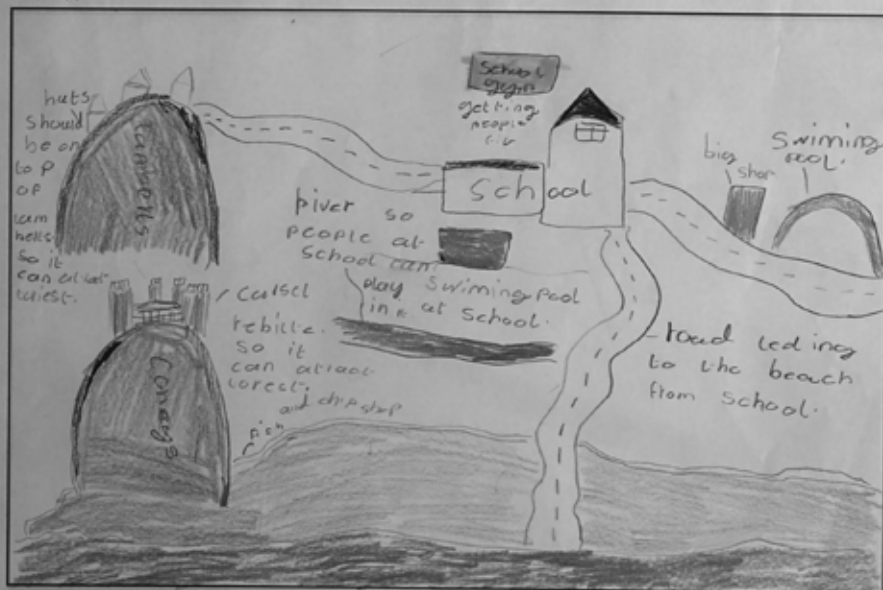
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My Upper Marshwood Vale Future



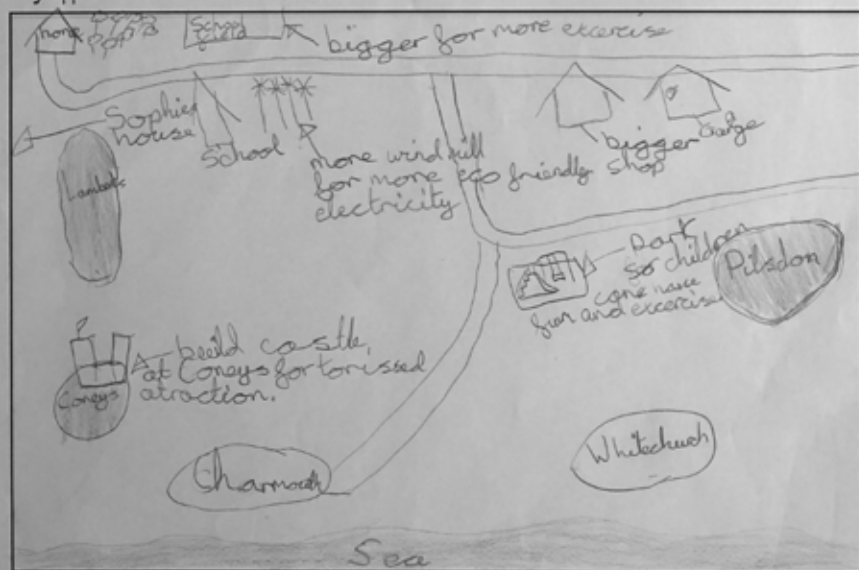
'The children enjoyed thinking about the future and the map work was stunning,' said Luke Owen, head teacher at Marshwood School. 'Projects like this bring a real context to the children's learning.'

committee. 'It's great to have young people involved in the NP and really thinking about what their village needs,' said Charles. All the children's maps have been uploaded to the new NP website and can be viewed at <http://uppermarshwoodvale.org/home/neighbourhood-plan/marshwood-primary-school>

The maps were presented to Charles Somers, chairman of the NP steering



My Upper Marshwood Vale Future



Rural bus service updates

Routes 688 and 14 Thorncombe/ Marshwood to Chard/Axminster, every Thursday

Once again, passenger numbers on these routes continue to be good to very good. Most weeks we are normally seeing between 75% and 90% loading, (and on occasion even 100%).

There has, however been the odd week where passenger numbers have been at 50%-60%, but then they recover back to normal levels the following week.

PlusBus Marshwood/Thorncombe/ Catherston Leweston to Bridport, every Wednesday

Passenger numbers continue to range between 65% and 90% loading each week, since this service was re-routed. We have, in addition to our working group in our area, another 'champion' who lives in Salwayash, Mrs June Williams. June has been very active in helping to save and promote our rural buses, in particular this service to Bridport.

Fundraising activities

In order to fund the revenue shortfall of £2,060.00, between fares and running costs of these buses, there have been on-going fund raising events and initiatives, in both Thorncombe and now the Tatworth area. As reported previously, the Father's Day Breakfast Club, in Thorncombe in June, raised a total of £340.00. This

together with other private donations, plus the money raised from the collection jar at Perry Street Social Club, (South Chard), was finally rounded out to £500.00.

A collection jar was in place at Thorncombe Village Shop, for all of October and the early part of November and on 12 November, a craft fair, coffee morning and raffle was held at Thorncombe Village Hall.

This event, as with the Breakfast Club, was very successful. As previously, with some private donations, plus the funds from the collection jar at Thorncombe Village Shop, a total of £488.30 was raised.

Our grand total at the moment is therefore £988.30. These funds are held by Thorncombe Parish Council and separately identified as 'earmarked funds', for the rural buses. Further collection jars are now in place at Thorncombe Sports and Social Club, plus Tatworth Memorial Hall.

Please note we have another Breakfast Club, in Thorncombe, to be held on Sunday 19 March, 2017. All are very welcome to this event.

Application for a Community Transport Grant from Dorset County Council

This was completed and sent off in November asking for matched funding of £1,060.00, for our total, as above, (which should be at £1,060.00 by the end of 2016, once the latest collection



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jars are processed). We are awaiting the final decision on this application.

Concessionary bus pass consultation

Concessionary Bus Pass Scheme: Dorset County Council is running a consultation until 13 January with proposals to make changes that will affect concessionary passes. Information is available in libraries and online at: www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/travel-dorset/concessionary-passes-consultation

Future fundraising activities

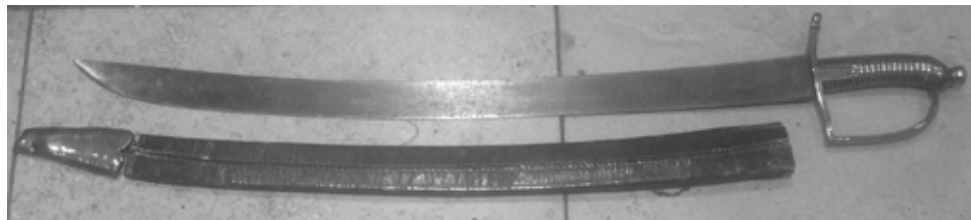
Throughout this fundraising process, it has been most gratifying to see first-hand how generous and supportive the parishioners, bus users and local businesses are in our

area. Initially this was in Thorncombe and Chard. Now there is a widening base of support in other communities, such as Tatworth, Perry Street, and it is now beginning in Salwayash. The hope is that in the future, other communities, such as Marshwood and Hawkchurch could become involved in fundraising.

We feel we have made reasonable start, but will need to keep going and it would be comforting to feel that we have the possibility of help from other locations in our area, which are served by our rural buses.

Cllr David Marsh, (on behalf of the working group of Tatworth/Forton and Thorncombe Parish Councillors and Bus Supporters)

Curiosities of the Vale: The Constable's Sword



This sword is owned by the Bowditch family of Stoke Abbott. It is approximately 170 years old.

In the early 19th century once the Napoleonic wars were over there was a deep agricultural depression. Dorset was already a poor county and mostly agricultural so it suffered greatly. There were riots and it was this discontent that led eventually to the deportation of the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

Because of the riots and fear of further disorder, the government issued senior churchwardens with a sword. They were called Constables

and would have been called upon to assemble with their weapons if a riot occurred.

The churchwarden who has handed this sword down the generations was Robert Barrett, Cllr Matthew Bowditch's great-grandfather's uncle. All male Bowditch children are christened with Barrett as their additional Christian name. You pass Robert Barrett's headstone on the righthand side of the path up to the church door in Stoke Abbott.

Do you have an unusual object that is part of local history? Let us know so we can include it in future editions. Email the Editor.

Parish Council meeting dates

Next parish council meetings are 19 January, 16 March and 18 May (annual council meeting).

The annual parish meeting is on 20 April 2017.

All meetings at 7.30pm in Bettiscombe Village Hall. See the website at www.uppermarshwoodcouncil.org for minutes.

Deadline for the Spring issue of Beneath the Vale is the end of March for publication in April.

Buy your heating oil at a discount

Are you interested in buying your heating oil at a discount price? Did you know that Minster Fuels (Watsons) run community buying schemes.

Households across a parish get together and bulk buy their heating oil. The exact price varies, but Minster say it is 'at least 5p a litre' different from the standard price.

To qualify, we would need a minimum of 20 households to commit to the scheme for at least a year. Minster will then deliver to all the households in the scheme who need it on a top-up basis. This does mean that you might sometimes get an oil delivery a bit sooner than you would have ordered it yourself. However, it also greatly reduces the chance of running out. From experience, Minster are good at making sure that everyone is kept fuelled in advance for the peak time of Christmas and the New Year. Having your tank well supplied means that you won't run out in sudden cold snaps.

In a community buying scheme, everyone pays separately for the oil they have used. You can set up a monthly direct debit to spread the cost evenly through the year if you want and there is no extra fee for doing this. Or you can pay in full on each delivery. There are no up-front costs and you will save money. Interested? I am gathering a list of people who would like to know more. Please phone me on 01297 489 253 or email sarajhudston@gmail.com.

Sara Hudston

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Volunteers wanted to help look after Little Giant Wood

Teasel the tawny owl was one of the stars at an open day in Little Giant Wood in Stoke Abbott. Xtrme Falconry brought along four of their owls as part of an event organised with Dorset Wildlife Trust and the Dorset AONB. Mulled cider, delicious apple cake and marshmallows toasted on a woodfire more than made up for the heavy rain showers. The aim was to inspire volunteers to help look after the wood.

Little Giant Wood is a community woodland looked after by the Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council. It was planted by volunteers 16 years ago and was one of the Millennium Woods created by the Woodland Trust. It is now maturing and needs a bit of TLC. We are very grateful to Dorset Wildlife Trust and Dorset AONB for their support.

The next volunteer days are Thursday 19 January and Saturday 4 February.

Nick Gray, West Dorset conservation officer at DWT, says: 'Come and help us lay the hedge along Long Barrow Lane – full instruction given for beginners!

'Laying by hand in the traditional way - a very satisfying skill - will rejuvenate the hedge in its winter dormancy for insects, birds and mammals alike, let sunlight onto the woodland floor for flourishing flora, and open up the footpath along Long Barrow Lane.'

For more details, please contact Nick Gray at the trust on 07824 438974.

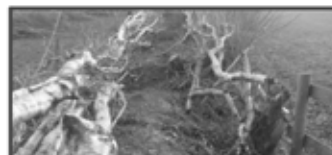


Little Giant Wood Stoke Abbott Thursday 19th January 2017 & Saturday 4th February, 10 – 4

Come and get stuck into hedge-laying and woodland management in Little Giant Wood community woodland
(Full instruction given)

Bonfire with hot drinks and baked potatoes!

INFORMATION AND BOOKING: Nick Gray:
01300 321329 / 07824 438974 [ngray@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk]



Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council: September and November

15 September

A brief meeting where the main topic was funding for repair of fingerpost signs. David Hitchcock, chairman of the Marshwood Community Land Trust, outlined the costs and approach. As this meeting was held before the CLT AGM, Mr Hitchcock said he would come back to the council and seek members' support if the CLT board agreed to spend some of its funds on fingerposts.

Councillors also discussed the locked gate at Bottle Lane, Marshwood. The County Council Rights of Way officers have written to the landowners requesting that it be unlocked.

Under planning matters, councillors agreed to support a retrospective application by The Dorset Hideaway at Bridge Farm, Cardsmill Lane. The application was for change of use of agricultural dairy farm land for use as a camp

and glampsite. Part of the land currently in use already has permission for the buildings being used on site in connection with the business and for the pitches and access roads to them. This application sought permission for the remainder of the development.

17 November

Another concise meeting which lasted a brisk three quarters of an hour. Councillors heard that the planning application for a children's farm and family visitor centre at Foxdown Farm in Marshwood has been approved.

Councillors supported an application to fell five poplars, a pine and a sycamore along the access road to Brimley Mill in Stoke Abbott.

Editor's note: The meeting on 15 December was held after our deadline. The report will be in our Spring edition.

Help to improve our footpaths and bridleways

We're lucky to live in an area with so many footpaths and bridleways. Our rights of way are a treasure enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. It's to our advantage to keep them in good shape.

With this in mind, the parish council has appointed Cllr Cassian Gray as rights of way liaison officer. Sara Hudston, editor of Beneath the Vale, will be helping Cassian. They aim to work with landowners and volunteers to improve our network of footpaths and bridleways. Some funding might be available from the county council to help pay for new stiles or gates and to

provide signs. Do you know of a path that is blocked, overgrown or needs better signs? Get in touch with Cassian or Sara. Cassian has particular responsibility for Stoke Abbott and Pilsdon parishes, while Sara is the contact for Bettiscombe and Marshwood.

Would you like to help? In the spring Cassian and Sara are hoping to organise some volunteer sessions to clear some of the more neglected paths. Please get in touch if you would like to get involved. Email or telephone Cassian on cassian@montmeru.com or 01308 862 448.

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Community Land Trust AGM agrees to support fingerpost sign repairs

At the annual general meeting of Marshwood Community Land Trust, David Hitchcock, the chairman, summed up their successful campaign to bring affordable homes to the community with a list of problems solved and faults found. Only one problem remained – what to do with the CLT’s ground rent.

No one wanted to gift our hard earned funds to the taxman so the money has to be spent during this financial year. Just for once it seemed that here was a source of money looking for a worthy application.

All the usual reports and re-elections were quickly dealt with, and the committee moved onto the meat course – what to do with the available funds.

Fingerpost signs to be costed

Top of the list was the dreadful state of the parishes’ signs especially the traditional fingerposts. It was widely felt that this project has languished for far too long and there were many comments on the kind of improvements that were being recommended.

It rapidly became clear that with other councils setting up sub-committees overall co-ordination would be required. The members decided that they would support the refurbishment of the worst three fingerpost signs, subject to the work being costed.

An alternative improvement for our community would be to create a kitchen and toilet facilities at Marshwood church. The nave of St Mary’s is already time-shared between the school, who occupy it on weekdays, and the congregation (Sundays).

PCC to be consulted

This is to the obvious benefit of both parties and the school has on occasion provided toilets and even meals. More permanent provision of such facilities would be very welcome but set against this proposal is the overall concern for the whole building as voiced by CLT membership. The committee decided to consult the parochial church council for further guidance.

Defibrillator considered

The provision of a further defibrillator for the Vale was another topic for discussion along with possible sites. A proposal emerged to repurpose old phone boxes, which takes advantage of the fact these are connected to mains power and uses this to maintain the charge of the defibrillator’s batteries.

Support for first aid training was also discussed, as was training in the use of the defibrillator. This AGM disappointed only in the numbers present, but the committee and CLT members who attended made up for this with the range and quality of ideas set out for consideration.

Ali Cameron

Recipe: Winter boozy fruits

Be careful with this one as it can pack quite a punch! Serves six.

Ingredients:

1lb of mixed, dried fruits, eg figs, pears, apricots, cherries
A cinnamon stick
Juice and zest of one large orange
2 pints of black tea (no milk)
1 tablespoon of orange liqueur
2 tablespoons of honey

Recipe by Joy McClellan

Method:

Pour tea into a medium size saucepan, add cinnamon, juice and zest of the orange and the liqueur. Bring to the boil stir in the honey and when dissolved add the dried fruit salad. Cover pan and simmer for about 10 minutes. Push fruit well down into the liquid.

When the dish is quite cold, the fruit will be tender. Serve cold or warm up again and serve with thick plain yogurt or cream.

Marshwood CLT news round-up

CLT directors re-elected

At the annual general meeting held in October, Charles Somers and David Hitchcock were re-elected as directors. The treasurer gave an up-to-date account of the trust’s finances and discussion followed as how best to spend the money the CLT has before the accounting year end.

Meeting with church

As CLT Chairman, I have organised a meeting at the Church with Rev. Stephen Skinner, the Headmaster and the Chairwoman of the School Governors, together with the Church Warden and the Salisbury Diocese Architect to see if the idea was feasible. The discussions were very positive and we await some idea of the cost involved from the architect.

David Hitchcock

Emergency first aid

Lacking in first aid know-how or confidence? Let the CLT help you brush up those skills and leave you confident that you could help in an accident or emergency situation.

We would like to train members of our community to be able to manage a situation at least until help arrives. Two course options are being considered:

1. A six-hour workplace course, fully accredited, and a certificate valid for three years on completion.
2. A basic knowledge of first aid including CPR.

Interested? If so please contact Ali Edwards. aliedwards34@icloud.com
01297 678382

Open meeting discusses future of St Mary's Church in Stoke Abbott

More than 30 people gave up their Saturday morning to attend an open meeting to discuss the future of St Mary's in Stoke Abbott.

Team Rector of the benefice, the Rev. David Baldwin, set the scenario clearly enough: almost all rural churches nationwide are suffering a loss of their congregations as the young desert their villages.

Treasurer David French co-chaired the meeting. He described how the 1958-installed heating system had finally given up the ghost last year, forcing the congregation to use the village hall. This event, which coincided with necessary roof repairs, led the parochial church council

to look to the whole community of Stoke Abbott to decide their church's future.

The audience took over the meeting with their ideas, suggestions and comments. Could Stoke Abbott take part in the Beaminster Festival with the church finding use for music? Should specialist music be encouraged so St Mary's could become a centre of excellence? Under-floor heating is needed as radiant heaters may warm people but do not heat the space. St Mary's is a grade I listed building and needs constant heat input to keep out damp.

The PCC is now considering all the comments and suggestions and hoping to find a way forward.

Bottle Inn wins CAMRA Regional Pub of the Year



The Bottle Inn at Marshwood has been declared Wessex Regional Pub of the Year by the Campaign for Real Ale. The unpretentious hostelry has been judged one of the 16 best pubs

for real ale in the whole of Britain. The photo shows landlords Nigel and Chrissy Blake receiving their award from Rich Gabe of CAMRA's West Dorset branch.

Broadband update

Ultrafast broadband has arrived in the Marshwood Vale for the first customers, with more able to take the service through December and January.

Engineers have been building the network throughout the autumn thanks to a community initiative led by Charles Somers to attract further funding into the Superfast Dorset programme to enable this area.

When completed, parts of the area will become rural Dorset's best-connected community, enjoying much faster speeds than any other rural community of its size.

The technology – 'fibre to the premises' or FTTP – has been successfully deployed in other areas in or near towns or in hamlets or parts of villages. But residents in parts of the Marshwood Vale will be the first substantial rural community to access speeds of 300Mbps – or 'ultrafast'.

With FTTP, people can choose between standard packages offering 'superfast' speeds of over 24Mbps or ultrafast packages offering much higher speeds.

FTTP has been used in parts of the Marshwood Vale because premises are spread across a particularly hilly geography with many small clusters of homes. The fibre cable runs directly from the exchange to the premises.



FTTP will not however be available to all residents in Marshwood parish. Homes on the Chideock exchange will be limited to standard superfast broadband. This is because service to these addresses will be 'fibre to the cabinet' or FTTC. A new cabinet is being installed in Whitchurch Canonicorum, but the service will then have to come down a relatively extensive length of old copper wire to reach people's homes.

More information about the technology and how to take a service is available at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/superfast/fttp>. If service is not yet available at your property, sign up for an email and the Superfast Dorset team will let you know when it is.

Remember that to get superfast broadband you will have to sign up for a new package with your internet service provider (many deals come bundled with your landline service). Your internet speed will not alter unless you sign up for the new service.

A new website for our community

www.uppermarshwoodvale.org

Our new website is now up and running, do have a look.

The first main page is dedicated to our developing Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and a second page to articles from

our *Beneath the Vale* (BTV) parish council magazine. Two further pages provide links to the separate websites of the Marshwood Community Land Trust (CLT) and the Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council.

The NP and BTV pages also have links to separate Facebook pages and we hope that all of these will allow everyone in the community to give us their views and to suggest articles on local issues.

Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire

Your community needs you to fill in the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) questionnaire enclosed with this issue of the BTV and to return it before the end of January 2017.

Following on from NP scoping sessions held earlier this year at Blackdown, Stoke

Abbott and Bettiscombe we have prepared a detailed questionnaire for you to fill in. We will analyse your answers and this will allow us to prepare a first draft of the plan which we will present to you next spring before it is finalised and put to a referendum. Please help us by filling in and returning your questionnaire. Thank you!

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee: Members

Chairman	Charles Somers	01297 678178
	somers984@btinternet.com	
Secretary	John Vanderwolfe, UMV parish council clerk	
Members	Jacqui Sewell, West Dorset District Council councillor	
	David Hitchcock, chairman of Marshwood CLT	
	Ali Cameron, UMV parish councillor	
	Ali Edwards, UMV parish councillor	
	Mike Robinson	
	Sue Edwards	
	David French	
	Sara Hudston, Editor, <i>Beneath the Vale</i>	

email: np@uppermarshwoodvale.org

Address: NP Steering Committee, c/o The Old Rectory, Marshwood, Dorset DT6 5QJ

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Community Land Trust website: www.marshwoodclt.org.uk

Facebook Page: Marshwood CLT

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Stoke Abbott	Mark Roberts lucullas.lucas@virgin.net	01308 487 866

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