



TATWORTH AND FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2023

Hello, and welcome to our third Newsletter for the residents of Tatworth and Forton Parish.

Summer is unfortunately over and we are now entering into the Autumn period. Hopefully the weather will allow us to go out into the community to enjoy the autumn colours.

Councillors

During the summer we have co-opted Peter Chapple and Anna Rust to become Councillors for this Parish after the resignation of Tim Eggins and John MacOmish.

Councillor Chapple found himself living in this parish largely as a result of his late parents' decision to retire here in 1999. Initially just a frequent visitor, he has now been a permanent resident here for the past eight to ten years.

Having spent most of his career working in education in various capacities, often living and working overseas, he is now largely retired.

Here in the local arena... he is particularly interested in planning and environmental issues. He believes that all new developments should be proportionate and sustainable, and in line with the ability of local infrastructure and services to cope. He is unashamedly in favour of 'clean and green', a campaigner for better air quality, and can boast two largish trees in a modest front garden, also a dustbin often full of sacks of litter which he has collected!

Councillor Rust lives in Tatworth on School Lane with her ginger cat. She grew up in West Dorset and attended the Woodroffe School prior to University, returning to this area as an empty nester a few years ago. Councillor Rust is a secondary school teacher and has a deep commitment to ensuring we represent all people within the community and wants our parish to continue to thrive and our community to feel safe and valued. A keen singer she sings with the Axminster Chamber Choir and Axminster Choral. Councillor Rust currently sits on the cemetery committee but is happy to be approached about any concern or idea from members of the community.

Jubilee Field

A major step towards a safe and easier access to this very important amenity has been completed. A 3-metre-wide path has been constructed through the area that has always been boggy for the most part of the year. The work has included the restoration and improvement of field drainage as well as the creation of a storm water retention bank where wild flowers will be encouraged, as well as another triangular section a little further into the main field that is being professionally prepared for more wild flowers. Our thanks for a great job to Grants Driveways and Landscapes, and Tony Benger Landscaping.

The tree planting continues with specimen native oak, sweet chestnut, copper beech and wild cherry trees to be located in the main field plus 60 more trees thanks to a successful grant application to the Woodland Trust. These additional trees will include silver birch, rowan and more wild cherry. We also plan to plant some spring bulbs in the area too. The work to aid conservation, biodiversity and flood management continues whilst providing a space for all of us to enjoy. The revised hedge and grass cutting contract is also designed to encourage residents to take advantage of this fantastic amenity.



Please look out for and read all information signs. Unfortunately, there have again been very serious reports of dogs out of control including sheep attacks in the adjacent fields and jumping up to passers-by. This is the direct responsibility of dog owners who allow untrained dogs off the lead. The parish council have gone to great lengths to make this very important amenity open to all and enjoyed by all and irresponsible action by a few will not be tolerated. The council may be forced to insist that all dogs must be kept on leads due to the few dog owners who are unable to maintain control over their dogs whilst training obedience. Hedge laying to improve security for dog owners and our neighbours who wish to allow stock to graze in adjacent fields, is about to commence.

The allotments still have plots without tenants; however, with the improved access we do not expect these to be available for much longer. Anyone interested should apply to the Parish Clerk to have their names added to the list. The allotment holders were represented at the last Amenities Committee meeting and an extremely productive and open conversation followed. The Council look forward to regular meetings with allotment holders in order that this extremely important facility can progress to the advantage of all concerned.

Shelters Bins and Seats

The new community notice board is soon to be placed at the new bus shelter opposite Perry Street Club. We all can take advantage of this via the parish office.

The bus shelters all need continued maintenance which is progressing.

Unfortunately, the plan to replace the dog waste bin at the Memorial Hall was not accepted but we plan to identify a nearby location soon.

More litter bins rely upon agreement from the County Council; we plan to raise this again at Somerset County level.

We have been given permission to place 2 new park benches, one in Tatworth on corner of Linkhay Orchard and Perry Street and another in Forton on the grass area on Forton Lane. There are two other areas where we are in discussion with the land owners.

We have agreed upon a bench specification and would like to give our residents the option to donate a bench as a memorial and another option to purchase a share in a memorial bench. Anyone interested in this plan should contact the Parish Clerk for more information.



Coombses Pond

The purchase is complete and it now belongs to the parish. A number of people have advised the Parish Clerk that they will be keen to join a working party of local volunteers to help bring back this very important amenity to the benefit of us all. We are considering quotations from contractors to improve the pond area.

Parish Green Verges

A thousand spring bulbs have been purchased to beautify a number of areas around the parish. Volunteers have planted these around Tatworth, Forton and the Cemetery.

War Memorial Cleaning and Renovation

Professional stone masons have made a fine job of the war memorial restoration. Additional work to the associated railings is now planned.

Solar Lighting

A Somerset contractor has installed solar lighting to the short path near Perry Street Club, adjacent to the Forton brook from Waterlake Road, opposite Lower Coombses, to Holway. We appreciate some trees need to be cut back.

Cemetery

Maintenance continues to make this one of the most attractive cemeteries in the area. We have asked our main contractor, Mervyn from B Powell & Sons, to extend the lavender hedge around the Garden of Remembrance. The front gate has been repainted.

Planning

The Parish Council has received notification of amendments (including a reduction from 252 to 236 dwellings) to the proposed residential development on land adjoining Holbear and Forton Road in Chard. Whilst this may appear to be in Chard it is actually in Tatworth and Forton Parish. This application was discussed at the Planning Meeting on 5th October and a full list of objections was sent to Somerset Planning South. This can be found on our website.

The appeal by the developer to have 35 and 13 houses built on land North of Fore Street in Tatworth has once again been dismissed by the planners.

The Crossman application to build 95 houses off the B3167 near Chilson Common was rejected by the County Council Planning Committee for Somerset South following very effective lobbying by residents and objections by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is actively pursuing reported breaches of planning rules with Somerset County Council. Please note that planning permission must be obtained in most cases before building works are undertaken. Failure to do so may result in fines and could also result in costs to put works right. In the worst cases it may even result in demolition. Online advice on whether or not you require planning permission is available on the Somerset County Council Planning Portal.

Flood Prevention

We now have 11 community/flood wardens and training is being looked at with either Environment Agency or the commercial arm of the Fire Brigade. Meetings have been held with Wessex Water, the Environmental Officer who deals with the River Axe and Martock Flood Wardens. Advice was also received on how to help the flow of Forton Brook without entering the water, measuring phosphate levels and potential flood early warning systems.

Finance

The Parish Council has agreed to make a number of grants totaling £5,000 for 2023 which were presented at our Awards Evening on 28th September.



The following organisations will benefit: -

- St John's Toddlers – New ride-on toys and craft equipment £500
- Tatworth Pre-School – Replace and repair wooden fencing £500
- Forton Community Association - Tree planting and screening of buildings £500
- Perry Street Youth Football Club – Kit for 3 new teams £500
- Little Acorns – Outdoor play area and fencing £500
- Tatworth Amateur Pantomime Society – Sound mikes, monitors and speakers £500
- Tatworth Playing Fields – Replacement mower £500
- Perry Street Social Club – Towards disabled access at front entrance £500
- 1st Chard Brownies – New flags, neckerchiefs and craft resources £300
- 2nd Chard Guides – Towards replacement tents £300
- Chard Rugby Club Mini & Junior Section – First aid kits £300
- St John Ambulance – Towards Community Support Unit vehicle £100

Community Matters

Youth Club

The Parish Council has organised and funded a youth club at the Memorial Hall on Monday evenings from 7-9pm for Year 6's onwards. It has been a slow start to the Autumn period so please come and enjoy. We are hopeful that this will continue into 2024 but if it is not used this could be in doubt.

Tatworth Bonfire Night - Playing Fields, 4 November.

Remembrance

The Parish Council has supported the British Legion with the purchase of remembrance silhouettes. As you drive/walk by please remember those who gave their lives for the freedom and privileges we enjoy.

Christmas

The annual Christmas lunch for Parishioners living alone will be on 4th December and will be held at the St John's Church rooms. Any residents who would like to attend are please asked to advise the Parish office.

Dates of Meetings Full Council 2nd November, 7th December and 11th January 2024

As this is the last Newsletter of 2023 the Parish Council would like to wish all residents within our Parish a very merry Christmas and a successful New Year.

If you have any questions or feedback arising from this newsletter please send them to admin@tatworthandfortonparishcouncil.org.uk.