

Jan 2012

CLARION

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www.limpleystoke.org

Issue 70



Have YOUR say on community future

Limpley Stoke and Freshford Parish Councils have come together to begin the process of developing a plan for the community – a Neighbourhood Plan – with funding secured through the Prince's Foundation and a further application under active consideration by the Department of Communities and Local Government. Unlike the existing Parish Plans produced some four years ago, Neighbourhood Plans are enshrined in the Localism Act 2011. These plans will have legal force and will help set out in clear terms the reasonable and considered plans for the future of our area.

To this end, a **PUBLIC MEETING** will be held on **TUESDAY, JANUARY 31** at **FRESHFORD MEMORIAL HALL**. Seldom, if ever, will the communities of Freshford and Limpley Stoke have had such an opportunity to shape their own futures.

There has been much change within the last five years. While the most visible and tangible change has been the building and opening of the community Galleries Shop, there has also been increasing public awareness and activity on those matters which touch our daily lives, such as the protection of the environment, improvements to community facilities and the delivery of services, roads and traffic issues, schooling and housing.

This is where you come in. We want to hear your views and we want as many of you as possible to contribute to the development of a community plan for the future.

The process begins with the public meeting, most of which will be given over to 'round table' group discussions where those attending can have their voices heard.

This month you will receive through your door a briefing paper and further information on the event and what you can expect to come out of it.

The Prince's Foundation has confirmed that it will assist us in the creation of our Neighbourhood Plan and in looking specifically at the provision of a new community village hall at Freshford.

The Prince's Foundation will also look at connections within the villages, public facilities, parking and open spaces, alongside the delivery of affordable/elderly housing, the community right-to-build and the potential for micro-power generation.

The public meeting will be followed by a **two-day workshop in February** (dates to be announced)

for invited 'stakeholders', ie community members and Wiltshire and BANES Council officers and members, before finishing on the second evening with a final public meeting – which all residents are welcome to attend – where the workshop's initial findings will be announced.

Please come along and tell us what you think. It's you who will help shape the future. It's your voice that needs to be heard.

Parish Council vacancy

A vacancy has arisen on the Parish Council following the resignation of Simon Lord. Simon brought a professional and incisive approach to all council business and his contributions will be greatly missed.

Contact parish clerk Andrea Griffiths at clerk.lspc@btinternet.com or phone 722433 if you're a community-minded resident with the time and energy to be part of an active council.

Community Plan public meeting reminder

All residents of **Limpley Stoke** and **Freshford** are invited to a **PUBLIC MEETING** at **7.30pm** on **TUESDAY, JANUARY 31** at Freshford Memorial Hall to discuss the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. This is your opportunity to give your views or to ask questions.

If you have thoughts on any pressing issues facing our community, please come to the Public Meeting and express your views. We want to hear from all ages and all parts of Limpley Stoke. We'd like as many of you as possible to contribute to the development of a community plan. This is your opportunity to help shape the future.

There will be a workshop for invited 'stakeholders' on **February 16** to discuss the outcome of the meeting. This will be followed by a final **Public Meeting on Friday, February 17 from 7.30 to 9pm**, which all residents are welcome to attend, where the workshop's initial findings will be announced.

If you have any questions, contact Simon Coombe on 723306 or you can email him at simonhjcoombe@hotmail.com.

Precept rise stays below inflation

Limpley Stoke Parish Council is responsible for setting the parish precept – the part of your Council Tax levied by the Parish Council to fund local expenditure. The total precept for the year 2011/12 was £11,240, which works out at around £45 per household.

After some deliberation, the Parish Council has decided to increase the precept by 2.0 per cent. This is below the Consumer Prices

The Parish Council is mindful of the need to keep your taxes as low as possible and, to this end, considerable volunteer hours are expended on community projects. But the Parish Council also needs to ensure there are enough resources to preserve and improve this community.

We have a busy year ahead. Planned projects for 2012/13 include establishing a ground-breaking cross-border Neighbourhood

Standing room only at local plan debate

One thing is certain: the people of Limpley Stoke and Freshford have very definite ideas about what they want – and don't want – to see in the community, judging by the high turn-out on a chilly January evening, when around 150 residents packed into a crowded Memorial Hall to have their say on a proposed joint Neighbourhood Plan for the two villages.

This lively meeting was followed on February 16 by a workshop for invited 'stakeholders' from the two villages, where four groups assessed people's likes and dislikes, wants and don't wants, which were highlighted at the open meeting.

Each group looked at particular issues: environment, facilities, planning, and transport. Key people with experience in the four areas were at each table to assist with discussions and to input further information.

The groups were asked to look at the proposals from the open meeting and to review what might feasibly be taken forward and included in the joint Neighbourhood Plan.

A brief presentation was given by each group, describing their thoughts and ideas on what had been discussed, followed later by a final submission detailing the groups' recommendations on their designated subject areas.

/continued overleaf



Your village needs YOU!

A small group of volunteers are busy planning community events to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in early June. But more help is needed to get some of these events up and running over the Diamond Jubilee weekend of **June 2 to 5**.

Pencilled in so far are a cheese and wine evening at Limpley Stoke Village Hall, to include a special screening of the 1953 'Tutfield Thunderbolt' film, on **Saturday, June 2**. Of course, no jubilee celebration would be complete without a street party and ours is planned for **Sunday, June 3**, followed by fun and games on the play park, when all Limpley Stoke youngsters will be presented with commemorative jubilee mugs.

Many more activities will be taking place during Diamond Jubilee week, including St Mary's Church flower festival, story-telling sessions, and boat sailing on the river for the youngsters. *The Clarion* will keep you posted. Funding grants to cover event costs have been applied for.

If you'd like to be involved and can help out in any way, please contact Sheena Broadhead on 723404/email: sheena.broadhead@hotmail.co.uk.

A36 closed overnight March 1 and 2
Many of you will no doubt be pleased to know that the Highways Agency has scheduled the A36 for closure overnight on **March 1 and 2** for essential re-surfacing work to the carriageway. And not before time!

Neighbourhood Plan findings *continued*

After a long day of workshop participation, ESHA Architects, assisted by traffic engineers from Alan Baxter Associates, were then tasked with putting together a presentation, to include all the recommendations, and this was placed before an enquiring and lively audience of some 100 people at the second public meeting on February 17.

Proposals put forward included village squares for both Limpley Stoke and Freshford; a design for a new Freshford community hall, with two possible options as to where it might be sited; a scheme for a safe pedestrian crossing point linking Midford Lane with the top of Church Lane; and potential infill sites where housing might be accommodated.

Questions flowed thick and fast. The ESHA team stressed that it was for the community to say what they wanted.

What ESHA could do, for example, would be to explore and illustrate options for development and improved road safety. Final decisions would need to be made by the community.

Not every aspect of the tasks undertaken in the workshops could be discussed in the time available. But all the substantive issues will be addressed in the written report to be prepared by ESHA Architects which should be published within the next four weeks or so. Watch this space! It should make interesting reading and ensure that the debate over the future shape of life in this community sustains its present momentum and purpose.

Registering your child for pre-school

Freshford Pre-School is now running at full capacity, with a waiting list in operation for the current school year.

The popular school is almost full for children starting in September 2012, with only a few places remaining for September 2013.

Parents are encouraged to register their child well in advance of when they would like them to start at the school. For comprehensive information, visit the website at www.freshfordpreschool.co.uk.

Parents are invited to visit the school before completing the online

July 2012

Not too late to join Neighbourhood Plan groups

Thirty people have already signed up to join the Neighbourhood Plan working groups, following a successful June launch of what promises to be an important opportunity to plan the future of both villages. If you weren't able to make the meeting, it's still not too late to join one of the groups. Contact Ingrid Maher-Roberts (clerk, Freshford Parish Council) at ingrid.freshfordpc@gmail.com.

Neighbourhood Plan update

The Limpley Stoke & Freshford Neighbourhood Plan, which will provide the legal basis for residents to decide the future of our community, is well underway.

Four working groups – made up of around 40 residents and comprising Environment and Landscape (chair: Tom Harper); Planning and Development (chair: Hugh Delap); Transport and Movement (chair: Bob Broadhead); and Facilities and Services (chair: Mike Newby) – have been meeting over the summer and are already developing many interesting ideas for improving and preserving this beautiful and thriving community.

Summaries of these deliberations will be available for residents' feedback during a series of surgeries which will be taking place in **October** in a number of locations, including Limpley Stoke Village Hall, the Hop Pole and the Galleries Shop.

In the meantime, you can access all the latest information on the Neighbourhood Plan process, including minutes of all meetings, at www.freshfordvillage.com.

Get in touch with Simon Coombe at simonhjcoombe@hotmail.com if there are any questions you'd like answered.

Show organisers hope heavy downpours haven't dampened gardeners' spirits

It's official: it's been the wettest summer in 100 years, but organisers of the Freshford & District annual Horticultural Show, which takes place at 3pm on **Saturday, September 8** at Freshford Memorial Hall, are hoping that the adverse growing conditions haven't deterred any potential entrants.

The show is open to Freshford, Limpley Stoke, Hinton Charterhouse and Westwood residents, who are welcome to enter any of the many categories, ranging from vegetables and flowers to cookery, handicrafts and photography. Families and children can enter a variety of competitions.

Entry forms and class schedules are available at the Galleries Shop (where there is also a box for completed forms), inside the Parish Magazine, or by contacting Jill Campbell (01225 309033) or Sheila Wyatt (723443). Copies can also be downloaded from www.freshfordvillage.com.

Entry forms need to be returned by 6pm on Thursday, Sept 6. Exhibits should be taken to the Memorial Hall in Freshford Lane after 7.30pm on Friday (Sept 7) or between 8.30am and 10.30am on show day.



Parish Council vacancy

A vacancy has arisen on the Parish Council following the resignation of Bil Bailey. Bil was instrumental in bringing about the village's 20mph speed limit campaign. More recently, his painstaking efforts resulted in the splendid restoration of the Lower Stoke telephone kiosk.

Contact parish clerk Andrea Griffiths at clerk.lspc@btinternet.com or telephone 722433 by **Thursday, September 27** if you're a community-minded resident with the time and energy to be part of an active council.

Boules 'n' barbecue

Make a note in your diary for **Sunday, September 23**, when the annual village boules competition gets underway.

The contest, which is open to all Limpley Stoke residents, begins at noon on the King George V play park on Woods Hill. Spare sets of boules will be available and everyone is welcome to have a go. The village barbecue will be available for anyone to use, so bring your own food and drinks.

Have your say at local surgeries

The Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan is making exciting progress. Four working groups – Planning and Development; Environment and Landscape; Facilities and Services; and Transport and Movement – have been set up and have already had extensive discussions to develop the thinking which will contribute to the Neighbourhood Plan.

If you haven't already had your say, now is the time to do so. A series of Neighbourhood Plan surgeries will be held in Limpley Stoke and Freshford on alternate Saturday mornings, where residents will have the opportunity to chat with members of the working groups. You'll be able to find out about the ideas being put forward and add your suggestions and thoughts. Any comments you make will be carefully considered and will help shape the first draft of the Plan.

The first surgery took place at the end of September, others will be held on:

Saturday, October 6: 10.30am to 12.30pm, Freshford Memorial Hall

Saturday, October 13: 10.30am to 12.30pm, Limpley Stoke Village Hall

Saturday, October 20: 10.30am to 12.30pm, Freshford Memorial Hall

A mobile display will be positioned near to the surgeries and will tour other locations in the two villages.

Why not pop along and have a go at the photo quiz *'How well do you know your village?'*, discuss the Plan and leave your comments, and enter the prize draw to win a £50 M&S voucher.

If you're unable to make it to any of the surgeries, you can get further information on the working groups and their discussions by visiting the website at www.freshfordvillage.com.

Safer routes for pedestrians

Work to install painted pavements on Woods Hill and Midford Lane was carried out in August. At present, the 'pavements' consist only of a broken white line along one side of the carriageway. The coloured surfaces at each end of the new footways will be installed at a later date.

Drivers should be aware that, because painted pavements are still classed as carriageway, the same rules apply as they would if an accident occurred with a pedestrian walking down any other lane with no raised pavement. The broken line (hazard line) denotes that it is acceptable for drivers to cross the line to avoid obstructions.

Please remember that vehicles should not be parked on the painted pavements, thereby forcing pedestrians to walk out into the road.

Mobile library service

Have you visited a mobile library recently? For adults, there's a large range of information books and novels, ranging from the latest thriller to best-selling autobiographies, cookery and gardening. And it's not just books – DVDs are available for hire and there's also a wide choice of large print and talking books.

If you are a parent with young children, you'll find a great range of picture books, story CDs and films on DVD for them to enjoy. There are information books and plenty of exciting reading for older children as well.

It's free to join the library so why not try it. You just need to take along proof of your name and address and you'll be signed up.

The mobile library visits Uplands Close in Midford Lane fortnightly on Thursdays from 9.25 to 9.45am. Next visits are October 11 and 25.

For more information please visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries.

Changes to bus service 94

As of last month, bus service 94 operated by Libra Travel has been re-routed via Pulteney Bridge and extended to Bath Bus Station. Buses no longer stop in Terrace Walk but pick up instead at stop Cc opposite The Guildhall. Unfortunately, this information was not available in time for the September Clarion.

Timetable information is displayed at village bus stops.

December 2012

Neighbourhood Plan

The Limpley Stoke & Freshford Neighbourhood Plan will bring together the views of local people and represent them to a wide range of organisations that set policies and deliver services to rural areas. After nine months of consultation with the community, the four Working Groups have produced recommendations to the Management Group, who have amalgamated the key ideas into a **questionnaire** to be circulated to all residents in **January 2013**. This questionnaire will provide every resident with the opportunity for input on the key recommendations and to comment, where appropriate. Your feedback will provide us with the confidence to write a Neighbourhood Plan which reflects the views of the majority of our residents.

Our Neighbourhood Plan is expected to last for a generation. Please keep an eye out for this questionnaire and understand it is an important form for you to complete.

February 2013

Neighbourhood Plan ‘making progress’

Following on from the open meetings, working groups, surgeries, and extensive contributions from residents, the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) team have now produced a leaflet, ‘*Making Progress*’, summarising the main proposals likely to go forward to the final Plan. ‘*Making Progress*’ includes a questionnaire to help gauge residents’ feelings about these outline proposals. The team are keen to hear from as many people as possible, including younger people and those working in the neighbourhood.

‘*Making Progress*’ will be delivered to every household in Limpley Stoke and Freshford between **February 20 and 22** and the replies collected, again from each household, between **March 4 and 6**. This task will be undertaken by Gordy Powell, well-known to many residents as our former postman.

To support the distribution of ‘*Making Progress*’, there will be further NP surgeries on **Sat, Feb 23** (Hop Pole, 10.30am) and **Sat, March 2** (Freshford Hall, 10.30am), where residents can speak to members of the team and ask questions about the leaflet and questionnaire, and the NP process itself. Further details will be published nearer the time.

‘*Making Progress*’ is **not** the final Neighbourhood Plan but is an important part of the process. When the Plan itself is submitted for review, the team will need to show the degree of support in the community for the proposals it contains, so your views count. If you are broadly happy with the proposals, it is important that you say so. Your comments do not commit you in any way but will help your Councils decide what should go forward in the final Neighbourhood Plan.

The voice of the community!

Residents' reactions to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire have been overwhelming. To date, responses have been received from 600 people, comprising over 50 per cent of residents and electors, which exceeds the team's optimistic expectations. Furthermore, detailed comments from many of you have provided a rich seam of ideas and issues which will help the Working Groups and Management Group address your key concerns and tailor the final Neighbourhood Plan to the precise wishes of the community.

It is difficult to summarise thousands of diverse opinions and comments, but the weight of opinion is firmly in favour of making imaginative improvements to our infrastructure and services, on condition that these are done in a sympathetic style compatible to our unique and beautiful rural environment. The loud and clear message is that nobody wants Limpley Stoke or Freshford to be 'suburbanised'.

The country's first Neighbourhood Plan referendum took place in Cumbria last month and, with a turn-out of 34 per cent, was accepted by 90 per cent of residents. Our Neighbourhood Plan is not far behind. Teams hope to complete writing it this month, followed by several months of extensive consultation and inspection, before our referendum is held by the end of the year.

The team wish to thank everyone who took the trouble to complete the questionnaire. It's not too late if you haven't already done so. Copies can be picked up and dropped off at the Galleries shop.

Pop-up Opera makes welcome return

Pop-up Opera returns to Freshford Memorial Hall on **Sunday, May 12**, with a performance of Donizetti's comic opera, *Don Pasquale*, one of the composer's most popular works.

Following on from last year's acclaimed performance of *L'elisir d'amore*, Limpley Stoke Performing Arts (LISPA) continues to make opera accessible for everyone by performing in unusual locations, without compromising the quality of the music or story. LISPA was founded three years ago by Clementine Lovell, niece of co-founder and long-time Limpley Stoke resident, Peter Spence, who died in February.

Tickets for *Don Pasquale* cost £16 each (*no concessions*) and are available from the Galleries Shop (723249) or Bath Box Office (01225 463362 /email boxoffice@bathfestivals.org.uk).

You are invited to bring a pre-performance picnic (weather permitting). The bar opens at 2.30pm and, in homage to *Don Pasquale*, will be serving a special cocktail – *The Doctor's Potion* – along with wine and soft drinks. The performance commences at 4pm, with an opportunity for everyone to meet the cast afterwards.

More details are available by visiting www.popupopera.co.uk and www.lispa.org.uk. For performance enquiries, contact Jacqueline Newbigin on 722106.

Spring concert of Viennese classics

A concert of Viennese Choral Classics will be performed by the Freshford Singers on **Saturday, April 20** at St Nicholas Church, Bathampton. The concert starts at 7.30pm and includes works by Haydn, Brahms and Bruckner, conducted by Bernard Wight. Telephone 723324 for further details.

Admission is free. A retiring collection will be taken for the British Heart Foundation.

July 2013

Community consultation on Plan

After 18 months, 720 meetings and an extensive review of thousands of ideas and suggestions from hundreds of residents, a Neighbourhood Plan for Limpley Stoke and Freshford has been drafted. This will be a formal planning document, written in plain English, with lots of maps and diagrams to make it accessible to residents. From **July 1**, the Draft Plan can be found on the website at <http://www.freshfordvillage.com/living-in-freshford/parish-council/neighbourhood-plan>; in the Galleries Community Shop; or through clerk Ingrid Maher Roberts on 723306.

The formal consultation with residents lasts from **July 1 to August 12**. Please read it and give us your comments and feedback either via one of the comment slips provided, through the website or by email to ingrid.maherroberts@gmail.com.

Neighbourhood Plan surgeries will be held on **July 6 and 20** from 10.30am to 12.30pm in Freshford Memorial Hall, so do come along and share your views.

This plan, which has arisen out of a strong local engagement, is vital to the future of our community. Without one, we are vulnerable to the vagaries of central planning departments. It will allow us to determine our own future, strengthen local controls over planning, and be a legal document which has to be taken into consideration by statutory authorities.

It will also attract funding to support local projects listed in the plan and provide a coherent long-term strategy for us.

The vision is for Limpley Stoke and Freshford to remain unique, vibrant, sustainable and forward-looking communities which are attractive places to live, work and visit.

We want future generations to benefit from improved facilities, while protecting the distinctive rural nature of the villages and their surrounding green fields and woodlands.

The plan is evidence-driven and includes many projects and planning policies designed to achieve this vision. We will be reviewing and amending the Draft Plan, following feedback from residents, and will then submit it to the two local authorities for consultation. Following a planning inspector's formal examination in the autumn, a referendum on the Final Plan will be held in the community.

Time for a break

The Clarion is now taking a summer break. Back in September.

*Bath & North-East Somerset Chairman,
Neil Butters, and friends open the fête.*

November 2013

Neighbourhood Plan update

We have been informed that Wiltshire and Bath & North East Somerset Councils will be completing their formal process to designate the area of our Neighbourhood Plan at the end of November.

It has been a frustratingly lengthy process, requiring both councils to obtain Queen's Council opinions, given the unique cross-border nature of our Plan.

We have, however, been using this delay to update our Plan, follow-

ing the excellent feedback from residents, as well as completing a Sustainability Appraisal and a Sustainability Environment Appraisal, both of which are required as part of the Neighbourhood Plan approval process.

The formal six-week public consultation period of the revised Plan is now expected to take place in December/January.

If you have any questions, please contact [simon Coombe](mailto:simon_coombe) at simonhjcoombe@hotmail.com.

Neighbourhood Plan: last chance to have your say

The launch of the formal six-week Neighbourhood Plan public consultation will take place at the Limpley Stoke Hotel on **Saturday, January 11** between 10.00am and midday. Please come along and hear about the latest thoughts and plans for improving our community which have been adapted and modified following the informal consultation over the summer.

We regret that the process may seem slow and bureaucratic, and it belies the considerable amount of hard work being undertaken by your representatives behind the scenes. It is not easy having one of the first Neighbourhood Plans in the country and we are perpetually breaking new ground. The cross-border designation of our parish boundaries alone took 18 months and required Wiltshire and B&NES to seek QC advice in London.

The Neighbourhood Plan needs to reflect the views of the community as a whole and the informal summer consultation was immensely helpful in clarifying the views of residents. All the points made have been extremely helpful and constructive in improving the Plan.

We are now keen to verify that the revised plan still captures the views of our residents. The Plan and related documents will be on the joint Neighbourhood Plan section of the www.freshfordvillage.com website. A printed copy will be available for inspection at the Galleries shop.

The Plan will be displayed at open surgeries at the **Limpley Stoke Hotel on January 11** and **Freshford Village Memorial Hall on January 18** from 10.00am to midday. The consultation will be open until February 22, so do take the opportunity to see where we've got to and let us know what you think.

Looking forward, any further comments received during this consultation will be carefully considered and the Plan amended, if appropriate.

The final Draft Plan will then be submitted to the lead councils for further formal consultation and for consideration by an independent inspector.

Finally, all being well, we hope to bring the Plan to referendum by the community, possibly in September. It has been a longer and harder process than any of us envisaged at the start – but we're nearly there.

A36 could close for three months

A major section of the A36 is to close for up to three months for essential stabilisation work, after cracks appeared in the road surface.

The Highways Agency, which is responsible for the road, plans to shut the stretch between Hantone Hill at Bathampton and the centre of Brassknocker Hill to carry out remedial work to prevent the road slipping into the valley. Work will involve installing 14-metre-deep concrete piles along a 240-metre stretch of road.

The Highways Agency says a start date for the work – which could take up to three months – has not yet been finalised but is unlikely to begin before March 2014.

Southbound traffic will be diverted along the A4 to Chippenham and then the A350 to Warminster during the closure. Bath-bound traffic will follow the route in reverse.

This is the second time in recent years that stabilisation work has had to be carried out on a local stretch of the A36. In 2008, a similar scheme to correct road and footpath slippage between Brassknocker Hill junction and Waterhouse Lane caused weeks of disruption for local residents and businesses.