

Chedworth Parish Council

This report covers both the May and June meetings. Over the summer important news will be on our website, Facebook and Nextdoor.

County says sorry for not telling village of changes to winter plans

It may have taken five months to get representatives of county highways to a meeting, but if they had been hoping that we had forgotten what chaos their decision to cut the village from the gritting route had caused they were disappointed.

Villagers and parish councillors told Councillor Vernon Smith, Gloucestershire County Council's cabinet member responsible for highways, and highways managers Bob Skillern and Danny Taylor, that their decision had left roads in the village treacherous for up to a week after the snow fell.

Bob Skillern said that we should have been told of the decision to stop gritting through the village and he apologised that we had not been consulted.

We were told that the road through the village would not be put back onto the primary gritting route but would be treated once the main roads had been done. As with other communities throughout the county one route into the village would be kept clear if possible and that route was Fields Road.

We explained to the three county representatives that once the parish council knew that more was expected of us then parish councillors and villagers had stepped up and the impact of the two subsequent snow events had far less.

The parish council is meeting with highways to agree the location of new grit bins which they will be filling before next winter and we will be producing a new Winter Emergency Plan before next winter.

Be a responsible dog owner and PICK IT UP!

We continue to receive complaints about the amount of dog mess on the village playing field and would ask dog owners to always pick up after their pets.

It seems extraordinary that there are people in the village who think it's OK to allow their dog to foul on an area where children regularly play, especially as it can cause serious illness including blindness, particularly in children, and is extremely unpleasant for everyone.

The parish council has put up new signs to remind dog owners that they need to clean up after their dogs, and dog owners who do not pick up in any public places could face a £75 fixed penalty notice or a fine of up to £1,000 if taken to court.

If you see someone not cleaning up after their dog you can report it to Cotswold District Council who will follow up your complaint and prosecute offenders. They need the time, date and place it happened and the name and address of the person with the dog.

Finding the right balance between tidiness and wildlife

The Parish Council is constantly trying to juggle the wishes of those villagers who want neat and tidy verges with those who see verges as vital refuges for plants and wildlife.

The current regime carried out by the county council, which involves an early trim when all the cuttings are just left to rot where they fall, encourages whiteweed and nettles which choke out all other plants.

In order to encourage a wide range of plants it is necessary to cut the full width of the verge later in the season, once the flowers have seeded, and then collecting all the cuttings.

The parish council is therefore going out to contractors to get quotes to find out how much it would cost to manage the verges for wildlife.

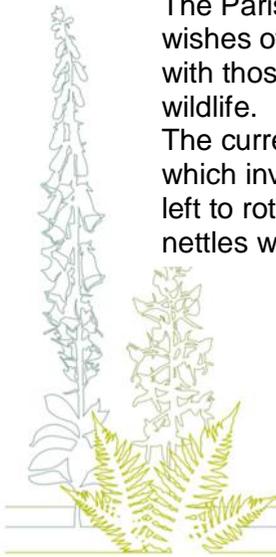
Even if we do take on the management of the verges it will not happen until next year and the

visibility splays will still be cut to ensure road safety.

If you would like to learn more about managing the verges in a different way you should check out the information on the Plantlife website

http://www.plantlife.org.uk/application/files/4614/8232/2916/Road_verge_guide_17_6.pdf

We would also like to encourage more interesting plants and flowers to grow on the triangle at the top of Tuns Hill and are investigating the best way to encourage this. In the meantime we are continuing to keep it cut having received many positive comments since putting a programme of management in place. We would be interested to know how villagers would like the triangle to look.



Council rejects proposal to divert footpath

Parish councillors will not be supporting proposals by the owners of Chedworth House (built on the site of Tweedledum and Tweedledee) to move the footpath (KCH47) which runs along their drive.

The path was temporarily closed while the house was built but the parish council has previously opposed a request to support the diversion becoming the permanent route. That path dropped down into the valley before climbing back up Green Lane.

The new route the owners proposed skirts around the garden of Chedworth House and rejoins the original path by The Summer House, but councillors were not prepared to support this change.

It was felt that the new path did not provide a similar alternative to the existing path which is accessible to the less able or those with small children and pushchairs.

The council had been told that there were walkers who would prefer not to walk the existing route along the drive and councillors suggested that one alternative would be to create the new path as a permissive route while keeping the existing path open. This would provide the alternative for more able walkers, reduce the use of the path along the drive but still provide access for those who wanted to use the historic route.

Summer brings problems for walkers

The warm weather encourages walkers to head for the footpaths but also causes problems with rapidly growing nettles, whiteweed and brambles quickly making paths impassable.

It is the responsibility of landowners to keep the footpath clear so if you have a path crossing your land please do your best to make sure that it is clear for walkers. If you are aware of any blocked footpaths you can inform the parish council on our website or by contacting any councillor.

First Aid Courses prove popular

The Parish Council is organising a third First Aid Course with Cotswold First Aid. The course will take place at the village hall on July 18th and 25th and although this one is now full if you are interested in taking part in any future course please contact me at Ros.jess1@btinternet.com.

The council is subsidising the cost of the courses and is very grateful to those who have made contributions to enable us to continue to offer the training.

Ros Jess

To contact the council, email the clerk, Elizabeth Broad (clerk@chedworthpc.org.uk), or call her on 720313. You can also contact any of the councillors direct.