

# Somerford Keynes Parish Council

## NEWSLETTER

October 2015

Clerk: Muriel Watkins 861614

[www.somerfordkeynes.org.uk](http://www.somerfordkeynes.org.uk)

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*Councillors John Brailey, Mike McKeown, Karen Mogridge, Ron Munroe, Michele Pinto, Sarah Powell (Chair), Roger Sleeman*

### Your Parish Council

The full list of Parish Councillors appears at the head of this newsletter and all are happy to listen to any comments or problems you may have – you can obtain their telephone numbers from the Clerk if you don't know them.

### Emailed Newsletters

Thank you to all who have agreed to receive these Newsletters by email. This will not only help us to save on paper and printing costs, it will also make life a bit easier for Parish Councillors (who currently deliver them by hand). If you haven't got round to it yet you can still register by contacting [karen.mogridge@somerfordconsulting.co.uk](mailto:karen.mogridge@somerfordconsulting.co.uk). Your email address will be held on its own list and will not be used for any other purposes.

### Neighbourhood Development Plan – calling all businesses

The NDP team will be distributing a separate Newsletter soon. In the meantime, however, the team is calling on all businesses within the Parish to register their interest in a business-only NDP consultation event to be held later this year. The team is especially keen to know of lower-profile 'micro-businesses', which might be run from home, possibly part-time, and employ only one or two people. So if you run any sort of business within the Parish please let the NDP team know at [ndp@somerfordkeynes.org.uk](mailto:ndp@somerfordkeynes.org.uk) or by telephoning the Clerk.

### Road Closure on Kemble Station Route

We have been notified that the South Cerney/Kemble road is to be closed for resurfacing from Spratsgate Lane all the way to (but not including) Washpool Lane, Kemble, throughout October. At the time of writing only the eastern end of this stretch of road is closed, and diversions are in place through Somerford Keynes via the Ewen Road. As the roadworks move west, this diversion will obviously have to be changed. If you are travelling to Kemble Station please be aware of possible disruption to your plans and leave plenty of time for your journey.

### Roads and Signage

Over the past few months we have become very concerned about the condition of the roads, both within and surrounding our parish. A particular issue is the state of the road signs. Certain road signs are a legal requirement and we have noticed that several important ones (such as 'give way') are obscured by hedges, tilting badly or simply lying on the ground, raising a number

of safety concerns. We continue to report these matters to Gloucestershire Highways, who excel in unresponsiveness. If you have any concerns concerning the state of the roads or signage please contact the Clerk.

### Defibrillator Awareness

Hard to believe but it is over a year since the Defibrillator was installed at the Village Hall. The really good news is that it hasn't been called into use so far, and long may that remain so. Last September, as part of the launch of the Defibrillator, we organised a Community Awareness Training evening run by Community Heartbeat Trust. The view of those who attended was that this was a very useful session in both understanding what the Defibrillator was all about and giving confidence to use it in helping a heart attack patient until paramedics arrive.

In light of the positive feedback, the Parish Council has engaged CHT to run another Community Awareness Training on **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall**. This will serve as a refresher for those who came last year and another opportunity for those who missed it. The evening will be led by Jonathan Poulter, from CHT, who has extensive experience in first aid training in a variety of settings. We would like as many people as possible to take advantage of this event, because we should all see it as part of our community self-support.

### 'Buddy' System for Medical Emergencies

On the subject of self-support, remember that in a medical emergency you can ask the Emergency telephone operator to contact a 'Buddy' on your behalf. The Buddy's role could be to collect the Defibrillator on your behalf, if that is what is required, or simply to be there with you until professional help arrives.

Now is a good time to organise your Buddy network. Get together with two or three near neighbours and you could be Buddies for one another! Keep the names and telephone numbers of your Buddies by your phone where they are readily available – we hope none of you will ever need to use them.

### Neigh Bridge

The conservation works on the Thames at Neigh Bridge are now nearly complete. The WILD project, in conjunction with the CWPT, has restored and reinforced the river banks, and access has been restricted by a temporary plastic fence. A permanent fence will be installed to prevent future damage to the banks by people and (mainly) dogs accessing the river.

Due to cost constraints the fence will follow the line of the main footpath in Neigh Bridge rather than the meander of the river. The Parish Council has expressed to the CWPT its disappointment as, in parts, it will not be possible to walk alongside the river. Dogs will still be catered for as a platform is to be built a little upriver of the stone bridge to allow them access to the river. Owners are asked to encourage their dogs to use the platform both to enter and leave the water, as the banks will be specially reinforced at this point.

Work is also ongoing to clear vegetation. The river has been opened up by the removal and pruning of some shrubs, and the trees along the Thames Path will receive some much-needed maintenance. The CWPT intends to use some of the wood gained from this exercise to construct a simple children's activity trail round the lake.

Finally a boardwalk is to be constructed from near the main entrance of Neigh Bridge, across the picnic area to the dog platform by the river. This is the area which becomes very boggy and waterlogged in winter, so walkers should find access much easier in future.

### **Lake 99**

The PC is currently finalising the legalities involved in the creation of the public right of way around the larger lake. We hope that this will be completed by the end of the year. Upon completion, the site will be opened to the public for recreational use.

In the meantime, the necessary safety equipment, bike racks, an interpretation board and a dog bin have been installed. Picnic tables and benches will be fitted in the Spring. We have also just learned that we have been awarded a grant to construct a boardwalk between the two lakes, which will make it easier to walk completely around the main lake in winter. This work will start very soon.

It is incredible how over time the site has become more beautiful as the trees have matured and the reeds have established. We hope that in the future this lake will be a tranquil place for families from the Parish to relax and enjoy living in the Water Park.

### **Cullimore Gravel Extraction Site**

Cullimore commenced extraction works on the site adjacent to Keynes Country Park on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015. However, to date there has not been much activity on site.

Also, Cullimore has still to submit a post-extraction water management plan that is acceptable to Gloucestershire County Council. As a result, Cullimore can only extract phases 1 and 2 of its plan and cannot infill at all until a plan has been accepted. The Parish Council continues to work with GCC to express and highlight our concerns about the dangers of an increased water flow towards Somerford Keynes and water backing up to Shorncote.

### **Cotswold Community**

Parish Council representatives have recently met with members of the planning team for the

Cotswold Community development. Those of you who attended the presentation in the Village Hall early this year may remember that there were proposals for a community of around 150 dwellings, a business hub and some rural craft workshops. However, we have been informed that these plans have been severely curtailed by the draft Ashton Keynes Neighbourhood Development Plan, which has allocated only 75 dwellings to the site (including 27 already existing). Whether this reduced number of properties is financially viable for the developers depends on Wiltshire Council's requirements in respect of the proportion of lower-cost housing.

The Parish Council feels that such a small development, even if financially viable, is unlikely to constitute a sustainable and diverse community. It will be isolated from both Ashton Keynes and Somerford Keynes village centres. Although it will be nearer to Somerford Keynes, the development will offer us no benefits as it will have no facilities of its own. We shall be expressing these reservations to the AK NDP committee when we comment on their Plan.

The Ashton Keynes NDP website can be found at [www.ashtonkeynesneighbourhood.com](http://www.ashtonkeynesneighbourhood.com).

### **Somerford Keynes with Shorncote History Group**

The next meeting of the History Group will be from 7pm on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> October in Somerford Keynes Village Hall. We are delighted to welcome the well known Air Transport Auxiliary Pilot, Joy Lofthouse, who lives in Cirencester and plays bridge in our village hall. She will tell us about her not to be missed experiences of delivering aircraft (mainly Spitfires) from the makers to the Royal Air Force in the war. Some other ATA ladies delivered Lancasters and Meteors! So, note the date in your diary for an excellent evening talk and just come along! We also will have some Village History to browse.

### **Dates for your Diary**

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October** History Group meeting – see above.

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November** Community Awareness Training evening – see above.



Sarah Powell, Chair

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*The unadopted minutes of the Parish Council are displayed on the Parish Notice Board together with bus and mobile library timetables. The agenda for the next meeting is also displayed some days before each meeting. **Parish Council meetings are always open to the public.** The next Parish Council meeting will be on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.*