

# Colehillclarion

Tel: 887786

## Local news from Colehill Parish Council

### It's been a good two years....

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of May I handed the badge of office to Cllr. David Mitchell, my successor as Chairman of Colehill Parish Council. It was time to reflect on my two year's in office, the progress we have made and the increasing involvement with the community. We organised the first Colehill Country Fair, which continues for the third time this July; we have greatly improved our communication with residents through the newsletter, website and twitter; new and long awaited equipment has been installed at Olivers Park; the Safer Routes to School Cycleway is up and running. However, we continue to face many challenges not least of which is the fight to keep the library open, to retain the School Crossing Patrols, the improvement of Canford Bottom Roundabout. One of the most pressing issues is the rebuilding of The Reef (Colehill & Wimborne Youth & Community Centre) and fund-raising is on-going: Colehill Parish Council will remain at the core of this important facility for the youth of Colehill. I know that Cllr. Mitchell will work tirelessly to improve the lives of all residents of Colehill and will continue in his quest for allotment gardens and for Parish Council involvement in any housing development that impacts on our village.

KD Johnson, Chairman 2009-2011

### CLAG fighting to save the library

To assess the options available to the community the Colehill Library Action Group (CLAG) has reformed and has met a number of times, the most recent being a meeting with Tracey Long, the manager of Dorset Library Services, on 9<sup>th</sup> May. At this meeting the latest proposal from the County Council were discussed and the importance of Colehill Library to the Parish was repeatedly articulated to Ms Long.

The Association of Friends of Dorset Libraries (AdLib) has proposed that the Library service spreads the pain across the service, rather than focusing on the smaller communities.

Dorset County Council has instigated a questionnaire to find out which proposals are preferred by the people of the county. CLAG urges you to fill it in and make your opinion known. Log on at <http://mrg.bournemouth.ac.uk/surveys/dcclibrary14/library14.htm> or complete at library

### The Core Strategy, did you have your say?

All of us should have received a questionnaire from EDDC asking us to comment on the development proposals that have been suggested for Colehill, Wimborne and surrounding areas. As the Parish Council we were asked to submit our views and make comments on areas that have been ear-marked as possible sites for development in the future: we hope that many of you took the opportunity to submit your views and to comment on the various schemes. We are fortunate to have members of the Parish Council working with the Environment Theme Action Group (ETAG) and can report as follows:-

#### Burts Hill/Cranborne Road

There appears to be a consensus that the proposed development either side of the Cranborne Road is far too big to go ahead in one go. ETAG takes the view that any development of that size will blight the approaches to Wimborne from the North West; there are environmental issues in relation to water table, water extraction and problems for wildlife and natural flora too. Some of this is mitigated by the proposed connecting green areas but by no means an answer.

#### Cuthbury

The redevelopment of Cuthbury and the run-down allotments seems not to have raised too many issues as long as alternative allotment land is available. Many view this as an opportunity to demolish and rebuild many of the unsightly properties in Cuthbury Close. There is sympathy for the view of Colehill Parish Council that St. Margarets should be left as a potential extension for the cemetery.

continued over:-

Keep up-to-date with events in Colehill at

[www.colehill.gov.uk](http://www.colehill.gov.uk)

[www.twitter.com/colehillnews](http://www.twitter.com/colehillnews)

**Leigh Park**

Leigh Park seems generally to be accepted with one or two exceptions from people already living in the area. ETAG believes, quite rightly, that there will be a noticeable decrease of light pollution and a sympathetic development will require some green space around the new Community Centre.

**Stone Lane**

With the removal of commercial traffic in and out of the industrial estate and the development of an area perceived to be an eyesore, Stone Lane is seen as a step forward. However, some of the ETAG members have expressed concern that it is too close to the river and there may be ecological issues that will need to be addressed.

**Allenview Area**

ETAG is unenthusiastic about this even though there are not many environmental issues of concern. Questions were raised as to how EDDC could justify a move from their offices in Furze hill to the centre of Wimborne. A commercial market or public gardens development will still see the loss of the main parking area in a tourist town. The parking at Waitrose, which in any case is restricted as to time, is no compensation.

**Land South of Leigh Road**

This is contentious in several ways although it is believed that problems can be overcome without too much difficulty. Firstly, people in the Parmiter area and Brookside are concerned about the amount of traffic and numbers of people accessing the proposed sports area. As long as the sports fields are to the southern side, nearer to the A31, and access is via a dedicated roadway away from Parmiter this should ameliorate this potential problem. The idea of allotments is well received by both residents and the ETAG. This is a very large piece of land and the proposed housing development could be such that it does not impinge upon the present bungalow-type area that exists at present. ETAG has not presented any environmental issues other than the potential for noise and light pollution. With feelings running high amongst some residents it is essential that open discussion be encouraged.

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**Cannon Hill Plantation goes up in flames**

The exceptionally dry and warm April weather has resulted in many heath and forest fires throughout Dorset, including our own Cannon Hill. This serves as a very timely reminder, as summer approaches, that we need to be extra diligent as we are out and about enjoying our beautiful countryside. Many fires have been started deliberately: if you see anything suspicious, don't hesitate, contact the emergency services immediately.





## School Crossing Patrols, are they going to be a thing of the past?

"Walking and cycling to school is the most sustainable and healthy way to travel to school. Walking and cycling to school can also give important healthy exercise for pupils, parents and staff. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence recommends that children and young people should undertake a range of physical activities for at least 60 minutes over the course of a day. Walking and cycling to school is an excellent way of helping young people to achieve this target." **This quote is taken from Dorset For You Road Safety portal.**

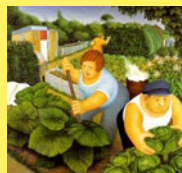
With this stated aim, you have to question why DCC is planning to withdraw the funding for the School Crossing Patrols (SCP) in March 2012. DCC states that it is not legally obliged to provide SCP's, they are a discretionary service and with 63 sites across the county, each costing £3,000 per school year to operate, stopping the scheme will save almost £200K per year. However, the irony is that DCC says they are not actually withdrawing the SCP's, they are only withdrawing the funding for salaries (that's the £200K!) and it is up to each individual school or community to either pay for the SCP themselves or organise volunteers to run them. One response from a local Head Teacher clearly demonstrates the views held by our local schools.

*"The main point that I feel very strongly about is that the public sector is facing a raft of cuts and changes that are impacting across schools at different levels both directly and indirectly. I feel that School Crossing Patrols were introduced to keep children safe while they were learning about road safety. This has been successful for many years. However, I do also believe that parents have a responsibility for their children and to teach them life skills as well. As a school we cannot be in all places at all times. The alternative solutions put forward to us appeared to be blue-sky thinking with people volunteering to take on the responsibility on a daily basis throughout the year. I can't see this as practical and following discussions with my parent association it appears they agree. The other proposal was that we use our own funds to enable the crossing patrols to continue which is certainly out of the question as resources are stretched to the limit at present."*

The Parish Council fully supports the schools in their efforts to retain the SCP's. Local representation has been made to DCC urging them to reconsider the decision to withdraw the funding for this much-loved service. The joy for a child to be able to walk or cycle to school on his or her own, knowing that there will be someone to see them across the road, cannot be underestimated. This one is worth the fight!

## Allotments - Meeting in June!

A meeting will be held at 7.30.p.m. on Friday 10th June at the Memorial Hall and all known interested parties will be invited and of course, anyone else is welcome to come along too. A proposal will be put forward to get an Association started, with various options outlined and then everyone will be given a questionnaire to complete to get a consensus on which option is preferred.



## Coombe Woods and the BMX Track

Despite the support and enthusiasm of the Parish Council to maintain this facility for our youngsters, we have found during recent inspections, unacceptable modifications to some of the jumps and excavation of soil and clay that has compromised many of the tree roots in the wood. The Council, together with the Safer Neighbourhood Support Team, has been in contact with some of the riders who use the track and requested that the jumps be rectified and the recently dug pits be backfilled.

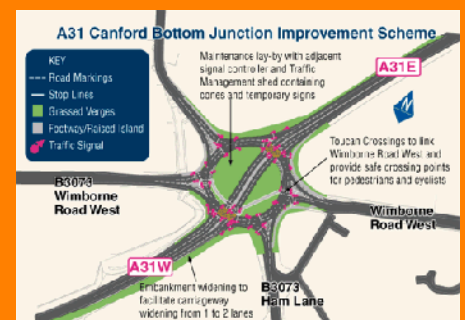
**Warning:** please don't abuse this facility; ROSPA could close it down!

## Hamburgers but not the edible variety!

At a hastily arranged public meeting held at Stapehill in early April, the Highways Agency confirmed that they had secured £5.8million from central government to undertake the work at Canford Bottom roundabout, creating a Hamburger Junction linking the north and south sections of the A31. The work was originally planned to start in the first quarter of this year but because of earlier doubts about the funding, the start date was put back until May. However, it was acknowledged that this would cause an unacceptable back-up of traffic during the very busy summer months. The road works will now start in September but will take 30 weeks to complete instead of the 22 weeks originally planned, due to the adverse winter weather.

Despite local MP's Annette Brooke and Chris Chope, along with County Councillor Janet Dover, requesting a public exhibition and consultation this was turned down due to lack of funds. The consultation will now only take place on the DCC website and because DCC could not get the website up and running in April, the period that you can make comments closes on 31<sup>st</sup> May. Both MP's have promised to make a complaint to the government about the lack of public consultation and will try to get it reinstated. If you want to take part in the consultation, visit [www.highways.gov.uk/a31canfordbottom](http://www.highways.gov.uk/a31canfordbottom), or contact the Highways Agency Information Line on 0300 123 5000 or email them at [ha\\_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk).

**Comment:** Did a little research on Hamburger Junctions and even though it may not be much compensation to us local residents who have to endure the daily nightmare of trying to get round Canford Bottom, it does appear that they seem to work. With traffic lights controlling the flow of traffic, the theory is that it should be easier for vehicles to move in sequence. Me thinks it is a case of watch this space! Ed.



## STOP PRESS!

Plans will now be put on public display, date tba. Keep an eye on noticeboards.

# The Reef needs your support

We keep hearing about The Big Society and here, in Colehill, we have just the thing for all of us to get behind and show how a community can pull together to raise desperately needed funds to enable this essential project to get off the ground.

**The Reef** (Colehill & Wimborne Youth & Community Centre) plays a crucial role in the lives of over 500 young people both living locally and further away in the surrounding villages.

The old caretaker's bungalow is grossly inadequate and the only option is to demolish it and replace it with a new purpose built centre which will not only serve the youngsters but will be available for the whole community to use. So far £340,000 has been raised and a further £340,000 is needed so that this project can be fulfilled. A recent application to the South West Regional Development Agency (RDA) for this final amount was sadly caught by a short fall caused by Government budgetary restrictions: this caused a temporary suspension to new projects under Axis 3 (Community and Social projects). The application is still being appraised and if approved could be referred to Defra with the possibility of accessing a proposed national fund.



**In the meantime**, there are ways in which you can help and there are two fund-raising events that are taking place to boost the coffers. The first one is **THE BIG BIKE RIDE and BIG BBQ and COMMUNITY FAIR taking place on SUNDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY**, details can be found on the back page. The second one is a Ceroc Dance Night, which will take place in the Memorial Hall on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September. This will be advertised later but if you would like to reserve a place please contact Susan Davies on 01202 842311 or email [sdavies@colehill.gov.uk](mailto:sdavies@colehill.gov.uk)

**The Reef deserves your support.** A website has been set up so that you can make donations on-line and get further information on events. If you are a UK tax payer the charity can claim back the tax through Gift Aid. Please go to [www.virginmoneygiving.com](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com) and enter 'Colehill' or 'Reef' in the charity search.



Artist's impression of the new building

# Do you need Planning Permission?

If you are thinking of making changes to an existing building or building a new property you will, in all likelihood, need planning permission. The local planning authority (LPA) at EDDC is responsible for deciding whether a development should go ahead and this could be anything from erecting a garden shed, adding a substantial double storey extension to your home or building a new house in what was your back garden.

## Permitted Developments

Certain minor building works don't need planning permission and are known as permitted developments. This is because the effect of such a development will be negligible on neighbours and the surrounding environment: building a boundary wall below a certain height would come into this category. Similarly, a change of land or building use is also a permitted development if it's within the same "use class". However, if you live in a conservation area or if your property is a listed building different requirements apply and you may need planning permission.

## Commenting on Proposed Developments

The first time many of us learn about a development is when we see the public notices displayed by the LPA and/or when they write to neighbouring homes inviting comments. This information is also available on-line and if the development is of a considerable size then the LPA will advertise in the local newspapers. Colehill Parish Council is also part of the planning process and any comments that you have on developments in your neighbourhood should be copied to the Parish Council as well as to the LPA at EDDC. You can also make your comments in person at any of the Highways and Planning meetings held by the Parish Council: dates of the meetings are published on noticeboards or on the website at [www.colehill.gov.uk](http://www.colehill.gov.uk) Other agencies such as English Heritage may also be asked to comment on proposed developments. For your views to be taken into consideration, you must submit them before the published deadline for comments.

## Your Responsibilities

The owner of the property or land is ultimately responsible for complying with the relevant rules and regulations, regardless of need to apply for planning or building regulations approval. Failure to comply with the rules will result in the owner being liable for any remedial action: this could be as extreme as demolition of the property. It is always advisable to discuss your proposals with the relevant LPA. Using the services of a professional architect will go a long way to ensuring that drawings submitted clearly show the alterations and changes you wish to make and the architect will also act as your representative to ensure that you fully comply with the planning rules.

## Meet the Planning Officer

Prior to submitting a planning application it is a good idea to have a meeting with the Planning Officer to ensure you fully understand the LPA's requirements. More information can be found on the Planning Portal at [www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning)

