



Local news from Colehill Parish Council

Autumn, the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness.....

We're not certain how "mellow" we are going to be over the coming year as the coalition Government rolls out details of the Comprehensive Spending Review. At the Parish Council we are reviewing our budgetary needs for the next financial year and our priority is to maintain services for local residents. There is a lot of talk about "the big society" and perhaps this is the time for us all to ask if there are ways in which we can help ourselves, our neighbours and the wider community. Next year we will be holding local elections for Parish and District Councillors; is this something you could get involved in? (see the article below)

We are already planning the Country Fair for 2011 and we would welcome volunteers to come forward to offer their help and expertise to develop the fair into a great annual event that all the family can enjoy. Would you be able to run a craft tent for children? Are you a member of band that would like to perform at the fair? Could you organise a cricket match? Let's all get behind this project and make the Colehill Country Fair an occasion when the whole community comes together.

KD Johnson, Chairman

Councils appoint Dorset's first shared Chief Executive



David McIntosh has been appointed as the first shared Chief Executive for Christchurch and East Dorset councils and takes up the post in January, 2011.

This partnership has been created in light of public sector funding cuts and will save each council around £50,000 annually, with further savings being made by sharing other senior management posts in the near future. It is anticipated that this will reduce the cost of running the two councils by around £300,000 and is the first stage in a planned package of savings. However, each council will remain independent, keep their separate identities and retain their own Councillors and budget: council taxpayers' money from one council will not be spent by the other.

Your Parish Needs You!

May 2011 will be your opportunity to elect your local councillors to represent you at Parish and District Council. We, at Colehill Parish Council, are your most local representatives as we all live within the Parish, send our children to local schools, use local services and understand and often experience, the problems that arise from time to time. Now is an ideal time for you to get involved with your community and help shape it as we face difficult and uncertain times. Members of the public are always welcome at our meetings, please come along to see for yourself.



Most people's impression of what a councillor does is just attending council meetings. However it is the ordinary day to day contact with local people that a councillor experiences in their community that is the most important part of being a councillor. Councillors act as ambassadors for their community, keeping everyone aware of local needs and concerns and reporting back on district, county and regional changes.

The main skill needed is being able to listen. You need to listen to the views of people in your community. It is this knowledge that many public bodies and organisations acknowledge is the hardest to capture and they use the parish council for advice to assist and inform their services.

(continued over)

Keep up-to-date with events in Colehill at
www.colehill.gov.uk

www.twitter.com/colehillnews

(continued from front page)

You will need to attend meetings. Most are held on Tuesday evenings and all councillors are expected to attend the Council meetings held every six weeks. There are also two committees, Planning and Finance and General Purposes, some councillors serve on both, but you need only serve on one if you prefer. You may also be asked to attend civic functions as part of your duty to the community. This entails Remembrance Parades, civic walkabouts and public functions to name a few.

You will need to draw on your own skills and experiences and it is the sharing of these that makes the Council strong. Working as a team you will deal with employment issues, budgeting, asset management, grant funding and lots more. Accounts are kept by the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, but it is the councillors who are responsible for the financial decisions. Councillors make a group decision on all matters; no one councillor is responsible for any single decision. This is democracy at its best.

Training is available for all councillors and legislation allows for councils to pay for this training. New councillors can instigate new procedures and embrace good practice.

If you are over 18 years you can stand as a councillor, but you must be registered on the electoral register for the parish or, for the last 12 months, you must have occupied premises in the parish, worked in the parish or lived within 4.8 km of the parish.

The number of councillors required for Colehill Parish Council is fifteen; this amount was set by East Dorset District Council. If you wish to stand for election you need to contact Julia Duncan at East Dorset District Council (01202 886201) before the end of March 2011.

Those who are elected in May 2011 will sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and agree to observe a Code of Conduct when dealing with matters on behalf of the community.

Government Spending Review

At the time of writing we are waiting for the outcome of the Coalition Government's spending review, due on the 20th October. Dan Povey, finance manager for EDDC, said that they are as much in the dark as the general public and until they have been informed by Whitehall they cannot predict the effect that government cuts are going to have on local communities. We must not be panicked into thinking that services are going to be withdrawn overnight: the plans, once approved, will be rolled out over a 5 year period. EDDC will do all it can to protect local services: the Parish Council is committed to doing the same. It's time for all of us to do a bit of belt-tightening!

Play gets a boost in Colehill

Following a planning decision by East Dorset District Council the sum of £20,000 has become available to improve the play area and surrounding play field at Oliver's Park.

Janet Dover, County, District and Parish Councillor, has been asked by the Parish Council to liaise between East Dorset District Council, the Dorset Police Safer Neighbourhood team for Colehill and youngsters who use Oliver's Park, to invite them to come up with suggestions.

Got a good idea?

Contact Janet on 01202 884768 or e-mail j.dover@dorsetcc.gov.uk or write to her at 159, Cutlers Place, Colehill. She will be at Colehill Library on the first Saturday of each month between 9.30 and 10.30a.m and outside the Co-op, Middlehill Road, the first Wednesday of the month between 10am and 12noon.

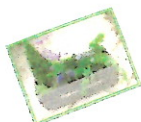
It's a Goal!

After an inspection of the worn goal mouths in Oliver's Park in February, it was concluded that the badly eroded ground would need urgent repair. But, we've gone one better. EDDC supplied 2 new, bigger goals, the Parish Council had them installed in September and our local kids are enjoying putting the England team to shame!

order
now for
Christmas!

fleur bijou a garden in a box

beautifully designed miniature seasonal gardens
planted in hand-made wooden boxes,
the perfect gift for all garden-lovers



tel: 07802 955927 email: fleurbijou@btinternet.com
www.fleurbijou-gardeninabox.co.uk

STOCKS INN

Tel: 01202 882481



Furzehill, Wimborne BH21 4HT
www.thestocksinn.com

Winter Lunchtime & Evening Offers
available Monday - Friday*

**FREE BOTTLE OF HOUSE WINE when 2
people or more purchase a Starter & Main
Course or a Main Course & Sweet**

* Offer not available Bank Holidays and cannot be used or combined with any other offer or discount. Subject to availability. Offer may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Offer expires 31st March 2011. Please bring about with you when using this offer.

Keep Cosy this Winter



Grants for cavity wall and loft insulation, of around 50% or above, are available for all home owners and private tenants, what-ever your income, and of 100% if you satisfy the eligibility criteria. However, you must use a government-accredited supplier and the best place to start is by asking your current energy supplier, all of whom have to, by law, offer the government-backed scheme.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should you use the services of doorstep advisers or sellers: none of the energy companies are permitted to operate like this. Just contact them directly (their number will be on your utility bill) and they will arrange for a survey to be carried out on your home. Don't be cold: this scheme is there to help you insulate your home and to cut your energy bills, a win-win situation for all.

Get naturally active in East Dorset

The Activate 1000 scheme offers an exciting range of country side activities at Moors Valley Country Park & Forest and at other locations in East Dorset, including, Wimborne, Verwood, Ferndown, West Moors and Colehill. It aims to get at least 1000 local people taking part in 30 minutes exercise 3 times a week and includes; Health Walks, Health Cycles, Women's Running, Outdoor Circuits and many other active pursuits all designed to promote a healthy lifestyle in enjoyable surroundings.

October 2010 saw the start of Fitness Buggy Walks and Women's Running Classes from Colehill Library. They run on Tuesday mornings and are both designed to help people further their weekly routine of exercise, whilst socialising in a fun, friendly environment.

Health Walks are continually growing in popularity and subsequently have been expanded to many locations in East Dorset. To register your interest in a Colehill Health Walk or to become a Health Walk leader please contact the Rangers on 01425 470721 or email activate1000@eastdorset.gov.uk

Beauty @ Home by Karen

Mobile Therapist with over 10 years experience

*Acrylic Nails
Manicure
Pedicure
Waxing
Tinting
Facials*

**** Introductory Offer
to all New Clients**

**Full set of beautiful
acrylic nails for £30.00**

Thinking of Christmas?

*Why not give one of our Gift Vouchers to that
Special! Someone!*

*Enjoy a little pampering in the comfort of your
own home. Appointments to suit (Ladies Only).*

Telephone: 07736 937567

**WORLD'S
BIGGEST
COFFEE
MORNING**

Friday
24th
September
2010



Local resident, Barbara Brown, raised £300 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Norman, you make a lovely cuppa!

Tour de France!

Norman Davies cycled 325 miles from London to Paris in 3 days and raised over £2500 for Action Medical Research for Children.



Doing something for charity?
Why not let us know.

Fun

Fresh air



Friendly



Colehill
Fitness
Buggy

Walks and
Womens
Running
now started!

**Activate
1000**
Get active in your countryside

SPORT
ENGLAND

Dorset **LEAS**

POP

Forestry
Commission

For more details please call the Rangers on 01425470721 or email activate1000@eastdorset.gov.uk

Ulyett Electrical Services

DOMESTIC • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL

Tel: 01202 639328
Mob: 07973 287225

- REWIRES
-
- BURGLAR ALARMS \ CCTV
-
- INDOOR \ OUTDOOR LIGHTING

FOR A FRIENDLY RELIABLE SERVICE



Complying with 17th edition

2012 Olympics, are we going to be grid-locked?

The Parish Council has expressed serious concerns regarding the proposals for Canford Bottom Roundabout in time for the 2012 Olympic Games. Weymouth and Portland will be the host for all the sailing events and the impact on local motorists could be considerable as the A31 will be the main route for traffic travelling from London to Weymouth.

The "Hamburger Junction" proposed will create a 4 lane road (2 in each direction) through the centre of the roundabout to join the North and South sections of the A31. Traffic lights will control the flow of traffic but with no plans to improve the roundabout at the other end of the Wimborne by-pass, as well as the controversial decision by Poole Borough Council to close the link road A349 from Gravel Hill to the by-pass, it begs the question how is this going to help any road users?

Colehill Parish Council has made representation to the project engineers, Mouchel, asking for reassurance that residents are not going to be unfairly inconvenienced either by trying to travel to Ringwood, Ferndown and beyond or by traffic using Middelhill Road and Smugglers Lane as a cut-through. The effectiveness of lane segregation will depend on the signing strategy and was of high priority. The Parish Council has requested a meeting with Mouchel after the one scheduled for July was cancelled. Construction, due to start next year, should be completed by the last quarter of 2011, well in time for the start of the Olympics in July 2012. The future of this development is still in question, as funding from central government remains uncertain.

Middlehill Road Chicanes

Minor amendments will have taken place during the October half term and will help to reinforce the operation of the traffic calming: the priority operation will remain the same. Additional buildouts will be constructed to further encourage motorists to give way when they don't have priority.

This must be one of the hottest topics in the parish and elicits columns of newsprint in the local media. The calming measures were installed as a direct response to the very large number of residents that requested them during the survey for the Parish Plan. The decision on what was put in place rests solely with Dorset County Council and these were made after a considerable period of public consultation. Whilst we can comment and pass on residents' concerns to that body, they ultimately make the decisions.

Almost exclusively the complaints that have been received relate to the fact that the 'give way' signs do not relate to 'an obstruction on that side' and are thus confusing. It is this that the alterations are intended to address. It is, we believe, important to give this a chance and see if it is effective before making further representations to Dorset County Council. The electronic surveys, carried out since the inception of the calming measures, all show a significant decrease in speeds in Middlehill Road.



Government Endorsed Standards
www.trustmark.org.uk

TreeCareApproved.org
APPROVED CONSULTANT

Mark Hinsley
Msc.Res.MAN (Arb), OND (Arb), M.Arbor.A
Arboricultural Consultants Ltd.

TREE ADVICE & REPORTING
Established 1994

We are a well established Wimborne company offering qualified tree consultancy services. We specialise in:

- Tree Condition Advice and Surveys, including Liability Assessments and Management Plans
- Landscape, Planting & Maintenance Schemes
- Amenity Woodland Management Plans
- Advisory/reports Service for all Planning Application needs (to BS 5837 standards)



All enquiries welcome
01202 840819
web: treeadvice.info
email: enquiries@treeadvice.info



Consulting Arborist Society.com
PROFESSIONAL MEMBER

Take care of our feathered friends

We all love seeing wild birds in our gardens but just as we do they feel the cold, need warmth, shelter and a hearty meal. Here's a few tips on how to help these welcome visitors survive the winter months.

- Feed twice daily if possible in the morning and early afternoon, before it gets dark
- Introduce a bird table and high calorie seed mixes: this can also be used to put out kitchen scraps such as fat and suet, mild grated cheese, cooked potatoes, pastry and soaked fruit.
- Put out hanging feeders for black sunflower seeds, sunflower hearts, sunflower-rich mixes or unsalted high fat peanuts.
- Ensure a supply of fresh water every day. If it is very cold use tepid water, but it is vital NOT to use any antifreeze products, which can be poisonous
- Put out unwanted apples and pears for blackbirds, song thrushes and other members of the thrush family.
- Bird cake and food bars are very good because of their high-fat content. Food bars of fat hung up or rubbed into the bark of trees is a great help for treecreepers, goldcrests and many other species.
- Put up nest boxes to provide roost sites for smaller birds. They will then be used for breeding later in the year.



Improvements to Dorset for You

If you have not clicked on www.dorsetforyou.com recently you will be surprised at the wealth of information it now contains. The whole website has been re-engineered to make access easier for the public, and there is far less "local government speak".

The most powerful function is **Find your nearest** Simply put in your postcode and there is a whole host of information at your fingertips – right down to when your refuse should be collected. On the left hand side of the opening page you will see an entry

Environment and Planning.

Click on this and again on **Planning** and you will be led eventually to planning applications in East Dorset, with the ability to put in a postcode to see current and past applications. This will make it easier for you to comment on applications. So get clicking on

www.dorsetforyou.com

and see what more you can find of interest.



The Core Strategy - make sure your voice is heard!

East Dorset District Council has launched a 360 page *document for consultation*. It deals with possible options for the delivery of the sort of development seen as necessary to meet the needs of all our residents and businesses. In other words, the way we want things to be from now to, say, 2027. Once you mention the word *development* people respond with: Oh, you mean more houses. Well, that is one of several basic needs which have to be balanced against other conflicting demands. But it is by no means the only factor as we consider infrastructure, transport, and the natural environment. There are critical issues, problems and challenges to be overcome.

The document is about our future and is in line with the Coalition Government's Localism Agenda, giving the local communities an opportunity and power to shape the future of their area. A number of policy options are set out, based on a significant amount of evidence, data collection and the outcome of previous consultations in 2008 and 2009.

EDDC now wants to know what your views are on this comprehensive plan. The document can be seen on DorsetforYou, <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/>, and in the libraries. The consultation period runs to December 2010. Your comments will be used to inform the Draft Core Strategy that will be published in the Autumn of 2011, and be subject to a public enquiry.

Desperately Seeking Some Land!

4 - 5 acres, water supply or access to one, viable for horticulture, free from environmental inhibitions, available to lease for 10 - 15 years with the option to renew. We want the land for allotments for the community. Can you help? Please contact the Parish Council on 01202 887786.



Santa's GROTTO



Saturday Nov 20th - Friday 24th Dec

Christmas at Stewarts is a unique experience that the whole family will enjoy and children will remember for years to come.
Admission £6.99 including a great gift from Santa.

Visit
Santa's real
Reindeer



GARDENLANDS, Lyndhurst Road
Somerford, Christchurch BH23 4SA Tel: 01425 272244

COUNTRY GARDEN CENTRE, God's Blessing Lane, Wimborne BH21 7DF Tel: 01202 882462
Advanced booking is essential - available online www.stewarts.co.uk from 1st November

A bit of TLC for your garden

The end of the growing season signals the perfect time for a spot of routine maintenance. You might think the lawn pretty much looks after itself, but it will benefit from raking over to remove leaves and from an application of lawn fertiliser. When the herbaceous borders are empty of flowers it's a good time to check whether any structural repairs need doing. Check walls and fences for signs of wear, and repair any loose panels or holes. Wobbly paving stones can also be secured, but ensure you choose a dry spell to do any cementing. If you have a pond, remember to cover it with a net to prevent falling leaves polluting the water, and if it has fish ensure it never freezes completely to enable them to breathe. A good way of doing this is to put a child's ball on top of the water. When the pond freezes, just lift off the ball and you have a ready-made hole

Planning Ahead

Bulbs can be planted - snowdrops, daffodils and crocuses are the earliest, with tulips flowering a bit later in the season, so check the labels before you buy to guarantee a succession of colour. This is an ideal time to plant or move shrubs and trees, to allow them to anchor down before the growing season. Also take time to reflect on what was successful in this year's planting scheme and what didn't work so well, so you can adapt your plans for next year.

Introduce Colour & Interest For The Colder Months

It may seem like everything dies back in the winter, but there are a few hardy little souls who flourish at this time of year. Cyclamens come in white and a range of pink shades with glossy green leaves, and add a welcome dash of vibrancy in the depths of winter. Pansies and their miniature cousins, violas, are a favourite and do especially well in a sunny spot. It's also not a bad idea to include plants that offer winter interest in your long-term planning. Trees and shrubs with interesting bark and stems provide structure in the summer and are still good to look at in the winter.

Council Tax Referendums, a burden for cash-strapped councils?

Eric Pickles, Sec. of State for Communities and Local Government, is proposing to give residents the right to veto high council tax by abolishing capping and giving local people a stronger role in determining the annual increase. A period of consultation has just ended, with parish, district and county councils being asked to submit their comments to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Coalition Government intends introducing legislation at the earliest opportunity making it a legal requirement for councils to conduct referendums if it is deemed that the increase in council tax is excessive. Under current ruling, the Secretary of State can take capping action but this can make it very difficult for councils to plan their budgetary requirement. Parish and Town Councils set a precept to enable them to support neighbourhoods and communities and this is shown on the council tax bill. It is recognised that council tax payers should be protected against excessive increases but are referendums really the answer?

The Government is proposing that any billing authority that sets an excessive council tax increase must hold a referendum of all local registered electors. The organisation and cost of this will fall to that same billing authority, with little opportunity to recoup the costs involved. If, as a result of a referendum, the proposed increase in council tax is rejected, the billing authority would have to issue new bills to every household immediately and offer refunds or credits against any future liabilities.

For Town and Parish Councils, the main concern is the time and cost involved, should the Government introduce this legislation. We all want to see fair council taxes and we give a great deal of consideration to local needs and the general economic situation prior to setting the precept. However, these costs could prove too onerous for a small Parish Council and ultimately could add to the financial pressure that many billing authorities find themselves under.



Suttles

Your local friendly stone and aggregate supplier

Sand Gravel Limestone Decorative Chippings

Local specialists in decorative chippings for your garden, driveway and paths

From £29 per tonne

Delivery or pick up from our Tower Park depot - your choice View our range of products at www.suttles.co.uk

01929 439444 01202 657995

Bosnia, the forgotten country

David Topping and his brother John are planning another aid trip at the end of October to Bosnia, a much forgotten country now the media have lost interest. The Bosnians are making a huge effort to rebuild their economy but schools, orphanages, hospitals, paraplegic associations and families associations often get left behind. The mine clearance programme, (Bosnia has more mines than any other country in the world second only to Cambodia), is painfully slow as they just do not have the money and there is very little international aid.



The last convoy consisted of six Landrovers with 3.5 tonne trailers: they took over 12 tonnes of aid to a centre for people with mine injuries, a paraplegic association for distribution to the disabled (many from the war) as well as clothes and nappies to several families associations. Genesis, who's primary function is to teach conflict management and mine awareness training to children, helps distribute this desperately needed aid to various bodies and organisations, all of whom express their gratitude to the people who donate to the convoy.

Some of the aid was collected locally and a big thank you to all who helped. Colehill First School, who collected clothes and shoes, are also making up Christmas shoeboxes for us to take. Ferndown First School have had a change of uniform so have made a collection of the old uniforms. Again a very big THANK YOU to all! David and John will be away from the UK for eleven days, three travelling out, five in Bosnia and three returning. David tells us, "A tiring and emotional trip but well rewarded, just by the look on the recipients' faces."

2011 Census just six months away

In six months time you will receive a white envelope through your door, with a giant purple origami C emblazoned on it. It will contain a questionnaire because it's the once in a decade census! The census is an integral and vitally important part of local life, so much is tied up with the end use of the statistics. Find out more at www.census.gov.uk

Get Involved

We need a local team to carry out the census fieldwork. Make some time, make some money, make a difference.

Visit www.censusjobs.co.uk



Receive 10% OFF your first order

PetzRus

Pet Food Supply & FREE Home Delivery Service

- Good value prices** - Up to 10% lower than retail prices
- Saves you time and money**
- We do all the heavy lifting**
- Foods for every animal**
- All the leading brands**
- Personal, efficient & friendly service**

It's no wonder so many pet owners are switching to **PetzRus!**

FREE Home Delivery



Call us

01202 840234

Order On Our Easy To Use Website

www.PetzRus.co.uk



Overgrown hedges are a hazard

Good hedges make good neighbours: or so the saying goes. Well-kept hedges beside the footpath enable people to walk along unimpeded and enjoy our lovely countryside and village life around Colehill. Overgrown hedges, obstructing the pavements, create a dangerous situation for people with disabilities and the visually impaired, as well as pram and wheelchair users.



Dorset County Council has a duty to protect the rights of the public to full unobstructed access to the public highway under the Highways Act 1980, Section 154. DCC has asked the Parish Council, when it becomes aware of a problem, to contact the owner/occupiers of the properties to advise them that they are in breach of the law. The County Council has the powers to require the breach to be remedied, failing which it or its agents can undertake the work and charge the owner/occupiers.

In doubt about the regulations? Contact the Parish Clerk, who can provide you with a leaflet: you can also report clear breaches to the Parish Council. Autumn is a particularly appropriate time to take action so please cut your hedges back. You will greatly improve the appearance of the neighbourhood, and make the pavements safer for everybody.

Dates for your diary

November Events

- 6 **Fireworks**, St Michael's School
- 13 **Wimborne in Bloom Charities Fair**
Allendale Centre, 10am – 4pm
- 14 **Remembrance Parade**, 10.15am
St. Michael's Church to War Memorial
- 20 **Christmas Market**, Upper Church House
Wimborne 10am – 2pm
Santa's Arrival, 2.30pm
Stewarts Garden Centre, Broomhill
- 27 **Christmas Tree and Lights**, 5pm
St. Michael's Church
Christmas Market, 5pm – 7pm
St. Michael's Church
Christmas Lights, Wimborne 3.30pm

December Events

- 1 **Christmas Workshops**, 10am – 12noon
Walford Mill (various dates to 17th, see advert)
- 4 **A Comedy of Errors**, 10am – 12noon
Allendale Centre FREE CHILDREN'S SHOW
Places limited, MUST get tickets in advance
- 11 **Magic Stilts**, followed by Aladdin Pantomime
10am-12noon
Allendale Centre FREE CHILDREN'S SHOW
Places limited, MUST get tickets in advance
Christmas Parade, Wimborne 2.15pm
In aid of Save The Children
Pudding Stir, Priest's House Museum
10.30am – 4pm
- 17 **Carol Concert**, 6pm
Corn Market, Wimborne
- 18 **Dick Whittington and His Cat**
Tivoli Theatre until 1st January 2011

February Events

- 4 **The Bedtime Tales Pantomime**
until 6th Co.MaD Colehill Memorial Hall

April Events

- 2 **Quiz Night**, Colehill Memorial Hall
Tickets from Barbara Gooch Tel:882590

Free Parking for Christmas Shopping

Sat. 4, 11 and 18

Mon. 20 - Sat. 25 inclusive



Editor: Susan Davies Email: clarion@colehill.gov.uk
Telephone: 01202 887786

fleur bijou

Christmas Workshops at Walford Mill

by local florist and tutor, Susan Davies

Hand-Tied Christmas Wreath
Dec:1st,4th,7th,8th 10am-12noon

Christmas Table Arrangement
Dec:13th,14th,17th 10am-12noon

£30 each (includes tuition fee, materials & refreshments)
*ask about our floristry courses starting in the New Year

These workshops are suitable for all ages and abilities. No experience necessary and you will take home something hand-made and beautiful. A great start to the festive season!

To reserve your place on these very popular Christmas Workshops, please contact Walford Mill on 01202 841400 or call in to Walford Mill, Stone Lane, Wimborne
www.walfordmillcrafts.co.uk www.fleurbijou-gardeninbox.co.uk

BMX Track one of the best in the country!

It will probably come as a surprise to most Colehill residents that we have a recreational facility that is in great demand nationally. The BMX track in Coombes Wood, Smugglers Lane is so highly regarded for its adrenalin-charging jumps that riders from all over the country come to take on the challenge.



A group of very enthusiastic Colehill youngsters, together with parents and pro-rider Josh Brooks and Andy Walker, have had a meeting with the Parish Council to discuss designing a separate trail for inexperienced, young riders as well as modifying some of the larger jumps to enable the older children to grow in confidence before attempting the really big jumps.

Jack Hare, 15, acting as unofficial spokesman for the Colehill youngsters who regularly use the BMX track, said that the jumps are important to them for a number of reasons. He said it is something that youths of all ages can use together and making some of the jumps easier for junior riders means that they can all meet up locally, rather than having to travel further afield to find jumps that they can do. He also said that it gives them an interest and keeps them "off the streets", a view supported by our local PCSO Matt Johnson. Jack said, "I ride every day which is good exercise. I enjoy it – it's my passion and it would be good to see younger children getting into the sport. I believe that improving these jumps would encourage that." And, who can argue with that sentiment?

The Parish Council supports the development of the BMX track but this has to be done sympathetically with environmental sensitivities taken into consideration during the consultation stages. It is hoped that the new jumps and improvements to existing ones will be undertaken during the winter-time, a natural off-season for the track, ready for the start of the new BMX season in March.

Comment: Having met a number of the young people using the track it is clear how important this facility is to them. Their enthusiasm is infectious and their determination to "own" this track and not to allow it to be trashed by others, is a credit to them. Perhaps we should consider "rewarding" them by holding a BMX competition next year. Anyone interested in sponsoring this for our local youngsters? Ed.

The Reef, almost there!

Fundraising is moving on at a good pace now with £360,000 of the £475,000 target identified. Funding has been achieved through generous pledges from various charitable trusts and grants from local councils. The Committee is about to appoint an architect, which will move the project on to the tendering stage, with March 2011 the target date to start the building works. Donations can be made by contacting David Topping (Chairman) on 01202 888291 or you can support the re-building project at various forthcoming events. (see diary dates)