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The Parish Council Newsletter

Welcome to the September 2020 edition of the Parish Council Newsletter. This two page version of the Newsletter is available on the Council's website. **Printed copies** will be available from our usual outlets at Forest Pharmacy; Fourways Stores; Budgen and Woodington Feeds. We will be making regular Newsletter updates to be found on our **web site** and our **Facebook** pages – type in **Copythorne Parish Council** on Facebook to get to our pages.

A Message from the Parish Council to All Our Parishioners – COVID-19

THE LOCKDOWN EASES FURTHER, BUT WE'RE NOT THERE YET!!

As with all our previous recent issues, the Parish Council would like to express our sincerest wishes that all of you **stay safe and well** as the country continues to experience the threats posed by the Coronavirus (**COVID-19**). More and more people can be seen enjoying the freedom to move around, go to the pub, eat out (especially on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays!), and of course, get back to work! The playground at the Parish Hall has been well-used and enjoyed by numerous children since re-opening. But we must all still **continue to be vigilant!** And there are still many in our community who have to stay at home. **Please still keep an eye out for neighbours you know can't get out and are in possible need of help.**

The Parish Hall plans staged reopening from September (the Pre School is already open)

The Parish Council continues to provide **updates on our website and Facebook pages.**

Unless the guidance changes, the next Parish Council meeting on **8th September** will again be held **virtually via videoconferencing**. If you have an issue you'd like raised under the '**Public Session**' agenda item, please contact the Clerk; details below.

So everyone: Please Continue to Be Careful! - Be Safe! - Be Well!

Update 1 – The New Forest Ambassador Scheme

In our last edition, we reported that the National Park has introduced the '**New Forest Ambassador Scheme**', which went live from **1st August**. The scheme is designed to welcome visitors back to the New Forest and at the same time helps them understand and respect it and avoid undue 'stress' on the environment. Volunteer Ambassadors, drawn from local people, will help with the encouragement of a positive attitude to the care of the Forest. Issues include **litter picking, verge parking, promoting the New Forest Code** and **reporting problems**.



While this is a National Park initiative, the Parish Council has established a Facebook page which will provide regular updates on the progress and information about this highly relevant and important scheme and since we started that page, we have been impressed by the hundreds of 'reads' we have experienced! There's still time to volunteer, so if you're interested, you can obtain more information by visiting: www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/nfambassadors or to download the code see: www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/07/FINAL-nf-code-July-2020.pdf

Update 2 – Invasive Non-Native Plant Species – A Parish Broader Forest Challenge

In our July edition and subsequently with a special feature on our website and in Stanley's Own magazine, we reported a rise in sightings of **Japanese Knotweed** and **Himalayan Balsam** in our area. These two invasive non-native species are the most prevalent (there are others), in the New Forest and we have experience of several incidences of them in the past, in some cases, quite major. We are now in the 'peak' season for these plants and this is a reminder to **keep an eye out for any instances of growth.**

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For **Himalayan Balsam** and its removal, see the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) website: www.hiwwt.org.uk/new-forest-non-native-plants and see also the **Parish Council web site** for updated information on **Himalayan Balsam Removal Projects**.



Dealing with **Japanese Knotweed** is a **professional job** using the right chemicals and procedures. You can't just cut it down and assume it's dealt with. You **must not** take it to Local Authority Waste Recycling Centres or put it in garden waste bags for collection.

There is clear information on how to spot it and further advice at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-japanese-knotweed-from-spreading. Also, other information and identification sheets for Japanese Knotweed and many other invasive plant species can be found at the **NNSS site** – www.nonnativespecies.org.



Coronavirus – Further Update on Help from Our Local Community Shops

All our local shops and services are working in much the same way as previously, with **Local Farm Shops**: – **Alford's** open Thursday, Friday and Saturday (**02380 812 269** for orders) and **Tatchbury Manor Farm** on Friday and Saturday for order collections (tatchburymanorfarm.co.uk); **Forest Pharmacy** weekdays 8.30 am to 5.30 pm and Saturday 10.00 am to 2.00 pm (**023 8081 2734** for pharmaceutical delivery requests) (see also their new website at myforestpharmacy.co.uk); **Budgens** normal 7 days a week opening and **Spar** normal 7 days a week opening. **Fourways Stores and Bartley Post Office** – the shop is open from **6.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.** every day and the post office from **9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.** (**02380 813 481** or johanne@fourwaysstores.com for orders / deliveries)

PLEASE NOTE: ALL ABOVE INFORMATION IS CORRECT AT TIME OF WRITING

Towards a 'Parish Community Forum' and the Start of a Community Development Process for a Parish Design Statement (PDS)

Parishioners will know that, due to the Coronavirus Lockdown, the **Annual Parish Meeting (APM)**, scheduled to take place in March and facilitated by the Parish Council for the community, was cancelled. The **APM** is a legally established meeting for the local community, facilitated by the Parish Council, and Government advice meant that it could not take place.

The 'window' in which an APM can legally take place has now passed. However, the Parish Council believes that some form of **local community meeting** would, if we could achieve it, be a desirable event to try and arrange. However, **it should be noted that** any meeting we arrange would not have the legal status of the APM – it would simply be a Local Community Meeting facilitated by the Parish Council to discuss local items and celebrate developments.

To that end, we have provisionally set a date for a '**Parish Community Forum**' at the Parish Hall on **Tuesday 27th October at 7.30 pm**. But please note that **this date is provisional** and any meeting can only go ahead if the then current Government advice allows us to operate it!

Most importantly, as indicated in the last Newsletter, a key item would be the launch of the process to create what is usually known as a **Village Design Statement (VDS)** - Copythorne Parish is comprised of **6 villages**, so our document would be called a '**Parish Design Statement**' (**PDS**). We described what a VDS / PDS is in our last (August) Newsletter, so please refer to the copy on the Parish Council website for more information. This will be a **Community Initiative**, not a Parish Council one and any Steering Group would be comprised of local people, including Parish Council representation

This is an exciting development for our community. We'd be really pleased to hear from anyone who'd like to be involved. This is a **call for volunteers** to sit on the community led Steering Group.

If you're interested, please contact the Clerk (details below) and leave your contact details.

Date of the Next Parish Council Meeting: The next Parish Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 8th September** and at the time of writing, is planned to take place via video conferencing. Contact the Clerk for more information on how to access the meeting.

The Clerk to the Council, David Rigby, can be contacted by post at: 9, The Cleaves, West Totton, Southampton, SO40 8WL or by telephone: 02381120150 or by email at: parishclerk@copythorne.org.uk website: www.copythorne.org.uk. Details of individual Parish Councillors, and information on District and County Councillors, can also be found on the Parish Council Website and on community notice boards.