STILTON PARISH COUNCIL

Monthly Newsletter

In this issue - Face to face meetings, the 'Wednesday' club, Stilton Speedwatch revs up, Christmas Fair plans and a Play Park update



PARISH COUNCIL MEETS FACE-TO-FACE OUT OF DOORS!

Thanks to June's fine weather the Parish Council was able to hold its first face-to-face meeting out of doors at Stilton Pavilion on 8th June. The Government's legislation allowing Zoom meetings ended in May, so Parish Council face-to-face meetings are now obligatory. The outdoor session enabled a gathering of our Parish Councillors, together with our District and County Councillors and some members of the public, to take place with the necessary Covid-19 precautions. A very full agenda, including dealing with the end of year audit issues, was dealt with speedily and efficiently so business was completed just after the sun dipped below the horizon!

New 'Wednesday' Club at the Pavilion

As the grip of the Covid-19 Pandemic is eased there are many people in the village who yearn to start socialising face to face again. The Parish Council has responded to residents' requests (mainly from the over 50s who are fully vaccinated) for somewhere to meet, have a cup of tea and a chat, by setting up a Wednesday Club at the Pavilion.

The new Club has got off to a flying start with all the social distancing and Covid-safe measures in place. The Club is open on Wednesdays (hence the name!) between 2pm and 4pm for villagers to meet and talk. Various social activities will be available, including for example, chair yoga, music and demonstrations during the next few weeks. Julie, our Pavilion Administrator is full of ideas for the Wednesday Club, one of which might include a luncheon club if there is sufficient demand.

To start the ball rolling, over the past four weeks Mary Croll and Jackie Shailer have donated delicious homemade cakes whilst other volunteers have made the tea, coffee and washed up afterwards.

The Club has only been in existence for a few weeks but there is already lots of good feedback. One villager summed up his feelings about it by saying that, "it is marvellous to have somewhere in Stilton to go to for a cup of tea and a chat."

Why not come along and join in?





PLAY PARK UPDATE

Those of you passing by the Pavilion will have noticed that the groundworks in preparation for the Play Park have already started. These should be completed soon so that the area is ready for the installation of the play equipment. We understand the installation is likely to start towards the end of July or early August.



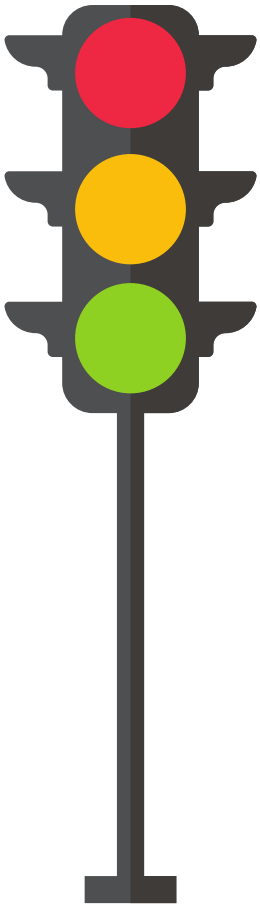
CHRISTMAS FAIR DATES

The Parish Council agreed to hold a Christmas Fair at Stilton Pavilion on Saturday, 27th November 2021 (COVID restrictions permitting!) Now that the under-12's Play Park is to be built, all profits from the Fair will be placed in a fund for youths' amenities, the planned Phase 2 of the Parish Council's plan for the young people of our village. The Christmas Fair is a major undertaking and we really need your help for the planning and running of the event. If you would like to help in any way please contact Dee Darnell (dee.darnell@stiltonparishcouncil.org or tel: 0780 6833555)

HIGHWAYS AND SPEEDWATCH – EDUCATING OUR DRIVERS

Our reports of speeding vehicles in North Street have attracted a lot of attention from residents. There are lots of ideas for how we might solve the problem. However, many don't realise that to achieve changes we must persuade Cambridgeshire Highways (who are responsible for our roads) that action is needed. Any change has to meet current rules and guidelines, but, if our arguments are sound, county funds may be forthcoming – though usually with some local matched funding from the Parish Council. Road maintenance and highways changes are expensive and so our proposals need to be strong. We are always in competition with other villages that also have road safety concerns.

Stilton's recent successes with bids to Cambridgeshire's Local Highways Improvement (LHI) scheme have been underpinned by evidence accumulated by the village Community Speedwatch team. Our records of speeding vehicles along North Street were essential to get LHI funds for our Moveable Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS) that can now be seen around the village and for the 40mph "buffer zone" that will be installed to the north of the village later in this financial year.



The MVAS is now, not only displaying vehicle speeds but is continuously collecting data of traffic numbers and speeds of vehicles. This will help further bids for traffic calming measures in the village. But Speedwatch will continue to provide important information to help our future bids for funds.

Both MVAS and Community Speedwatch are important to remind and also educate road users about the hazards associated with speed on our roads. We know that many drivers slow down when they spot our MVAS or Speedwatch team. We are pleased to see that. The main idea is not to "catch" those who offend but remind drivers of the need to keep to the speed limit. Perhaps in the future our vehicles will be fitted with a "black box" controlling and/or recording our vehicle's speed! But, until then, we have to use other methods to keep our village safe.

Community Speedwatch is a national initiative where members of local communities, with the support and supervision of their local police, record details of speeding vehicles using approved detection devices. In Stilton we have a small band of volunteers running Speedwatch. But we need more people to come forward if we are to provide regular Speedwatch sessions for our village. We don't want to interfere with our neighbours' behaviour, but improve the safety and quality of life for everyone in our village.

How does it work? The Speedwatch team records all vehicles passing that are exceeding the speed limit; this information is passed to the police. Registered keepers of those vehicles are contacted – initially with a letter explaining the potential risks and consequences of their dangerous behaviour. Repeat offenders receive a visit from the local police, irrespective of where they live. Beyond these friendly gestures, focused enforcement and criminal prosecution follow based on the collated evidence.

If you can spare just an hour or two a month to become a Community Speedwatch volunteer for Stilton please contact csw.stilton@gmail.com or Keith Bull on 07484863226.

We can organize a short police training session to show you all you need to know to join us in our Stilton Speedwatch sessions.

Stilton Speedwatch needs you.

We look forward to hearing from you!