



<b>Parish Council</b>	<b>Job Responsibility</b>	<b>Area Responsibility</b>
Mr D Venner(Chmn) 656 637	Quantock Hills	Culverhayes, Newton, Kingswood, Main Rd.
Mr M Andersen 07760 170300	Roads	Dashwoods La., Combe Close, Quantockside
Mr M Cox 656 183	Police Liaison	Trendle Lane, Quantock Moor, Chilcombe La.
Mrs C Randell 656 956	Young People	Church Lane (1 - 38) Parsons Close, Gatchells La.
Mrs N Russell 656 710	Environment	Church Lane (No. 40 down to main road)
Mr K ter Braak 656 633	Planning	Hill Lane, Honeyrow Lane, Halsway, Thorncombe
Mrs J White 633 624	Footpaths	Woolston
Mrs M ter Braak 656 633	Parish Clerk	

<b>Neighbourhood Watch Wardens</b>		
Murray Bush 632 878	Woolston	
Carol Darke 656 222	South of A358	
John Lees 656 333	Dashwoods Lane, Combe Close	
Mark Ogden 656 371	Church Lane, Gatchells Lane, Parsons Close	
Cerys Randell 656 956	Trendle Lane, Quantock Moor, Chilcombe Lane	
Kees ter Braak 656 633	Honey Row Lane, Hill Lane	

**PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS - 5 MAY 2011**

There will be some vacancies on your parish council at the next election in May, so if any parishioner is interested in becoming a parish councillor now is the time to volunteer! You could make a worthwhile contribution to the parish and it's not very time-consuming - just 6 meetings a year. For more information or to register your interest, please contact the Parish Clerk (Mary ter Braak) on 656633.

**COMMUNITY FIRST RESPONDER SCHEME**



Last month 13 parishioners spent 21 hours in the Village Hall learning and practising First Aid and Resuscitation techniques. After having completed the final section of the

course - attending a real emergency situation with an ambulance crew - they will be fully trained and qualified as First Responders.

In a rural situation such as ours this could well make the difference between a good recovery or not! For further information contact Kees ter Braak - 656633.

**CONGRATULATIONS** from us all to Graham High on his M.B.E. (Magnificent Bicknoller Effort!)

**SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS - AN INFORMATION FORUM**

The world, and the UK, needs to be generating more of its energy sustainably. One of the technologies is solar photovoltaic panels (PV). Like many new inventions for your home, PV has attracted many claims, many suppliers, and plenty of confusing information. For anyone thinking seriously or just idly about investing in PV, the need is for objective information and the chance to get straight answers to straight questions, not sales pitches.

Quantock Eco is organising an open forum on **Wednesday 9 February in Bicknoller Village Hall** to provide an objective briefing on PV for local residents. Information will be provided by accredited installers, homeowners who have invested in PV, and experts on finance and legal aspects. There will be ample opportunity for questions and discussion.

The forum starts at 7.30 p.m. and entry is free. Beforehand, at 7 p.m., a fish & chip supper will be available, at a price of £5.00 (prior booking essential: please contact Carole Darke on 656222. For further information on the forum, contact Richard Hill on 656628.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH** - John Lees writes:

It is good to report "nothing to report". One reason is, I am sure, that you have all been crime conscious - e.g. when away from home you have left a parked car in view, lights coming on automatically at night and above all you have kept your Warden informed of your absence.

Sue Marks, our PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) has left us. Peter Bolton (from Minehead) has replaced her.

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### **WELCOME TO THE PARISH**

John & Jane Grellier, White's Meadow, Trendle La.

Annette Lewis, 27 Church Lane

Edward & Sheila Down, Edgemoor Cottage, Hill La.

Phil & Nicole Milton, Little Gables, Dashwoods Lane

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**BICKNOLLER FLOWER SHOW** starts a new year! The primroses are appearing and the bulbs shooting! So we invite you to come to the **SPRING SHOW** on Saturday 26 March at 2 p.m. in the Village Hall to see and smell all the beautiful blooms. Before that, on 17 February at 7.30 p.m. we will be enthralled by Chris Smith from Pennard Plants and his presentation "The Victorian Walled Garden". Entry is free to both events, so please join us in 2011. We are also repeating the Potato Challenge - come along and find out more!

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**SOCIAL CLUB** - Ian Anderson writes:

The Social Club meets every third Wednesday in the month, apart from August. Our members enjoy discussions, talks, visits and demonstrations (not the violent type!).

Highlights from last year included a talk on the Brendon Minerals Line and a visit from an expert on raptors, who brought his barn owl and kestrel to the Village Hall, where they flew among the audience, to everyone's great delight!

Events already booked for this year include an illustrated talk by James Williams, Chairman of the Otter Group of Somerset Wildlife Trust, and a visit from auctioneer Claire Rawle, who will be talking about antiques and collectables and will be valuing members' belongings. Time to get Aunt Enid's vase out of the attic!

Membership costs only £8 a year. Please contact the Secretary, Jean Challender, on 656760.

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**OUR SHOP** - John Lees writes:

Ask any estate agent and they will tell you that having a shop in a village adds up to 10% on property prices. If your house is worth £200,000 then the shop has contributed £20,000!

So, **Buy Five, Stay Alive** is not a lot to ask, particularly as we stock over 400 different items, including an unbeatable choice of cards and a good variety of local produce.

**BICKNOLLER W.I.** - Mary Hill writes:

Bicknoller WI had a busy and varied programme in the second half of 2010. For our September meeting, Sheila Draper gave us a fascinating and very amusing talk about her passion for patchwork, and a display of her work was much admired.

In October, Nigel Ford, a Magic Circle member and the Taunton Wayfarers 'Pantomime Dame', amazed and mystified us with a range of tricks and mind-reading abilities, interspersed with many funny stories.

At our AGM in November, Maggie Pumphrey stood down as President, having completed three very successful years, and Mary Hill was elected in her place. The committee members were re-elected, with the exception of Glen Heaton, who stood down for family reasons. The AGM was followed by a light supper, and games which made us all laugh.

The year finished with the annual Christmas dinner, held at the home of Mary Hill, with catering by Jenny Jenkins. This was a huge success, as Jenny provided us with an outstanding meal and service, so that a very convivial evening was enjoyed by all.

The subject at our next meeting on 10 February is entitled 'Summer Tranquillity in 10 days' when David Manners will talk to us about the design and construction of an award winning garden. This is an OPEN meeting - everyone is welcome and the cost is £3 for non-members.

At our March meeting we will be watching the DVD of 'Mrs Henderson Presents', the story of the founding of the Windmill Theatre.

The open April meeting promises to be of real interest to the whole village, as Sharon Bailey is talking to us about 'Birds of Prey', and bringing some of her birds with her for us to see.

Our May and June meetings are craft orientated with demonstrations on 'Making Traditional English Pot Pourri', and 'Rags to Bags', involving recycling materials to make special bags.

If all this sounds fun to you, come and join us. We are not an old and fusty WI, but a lively and welcoming group. If you are new to the village, it is an excellent way to make new friends!

Our meetings take place at 7.30pm on the second Thursday of the month in the Village Hall. You may come as a visitor (charge £2.50) to see if you want to join us. If you would like any more information do ring our Secretary Mary ter Braak (656 633) or our President Mary Hill (656 628). We would be delighted to hear from you.

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**ROYAL BRITISH LEGION** - Pam Miles writes: the welfare help that the Royal British Legion gives to our service and ex-service men and women and their families is needed more than ever. Thanks to your support, the Quantock branch raised £2000 last year, much of which went to the welfare of those in Somerset.

We have the right wool, at last, and have now begun to knit hats for our soldiers in Afghanistan. If you knit, or know someone who can help, please get in touch with Gladys Fillyary (656452) or me (656888). These woollen hats are gratefully received out there where it can be very cold at night, even in the summer.

This year we shall be holding our traditional Coffee Morning in May at Combe Cottage, Dashwoods Lane, courtesy of Deirdre Gascoigne, and our Barbeque in August will be in the marquee. I would like to take the opportunity to say a big thank you to all those who help with these events. Every contribution, from a home-baked cake to your time, is very much appreciated. We look forward to seeing you there.

If you know of anyone who may benefit from RBL welfare, please do let us know via 656888. If you are considering joining, please call 656402. More information can be obtained from our website: [www.quantockrbl.org](http://www.quantockrbl.org)

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#### **OUR VILLAGE HALL**- Robert Hardy writes:

Though the level of lettings has fluctuated, overall the Hall is getting plenty of use and the Management Committee continues to upgrade the facilities we offer.

The new audio and projection system, established under the guidance of David Thorpe, has been up and running for some time. We have recently acquired a set of modern trestle tables and twenty extra folding chairs, all seen to advantage at Wendy Eaton's Bingo Night on 17 December, which was packed in spite of the arctic weather.

Outside, the Play Area passed its annual safety inspection by Somerset Playing Fields Association, with only two or three very minor defects being identified, and those easily rectified.

Unfortunately, it suffered some vandalism in September (the culprits not known) which meant replacing and repairing some gates and fencing.

On 18 September we held a successful Jumble Sale in partnership with the Social Club. Our next event is a musical evening on Friday 11 March, the entertainment being provided by committee member Martin Cox's band - Regal Rhythm.

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#### **QUANTOCK ECO** - Julian Anderson writes:

We have had energy efficiency workshops in five villages across the Quantocks, a stand outside the Co-op in Bishops Lydeard and have also made an announcement on Facebook offering free on-the-spot advice on how to be energy efficient.

Several members volunteered to be trained as "Energy Savers" and are now available to give that advice.

We have also distributed information on sustainable electricity generating systems which will reach a peak in our special information forum taking place at the Village Hall on 9 February (see front page).

Our electric vehicle project has produced a positive

result: a community transport service will be buying an electric Peugeot MPV with wheelchair facilities for the "Musgrove run".

We have started a project designed to convert the plastic that still fills our bins into useful objects, instead of sending it to landfill. This project is actively supported by our MP and WSDC Environment Councillor.

Two Bicknoller QE members have joined the Quantock Beekeepers' Association and are taking courses in beekeeping. Another course will start in March.

The Quantock Hills AONB has invited QE to be a "delivery partner" of specific tasks in their Management Plan, all of which are geared to preserving our biodiversity.

QE now has a strong membership base and supporters in eleven Quantock villages. We also have the support of established groups such as Forum 21, the Centre for Sustainable Energy and the Energy Saving Trust and have received a grant from the Quantock Hills Sustainable Development Fund.

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#### **OUR CHURCH** - Cerys Randell writes:

The Church Action Group continues to run events in the village. The most recent one being "Carols around the Tree" last December followed by mince pies and mulled wine.

It was also the turn of St. George's church to host the Benefice Christmas Eve midnight candlelit service. It was very uplifting to share this special service with so many people.

Forthcoming events planned this year include a coffee morning on Saturday 19 February from 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon. The theme for the morning is "Guess the Couple". If you would like to take part, we need your wedding photos! All photos need to be given to Mike & Jean Pennington-Ridge and we promise to take great care of them.

There will be a second coffee morning in March and we are planning a table top sale in aid of "Water Aid" which is the charity we have chosen to support this year.

St. George's PCC is responsible for maintaining the up-keep of the fabric of the church. You may have seen workmen at the church over the last few months. Some of the work undertaken has been to keep the stonework in good order and this work has now been completed.

For our latest project we are asking for **your help**.

We are in the process of installing under pew heaters and need donations to be able to extend heaters to more pews. So far we have been able to put heaters under all the pews in the centre aisle but would like to extend them to all parts of the church. Each heater costs us £45.

We have already received some donations towards the project for which we are deeply grateful, **but we need more!** If you would like to buy a heater or

make a donation towards one, please contact the Churchwardens - Mike Pennington-Ridge (656555) or Paul Mansfield (656816).

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**HISTORY IN OUR MIDST** - there follows two articles about two contrasting maritime figures:

**Jenny White** writes about her father, the skipper of the Aust Ferry across the Severn.

In 1931 my father, Geoffrey Groves, was the first skipper of the motor ferryboat taking passengers across the river Severn from Beachley to Aust. The crossing lies almost exactly where the first Severn Bridge was to be built in 1966.

Although the ferry the "May Queen" was supposed to carry passengers only, the rules were quite flexible and bicycles, small livestock and even motor bikes were often transported.

One day a gentleman came rushing down the pier at Beachley and asked my father if he could take him and his small car (Austin Seven). At first he was refused but the man was desperate and pleaded with him.

My father, being one who could not resist a challenge, considered all the implications: they certainly would not be insured, he could lose his job and it might not work! Eventually he was persuaded and strong planks and ropes were found. They managed to drive the car on to the open boat, secure it in place and then succeeded in transporting the car across to Aust. I gather the princely sum of 17 shillings was paid for this service.

When the "May Queen" arrived back at Beachley, the owner of the ferry came rushing down the pier. Dad thought ("now I'm in for it") but not at all, the owner just said "Well done Geoff - I've been thinking, if a small boat can carry one car, a larger boat can carry several ....!"

So began the Beachley to Aust car ferry which ran from 1933 to 1966 when the Severn bridge opened.

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**Philip Day** - one of his ancestors was Sir Cloudesley Shovell, Admiral, who in a great tragedy in 1707 lost his life along with 2000 others when his fleet foundered on the Scillies.

Admiral Shovell had run away to sea from his job as an apprentice cobbler and worked his way up in the navy, distinguishing himself at various battles, including the capture of Gibraltar. He was potentially another Nelson.

It is easy to belittle the navigational skills that seemed to be lacking in those days. The biggest lack was a reliable time piece. Navigation was by Direct Reckoning ..... you knew where you were when you started, you knew your speed and you knew where you wanted to go but there was no way of knowing accurately for how long you had been sailing.

It wasn't until 1761 that John Harrison proved his chronometer could be used at sea and, by an amazing coincidence, the great, great, great,

great, great, great grandson of John Harrison lives in our village - Jim Harrison of Quantock Moor House!

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## NEED HOME IMPROVEMENTS

If you need essential home improvements but can't afford High Street lending rates, then West Somerset Council may be able to help. Homeowners in West Somerset of all ages on lower incomes and/or benefits can apply for low cost loans.

The interest rate is fixed at 3% for the whole lifetime of the loan. Monthly repayments are low and will not rise.

You can borrow from £1,000 to £15,000 to help your home meet the decent homes standard, so improvements may include:

Repairs to leaky roofs; replacement boilers and radiators; installing central heating; replacing rotten windows or doors; updating bathrooms or kitchens over 20 years old

A friendly, qualified advisor will support you during your application. The work will be carried out by trusted local builders and West Somerset Council will check that it is finished to a good standard.

For more information, please phone 01278 435747 or log on to the Wessex Home Improvement Loans website at [www.wessexrt.co.uk](http://www.wessexrt.co.uk)

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

All in the Village Hall unless otherwise stated.

9 Feb. Fish & Chip supper (order in advance) 7p.m.  
Open Forum on Solar PV panels 7.30 p.m.

10 Feb. NSPCC Coffee Morning 10 a.m. to 12 noon

10 Feb. "Garden Design: Summer Tranquillity  
in Ten Days" 7.30 p.m.

17 Feb. "The Victorian Walled Garden" 7.30 p.m.

19 Feb. PCC Coffee Morning 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon

26 Mar. Spring Flower Show 2.30 p.m. onwards

17 Apr. Open Farm & Hog Roast at  
Quantock Moor Farm 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

7 May RBL Coffee Morning at  
Combe Cottage 10 a.m.