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27th May 2020

How green can we be?

Dear All,

Thanks to everyone for maintaining sensible lock down behaviours as we approach the end of May, so that we all **Stay Alert and Stay Safe**.

We have been blessed with wonderful weather to enjoy exploring our wonderful village, discovering routes we may not have used before. We have an extensive footpath network around the village which links to the neighbouring settlements of Rodney Stoke, Easton and Priddy, as the Westbury Walks series available from the village shop demonstrate.

The Parish Council also has a footpaths officer, Colin Booth, who keeps the council informed about the state of the paths network which it is the County Council’s duty to maintain. We’d be grateful to hear any comments you have on where you might have found it difficult to walk and any thoughts on where improvements might be needed.

Mendip District Council is responsible for cutting amenity grass areas and the verges of our roads and lanes. Coronavirus is devastating for many, but not all. There are some positives, especially for wildlife in Mendip – it’s thriving.

The emergency has meant large areas of amenity grass have been left uncut, and still remain so, providing a unique opportunity for the Council. Mendip was already looking at wildflower and rewilding proposals. Now this idea has been accelerated and areas are being identified for seasonal or Eco cutting. Decisions need to be made quickly as cutting time is near. Mendip are keen to get local views on where we can improve the biodiversity of our village by reducing the frequency of cutting and where it is still necessary for reasons of road safety.

As well as thinking of the health of our paths and roadsides, we are also concerned about tree cover within the village and its surroundings. The council has recently supported the development of a community tree group and their first public statement is included with this bulletin. Let them know your thoughts.

Finally on our eco theme the Parish Council has noticed how many of us are spending more time in our gardens and being aware of the pleasure and health giving benefits of growing our own vegetables. Do you need more space to do this? We would be interested to know what demand there would be for local allotments here. Do contact me with your views.

Stay safe and continue to enjoy our paths, country lanes and magnificent trees.

Sue Isherwood, Chair Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Council 01749 870457