

***December 2021***



WESTBURY-SUB-MENDIP  
PARISH COUNCIL



## ***Newsletter***

***Merry Christmas to all our residents***



*Photo by Tina Westcott*

***Westbury Tree Group 2022 Calendar –  
see page 9***

# New Covid regulations and advice



Photo by [Florian Galwogger](#) on [Unsplash](#)

**F, LIKE US**, you wondered why the new Covid variant was not called Epsilon, read to the end of this piece!

Otherwise, we expect you are well aware that the Covid guidelines have been changed to require the wearing of face masks in shops and on public transport from Tuesday, 30th November. This is particularly important for our Village Shop, which has served the community brilliantly. Thank you to all the staff and volunteers. The other key change is that anyone who has been in contact with someone infected with the new omicron variant should self-isolate regardless of their vaccination status. More details are [here](#).

Advice on mask wearing in schools has also changed – full details are [here](#).

You can get updated NHS advice about Covid, including symptoms, testing, vaccination and self-isolation, [here](#).

So why not Epsilon? There have been several variants of the Covid strain, which while not being significant have already been given Greek letters as far as Nu and Xi.

Officials at the World Health Organisations skipped two letters of the Greek alphabet when naming the latest

Covid variant in order to avoid “stigmatising” China, and perhaps its premier Xi Jinping.

A WHO source confirmed the letters Nu and Xi had been deliberately avoided. Nu had been skipped to avoid confusion with the word “new” and Xi had been ducked to “avoid stigmatising the region”, they said.

Since May, new variants of Sars-COV-2 have been given sequential names from the Greek alphabet under a naming convention devised by an expert committee at the WHO.

The system was chosen to prevent variants becoming known by the names of the places where they were first detected, which can be discriminatory.

Initially, most commentators assumed the B.1.1.529 variant, which was first found in Botswana, would be given the name Nu – the 13th letter of the Greek alphabet – but plays on the word “new” immediately spread across the internet.

Meanwhile we hope you all stay safe.

**Sue Reece and Mick Fletcher**

# End of an Era

**T**HE PLAYING FIELD committee are sorry to be saying farewell to two of its longstanding members, Alison Cole and Jan Ward, who have decided (after 14 years and 24 years respectively) to stand down.

Jan joined the committee in 1997 and, apart from a brief period from 2010 – 2013, when work commitments took up her spare time, has worked tirelessly towards the development and successful running of the playing field.

One of the first initiatives she was involved in was the installation of the skate park where she took a full role in fundraising and encouraging the young people of the village in decision making on the size and equipment most suited, as well as organising a 'skate-athon'.



Jan took on the position of Secretary in 2013 and, in this role, has been instrumental in organising fundraising events such as the 100 Club and annual Quiz Night, with her husband Ian setting the questions. She also became expert, alongside Alison, on filling out endless grant applications and pounding the streets of Westbury-sub-Mendip persuading businesses and individuals to support projects and make donations, as well as taking the minutes of meetings and keeping on top of correspondence and the day to day running of the playing field.

Alison Cole joined the committee in 2006 as Treasurer, with a period as Chairman, and on occasion fulfilling both roles when there were unfilled vacancies! Following the retirement of Tony Shepherd who had likewise been a stalwart in gaining grants for the AWS and managing the finances as funding increased, Jan and Alison were successful in gaining a £25,000 grant from the Legacy Fund and donations from local businesses and residents which, together with monies raised through Glastonbury stewarding from 2002 onwards, enabled the All Weather Surface to be installed, finally opening in 2016. More recently, Alison and Jan have organised the sandblasting

of the large swings and their refurbishment, with Guy Timson and Cathy Wilkins completing the painting.

The Treasurer's role entails preparing the accounts for auditing by Peter Laws; submitting an annual return as required by the Charity Commission; keeping them up to

date with the details of Trustees; registering for Gift Aid, arranging annual insurance, safety inspections, paying in income to CAF bank (a charities only bank); and ensuring that, as charity law dictates, reserves are 'ring fenced' to enable the upkeep of major projects. Both Tony and Alison have performed this role admirably and with great integrity.

Fundraising events in Jan and Alison's tenure include (to name a few):

- a Music Festival (2006) – with enormous help from Neil Burrows and Janette Limond
- a Goods and Promises Auction (2008) – with Will Hancock, our previous Chairman, as the auctioneer
- Picnic in the Park (2014) at the time of the Friendly Society's Diamond Jubilee event
- A tapas event (2014)

So...undoubtedly the end of an era – Alison says, "I am very proud that a small village like ours has such a well-developed playing field, open for the enjoyment and benefit of all residents. This is all down to many, many people who have given, and continue to give, time and money. And to the Parish Council for their support with our projects and insurance. It is time to hand over the baton to younger members of the community to develop the facilities further and I wish them well in this."

Our grateful thanks to Alison and Jan – and our best wishes for a happy 'retirement'!!

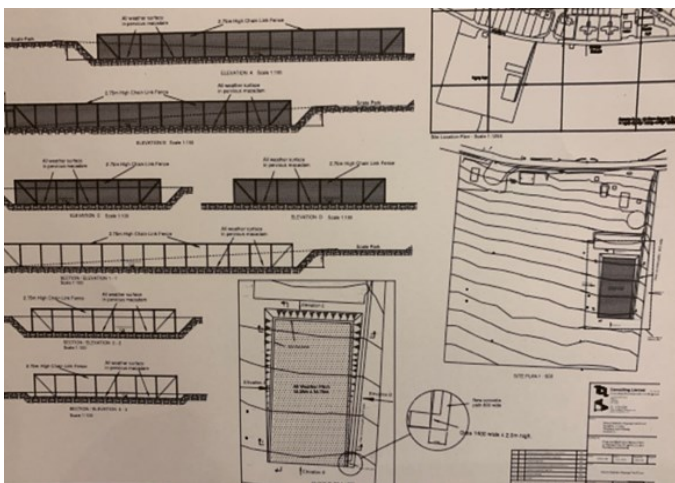
**Helen West**

# Another well-deserved thank you

**T**HE COMMITTEE of the Robert Glanville Playing Field Trust would like to take this opportunity to give our heartfelt thanks to Trevor Cole for all his hard work behind the scenes over the past 20 years.

Alison has been very much involved with developing and managing the village playing field but, out of public view, Trevor has been our 'unsung hero'. The skilled work he has undertaken as a structural engineer has been of the utmost help in completing the two major projects since 2000 at the playing field, without which they might not have been accomplished. His totally unpaid service has saved us in the region of £10,000, as well as providing expert and professional advice and an explanation of his findings in terms we all understood!

In our first project, Trevor produced detailed, for a hardened and polished high grade concrete surface with no ridges or defects: the type of concrete used in warehouse and supermarket floors that would withstand not only the elements, but also the pounding of skateboards and BMX bikes. Time has certainly proved that this was correct – not a crack or defect in over 15 years so that no maintenance of the surface has been necessary.



*Trevor's detailed plans for the all-weather surface*

Following the successful installation of the skate park, the committee wanted to install an all-weather surface (AWS). In order to submit plans for this, Trevor carried out a digital survey of the whole playing field. Originally the area that was to be used was in the north-west corner below the car park, for easy access to the AWS. This would require some cut and fill, that area being on a slope. However, after structural drawings of the skate area. Those on the committee at the time thought a bit of concrete would do ... Trevor explained the need studying maps of the area, Trevor realised that the main water pipe from Cheddar to Wells ran across the field – any excavation would have most likely hit this pipe. After much investigation, the line of the water pipe was determined which meant that the AWS had to be re-positioned to its current site.

Initially, Trevor thought that cut and fill would be appropriate but, after soil analysis proved the fill was likely to settle, the decision was made to do a cut only. This had the further benefit of making the AWS less visible and intrusive to the local residents as it was partially hidden below the skate park. Trevor produced plans for submission to Mendip Planning and also wrote a Design and Access Statement. The soil from the cut was spread across the lower end of the playing field and seeded by Malcolm Harding which meant that the lower end of the field was raised, another added benefit.

Ever helpful and patient, Trevor guided us through the complexities of this project to its successful conclusion in 2016.

**Helen West**



**WESTBURY-SUB-MENDIP  
PARISH COUNCIL**

**Newsletter**

The next issue of this newsletter will be in  
early February 2022.

## *The Playing Field is available for hire*

If you would like to use the field for an event,  
please contact Guy Timson at

**[guytimson@hotmail.com](mailto:guytimson@hotmail.com)**

# A credit union for Mendip

**C**REDIT UNIONS are rarely in the news and not well understood but they serve some two million members in the UK and have, collectively, assets of around £ 4 billion. So, what are they and what do they do?



Photo by [Nick Fewings](#) on [Unsplash](#)

A credit union is essentially a financial co-operative. They exist to support saving, and to provide loans to their members. They are accountable to those members, not to external shareholders. As banks and other financial institutions continue to withdraw their services from smaller and poorer communities, credit unions are able to fill the gap. A third of all UK bank and building society branches have closed during the past four and a half years which helps explain why credit unions in the UK have taken off.

Traditionally, the scope of a credit union has been defined by a 'common bond'. Members were drawn from a community that had something in common – living in a particular place, working for the same employer or belonging to a specific trade union for example. When taking out and repaying a loan therefore, members were not dealing with a faceless multi-national, but a community organisation, staffed in large part by volunteers, who in some ways were people like them.

As some institutions have grown in size, the role of volunteers and face to face contact has become less central but in Mendip we have a credit union – the Mendip Community Credit Union (MCCU) – that is determined to stay local and close to its community. It operates service points in the library in Wells and other centres in the Mendips and offers face to face meetings with volunteer staff to discuss how its services might help.

Austerity and the pandemic have led to increased numbers of people in serious financial need contacting the credit union. Yet credit unions are not food banks. Their role is not to give handouts to the needy but to provide accessible financial services for those neglected by mainstream institutions. The people the credit union can help are those capable of saving and repaying a loan but perhaps lacking the credit history or the regularity of income that high street banks demand.

Many members of MCCU are self-employed, can earn good money but lack a guaranteed level of weekly income. In the Mendip area many members have worked on the festival circuit, now hit badly by the pandemic. Others work in hospitality and tourism which is also seasonal and equally damaged by Covid and Brexit. The most common reason for members taking out a loan is to replace a car or van, or perhaps pay an unexpected utility bill. They can afford it, but not to pay it all in one week.

As the economic outlook remains uncertain credit unions will continue to have an important role to play in helping people manage their financial affairs. Anyone interested in finding out more about our local credit union can ring Freephone 0800 622 6036 or check out their website by [clicking here](#).

**Mick Fletcher**

## Volunteering for Mendip Community Credit Union

The credit union is run entirely by volunteers and always needs more help. Some of the work is specialist (e.g. dealing with the accounts), some requires the ability to deal with the public (e.g. helping at the service point) and some is occasional (e.g. 'stuffing' and delivering members' statements and newsletters!).

Some of our volunteers have made a video to tell you a bit about what's involved in volunteering for the credit union, why they do it and why it's so important.

To find out more about volunteering and to watch the video, [click here](#).

# *Land behind Court Farm*



**T**HE CHURCH COMMISSIONERS' agents have at last decided to take forward an outline planning application for around 50 houses on the large field at the beginning of Roughmoor Lane (behind Court Farm). They are following the indications for village development in the Mendip Local Plan. They are hoping to have initial discussions with Mendip District Council and your Parish Council before Christmas and to conduct a public consultation in January. This is the biggest housing development proposed in the village since Stoneleigh was built (over several stages) in the 1970s, so we are sure that many of you will want to see what is proposed and have your say. As soon as we know more, we will keep the community updated, but do not hesitate to contact me with any of your suggestions or concerns.

**Sue Isherwood**

***Forthcoming meetings of the Parish Council will be at the Village Hall at 7.30 pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> December and 5<sup>th</sup> January.***

The agenda for each meeting is displayed on the noticeboard outside the shop.

# Shop Local at Christmas



We stock a wide range of Christmas cards, gift wrap & tags  
A selection of local calendars & crafts  
Gift confectionery & chocolate

## Christmas Orders being taken from 1<sup>st</sup> December

\*\*\*\*\*

Meat and Poultry from Hector's Farm Shop & Thorner's of Somerset  
Breads, cakes and pastries from Burns the Bread,  
Cheeses & dairy from Times Past, Chew Valley, Yeo Valley & Barbers  
Orders can be collected from the shop on 23<sup>rd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> December

## Westbury sub Mendip Community Shop & Post Office

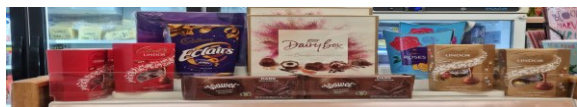
The shop is owned by the village, run by the community.

Phone: 01749 870296

Order Email: [westburysshoporders@gmail.com](mailto:westburysshoporders@gmail.com)



## Christmas Shopping Evening



**2nd December 6.00 -8pm**

Join us for mince pies and mulled wine while  
you choose some Christmas goodies and  
browse local gifts and cards, plus a chance to  
win our Christmas Hamper.



### Post Office Services:

#### Overseas Christmas Posting Dates:

Australia & New Zealand: 6<sup>th</sup> December.  
USA, Canada & Poland: 13<sup>th</sup> December.  
All other EU Countries: 16<sup>th</sup> December.

Customs Labels are required on all overseas  
parcels including to the EU.

To help reduce queues at the Post Office,  
please collect and complete labels before  
sending your parcels.

PO staff are always happy to advise on the  
best level of service for your parcels.

# Somerset Waste Partnership

Festive collections 2021-22			
Usual collection day	Revised collection day	Usual collection day	Revised collection day
Friday 24 December	<b>No change</b>	Monday 3 January	<b>Tuesday 4 January</b>
Monday 27 December	<b>Tuesday 28 December</b>	Tuesday 4 January	<b>Wednesday 5 January</b>
Tuesday 28 December	<b>Wednesday 29 December</b>	Wednesday 5 January	<b>Thursday 6 January</b>
Wednesday 29 December	<b>Thursday 30 December</b>	Thursday 6 January	<b>Friday 7 January</b>
Thursday 30 December	<b>Friday 31 December</b>	Friday 7 January	<b>Saturday 8 January</b>
Friday 31 December	<b>Sunday 2 January 2022</b>	No garden waste pick-ups in festive fortnight, above. All collections resume from Monday 10 January. Recycle sites on usual schedules except all close Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Extra site open days: Dulverton Monday 27 December, Crewkerne Tuesday 28 December	

 Somerset recycles

 Somerset Waste Partnership



## Unitary news

**A NEW LOCAL** Government Reorganisation (LGR) Joint Committee has met in Somerset to steer the move to a single unitary council for the county. The two-hour public meeting was hosted by Mendip District Council at their offices in Shepton Mallet (5th November 2021).

The Committee consists of nine members from both District and County Councils, including the five Somerset Council Leaders, plus four Somerset County Councillors. Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of Somerset County Council, chaired the meeting and Cllr Val Keitch, Leader of South Somerset District Council, was unanimously elected Vice-Chair.

They discussed terms of reference, programme governance, budget, future meetings and agreed a work programme. The Committee also agreed that the name of

the new unitary authority, as proposed by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), would be 'Somerset Council' as of 1st April 2023 (vesting day).

Some matters regarding the draft Structural Changes Order (SCO) – the basic operating and governance principles for transition from five existing Councils to the new unitary council – were deferred to allow for further consultation within individual councils. They included the date of the next elections (either May 2022 or May 2023), plus the proposal that Somerset County Council will be the "continuing authority" for the new Council.

Papers for the inaugural meeting of the Joint Committee can be viewed online now. The meeting was recorded on Microsoft Teams and this recording will be available shortly. You can find full details [here](#).



## Westbury Tree Group 2022 Calendar

*Westbury  
Society*



November 2022



Tree planting is best done when the saplings are dormant, so winter is the best time to get out and plant new trees (unless the 'lightness of the night' is the right place). These last saplings often need protection from grazing animals and topping in the early years until they become established.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## Now available in the Shop.

A4 size one page per  
month.

Cost £7.

all this goes to the Shop.

Each month there is  
an image illustrating  
the various activities  
involved in the  
management of  
trees through out  
the year.

Eg November is a time  
for planting out new  
trees.

## ***Staying in touch***

### ***Chair***

***Sue Isherwood***

***[sueisherwood9@gmail.com](mailto:sueisherwood9@gmail.com)***

***01749 870457***

### ***Vice Chair***

***Ros Wyke***

***[cllr.wyke@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.wyke@mendip.gov.uk)***

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### ***Buffy Fletcher***

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### ***Newsletter Editor***

***Martin West***

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## ***Free festive parking in Mendip***



**FREE CAR PARKING** will be available in all Mendip-owned pay and display car parks for one week, from Saturday 18th December until Friday 24th December 2021.

The Council is also providing free parking all-day on Saturday 1st January. This is to support drivers who park vehicles in car parks on New Year's Eve, to use alternative and safe methods of transport to get home. Full details on Mendip's free parking offer can be found here: **[Free festive parking this Christmas in Mendip](#)**.

## ***Supporting Small Business – 4th December***

**THERE'S A FEE-FREE** day planned to support Small Business Saturday at selected car parks. Anyone visiting the area for Small Business Saturday, on 4th December, will find charges suspended across the following car parks: Cranhill Road in Street, St John's car park in Glastonbury, Union Street in Wells, Great Ostry in Shepton Mallet and the Cattle Market in Frome.

Residents are asked to note that although parking is free, all other terms and conditions of car parking within the relevant car parks remain.

- Check the time limits
- Don't park in disabled bays
- Park responsibly.

Penalty charges will be issued if you breach the conditions. For more information on Mendip car parks, please visit our web page **[Pay & Display Car Parks in Mendip](#)**.