



NEW OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE BROADBAND

Do you live on or near Spearywell Road and have a broadband download speed of less than 10Mbps? If so, the Parish Council wants to hear from you.

There is already a scheme (the broadband Universal Service Obligation) that allows any property with poor broadband to receive a contribution of up to £3,400 towards bringing it up to the 10Mbps minimum standard.

New this month is an arrangement which allows these contributions to be pooled, and we know that at least 15 dwellings on or near Spearywell Road could benefit.

A full quotation for the cost is being prepared by Openreach (estimated to be £50-60,000), and it is possible that if everyone in those properties joins in, we could get close to the cost of implementation.

It doesn't make any difference if you are in tenanted property.

Please email broadband@mottisfontpc.org.uk by 14th February to express an interest. It's early days for this scheme, but worth a try!

Jeff Channing
Chair, Mottisfont Parish Council

LOCKDOWN SUPPORT

Parish Support Telephone Line

The Parish Support Line on **01794 236987** was set up in March 2020 by the Parish Council to help people in the parish get through the first lockdown.

The Support Line is still running, manned by a rota of local volunteers who are ready to take your call and help where they can. So if you have a problem you need help with, or simply want to talk to someone, it's there for you.

Parish WhatsApp Group

There's a thriving WhatsApp group with around 50 parish people signed up. It's a great resource for staying in touch or getting help. If you would like to join it, send an email with your mobile phone number to Jeff Channing at jeffmottisfont-at-btinternet-dot-com (use "@" and ".").

HIGHWAYS AND FOOTWAYS

B3084 through Mottisfont

Hampshire Highways contractors are due to carry out major carriage repairs on the B3084 through Mottisfont this month. As a result, a two week road closure will be put in place between Mottisfont & Dunbridge Station level crossing and Queenwood Crossroads at Broughton.

Limited access will apply on weekdays when the road is closed. However, at weekends it is proposed to open the road as normal.

The road improvements are scheduled to start on 8th February. After completion of the work, the whole carriageway will be resurfaced.

Hatt Hill Footway at Mottisfont

Hampshire Highways Department is looking at resurfacing the section of badly worn roadside footway between Hatt Farm and Hatt Farm Cottages. Updates on this will follow when available.

Lockerley Road street nameplate

Our parish lengthsman has repaired the broken Lockerley Road nameplate near the Mill Arms. He has fitted new posts and installed the metal nameplate on a new wooden backing board. The street nameplate now looks as good as new.

Dunbridge village gateway on the B3084

Our parish lengthsman has now fitted the white palings onto the rails of the village gateway at the start of the 30mph speed zone on Barley Hill at Dunbridge.

Hampshire Highways contractors will be laying a red anti-skid surface on the southbound carriageway at the gateway when weather permits, along with white lines at the road edges. When this work is done, it will complete the package of traffic-calming measures sought and paid for by Mottisfont Parish Council that are aimed at slowing down speeding motorists.

Andy Simmonds
Mottisfont Parish Council
Highways and Footways Representative

PS The Parish Council is still pushing to get potholes fixed! -Eds.



National Trust

The grounds and gardens of Mottisfont Abbey are currently open for local people to take exercise and our countryside carparks are also open. This is all in line with government guidelines to help provide safe spaces for people to exercise locally. We are keeping a close eye on visitor numbers, have significantly reduced the number of bookings, and we are also liaising with the local police teams to help ensure our visitors are following the guidelines.

This is an excellent time for those who are very definitely 'local' in the Mottisfont and Dunbridge Parish to renew your Parish Passes! As you know Mottisfont Abbey is free to visit for those in the Parish, but you do need to renew your passes - email Mottisfont@nationaltrust.org.uk for details - and we do also need all visitors to use our online booking system.

We are not currently running any events or trails, but are hoping to put on some Easter activities if allowable at the time. A big thanks to those who visited just before lockdown to see the house and grounds decorated for Christmas, and for all who passed on thanks and positive comments. It was definitely a high point being able to provide a safe experience and still make people smile in otherwise challenging times!

In other news, we'll be shortly starting work across the estate to manage ash tree dieback, a fungal disease which sadly is affecting ash trees across the UK. Not all affected ash trees will be felled, although we will need to remove or reduce those trees which are unsafe to the public. Wherever we can we'll be leaving deadwood so that wildlife can benefit.

Wishing everyone all the best through this winter lockdown; do stay safe and well!

Vicky Fletcher
General Manager, Mottisfont & South West Hampshire Group
vicky.fletcher@nationaltrust.org.uk

Test Valley Transport

Test Valley's Unity organisation is offering a community transport scheme to take residents to vaccination and medical appointments.

To be eligible, residents must live more than 400m from a bus stop, and/or have a disability or have another reason for being unable to use public transport.

Unity can be contacted by email at transport@unityonline.org.uk, or phone 01264 356808.

The Broughton and Mottisfont Community Bus Committee

Charity Number: 284910

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Broughton and Mottisfont Community Bus is run as a charity under the provisions of the law and the Charity Commission. An Annual General Meeting is held each year, to which members of the public are welcome. Due to the pandemic, the 41st Annual General Meeting will be held using video conferencing on Monday 1st March, starting at 5.30pm. If you wish to attend, please send an email to thevillagebus-at-outlook-dot-com (use "@" and ".") or use the contact details below.

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Approval of minutes of 40th AGM
3. Matters arising from those minutes
4. Financial report given by David Mason
5. Chairman's report given by Peter Broome
6. Resignations and Election of Officers
7. Any other business (including suggestions for excursions in the summer months).

Anyone wishing to serve on the Committee, or nominating someone else, should contact either the Chairman, Peter Broome on 07715 055938, or the Secretary, Andrew Illingworth on 01794 301295. The latest date for such nominations is 22nd February.



Households will soon be asked to take part in the census, the nationwide survey of housing and the population. The census has been carried out every

decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941.

Households will receive a letter in early March with a unique access code, allowing them to complete their questionnaire online. Paper questionnaires will be available on request. Census day is 21st March.

BROUGHTON COMMUNITY SHOP

Broughton Community Shop and Post Office is remaining open through this current lockdown, providing a valuable service in a Covid-secure environment.

The focus on local suppliers, 'eco' and essentials continues, not forgetting some lovely treats – just what we all need at the moment! Please take a look at the new website www.broughton.shop for information and updates, including exciting new lines.

A warm welcome – and easy parking – await!

From the Rector

Coping with uncertainty

At the time of writing, the churches in our communities are not open for worship on Sunday, although most of them do remain open for private visits throughout the week. This is not a situation that we had hoped for or even anticipated, even a month ago, though I suppose that on reflection as we look back at the course of the covid pandemic for the last year, its ebbs and flows have seemed obvious in hindsight.

Such was the uncertainty around the current lockdown that decisions on whether to remain open or to close were made locally because national leaders could not decide or agree. It turns out that the majority of churches nationally have decided to close for now. Planning for the future seems impossible due to the level of uncertainty around the future.

Uncertainty is challenging. It feels uncomfortable, and often our natural instinct is to try to avoid it by seeking to control situations. Yet the very nature of our current predicament is that we have little control over our situation, and even governments are at the whim of events.

Accepting our lack of control is a feature of practicing faith. Those who accept the influence of the divine in their lives also accept that they themselves can not be the master of all they encounter. To recognise that you are not your own ultimate authority means acknowledging that something else is. It can also cause us to take more personal responsibility, and focus less on the way other people live their lives, knowing that the only thing we can control is our own choices and behaviours. Yes, we might think that other people should wash-their-hands, wear-a-mask, or not-be-so-close, but most of us have learned by now that nothing we can do or say will influence other people's behaviour.

So being surrounded by uncertainty, unsettling thought it is, can be a chance for us to step back, consider our own place in the world we inhabit, and recognise that we are not the masters of all. It is a good time to accept that there is something greater than ourselves and entrust ourselves to His care.

St. Andrew's Church Opening During Covid Pandemic Lockdown

As you may be aware, our church services have been suspended during the current lockdown. Sadly, it seems this may be the case for some time yet. However, from 1st February we will be opening St. Andrew's, within government guidelines, for the purposes of private prayer on Wednesdays (only) between 12 noon and 3pm until further notice.

For the safety of yourself and others please follow the guidelines and restricted areas displayed in church, wear masks, observe social distancing of 2 metres, and use the hand sanitiser supplied. We look forward to better times when it will be deemed safe to once again open our church freely to all parishioners and visitors every day, without all these horrible 'dos and don'ts'. Despite all this, we hope everyone will sense a spirit of peaceful haven, and imagine a warm welcome within the walls of this special place.

Meanwhile, please note there is a Benefice service every Sunday via Zoom led by Rev Phill Bowden. For more info on how to access this please contact him on 01264 810810.

With best wishes,

Trish and Sue
Church Wardens

The Thomas Dowse's Charity What do we do? Can we help?

The Thomas Dowse's Charity is able to provide grants to individuals, up to the age of 25, living in Broughton, Bossington, Mottisfont and Dunbridge, for educational purposes towards the cost of such things as uniform, school trips, music tuition, overseas educational trips, swimming lessons, transport to educational establishments, laptops and books.

Applications are treated in strict confidence. Applicants must demonstrate need, but there is no means testing.

In the current circumstances the Trustees are not able to meet, but are still able to consider any applications for grants. Please email the secretary for an application form or collect one from Broughton Primary School, St. Mary's Church (Broughton) or Mottisfont Church (if they are open).

Applications received will be circulated to Trustees for consideration and applicants will be notified as soon as possible.

Email address: tinastuart1-at-gmail-dot-com.
(remove the dashes, and change "at" to "@" and "dot" to ".").

The Stores, Dunbridge – A History by Martin Fletcher

Part 2 - continued from the previous edition

Angus remembers being with his father delivering groceries at Awbridge on the evening of Friday 27 October 1939, when they learned that Dunbridge Flour Mill was on fire. They promptly returned to find the Mill well ablaze and the heat from the fire making it too hot to stand in the driveway. There was much speculation about the cause: was it the Germans, a passing steam train, or the mill's steam engines? The Mill was completely destroyed, and the site stood empty until it was redeveloped with three houses in 1978.



By the 1930s, Dunbridge depicted an industrial scene with the railway station and sidings served by a large metal gantry over the road. This transported gravel in large buckets from the quarry

behind the Mill Arms public house. Next door stood the prominent Flour Mill with its tall chimney. Much produce arrived by train (decades later increasingly large lorries fulfilled this function).

During and after the Second World War rationing meant that a little had to go a long way. The back garden at The Stores became a vegetable patch.

As well as being a grocer, George Fletcher occasionally performed duties as butler for Maud Russell at Mottisfont Abbey (also a customer) when she was entertaining high society friends from London; also for families at Dunbridge House, and Kimbridge House.

With the business continuing to grow, George Fletcher purchased a larger Austin A40 window van in 1950, however his health declined by the mid-1950s, so Angus returned from farming in Wiltshire to help his parents run the shop. In 1955, George's doctor gave him four years to live; he died in 1959.



The Next Generation

Lilian and Angus Fletcher, along with local part-time staff continued to run the shop. Angus spent increasing time on deliveries. The Stores was the first to have a telephone in Dunbridge, with the number Lockerley 200.

Ebba Fletcher had married George Fryer during a blizzard at Mottisfont in 1952; her career taking her further afield and away from the business.

Angus Fletcher married Cynthia Newberry in Romsey Abbey in 1958; they lived in Danes Road, Awbridge.

In 1960, Angus purchased the freehold of The Stores and Rose Cottage from Charles Aylward. Aylward's offer to sell the old Flour Mill site to Angus for £3,000 was unsuccessful; however a decade and a half later it was purchased by Roy Bailey, proprietor of Braishfield Stores.

In 1965, Lilian Fletcher retired from the shop and moved into 2 Woodlands, just 3 doors away. Angus, Cynthia and their son Martin moved to The Stores, where the family grocery business survived thanks to the delivery of telephone orders to many local villages (you dial, we deliver).

With a career and then life away from the family business, Martin married Wendy; they have a son, Bradley.

In 1985 the Fletcher family business celebrated 50 years. Angus and Cynthia Fletcher retired in June 1989, when the shop was closed. They continued to live there with the whole property being converted to residential use. Few may know that The Old Stores still benefits from its own private well which has supplied water to the premises since it was pumped by hand.

Cynthia lived 4 months beyond her 90th birthday in 2017. Angus entered his 10th decade in 2019, and can still reflect on the good times.

As the clocks changed in autumn 2020, with the sale of The Old Stores having already run the gauntlet of Brexit, and then Covid-19, new owners were found: a young local couple who, I am confident, will put their own imagination into the property and play their part in future village life.

The Future?

Interestingly the Mottisfont Parish Plan 2017 asked people how they would value certain new facilities. A shop came top of the list.

© Martin Fletcher, November 2020