

Notes from the monthly Council meeting, 12th January 2011

Flooding: An audience of 18 took part in the open forum before the meeting, and discussed the recent flooding in the centre of Uplyme. Residents with any direct experience are asked to write down what happened and post or email it to the Parish Clerk, so evidence can be presented to the relevant authorities. The Council is trying to arrange a meeting with Devon Highways, the Environment Agency, and affected residents, to see what can be done to alleviate the drainage problems. There is unlikely to be money for a proper flood relief scheme, but other smaller projects might be possible. Mr Ostler was thanked for his timely efforts in digging out the stream bank, thereby preventing much worse flooding for several residents.

Environment: Kimmo Evans from the East Devon AONB outlined the Parish Biodiversity Audit that was carried out in Uplyme, and suggested that some natural solutions to preventing run-off might be worth considering. (The audit will be available to download from the web site.)

Planning: no applications were dealt with since the December meeting, but 3 were granted by EDDC, namely: Smoky Hole Cathole Lane – construction of garage; The Little Cedar House Venlake – T1 larch reduce canopy back to the boundary (only part approved); 14 Glebelands Uplyme – fell 1 x multi-stemmed laurel. The most notable decision from December was the support for the affordable housing near the Village Hall, with a note that safe pedestrian access to Lyme Road, and a condition preferring residents with an Uplyme connection, is essential.

Precept: the Council resolved to set the precept (the money from your council tax that goes to the Parish Council) for 2011-12 to the same level per household as this year, despite the extra cost of an election (£2000 estimated), and putting almost £4000 into reserves for resurfacing footpaths in the Cemetery, which will soon be necessary. Someone in a Band D property will therefore pay just £19.06 for all the work the Parish Council does – less than the price of a first-class stamp per week! The Clerk was thanked for her “good housekeeping”.

Hedges: landowners and householders are again reminded of their duty to keep roadside hedges cut back so vehicles can pass without being scratched.

Grit: during the recent cold weather, several selfish residents stole grit bags and from bins. The grit in the roadside bins/bags is supplied **only** for use on the public highway, and it is an offence to take it for use on private property e.g. drives, garden paths, farm tracks and yards. This matters for several reasons: stretches of road remained icy and dangerous for both cars and pedestrians; the

County Council says it will not deliver more grit bags to the roadside where nearly all the bags have been pilfered (so everyone in the affected areas will suffer for the actions of a few), and the Clerk's time is unnecessarily taken up with trying to organise replacement supplies to the detriment of other important work.

Both the police and DCC Highways have indicated that they will take action in future if anyone can give information about the people concerned (e.g. registration numbers of any vehicles). Call **08452 777444** for the Axminster Rural Police team, or **0845 155 1004** for Area East Highways.

Grit is available commercially from local builders' merchants and farm stores, and is not very expensive, so those making life unnecessarily dangerous for everyone else in the village are only doing so to save themselves a few pounds.

Election: some councillors will not be standing for re-election, so now is your chance to get involved with making Uplyme a pleasant and safe place to live. You can ring any of the Councillors to find out what's involved, or look on the web site or notice boards for more information. The Council would like to have representation from young people in the parish – you can be a councillor from 18!

In May, everyone has a chance to choose local representatives, so make sure you are on the Electoral Register in good time! Call 01395 517402 for advice.

Census: the 2011 census is held in March. This isn't just an academic exercise or state snooping: the money the district council gets from government is directly linked to the estimated population, so the more people that are counted, the less your local services will need to be cut. If you, or anyone you know, thinks they will need help with filling in the forms, please let the Clerk know.

Lyme Regis and Charmouth libraries: Dorset CC is considering closing both these libraries to save money. If you or your children use these facilities, please write in support to Mike Lewis, the Lyme Regis Town Clerk, (Town Council Offices, Guildhall Cottage, Church Street, Lyme Regis, DT7 3BS, or email DCC direct on libraryreview@dorsetcc.gov.uk). The decision will be made in mid-February, so please reply by 13th February if you can.

Police: to end on a more positive note, PC Kevin Bennett, our neighbourhood beat officer, reported that overall crime for Axminster Rural in 2010 was 8% down on 2009; and operations targeting shed/outbuilding burglaries have reduced these crimes by 27%.

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