

# FLAX BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL

[www.flaxbourtonparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.flaxbourtonparishcouncil.co.uk)

## NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2011

BREAKING NEWS – the Parish Council have voted to hold the precept at the same level of £23,000 for 2011/2012 as in the current financial year

We hope that you keep in touch with the activities of your Parish Council by reading the minutes of our monthly meetings in the Parish Magazine or on our website. Or, best of all, you come along to our meetings – second Tuesday of each month at the Village Hall, 8pm.

Below is a summary of some of the current and regular items on our agenda – we hope you find this occasional newsletter helpful – it is also on the website.

**Village Hall** - it is four years since this new facility was handed over to the Parish Council and we are delighted that its use for parties, club/association meetings is increasing all the time. It is also the venue for the monthly Parish Council meetings. The Hall and adjoining playing field are operated by local volunteer residents formed as a Community Interest Company. See the Village Hall website at [www.flaxbourtonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.flaxbourtonvillagehall.co.uk)

**Parking** - actually the most contact recently with the Parish Council on a single issue has been about parking. There are a number of “hotspots” in the village where access is becoming difficult because of the volume of street parking – cars and some commercial vehicles. This could be a particular issue for emergency vehicles and the Police are aware of this and have written to residents in some areas. Please would residents always use their drives and garages where available, and encourage visitors to do so where possible.

**National Grid Pylons link proposal** - whilst not in our parish, the “Corridor 2” route would be highly visible at the end of the Wraxall valley. The Parish Council’s policy is to support neighbouring communities and oppose the policy of ‘pylons or pylons’ and to pursue a sub sea or underground solution. A member of the Parish Council attends the relevant National Grid and action group meetings.

**Flax Bourton Church of England Primary School** – congratulations to our local school on the “good” Ofsted report achieved last year, “a little gem” is how one parent described the school to Inspectors. A current issue for parents, staff and pupils is the lack of a crossing patrol in Station Road, which is a hazardous road to cross when approaching the school. It does not fulfil the criteria for a crossing patrol attendant funded by North Somerset Council and the School and parents are actively exploring alternatives and are hoping to set a volunteer and run a crossing patrol scheme. Volunteers are being sought for half an hour between 8.30am-9am and 3.10pm-3.40pm. If you are interested in helping; free training, fluorescent jacket and lollipop; please contact the school office. “We are keen to work with the school in finding a solution and a member of the Parish Council is attending the appropriate meetings and another Parish Council member is a governor of the school. The school has a website at [www.flaxbourton.ik.org](http://www.flaxbourton.ik.org)

**North Somerset Agricultural Showground site** – the land in Station Road / Clevedon Road (about half is within the Flax Bourton Parish Boundary) was purchased by the Show Committee from the Wraxall Estate Trustees in 2002. We welcome the local presence of this long established agricultural show and occasional similar rural events. With concerns over noise, access and general environmental impact, it is the policy of the Parish Council to ensure that the formal use of the land remains agricultural with occasional rural type events only. The agricultural society has a website at [www.nsas.org.uk](http://www.nsas.org.uk)

**Stancombe Quarry** - as you will know, a long established local operation for the extraction of limestone; current planning allows activities up to 2023. A member of the Parish Council sits on the quarry liaison group and is particularly watchful for any extension of operations beyond this limestone extraction. A very active and successful Action Group was formed in 1999/2000 to oppose the building of an overhead conveyor belt to the main railway line. A recent grant of £1000 from Tarmac is being used for three additional litter bins in the village.

**Former MOD Fuel Depot (Station Road)** – built in ‘Cold War’ days and redundant from about 1990, a ‘fast track’ planning application was made in December 2006 to bring the depot back into use. With many concerns including safety, access, vehicle movements and expansion of BIA, the Council (supported by a residents working group) vigorously opposed the application and to date no more has been heard! But we need to be alert to any proposed alternative use of this commercial site.

**Local Development** - The Local Development Plan (known by North Somerset Council as the Core Strategy) is currently in the course of being updated to set out policy and priorities for the period 2006 – 2026. Details are on the council’s website [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning+policy/Local+Development+Framework](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning+policy/Local+Development+Framework)

Prior to the change of government in May 2010, the Regional Spatial Study for North Somerset set an allocation of 26,750 new homes including a south west Bristol Urban Extension of 9000 units. With development policy handed back to local authorities, the proposed target in the draft updated plan is 13,400 units by 2026 – including 8,600 in the Weston-super-Mare area.

Flax Bourton is to be classed as a village with an existing settlement boundary suitable for limited infilling only (maximum 2 dwellings) and appropriate replacement of existing dwellings. This policy is broadly supported by the Parish Council. But many developers are claiming that the proposed number of new homes is inadequate and are challenging the revocation of Regional Spatial Studies.

You should continue to follow the consultation exercise and make your views known to North Somerset Council or to us at the Parish Council.

**Job Vacancy** - Village Orderly required, the role is part time, approximately 4 hrs per week and would consist of litter picking around the village and reporting to the Clerk any issues, such as graffiti, overgrown hedgerow etc. For further information please contact Ruth McNaught

**Finally – we need you!** The above update shows there is much for the parish council to monitor and carry forward but there are only five of us – there are two vacancies. And we have not mentioned many other routine items that are on our agenda – planning applications, highways, footpaths etc. The proposed **Localism Bill** has now been published, and passed its second reading, with the objective of “giving local people power and funding to deliver what they want in their communities, including increased control of local funding”. We wait to see the shape of this but if the Parish Council is to keep on top of current issues and embrace additional responsibilities under the Localism Bill, we need more residents to join our team. Please call one of us or come along to one of our monthly meetings to learn more about the role of a Parish Councillor.

#### **Councillors**

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