

WHPC Newsletter – Oct 2020

Thank you to the many village residents who completed the recent WHPC Help Scheme survey.

Over 75% of the forms were returned which was a fantastic response! Councillors were keen to receive your feedback and gather any learning points for the scheme. These will help to shape the Help Scheme if/when it is re-launched. Thank you for your many lovely messages for the Clerk, Council and of course our wonderful volunteers.

Will the WHPC Help Scheme be re-launched?

As we're all aware the Covid-19 situation continues to evolve. We are fortunate in East Devon as the number of cases remains relatively low. WHPC will continue to monitor Government and local Council guidelines and will re-launch the WHPC Help Scheme if required. In the meantime

- The WHPC office number **01404 232 100** is always available (please leave a message outside office hours)
- Our wonderful volunteers have agreed to continue their support and are currently on stand-by
- Despite its name the Ottery Help Scheme supports many people in West Hill with transport to medical appointments, prescription collections, befriending and much more (tel 01404 813041)
- We know many residents have signed up for prescription deliveries in recent months. Could this service help you? Details are available from the Well Pharmacy or Boots in Ottery.



Council News - Did you know.....?

- **You** can have your say on **planning applications** in West Hill. WHPC is consulted on every planning application within the village, from minor alterations to new builds. Each application is reviewed at a Council meeting (which are open to the public). Using their local knowledge Councillors consider the impact schemes may have on neighbouring properties, trees/hedges/roads and compliance with planning policies. They may decide to recommend approval or refusal. In addition, they often suggest amendments or raise concerns. It should be noted that EDDC's Planning team are the ultimate decision makers, however they have to take into account the Council's comments

Details of applications are available on the WHPC website including links to the full application details on the EDDC website. If you have comments or concerns regarding an application please contact a Councillor or the Parish Clerk. Plus, you are welcome to speak at a Council Meeting.

You can have your say! Councillors want to understand your views and encourage you to contact the Council. Have you ever considered attending a **Council meeting**? Admittedly not every agenda item is "exciting" but you may be interested in a particular item or perhaps you want to voice support, concerns, questions, suggestions etc. You don't have to stay to the end of the meeting. Agendas and Zoom meeting details are published on the noticeboard and WHPC website. WHPC

meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm. The Open Spaces Committee meet on the last Tuesday of the months at 1.00pm. Of course, residents can always contact the WHPC via email or telephone (details below).

- **Your** group or organisation can apply for a grant from WHPC. Full details are available on the WHPC website. Councillors recently awarded grants to West Hill's RBL (new kitchen), TRIP Community Transport and St Michael's greeting cards+ calendar project.
- **You** can **report potholes**, drainage issues, faulty streetlighting, overgrown hedges, fallen trees etc directly to the Devon Highways team. Please have the relevant address or post code to hand as you will have to identify the location of the problem.



To report a Highways problem

- For emergencies that require immediate attention or general queries, please call **0345 155 1004**
- Highway's "**report a problem**" webpage is easy to use. Just select the appropriate category (eg potholes) and mark the location on the map (keep zooming in until a box appears!). If you find that the problem has already been reported just add your details if you wish to be kept informed of progress. It's helpful to upload a photo of the pothole or such (if available). You will receive a reference code, plus acknowledgement and completion emails. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

Other Matters

The "**Planning for the Future**" **White Paper** has worrying implications for our village as well as the whole country. The algorithm for calculating housing numbers in East Devon is deeply flawed, and demands a **76% increase in new houses in East Devon**. West Hill will not avoid the impact of this. The proposals will reduce local say in where new housing is built. For WHPC's response to the government consultation, our letter to Simon Jupp MP and his reply, see our website: www.westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk/whpc-letter-simon-jupp-mp-nalc-re-planning-future-proposals-simon-jupp-mp-response

Some of you may have noticed the appearance of some poles on verges with no signs on them. As we have previously reported the Parish Council is in the process of acquiring a **Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS)**. Unfortunately we are still waiting for the fixing brackets and the VAS device itself which is being paid for by WHPC but supplied through Devon Highways. We hope to have the VAS up and running in the next month or so and hopefully we will start to see drivers taking note of the correct speeds through West Hill.



Councillors regularly monitor the **Playpark** and have recently carried out maintenance work on the bark path, safety matting and playboat. The ongoing problems with playpark waste collections have been frustrating so Councillors have decided to install a recycling bin and change service providers.

Finally, earlier this year residents contacted the Council to report that the **footpath** between West Hill Road and Eastfield was un-usable in wet weather. Many residents use this path to avoid walking along the narrow section of West Hill Road. WHPC liaised with Devon Highways and has agreed to fund a **handrail**. This will be installed by the Lengthsman in October – just in time for the winter weather.