

DUNSTER AREA PANEL – NOTES OF MEETING

MONDAY 25 JANUARY 2016

COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, WILLITON

Attendees: Faye Barringer-Capp (Chair)
Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellow, Crowcombe Parish Council
Cllr Barbara Bryan, Dunster Parish Council
Cllr Christine Oliver, Dunster Area Panel
Cllr Phil Gannon, Old Cleeve Parish Council
Cllr Margaret Smith, Old Cleeve Parish Council
Cllr Marilyn Crothers, Nettlecombe Parish Council
Cllr Bryan Leaker, West Somerset Council
PC Petri 7292, Avon & Somerset Constabulary
David Peake, SCC Highways
Jim Kent, West Somerset Seniors Forum
Cllr Brenda Maitland-Walker, WSC Councillor
Cllr Christine Lawrence, SCC Councillor
Judy Carter, Dunster Neighbourhood Watch
Tony Murray, Director of Magna West Somerset
Shirlene Adam, Director – Operations, West Somerset Council
Eileen Ford, Executive Assistant, West Somerset Council

1) “Have Your Say” – Community Issues

An issue was raised regarding Slades Lane and it was agreed to deal with this later under the Highways Report.

2) Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Ian Liddell-Granger, Steve Eggar and Cllr Martin Dewdney.

3) Minutes of the Meeting Held on 6 October 2015 and Matters Arising

Cllr Margaret Smith raised the issue of the toilet signs. Cllr Smith agreed to arrange for a volunteer to remove the signs.

A correction was made in respect of Item 1, Para 4 – the correction was to say that Cllr Crothers raised the issue in respect of Washford Cross and Cllr Lawrence responded.

Following the above amendment the notes were approved.

4) Magna West Housing Association

Tony Murray, Director of Magna West Somerset, attended the meeting to discuss Magna's annual report. The report had been distributed prior to the meeting. Mr Murray informed the meeting about the background of Magna. This included:-

- 2,300 house in West Somerset
- 2 offices in Williton
- A meal service to tenants and private customers
- Handy man/gardening service to tenants and private customers
- 348 houses in the Dunster area
- Positive feedback received in Magna's recent customer survey
- Preference given to local people
- Magna's recent Board decision to stop building homes and to reduce their outstanding debt

Mr Murray also explained to the meeting that the Homefinder's system was currently under reconstruction to make the process of bidding for a property easier and quicker. Mr Murray went to mention that Magna were concerned about the welfare reforms the Government were bringing in regarding the capping of benefits tenants could claim. Government policy had changed in July 2015 to help tenants in respect of capped benefits because Housing Associations are now required to reduce their rents by 1% over the next four years.

In the question and answer session that followed Cllr Leaker asked about the current turnover of stock. Magna's current turnover was between 8%-9% and it was only in Minehead that demand for property out striped supply.

5) Police Report

PC Petri attended the meeting and updated the meeting on recorded crime in the area. The Police have changed the way their statistics for crime is recorded.

Over the last 12 months recorded crime had reduced by 1%. Telephone calls received by the Police had also dropped. Concern was raised by Cllr Leaker that not all crime was being reported. A discussion took place regarding the need to ensure the public continued to report crime and it was agreed that a reminder would be put in parish magazines.

6) Highways Report

David Peake updated the meeting on planned works in the Dunster area. This report is attached as appendix 1.

Cllr Gannon raised the issue of Bilbrook Lane. A resident of Bilbrook Lane was concerned about the state of the road following the recent drainage work which had been undertaken and wanted to know when the Lane would be resurfaced. Mr Peake confirmed that safety repairs would be undertaken to repair the Lane where necessary.

Cllr Smith raised concerns regarding the gabions on the sea front. The gabions were to be removed three years ago but still remained in place. A discussion took place regarding the possibility of the Steam Coastal Trail using the gabions to help support the trackway.

Concern was raised regarding the recent flooding at Carhampton and the A39. The runoff from fields had caused the drains to block and flood the A39. SCC Highways had already been contacted regarding the clearance of these drains.

Mr Peake also agreed to check on the issue of poor signage in Dunster following concerns raised by Cllr Lawrence.

Cllr Smith raised concerns regarding the lack of safety signs at Bilbrook. Mr Peake recommended that Cllr Smith write to the SCC traffic engineer regarding her concerns about the lack of proper signage.

7) Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service

An update report was received by Chris Jones, Somerset Watch Command Team – attached as Appendix 2.

8) West Somerset Council Report

Shirlene distributed the actions which had come out of the recent “Let’s Make Loneliness and Isolation History in West Somerset” Conference – attached as Appendix 3.

Shirlene then updated the meeting on the following matters.

WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Cabinets draft budget for 2016/17 will be considered at their meeting on 3rd Feb and then FC on 24th Feb.

Despite the challenges faced, the proposal outlines a balanced budget for next year, but the challenges in future years are significant. The Government grant funding we get to support delivery of our services will reduce to nil by 2020, and we know our business rates income is down by over £300k pa due to the impact of the Hinkley B appeal last summer.

Whilst the budget for 2016/17 is balanced with clear savings plans in place, the medium term financial plan shows that we have a gap of £0.218m for 2017/18, which rises to over £1m by 2019/20.

Public Conveniences

A discussion took place regarding public toilets and Cllr Maitland-Walker read out a statement from Cllr Martin Dewdney.

“I am sorry I cannot join you at tonight’s meeting as I have a previously arranged meeting in Taunton which I must attend.

For the sake of clarity this is the updated position of the West Somerset Council owned Public Conveniences is as follows;

Consultation with the Towns and Parishes of West Somerset will commence in February which will allow plenty of time to explore third party and Parish/Community solutions to be looked at accurately, costed and they can approve their precepts for the financial year 2017/18.

Several Towns and Parishes have already approached me and there are a series of different solutions being pursued, tailored to their needs and requirements.

For those communities who have yet to approach me I will contact them next week to organise meetings during February and March to get this process started.

This information released in the media last week regarding this subject was placed without our knowledge, without any consultation with me or the Officer Team at West Somerset Council”.

A discussion took place regarding the need to find a collective solution to this issue. A request was made for Cllr Dewdney to be invited to the next Area Panel meeting.

9) Dates of Future Meetings

The Chair informed the meeting of the future meeting dates.

10) Any Other Business

Cllr Leaker informed the meeting of SCC’s Community Transportation Survey and requested that concessionary fares are an agenda item for the next meeting in April.

Cllr Maitland-Walker updated the meeting to confirm that officers are still in the process of identifying a date when someone from the NHS to attend a Scrutiny meeting and agreed to keep the Panel informed of progress.

SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS

Date of Meeting	Agreed Action	Agreed Owner
13.01.16	Arrange for a volunteer to remove toilet signs	Cllr Margaret Smith
13.01.16	Cllr Dewdney to be invited to attend the April Area panel meeting to discuss public toilets	Shirlene Adam
13.01.16	Cllr Leaker requested an agenda item for the next meeting in April – SCC's Concessionary Transportation Survey and concessionary fares	Shirlene Adam

APPENDIX 1

Planned Works in Dunster Panel Area

West Somerset House, Williton 25 January 2016

	Parish/Town	Location	Description	Start	Finish	Duration
Completed						
EDF	Williton	B3190 Washford Cross	Construction of new roundabout.		Completed	
SCC	Old Cleeve	Roadwater Road, Hungerford	Repairs to retaining wall.		Completed	
SCC	Elworthy	Hartrow Gate to Ashboor Hill	Repairs to edge of carriageway.		Completed	
Ongoing						
SCC	Old Cleeve	Lower Billbrook Lane	Drainage work. Temporary road closure.	11 Jan	29 Jan	3 weeks
Future						
SCC	Old Cleeve	Huish Lane, Washford	Drainage work.	8 Feb	12 Feb	1 week
SCC	Brompton Ralph	Scarr Chapel Lane, Pitstord Hill	Repairs to parapet of Scarr Bridge. Temporary road closure.	15 Feb	11 Mar	4 weeks
SCC	Nettlecombe	B3190 Sticklepath	Drainage works. Temporary road closures during the day.	22 Feb 29 Feb 7 Mar 14 Mar 21 Mar	26 Feb 4 Mar 11 Mar 18 Mar 24 Mar	5 days 5 days 5 days 5 days 4 days
SCC	Crowcombe	Roebuck Gate Lane	Drainage work. Temporary road closure.	7 Mar	25 Mar	3 weeks
SCC	Watchet	B3191 Cleeve Hill	Carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closure.	8 Mar	10 Mar	3 days
SCC	Williton	A39 Long Street	Carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closures in the evening.	25 Apr	29 Apr	5 evenings
SCC	Williton	A358 High Street	Carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closures in the evening.	3 May	6 May	4 evenings
Other						
SCC	West Somerset	Various	Additional "Deep Cleanse" jetting, full cut back, ploughing and grip clearing.			

APPENDIX 2



Area Panel Meetings items for discussion / community information.

Meeting Date: 25/01/2016

Operational News for Community information relevant to the areas covered by area panel meeting:

- Since the last area panel meeting held in October, Minehead crews have attended 46 operational calls during the last quarter. These have included 3 Road Traffic Collisions, 9 property fires which have been accidental causes or electrical related, 1 vehicle fire, 5 special service calls to assist other agencies including a mud rescue. Chimney fires have started again with crews responding to 4 over the last 3 weeks. Crews also attended 3 fires in the open that were unattended or poorly controlled bonfires spreading to other property or land. Crews have also attended a number of domestic smoke alarm calls and calls made with good intent that did not require our attendance.

Community Safety news and activities within the areas covered by the relevant area panel meeting:

Since the last area panel meeting, community safety work has been carried out at various events in and around Minehead and West Somerset.

These have included:

- A bespoke session for West Somerset College 6th form students on the importance of wearing seat belts.

This is different from traditional approaches where by behavioural change techniques are used and emphasis on the positives as opposed to negative outcomes. Really making an effort to demonstrate to young people that they are in a position to share and demonstrate good behaviour and have a positive influence on others around them.

- We are also running a local Chimney Fire and Carbon monoxide campaign for the winter months with the emphasis being on having information available at a variety of key locations. These include Fuel suppliers at Jewson Ltd and The Esso station. We also have the support from a local wood burning stove installer at Ben Bowmans Ltd on Mart Road.

These businesses have kindly offered to hold a supply of leaflets for both Chimney fire safety and Carbon Monoxide awareness that are free for local residents to collect.

Residents can of course go to our website dsfire.gov.uk/Yoursafety or visit our community facebook page **Minehead Fire Station**

(Pdf leaflets attached)

- Fire Safety Officers are also in the process of carrying out random and organised checks on licenced premises and residential care homes across the West Somerset area.



Chimney safety

Carbon monoxide – be aware

Carbon monoxide (CO) gas can kill. Heating and cooking appliances, fuelled by coal, smokeless fuels, wood, oil and gas can cause CO poisoning if they are poorly installed, incorrectly used or if they are not properly and regularly maintained. Early symptoms of CO poisoning include: tiredness, drowsiness, dizziness, chest pains, nausea and flu like symptoms. You can reduce the risk of CO poisoning by:

- having appliances installed and properly serviced by competent engineers
- getting chimneys and flues inspected and swept
- not overloading a fire and only burning the fuel it is designed for
- fitting a carbon monoxide detector
- good ventilation.

Sweeping frequencies

Frequency will depend on a number of factors which include the type of fuel used, appliance, duration of use, moisture content of wood fuel, and the type of chimney you have. Your Chimney Sweep will be able to advise on the sweeping frequency during the appointment. The sweeping frequencies below are for guidance purposes only:-

- **Smokeless fuel:** at least once a year
- **Wood** quarterly when in use
- **Bituminous coal** Quarterly when in use
- **Oil:** once a year
- **Gas:** once a year

Anybody who suspects their chimney may be on fire should call out the fire service immediately. Look out for excessive smoke, embers falling back into the hearth, sparks shooting from the chimney top, the walls of the chimney breast or adjacent walls becoming very hot to the touch.



Contact us

01392 872200

firekllis@dsfire.gov.uk

www.dsfire.gov.uk

To request any information in this document in an alternative format or language please call 0800 731 1822 or email firesafety@dsfire.gov.uk

**KEEP
SAFE**
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Acting to Protect & Save

Safety advice for chimneys

Every Year Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service attend hundreds of chimney fires which cost us over £250,000 a year. You can help us reduce this amount by reading the following safety advice to help you reduce the risk of your chimney catching fire.

Preventing chimney fires

Regular cleaning of your chimney or flues will eliminate the build-up of soot and clear obstructions such as bird or animal nests, leaves and debris. You will also reduce emissions into the atmosphere by assisting the complete combustion of fuel. It is not sufficient to use a vacuum cleaner. You should ensure your chimney flue is inspected regularly to prevent fires breaking out.

The most common cause of chimney fires are:

- infrequent sweeping and cleaning
- burning unseasoned wood
- improper appliance sizing
- overnight burning or smouldering wood for long periods in wood stoves.

Seasoned wood

It is important that if you are burning wood that it is dry and well-seasoned, this means that it has 20% or less moisture content. A well-seasoned log will have drying out splits in the ends. You can also use a moisture gage, which are available from hardware stores, to tell you exactly how much moisture your wood contains.

It is a good idea to buy your wood at the beginning of the summer and store it outside where it can be exposed to the wind and sun and protected from direct rainfall.

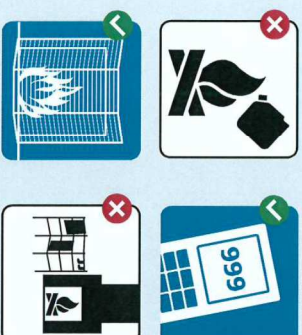
Burning wet, newly-felled or coniferous wood can cause tar or creosote to form in the wood burner and chimney which can be hazardous.

Open fires

- Have your chimney swept before lighting the first fire of winter.
- Always place a fireguard around the fire.
- Do not overheat the grate or build fires too high.
- Dispose of ash appropriately.
- Do not dry or air clothes on a fireguard.
- Ensure fires are extinguished before you go to bed.
- Never use petrol or paraffin to light your fire.

Wood-burning stoves

- The stove or boiler should be installed and regularly serviced by a competent engineer.
- It is important to use the correct size stove for your room. One that is too large will not get hot enough to burn all the fuel in the wood and un-burnt fuel will pass up the chimney as smoke and cause creosote, which is highly flammable, to form on the inside of the flue or chimney.
- Ensure the room is well ventilated.
- If the wood burner has been used slowly (overnight, for instance) this should be followed by a period of faster burning to dry out any creosote and to warm up the chimney again.
- Don't use your stove as an incinerator for general rubbish.



Carbon monoxide alarms

Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are not a substitute for proper installation and maintenance of gas appliances.

Make sure the alarm meets British Standard EN50291 and ideally has the British Standard Kitemark. You should install, check and service CO alarms according to the manufacturer's instructions.

CO alarms are available from DIY and hardware stores.

Useful information

Gas Safe register

To check if an engineer is on the register visit www.gassaferegister.co.uk



Contact us

☎ 01392 872200

@ firekills@dsfire.gov.uk

🌐 www.dsfire.gov.uk

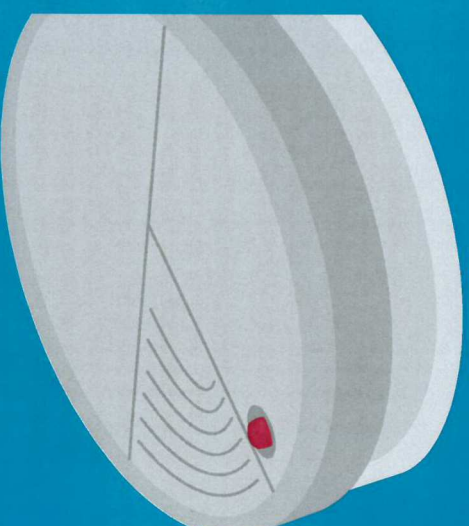
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Carbon monoxide advice



**KEEP
SAFE**
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Acting to Protect & Save

Carbon monoxide (CO)

Carbon monoxide (CO) is the most common form of household poison. You can't see it, you can't taste it and you can't smell it.

CO gas is produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels, including gas, oil, wood and coal. Carbon-based fuels are safe to use. It is only when the fuel does not burn properly that excess CO is produced, which is poisonous.

Poisoning occurs when gas appliances and flues have not been properly installed, maintained or are poorly ventilated.

The danger signs

- yellow or orange rather than blue flames (except fuel effect fires or flueless appliances which display this colour flame)
- soot or yellow/brown staining around or on appliances
- pilot lights that frequently blow out
- increased condensation inside windows.



The symptoms

The early symptoms of poisoning can be easily confused with many common ailments and can develop quickly or over a number of days or months. Look out for:

- a headache – this is the most common symptom
- feeling sick and dizzy
- feeling tired and confused
- being sick and having stomach pain
- shortness of breath and difficulty breathing.

Take action

If you think you have carbon monoxide poisoning, you should:

- seek urgent medical advice from either your GP or your Accident department
- open the windows and doors to ventilate the room, and don't sleep in it
- switch off all your gas appliances and don't use them again until the problem has been fixed



- shut off the gas supply at the meter control valve – if gas continues to escape, call the Gas Emergency free phone number on **0800 111 999**
- call a Gas Safe registered engineer to check all your gas appliances.

Top tips for prevention

- Installation, repair and regular servicing of any gas and fossil fuel appliances, flues and chimneys should be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Make sure you have good ventilation and enough fresh air in the room containing your gas appliance.
- Ensure chimneys/flues aren't blocked and vents aren't covered.
- Get your chimney swept from top to bottom at least once a year by a qualified sweep.



APPENDIX 3

‘Let’s make loneliness and isolation history in West Somerset: Conference

The ‘Let’s make loneliness and isolation history in West Somerset’ Conference was a huge success. The actions taken from the Conference and the latest updates are outlined below.

1 Extending our community transport schemes

ATWest are willing to meet with any community to explore the potential for developing new community transport projects.

2 A community swimming pool in Minehead

Minehead Town Council is investigating this.

3 Resource Bus and Activities for People who have visual impairment

Somerset Sight Resource Bus already visits West Somerset, for details, please visit: <http://www.somersetsight.org.uk/show.php?contentid=149>

4 Village Agents throughout West Somerset:

Community Council for Somerset have extended their service with a Village Agent:

a) New Community Centre opens just in time for Christmas

Community Council for Somerset Village Agent, Caroline Harding, has been supporting Hanover Court Manager, Mike Stables, over the past few months to re-open a community day centre for Dulverton residents and neighbouring parishes. The Day Centre is open every Friday from 10.00am – 3.00pm to the community and offers a morning Movement to Music session, three-course lunch, guest speakers, crafts and bingo.

The opening day offered a morning session with Movement to Music, followed by a delicious three course Christmas lunch and then in the afternoon the children from Dulverton First School came to entertain the guests with carols and music. This was followed by a surprise visit from Father Christmas who kindly gave out lots of presents to both school children and guests.

If anyone is interested in attending the Friends of Hanover Court day centre which is held every Friday, or is interested in volunteering at the Day Centre please contact either Mike Stables of Hanover Court on 01398 324076 or Caroline Harding, Village Agent on 07908 160733.

b) **Adult Social Care Hub Pilot**

Two CCS Village Agents will now be taking referrals from the Minehead and Wellington Adult Social Care Hubs. If you live in these areas and would like support from the Adult Social Care Hubs you can contact Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224 to see if you are eligible.

We will have community agents providing in-depth guidance on a one-to-one basis to help people feel better supported within their community. The work will involve advice, signposting and enabling people to connect with relevant services available;

- benefit checks
- home safety
- health and wellbeing support
- and energy saving etc
- Our community agents will also be encouraging people to attend groups that can support their needs eg Toddler or Dementia groups; 'Singing for the brain groups' and coffee mornings for carers etc. We can help people attend these groups and even go along with them if they are feeling nervous.

5 **Methodist's 'Holiday at Home Schemes' throughout the district**

Discussions are taking place with various organisations in the district to ascertain

6 **Extending the 'Living Better' approach (social prescribing) for all GP Surgeries in West Somerset**

At present, this pilot is offered to patients in Dunster, Porlock, Irnham Lodge (Minehead) and Dulverton Surgeries. Discussions are taking place with a range of organisations to seek funding to roll this social prescribing project out to the whole of the district.

In addition, in March 2016 Exmoor National Park Authority will be launching their 'green prescription scheme', in partnership with Dunster Surgery. Patients suffering with low mood will be referred to the project and have the opportunity to engage in an 8 week outdoor activity based programme including guided walks, gardening at Dunster Castle, storytelling and scrub bashing. Participants will have their wellbeing measured before and after the 8 week programme to track progress made, and ideally participants will become more engaged with the outdoors in the long term as a result. The 8 week programme will be repeated until the end of October for new referrals, so in total there will be 4 cycles within the first year.

7 **Dementia Awareness Groups**

Both Watchet and Minehead now have Dementia Awareness Alliances. Williton is a 'dementia friendly' village. The Reminiscence Learning 'Archie' Intergenerational Project has now been run in Williton and Dulverton. There are plans to run the 'Archie' Project in Minehead and Watchet too. West Somerset Council is a 'dementia friendly' organisation and both staff and members have received training with a number of staff becoming 'Dementia Champions' and rolling out 'dementia friends' training to such organisations as West Somerset Voluntary Sector Forum.

8 **Home Help Service**

This service is already available via Magna's website and the link is <http://www.magnaws.org.uk/community-services/community-support-home-help/>

Magna's community services team offers support to the whole West Somerset. They can make a personal visit or provide contact on the telephone according to customers' needs. You can contact the team on: 01984 635141.

Magna can offer help with:

- Reading mail
- Security and safety checks at home
- Benefit forms and maximising income
- Or just a friendly visit to check all is well

Magna's team can also liaise with doctors, hospitals and adult social care to provide support with:

- Preparing meals
- Shopping
- Booking appointments
- Transport
- Dog walking
- Housework

Community support is available to elderly or vulnerable people, people with disabilities and people with long term illnesses across West Somerset. You do not need to be one of Magna's tenants to benefit from community support. This service costs just £12.75 per hour. The telephone number to contact the team is 01984 635141

9 **Additional roles for home delivery service personnel**

Contacting local delivery organisations, including the Post Office, to see if they would consider handing out contact cards for Village Agents / Age UK. To be actioned.

10 **Affordable Housing to Rent in West Somerset**

West Somerset Community Land Trust now has its own Facebook page, where people who are interested in renting accommodation can register their interest and follow the Trust's progress.

11 **Village Buddying Service**

Monksilver Parish Council carried out a village mapping exercise of their entire community. Identifying all those people who are living alone and potentially isolated and vulnerable. The Parish Council has identified an individual who befriends this person. It is the responsibility of the befriender to take the person to all community events in the village. If the befriender is turned down three times, then the lonely person is invited around for coffee to make sure they are OK and nothing is wrong. Anyone wishing to find out more about this project should contact the Parish Clerk, Ross Urquhart tel no: 01984 656573 or e-mail: ukraj.676@gmail.com