Comberbach Village News

Community updates and events - Jan 2021

Magnificent Magnolia

Parish Council

An informal update from your parish council chairman

Notes from the Chair

By the time this newsletter has been distributed life should be getting back to normality with residents being able to meet up with their families and friends socially in the garden and then in May even a more relaxed atmosphere. It's good to hear the daily noise from the school playground and the enjoyment of children meeting up with their school friends. Indeed, one day when I visited the recreation area there were over 50 parents and children playing all socially distanced. It means that the monies we spend on the recreation area are used to the benefit of the local community.

Storm Christoph 18-20 Jan

The storm brought some flooding to the village in a number of areas which has resulted in damage to households. Whilst CW&C were inundated with requests for help some residents were able to locate sand bags to help. Although after the initial storm the Parish Council were able to locate sand and sand bags for use by the residents for any future emergency.

The Ward Councillors held a zoom meeting with the Parish Councils and a request has been put forward that Parish Councils where possible should have their own supply of sand bags and flooding signs which could then be used locally in an emergency. We have also asked CW&C for a detailed assessment of when drains and gulley's are cleaned and how many times a year.

Special Thanks

I have heard that Steve Howard is standing down as Chairman of the Fete Committee. A personal thank you from the Parish Council on his role and how he has organised both the Fete and other events over many years.

Thanks also to Nicola Ashbrook for the imagination of thinking of producing an anthology of stories during Lockdown. I am sure you all agree the booklet issued to all households in the village was a joy to read, so thank you to all of the contributors of stories.

Super Hero

Our own super hero aged 3 Sydney Hornby (and his parents Claire and Alex) have collected 146 Easter eggs from people in the village to donate to mid-Cheshire food bank. What an amazing achievement.

Parish Precept

The Parish Council agreed to maintain the precept at the same level as for 2020/21.

Recreation Area

It was agreed at the January meeting to proceed with quotes for the building of a pump track on the land behind the village storage unit (formerly the old memorial hall). A contractor has been appointed and details of the layout can be viewed in the newsletter. The track will be able to be used by children of all ages 3 upwards to allow user to "pump" their way round the track without the use of pedals.

The design has been catered for all abilities and can be used by balance bikes as well as BMX bikes and skateboards.
In addition, an area of the pathway surrounding the recreation area by the zip line is to be repaired with new stone being laid.

Highways and Hedges

A number of residents have commented on the fact that parents and children especially with a pram or buggy are unable to use the footpath because of either overhanging or overgrown hedges or cars are parked with their wheels on the pavement. Can I remind residents to be mindful of the need that we should not be asking residents with buggies etc to have to use the highway instead of the footpath?

CW&C StreetCare

We have received the below information.

Grass Cutting

This years target is to grass cut at intervals of every 3 weeks from early April to early October

Weed Control

A blanket spray of the whole Borough will start in April and be completed by July

Road Sweeping

Will be serviced by road sweeper on two occasions per year

New Councillor

Congratulation to Richard Chandler who was co-opted onto the Parish Council. We now have a full complement of Councillors until elections in May 2023.

John Ryder

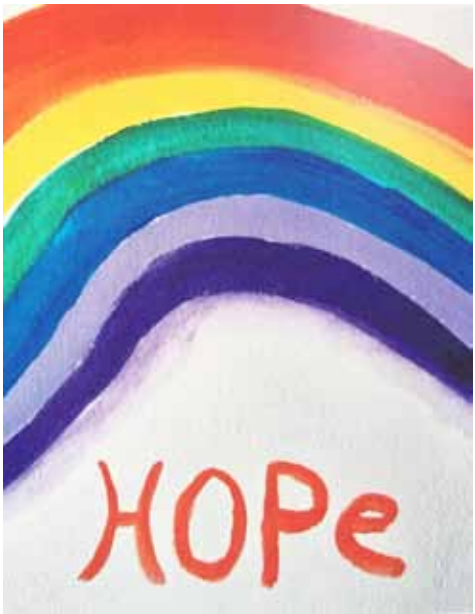
Village Super Hero

Eggsellent

Three year old Sydney Hornby (and his parents Claire and Alex) have collected a whopping 146 Easter eggs from people in the village to donate to mid Cheshire food bank. Well done to him and his family and a big thank you to all those who contributed.

'We would like you to know that you are seen, valued and loved'.

This rainbow of Hope and message was submitted by a Comberbach resident who is a member of Zac's House Kingdom Community and is for everyone who has supported and cared for the residents of Comberbach and its environment during the past year.



Just a few words from your local PCSO Diana Wiggins

I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well.
As we start to ease restrictions we still need to play our part in keeping safe and following any guidelines that may still be in place.
Local Police Surgeries will soon be held at the Post office - dates/times will be advertised on the notice board or social media.

Parking matters

Concerns have been raised about vehicles parking on pavements, please be respectful and park in a manner that allows wheelchair or pushchair access. We don't want any member of the community having to walk on the road.

Speed enforcement is conducted in the area, so please be mindful of the speed restrictions that are in place.

Look out for neighbours, if you have any concerns about their welfare please contact the Police. Our time will not be wasted, this is what we are here for.

We all need to play our part in keeping our community safe.

I can be contacted by email diana.wiggins@cheshire.pnn.police.uk with any issues or concerns that you may have.

Take care and enjoy the summer months.
Diana Wiggins

Comberbach Front Garden Fete - Flower Power

The Village Fete Committee is pleased to announce that this year's fete will take place on Saturday 26th June and that the theme will be 'Flower Power'. With the easing of restrictions, the format will once again be a 'front garden' festival, but with greater scope for interaction between households than last year. Think decorated houses, stalls, games and pop-up music acts on front drives and safe cul-de-sacs, with attractions spread out across the village for residents to explore on foot.

Pavement parade

Fete day will commence with the crowning ceremony in the chapel grounds, followed by a pavement procession around the village, led by the incoming Rose Queen, Alice Hopwood, and Rose Princess, Lucy McLeod.

Village attractions

The committee is planning to produce a village map showing the locations of the various attractions. There will be a small number of committee-run stalls/attractions at safe locations. For example, there will be a BBQ on Goosebrook Close serving burgers throughout the day. As with previous years, any funds raised on fete day go back into village projects, but the main objective of the day is to put on a fun village event.

Garden games

Residents are also encouraged to organise their own front garden games for people to participate in and these will be mapped. Possible ideas could include 'Giant jenga', 'Guess the name of the teddy', 'Splat the rat', 'Beat the goalie', 'Hook a duck' or 'Crockery smashing'. If you live in the village and would like to run a game, please speak to a member of the committee or email us on fete@comberbach.com so that we can include your game on our map. Games can be free or, if you would like to raise money for the village or for a specific community group, you can charge people to have a go.

There will be a prize for the best garden game!

Competition time

In addition to the parade and stalls around the village, this year, we are introducing several competition categories that will be judged on the day. Entry will require some advance preparation, so get thinking about which categories you might like to enter. We know how much creative talent there is in our village so we are anticipating a high standard!

- Best Miniature Garden
- Best Themed Garden (hanging baskets, flower displays, flower decorations)
- Most Interesting Homegrown Vegetable
- Best Front Garden Game
- Best 'Made in Comberbach' Produce (can be beer, jam etc).

'Don't move your car on the day' campaign

To minimise the movement of traffic around the village on fete day, we will be running a 'Don't move your car on the day' campaign. We will be encouraging those who live in the village not to go out in their cars while the fete is taking place to make the village as safe an environment as possible.

The entire event will be planned in consultation with Cheshire West & Chester Council to ensure it is 'Covid-compliant'.

Thanks all for your continued support.
Lynda Bigmore (on behalf of the Village Fete Committee).

Memorial Hall Report

The doors of the Memorial Hall were opened again for under 18s groups and classes on Monday 12 April. We're looking forward to welcoming back groups and organisations of adults according to the government's timetable over the coming weeks and months. This will include the WI, who are booked to return in a couple of months, after an absence of over twelve months!

We're in the process of applying for grants to help with the cost of installing a new heating system. The current boilers need replacing as soon as possible, so coupled with new radiators this will be a significant outlay, so grants will be a huge help. We're also planning on replacing the lights in the hall, which is another considerable investment, but as with the heating system, we should be able to make huge savings going forward.

If you're interested in booking the hall, or have any queries or questions, please contact me or Liz Cook and we'll be happy to help.

Nikki Lord 07721 501181
Liz Cook 07771 638324
comberbachmemorialhallbookings@gmail.com

Village Shop & Post Office

Firstly I would like to say thank you to everyone for their kind thoughts, cards etc. following my recent stay in hospital.
I am now home and on the road to recovery but with further hospital visits being necessary I have decided to retire from the business and have set a timescale of no later than November 2022. By this date I will have completed 30 years in Comberbach. The business is already on the market and details have been passed on to interested parties but in the present climate very few people seem ready or willing to launch into a new project. Hopefully the situation will change as we exit lockdown and I will be doing all I can to find prospective buyers for the business before November 2022.

Some of you may know that I applied for Planning Permission to convert the garage at the shop into living accommodation so that I could remain in the village following the sale of the shop. Unfortunately the application was refused by CWAC. Splitting the plot into two would enable me to reduce the asking price for the business and thereby increasing the chance of attracting prospective buyers before the deadline, so I have employed a Planning Consultant to address the issues raised by CWAC and resubmit the application. If you feel you would like to offer your support to the application please contact me and I will let you know how you can go about this.
Steve Howard

(NB – Rebecca Matzen is the new Chair of the Fete Committee, contact details at the back)

Comberbach Methodist Chapel

After having our Doors closed for the last three months, we are now all very much looking forward to opening them for Worship from 18 April. Covid restrictions will still be in place and because of social distancing, seats need to be reserved by ringing Robert on *01606 891771.*

Despite the Chapel being closed, a group of twenty five Members and Friends met on the Lawn on Easter Sunday Morning, and still complying with all the latest rules and regulations, sang through twelve Easter Hymns. Alan played the Organ and the sound was relayed outside by a speaker situated in the Vestibule. Roy Kirkpatrick's help with that was much appreciated. Whilst everyone was singing, the wooden cross, which had been draped in purple since Good Friday, was decorated with flowers. Everyone enjoyed this socially distanced get-together, in the sunshine, celebrating the Resurrection and looking forward to better times to come.

Zoom Choir

The Choir have continued to meet via Zoom sessions, singing to their past recordings of the songs that they know very well. Always good to keep in touch.

Please continue to check our Website for various Reflections and Prayers.

Each week the forthcoming Sunday Service will be posted on the Noticeboard.

John Eaton
Handyman Services

Handyman
Landscaping Services
Property Maintenance
Local Tradesman

3 Cogshall Lane, Comberbach
Please call on 07966873932
johneaton303@hotmail.com

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CW9 5LP

A Walking Website

Are you fed-up with doing the same old walks? Walking in Cheshire www.walkinginengland.co.uk/cheshire is the website for you!

With hundreds of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, contact details for all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

'There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Cheshire, part of the Walking in England suite of websites (www.walkinginengland.co.uk) one for each county in England, has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you'.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

John Harris
www.walkinginengland.co.uk
email: john@walkinginengland.co.uk

(PS. beware there are 2 places in Cheshire called Marbury)

1st Comberbach Guides and Senior Section

Busy Zooming

During the lockdown our Leaders have kept us busy and connected via Zoom. They made up, and delivered, a box of craft items and activities for each of us. Each Wednesday we were told which bag of items to remove from the box. Then we all did the activity together. From the box we made a mobile phone holder out of clay, and then painted it, made pancakes and cooked them over a candle, celebrated Thinking Day by making a peg doll Guide, made a miniature ballista to fire pompoms and paper flowers for Mothers' Day. We also made a vision board and had a go at blackout poetry. We finished each meeting with a quiz - thank you Cerys.

Easter egging

For our last meeting before Easter the whole unit met in Marbury Park. There we successfully completed an Easter egg orienteering course, put together by Senior Section and Leaders. We ended at the campfire where we toasted marshmallows.

Face to face

Now that we can meet face to face again (socially distanced, of course) all our meetings next term will be in Marbury Park - rain or shine. We look forward to many outdoor activities. Who knows what we'll get up to!

Continue to stay safe everybody.

Guides and Senior Section.

1st Comberbach Brownies

Unfortunately 1st Comberbach Brownies has had to close. It was a very hard decision to make but, due to our small number of girls and our Guiders having other commitments and care duties to fulfil elsewhere, we felt it was the right thing to do.

We would like to thank everyone in the village and surrounding areas for all your support over the last 45 years especially all the girls and Guiders who have attended and helped in the unit. We would also like to thank all those involved in Guiding in the various groups in the village, and District for their help and support and many years of great Adventures.

Best Guiding wishes to you all
Zoe Jones and Guiders at
1st Comberbach Brownies

Comberbach WI

By the time this goes to print, Easter will have been and gone, and I trust that the Bank Holiday has been a pleasant time for everyone, giving us the chance to relax, reflect, reconnect with loved ones, enjoy the emergence of Spring and generally give thanks for these joys around us.

A little sunshine

What a difference a little sunshine, warmer temperatures and some colour make! The cold and grey skies of winter are finally behind us and we have all been enjoying some blue skies, even though we still get the occasional grey one. My garden and many others are now vibrant with spring flowers and driving through the village I see some lovely gardens. It all serves to lift the spirits after a difficult year. Vaccination has also helped to give us all more confidence for the coming months, although we are not out of the proverbial woods yet and caution is still the watchword.

Lockdown life

The lockdown has made things so difficult for many, and we have all missed being able to do so many things which we previously took for granted. The ladies from our WI have missed the monthly meetings and all the activities which we normally would have enjoyed, such as outings, organized trips, coffee mornings and garden parties. We now have the rule of 6 back, which means we can meet up outdoors, weather permitting, for a coffee, chat, walk and catch-up. I am sure we will all benefit as a result. The walkers will be able to resume in sixes, as will the book club at Sara Smith's home, where she was hosting a group of five others in her garden the last time we were able to meet in sixes. It is all part of getting our WI up and running again. We hope to start using the Hall again in late summer – July or August, and we shall draw up some sort of programme as we go. We will keep our members updated by the usual means and use the notice boards in the village too.

Cheshire No Show this year

The word will have got around now that the WI will not have a presence at the Cheshire Show, even if it does go ahead. There has always been a huge WI marquee at the show, but it was decided that we should not be putting WI members and their close family members at risk from Covid, at what would be a busy event. Margery Hall, our Show organizer, has a much-needed year off!

Margery has worked tirelessly each year, even spending her birthday at the Show every time! Her illness last year has prompted her to step back from some of the work she had been doing for our WI, so we all thank her for everything she has done. She remains on our Committee and will continue to be a valuable member of the group.

Come and join us

That brings me to the next thing: WE WOULD LOVE SOME NEW MEMBERS! Have you recently moved into the area and would like to join us?

The WI nationally is welcoming younger ladies, and the organization is no longer seen as being for the over 60s! We meet at the Village Hall on the first Monday of the month in normal circumstances, and we enjoy a good range of speakers, trips, activities and outings. Perhaps you have previously thought that the WI was not for you – you may like to reconsider?

Perhaps we're not what you think

Others may think "they are not ready yet" to join, but there is something to suit most tastes! Last year we cancelled speakers, outings, the theatre, a canal cruise, shopping trips and meals out. Attendance each month is not compulsory, and you choose how much or how little you would like to be involved. Yes, we do sing *"Jerusalem"* (not brilliantly, in my case, but I am at the front and everyone can hear my off-notes!) but it is sung with gusto.

We have our own website and Facebook page too, so we do move with the times! We look forward to seeing you and a warm welcome awaits, along with tea, coffee and cake!

Wishing you much enjoyment of "better times" with friends and family.

Janine Hampton
President, Comberbach WI.

Comberbach Community Pump Track – coming soon!

At the meeting of the Parish Council on 19th January, the Council agreed to include a sum of £17,000 in the budget for 2021/22 for the provision of a Pump Track and to seek quotes from suppliers for the building of a tarmac-based facility. Quotes were invited from 5 suppliers and at the meeting on 9 March approval was authorised to proceed with the supplier, Clark & Kent. The proposed track is slightly larger than the original outline. Clark & Kent have vast knowledge and experience in this area having built pump tracks for over 12 years including local tracks at Mickle Trafford in 2019 and Waverton in 2020.

Work is scheduled to start in early May and should be completed within 2 weeks.

The Recreation Area has had no additional equipment installed since it opened in 2002. The land behind the village storage unit, where the old memorial hall was located, has given the Parish Council the opportunity to budget for new recreation activities.

A pump track is a looped sequence of rollers and berms (swoopy banked turns) for riders of all ages, including young children who can use it to ride balance bikes. Its design maximises momentum, so you can ride around the track with minimal or no pedalling. It can be used by bikes, micro scooters, skateboards and rollerblades. The track will include various features such as berms, Rollers, Tabletops, Doubles and Triples. These will all be fundamental to helping both beginners and more experienced users develop their skills on the track. The features will be of a progressive design and give all users a great variety to enjoy.

The Parish Council thinks the Comberbach Pump Track will be a great asset. The Recreation Area is well used and this additional facility will enhance existing provision and its versatility means it can be used by families and individuals. The track will promote great health benefits and give positive social returns to the whole community. The facility will be inclusive to all ages, modern and engaging and will be sensitive to the surroundings.

We can't wait to see it installed!
Comberbach Parish Council
If you have any queries please contact the Clerk - *clerk@comberbach-pc.gov.uk*

Comberbach Bowling Club

Following the Government's "Roadmap out of lockdown" the Club opened on 29 March 2021 to allow members to play bowls, initially in limited numbers, but after the 12th April we anticipate that friendly matches can start also. Competitive league and cup bowling is anticipated to commence in mid-May and with this late start the bowling will continue until October 2021.

The Bowling Club Rules

stipulate that it is operated as a Members' Club with provisions for Guests and Visitors. Membership is open and for a small annual subscription the members are entitled to utilise the facilities. We welcome any new members, whether they are experienced bowlers, newcomers to bowling or just as social members.

The Bowling Club is self-financing and our income relies on annual subscriptions, bowling fees, funds raised from club social events and sales from the licensed bar. The Club is a non-profit organisation and, after all the maintenance costs are paid for, any surplus funds each year are utilised to improve the Club and facilities for the benefit of the members.

Centenary

August 2021 is the centenary of the Official Opening of the War Memorial and Bowling Green and we are hopeful that by this time we are allowed to operate in a normal manner to celebrate the event.

We welcome back our members this year after a difficult 2020 and if anyone is interested in joining as a new member please contact me or visit the Club to find out more.

Adrian Robinson
Chairman Tel 01606 891663

Start of a new era for The Spinner and Bergamot

April heralded a change of landlords in the Spinner and Bergamot. Robert and Anita have left and we wish them and their family all the best for the future.

The new landlords and ladies taking over are husband and wife teams Simon & Kirsty Jane along with Dave & Angie Rotherham. The Spinner will be the sister pub to The Bells of Peover which Dave already owns. Simon and Dave have worked together and been friends for over 20 years and have now made the decision to go into business together. The new landlords tell us they will welcome the local community with a big smile and look forward to meeting everyone and integrating into the community.

They open from midday Monday 12 April with lots extra outdoor tables and seating both on the side garden, the terrace and former bowling green area to the rear. Approximately half of the tables will be under gazebos to enable their use during rain showers - these covered tables can be reserved for dining or just drinking - the rest of the tables will be first come, first seated.

Their immediate aim is to provide outdoor provision for drinks and food but more long term they want the pub to be a comfortable and relaxed venue where people can come to enjoy a friendly atmosphere with a high standard of food, drink and service. They will be using local produce to prepare fresh food of high quality.

Food service is from midday until 8.30pm, initially the outdoor menu will be limited (they only had 11 days to get ready), but will increase in range rapidly once the team are ready to deliver the menu quickly and consistently. A children's menu will be available as well as vegan options.

They remain a pub within the Robinson's brewery group, so are fully tied to their drinks products, but have introduced new products, will have a rotation of cask beers, and an outstanding wine list.

Bookings can be made via the website *www.spinnerandbergamot.co.uk* or phone *01606 891307*, and it is especially advisable to secure a table at busier times.

Friends of Anderton and Marbury

Photographic Competition 2019/20

At last, the results have been published. Many thanks to those who have helped, giving up their time and expertise in these difficult times. The judges (Andy Harmer, Simon Davies, and Nick Jones) did a wonderful, professional job in sorting out the results. One other individual, who wants to remain anonymous, has also done a huge amount of work.

What has been most rewarding has been the pleasure expressed by those who took part and one commented, "Makes you realise how lucky we are to have Marbury on our doorstep." The entrants obviously enjoyed the experience of having their efforts appreciated and getting some feedback from the judges. Some had entered with trepidation, not having taken part in a competition of this nature before, but have now gained the confidence to do so again and see it as a good reason to look for photo opportunities while visiting the patch.

The future

This is all to the good, and augurs well for the future of the competition. This is not to say we should sit on our laurels and any suggestions for improving the event's organisation would be most welcome.

The judges were impressed with the standard and had a difficult job finalising results. They are in favour of using the on-line system used this year, but with the added ability to meet as a group to discuss results.

The photographic competition was the only event possible for over a year and it was a huge success and worth the effort. The 'winners' photos are shown but visit FoAM's web site *(www.foam.merseyforest.gov.uk)* to view all the entries.

Jim Jeeves

Category	Title	Photographer
Fauna	Firecrest	M. Bullock
Flora	Winter teasel	Dave Trevor
Work, Rest and Play	Happy Days	Graham Walker
Landscape	Neuman's Flash	Dave Atherton

Great Budworth Garden Club

(Part 1 from earlier in the year)
Due to coronavirus and lockdown the Garden Club decided not to hold an AGM as there was nothing to discuss! A wonderful online News Letter for garden club members was produced containing information and updates.

The weather in early 2021 was not pleasant for gardening with hard frosts and snow making it impossible to get outside. Nevertheless, snowdrops appeared, the camellia has flowers, and daffodils broke through. Nature is marvellous and takes no heed of pandemics, lightens our spirits, and warmer weather will give us all hope and contentment.

During the last year, I have written a book about all of this, adding to it my family history. As the pandemic and its impacts are not over yet, I've started a second book. The books are not for sale, just for my next generations. The photo show me with the book.

(Part 2 more recent)
We hope you have stayed safe and well during this dreadful pandemic. Our gardens have been a saviour for us, and we can enjoy pottering around them.

We have not printed an events card, because we are not certain what we are doing just yet. We have had a zoom meeting with Phil Smith as speaker, which went down well.

Our April meeting is a plant sale outside the parish hall on Tuesday 13 from 2-4pm. We will be giving members sunflower seeds to grow on for a competition, there will be a seed SWOP, and garden sundries. All monies for charity. Some restrictions are lifted the day before, pubs can serve outside, and non-retail shops are open. Jane Fairclough will open her garden, Parm Place, High Street, for members at that time also. It is a stunning winter garden. We will have a good afternoon of comradery and friendship and look forward to the rest of the year in the club.

The May meeting will be a zoom meeting, details to be sent to members in our own 'Keeping in Touch' newsletter.

Sad news to tell you that our member, Jane Johnson, from Whitley, has died peacefully aged 90. Condolences to all her family. She was a great lady.

Looking forward to normality in our lives once again eventually.
Best wishes
Jean Davies
0789993 7683

Comberbach Art Group

Well what a strange 12 months this has been for the art group, we had some garden painting sessions in the summer but we are still unable to make plans to meet up to paint at the moment, however we hope restrictions may be relaxed soon, until then we are keeping in touch by e-mail and sharing our paintings to inspire each other, some to celebrate spring and another that is out of this world!.

If anyone would like to find out more about the group please get in touch with *midgebroadhurst@gmail.com*

An appeal for assistance

"Help wanted in the preparation of a Local History book with producing illustrations and manipulation of Photoshop".

please contact Alan Bailey
baileyalan4@gmail.com"01606 891149

2nd Comberbach Brownies

Zoom games

Spring term saw girls and Guiders zooming together on a fortnightly rota and using the alternate Wednesday to complete a craft or challenge. We seem to maintain everyone's interest and our 4 new girls have settled in really well. We returned to some of the favourite Zoom games---scavenger hunts, fruit and veg bingo, and guess the food while the snowman melts! Words for breakfast food ranged from cereals to eggs benedict! Guiders would like to have breakfast at that Brownies' home!

One Wednesday Zoom call saw all the girls make Tiffin under Wise Owl's instructions. Weighed ingredients had been sent earlier by the Owl Delivery Service and Mr Wise Owl was in charge of filming the stages as they happened in our kitchen. He's awaiting his BAFTA nomination anytime soon! Every Brownie produced a super delicious tray of Tiffin but we understand it didn't last long! Some girls thought they might make more for Mothers' day.

The girls were challenged to make a flag which was personal to them and so made them unique. The resulting flags showed families, hobbies, pets or favourite places to go. They used colours or drawings to illustrate these and the conversations we had over Zoom were very interesting. For Mothers' day we thought our Mums were all super heroes so a card with this theme was made and even a mask for her to wear all day. The card included reasons why their Mum was super hero and there are Mums out there who 'make delicious spag bol', or 'bake lovely cakes', or 'help me find my common sense at times'.

On the last Zoom meeting of term 2 Brownies made their Promise together with Emma who is working on her Adult Leadership Qualification. Elizabeth made her Promise extra special for us all by signing hers using Makaton. Very well done to her. We delivered a bag of craft bits and bobs before Easter and the girls were very creative.

Next term we intend to continue as we have been doing but hoping to have an evening at Marbury towards the end of term. In the meantime we're working on a Grow your Own badge so green fingers at the ready!

Lynda Flynn (aka Wise Owl)

A Bird's Eye View

Otterley Amazing

In my last column I briefly mentioned an otter sighting on the mere on 27 December. Historically the otter was an uncommon visitor here. It was also seen at Arley and Tabley as well as the River Weaver around Northwich. This though was back in the 1950s and, following decades of persecution and pollution, it disappeared from our waters.

It is only during the last decades that it has got a foothold back in the country, with sightings around the Rivers Weaver and Dane. Tragically, but intriguingly a dead dog (male) otter was found on the road opposite Neumann's Flash a few years ago. This latest sighting fits a pattern of continued expansion back into its old ranges. As the population grows the young will journey further afield looking for new places to colonise, hopefully filling a historic gap in our fauna in the process.

The mere suffers a lot more disturbance these days but if you are around at dawn or dusk keep your eyes open because you never know. The fact that every county in England now has otters is of great credit to the various nature conservation groups involved in helping them, and points to what we can achieve when we put our minds to it. Who knows maybe we will get a pair of beavers one day!

No Sparrows but Sparrowhawks

Speaking of collective achievement, I hope many of you took part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch held back in January. The data gathered from this survey helps highlight bird population declines and the action needed to try and remedy them. Typically, during our survey bird numbers were less than normal. I even suffered the indignity of having no house sparrows present; well not until the day after the survey!

Proceedings were not helped by a glorious female sparrowhawk tearing through the garden and scaring everything into cover for 5 minutes. I could not count her on my list because she never landed in the garden. She has been around a lot of the winter, on one notable occasion even landing on top of the bird feeder while I was cleaning underneath it, fixing me with her fierce, piercing, all-seeing yellow eyes before departing.

You will know if they are present in your garden if you spot their 'plucking-post'. Some people get upset by the bird's presence, but please do not be as you are lucky to be in the company of your garden's apex predator.

They are a sign that your garden is a healthy place and the food chain is working as it should. They help keep it that way by taking sick and injured birds as well. There is a lot of talk in ecology of 'keystone species', which can be as seemingly insignificant as fungi or grass or plankton without which nothing else thrives. In our gardens we are the 'keystone species', nurture your garden right and everything else will follow.

Egrets Everywhere

During the latest lockdown I have mainly been avoiding the busy park but while walking on routes around the village I often neglect, I have seen some great birds like ravens, skylarks, yellowhammers, large flocks of redwings and field fares, grey partridge, tree sparrows, 100+ linnets feeding together and I also found a tawny owl roost site.

On 26 of February I found a singing chiffchaff by Cogshall Hall; a very early return date for this spring migrant. Walking along Hall Lane a while back, someone driving by asked me if I had seen what they described as a lost 'white peregrine', which I had not. A bit later on I spotted a white shape in a paddock to my left.

Expecting to see the lost bird when I raised by binoculars, I was surprised to find myself looking at a little egret instead. It was stood on one leg with the other one tucked up under its feathers to keep it warm. It is amazing to think that what was once such a rare bird is now to be found so close to home. Seeing it out of its usual habitat, on the mere and the flashes, really brought home to me how quickly things can change for the better!

JB

Great Budworth Parish Church

Welcome back everyone!

Dates for the diary

Sunday 9th

10.30am Rogationtide Service with The Rt Revd Mark Tanner, Bishop of Chester – service in Church and finishing with a short walk around the village. Please make sure you book in for this service with Pauline Ridgway.

Saturday 15th

1pm First wedding of the year! Please pray for Melissa Carver and James Pentecost who will be getting married, and for their guests – all 13 of them!

Boyd Walk

Due to the Coronavirus restrictions this annual walk has had to be postponed, but may be held later in the year, in the autumn.

Christian Aid Week – Sat 8th to Sun 16th

You may receive an envelope through the door and if so please return as directed or drop off in Church – thank you and please support Christian Aid's annual fund-raising venture if you can.

Church Teas and Summer Fair

The resumption of our very popular weekly Church Teas in the Parish Hall in Great Budworth, and the holding of the annual Summer Fair, will be discussed at a forthcoming meeting of the Parochial Church Council, and any decisions will be publicized as soon, and as widely, as possible. Please bear with us.....!

The Revd Alec Brown
Vicar of Great Budworth.

Photograph by Anita Robinson

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Report from Comberbach Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesdays 19 January and 9 March 2021

Virtual Meeting Regulations

The Parish Council meetings continue to be held using Zoom in accordance with current regulations.

New Councillor

The Parish Council co-opted Richard Chandler and we are now up to full strength will all 8 seats on the Council being filled.

Precept

In January the Council approved the precept total to be submitted to CWAC to be £22,655 which equates to a Band D charge of £50.91 for 2021-22 which is no change from the current year (0% change).

Recreation Area and new Pump Track

The Recreation Area continues to be an area of focus in terms of spending and future projects. The new project to provide a Pump Track for all ages to enjoy will be progressing soon (see separate article). There will also be a project to improve the footpath to stop the flooding issues. ROSPA will be undertaking their annual inspection in April to ensure the Recreation Area continues to be a safe environment.

Covid Writing Project

The Council was delighted to pay for the printing costs of this lovely book which was so well received by residents; well done to Nicola Bartley for her idea and hard work in making it happen!

Speeding

This continues to be an issue of concern for residents and the Parish Council. The Council has put money in the budget to purchase a Speed Indicator Device (SID) with our neighbours at Anderton with Marbury Parish Council. In the meantime, the Council will look to borrow the SID from CWAC when Covid restrictions allow.

Flooding

The Council was updated by the CWAC Ward Councillors on actions to address future flooding including a list of proposals that were submitted to the CWAC Flooding Task Group. The proposals included providing each Parish Council with a supply of sand, sandbags, signage and cones to keep in store in their local area in case of future need. The Parish Council has already purchased a stock of sand and sandbags to keep in the storage unit in case of future need. In addition, the Clerk has written to CWAC seeking information on maintenance schedules including grass cutting, weed control, gulley and road sweeping.

Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Council – Tuesday 4 May

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place, on Zoom, on Tuesday 4 May at 6.30pm. The Chairman of the Parish Council will present his annual report and there will be a separate report on the Council finances. All residents are welcome to attend this meeting and can ask any questions of the Council. The Annual Meeting of the Council will follow at 7.15pm, residents welcome.

Parish Council Minutes are available on the noticeboard by the village store and on Parish Council website: *www.comberbach-pc.gov.uk*

During the Coronavirus situation, Parish Council meetings will be held remotely. Members of the public are welcome to listen and/or watch meetings and should contact the Parish Clerk for details: *clerk@comberbach-pc.gov.uk or 07759 212449.*

Parish Councillor information and meeting dates

All Parish Council meetings are held on a Tuesday.
Members of the public are welcome to attend and can speak during the Open Forum at 7.15pm
Meeting dates:
2021: 9 March; 4 May; 13 July; 14 September; 26 October; 14 December;
2022: 18 January; 8 March.
Annual Parish Meeting – 4 May at 6.30pm

In view of the current situation with Coronavirus all meetings are currently held via Zoom. The ID will be published on the agenda or details can be obtained by contacting the Parish Clerk.

Agendas and minutes are published on the noticeboard by the Post Office and on the Parish Council website.
Contact the Parish Council as below:

Name	Address	Tel numbers	Contact point for
Cllr. John Ryder (Chairman)	26 Burgamot Lane, Comberbach CW9 6BU	01606 891 827	Barrymore Crescent, Burgamot Lane,
Cllr. Steven Hornby (Vice Chairman)	Sunny Bank, Marbury Road Comberbach CW9 6AU	01606 891075	Senna Lane (lower to Mather Drive), Marbury Road, The Moss
Jim Bradley	3 Bracken Way, Comberbach CW9 6QF	01606 891 005 07708 633458	Bracken Way, Kennelwood Road, Fox Lea, Freshfields, Broadacre
Rena Bradley	3 Bracken Way, Comberbach CW9 6QF	01606 891 005	Bracken Way, Kennelwood Road, Fox Lea, Freshfields, Broadacre
Richard Chandler	Crows Nest House Crownest Lane Comberbach CW9 6HY	01606 891 005	The Avenue (to the Spinner), Warrington Road (from the Spinner, Budworth Lane Crownest Lane
Bob Holt	8 Cogshall Lane Comberbach CW9 6BS	07739 046775	Mather Drive Meadow Lane Senna Lane (upper: from Mather Drive)
Jill Johnston	6 Barrymore Crescent Comberbach CW9 6PA	01606 892 121	Goosebrook Close, Brookfield Road, Spinner Crescent, Chapel Close, Reedsmere Walk
Val McDermott	14 Cogshall Lane Comberbach CW9 6BS	01606 891075 07739 046775	Cogshall Lane Outer Cogshall
Parish Clerk	Denise French clerk@comberbach-pc.gov.uk	07759 212449	

Please note the new email contact details for Denise French (as above) and the landline number for Val McDermott (correct in the above table)

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What's going on...when, and how to contact the right people

Memorial Hall

WI	1st Mon each month	7.30pm	Rosie Rowe	784858
Ladies Club	3rd Mon each month	Different Venues	Ursula Ryder	01606 891827
Love to Dance	Mon, 4 - 8.45pm Wed 4 - 7.30pm		Zoe Buckley smb.designs@hotmail.co.uk	
Well heeled puppies well heeled dogs	Monday (small hall) Thursday	4.45 -8.15pm 6.45-8.15pm	Mike Flannery mike@thedogclub.co.uk	
Northwich Fencing	Monday	7.30 - 9pm	northwichfencingclub@gmail.com	
Karate	Monday Sunnday	6-7pm 4-6pm	Andrew Wilson cheshire.shitoryu@gmail.com	07388 869985
Yoga	Wednesday	8-9pm	Alison Rostron yogapilatesali@gmail.com	07460 805880
Calligraphy	Thursday	1.30-3.30pm	Brian Sudlow	01606891722
Pilates	Thursday	9.15 - 10.15	Carole Rowley cazrowley1@gmail.com	
Cheerleading	Friday	5 - 6pm	Megan Berry meganberry_@hotmail.co.uk	

N.B. Under 18 classes in Love to Dance, Fencing, Cheerleading start in April, all adult classes begin 17 May.

Chapel

Brownies (2nd)	Wednesday	6 - 7.20pm	Lynda Flynn	891571
Guides	Wednesday	7.30 - 9.00pm	Anne O'May	891156
Marbury Senior Section	Monday	8 - 9.30pm	Anne O'May	891156
Sunday School	Sunday	11am - 12.00pm	Ian Woodcock	01606 891218
Art Group	Mondays	10 - 1.pm	Midge Broadhurst	01925 266 798
French Language Lessons	Thursday	7-9pm	Nathalie Poutineau	892741

Comberbach Primary School Hall

Toddler Group	Wednesdays	9 - 11am	Comberbach School	01606 891336
Rainbows	Monday	6 - 7.15pm	Sue Greenwood	76408

Anderton Village Hall

Scouts	Friday	7.30 - 9.00pm	Paul Underwood Rob Doel	07725 150 928 891789 / 07526 723516

Antrobus School Hall

Cubs	Tuesday	6.30 - 8.00pm	Rachel Cameron	01606 891023
Beavers	Wednesday	6.15 - 7.15pm	Janet Warburton	854014

Please send contributions to the newsletter to: newsletter@comberbach.com
Articles for the newsletter can also be made to any of the team below either on paper or by e-mail

Kath Wharfe	18 Burgamot Lane	891540	kathwharfe@hotmail.co.uk

Useful contacts:

Village web site	www.comberbach.com	
Marbury Park Rangers		77741
Homewatch		892568
Village Memorial Hall - bookings	07771638324 / 07721501181 (Liz/Nikki) or comberbachmemorialhallbookings@gmail.com	
Clerk to the Parish Council	clerk@comberbach-pc.gov.uk	
Pre-school website	https://www.comberbach.cheshire.sch.uk	
Comberbach Methodist Church	Rev Tim Simms	01606 301588
Sunday School Room Hire	Alan Woodcock	891248
Great Budworth Parish Church	Rev A Brown	891324
Fete Committee	Rebecca Matzen fete@comberbach.com	07725954349