

From the Parish Council.

Remember Saturday 21st March is the day for the Valley Litter Pick. Please see the separate article and poster (on page?) for details.

It is sad to report that we have once again had to close the car park at Couch Green having been warned that travellers are back again in Winchester and are being moved on from their present location. Thanks to the efforts of our expert local welder we now have a "lock box" covering the padlock to the high level barrier to the car park. Along with other work such as ditches and an extra gate as many reasonable precautions as are practical are now in place.

While remaining on the subject of Couch Green there have been three other areas of progress. The container for the storage of football equipment is now on site and already in use. As previously reported, once the ground is dry and hard enough, it will be moved onto the concrete pad. A start has been made to our tree safety programme. Following a report from a tree consultant the pines close to the bus shelter have been de-ivyed. Further work is due to be carried out by tree surgeons to remove potentially dangerous branches and also ash trees close to the road near the telephone exchange. The third area is the copse on the west side of Couch Green. This is in a poor state. Thanks to a local resident this is now being cleared in stages. The Parish Council has provided "whips" which the resident has planted to create a new hedge.

Thank you to the two people who responded to the requests in last month's Valley News. Both their views on the new bus shelter design for Itchen Abbas and the position for the notice board at Martyr Worthy were taken into account by the Parish Council at our last meeting. The bus shelter when replaced will be very similar in design to the present one but will have a window so that those waiting inside can see the bus coming. The notice board will go back in its former position close to Martyr Worthy Village Hall. At present we are looking for a good carpenter to rebuild it.

Many residents will have received a leaflet from the Boomtown organisers in their copy of The Itchen Valley Forum. Reading this or from elsewhere you may be aware that they have made a planning application to increase the numbers attending. Their aim is to make the numbers allowed by this application match those already allowed by the current licence. This increase is an approximate increase of twenty-five percent. Following a presentation by the Boomtown organisers the Parish Council discussed this application. As always in the case of Boomtown there was a wide range of views. It was therefore agreed to submit a comment raising a number of concerns and recommendations. The main thrust of these centred on improving care for the environment, not only while the festival was on but also during the remainder of the year. It was also requested that as the licence is limited to a set number of years that the planning permission should be the same. The full details will be in the minutes on the Parish Council website.

Two members of the Parish Council together with a number of Valley residents attended the drop in session run by Southern Water on the Candover Temporary Pipeline Project. Little has changed since the previous report last year. Our main area of concern is that water from this line will be discharged into the river via the trout farm in Itchen Abbas. Details of this are still not clear. If and when more information is more forthcoming we will let you know.

Hope to see you at the Litter Pick.

Patrick Appleby.