

PARISH NEWS



Clare
Parish Council

ISSUE TWELVE - MARCH 2011

You will all have heard about BT's proposal to put a Wind Farm on a site at the Western edge of the parish at Leys Farm, Clare. A planning application for the erection of several wind-turbines is expected later this year and the Parish Council and councillors are keen to assess local feeling before they have to send their recommendations to St Edmundsbury Borough Council who are the local planning authority.

Please play your part in this decision by making your feelings known to the Parish Council. As we expect a large response we have set up an email address for this purpose. Alternatively you can write to us with a brief comment - see panel below.

Your opinion is important to the council, whatever it is. Please indicate "Yes", "No", "Don't Care", "Undecided" or something similar. In each case please give your name and address in confidence, purely to indicate that you are a Clare parishioner as we cannot accept responses from non-parishioners.

The Parish Council wish to do the right thing for the Community and need your opinion.



If you wish to find out more information about the plans, you can visit BT's website: <http://www.btplc.com/responsiblebusiness/index.htm>. You can find an alternative view by visiting the Stop Turbines Over Clare action group's website: www.stopclarewindfarm.com.

STOC will be hosting a public meeting in Clare Town Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 4th April when, Tim Yeo MP will be one of the speakers.

Your opinion is important to the council, whatever it is. Please indicate "Yes", "No", "Don't Care", "Undecided" or something similar. Please send us your comments to the following ...

Write to us at the following address:

Wind Farm Opinion, Clare Parish Council, The Old School, Callis Street, Clare, CO10 8PX

Email us on: clarewindfarmopinion@hotmail.co.uk

Don't forget to visit the Clare website at www.clare-uk.com



New Strategic Direction will hit Clare hard

As widely reported in the press, Suffolk County Council (SCC) will be making budget cuts which will impact on many of the discretionary services which it delivers to communities. In the case of Clare, a number of our most used and most valued facilities are under threat: Clare Castle Country Park, Clare Library and Clare Youth Club. In essence, SCC's stance is that their funding will cease during 2011 and it is for local community groups and volunteers to step forward, organise management committees and make proposals to finance and run the services without any financial support from SCC.

We are obviously a very active and engaged community as evidenced by the fact that we were voted Suffolk Village of the Year for 2010-12. Significant community effort has also gone into creating the Clare Community Plan and into retaining a secondary school in Clare on the Middle School site. Our local voluntary sector is already very active, some might say already very stretched

The following is an update on each of the areas which this policy will affect:

Clare Youth Club

The Youth Club will have its local government funding removed from April 2011. The club has run successfully for many years and is led by three youth leaders and provides activities and friendship for some 50 youngsters. The club meets weekly during term time at Clare Middle School. Two of the three leaders are funded by the weekly subscriptions and by CLASP. The third youth worker is however funded by SCC. The Youth Club Management Committee led by Stuart Green is currently looking at ways of raising funds so that both youth clubs can continue. Stuart has held conversations with the Headteacher at Stour Valley Community School and it has been agreed that the school will ensure that there is appropriate indoor space available for the youth club to continue.

The Youth Club is a vital community asset and of great benefit to our youngsters. We need to ensure that it is retained.

Clare Country Park

The Country Park is at the heart of the community in Clare and its surrounding area. It is a well-used local recreation facility, highly valued by local people, popular with visitors and an integral part of our local business community. SCC is currently considering its future role in the running of Clare Castle Country Park as part of the larger review of the future of all council owned country parks and recreation sites. The council is proposing that they will no longer be involved in the running of the site and would seek to transfer all assets involved to local organisations by September 2011.

SCC say "We would like to see the site continue as a country park open for all to use but that does not mean that it has to be run exactly as it is now."

The Parish Council is very clear in its view: our Country Park has simply been lumped in with all other parks and country parks across Suffolk. No account has been taken of the fact that the Country Park is also our Town Park, sitting as it does in the middle of Clare. While it receives 180,000 visitors every year from all over the East of England, for Clare residents it is used daily by walkers, dog owners and families who bring children to the playground.

SCC cannot simply abdicate financial and management responsibility and expect the volunteer groups to step into their shoes. The Parish Council has written forcefully to SCC to ask them to re-think their approach, articles have appeared in the local press and on 16 March Councillors spoke at the SCC Scrutiny Committee which is looking at how the divestment of Suffolk's parks is being managed.

It is the Parish Council's very firm intention that the Country Park should remain available to the residents of Clare and continue to bring visitors to our town. We will work very hard to arrive at the most practical and cost-effective solution for all Clare residents.



Clare Library

Many of you will have already signed the petition to save Clare Library which now has over 1,200 signatures. At the Open Meeting in the Community Centre on the 11 March over 60 parishioners attended to give their support to the campaign to stop the closure from happening.

The Parish Council will now continue to engage with SCC to put across the views and concerns of all the library users including engaging in meetings with them, requesting a Scrutiny Committee meeting and replying to their consultation documents.

Clare Library is a vital facility which is well used by all sections of our community and together we believe we will find a way to keep it open.

Clare needs strong Parish Councillors more than ever!

The issues confronting our community in the coming months are significant and can change the whole environment and character of Clare for years to come. Ensuring that we achieve the right solutions for Clare in matters of the wind turbines, the Country Park, the Library and the Youth Club will be critical to the future well-being of our town.

The elections to Parish Council will take place on 5 May and Clare needs strong Councillors now more than ever. The major issues already mentioned are our additional challenges over and above the day-to-day running of the Parish with our responsibilities for highways, the general upkeep of the town, planning matters and much more.

Please give serious consideration to putting your name forward between 25 March and 4 April to help steer Clare through these challenging times. Contact the Parish Clerk for more information.

July festival in Châtillon

You have probably heard about the very successful cultural exchanges between Clare and Châtillon in central France. This year another exchange programme is planned for July and we would like this to include people from Clare and surrounding villages.

Châtillon is a charming Norman walled town, built on a hill with winding narrow streets. The river winds below, and is of similar size as the Stour in Clare. In fact the surrounding countryside is very similar to the Stour valley, but with vineyards. Their villagers are very friendly and hold a special affection for the British.

One of the themes for this year is children, family way of life, and local folklore. It is also hoped that parties from Bulgaria, Italy, Denmark, Finland, Spain and Portugal will also come.

The programme will be varied and run for three days over the "Bastille" holiday with the



focus on fun. There will be plenty of time to mix, watch or join in with activities including a grand firework display, "it's a knock out" events, and a European market in the town square.

Funding is from the EU which means travel will be paid for. The 48-seater coach will be leaving Clare on Wednesday 13th July and coming back on Sunday 17th. Accommodation will also be free as it will be provided by host families.

If you wish to attend or find out more, contact, David Gilbert, 14 Pentlow Drive, Cavendish, CO10 8AB. Phone 01787 280696 or email davidgilbert23@yahoo.co.uk.

Cleaner Clare

Our two street cleaners have been working hard since November on the new street cleaning routes and tasks to get Clare looking at its best. We are delighted to have had some very positive feedback that their efforts are making a big difference in the town centre.

Our cleaners are also responsible for gritting and clearing the paths during cold weather. Long cold spells always present some problems with roads and footpaths especially as grit is not always readily available. However, despite the exceptionally long cold spell in December and January our street cleaners worked

efficiently to keep key central footpaths clear, place timely orders for more grit and report any health and safety issues on the roads to Suffolk County Council.

To help keep Clare running smoothly, if you notice a grit bins needs filling or there is a particular health and safety issue, you can report it to the Parish Clerk who will make the responsible authority aware. We would like to remind all parishioners that grit from grit bins can only be used on public paths and highways and should not be used on your own driveways.

Local Police team update

Clare Parish Council extends a warm welcome to our new PCSO, Ryan Wilson who took on his duties in Clare on 6th January. Ryan will cover the wards of Clare, Cavendish and Hundon.

Ryan says: "I have been a town centre based PCSO working in both Norfolk and Suffolk for over 6 years. For the last 4 years, I have been part of the Bury Central SNT

and I have enjoyed working closely with varied retail outlets, small businesses and local establishments, as well as partnership agencies, amongst them St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

I am looking forward to working with PC Ruth Horton alongside a new variety of communities on the St Edmundsbury Rural SNT. Please be sure to say hello when you see

C.L.A.S.P

With the start of the new year it is a good time to remind everyone about CLASP and the services they offer to the people of Clare and the surrounding villages. CLASP, Clare Liaison and Support Project was founded in 1985 by the four churches to provide help and friendship to local people.

Currently teams of volunteers run the following services:

- Voluntary drivers take people to doctors, dentists and hospital appointments. (Val Davies, 01787 280669)
- A Senior Centre is run by Marian Burbridge (01787 277528) where people are brought in by the CLASP mini bus to the Community Centre in Clare on Wednesdays and have a freshly cooked lunch, followed by tea and entertainment.
- Teams of 'visitors' visit people in their homes and provide support and company. (Fel Parsley, 01787 278802)
- CLASP owns a mini bus which has a team of drivers who take groups of people shopping and to other venues. It is also available for hire. (Malcolm and June Smith 01787 277370)
- A table sale takes place in the Town Hall every two months to raise funds. (Liz Knight, 01787 277810)
- CLASP also supports a youth worker, the summer swimming pool project and other societies in the town.

CLASP urgently need more voluntary drivers and drivers for the minibus and are also pleased to welcome anyone who feels they would like to help in any capacity. Contact Chair, Margaret Taylor on 01787 277421.

me. I can be contacted on 01284 774100 or stedsruralsouth.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk"

The police team would also like to invite Clare parishioners to their next Community Priority Setting meetings, which are attended by the police, county, district and parish councillors. The next meeting will take place on Thursday 9th June 2011 at the Erskine Centre in Chedburgh (IP29 4UL) from 7pm-9pm.

When Times Were Even Worse

Clare Ancient House Museum presents its 2011 exhibition opening 21 April 2011, until 2 October.

Times are tough economically today but towards the end of the 19th century the lives of ordinary people were far worse. The Agricultural Depression (1870-1895) brought misery and hardship to many people and Clare was no exception.

Agricultural workers' wages were only 11/- (old money - shillings) per week yet a small family needed 18/- to 21/- a week to live without actual want. Many families moved to towns to seek work and many emigrated. Businesses in Clare suffered, shops closed, the hotel and inn trade had a sharp downturn and property prices, especially farms, plummeted. It all sounds dreadfully familiar.

We have researched Clare society through census returns, old documents and photographs and parish records. Surprisingly not many people from Clare were in the



workhouse because people here seemed to 'pull together'. Even the local doctor had three people boarding with him who were receiving parish relief.

Clare Ancient House Museum will open at Easter and we look forward to your visit. For local people this year's exhibition should be particularly interesting - an ancestor or two may be mentioned. We have available a comprehensive booklet which provides invaluable research findings for a school or college project and we welcome your questions regarding the exhibition.

The Parish owns the Museum but it is run entirely by volunteers and financed by fundraising events and donations. If you are interested in joining us then please phone Tom Shaw on 01787 277572 or Peggy Smith 01787 277249.

Community Plan Update

The full plan has now been printed and copies are available in the library, the Parish Clerk's Office and on the Clare website.

Representatives of the Community Plan Steering Group and the Chairman of the Parish Council met recently with the Chief Executive of St Edmundsbury Borough Council and it was very well received. The Borough has asked that our Plan should be used as an example of good practice at a Parish Conference later this year.

The Clare Community Action and Monitoring Group has been formed to oversee the conversion of the findings of the Community Plan into firm action and where necessary, to initiate action. Some of the report's findings are already being acted upon by the identified "Lead Bodies" for example the Parish Council. Other elements of the report's findings will need time and commitment to make things happen. The Action and Monitoring group will,



however, diligently pursue these issues. Other items on the "wish list" will require input from the community - young and old and those in the middle.

To this end we would like you to come and talk to the Clare Community Action and Monitoring Group in the TOWN HALL on SATURDAY MARCH 26th between 9.00am and 12.00pm.

The winners of the Treasure Map competition were recently drawn and the winners are:

John Culshaw - £25
Norma Humphreys - Bottle of Whisky
Ron Gardiner - Bouquet of Flowers
Cyril Burry & Val Phillips - Atlantic Health and Spa Day Passes for Two
Darrell Barber - Hamper

Many thanks to all those who supported all the fundraising for the Community Plan.

Keep it clean

There has been an unpleasant increase in the amount of dog-mess left on paths and the cemetery over the last few months.

Please note that dog fouling is an offence and the Parish Council will take action against offenders.



Citizens Advice

Haverhill Citizens Advice bureau will continue to offer their services to Clare residents free of charge on the second Monday of every month. No appointment necessary, just drop in to the Committee room at the Old School Community Centre between 10am and 12 noon.

Dates for your diary

Clare Community Plan

26th March - 9.00-12.00pm in the Town Hall

Public Meeting - Wind Turbines

4th April - 7.30pm in the Town Hall

Annual Parish Meeting

3rd May - 7pm in the Old School Community Centre - All parishioners are encouraged to attend.



Clare
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Email parishclerk@clare-uk.com
Telephone 01787 277559



Don't forget to visit the Clare website at www.clare-uk.com