

Burlescombe Parish Council communications update

11 September 2024

Key communications activities that have taken place

1. **Parish magazine** – In the September issue of the Parish magazine, we shared an update that highlighted the removal of the fallen tree from the Old Railway Line, the works to the Westleigh playpark by MDDC and the new nets in the adjacent football field. We also communicated the appointments to the Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee and Comms Officer, and shared the dates of the next meetings. The Editor also felt it would be good to include the full minutes of the 6 July meeting and so these were published also.

2. Facebook

Posts on Facebook since we were elected have covered:

- An update from our inaugural meeting and a link to the MDDC website and noticeboards for agendas and minutes.
- Information about the Grand Western Canal and Broadpath Landfill site consultations.
- Westleigh Playpark, ORL tree removal and football net updates.
- A brief update from our 5 August meeting, directions to the MDDC website for minutes and agendas, and a brief summary of recent activities.
- The date, location and agenda of our 28 August meeting.
- The discovery of potential giant hogweed on the ORL and subsequent assessment that it was not the dangerous plant. Residents were however reminded not to touch or pick plants in the area.
- The date, location and agenda of this 11 September meeting.
- A note that Councillor Eaves has been liaising with DCC about potholes and sharing the link through which residents can report an issue.

Posts so far have resulted in 241 reactions (all positive ‘likes’ and ‘loves’).

And comments, including:

“Very nice and informative post. Let's see if we can get people attending meetings and feeling involved in the upkeep of our parish.”

“Fantastic work! Thanks for keeping everyone updated.”

“This is all so encouraging! Keep it up we are all behind you!”

Plus positive responses to the new football nets.

People have also commented to bring things to our attention including:

- Some hedges that needed cutting back in Westleigh (work completed very swiftly, just not by us).
- That the MDDC website details needed updating, which has happened.
- Their view on the Broadpath consultation.

Our Burlescombe Parish Council Facebook page has now been created, and the following message posted on the page and pinned to the top for all visitors to see.

Welcome to our page, which we will use to communicate our activities as your parish council.

If you wish to be a part of this online community, you must agree to abide by this code of digital engagement, which is designed to keep everyone safe.

Rule 1: Debate and disagreement are welcome, but only if expressed with courtesy, respect and politeness.

Rule 2: Posts should not contain abuse, harassment, intimidation or threats of any form.

Rule 3: Posts should not contain any form of discrimination – including racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia or religious intolerance.

Rule 4: Posts should not spread false or unverified information.

Rule 5: For transparency reasons, users should not post anonymously.

If any of these rules are broken, page admins reserve the right to delete posts, block users and report content to the police if necessary.

Please note: This page is not continuously monitored and is intended primarily to share updates, as such, it may not be possible to respond to all queries on this page - if you have specific enquiries, please send directly to the clerk's email address.

These rules are adapted from the Local Government Association's best practice guidance.

3. Noticeboards

In line with our approved comms plan, agendas and minutes have been posted in the Westleigh, Burlescombe, Appledore and Ayshford noticeboards.

Future communications

1. Parish magazine - The October issue deadline is now. Following the meeting a summary of key messages for the next month will be drafted.

2. Facebook – we will start to use the Facebook page in earnest, giving a summary of this meeting, any other key updates, in particular raising awareness of what to expect from the page and our communication approach more generally.
3. Noticeboards – we'll continue sharing agendas and minutes as a matter of course.

Key objectives in these early weeks and months will be to:

- Raise awareness of what we are and aren't responsible for – so parishioners know what to expect and who else to contact for issues outside our remit.
- Highlight how people can share their views and get involved – including the rules for public participation in meetings that we are required to follow.
- Share regular updates on our priorities and activities, to build confidence in us as a council.