WATER PROBLEMS IN HOWELL HILL

Following A303 works at the top of Howell Hill several gullies became blocked and surface water has been running overground between chambers.
In fairness to National Highways and their main contractor Galliford-Try, linking new drains to a poorly maintained 'legacy system' exposes issue not entirely of their making.

SC Highways were unable to respond in reasonable timescales due to a change of their 'Term Contractor' during April and West Camel PC decided to meet the cost of a Contract Jetting Contractor @ £850 + VAT per day to resolve the issues.

The two-man crew from 'Glanville Environmental' worked extremely hard sucking out most of the accessible gully pots / manholes and jetting the surface water system from the top of Howell Hill almost to the bottom.

Unfortunately, the two problem areas couldn't be totally resolved without further work but both areas have been improved and currently water is no longer running overground, but may do in times of heavy rainfall.

On the positive side – we now understand the surface water system in Howell Hill and what steps are required to upgrade and rectify an inadequate 'legacy system'.

Several manholes associated with gully pots are sited well under overgrown hedges and will require uncovering before further works can take place.
Towards the top of Howell Hill the drain system crosses a wide verge towards a 'legacy' ditch system that is overgrown, fairly silted up and requires clearing.
Probably for decades, surface water has seeped into the surrounding ground and resurfaced at various points in ditches (or through the road surface) further down Howell Hill.

This work could be undertaken locally as the land belongs to SC Highways and is safely off the public highway. At the bottom of Howell Hill just above 'Bowers' the drains are congested with tree roots and some road works are required to be undertaken by SC Highways. Unfortunately, these works will necessitate a 'Road-Closure' which won't be possible until Howell Hill reopens in September '24.

An expensive exercise and not undertaken lightly but sadly something WCPC will probably need to fund in future years if we are to return / maintain surface water drainage to a more acceptable standard that serves as part of the local 'Flood Mitigation' picture. WCPC's future plans for 'Flood Mitigation' will be discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting on 31st May.

Although WCPC managed to hold the Precept (Parish portion of Council Tax) for 2024/25 at the same level as 2023/24 (£60/Band 'D' Household), this is probably unsustainable going forward, especially as the Community Benefit Fund payments will cease in 2026. For example, you may have seen press reports of Yeovil Town Council doubling their Precept in order to save public amenities threatened with closure.

Weather Records from Mead Farm

January 2024
Maximum temperature: 13.8 C (56 F) on the 2nd and 23rd.
Minimum temperature: –8.3 C (17 F) on the 19th.
Grass level minimum: –10.4 C (13 F) on the 18th.

Total rainfall: 64.9 mm (2.56 ins.)

February 2024
Maximum temperature: 16.2 C (61F) on the 15th.
Minimum temperature: –1.4 C (29 F) on the 25th and 27th.
Grass level minimum: –2.2 C (28 F) on the 12th.
Total rainfall: 121.6 mm (4.79 ins.)

I've just completed 60 years of temperature records, and 59 years of rainfall records.
If you would like a summary of data for this period, please contact me: Geoff.mead@yahoo.com – Geoff Chapman.

Regular Events, Clubs & Societies

West Camel Book Group

The Hunger Games, by Suzanne Collins provoked mixed reactions from the Book Group. It was agreed that it was written with teenagers in mind and therefore the response from our book group would be coming from a different perspective. The surmise is that in a future time, society might develop into clear divisions which are subjugated by a 'Capitol' district that controls them with cruelty and fear. The outworking of the story, a kind of gladiatorial killing games by children, does have a morality but the descriptions of hatred and methods of killing, as well as the manipulation by the 'Capitol', are brutal and uncomfortable to read. It was strangely enjoyable to some and odious to others, which tells you that we are all different. You may or may not want to read this book. I was challenged to imagine a book that would present the future in a more optimistic light, and my mind has been working hard, trying to see what would be a Utopian alternative that was believable and possibly achievable. Most times, Utopia is seen as 'Pie in the sky'. It set me off on a philosophical track which has hope that society will always hold dear community, difference and an appreciation of the world around us, regardless of technical progress and political machinations. Hang on to hope, I say!
We pooled our thoughts on the next books to read and these are our suggestions:

Wednesday 10th April	The Island by Victoria Hislop
Wednesday 8th May	Cake for the Gestapo by Jacqueline King
Wednesday 12th June	The Marriage Portrait by Maggie O'Farrell
Wednesday 17th July	Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte and / or The Eyre Affair by Jasper Fforde
Wednesday 14th August	Philip: The Final Portrait by Gyles Brandreth
Wednesday 11th September	Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus

Other recommendations include:
Sam Neill's autobiography
The Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles
The Seven Secrets of Happiness by Gyles Brandreth (a good antidote to Hunger Games!)

As ever, anyone is welcome to join us. A telephone call will confirm where we are meeting as The Walnut Tree has not always been open over the last few months. **07967991519**
Happy Reading. Melanie Smallwood

West Camel Parish Council

Council next meet on Thursday, 9th May at 19:30 in the Committee Room at The Davis Hall. As usual, details and an agenda will be posted on the notice boards 3 clear days before the meeting.

This years Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Friday 31st May.

Film Night at The Davis Hall

Friday 26th April - '*One Life'* (Napoleon is currently unavailable but will hopefully be shown later in the year).

Trailers can be watched on the Davis Hall website - www.davishall.co.uk - click on the icon for the film you are interested in.
All films - doors open 7 p.m. for 7.30 start;
Tickets on the door - £5 (£3.50 16 and under).
Comfortable new chairs and a warm hall.
Licenced Bar and tea/coffee available.

WEST CAMEL CHURCHES TOGETHER

ALL SAINTS CHURCH
Sundays 7th April and 5th May 4pm
"Sunday @ Four"
An informal united service, with a quiz, choice of hymns, a reading and short reflection, followed by a delicious tea. A chance to meet old and new friends.

Bank Holiday Monday 6th May 10am-12 noon
COFFEE MORNING
With cake stall, bring-and-buy and raffle
Proceeds for Christian Aid
A UK-based charity fighting global poverty.

Local Church contacts: Jenny Clothier 01935 850281, Geoff and Elizabeth Chapman 01935 850838.
Email: Geoff.mead@yahoo.com www.facebook.com/westcamelchurches
Website: www.westcamelchurches.org.uk

WEST CAMEL GARDENERS CLUB

Wednesday 24th April, 6.15 pm at Castle Gardens, Sherborne - Gold Club 25% discount evening
Monday 13th May, 7.30pm at the Davis Hall - Speaker Greg Morter presenting 'From Seed To Fork'
Saturday 8th June at the West Camel bus stop 10am to 4pm - Annual Plant Sale

VILLAGE LITTER PICK 23RD MARCH

Many thanks to the 17 volunteers who braved a rather showery Saturday morning to help clean-up the roads, footpaths and verges around the Parish. As you can see from the photograph quite a lot of mixed 'litter' was collected.
Its quite shocking how much litter gets thrown from cars as they pass through the village on their daily commute!

Thanks also to Cath and Rich Hooper who volunteered to 'clean-up' the various road signs around the village centre – makes a huge difference to their visibility.

Your West Camel Events Diary

Mon pm	Short Mat Bowls @ The Davis Hall
Tue pm	Art & Craft Group @ The Davis Hall
Tue pm	17:00 - Pilates
Wed pm	Model Railway Group
Thu am	Coffee Morning & Post Office 9:15.
Thu Eve	Scottish Dancing
Sat am	Model Railway Group
7th Apr	All Saints Church Sunday @ Four
10th Apr	Book Club
24th Apr	Gardeners Club – Gold Club 25% Discount Evening
26th Apr	Film Night – 'One Life'
2nd May	Somerset PCC Election
5th May	All Saints Church Sunday @ Four
6th May	All Saints Church Coffee Morning 10 – 12.
8th May	Book Club
9th May	WCPC Meeting 19:30
13th May	Gardeners Club – Speaker 'From Seed to Fork'
31st May	Annual Parish Meeting
8th June	Gardeners Club – Annual Plant Sale
12th June	Book Club

Event notifications by email: Register at westcamel.org.uk/communications

Next edition of 'The Chronicle' is scheduled to hit the 'news-stands' in early June 2024. If you have any news item or event you wish to publicise, please provide your draft to 'the editor' by 24th May - OTC.

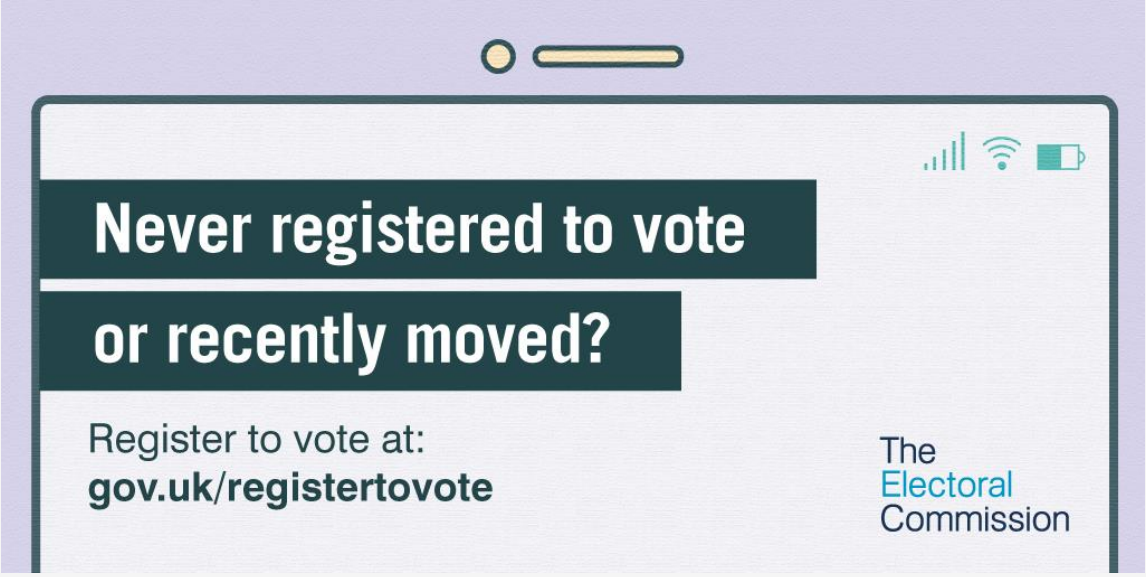
COFFEE MORNING

At the Davis Hall from 9:15 every Thursday morning. Tea and cake, bakery and post office, collect your meds delivered from the Health Centre.
Pop in for a cosy chat and catch up on what's happening locally.

Now with Barista style choice of coffees and freshly made bacon (and egg) sandwiches!

Somerset Council

Essential info about the PCC and future elections



Credit: The Electoral Commission

Elections for the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) take place on Thursday, 2 May 2024.

As a subscriber to our e-newsletter/e-alert service, we've sent this to tell you about important information regarding voter ID, postal and proxy voting that will affect how you vote, not just in the upcoming PCC election, but all future elections.

Read more

Invite to take part

We invite you to join West Camel Theatre Group in a swashbuckling adventure of skullduggery on the high seas in Treasure Island the Pantomime, to be performed near the end of January 2025.
We are looking for anyone (children need to be over 5 years old, otherwise no limits) who would like to join in a fun time together, be that on stage (acting, singing, dancing), supporting backstage, creating costumes and any other role you would like to do that helps the pantomime to be a success.
We rehearse mainly on Sunday afternoons, starting from early September 2024. If interested please get in touch, at the email below. You can find out more about the theatre group on our Davis Hall webpage at: https://www.davishall.co.uk/theatre-group/
Or regular updates on our new Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556070488269
Come on a pirating adventure with us and be assured of a warm welcome, oh yes you will!

Andy White, Director
Contact: westcameltheatregroup@gmail.com

West Camel Theatre Group

WEST CAMEL THEATRE GROUP
Treasure Island Pantomime 2024-2025

Name ……

Address……

Age if under 18 ……

Parent or Guardian name/s if under 18……

Contact telephone No: ……

Contact email……

Please circle all that apply for you if handing in a hard copy or delete those that don't apply if using e-mail.
I would like to:

Acting	Sing Solo	Sing in a group	
Dance Solo	Dance in a Group	Organise the Choreography	Play an Instrument
Stage Manager	Back stage management set changes	Back stage props management	Prompt
Lighting	Sound	Make up	Children support
Make set	Paint Scenery	Make Costumes	Make Props
Front of house	Run the Box Office	Help run bar, refreshments	Advertising and promotion.
Create Programme/tickets	Other roles list here>>>>>>>>>>>>>		

Please return to: Andy White the Director and we will be back in contact with you about next steps.
e-mail: westcameltheatregroup@gmail.com
Please let us know privately if we need to be aware of any potential medical issues. E.g. major allergies,

sensitive to make up.

Insurance: For Insurance purposes we must have a list of everyone involved.

Safeguarding: All the West Camel Theatre Group Committee are DBS checked and registered.