

COMPTON BASSETT MATTERS

AUTUMN 2023

EDITED BY CLLRS
BARLOW AND WAITE

New speed limits, cameras and enforcement measures to protect village approved

Recent weeks have shown how easy it is for our village to be used as a shortcut by motorists seeking to avoid resurfacing works in Calne with literally hundreds of cars speeding through the village at peak times. Therefore, we are pleased that after over 3 years of active lobbying, the Parish Council has been notified that traffic control measures have finally been supported by Wiltshire Council. They are now out for wider consultation but approval is expected.

With 1000 cars recorded travelling through the village per day, both volume and speed are of concern to most residents. A package of measures is intended to be introduced in the next 6 months.

A new 30mph speed limit will be extended from its current position near the Old Laundry to Dove Cottage. Also, a new 40mph limit will be imposed on the stretch of road from Dugdale's Farm to Breech Farm near the parish boundary.

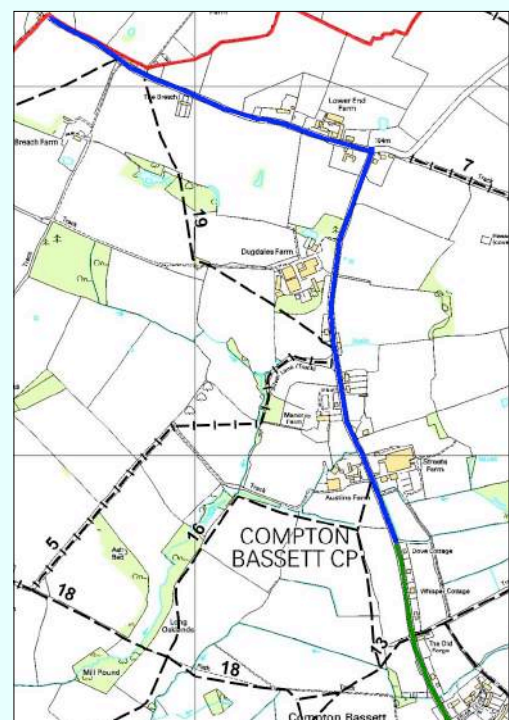
To police speed adherence and enforcement, as well as the speedwatch volunteers, the Parish Council will be installing an additional Speed Indicator device (SID) at an appropriate point in the new 40mph section. This will supplement the existing SID in the village but also go one step further by employing Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology to snap motorists who ignore and exceed the speed limits. The information concerning these motorists will be passed to Wiltshire Police as a monthly data download for action.

Finally, as well as the speed limit and cameras, we also intend to remind those travelling into the village that we are a pretty and desirable location by

installing new gates and signage at both ends of the village. As a linear settlement it is easy to see Compton Bassett as just being a short cut road to other destinations and drive accordingly. We want our linear settlement to be more visible as a village and treated with respect and courtesy.

During the process of gaining approval for the new speed limits, it was vital that the Parish Council was supported in its campaign by Councillor Ashley O'Neill. As well as meeting with highway engineers in situ, he also spent essential time communicating with Parish Councillors and ensuring he communicated our concerns and views in the most effective manner. We are very grateful for his input throughout the process.

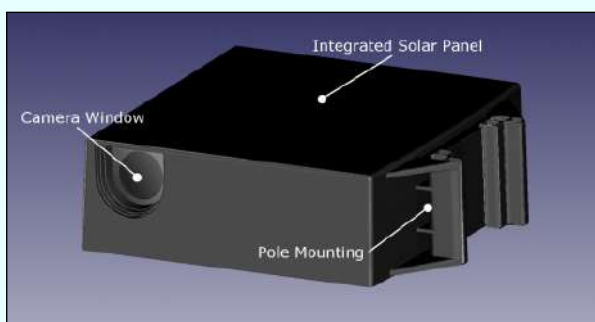
Julian Barlow



New 30mph zone in green, 40mph extension in blue.

AutoSpeedWatch set for the village

A new device is due to be installed soon to target persistent speeders within the 30mph zone of the village. AutoSpeedWatch automatically records the registration of illegal speeding vehicles, identifies and collates the worst and most frequent occurrences for further action. It does this by photographing the rear number plate of a vehicle travelling at excessive speed during daylight hours.

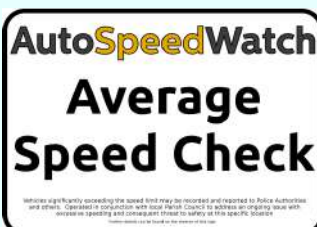


The solar powered unit is connected via the internet to a central server where incoming data is verified. It's not an enforcement camera and doesn't issue penalties or fines but will guide enforcement for appropriate measures to be taken. It's cost effective and a visual deterrent.

We will probably install the new device where the current SID is located, and then move the SID further out into the new 30mph extension.

In its very first year of operation, AutoSpeedWatch recorded 100,000 offences. When this data was collated it was found that just 238 vehicles were responsible for the persistent, excessive speeding and recording multiple offences. This enables efficient and effective targeting.

If the device is successful, we could consider adding a second unit at the other end of the 30mph area to allow for an "Average Speed Check" zone between the units.



Village Gateways

Once the 40mph speed limit area is extended out to a position near the parish boundary by Breach Farm (see map on front cover), we shall at last be able to progress with plans for new gateways to be situated at each end of the village. The subject has been discussed many times at council and in previous editions of this newsletter.

Gateways have been shown to reduce vehicle speeds and have the added benefit of enhancing the environment. They boost the visual impact of a decrease in speed limit and emphasise a change from rural road to village settlement.

The gates are made from a blend of wood fibre, recycled thermoplastics and adhesive resins. They give the appearance of wood with all the longevity of plastic, so will not rot or require varnishing or painting.

Some examples are shown below; if you see something that you feel would look good, please let us know:

parishclerk@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk



Compton from the air, September 2023



Thanks to photographer Jeff Wheeler and pilot Roger Milburn for sharing this.

Emergency planning for the village



As part of its statutory role to look after parishioners, the Parish Council has formulated an emergency plan which offers villagers a place of safety should the village become isolated for any reason. This would have all seemed a little “Dad’s Army” prior to Covid, but if the pandemic taught us anything, then it is the importance of self-reliance and preparedness for any eventuality for a community.

In our village the purpose of the plan is to:

- To establish a community emergency co-ordinators’ team that will coordinate the community response and liaise with the emergency services / local authorities as appropriate

- To determine actions required to minimise the harm from identified hazards or threats
- To establish a means of identifying vulnerable people in the community with a view to supporting them in an emergency
- To pinpoint resources in the community that would be available to minimise the severity of the emergency
- To establish key contact details for the emergency services and local authorities, the Local Community Emergency Co-ordinators and key community resources in the event of a major incident in or near the parish.

A key element for you to be aware of, is that we have established that Benson Village Hall would form the community hub central gathering point for the village in the eventuality of us being isolated by an event, such as severe weather.

The Parish Council is exploring grants for buying a generator which would be situated at the Village Hall and provide heat, light and catering provision.

How do I go about getting planning permission?

One of the most common questions we are asked as a council is regarding the rules surrounding planning permission. As I am sure you can imagine it is a complex and labyrinthine process. If a planning application is submitted it is not just the Parish Council who have the right to be heard. You can comment on a planning application as a resident. Your opinion counts and your Council and Local Planning Authority (LPA) have a duty to listen to your opinion and base decisions on relevant planning rules and policies. Remember, planning officers at your Council are there to help and you can ask them for advice if you are unsure how to interpret a planning application.

Compton Bassett has its own complexity as it embraces both conservation area status, as well as in parts, being in an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB). These areas have especially onerous rules imposed by Wiltshire Council regarding what and where projects may be planned, adapted or built. Style, approach, design and impact are all taken into account. We also have an established Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted and supported by the village. It prescribes what is acceptable from the village perspective and is lodged with Wiltshire Council. For instance, it has restricted the amount of new build projects in Compton Bassett.

All planning applications within our Parish have a legal requirement to be considered by Compton Bassett Parish Council and we can either support, object or make no comment on any given submission. Our criteria for a decision is often based on visual, or aesthetic impact on the village guided by planning regulations and precedent. We may also take advice from Ashley O'Neill, our local council representative.

Our view is not definitive and the planning officer will make their own decision on whether to grant or deny permission, or impose stipulations and changes. However, we seek to represent the view of the community and the planning officer will therefore take our views into account. Hence our recent opposition to the proposed sand extraction

project in the Freeth area of the village was important in helping influence the view of Wiltshire Council planning committee who imposed sensible if onerous planning conditions on the applicant.

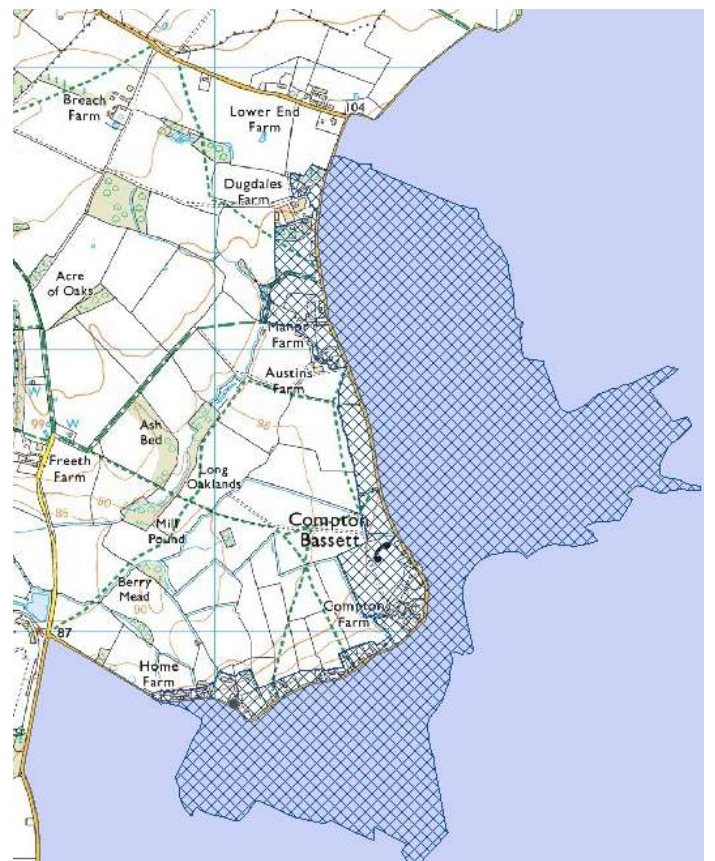
We welcome informal approaches by parishioners who may want a view on proposed projects prior to submission to the planning officer. Our view, whilst not binding, may help you gain an appreciation of what may or may not be appropriate.

Contact the Parish Council clerk parishclerk@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk if you want to seek our help.

For Wiltshire Council's website planning area: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-building-control>

Finally, should you wish to learn more we recommend you also visit the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust website which has an excellent section regarding guidance on planning issues which you may find helpful:

<https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/planning>



Compton Bassett's conservation area (hatched in map) was first designated in November 1974. The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is shaded in blue.

Message from the new Chair of the Benson Village Hall, Compton Bassett by Paul Rossiter



Both Liz, my wife and myself have lived in Compton Bassett for over two decades and I am pleased to be invited by the parish council to write this note to you in my capacity as the newly elected Chair of the Village Hall Committee. Most villagers don't realise that the Benson Hall works entirely independently of the Parish Council with its own articles of association and board of Trustees.

As newly appointed Chair, I am taking over the position from Jane Marshall, who has been in the role for the last two years and has done an excellent job not least in securing some much-needed maintenance work on the Village Hall, playground, and improving the property owned and maintained by Benson Hall at 18 Compton Bassett.

This recent period under her tenure is best described as being most challenging for all Trustees, who give up their time for free and look after the hall and its assets on behalf of the whole village. The recent work undertaken has formed an essential bedrock from which we can all now build on and it means that we start to focus on how the Village Hall itself can serve everyone in the community in a more inclusive and effective manner.

I think it's very easy for us to push out the "use it or lose it" message when organising events at the village hall, but in actual fact it's up to us, as a committee, to evaluate the needs and wants of the village to create an event venue that makes people want to come, enjoy themselves, and look forward to the next event.

We also need to work closely with the Parish Council to identify opportunities for community benefit and emergency planning so that it can be used as a refuge in the event of bad weather or disruption something covered elsewhere in this publication.

We have to ensure the hall's potential is both realised and maximised by raising awareness of its capability and upgrading the facilities to meet

modern standards and customer expectations. If you like, we need to make you feel like the hall is both a place of safety but also a venue where you can feel like you are going "out-out".

So what changes?

The changing demographic of the village means we need to communicate in a way that is more aligned with modern methods, yet still retain traditional channels of discourse for those that prefer it. To that end, we will be upgrading our online and social media presence to achieve this and working more closely with the Parish Council to provide a more joined up approach. Two Parish Councillors are trustees.

We also want to help promote local businesses through sponsorship and advertising of events at the hall so please, reach out to me if your business would benefit from this kind of support.

We need input and feedback to tell us what people would like to see at the Hall – we undertook a survey a while back to establish a starting point, and we'll be following up on this to hone in on popular events and prioritise facilitation.

But that doesn't mean we're standing still. We are currently working on an exciting upgrade to the hall, which will open up a lot of opportunities for future events, and we'll be sending out regular updates on progress... trust me, it's going to be BIG! Please follow us on Instagram @bensohall.online to stay up to date.

Finally, if you have any ideas for events, would like to organise an event of your own, or would just like to help out (in particular social media, audio visual & marketing) then please feel free to contact me by email:

paul.rossiter@bensohall.online
or mobile 07889 643582.

I look forward to seeing you 'out-out' at future events!

1876: Squire Heneage and the Unions



William & Sarah Derham with two of their sons and a daughter, and possessions.

When Clement Walker-Heneage inherited Compton Bassett and Cherhill estates in 1875, many agricultural labourers across the country were striving for better wages, and consequently, membership of a union was taken up by some. Poverty was widespread and a labourer's hours were long; 12 shillings per week was the average pay for a labourer (£88 in 2023). In Compton Bassett, living conditions had improved markedly since the 1840s, as the old squire had replaced many of the medieval hovels with modern housing for his workers. By contrast, Cherhill was largely left alone. As a consequence, living conditions there varied substantially.

In 1840 an enquiry was carried out in Wiltshire to find out the average life expectancy for land-workers. It found that gentlemen and their families of the so-called 'liberal professions' could expect at least 50 years on average, while for farm labourers it was only 33. There was a palpable sense of disquiet among farm workers and a desire to try and effect change, by some of the braver ones. This was extremely risky when your employer was also your landlord, who employed and provided accommodation for almost everyone in the village. It could incur the wrath of the squire, who adamantly opposed the union movement. Feelings ran high amongst labourers; three had been charged with intimidating a fellow worker named Sexton in Compton Bassett, who refused to join in a strike and was violently assaulted.

Farm labourers in Compton Bassett knew what to expect if their union membership, such as the Agricultural Labourers Union, was disclosed to the new squire who actively sought out this information. His control within the community was far reaching and could manifest itself in various ways. The squire ran a coal and clothing fund for workers' families, in

which women had the privilege of being members and their husbands were obliged to contribute. Women members were periodically invited to take their bundles of clothing up to Compton House where Mrs Heneage inspected them in her drawing room and scolded them if any article displeased her. She would ask if their husbands were a union member and if the answer was "yes", they lost their membership of the Squire's fund. Worse could follow: Squire Heneage was not above exercising his almost feudal powers by evicting an employee when their tenancy came up for renewal and their children would be removed from the local school. Other forms of punishment might be administered, such as removing people from Compton Bassett to the squalid cottages in Marsh Lane, Cherhill. These inhabitants were referred to as "the transports from Compton", echoing in a local way, the transportation of convicts to the colonies at that time.

One family who had subsisted in one of the Marsh Lane cottages for 28 years since 1848, were the Derhams. William Derham was employed as a farm labourer on the Compton estate and, in 1876 was living with his wife Sarah, two sons and a daughter. His union membership was known to the old squire who had voiced his displeasure, but it was the new squire Clement Walker-Heneage, taking over the previous year who commenced eviction proceedings as soon as Derham's tenancy was up for renewal. This was carried out on the 10th February 1876 and the family were photographed at the roadside along with their meagre belongings. Amongst these is a Wesleyan Missionary Box pictured at the centre on a small table, into which any spare coppers were deposited to support missionary work abroad; many villagers possessed such a box.

Squire Heneage cont'd

Nonconformists, such as Wesleyan Methodists, were abhorred by the old squire who contrived to get a Wesleyan chapel in Cherhill pulled down. When the congregation defiantly carried on to hold open-air services, Mrs Heneage went in her carriage to order the people not to go and hear "those brawlers".

The Derham family left, daughter Alice was barred from the village school, but local farmer John Clark took pity on them by allowing their possessions to be stored in his barn. For this, he was told that the lease for fields he rented from the Heneages would be terminated. Squire Heneage had an uneasy relationship with the Clarks; John's father, John Snr, owned a house in Marsh Lane and built a Wesleyan chapel on one end in 1832. He called the house 'Zoar', a biblical reference to one of five cities in the Jordan Valley which escaped 'fire and brimstone'.

News of the Derhams' eviction travelled fast in the region, helped by newspapers who had followed the events, resulting in a public meeting of protest being called for Friday 28th February. To everyone's amusement, the meeting was held in a meadow belonging to the squire but still rented by John Clark, at Cherhill. Some arrived by cart from Calne in a torchlit procession amid pelting rain, which unfortunately did not relent for the whole evening. Astonishingly, nearly one thousand people gathered there, some having walked over ten miles and then stood ankle deep in mud for two and a quarter hours.

However, the inclement weather did nothing to dampen the spirits of the crowd who listened to various speakers, including John Clark who was loudly cheered. He declared to the audience, "I have taken the Gospel to Compton and I have always voted Liberal. These are my only crimes. I know what oppression has been practised. The late squire's lady had my wife in before I married her and told her she hoped she wasn't going to have that John Clark, and suggested three others that she thought would suit her. Why not John Clark? Is there a man here that can say anything against me?" Shouts of, "No, no: you're a good honest man!" rang out.

Resolutions passed at the end of the meeting denounced "the cruel and wanton eviction on the estate of Mr Heneage as an abuse of power on the part of a landowner". A petition to Parliament would also be sent, strongly protesting against any further legislation on Enclosure of Commons. This was a reference to wealthy landowners, like Squire Heneage, legally but controversially enclosing common land. The last speaker implored everyone present to give a penny to show their sympathy to the Derhams and, to cheers all around, that he would have great pleasure in giving a sovereign.

Photographs of the Derham family eviction went on sale for sixpence each at the event, and on the back were printed the facts of the occasion: "...evicted from the cottage they had occupied for 28 years, and refused another on the estate, although at the time a number were empty - Dissent and Unionism their only crime."

Sarah died aged 56 in 1883, while husband William reached 80 and had been living with daughter Alice and her family since around 1890. After Sarah died, William lived with the support of the Calne Union, to the tune of 2s. 9d. a week (£21 in 2023). Help from two of his sons George and Henry was sporadic; both were employed but had a history of being in trouble, appearing before the local magistrate on several occasions. George was fined 7s. 8d. for trespassing in search of conies (rabbits) while Henry had been charged with wilful damage to a tree, costing him 16s. 6d. The two sons were called before a magistrate in 1883 to answer for the lack of contributions towards the support of their father, they being single men and in work. They did not appear but were each ordered to contribute 1s. a week. The magistrate in each of these cases was the squire, Clement Walker-Heneage.

In November 1937, George died aged 77, when his shepherd hut caught fire at Heddington, in the early morning. It was an accident caused by an oil stove which had tipped over. By the time help arrived, it was impossible to gain entry, the flames and heat being so intense.

Laurie Waite
Compton Bassett History Archive

Benson Village Hall

PUBLIC NOTICE

LICENSING ACT 2003

APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE
(Section 17 of the Act)

Name of Applicant:	The Trustees of Compton Bassett Village Hall
Postal address of premises:	The Village Hall Briar Leaze Compton Bassett Calne SN11 8RQ

The application, if granted, is to enable the following licensable activities on the Premise Licence:

Performance of Plays, Films, Live Music, Recorded Music and Dance

Sunday to Thursday 08:00 to 23:00

Friday & Saturday 08:00 to 23:30

Sale of Alcohol

Sunday to Thursday 10:00 to 23:00

Friday & Saturday 10:00 to 23:30

Christmas Eve & New Year's Eve 10:00 to 01:30

Bank Holidays 10:00 to 23:30

A copy of the application may be inspected by visiting <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/licences-permits-new-premises-applications> or by emailing publicprotectionnorth@wiltshire.gov.uk

Any representations by a Responsible Authority/Interested Party or other persons must be received in writing 14th October 2023, by email to publicprotectionnorth@wiltshire.gov.uk or by writing to The Licensing Authority, Wiltshire Council, Public Protection, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application punishable on summary conviction of £5,000.

Village news in brief...

Water saga...

The ongoing saga of the water leak outside Rosemary Cottage, 31 Compton Bassett is still unresolved despite many visits by Wessex Water this year and last. Wessex actually dug up the area around the supply pipe only to find the pipe and connections were intact. They then followed up by taking a sample of the leaking water which proved to be negative for chlorine traces, meaning it's natural spring water. A specialist leakage detective team investigated along the stretch of road leading to the pipe during the day and at night but failed to find any acoustic evidence.

We've now handed this on to Wiltshire Highways who say they they will be on site within the next month.

Safe walking

Following official complaints being made about a problem dog in the village, the Parish Council has been in communication with Wiltshire's dog warden over the last year, who have visited the dog's owners and now served a Community Protection Notice. Hopefully, the conditions enforced will lead to a successful outcome for everyone concerned.

Planned Power Cut



You should by now have been informed if you are going to be one of those affected by a planned power cut which is due to take place on Tuesday 3rd October, from 8.30am to 4.30pm. Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) has programmed the work to enable essential pylon work to be carried out.

Householders who will be affected are being contacted directly by SSEN.

White lines

White tram lines are due to be painted shortly by the war memorial to emphasise this narrow section of road, and encourage drivers to slow down.

Village Traffic control

A recent car accident near Goodenough's Corner shows how improved traffic management will be important in this part of the village and a new reduced speed limit, plus monitoring and enforcement is good news for the parish.



Always contact the Parish Clerk in the first instance please

PARISH CLERK	CONTACT	
Diane Zeiten	parishclerk@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk	Parish Clerk
COUNCILLOR	CONTACT	RESPONSIBILITIES
Pete Szczesiak	chairman@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk	Chair, Calne Area Parish Forum, LHF&G & Calne Area Board, Hills Liaison Committee, Legal Duties, Neighbourhood & Farm Watch
Charles Reis	vicechair@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk	Vice-Chair, Heritage, Neighbourhood & Farm Watch, Rights of Way Liaison
Julian Barlow	julianbarlow@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk	Road Safety, Communications, Neighbourhood Plan, Wildlife Trust Liaison
Peter Barnett	peterbarnett@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk	Hills Liaison Committee, Parish Steward Link, Village Hall Representative
Edward Budge	edwardbudge@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk	Health & Welfare, Communications
Rod Lloyd-Davies	rodloyd-davies@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk	Communications, Road Safety
Laurie Waite	lauriewaite@comptonbassettparishcouncil.gov.uk	Communications, Neighbourhood Plan, Heritage, War Memorial, Website Liaison, Village Hall Representative, Road Safety