

## **Burton Overy Parish Council – WhatsApp Chat Groups**

At the start of the Covid pandemic the Parish Council set up two WhatsApp chat groups namely the **BOPC Info & Social Group** and the **BOPC Support & Help Group**. Over the last 18 months these groups have served the village well. However, as time has gone on, their separate functions have blurred and now would seem to be an appropriate moment to reconfigure these groups to match changing requirements.

The Parish Council is therefore proposing that from Oct 5<sup>th</sup> 2021 two new WhatsApp Groups are set up to replace the existing groups. The proposed new groups are:

**The Village Forum.** This will provide a channel for the discussion and highlighting of topics of interest to village residents and also a route for seeking help or advice as and when required. The informal rules of this chat group are: (i) transactions of a clearly commercial nature are discouraged (e.g., the buying and selling of items); (ii) all postings should be respectful and considerate to others and (iii) the participant list will be restricted to local residents or those with close links to the village. These rules will be applied at the discretion of the Admin team.

**Burton Overy Noticeboard.** As a Parish Council we have also found the WhatsApp groups useful for the occasional dissemination of information relating to matters of local interest or concern. A dedicated channel for the advertisement of local events, for example the Village Show, the “Round Rutland Walk”, the Christmas Tree Festival etc. might also prove valuable. This would not be a true chat group but more an information channel in that only the Parish Clerk would be able to post messages as the designated Admin.

The steps involved in moving the existing BOPC WhatsApp groups to the new groups are as follows:

1. The existing BOPC Info & Social Group is simply renamed The Village Forum.
2. The participants in the newly named group are sent a link inviting them to join a new group, namely the Burton Overy Noticeboard.
3. There are currently 17 people who are participants in the BOPC Help & Support Group but not in the BOPC Info & Social Group. A note will be posted on the BOPC Help & Support Group inviting these individuals to respond as to whether they wish to join one or both of the new groups.

Of course, participants will be able to withdrawal from one or both of the new WhatsApp groups at any point in the future. Similarly new participants will be added as and when appropriate.

The Parish Council would be happy to receive comments on these proposals via the email address: [clerk@burtonoverypc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@burtonoverypc.org.uk)