



New services for local councils from The Local Channel

***“NALC’s preferred community website partner
for town and parish councils”*** 

***The Local Channel has now launched brand new,
additional services that everyone can benefit from.
See inside for more information...***

Inside this issue..



Peter Lilley (COO)
explains how TLC can
make life easier for
councillors and clerks.



GUEST WRITER...
Melissa Pang shares 10
facts that we never knew
about blood and talks
about the importance of
being a blood donor.



YOB CULTURE
I give a personal view
about ‘yob culture’
in our local
communities.





New services for local councils from The Local Channel

**“NALC’s preferred community website partner
for town and parish councils”** 

We have just launched eight new services for parish and town councils across the UK that we want to tell you about.

These services are *in addition* to the TLC web site that you currently have, and include the option to have “banner ad-free sites”, and for TLC staff to load all your information to your site (the “TLC load and build” service). Services can be purchased individually, or as part of “value packages” comprising of several services combined.

It is important to note that every community who has already adopted their TLC site from us can carry on using their websites as normal; nothing changes, unless you want to purchase one of our new services.

So, nothing has been taken away, and now there’s the additional opportunity to take advantage of some (or all) of the new services. These services are intended to help parishes reach the “Quality Parish” criteria, while also taking some of the workload off the shoulders of the councillors and clerks.

For example, the “Marketing Support” service will help the council make local people aware of their community website with posters, window stickers, flyers etc.

Additionally, there is also the “Revenue Share” service, where councils can opt to share 50% of the revenues generated from local businesses who were introduced to TLC by the council. So the council can cover the cost of any new services/packages by joining the revenue share scheme. All NALC members will automatically receive a 10% discount off any service purchased.

If you would like to find out more about the new services we are now offering, including the price list, please see the TLC news section on the homepage called ‘New services for local councils’ on the right hand side of the page.

It is very important to us here at TLC HQ that our existing adopted administrators understand that nothing has changed for them other than there are now several more services to help them. There are some fantastic sites on The Local Channel where administrators have worked extremely hard and been very loyal to us and we thank you all greatly for your time, effort and skill in creating these sites. You all know who you are!

www.thelocalchannel.co.uk





Making life easier for councillors and clerks

By Peter Lilley

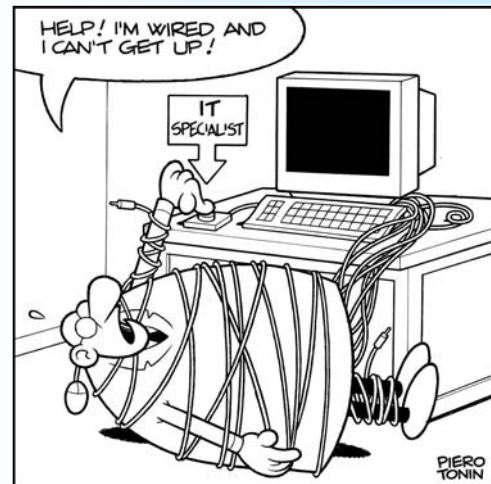
Town and parish councillors and clerks are busy people - the expression "time poor" will ring true in many council offices. So while a local council web site is a good idea for many reasons (not least that it can help the council achieve Quality Status), it can also be very time-consuming.

The problem is compounded if the council's site is run by just one person (often the clerk!) and particularly if they are new to running a community web site.

That's why The Local Channel (in partnership with NALC) is delighted to offer town and parish councils a solution to the problem; The Local Channel will "do it all" for the council, for about £1 a day.

A recent job description for a Parish Clerk outlined the role. In summary:

- Produce minutes from monthly meeting, implement decisions, prepare and circulate Agendas and Minutes.
- Ensure Council makes legal decisions
- Handle all Parish Correspondence and appraise Chairman
- Handle all Planning Applications.
- Be available for Parishioners by telephone, fax or email, and answer queries.
- Be available for all other bodies and organisations.
- Liaise with Groundsman and Cemetery Sub Committee.
- Maintain documents pertaining to Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection,
- Declaration and Register of Interests, Elections and formal notices of Audit Inspection
- Maintain the Council records / accounts; meet recommendations of Internal Auditor and Accounts and Audit Regulations of 1996.





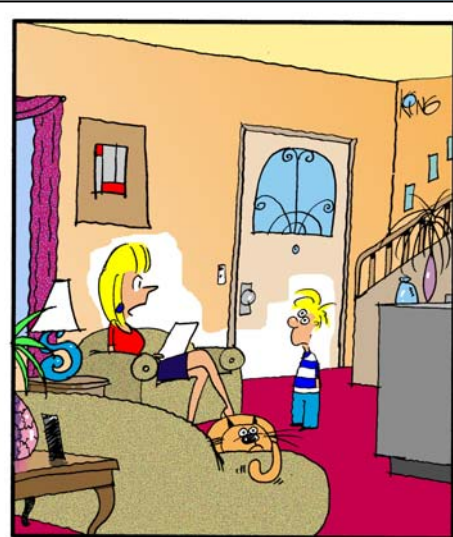
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- Handle all payments - provide resume of financial position for Council.
- Prepare Accounts and End of Year Return for Audit.
- Meet with Auditor and provide all documents requested.
- Arrange for adequate Insurance and Annual Risk Assessments.
- Prepare budget for precept calculations.
- Attend functions / training sessions
- And anything else reasonably requested by the Council.

So this is a very demanding job – and it’s not easy to find the time to learn how to run a web site, maintain it and keep it fresh. That’s why The Local Channel now offers to “do it all” for the council. Councils can just email (or post on a CD) the information they want loaded, and The Local Channel will build and maintain the council’s site for them.

There are many other new services too, such as **web logs** (the on-line diary of the Council Chairman, perhaps?), forums and community polls. And Local Channel sites can either include or exclude ads, as the council wants.

Though not everyone in the community is on-line, the majority are. It’s a fact that teenagers today have never known a world before such things as the web, mobiles, instant messaging, multi-channel TV, iTunes. They live in a “download” world, and the web is where a great many people get their information.



"No, I didn't download you off the Internet, I gave birth to you. End of discussion!"

Including information about what is happening in their local community.

And that’s why The Local Channel is proud to offer services to local councils that can make it easier for *them* to reach out to *their* residents.



YOJB CULTURE. THE REALITY. A 22 YEAR OLDS PERSPECTIVE

My name is Emma, I am 22 years old and I live in a small rural community in the heart of The New Forest, a beautiful, quiet part of the country. I had a friend who I was at school with who has just died of a drug overdose. He was a father to a young boy, an only son, and a great friend to many. He went out on a Saturday night down to his favourite local pub, consumed alcohol and drugs and never saw the next morning. His mother went to wake him up and there lay a lifeless body in his bed, surrounded by the four walls that had sheltered him in his short 23 years of life. The funeral. A celebration of life. Hardly.

A young, popular boy with everything to live for has had his life cut short by the abuse of drugs. The same drugs that are easily accessible in every community around the UK and in reality this tragic death won't make the slightest difference in changing the ways of drug users in my area and similar cases in other areas.

I got myself into the 'wrong' crowd when I was at school. At the age of 14 I was the one hanging around the local car park with a big crowd wearing hooded jackets, caps and puffa jackets, smoking, drinking and being rude to policemen and passers-by. I was never the one mouthing off mind but because I was part of the group I was automatically branded. I don't regret that part of my life, I made friends that I still see and we look back with smiles. Some of us found a new direction in life, others didn't, and for one 23yr old in the area, he never will. I have been offered drugs so many times; I am surrounded by it and can't count how many times I've been offered a line of coke or an ecstasy tablet, but for me, the temptation of experimenting never appealed. I have the most loving, caring friends who have had brilliant childhoods; they still take drugs from time to time, its normality in

today's society. You can't blame the parents all the time, drugs are everywhere; people would be naive to think otherwise. Young people these days do drugs because everyone is doing it; they see it, their surrounded by it and most of all because they love it. They have fun, they enjoy it and it's easily accessible.

There are some really nasty and disrespectful people out there that get kicks out of making other peoples lives a misery. They don't seem to have a conscience and police have little control. For these individuals, new laws need to be implemented, more prisons need to be built to accommodate people, sentences need to be longer, and the time served has to be a horrific experience and not a holiday camp! Perhaps the death penalty should be bought back for crimes like murder and abduction. Not only will the families who have lost someone gain some kind of justice for their needless loss but would also be a scare tactic that could cut crime. People think they understand the problem but the truth is they don't have a clue. Blaming parents for their kid's behaviour doesn't stand correct, maybe in some cases, but not in all. More awareness in education isn't quite going to





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cut it either. You can stand in front of a class for hours and say drugs are bad, drugs are dangerous but it's not going to take effect. Kids are not going to change their ways because some stranger stood in front of them for an hour about the danger, implications and worst case scenarios of drugs. Kids know drugs are bad, parents can drill it in to them as much as they like, the truth is once they reach school, it is up to them. They meet new friends, they go out, they experiment with drugs and love the experience. Kids take the drugs simply because they enjoy it. Building a new skateboard ramp or shelter for them to hang out in isn't going to match the excitement or enjoyment of taking drugs.

As for drinking, kids can get hold of it, all it takes is an 18 year old to go into the local shop and buy it for them, probably get a few free beers out of doing it anyway. It's all too easy for kids to get hold of drugs and alcohol and it's the people that help them achieve it which makes all this possible.

Yob culture in today's society has been dominating the media recently as more cases are being reported. Local communities are being terrorised and torn apart by 'people' (not always kids), living lives in torment, staying in after dark, feeling intimidated, afraid and helpless. Having respect for one another seems to be fading away with the past and leaving us with little hope for the future.

We need to introduce a stricter system whereby they have a choice, they choose to offend, they pay the consequences, however harsh, we need to punish the right people and try to help and guide those who can't help themselves before it's too late and another young life is lost.

We need to understand the problem first and work together to improve it with the help and support of the authorities and the government

I read an article that quoted MP Michael Howard saying that '*forces should be required to publish local weekly crime statistics on the internet so that communities could see what progress they were making*'.

The internet is accessible to everyone, communication is vital in a national crisis, why don't police and councils work together to publish the progress on local community sites, to measure improvements and help other communities do the same in their own areas, we provide this service for communities across the UK to do just this.

Has your local area implemented a strategy to tackle this problem? Do you have your own opinion on how to deal with such a difficult issue? I would love to build a discussion board on this and hear what communities are doing across the country whether proven successful or not. I could publish opinions and ideas in the next newsletter so that we can communicate and help each other deal with these problems that are so apparent in our local communities.

Please e-mail your responses to:

emma.cox@thelocalchannel.co.uk





Obituary for Common Sense

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend by the name of Common Sense who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such value lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, and that life isn't always fair.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not kids, are in charge). His health began to rapidly deteriorate when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place.

Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student, but could not inform the parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Finally, Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense finally gave up the ghost after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot, she spilled a bit on her lap, and was awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason.

He is survived by two stepbrothers, My Rights and Ima Whiner.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still know him pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

- Author Unknown -





Guest Writer Melissa Pang from the NHS discusses the importance of being a Blood Donor.

Here are ten things you never knew about blood:



- There are four major blood groups – O, A, B, and AB. O negative is the universal donor, meaning anyone can receive this blood group. AB positive is the universal recipient, and you're very lucky if you belong here because this type can accept blood from any of the groups.
- O is the oldest blood group, which harks back to the stone ages. It is also the most common blood type in UK especially in North England. The second oldest group is A, which appeared around 25,000 to 15,000 BC, and can be found mostly in Central and Eastern Europe. Most Chinese or Asian people belong to blood type B - about a quarter of all people share this group. The newest and rarest blood group is AB, and is believed to have occurred as a response to the mixing of existing blood groups on a major scale.
- Blood can be divided into four major components – red blood cells (these carry oxygen to the body cells), white blood cells (the body's defence mechanism), platelets (these help blood form clots), and plasma (where the proteins live).
- There are about 5 billion red blood cells in every litre of blood, which means an average of 25 billion red cells run around inside you, with 25 million (or 0.1%) dying every day. That works out to an approximate 300 per second, so it's quite unlikely you'll run out of blood.
- Last year, the National Blood Service collected 2 million donations from about 1.3 million donors. It may sound like a lot, but that's only five per cent of the eligible population giving blood two or three times a year. This has currently dropped to four per cent.
- A unit of blood is 470ml, and the NHS needs to collect 7,000 units every day for hospitals across England and North Wales.
- Donors can give blood up to three times a year, which works out to about every 16 weeks.
- Each donation can save a potential three lives.
- Giving blood takes up just an approximate hour of your time. It involves filling in some forms, a health screening, and ends with tea and biscuits. The actual giving of blood is only about 10 minutes.
- You can be a blood donor if you are aged between 17 – 60 years of age, in general good health and weigh over 7st 12lbs. Regular donors who are still in the pink of health can make donations up to the age of 70.

Donors can ring the 24-hour National Donor Helpline on [0845 7 711 711](tel:08457711711) or visit www.blood.co.uk to register their details, find the venues and times for their nearest blood donation session and book an appointment.





ED'S COLUMN

We hope you are intrigued about our new services and understand the benefits of having a website with us. We are a network of community websites which are interlinked and enables better communication on a locally based level. Our administrators who have already adopted can carry on using their sites as usual but are welcome to purchase our additional services if they so wish. We have provided completely free websites for the last 6 years but we are a business, and although its been lovely to provide something so useful for our communities across the UK, we need to start introducing some small, additional charges. We have some truly fabulous websites present on The Local Channel which our administrators work very hard in order to keep them up-to-date. We would like to thank them immensely for all their support and loyalty over the years.

The whole point of The Local Channel is to have an on-line presence to further better communication at the first tier of electable government. The importance of this is increasingly apparent in today's society. Many councils don't have their own websites and are only listed under larger councils such as the county or district council websites. From experience, whilst trying to search for a particular council via some of these sites, all I was presented with was a list of councils within an area and perhaps the odd contact detail, this isn't sufficient enough and certainly doesn't agree with the modernised society we live in today. The useful information that relates to a certain area needs to be easily available for the public to access and what better way than to have your very own council website that only relates to the matters of your community. You don't even have the excuse of not having enough time to populate your site either because for a small fee, we can do all the work for you.

In my own community, after such a tragedy, its very apparent how close, and emotionally tied a community can be. We may not be able to change the world but if we all work together, we can certainly make a difference.

*Sorry for the delay on this folks!
Take care and be safe.
Emma the Ed x*



Emma the Ed

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