

Chairmans Report May 2022

Well as my first year as Puddletown area chairman different is probably one word to describe it. We started in May 2021 on Zoom and when the government decided (rightly or wrongly) to remove that option we moved back to face to face meetings with social distancing and face masks before eventually moving back to our traditional style of open meetings.

During this last year we have had what appears to be an unfortunate trend generally in maintaining councillor numbers, with Councillor's Peter Churchill Julian Hubbuck, Nicky Ling, Dan Weiss and Katie Weiss all standing down over the year, this leaves the Parish Council short on councillors but hopefully more residents can be encouraged to consider becoming councillors and have an opportunity to listen to residents of the four parishes and present their concerns in such a way that Dorset Council take notice.

We had Anna Bendall who had been the Clerk and Responsible Officer since June 2019 resign as she has now secured employment in a job that really fitted her employment plan, she will be missed by all due the professional approach she always showed, and I am know we all wish her the best on her new position. On a positive note we have been able to recruit Kelly Haggett as our new Clerk and Responsible Officer who is now learning just how hard the job is, welcome Kelly.

So what did the last year bring?

Puddletown Area Parish Council (PAPC) agreed a grant to Tolpuddle Village Hall to enable broadband and a TV/display screen to be installed.

The referendum for Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan took place and was unanimously supported, this was a credit to all the volunteers who but hours into getting it to that state.

Puddletown registered to create a community speed watch group. The first meeting of the Southover Farm Slurry Liaison group took place and the PAPC awarded a grant to Life Education Wessex and Thames Valley to enable 169 children at Puddletown First School to be given education in health, wellbeing and drug prevention.

The first event as we started to surface after the pandemic took place a Summer Sizzler in Orchard Meadow that was arranged by the Tolpuddle Events Committee and financially supported by the PAPC, probably the first event that seemed normality may be starting to happen.

The first Lower Waterston Traffic Speed Consultation took place and is still ongoing.

The Martyrs Inn was listed as a Community Asset by the PAPC.

A certificate of Recognition was awarded by the High Sheriff of Dorset to the Community Support Group, a small group of volunteers who did so much during the pandemic to help those who may have not be able to get everyday things, shopping, meals and medication due the situation at the time.

The Phone box in Tolpuddle was completed as a small information facility in the village although the PAPC funded some of this the real thanks goes out to the amazing team of volunteers who took the old tired little used phone box into what it is today.

As I was producing this report it brings home how lucky we all are to live in an area where so much gets done not by putting lots of money into everything but by the pride so many take in the area and that shows by the work that is carried out by all the volunteers who would fill many pages if I started naming them all.

Alan Sheppard
PAPC Chairman 2021 - 2022