

## Minutes of the Winterborne St Martin Annual Parish meeting held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October at the village hall 8pm

**14 members of the public were present at the meeting.**

**This included 4 members of the Parish Council, and Dorset Councillor.**

**The meeting was recorded for the benefit of the Cllrs who could not attend.**

- 1. Housekeeping and to receive apologies for absence-** The Chair of the Parish Council welcomed all to the meeting including Cllr Roland Tarr (Dorset Council Ward member) and David Ackerley (Dorset Council senior ranger).  
Apologies were received from Cllrs, Martin Usherwood, Debbie Wiltshire, Karen Delafield and Neale Hallet.
- 2. To approve the minutes of the Parish meeting 19<sup>th</sup> May 2019**  
These were accepted as an accurate record. No meeting held in 2020 due to Covid.
- 3. Matters Arising from the minutes-** None considered
- 4. Chairman's report for 2019-21**  
AD used the report produced by the then Chair for the April PC meeting and added items since he became Chair.  
We have come to the end of a Council year that has been very challenging in so many ways for very many people. The restrictions that the Coronavirus Pandemic placed on us all and the concerns we all had for our own, our families', friends' and neighbours' health and wellbeing outweigh any of the regular Parish Council Business in a normal year and the impact on all of our residents cannot be overestimated.

The very quick response of the community in Martinstown was outstanding, the support provided to those that needed it in so many ways immense and very much appreciated by everyone.

The inability to meet face to face at the start of the pandemic and the emergency introduction of legislation to enable Councils to conduct their business in the virtual and digital world required a huge change and a welcome to the world of Zoom for our Parish Council meetings. This has been well received by Councillors and Members of the public and at some meetings has increased participation in our meetings. We thank everyone for being so accommodating in this matter.

Life for some will not return to what they previously considered as normal, perhaps for some time. Many will still make different decision about how they meet with people in a public format for some time. The Government did not extend the legislation to hold virtual meetings past the 6th May, which is why we have made the decision to bring our Annual Council Meeting forward to the end of April.

After the legislation stopped for virtual meetings, we looked at meetings at several locations in the parish and we are currently holding meetings in the Church to enable meetings to commence at 7pm, we do also use the VH but meetings cannot start until 8pm as it is so well used.

The Parish Council welcomed two new co-opted Councillors in Aug 2020, Andy Daw and Deborah Follett following two resignations from Ben Carter and Val Cardell. Then when Anne Bennett resigned, we welcomed Tim Bareham.

During the last year the Parish Council discussed and commented on 19 Planning Applications (in 2019/20 the Parish Council discussed and commented on 17 planning applications). Comments are submitted to Dorset Council who is the statutory authority for decisions on planning matters. The Parish Council made a resolution at the April meeting not to support any further new development that added the current sewerage system until this has been updated or suitably adapted.

The Parish Council, along with our County Councillor Roland Tarr, have continued with their efforts to find a solution to the dangerous parking outside of the McDonalds fast food outlet at Monkey's Jump Roundabout. The area is not within the boundary of the Parish Council and covered by a number of organisations in ownership and responsibility. Therefore, negotiations and discussions always include a number of stakeholders.

The Speed Indicator Device installed by the Parish Council in the Mallards Green area continues to provide consistent data to show a large percentage of drivers are unaware of or unwilling to comply with the 30 mph speed limit in that location. Residents in this area of the village still have no safe footpath to walk to the centre of the village and we will continue to work with Dorset Council to do what we can to improve pedestrian safety in this area as well as the rest of the village. The SID serves as a visual reminder to drivers of their speed. We are fortunate to also get visits from the Dorset Police Safety Partnership Camera Van in the area. We are currently looking into other traffic calming measures and road signage as part of this project.

The Parish Council receives regular feedback regarding footpaths and bridleways within the village and first attempts to resolve issues with landowners or, if necessary, refer any issues to the Dorset Council who are the responsible authority in relation to footpaths and bridleways. There are many comments received about uncollected dog excrement and it is worth reminding dog owners that when walking our field and farm footpaths it is still necessary to pick up after your dogs. Dog faeces are a danger to farm animals and unpleasant for everyone. Please remember to always clear up after your dog, wherever you are walking them.

The Parish Council are communicating with Wessex Water regarding future improvements to the sewer in the village and the impact of groundwater infiltration on the overflowing of sewers and ability to fully flush domestic toilets at these times in some properties. Following a meeting WW officer, they explained there is enough capacity for more dwellings but it is the leaks that are causing issues, and that over 300 metres of repairs have been carried out so far.

The Parish Council has had positive engagement with the National Grid VIP Project team while they are working on the replacement of some of the pylons on the Ridgeway with underground cables. We are particularly grateful for their donation of the luxury hamper of Dorset produce which had been raffled in April and the proceeds of £352 going to the Martinstown Beaver and Scour Group.

During the year a new website has been set up containing most of what you might need or want to know about the Parish Council. [www.winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk](http://www.winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk). Along with this is a new e mail for contacting the Parish Council through Michele Harding, our clerk. [clerk@winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk)

The Parish Council has adopted the telephone kiosk – which has already been painted by the Phone Box group this will remain the property of the PC but its future use is yet to be decided.

The site with 3 allotments is being well used. The 4<sup>th</sup> plot is to be split between the other allotment holders as it is requiring some work to make it a standalone plot.

The PC are in discussions with the VH committee over the future maintenance of the play area although they have received a grant which will help with the repairs.

During the year three benches were maintained and more are scheduled to be done. One bench was irreparably damaged due to a vehicle accident.

The Parish Council has a small budget for grants to local community groups and also a grants policy. Groups that fit the criteria can make an application to the clerk – the grants criteria and application forms can be found on the Parish Council website. [www.winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk](http://www.winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk)

The riparian owners of the stream are reminded of their duties with the stream, Thanks to the village volunteers who have been clearing sections of the stream assisting some of those unable to do this themselves. The PC are looking at the removal of the vegetation left on the banks for this year and are looking at early Nov.

**5. To receive reports from the following and invited guests.**

- a. **Dorset Council Highways Senior Officer-** unable to attend
- b. **Dorset Council Senior Ranger- David Ackerley-**spoke on the current Rights of Way management. Mr Ackerley has worked at Dorset council since 2001. When the Dorset Council amalgamated, he became a Senior Ranger and is now in charge of the roadside verge's rights of way, open spaces and Blackdown. There have been changes in the diversity of the verge's countywide and this is the last part of the county to make these changes.

Instead of 12 cuts that were reduced to 6 and now they've been reduced to 2 or 3 cuts per year. The rationale behind this is a system that is proved to work in other areas of the county. This is a cut and collect system, the verge is then reduced in fertility overtime so natural wildflowers will grow and re seed. If a verge is damaged, then seeds will be planted. It is difficult to see the benefits at the beginning when the grass has grown away and due to the amount of rain in May the team have got behind, but it will take 2 to 3 years for this to show in the future. During Covid the staff had been deployed for 18 months but finally the rights of 20 teams are coming back together.

The Weymouth area verges are the model for the statistics.

This has been brought about in order to reduce the carbon footprint. The new machines that are being used to cut and collect are very expensive, then the vegetation collected has to be composted, so it is not a cost cutting exercise.

David Ackerley reported on the rights away network from Holly lodge through to Clandon farm, this bridleway to Dorchester is due to be upgraded and the surface will be made of a semi natural surface to allow for all users.

David asked residents to ensure that they carry on reporting any complaints or service reports on rights of way network because they don't have the time to go around and check every RoW themselves. Although they do have a lot of volunteers but more area always welcome.

David also reported on the elimination of styles for gates in the Sturminster Newton area to encourage safe routes to school, this has also been done in Hazelbury Bryan but this can only be done with permission of the landowner. The gates are made of galvanised steel paid for and installed by DC then managed by the landowner going forward.

David also suggested that any bridges that require repair need to be reported.

David explained the way to report issues online, to take a picture, search the rights of way reporting online system on the Dorset council website and submit your complaint or service

request adding the photo. This will then create an MNT number which can then be followed through by the rights of way Rangers.

David was asked by a member of the public about the cattle crossing at Clandon farm and the muck, it was explained that a suitable surface would be put in place that can be easily cleaned after use and is suitable for horses with their metal shoes.

David Ackerley was thanked for his informative report and left the meeting at 8:40 PM.

- c. **Dorset Councillor Roland Tarr**-reported as our Ward Councillor on the various items he has been involved with, with the Parish Council.
- Roland spoke about the communications with Highways England, the Duchy and the letters that were written by the Parish council in order to move the project to put the bunding in at McDonald's entrance. Also, the project to solve the flooding problem at the roundabout at monkeys jump.
- Roland spoke about the issues with the sewerage in the village and his hopes to have had a rep from Wessex water and Dorset councils flood team to speak to village open in November.
- Roland also spoke about the issues of speed in the village and to try and reduce the reduction of speed to 21mph through the village if possible. He asked the meeting to by a show of hands how many would support a 20-mile hour speed limit of which the majority supported this.
- Roland supported to the comments made by David Ackerley to report issues online.
- Also, the proposed improvements to the cycle network route 26 from Maiden Newton and Frampton.
- Should any issues arise Roland would be happy represent the village.

## 6. To receive reports from the following and invited guests

- a. **Waste watch representatives**- The papers are collected and sold for the benefit of the village. There is currently £900 in the fund, should anyone wish to apply for this money.
- b. **Village hall representatives**- The VH Chair reported on the VH, the hall is fully open and well used. There are continuing repairs to the building. The committee have been successful with a grant from the Lottery for the play area of £10,000. More is needed in order to replace soe of the equipment. The PC and VH committee are in discussions with looking at ways to work together on the play area.
- c. **Winterbourne Valley Community Fund**- The fund formerly known as the Blanchard Trust have had 4 applications for support in the last 2 years. A monthly advert is placed in the V & V and the group are surprised there has not been more applications due to covid.
- d. **PCSO matters**- none.
- e. **Flood Warden**- none.
- f. **Green Group of Martinstown**- the chair of Green Martinstown would like to thank the parish council for declaring a climate in ecological cool emergency thus making a clear commitment to parishioners to bring an ecological awareness to all the PC's decision-making. This is an important step in aligning the work of the PC to what is needed to face the potential climate ecological and a humanitarian catastrophe. Clearly, we all have to play our part in making a positive difference as we are all partly responsible creating this problem in the first place. To that end we started green Martinstown group we now have over 30 members who have been working on various projects for the community of Martin stone that include recycling composting and the planting of wildflowers and trees. There has also been much research work happening in the background unseen to find ways to improve

public transport and to run from the village to work towards a better footpath cycle path to and from Dorchester and to find ways to power the village with renewable energy to give a few examples.

It would seem an obvious step as the PC has declared a climate an ecological emergency that we green Martinstown and the PC use our collective resources skills and expertise to work together to make a difference. We would like to propose that we showed your meeting to look at how we can collectively help to make Martin sound parish more sustainable leading to carbon neutrality as a matter of urgency.

- g. **Phone Box Group-** Work has progressed in preparing the interior. The interior has been repainted where a backboard had been to be removed, a set of shelving that will give flexibility to the use of the box is being designed. There is still an electricity supply to the box, and this will be inspected to ensure it is safe. The group will continue to plan the interior and come up with costings which we presented for approval. Info is in the parish magazine for ideas about decorating and future use.

## 7. Results of the village survey 2021

AD had produced a presentation of the key findings of the survey noted below, the full survey results and comments would be made available on the website after the PC meeting in October when actions will be formulated.

The Parish Council represents the village, and we hoped a survey would make us give us another way of gaining parishioners' views. We receive finances from the Precept taken from the Council tax and we have money from the CIL to allocate and distribute – so we have to have some priorities. We wanted some feedback on how we are doing. The presentation is the reporting in terms of the answers that could be counted. Results do not include free-text comments and ideas which were made available at the meeting. Survey results will be available on our website in due course.

### Sense of Community

- Extremely strong -21
- Strong - 62
- Needs slight improvement – 34
- Needs significant improvement -10
- Not applicable – 1

### How you get information about the PC

- Valley & Vallance 95
- Friends of Martinstown and the Valley, private Facebook group 63
- Parish Council website 58
- Village noticeboards 34
- Martinstown News web site 27
- Not applicable 1

### How does village maintenance need to be improved?

- Footpaths & bridleways need more regular maintenance\_– 72 supporters
- Riparian owners to more regularly clear stream, PC to take action – 58 supporters
- Improved verge cutting needed – 48 supporters
- PC should clear both banks of stream along its full length -37 supporters
- PC should supplement DC footpath & bridleway cutting -32 supporters
- Improved weeding/sweeping of pavements & car park bays -25 supporters
- Verges in village to be left wild and uncut -24 supporters

- Improved road sweeping is needed -21 supporters
- PC should supplement DC verge cutting -20 supporters
- No improvement needed - 9

### **More popular possible new projects**

- Parish Council to take on ownership of the Village Hall playground and fund this through the Council Tax precept. 50 supporters
- A level and mown grass verge footpath from Mallards Green to Monkey Jump 46 supporters
- Add picnic tables and additional benches to the Village Green, 41 supporters
- Extra waste bins in the village, 41 supporters
- Extra benches in the village, 38 supporters
- Permanent Christmas Tree on the Village Green, 38 supporters
- Parish maintained flower beds, 37 supporters
- Parish Council organised annual barbecue, 35 supporters

### **Less popular possible new projects**

- An ornate village sign on the Village Green, 29 supporters
- Wooden sheep on the Village Green, 27 supporters
- Electrical facility for mains illumination of Christmas Tree, 24 supporters
- Picnic tables and benches in the Washing Pool area, 17 supporters
- Wooden sheep near the Washing Pool, 17 supporters
- Permanently fixed cycle rack on Parish Garage wall, 12 supporters
- A drinking water bottle refill point ,11 supporters
- A beacon brazier on the Green to light on special occasions, 8 supporters
- None of the above 2

### **Introducing soft traffic calming measures**

- Reinstate volunteers for Community Speed Watch, 41 supporters
- Locate village boundary signs in sight of the village with planting and mown verge, 38 supporters
- Cut the village southern verge shorter to give a sense of place, 33 supporters
- Plant low growing shrubs on verges to give a sense of narrowing, 31 supporters
- Installation of village gates, 30 supporters
- None of the above 16

### **Dealing with planning applications**

- There should be no further houses built until the sewer is improved , 75 supporters
- Housing estates must have a minimum of 35% properties held at an affordable, low rent in perpetuity, 59 supporters
- An occasional house on a brownfield site should be supported, 56 supporters
- Houses on greenfield sites should not be supported, 52 supporters
- The PC should develop a formal Neighbourhood Development Plan, 52 supporters
- A new housing estate should not be supported, 43 supporters
- A new housing estate with 10 plus houses should be supported, 26 supporters
- The Parish Council should develop an informal development strategy, 17 supporters
- None of the above 7

### **Change the parish boundary to include McDonalds**

- No 59
- Yes 50
- Not applicable 19

### **Location of Queen's Platinum Jubilee Tree**

- Village Green 48
- Not Village Green 3
- Village Hall 2
- East End of village 2

- Reading Rooms 2
- Blagdon Close verge 2
- Churchyard-0
- Grove Barn 1
- Stream Bank 1
- Stephens Farm Lane 1
- GM bridleway tree site 1
- In view of Queen 1
- Not applicable/indeterminate 61

## **What the PC does well**

- Maintains the village green, allotments, benches, garage and bus shelter, 53 of 128 agree
- Encourages villagers to attend regular meetings, 45 of 128 agree
- Provides plenty of information on its website, 37 of 128 agree
- Communicates effectively with villagers, 36 of 128 agree
- Improves the village, 31 of 128 agree
- Provides allotments to villagers, 28 of 128 agree
- Comments on planning applications effectively, 26 of 128 agree
- Is transparent in all their actions, 24 of 128 agree
- Represents the views of the villagers, 23 of 128 agree
- Spends funds wisely, 20 of 128 agree
- Works effectively with Dorset Council to ensure all areas of the village are well maintained, 18 of 128 agree
- None of the above, 16 of 128
- Has a clear strategy for the future of the village, 2 of 128 agree
- Comments on planning applications effectively, 26 of 128 agree
- Is transparent in all their actions, 24 of 128 agree
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- Spends funds wisely, 20 of 128 agree
- Works effectively with Dorset Council to ensure all areas of the village are well maintained, 18 of 128 agree
- None of the above, 16 of 128
- Has a clear strategy for the future of the village, 2 of 128 agree

## **Way forward**

- Review the results at the next parish meeting
- The comments and the responses will inform our decision making
- We will improve our communication with the parish at North Rew and Ashton
- To improve our openness, we will consider agreeing some annual objectives, publish and review at the next annual meeting

## **Closure for refreshments**

The Chairman thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting at 9.40pm for refreshments