

SYMONDSBURY PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

Our Councillors 2012-13 – full contact details are available on our website www.symondsbury.org.uk

Peter Smith (Chairman, also Transport & Flood Warden)
Selwyn Holmes (Vice-Chairman & Ancient Monuments)
Mary Costello (Resigned Oct 2013)
Brian Baker (Allotments)
Malcolm Leighton (Coastal & Lengthsman Link)
Steve Ralph (Footpaths & DAPTC)
Amanda Streatfeild (BLAP & Resilience)
David Wragg (CLT & Symene Voice)
Clerk – Marilyn Stone
Email - Symondsbury@dorset-aptc.gov.uk
Phone 07967 683897 4pm-6pm
Monday, Wednesday & Thursday
Written communications should be sent to the Clerk who will acknowledge receipt and ensure a response is sent without undue delay.
Tahi Cottage 45 East Street, Beaminster, DT8 3DS.

From the Chairman

Welcome to our statutory Annual Report which I hope you will find of interest. I am now in my third year as Chairman. It is good practice these days for Chairs not become too permanent! Mary Costello decided to stand down last autumn for family reasons after giving sterling service for several years building up an excellent relationship with Jill Exton the DCC Footpath Officer in her position as our own Footpath Officer. Cllr Steve Ralph leapt into to the position reminding us that he had a much larger dog than Mary who needed to explore further across our very large parish! He is undertaking a systematic review of the current footpath situation. We were also sorry to hear that Gill Exton had also moved in yet another DCC reshuffle we will be pleased to welcome the new team at our Annual Meeting.

It is important to have a full team of councillors on the Parish Council and we are actively searching for a new member. Please contact us if you are at all interested, particularly if you are from the village of Symondsbury (there will be no election).

I take this opportunity to thank all of our councillors who freely give up their time to do their bit for the community.

I don't think it is too early to remind you that Parish Council elections are due in May 2015 when all of our seats will be up for election with 2 seats in the West Cliff Ward and the other 6 seats in the Symondsbury Ward which covers the remainder of our parish.

We have had a difficult year as our clerk of a year ago decided that due to family commitments she would not be able to do as much for us as she had anticipated, her successor also decided this was not quite the right job at the right time. We have welcomed Marilyn Stone Her contact details and "Office Hours" can be found at the start this report and on the website. The Parish email address will remain unaltered.

West Bay Websites continue providing our website agendas & minutes are now available soon after publication as well as our submissions to consultations on major projects www.symondsbury.org.uk

Local Councillors and officers

Daryl Turner, was elected as our representative on DCC he is an experienced councillor who was on Lyme Regis Town Council and also represents the Lyme Regis area on WDDC He has been appointed on to five committees including Roads & Rights of Way. Since election he has been in attendance at most of our meeting , Councillor Ros Kayes who is DCC councillor for West Cliff also attended the meeting held West Bay where she updated us on the West Bay Street alterations which, though not in our area effects access of residents and visitors to the "Cliff". Gillian Summers our WDDC is also a very regular attendee at our meetings and we much appreciate her

time and input in supporting any issues we have.

As part of the reduction in the numbers of Councillors on WDDC the Boundary Commission have proposed that West Cliff and Pine View will join into Bridport South for their councillor representation. This is currently out for consultation – notices have been exhibited and there have been formal notices in the press.

We also appreciate the interest shown by the local Police who are now submitting a short report of items of interest.

Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) Planning Permission has been granted for Broomhills to be the site for the Waste Management Centre. As has recently been reported in the Local Press they also propose to introduce the new collection systems in the west of the county towards the end of 2015 when building and access are completed at Broomhills, there will be further communication to explain what will be happening. The permission was granted by a majority of only one DCC Councillor (Anyone who has been watching the recent BBC2 series "Planning Impossible" will have seen how such decisions are taken) The Parish Council together with Bridport Town Council and a number of local people raised several objections particularly concerning access egress and effects on the A35, Broad Lane & Skilling Hill. However the Highways Agency were satisfied with the proposal including traffic lights and improvement to the Crown roundabout together with a 50MPH speed limit from east of Miles Cross to the Crown Roundabout There are now however suggestions that this should be 40MPH !

Symondsbury School

The last 12 months has been a very successful one for the school. Our numbers have grown from 97 to 110 and pressure on places at the school (as they are throughout the local area) is significant.

There has been a concerted effort to improve standards of teaching and learning over the year. Staff undertook a variety of training courses to boost professional knowledge and gain latest teaching practise. A revised curriculum and

emphasis on the key basics of numeracy and grammar have shown real dividends. We have been rewarded by some of the best test results we have had for many years. We ride high in the performance league tables now when compared to our Dorset peers. Our performance was endorsed by a 'good' Ofsted report in July – whilst the timing of the inspection was not brilliant (just before we broke up) it endorsed our very successful year. Aim now will be to sustain the levels reached and improve some of the resources to support learning. Recently we have refurbished the kitchen, class 4 and the key stage 1 playground area. Similar upgrades will continue around the school.

We have continued to support a wide range of charities over the year, including Children in Need, Comic Relief, the Poppy Appeal, shoeboxes for Xmas, a local Food Bank and most recently the Philippines Disaster Fund. In all we have supported 10 different fundraising events and raised over £1200. The school has undertaken the full range of activities from sports day to summer fete. Highlight for many was our 'Symondsbury's got Talent' show, alongside Class 4's summer production (written by themselves) on the 'Trial of Sylvester Wilkens' – the story of a Bridport boy hung for arson in 1833. The play was staged in the Town hall (an ideal 'court setting') and performed in front of the Mayor and to a packed audience. (Many thanks to Colin Hayley the Head Teacher for this comprehensive update).

Meetings

Our meetings are on the second Tuesday of every month at 7.00 p.m. in Symondsbury School. We will only meet in August if there is a need to look at any planning applications which are controversial, we will post notices if this occurs. Do feel free to attend any meeting as there is always an opportunity to raise

issues during the meeting in the Democratic Period which is early on the agenda. Unlike some Parishes we do not have a Planning Sub Committee so Planning Applications are discussed at main meetings. Whilst most can be dealt with within the three week consultation period we do ask for an extension on major applications to ensure parishioners have the chance to make their feelings known

Planning Applications

We have dealt with 25 applications this year, a little down on the previous year. We always make an effort to check each application with residents in the nearby area and respond to WDDC with any comments. If you have access to the internet, all information on applications is accessible at www.dorsetforyou.com. Comments and plans can be downloaded, and it is quite easy to find relevant applications this has recently been updated and tree applications are now included Paper plans are also available at Mountfield.

The now renamed West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan was submitted for examination by the Government appointed inspector however WDDC has asked for this process to be suspended in order to address the issues raised at a meeting recently held in public. Apparently this is a national problem, not just a West Dorset one. WDDC are currently advertising as they must on an annual basis for the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment this allows land owners and others to submit land for future needs (This does not mean any or all are accepted).

Yearse Farm. The Parish Council are of course taking particular interest in the implications of this proposal and we are awaiting further news from the developer who we believe has been appointed. Neighbourhood Planning is a new concept of the Localism act, and may play a crucial role – see **Bridport Local Area Partnership** item

Flooding Once again despite there being much waterlogging nowhere in the parish has been flooded though we make careful observation of the area.

Footpaths

Please contact Cllr Ralph with any queries or observations and he will make sure the right action is taken. The proposed alterations to footpaths in the Watton and Highlands area to make safe the crossing of the A35 are a long drawn-out and expensive process. The final decision will be made by DCC's Roads and Rights of Way Committee this is still ongoing with just one Bridleway resolved so far.

Allotments

Our allotments by the former London Inn on West Rd (A35) remain fully occupied The Pine View site with 9 plots has been cleared and residents of Pine View have taken up 8, with one still available.

Roads and Transport

The A35 has been discussed at a number of meetings chaired by our MP Oliver Letwin and it has now been agreed the the 40MPH section will be extended from Chideock to the east of Miles Cross where it will become 50MPH past the Eype turn to the Crown Roundabout.

DCC have just published accident locations for past years which are available on line. I still attend WATAG meetings on our behalf & reluctantly I am still Chairman I will be pleased to see you at our meetings held bi-monthly in the WI Hall Bridport where Public Transport matters are discussed. DCC are represented as are all of the local Bus operators. Details are available at www.watag.org from myself or by email watag@hotmail.co.uk

Bridport Local Area Partnership

We are represented on the Steering Group of BLAP which endeavours to bring together as many community groups in and around Bridport as possible, and we have been represented at all meetings, including some Planning Group sessions. Following on from BLAP it has been agreed that Symondsbury PC will join with Bridport Town Council & Allington PC to prepare a **Neighbourhood Plan** We hope to be joined by other neighbouring parishes It will take a great deal of work to produce a plan, but if successful, it will give us a considerable say over how Yearse Farm is developed and will give us

access to funds for community projects indeed other parishes involved in the district

Lengthsman

We have been in the Lengthsman Scheme in conjunction with Bridport Town Council for over three years now. This has led to us being able to provide a better service with regard to the small jobs always needed to be done around the parish such as gully and kerb clearance, litter picking and hedge maintenance around street signs. We will in future have to fund this ourselves hence some of the increase in our precept We also have to fund non strategic salt bins.

I still tour the Parish each autumn with the local DCC Highways Engineer & Councillor Turner when we try to establish what maintenance and any minor improvements which may be achieved.

If you have a highway problem, pothole or blocked street drain etc please report them on www.dorsetforyou.com. There is a revised system in place

Correspondence

We are always pleased to hear from any parishioners either by letter or email The use of email does have the advantage of being easy to distribute and creates a trail for record purposes.

Clerk and Councillors

As I mentioned at the start we now have a new Clerk and following training will I am sure soon be able to deal with most of the queries submitted.

As you will see from the first section each of our Councillors have particular responsibilities and attend various training events and represent the Parish at meetings and conferences as appropriate.

The parish was asked to join a working party at WDDC where a number of planning issues common to Town & Parish Councils are being discussed to make the whole system more user friendly clearer and far less confusing.

Other Groups

We attend Western Area DAPTC meetings.
Symene Community Land Trust

The Planning approval for the 10 Affordable House in West Road is now in place so watch that space (Next to the Medical Centre).

Broadband

We are in line for faster Broadband most areas having an improvement by 2016 though some areas could be sooner

Finances

Our Accounts are always open for inspection and a summary of the accounts are given below to give you an idea of where our money goes.

Summary of Annual Accounts (unaudited)

2012-13 **2013-14**

RECEIPTS		
10,800.00	Precept	11,340.00
212.50	Allotment	199.50
1.74	Interest	1.71
200.00	Grants rec'd	00.00
00.0	VAT refund	0.00
11,214.24	TOTALS	11,541.21

PAYMENTS		
3,856.54	Admin	4831
1,500.00	Lengthsman	1,550
193.73	Insurance	195
352.25	Subscriptions	364
165.00	Fees	169
000.00	Rents	200
484.67	Printing	433
905.06	Purchases	1026
1,160.00	Grants	300
536.03	VAT	456
9,153.28	TOTALS	9,524

Facts from 2011 Census results Parish Population 1059
More details are on www.dorsetforyou.com

www.symondsbury.org.uk