

Purbeck District Council Volunteer of the Year Award 2018

On the evening of Thursday 12th April Nick Gore, Parish Council Chairman, attended the Offices of Purbeck District Council to present an award to Affpuddle and Turnerspudde Volunteer of the Year, Campbell de Burgh. Campbell was accompanied by his wife Kate and the evening was most enjoyable. It is always interesting to hear about the varied contributions all Nominees make so willingly and enriching their communities as a result.

The address that Nick gave on the night is reproduced here;

“Campbell de Burgh has been a resident of the Parish of Affpuddle and Turnerspudde for some 30 years. Throughout this time, he has made a very significant contribution to our community, typically leading initiatives, guiding them to fruition and bringing about change to improve Parish life. The longevity of Campbell’s contribution to our community is greatly appreciated, but equally noteworthy is the breadth and depth of his influence across a very wide range of issues.

In 2002, as a Parish Councillor, Campbell headed a Steering Group, with a brief to put together a Parish Plan. The process to bring this plan to fruition included extensive involvement and consultation with the community. The result of 700 hours of local voluntary effort was a wide-ranging document covering local concerns such as housing, community facilities and conservation issues. By 2004 the plan had been adopted by both the Parish Council and Purbeck District Council as a Community Policy on future developments, with the express intention of being used to assist with local authority decision making at all levels. Thanks to this forward-thinking approach, when putting this document together, the plan remains relevant to the Parish Council today.

As part of the consultation with residents in developing the Parish Plan it became clear that there was an appetite in the Parish for a community website. Campbell was pivotal in bringing this wish to fruition. The aim of the website was to provide information to both residents and visitors alike on the facilities and activities within the Parish. Campbell is still the editor of the website and it remains a wonderful window into the life of our rural parish and a focus for the entire community. Whilst the site remains entirely relevant, Campbell has once again seized the initiative and is currently engaged in bringing the site up to date, in so far as its underlying technology is concerned, as well as updating it for the new Data Protection legislation.

Campbell’s ability to research complex issues and relate them to the challenges faced by our community has meant that he has been approached by others to assist with issues and projects from time to time. In 2015 he was asked by the Village Hall Committee to review the administrative arrangements for running the Village Hall Trust within Charity Commission requirements as the law had significantly updated since its originating documents of 1983. Following research and public consultation, in 2016 a preferred way forward was identified and Campbell was able to present a draft of the recommended Constitution of the Briantspudde Village Hall as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation based on the recommended Charities Commission “Foundation” Model.

In 2012 Campbell decided to take the bull by the horns on behalf of the whole community. Residents were reporting very low and variable Broadband capacity and he decided enough was enough. Campbell spearheaded a Self-Help campaign with two elements. The first to make sure that Parishioners’ house installation was as good as it could be and the second was to report poor performance to the Internet Provider. Regarding the first, Campbell offered information on the community website, including diagrams and pictures, but inevitably residents contacted him for additional support and expertise. In response he spent many hours seeking to improve individual installations and offering guidance.

A leaflet drop increased awareness of the issue and what individuals could do to help themselves. However, also included was a record form for residents to keep a log of their broadband speeds. The intention was both to provide the evidence needed to lobby BT Openreach to improve their current offering as well as persuading them to bring forward their plans for Superfast Broadband in the Village. Armed with this information as well as his considerable tenacity and powers of persuasion, these objectives were achieved.

In selecting these examples of the contributions Campbell has made to our Community, I am particularly struck by the theme that links them. Throughout his service to the Community Campbell has predominately looked to the future. In doing this he has sought to engage with as many Parishioners as possible; public consultation and listening to feedback have been the foundation of what he has sought to deliver and the recommendations he has made.

In nominating Campbell as our Volunteer of the Year, we want to recognise and thank him for his efforts during this year and the many which have gone before.

On behalf of our whole Community, Campbell, thank you and well done!"