

The Annual Parish Meeting of Affpuddle and Turnerspuddle

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Affpuddle and Turnerspuddle held on Wednesday 8th May 2019 at Briantspuddle Village Hall at 7.00pm

1. Welcome and Apologies

Chairman of the Parish Council, Sue Jones, welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies from Lesley Haskins, trustee of the Erica Trust and Stephen Sanderson, Church Warden - Affpuddle PCC.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 9 May 2018

The Minutes of the last Parish Meeting held on 9 May 2018, which were available on the Community website, were presented for approval. Trevor Poole proposed that the Minutes be approved, this was seconded by Sarah Lowman and agreed by all present.

3. Dorset Council Councillor's Report

Councillor Peter Wharf reported that he and Laura Miller had been elected to the Dorset Council for the new West Purbeck ward and they intended to report on a monthly basis to all Parish Clerks and others. They would also hold surgeries, on a casual basis, prior to Parish Council meetings. He was happy to be contacted at any time by Parish Chairs and Clerks and asked other Councillors to route any queries through them. Peter and Laura asked to be advised in advance of any issues Parishes wished to raise at their Council meetings to allow them to prepare and investigate before the meeting. They also intended to meet with all Chairs three to four times a year to maintain communication.

Councillor Wharf advised that the Dorset Council had a Conservative majority of four, its Annual Meeting would be on 16 May and it was likely that the Leader would be from the Conservative Party.

Councillor Wharf confirmed that the Liaison Committee, set up as a result of the Southover Farm Slurry Lagoon grant of planning permission is likely to meet two to three times a year and he would chair this Panel.

He thanked residents for their recent support and was looking forward to continuing to work positively with the Parish Council.

4. Parish Council Chair's Report

Councillor Sue Jones presented the report of the Parish Council. This is reproduced below:

It has been a busy year for the Parish Council.

2018 represented the centenary of the end of World War 1 and the Parish Council was keen to mark this poignant anniversary in an appropriate and lasting way. Arrangements were made to clean the War Memorial so that the names of those Parishioners who had given their lives in both World Wars were once again legible. This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the War Memorial Trust, to whom the Parish Council is very grateful. In addition, Phil Ventham came forward to suggest the planting of daffodils in Briantspuddle Woods to commemorate the fallen. The Parish Council provided the funding but Phil took the project by the horns by organising a working group to plant 2,000 bulbs last autumn. Thank you to Phil and to the willing group who

helped complete the task. The Parish Council also worked closely with Affpuddle PCC to organise a Service of Remembrance at the War Memorial at 11am on Sunday 11th November. Many local organisations were represented by the laying of a wreath and this simple but moving act brought our small community together in remembrance. Thank you to Jonathan Haigh who led the Service and acted as liaison between the Affpuddle PCC and the Parish Council.

The year has seen the successful creation of our new community website. Thank you to Campbell de Burgh, who masterminded the project to set up the new website and who, on behalf of the Parish Council, continues to edit and maintain the site. It offers a valuable record of the news, events and life in the Parish and we are mindful of the effort that Campbell puts in to keep the site relevant and up to date.

Moving onto the work undertaken by the Parish Council itself a highlight included some significant improvements undertaken to the roads in the parish in conjunction with Dorset Highways. The Parish Council has sought safety improvements to the Waddock Crossroads junction for many years, working with Highways and our County Councillor I'm pleased to report that some initiatives have now been implemented. New signs have been erected on the approach from Bovington and south on the B3390, as well as fresh road markings on the eastern approach. An experimental verge was laid and planted with a variety of slow growing plants to reduce maintenance also has the benefit of improving visibility northwards. Flooding issues in Throop were also brought to the attention of the Parish Council and Highways were congratulated for acting swiftly to correct the issues.

Unfortunately, highways issues have caused considerable distress to residents of Affpuddle. The increasing number of movements by large agricultural vehicles transporting slurry have caused safety concerns and a loss of amenity value. A planning application to install a slurry lagoon at Southover Farm was received during the year. It was claimed in the application that the introduction of the slurry lagoon would have the effect of reducing traffic movements to the site. Residents expressed their concerns to the Council in writing and during the public participation at the Council's Meetings. As a result, the Parish Council have made representations to Dorset County Council requesting wide ranging and specific conditions be applied to any grant of permission associated with the application. These conditions include the introduction of a liaison committee which will give a voice to residents to raise issues associated with the site. However, Members are keenly aware that the Parish Council have been unable to influence matters to the extent that many residents had hoped.

Last year the Borough of Poole purchased the former water meadows north of Briantspuddle for the purposes of complying with nitrogen neutral policies associated with new housing. Investigations were under way to decide whether to create a wetland environment, but they were put on hold to deal with other priorities. The Parish Council understands that a survey will be carried out to establish water levels at which point the authority will consult with the Parish Council about any proposals.

As an ongoing part of Council work, we endeavour to maintain our working relationship with other groups in the Parish and to ensure that policies and agreements are reviewed and modernised where necessary to maintain their relevance into the future. With this in mind, a decision was taken to realign agreements between the Parish Council and Bladen Social Club and remove ongoing confusion as to whether the 1982 or the 1986 agreement took precedence. At the same time, and in recognition that all the Agreements between the three parties are now over 30 years old, the Parish Council reiterated its desire to take part in discussion to modernise the remaining

agreements by mutual consent. It is hoped that progress will be made towards this objective in the coming year.

In August the Parish Council made grant awards following applications by Affpuddle PCC, Briantspuddle Village Hall Committee and Wareham Citizens Advice Bureau. These awards were made to enhance the lives of parishioners and the Parish Council would like to thank all these organisations for the role they play to support and enrich community life. In March I had the pleasure of attending the Offices of Purbeck District Council to present the award of Volunteer of the Year Award, on behalf of the Parish, to Eve Badcock. As most of you will know Eve has held the role of Postmistress for the last 16 years, a role which comes with considerable financial responsibility. As well as making a huge contribution to the shop and Post Office in this capacity, Eve also supports both the Village Hall Committee and Affpuddle PCC by making her garden available for key fundraising events in the form of the Annual Church Fete and Open Gardens. On behalf of the Parish I would like to thank Eve again tonight for the contribution she has made to our community.

Parish Maintenance is an ongoing task for the Parish Council, and this has included several initiatives this year. Two fingerposts have been replaced in line with the Council's objective of restoring the way markers throughout the Parish. The fingerpost at Briantspuddle Crossroads incorporates an additional finger to direct visitors to the Village Shop and Hall and was partly funded by a grant from Viridor as well as an anonymous donation by a parishioner. Thanks go to both parties for their generous support. The finger post at Affpuddle Crossroads has also been replaced. All Parish noticeboards have received attention. The noticeboard at Waddock Cross has been replaced and the boards in Affpuddle and Briantspuddle have been repaired. Grass cutting, weeding and other duties have been carried out to the highest of standards by the Parish Council's Groundsman. These efforts amongst others paid dividend when Briantspuddle was awarded the title of Dorset Best Village 2018 last September. As well as a plaque, the prize included a cash award of £200 which the Parish Council used to purchase its own litter picking equipment. This new equipment was put to use for the first time and to great effect during parish litter pick weekend. An entire trailer load of an extraordinary variety of litter was collected. Thank you to the 20 or so parishioners who gave their time so willingly to complete an unpleasant task, which sadly has become a necessary annual event. However, the result represents a big improvement to our environment and one which will showcase the parish for visitors at the up and coming Open Gardens event run by the Village Hall committee.

I am delighted that several initiatives have been brought to fruition during the year for the benefit of the Parish. In large part these would not have happened had it not been for the ideas, support and hard work of some willing volunteers.

Last year the Parish Council adopted both Telephone Kiosks in the Parish for £1 each, from BT. The Parish Council invited parishioners to suggest ideas as to how to use these little spaces to the best effect. Following the feedback, it was decided to install a defibrillator in the Affpuddle box and to transform the Briantspuddle telephone box into a mini information centre. David Griffith spearheaded the defibrillator project overseeing the grant funding and installation as well as ensuring that training was made available to parishioners at a free event in the Village Hall. He continues to check the defibrillator units in both Briantspuddle and Affpuddle each week and the Parish Council, and I am sure all Parishioners, are extremely grateful to him for this service. Leonora Sheppard together with Roger Stayte have transformed the Briantspuddle box into a mini information centre and designed the content to fit in the tiny space. The interior of the box now

contains three aluminium, weatherproof panels that display local history and information. The opening of the box attracted over 30 Parishioners to celebrate the occasion. Special thanks also go to Audrey Grindrod, who cut the ribbon on the day and remains the custodian of this special feature at the heart of the Parish.

Our long standing and highly respected Chairman of the Parish Council, Nick Gore, decided to step down from his post this year. On behalf of the Parish I would like to thank him for the contribution he made over a significant period to the Council and parish life. In addition, the Parish Clerk, Lindsay Hole, resigned to take up an alternative post and Jonathan Haigh decided to relinquish his position. They have both made positive contributions to the Parish Council and I thank them for all their work. During the year the Parish Council welcomed Stuart Chorley as a Parish Councillor and more recently Graham Lightfoot was welcomed back as a Councillor, following the recent Elections. I would also like to thank my fellow Councillors for the part they have played over the last year. Charles Barter, Vice Chair, has offered me tremendous support, for which I am very grateful, and Sarah Lowman kindly took on the role of Acting Clerk whilst we recruited to fill the vacancy. I am very pleased tonight to introduce and welcome Louise Dowell who has accepted our offer to join us as our new Parish Clerk.

In thanking so many parishioners in my address I am very conscious that there are many volunteers who give their time so willingly throughout the parish. We will hear from some of the organisations who help contribute to the life of the parish later tonight. However, before I invite them to speak I would like to thank all volunteers for their efforts, which are much appreciated. Looking forward to next year the Unitary Authority has been established and the recent elections concluded. Our County Councillors will be Peter Wharf and Laura Miller both of whom we have worked closely with before and we look forward to working with again in the interests of the Parish. As things stand we do not yet know how the Parish Council will be affected by the changes brought about by the Unitary Authority, Councillors will keep Parishioners informed as events unfold.

5. **Reports from Parish Representatives**

A number of parish organisations gave a review of their activities over the last year, as well as sharing some of their plans for the future. The following organisations gave a report, those reports that were electronically are reproduced below:

Affpuddle Parochial Church Council (PCC)– Report presented to the AGM, read by Jonathan Haigh on behalf of Church Warden Stephen Sanderson:

1. **Quinquennial Inspection.** A quinquennial inspection of the church structure was carried out by the diocesan architects in May last year and in their subsequent report it was stated that "St Laurence's Church is in good condition, and clearly well loved, maintained and looked after". The main concern was that some areas of the church are damp and that the gutters were regularly cleaned and any leaks repaired as and when they arise. The report gave a list of points for action and those listed as urgent have all been addressed A E Griffin and Son Builders. They were:
 - a. Removal of vegetation from roof and repair of slates.
 - b. Removal of moss from roofs.
 - c. Unblocking of hopper in downpipe on south face of tower.

There is also a prioritised list of repair work to be carried out over the year and within the

quinquennial period. This is being addressed with our builders and on a self-help basis where feasible.

2. Leaks in the chancel roof. During the winter there have been leaks in the chancel roof, one over the eastern end of the north aisle and the other where the chancel roof meets the wall of the tower above the centre rearmost row of pews. Both leaks have been addressed by the builders and their repairs seem to have been effective.

3. Electrical Inspection. A full electrical inspection of the church was carried out in October last year. There were several recommendations for action which have all been rectified by our electrician.

4. Safety Inspection of Heaters. A full safety inspection of the church heaters was carried out in October last year and a safety certificate issued.

5. Gift of a Communion Chalice. The PCC is very grateful to the Parish Council of Affpuddle and Turnerspudde for the generous gift of a new communion chalice. The donation of a second chalice gives greater flexibility when there is a larger congregation as the only other reserve chalice is extremely valuable, kept in the safekeeping of the County Museum and is not therefore immediately available for use without prior notice.

6. Inventory Check. A complete check has been made of the church inventory and all items have been identified. Nine of the most valuable items of silver are held for us by the Dorset County Museum.

7. Churchyard.

a. Construction of a Toilet. Progress over the course of the year has been slow. It was decided that a toilet adjoining the church building would be unacceptable as it would involve removing a window that was restored at very considerable expense some 30 years ago. It was decided therefore after some deliberation that a composting toilet of wooden construction would be planned in the area next to the existing potting shed close to the boundary of the churchyard to the south east of the church porch. This is the site that was proposed by the conservation officer for Purbeck District. An initial plan drafted by John Stark and Crickmay Partnership was considered unacceptable as it did not meet the PCC's requirement for a simple wooden structure. Plans are now being drawn up by Philip Hughes Architects, who are also approved by the Diocese, for a wooden structure in keeping with its setting in the churchyard and we await these plans. We will then move towards gaining a faculty from the Diocese and planning permission from Dorset County Council.

b. Hire of a Portaloo. Pending the construction of a permanent church toilet the PCC have decided that there must be a temporary toilet (portaloo) available in the churchyard for use at major church services and events such as the flower festival, weddings and funerals. Having experimented with a long term hire agreement in the second half of last year we have now decided only hire in a portaloo as and when deemed necessary. When deployed, the portaloo is positioned behind the gas tank near the small gate at the eastern end of the Peace Garden. This has led to objections from some local residents. The local authority supports our right to position a temporary toilet as and when we deem it necessary. We very much regret this state of affairs and do not wish it to continue any longer than necessary. This all adds greater urgency in the need to get on with the construction of a permanent toilet.

c. Churchyard Gates. New churchyard gates were installed in May last year. The gates are a gift of the Kidston family to whom we are extremely grateful. The gates are of high quality, well seasoned

English Oak, are weathering very well indeed and are a great enhancement to the church and its surroundings.

d. Churchyard Paths.

(1) Path in the main Churchyard. We are very grateful to Mr Moriarty and a team of supporters for their excellent work in restoring the pathway in the main churchyard between the gate and the porch.

(2) Pathways in the Peace Garden. The pathways in the peace garden are a growing cause for concern. The paths are becoming increasingly uneven due to subsidence into the underlying ground. Warning notices were put in position last summer and we have taken the advice of Richard Griffin regarding possible repairs. The essential problem is that the foundations to the existing paving are inadequate for the task. Any repairs will need the complete reconstruction of the pathways involving properly engineered foundations. This applies whether the paths are paved or laid with gravel. The stairs by the gas tank also require re-levelling. Richard Griffin has advised that any temporary repairs to a particular section of the path will inevitably lead to a ripple effect along the path and be of very limited effectiveness. There is a number of options available which range from complete reconstruction, which will be prohibitively expensive, to laying part of the pathway to gravel, lifting the remaining paving and sowing the former pathway with grass. None of these options is cheap.

e. Mowing. We continue to be very grateful to the large team of parishioners who give up their time and energy over the year to mow the churchyard. I am particularly grateful to Mr Parker for his tireless work in keeping an eye on the maintenance of the mowers.

d. Installation of Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Sign. As part of a national project a Commonwealth War Graves Commission sign indicating the presence of war graves in the churchyard was placed at the entrance to the churchyard at the end of last year to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. The upkeep of the sign will be the permanent responsibility of the Commission.

f. Spring Churchyard Tidy-Up. This will take place on Saturday 27th April (with Saturday 4 May as a fall-back date).

8. Safeguarding. Effective safeguarding is a high priority for the PCC and we are very grateful to Penny Haigh for her work as safeguarding officer to maintain oversight of this issue within the Parish and to keep the PCC up to date on developments in legislation as necessary. All members of the PCC have now attended the Church of England's Safeguarding foundation training course. The safeguarding policy is updated annually and will be signed at the end of this meeting.

- a. Post Cases Review. Under the direction of the Diocese of Salisbury there has been a requirement for all Parish Churchwardens and Parish Safeguarding Officers within the Diocese to carry out a Past Cases Review into any incidences of misconduct by clergy and church officers towards children and adults at risk. This check has gone back as far as 1950 and has involved checking PCC records and also consultation with individuals that have lived in the Parish for many years. No such incidents of misconduct have been discovered.

9. Health and Safety. Reviewed and updated in February 2019. The Policy Statement will be signed at this meeting.

10. Retirement of Canon Charles Masheder. A special Benefice service was held in the church on Sunday 27th January to mark the retirement of Charles Masheder as Priest in Charge at this Benefice and in particular this Parish. To mark his retirement Charles and his wife were presented with an original watercolour of the church painted by local artist Paul Matthews. It was a day of sadness marking the departure of Charles and his wife to begin a new life but it was also a day of celebration and thanksgiving for the wonderful work that Charles carried out in the Parish during

his incumbency. Charles was a man of outstanding gifts as a priest and his ministry was marked by genuine warmth and sincerity in everything that he did. We all miss him and his wife very much indeed.

11. New Benefice of West Purbeck. Following a period of consultation the Parishes of Affpuddle with Turnerspudde and Bere Regis have been incorporated with the Parish of Wool into the new Benefice of West Purbeck with the Reverend Carol Langford as incumbent of the Benefice assisted by Jenny Alidina and Judy Hunt as Associate Priests and also in due course a new Associate Priest who will be resident in the Vicarage at Bere Regis. The post has just been advertised in the Church Times and a new profile covering both this Parish and Bere Regis has been circulated with it. It is hoped that the new Associate Priest will be in post before the end of the year and hopefully before the end of September. A service to celebrate the creation of the new Benefice was held in the Church of the Holyrood at Wool on Wednesday 13th March with the Right Reverend Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne, in attendance.

12. Organist.

a. Ivor Mullins, who has been the organist at St Laurence's Affpuddle since 1954 has informed us that he wishes to retire as organist with immediate effect. Ivor had a bad fall in early November and is now living in a care home in Wimborne. We are planning an event and a presentation to be held at his care home as soon as possible to thank Ivor for his long and loyal service to our church.

b. Richard Hall has agreed to become the organist at St Laurence's Affpuddle with immediate effect. Richard's services as organist are in much demand and we will need to be flexible in order to allow him to meet his many other commitments. In principle Richard will play at the 10am services on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. Carol Langford has told us that Paul Martin, the organist at Bere Regis can play for us at our 10am services on the first Sunday of the month and hopefully also when there is a fifth Sunday Benefice service.

13. Events/Fund Raising in the year to date.

a. Organ Recital. An organ recital by Charles Harrison, Organist and Master of the Choristers at Chichester Cathedral, was held in the church on Saturday 14th April. The recital was well attended and raised over £755 which went towards the project to construct a church lavatory.

b. Church Fete The Church Fete was held once at Cruck Cottage Briantspuddle on Saturday 11th August thanks to the generosity of Chips Badcock. The fete was well attended and despite poor weather for the second half of the afternoon raised £1229.45. Our thanks go out as ever to the army of helpers who set up and ran the stalls, served the teas and in particular to Geoff Sagar for once again loaning and putting up two large tents from his tent hire business free of charge.

c. Ride and Stride. Sandy Moriarty took part in the annual ride and stride in support of the Dorset Historic Churches Trust which took place on Saturday 8th September and raised £275 which was greatly appreciated by us all.

d. Harvest Lunch. The annual Harvest Lunch was held in the village Hall at Briantspuddle on Sunday 14th October and raised over £300. We are once again very grateful to all those who helped to set up the hall, prepare and serve the food and not least to wash up afterwards.

e. Gift Day. The Annual Gift Day was held on Saturday 3rd November and with the vicar occupying his usual position outside the Village Hall in Briantspuddle. The response from the community was very generous indeed and £1048 was raised.

f. Remembrance Sunday. Remembrance Sunday last year marked the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. There was a service in the church at 9am which included an act of remembrance at the Peace Shrine. There followed a Parish Act of Remembrance at the Bladen

Valley War Memorial at 11am and wreaths were laid by representatives of a variety of organisations from across the community.

14. Planned Events/Fund Raising in the forthcoming Year.

- a. Flower Festival. A flower festival will be held in the church from Friday 31st May until Sunday 2nd June inclusive.
- b. Church Fete. The Annual Church Fete will be held at Cruck Cottage Briantspuddle on Saturday 10 August 2019.
- c. Gift Day. The Annual Gift Day will be held on 2 Nov 2019.
- d. Harvest Lunch. The annual Harvest Lunch will be held in Briantspuddle Village Hall on Sunday 13th October.
- e. Remembrance Sunday. The procedure followed for Remembrance Sunday last year proved very popular and was well attended event. It is hoped that a similar act of remembrance involving the entire community can be held on Remembrance Sunday this year which falls on 10th November.
- f. Carol Service 2019. Date to be arranged.
- g. Seed Money. Chris Parker's Seed Money fund raising project will be reactivated in the coming year with a mass dog walk as the initial event. Dates will follow.

15. Thankyou.

- a. Firstly we are all very grateful to everyone who has made our transition into the new Benefice of West Purbeck run so smoothly and in particular to Carol Langford for her leadership in pulling the parishes together and her conscientious tact and efficiency in ensuring that the changeover has gone so well. You should note that we are not in an interregnum but a component part of a new benefice awaiting the appointment of a new associate priest to be resident in Bere Regis Vicarage.
- b. Secondly, Liz and I would like to thank everyone here and beyond the church for all that they have done over the past year to help in our work in keeping things going. The list of tasks is enormous and we could not manage without you all. Liz and I are both very grateful to you for all that you do. Thank you.

Briantspuddle Music Group – Report presented by Jonathan Haigh:

The group has six regular players, of whom four play alto saxophones, one plays the piano, and one plays percussion; the alto sax players between them also offer soprano sax, baritone sax and flute as alternative instruments. These six members come from a variety of local communities – Briantspuddle, Throop, Turnerspuddle, Rogers Hill, Crossways and Piddlehinton.

We all practise individually at home of course, but we meet monthly in one or other of our members' homes (any one with a piano) to practise together, and are gradually extending our repertoire. From time to time we put ourselves in front of an audience and have a gig, such as the last two years at the village "Christmas Lights" festival when we provided introductory Christmas carol music. We will show the world that we don't just play carols, when we perform a programme of jazz, swing and Latin music as background to the village hall teas on the forthcoming Open Gardens day, 2nd June.

We first formed the group at the end of 2013, and were fortunate to qualify for a grant of start-up money from Dorset POPP. That has been used up now, mainly on buying sheet music but also in getting some professional support from Dorset Rural Music School. Now when we need more sheet music we have to pay for it ourselves. New members are always welcome, either for a trial session or as a permanent player. Whatever the instrument, we will find a way of incorporating it

into our repertoire! Contact Jonathan Haigh (01929 471768), to find out when and where our next session is or for more information.

Briantspuddle Village Hall Committee – Stuart Chorley presented the report on behalf of Chairman Jenny Lightfoot:

It seems unbelievable that it was a year ago we sat here for the last annual parish meeting and heard reports from the various organisations within the parish. But, then I started looking at the many things that have happened and quickly realised it would take at least a year to fit it all in and so here we are.

First of all it has been good to welcome Fiona Hogger onboard as a trustee, as the nominated representative of the PCC. The 10 trustees that make up our committee and Leslie, our tireless and invaluable minute secretary, incorporate virtually every aspect of our community which I see personally as not only how important the village hall is to our community but the inclusive desire from all corners to see it flourish and continue to meet the needs of our community.

It's been a very busy year with a range of activities taking place that some considerably larger communities would be in awe of being able to provide. I'll probably miss one or two for which I apologise but on a regular basis we have Pilates, yoga, short mat bowls, keep fit, skittles, Briantspuddle singers, coffee shop, let's lunch, evening talks/lectures, village hall lunch. A programme of arts reach performances, the Purbeck film festival, harvest lunch, the Christmas fair, Christmas lights celebration and awards and New Year's Eve party contribute to a full year.

We've also this year enjoyed the armistice day celebration tea party and exhibition, a wedding and various other private bookings.

Looking forward, I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage individuals and groups amongst us who would like to see other activities and events taking place to come and talk to us and let's see how together we can make even more things happen for our mutual benefit and enjoyment happen. The hall is very busy but there is scope to do even more if the desire for it is present.

The year has been just as busy behind the scenes keeping the hall not only in a good state of repair but seeking to improve and enhance facilities as we go. The re-ridging of the thatched roof was carried out successfully and the swifts played their part in vacating their annual holiday homes in an orderly manner at the agreed time allowing the work to be completed in what was a very hot sunny and dry summer.

We had the electricians in verifying and certifying the quality of the electrics throughout the building and also carrying out improvements to the fire alarm system moving from a battery operated wireless system to a fully integrated hard wired system, no more flat batteries triggering alarms. Not only that, but with a conscious effort to place unsightly wiring as inconspicuously as possible. It is our intention, as and when further re wiring or wiring is required to seek to gradually move everything to a less visible position further enhancing the beauty of our hall.

The establishing of a recorded ongoing maintenance schedule for the building and the annual clean further served to keep the facilities we enjoy as top notch as possible. Grateful thanks to trustees and other members of the community for rolling up their sleeves and helping out with the big annual clean.

We have also seen a large area of the main hall floor and the skittle alley replaced this year. A successful shared venture both in cost and organisation carried out by the Bladen social club and the village hall committee jointly. There is still some ongoing snagging being dealt with but overall a much enhanced and safer floor surface for all of us to enjoy.

We've also been able to purchase and install a new mixing desk and wireless microphone system to enhance everyone's enjoyment of the events that take place here with the loop system once again functioning correctly interacting with the P.A. system. There may still be a need to move a speaker to further reduce the risk of occasional feedback. I hope in particular that those with reduced hearing ability are benefitting from these changes and trust you'll persevere with us as we fine tune the system.

We have a beautiful new sign outside the main doors to the hall drawing your attention to the entrance.

For a number of years now we have been served well by our substantial and quite heavy wooden tables due in no small part to some considerable fund raising carried out by Sue Jeanes in the past. The tables are becoming increasingly temperamental and prone to inflicting damage on their users without warning and are in need of replacement and so in the very near future, paid for by a considerable donation from the community group and the sale of jams and preserves in the coffee shop and with the balance being made up from hall funds, we will all be able to enjoy using a set of new, lightweight, hygienic tables.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Angie Talbot for all the hard work she put in as a trustee until recently when she stood down from her position as representative for the community group, not least of all in arranging for the Wareham men's shed to build a display cabinet positioned in the foyer and soon to display the Debenhams China and other artefacts, and welcome Cindy Read onboard as she takes over from Angie. Also a big thank you for the enormous amount of work Allan Smith does in keeping everything running smoothly, not only as treasurer but in so many other ways.

It has been a pleasure to work with each and every one of the trustees this past year and we are glad to report that once again we end the year with the village hall being in good shape both physically and financially but be assured we will not be resting on our laurels as the first weekend in June races towards us and with the help of the church and it's flower festival weekend, kind villagers opening their gardens and many of you joining with us to make yet another open gardens event not only exhausting but thoroughly enjoyable as we come together as friends and neighbours working together for our community and this our village hall.

The Friends of Briantspuddle Post Office and Village Shop Association – the Chairman, Ken Kilbank presented the report:

The Shop and PO were working well at the moment with 30+ volunteers, 2 paid work experience staff and plenty of regular customers. There had been some reduction in sales recently but the shop had a modest annual surplus with depreciation being taken account of.

The PO, which was very important to the community, had steady use and both it and the shop would be provided for as long as possible and long as there was a demand for them but the situation could change in the future.

A resident asked if there was anything that could be done to improve footfall and Mr Kilbank said that various things had already been tried. The aim of the shop and PO was to serve the community and they would just have to see what happens in the future. He also said that an additional £3 spend per resident would be enough to make the difference to both.

Thursday Keep Fit Class – Christine Ralls, a member of the class, reported that more members were needed as a number were leaving the area. The class ran from 9.30am to 10.30am and a free taster session was offered to new members.

The Erica Trust – Councillor Sue Jones read out a statement on behalf, Lesley Haskins of the Erica Trust:

Last September, after detailed discussions with the Forestry Commission and Natural England, our plans for Lee Woods and Smokeham Bottom were welcomed into a Countryside Stewardship Scheme, and the critical Felling Licence approved.

The slightly scary harvester commenced its work in January and covered a surprisingly large area before stopping for bird nesting, with only extraction of that cut timber continuing. In this very short window much of the heathland restoration phase has been achieved. The far western slope, to make a heathland link down to the ponds, is yet to be finished, and a few large spruce and fir either too big or too close to the road to be felled by harvester are still to go, but the major part of the heathland work is done. Inevitably a few of the retained pines and birch subsequently succumbed to the strong winds, and others will most likely follow over time to different wind directions. But some young trees will be encouraged to take their place, and down in the valleys a more natural woodland will be allowed to regenerate.

Some of the proposed thinning works have taken place, for example in the old quarry area and behind Culpeppers Dish. Other thinnings are still to come, for example down the slopes from the quarry to Smokeham Bottom, round Allotments Plantation and in Culpeppers Dish itself. These further works will start in late August to take advantage of a hopefully a dry autumn. Critically we will then also move into the more delicate broadleaved woodland restoration phase, substantially, but not completely, extracting the coniferous element up slopes and over the heath. The brash has been left on the ground to lessen the impact of the activities and will be selectively cleared at the end of the whole operation.

Of course we recognise that there has been impact and disturbance, and that more is to come, and we are most grateful for the forbearance with which this has been received. Also much appreciated are the many kind words of support, which have made a journey not without administrative and practical humps and bumps, a nevertheless most rewarding experience.

Briantspuddle Community Group – Robert Beedle reported that due to a previous engagement the Community Group had been unable to make a presentation to the Annual Parish Meeting.

5. **Questions and Answers**

Leonora Shepherd asked whether the Bladen Social Club has submitted a report. Chairman, Sue Jones confirmed that no report had been received or any apologies given. She also confirmed that The Club had been informed about the meeting and invited to offer a report.

6. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business. Chairman, Sue Jones thanked Parishioners for attending the meeting.

The Meeting Closed at 8.10pm

DRAFT