

HPC Annual Report 2019/2020

This is the report for Holt Parish Council for the year April 2019 to March 2020. We have held 12 meetings which have been well attended by our councillors. At those meetings we have discussed a large variety of local subjects which are relevant to you, the Parishioners.

Through the year we welcomed 2 new Councillors, Richard Lonsdale from Furzehill and Andrew Wilson from Holt Wood. This now means that we have Councillors from all ends of the Parish to represent you all.

When the local District Councils were closed and one Dorset Council was set up we had a change of representative, we were sorry to lose Steve Butler our County representative along with our 3 East Dorset Councillors, all of whom had served us well for some years.

They were replaced by one representative, Councillor Robin Cook. We had not worked together before and we had to get used to each other, but Robin promised us that he would be there for us and attend our meetings. He has been true to his word and we thank him for his help and advice.

We have discussed 41 Planning applications of all types which then go forward to the planning department of Dorset Council for decisions.

There are always road issues including speeding and quantity of traffic and large inappropriate lorries. We spend many hours trying to find an answer to these problems. With this in mind we have set up a speed watch scheme under the supervision of Councillor Finney. Anyone can help with this, just give us your contact details. We also now have 2 speed indicator devices which can be sited in Broomhill, St James's School and Holt Lane.

There are ongoing problems with noisy cattle grids, dropped and blocked drains and crumbling road edges which have to be dealt with.

Councillor Frost keeps a close eye on the bridleways and footpaths; reporting fallen trees, unsafe bridges and waterlogged footpaths. She seems to know every footpath and bridleway in the Parish.

We had the opportunity to acquire two small pieces of land from East Dorset District Council before they disbanded. One of these was the Village Hall carpark which is now leased to the Hall Committee. The other was a small piece of woodland at the entrance to the fishing lakes in Holt Wood. We were unable to find a suitable leasing arrangement to suit both parties so we will keep it and maintain it.

The Parish continues to be proud of our outstanding local school, St James's. How lucky we are to have such a happy successful school for our children and grandchildren, even Great grandchildren. The Parish Council continues to support them where possible.

The Cemetery continues to be well maintained by Charlie Hiscock who looks after it beautifully. On a sunny day I don't think there is a cemetery prettier than ours. Visitors may notice that we have cleared the rabbit fencing and replaced the slabs making the right hand side tidier. Adrian Patterson is still our volunteer mole catcher doing an excellent job for which we thank him. Each year we do a safety check of the cemetery so if you see a flattened gravestone it will be because they are wobbly and require attention.

The new cemetery extension has been rolled and seeded and is now growing well as is the hedge.

The Village Green is well maintained by local contractor Limecove Ltd and again given a safety inspection each year. We still have the occasional problem of horses being put there but as the Green is National Trust property all we can do is report to them when this happens.

The Parish Hall of which we are trustees is running smoothly and becoming a far more viable concern, thanks largely to the efforts of Ann Korta and her committee. And we must thank Ann for continuing to run the Neighbourcare Car Scheme.

We were pleased to be able to nominate the Committee of Holt Village Hall for the Queen's award for Volunteers. The nomination is being duly considered and we will hear the result in early summer.

Councillor Wallace and I attend Dorset Association of Town and Parish Council meetings 4 times a year where we realise that most of the issues we have are shared by our neighbouring villages.

Councillors attend a variety of meetings and training sessions to try to keep up to date with a variety of matters.

Although we work quite hard on your behalf we would be lost without Lisa who is the fount of all knowledge and the glue which sticks us together. She is your first port of call for queries, complaints and hopefully praise. We all work well together and our meetings are very friendly.

I hope that this report gives you some idea of what we have been doing for the past year. We welcome you at any of our meetings if you have matters you wish to discuss. The meeting dates are always advertised in Village Voices and on our Holt Parish Council web-site.

Celia Moore