



Milborne Port

Annual Parish Report - April 2022

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Minutes of the Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Tuesday 26th April at 7 pm in the Village Hall.

Apologies were received from Karen Gough (Milborne Port in Bloom), Trish Foers (Tanners Café) and Will Mortimer (PCSO).

Cllr Tim Carty's proposal that the report of Annual Parish Meeting of 1st April 2021 be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting was seconded by Cllr. Robert Lockey and resolved by a majority of attendees. Cllrs. Carty and Lock gave their reports, followed by many representatives of local groups and organisations; written reports of those who attended (as well as those who were unable to attend) appear below.

Attendees made the following comments and observations at the end of the meeting:

- A resident expressed concerns about the poor condition of a Grade II listed building situated in the middle of the village; there has been communication with South Somerset District Council on the matter. Cllr. Carty will liaise with the Clerk regarding whether it is appropriate for the Parish Council to become involved.
- A resident expressed concern about the potential impact of an increased volume of traffic associated with housing developments on Kingsbury Bridge, also Grade II listed. Cllr. Carty explained that this issue regularly arises in council members' debates over planning applications but that this type of concern is unlikely to be a material consideration in SSDC's decision making process; where construction traffic is concerned, it might be a different matter.
- The Village Hall Committee would like the Parish Council to use the facility more often/regularly.
- The Editor of the Parish Magazine was thanked for her excellent work.
- Cllr. Lock thanked the Parochial Church Council for their support with the church paths project last year; she in turned thanked the Parish Council for their involvement.
- A resident enquired after the progress in planning to have the entrance to the allotments resurfaced. Cllr. Lock explained that there is still a plan to have not only the entrance but also the track and parking area resurfaced and that members of the Management Committee are working to this end; it has been proving very difficult to procure quotations from contractors.

The meeting finished at 8.50 pm.



Chairman's Report – Councillor Tim Carty

It has been a strange year for the Parish Council. From a practical perspective, we have continued to be affected by Covid. For the first part of the year, government guidelines indicated that councillors and the public should keep their distance, and as an employer we had a duty to protect our staff. However, the obvious solution of conducting business by Zoom was no longer available for any formal Council decisions, so we had at one point the curious convening of a Parish Council meeting in the car park of the Village Hall!

To further compound this, our previous Chairman, Austin Fletcher, had to stand down so he could focus on his work in the Covid front line, and no other councillor was in a position to be put forward until the Autumn. I would in particular like to thank Simon and Nathalie, our staff, for soldiering on and doing such excellent work in these doubly trying circumstances.

These challenges were increased by the discovery that the Town Hall roof was leaking and needed substantial repair at significant cost. Monies have been spent on the more predictable day-to-day running of the Parish Council but we have also begun the process of spending the so-called s.106 funds that arise from new housing developments within the Parish. The long-delayed project to convert the rugby pitch to football use at the Rec has now been completed. In the Summer of 2021, we installed a series of new pieces of equipment at the Gainsborough Play Area, an investment of some £25,000. In the 2022/23 year, we are looking to update the Play Area at the Recreation Ground. The Council is also working with the Playing Fields teams and South Somerset on a series of projects at the Rec, including an extension of the sports pavilion, new ball nets, a new storage building, and other infrastructure improvements.

Milborne Port continues to attract interest from developers. As South Somerset does not have a five-year housing supply, there is a general presumption to approve applications unless there are substantial planning reasons against a proposal. The Council's role is twofold in this – partly to ensure that inappropriate developments are challenged but also to seek to work with developers to see how their proposals could be improved and more closely reflect local concerns and needs. We currently have two significant applications pending in the Parish – for 58 houses at Wheathill Lane and 22 houses at Court Lane. We have been in contact with both applicants. Residents should also note that the Parish Council has no formal power over planning applications, as we are simply a consultee, but South Somerset have demonstrated a willingness to seek out local observations and concerns through us, which we welcome. Most recently, they have asked for our suggestions on what projects we might want to fund with s.106 monies from these applications should they go forward, and we have submitted suggestions pushing up to one million pounds in total (though we suspect we might not get all of that!)

In addition to these sizeable fundings beyond the precept, we have also sought small grants, particularly through South Somerset's Market Towns Investment Group and we have secured a number of these, with more in the pipeline. All of this helps us keep our precept relatively low, substantially below that of nearly all other Councils for similar size towns and parishes within the district, and the below inflation rise for 2022/23 further reflects this.

The last year saw the reintroduction of our speed indicator device, after two of our councillors passed the City and Guild qualification which enables them to be insured when they put it up. This is not a speed enforcement device, merely an encouragement to road

users to moderate their speed. First indications are that most take the hint, albeit one driver was still clocked at over 80 mph outside Ven House!

The Parish also took part in a trial whereby the verges to our roads in a number of village locations were left to grow, and the results were, so we understand, environmentally positive with improved insect life as a result.

We still await the implementation of approved adjustments to parking restrictions along the A30, and the pedestrian crossing point at the Crackmore Garage.

Potential initiatives for the future also include the resurrecting of the Neighbourhood Plan, which was placed on hold with the pandemic, and the possibility of a 'Multi-use, multi-access trail' between Milborne Port and Sherborne, avoiding the roads and in particular the dreaded Crackmore Rocks.

The Parish Meeting happens at the point we are having elections for the new Unitary Somerset County Council, which is the largest local government reorganization in Somerset for fifty years. There is a tremendous amount of work going on in the background but there was some concern that these changes, with the districts being removed, were being driven by the County and those towns with sufficient staff capacity to be involved. We have therefore sought to engage with the process, alongside Henstridge, so that a parish perspective can also be brought. It seems likely we will be in a South East Somerset 'Local Community Network' based around Wincanton, Bruton and Castle Cary, and we are participating in the steering group of their pilot around the theme of 'Wellbeing'.

We have a new Council with the first meeting on 10 May 2022. Councillors Philip Lock and Deborah Barsby are standing down and we wish both of them well. Phil has been an amazing supporter of the Council, diligently helping for many years and chairing the Management Committee; he has also helped champion the parish participation in South-West in Bloom, with notable success. Deborah has arguably been the most productive of all councillors, with a huge level of practical work especially around the maintenance of our footpaths. We are extremely grateful for all their hard work, wisdom, and support. We welcome Chris Phillips and Richard Warren as new councillors onto the Council. There remain four open seats available and we would be delighted to talk through what would be involved were any resident willing to consider putting themselves forward for co-opting.

Many thanks.



Management Committee Report – Chairman, Councillor Philip Lock

May I begin this report by expressing my thanks, on behalf of the Parish Council, to the volunteers who have worked so hard to keep our open spaces in such good order over the last year.

Neil Spencer, for his work at the community woodland. I would encourage everyone to take a walk through the Copse to see how the trees continue to mature and how they are now starting to weaken the grass growth to form a true woodland environment.

Val Mead and Dereck for their work in the cemetery; the copse of native tree species is starting to become established, yellow rattle has been sown between the trees to try and control the grass growth and allow other species to grow. They have also planted shrubs and border plants to add colour. The Parish Council bought a new lawn mower for use at the church and the old mower is available in the cemetery to maintain specific areas of the cemetery such as the cremated remains area.

Clive Laughton and Karen Gough, who have looked after the Crackmore bus stop and its surroundings and the plants in the telephone kiosk near the Co-op. Karen has also supported our efforts in the RHS South-West in Bloom competition by running our Facebook page; our efforts resulted in the village receiving a silver guilt award. Clive worked to replace the broken bench by the bus stop, sponsored by the WI.

Ailsa and John Taylor, who have transformed the Ball Court to a high level of horticultural achievement with so much new planting and the colourful planters.

Judith and Martin Lazell, who have made the Grove Garden such an interesting and pleasant place to meet friends outdoors. During the lock-downs, extra chairs arrived to allow small groups to meet at safe distance. The flower beds are still works in progress but more variety is being introduced as the seasons allow.

Debbie Barsby, who as a council member has taken on responsibility for the parish foot paths. Debbie has developed a good relationship with the county council and has worked hard to report defects and work with local landowners to ensure that paths are kept clear and safe to use.

The PCC, whose volunteers have worked with the council to keep our church yard in good order. The council has shared the cost of the phase 2 improvement of the church paths and commissioned some major tree surgery to reduce the risk to adjacent buildings.

The SSDC Ranger, Martin, who brings to the village the full support of the District Council to help maintain our village. He works under the direction of our Parish Clerk on a whole range of tasks associated with all our open spaces.

Thanks should also go to the **Planning and Environment Committee**. Their efforts to secure S106 money resulting from the new housing in the village has enabled us to improve the play areas and sports field.

Other achievements for this year: The Town Hall clock mechanism has been replaced and the clock face re-gilded. The repairs to the leaking Town Hall roof have been completed to the required Grade II listed building standard. Major tree surgery has been completed at the allotments to reduce the height and spread of the hedge rows.

Next year's projects: It is planned to paint the Town Hall exterior windows and of course make good the woodwork and undertake some limited interior decoration. The Cemetery Chapel needs work to cure a leaking roof and improve the insulation of the building. The chapel houses the village historical artefacts including some unique documents which require a good dry atmosphere. Last year the clerk commissioned a full survey of the trees owned by the Parish. There will be an ongoing need for tree surgeons to be employed to keep the trees in a safe condition

Reports from Local Groups and Organisations



Village Hall – James Crow, Acting Chairperson of Management Committee, for and on behalf of The Trustees of the Milborne Port Village Hall Charitable Trust

You may remember that lockdown restrictions were slowly eased from April 2021 until we were finally released in July. At the Village Hall we did our best to navigate all the many rule changes allowing groups back when we thought they were allowed to. But the path was a legal quagmire. Fortunately, we had weekly online Zoom sessions with the Dorset Community Association which ensured that the Hall's Management Team could react quickly to the opportunities that were presented.

The first group started back on 21st April and then the numbers gradually increased until all were back by July. We did lose a few groups but we gained others instead, including the Parish Council, for whom the Covid regulations meant that they could not meet in the Town Hall.

In April 2021, we had a presentation from Lyn Harrison about the possibility of putting a defibrillator on the outside of the Village Hall. She told us about the successful campaign to raise money to have several of these in the village and the details of how they were to be put up and maintained. The Committee agreed to allow this to happen, and it was fitted in June. We also agreed to offer the Hall for CPR training to provide people with knowledge of how to help people in an emergency if the defibrillator was not immediately accessible. We have offered the facilities for similar courses to be run at no cost to the participants, or the organiser.

The Committee also agreed for a Projector Screen to be fitted above the stage; it will be used for presentations, films and hopefully the streaming of concerts in the not-too-distant future.

During the pandemic we were very fortunate to receive money from the government which allowed us to help our users with a substantial discount scheme when they started using the Hall again. In return, we asked for a poster or editorial content to use in local publications. This assistance meant that from April until October 2021, all hire fees were reduced by 90%. In November the hire fees were reduced by 50% and December by 25%.

In October we welcomed the One Off Comedy Club to the Hall with an evening of live comedy, which was sold out. A number of villagers asked that we arrange a speedy return, which we managed to do on 26th March this year. It was another sell-out, with 200 'bums on seats', really testing our volunteer Management Committee!

We have also been consulting with two members of the Village who need to use hearing aids. As a direct result of their guidance and support, we are very pleased to report that Moviola (our Cinema night that runs from September until April) relaunched after Covid with the Hearing Induction loop in the Main Hall connected to the Moviola audio equipment, so that

personal hearing support devices can now receive the audio track of the film from the induction loop.

We have also started a project to upgrade the ladies' toilets and increase the number available in line, along the guidelines for Halls, so that we can host larger events such as wedding receptions more easily.

Talking about weddings... We have had more requests for wedding receptions, so we are in the process of putting together a wedding package for such enquiries. As the largest venue in the Village with two halls, a modern kitchen and a large car park, we could be hosting many more wedding receptions in the future, so we need to be prepared.

We also are fortunate to have a large south facing roof, so we are investigating the possibility of putting solar panels up and reducing our electricity bills while helping the planet.

A special thanks must go to our hard-working cleaning team, Michelle Cullen and Bernie Girling. We have been able to maintain a very safe environment here during the pandemic because of their flexibility in dealing with the ever-changing demands made of the Hall.

As Milborne Port has grown, the demands made of the Village Hall have changed. We are fortunate that the designers and original committee of villagers had the foresight to provide a futuristic facility which, nearly 40 years down the road, is proving that it can cope with the more modern demands now made of it.

The four Hall Trustees are the people who are legally responsible for the venue and its facilities; they are supported by a small group of Villagers who meet monthly with the Trustees. Working together, the two distinct groups form a Management Committee which aims to provide the 'Complete Venue', not only for the extensive present customer base but also for future events that could be expected within our community here in Milborne Port.

I am proud to be Chair of our hard-working, future-focused team of volunteers who give up so much of their free time without credit. Hopefully this report gives them that credit.

Milborne Port Parish Magazine - Linda Mumford

The Milborne Port Magazine aims to reflect all the activities and interests within the village, and we are very grateful to all those people who send us regular or occasional contributions. The Parish Council always provides the latest news of developments and initiatives in Milborne Port, clubs and societies send in reports of their recent activities and forthcoming events and individuals supply all sorts of intriguing contributions, which we hope all make for an interesting read each month.

The magazine also retains its role as a traditional 'parish' magazine, with details of all church services and events and a message from the vicar to open each issue. As everyone is aware, our Vicar, Rev Sarah Godfrey, left for pastures new in September 2021. We are very grateful to our Church Wardens and retired clergy, not only for keeping everything in the church going, but for keeping the magazine information up-to-date; they have also written the

introductory letters, which has given us an interesting variety of viewpoints and ensured that villagers are kept up to date on the progress of our quest for a new priest and a new vicarage. We are also very grateful to our advertisers, who provide a really useful guide to the services available within the village and the local area. Their support has enabled us to keep the price of the magazine at 45p monthly. Surplus income is regularly donated to charity and this year we have supported the DEC Ukraine appeal, SoMP, St John's Church, Milborne Port Foodshare and funded the cash prize for the church Annual Draw. The cover photographs, offered by Milborne Port residents, are compiled into a calendar at the end of the year and these have proved popular. A loyal team of distributors deliver the magazine to around 600 homes each month. To subscribe, contribute or to send photographs, contact magazine@milborneportchurches.org.uk

Milborne Port Opera - Linda Mumford



A year ago, Milborne Port Opera was in suspended animation due to the pandemic. Since then, we are so happy that we have been able to put on two shows at the Village Hall. In September 2021, we performed a concert version of the show which had to be cancelled in 2020, *The Arcadians*. Still socially distanced, we were able to adapt the show through a mixture of narration, dialogue and of course music, and it went down very well with our audience on the single performance.

Immediately, we moved on to rehearsing our major show for the year, *The Merry Widow*. This was performed in April 2022 and to our relief, we were able to mount a fully staged performance again, despite a rehearsal period which was quite severely disrupted due to Covid. Leading roles were taken by Jessie Stones (Copper), who grew up in Milborne Port and has been a member of the group since her early teens, James Craw and Rachel Milestone-McAdorey, who both live in Milborne Port. We are proud that, while members come from across a wide area, Milborne Port residents are still at the core. This season we were unable to rehearse in the village, again due to Covid restrictions at the Primary School, and had to relocate but we certainly hope to return to the school when they are prepared to accept outside bookings again. As always, we are very grateful to the Village Hall team for their unflinching support.

Foodshare Milborne Port – Elaine Ennis

The Foodshare project launched in June 2021, although planning had taken place for some months prior to this. It is a partnership between local volunteers, the Co-op supermarket on Gainsborough and Church House Trustees. We are based in Church House where we have a designated storage room and we distribute food on Thursday afternoons between 1.30 and 3.00 pm, having collected donations from the Co-op on the previous three evenings.

The aim of the project is to avoid food waste by distributing food which is still good to eat and also to help local people extend their food budgets a bit further. We are always busy on Thursday afternoons and have noticed an increase in customers as food and fuel bills continue to rise. Unlike a Food Bank, we do not require referrals from GPs or Health Visitors.

We are very grateful that so many local organisations gave us equipment or grants to start the project including the Parish Council, the WI, the Milborne Port Magazine Committee, the

Parochial Church Council, Somerset County Council, Spark Somerset and local individual donors. The congregation of St John's are particularly generous in donating ambient food and toiletries each week; this is important because items such as toothpaste and period products are not donated from other sources.

We benefited from the County Council pandemic funding in that for a few months we were able to get tinned and dried food and frozen meals from a project in Glastonbury. Sadly, this funding has ceased. We are now looking for other possibilities for food donations to supplement what we receive from the Co-op and St John's. We expect that more people will be approaching the project as the year progresses and household budgets are squeezed further. We would be delighted to accept food donations and can arrange collection. The contact email is foodshareadmin@milborneportchurches.org.uk.

Milborne Port Football Club – Rob Lockey



Although the season started off badly due to losing one of our adult teams, we have had a pretty successful season. Our Reserve Team were promoted to Division 1 of the Dorset League and it has been a season of building and improving over the season. Our A Team have done very well, coming second in their league and are due to play in their league cup final in a couple of weeks.

Our Under 14s, after winning their league last season, are in their Cup Final in a couple of weeks. Our Under 15s are currently second in their league with four games remaining. Our Under 16s, after winning the league last season are going to finish in mid-table and made it through to their Cup semi-finals.

We have welcomed new children into an Under 6s group this season, in addition to our existing Under 8s, Under 10s, Under 11s and Under 12s. We have also had a season of Veterans football, with Over 35s taking part in the Somerset FA Legends League.

Looking to next season, we hope to have 3 adult teams, 1 Legends team, two youth teams and U7, U8, U9, U11 and U12 children's teams.

Football continues to be a major activity in Milborne Port and we hope to add Walking Football and Women's football in the near future.

Milborne Port History and Heritage Group – Lyn Harrison, Secretary



We have been able to hold a full set of meetings since last year, despite a speaker cancellation through Covid, although we are very fortunate to have some talented members who were able to step into the breach at short notice. We regularly have 40 – 50 people attending the talks; all are very welcome, attendance is not restricted to members.

It is our intention to open the Museum on Sunday afternoons during the summer months. A lot of work has gone into the displays in the Museum but we are always grateful to receive any suggestions as to what you would like us to cover; it is the village's museum and your history and heritage which we are working hard to preserve. If you have any items that you would like to loan/donate to the Museum, please do contact us either via Facebook or via email at mphhgroup@gmail.com. We are always grateful for material to be put on the website or in the museum.

Our thanks must go to everyone that supports us in anyway and particularly the Parish Council agreeing to us continuing to use the chapel as our Museum.

After two very successful walks on Easter Monday we are looking to do more during the summer. We also have arranged some visits to places of interest such as Ven House Garden and Shaftesbury Abbey. Keep an eye on the website and Facebook page for more details.

Our website is taking shape! It is a valuable resource for village history, oral history and what is happening within the group so please do visit it: www.milborneporthistory.org.uk; we are very grateful to everyone that has provided material for it.

The accreditation application for the Museum is still ongoing; it is a very long (possibly up to three years) and complicated process.

As we are now a registered charity, we can apply to claim Gift Aid on any donations received. Our application is with HMRC, another long-winded process!

Keep an eye on what we are doing; we are sure that you will find something of interest to you.



Milborne Port Women's Institute – Jan Smith, President

The last twelve months have been a difficult period again. For the first few months we were not able to meet at all and a number of our members were reluctant to come back into a crowd of people once we could meet.

However, after August we were able to meet on a regular basis and we have in the last six months been able to have meetings and have had a number of speakers giving us interesting and educational talks. Gradually our members are coming back as confidence builds with our ability to give some social distancing and space.

Our President and two other committee members resigned in March and we have had to reform and develop a suitable programme of activities and speakers to fit in with our budget and with what members are looking for in their WI. We have an AGM in May and a new committee will be formally elected, but we are already well on with a programme that is starting to show results. We are looking forward to a good year ahead in some degree of normality and looking forward to adding more members to our group.

The WI-run Craft group seems to go from strength to strength, maintaining its numbers and making some wonderful craft for both for themselves and for the village, whilst enjoying each other's company. The group provides a good and successful centre for craft making in the village. As a WI group we are hoping, in the future, to run courses and opportunities for all members of the village to join in with. These will all be in our programme as we move towards 2023.

Our coffee mornings have resumed and we have the usual steady flow of community members coming in. The morning offers a focus for those living on their own to meet and share each other's company for a short while. It is also a good opportunity for our members to socialise with each other and enjoy a little laughter. It is hoped we will build on this need for a little laughter and fun with some interesting and informative matter.

St John's Church House – Trevor John, Chairman, Church House Management Committee



As COVID-19 restrictions ease, we have seen a welcome increased use of Church House by our regular users and we are now approaching pre-pandemic booking levels. We also have had a good number of private parties and other events. We still encourage users to take whatever precautions are necessary to minimise the risk and spread of COVID-19 but hopefully the situation will continue to improve over the coming year and this will bring the use

of Church House back to full normality. The Foodshare group is now using Church House regularly for food storage and distribution and this is providing a useful service to the local community and has been a real success over the past year.

One of the general maintenance activities that we have undertaken has been the painting of the exterior gable ends woodwork. We have also had some tree surgery done to remove trees that were overhanging neighbouring properties and this work has allowed more natural light into the main hall; we continue to make improvements to the garden and grounds. We are now planning to provide a defibrillator which will be attached to the exterior of the building.

ReBorne Community Church – Yvonne Bright



One Church 2 locations
Sherborne & Milborne Port
ReBorne Community Church
Registered Charity no. 1189540 operating as a CIO

ReBorne Community Church would like to thank the community for their support in completing questionnaires as part of our consultation.

We were thrilled to receive planning permission within 4 weeks for the renovation of the building and we thank members of the Parish Council for their support as we move toward this being used as a community hub. We are now in the finance stage and our Project Manager Tom Roberts has completed the funding bid document and this is out to financiers at this time. We will keep the community posted with progress.

Toddler Group continues on a Monday afternoon 1.30-3 pm with good attendance; it runs in term time but we use the holidays to meet together in the lovely parks of Milborne Port. As children leave to go to school this year, we are thrilled to see new babies being born and coming along with their mums.

ReBorne is open Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at the moment for coffee/tea and teacakes 8.30-10 am – come along and join us.

The Easter holidays saw us run a Kids' Club two mornings in the first week; this was lots of fun and had good attendance.

We intend to increase our children and youth activities in the second half of this year; we would like to have a Kids' Club weekly and dream of a safe hang-out space for the youth of Milborne Port.

Church activities continue with a weekly group on a Wednesday morning 10.30 am-12 noon; this is called a Life Group.

Our Sunday services are held in new Digby Hall in Sherborne as we have a growing congregation. Everyone is welcome. As a Church we support the local foodbanks and CAP (Christians Against Poverty) and we want to be here to support the local community in Milborne Port.



Milborne Port Climate and Nature Action Group – Sarah Warren

The aim of our group is to promote Climate and Nature Action in the village through our activities, and via magazine and web-site articles, by providing information on the urgency of both climate and nature action and how we can each help.

Climate

We have held **online and real climate strikes**, supporting the young people's movement, Fridays for Future. To coincide with the COP26 UN Climate Summit happening in Glasgow last year, Oxfam and its partners organised a virtual World Climate March, asking young people and adults all around the world to walk 1.5km in their communities or schools, in a march for climate justice; we participated, sending a video and photos (expertly taken as ever by the Webbers) of our 1.5 km march in Milborne Port (1.5 reflecting the need to keep global warming within 1.5⁰ C). Some of us also attended the COP 26 rally in Bristol last autumn and the Sherborne Quakers' vigil for climate justice outside the Abbey mid-April.

Milborne Port and Sherborne Solar Streets: We launched this scheme last May; it is still running and we continue to promote it; it provides a more affordable way for residents and businesses within our community (**including** surrounding villages) to buy solar panels, helping in the fight against climate change by providing clean, green renewable electricity, whilst generating funds for local projects with every installation.

Thermal imaging: We borrowed a thermal imaging camera from the District Council for a week last winter and organized a programme to help those interested identify whether and where their homes needed improved insulation; as one person put it, "I don't want to be centrally heating my garden!" A lot of money and energy can be wasted from a poorly insulated house; knowing where it's leaking is a great start and extra insulation also reduces air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Nature

We extended the length of **native hedge** on farmland adjoining the recreation ground with further planting last autumn and looked after the previous year's planting during the growing season. We helped with the **management** of the school's Wheathill Meadow, East Hill and with other local EUCAN conservation tasks at Alners Gorse and more recently Osborne chapel. We provided support and advice to the PCC on management to help wildlife in the churchyard. We are **generally promoting management** of verges and grassland that is more sympathetic to biodiversity – basically, cutting and collecting clippings at all times (which gradually reduces both fertility and the frequency of mowing, allowing more time for plants to flower whilst saving fuel, pollution, climate change and money), and preferably also leaving grassland uncut through the spring and summer, or at the least having a No-Mow May. This is because biodiversity is not a luxury, it is essential.

We also carried out a PTES hedgerow survey on the eastern side of the village with a view to helping the landowners decide where and how to enhance their management for wildlife.

South-West in Bloom Care for the environment is an important issue and the RHS judges look for evidence of positive action in our village so we attended on judging day to answer the judge's questions on the initiatives taking place in the village to help wildlife.

Litter picking- we litter picked almost the whole length of the road to Charlton Horethorne in the winter.

Village Defibrillators – Lyn Harrison

Since the last Parish meeting, I am pleased to say that three defibrillators have been installed in the village and I understand that two more are in the pipeline.

The three that are currently in situ are at the Doctors' Surgery at Gainsborough, at the Village Hall, Springfield Road adjacent to the sports field and outside the Town Hall.

The two others that are proposed are at the cemetery and Church House in Bathwell. So, as you can see, our village will be well covered.

I would like to thank everyone involved in this project, especially the WI, the Commonalty, the Spirit of Milborne Port, the Parish Council and everyone who donated to this very worthwhile venture.

Milborne Port in Bloom Group 2022 – Karen Gough

In 2021 we were able to enter the South-West in Bloom. The judge made a special mention of the Ball Court, Grove Garden, Cemetery and Pud Brook. He was very interested to hear from the Primary school children at the Wheathill Wildflower meadow. At the bus shelter by the garage, he was very taken with the murals and the meaning of them, and the replacement seat that had been erected with financial help from the WI and volunteers Philip and Clive constructing and fixing it. He remarked on the strong sense of community in the village, evidenced by the people he met along the route that give their time keeping their respective areas looking so good. The result of our efforts was a Silver Gilt in the Cox Cup.

In October I was asked by the Blackmore Vale magazine to write a feature and submit some

photographs about what we do as a group; I did hope this would encourage more people to volunteer to help keep this ever-expanding village looking good, but sadly not.

The Bloom Group (myself and Clive Laughton), joined forces with the Spirit of Milborne Port to repaint the phone box by the Co-op, adding some planting boxes and plants. The Co-op very kindly donated money towards this community project.

Sadly, this year we have decided not to enter; it is a big commitment by the small group of Volunteers and an impossible task to keep every area of the village to the standard expected of the South-West in Bloom. However, the group have decided to endeavour to keep their respective areas looking good.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Philip Lock and all the volunteers, who give up their free time to make Milborne Port a nice area to live.

Friends of Milborne Port Library – Rick Jones

In 2010, The Friends of Milborne Port Library (FoMPL) formed in protest against the planned closure of Milborne Port and 10 other Somerset Libraries. We succeeded in keeping all Libraries open. In 2018, Thirteen County Libraries were moved into Community Library Partnerships. FOMPL became a registered Charity, so we could undertake the village part of the partnership, Somerset County Council being the other party. The county passed various costs down to village level: staff and building costs being 2 major ones.

The current situation: Under the Partnership the County has given the Friends an outgoing mobile Library as a temporary Library, whilst awaiting the build of a Community Hub. It is parked in East Street car park, manned by County Library staff and the vehicle maintained by the Friends, currently numbering 8 and helped by 8 volunteer Cleaners.

Future: The build of the Community Hub is a Parish Council Initiative, to be rented to the PC under a peppercorn rent but built and owned by a property developer as part of approval for a housing estate adjacent to Wheathill Way. Administration of this Building is being organised by the PC, Friends and History & Heritage, who plan to run the hub as a library while displaying village artifacts.

We keep the whole community informed via a monthly report in the monthly Village Magazine, on the village website (www.milborneport.org.uk), on Notice Boards, Facebook and in the Library.

Thank you again for your support

Tanners Café – Trish Foers

I run Tanners Café with Sally Oxford, one of the Health Coaches based at the GP surgery. I am based at the Balsam Centre in Wincanton, and our financial support and resources are obtained through the Balsam Centre.

We meet most Thursday mornings and provide the opportunity for people to meet socially. Some are encouraged to attend as they may be lonely or socially isolated, or a variety of reasons; others come along as they enjoy the varied programme of activities and the chance

to catch up with friends over a cuppa. This is an open group for anyone of 18 years plus to attend.

We have recently changed our venue to the Community Hall attached to Wheathill Close. *Abri* are happy for us to use the resources there if residents from the local housing also join us. Early days yet but a couple of people from Wheathill Close are attending.

We have 12 on our books; numbers fluctuate a little and fees are kept to a minimum. Until recently we've managed to meet weekly but high Covid numbers locally has recently necessitated a break.

We've been able to meet inside from September and during last Summer met on the Rec, to give our group an opportunity to continue to meet. We continue to observe some Covid precautions as our members are generally older and therefore more vulnerable.

We would both like to see the group expand, so would be grateful if you could update other community groups in Milborne Port, and they could perhaps spread the word. If anyone is interested in joining please encourage them to come along on a Thursday morning from 10.30 – 12.00, or contact Sally at the surgery.

Tuesday Luncheon Club – Maureen Lock and Sue Scott

The Tuesday Luncheon Club resumed their meetings at the beginning of October 2021. The membership had decreased due to age and illness and sadly some of our older members had died. Everyone was very happy to be back at Church House to meet up with old friends and enjoy the lunches. We managed to have a Christmas Party without our usual guests and carols sung by our primary school pupils. Despite Covid restrictions it was a very happy occasion.

We have continued our meetings this year and are slowly welcoming new members. Some of our long serving helpers are retiring in July and we are looking for new volunteers. Despite delivering flyers and putting posters around the village, we have had only one offer of help. The lunch club provides a valuable service and meeting place for the over 65 age group of the village. We hope we will not have to close.