



# Sutton Poyntz Society

## Chairman's Report – 2016 - 2017

I am pleased to present to you my Annual Report under the second year of my Chairmanship. This has been a busy year for the Society with the commencement of work on the Neighbourhood Plan and the setting up of a Steering Group to undertake its preparation. The Society's application to become the Neighbourhood Forum for Sutton Poyntz was approved by Weymouth and Portland Council last September. In addition the Steering Group have appointed planning consultants and it is hoped that by the summer of 2018 the village will be able to put forward a final draft plan. There will be a more in-depth update on Neighbourhood Planning later in the evening.

### Committee membership

There have been some changes to the committee during the year. Due to her move from the village Jacqui Atkinson has retired and tonight John Sutherland is retiring as Treasurer and as a member of the committee, he was secretary for ten years and has been our treasurer since 2015. I would like to take the opportunity to thank both Jacqui and John for their input over the years. Jacqui was the inspiration for the last two summer Pimms evenings and John in both his roles carried out his duties in an exemplary manner. We welcomed two new members to the committee: Jill Kelsey and Jackie Greet, they are already taking a very active part as the Society moves forward. My own role as Chairman will complete its three-year term in April 2018.

### Planning matters

The Society puts in representations on all applications in accordance with its very clear planning policy. In respect of the planning application for houses outside the development boundary the application for Plaisters Lane made last year was turned down by the Inspector and as a result the subsequent applications for this land have been withdrawn. The desk top exercise undertaken by the Borough Council - the "Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment" - has indicated that a small development of six dwellings would be appropriate on the field next to the Springhead. Public House. The Society has made a representation on the grounds that this assessment of potential suitability directly contradicts the Society's and the Borough's planning policy and could result in loss or partial loss of one of the important views from the village. We have also responded to The Local Plan Review that is being undertaken considering the question posed within the documentation all in accordance with the Society's current planning guidance.

### Neighbourhood Plan

The developments in local planning policy give impetus to the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan which will set out in planning policy terms the long term vision for the village, including how much development we should have and of what type – and, of course, where. It will also bring together issues raised by residents and list action points as to how these can be progressed outside of the Neighbourhood Planning Process.

We really need the help of the villagers. It is not going to be possible for just the members of the Steering committee to undertake all the work required. The Steering Committee has identified a number of interest areas which need research and evidence gathering. These are at present but subject to review:-

**Transport, housing and planning, land use and conservation, biodiversity and the natural environment, business, tourism and employment, heritage, sport and recreation, renewable energy, IT and communications.**

Anyone with an interest, or expertise in any of these subject areas would be most welcome to join in on the work that will be progressed over the coming months. Please do become involved with this important work for the long term benefit of Sutton Poyntz.

## **Areas of Progress**

### **Top of the Pond car park**

Following a challenge on ownership the Land Registry have confirmed that the land is fully owned by Sutton Poyntz Ltd. There are some areas of potential further work to undertake including the work to alleviate flooding however the area with its notice board and planters is looking well-kept and the family of John and Lesley Wilson who donated funds for the new notice board have been very pleased with the scheme.

### **Defibrillator**

We are grateful to our committee member Jez Cunningham for spotting the opportunity to obtain at no cost a Defibrillator for the village and this is in the process of being installed at the village pub. Training sessions for its use are already being given. The Society will be making a donation to the British Heart Foundation which donated the defibrillator.

### **Bus Service**

I and Bill Egerton met with First Bus regarding proposed changes to the village bus service and although we are suffering a further reduction in service it is being retained at least for the time being. Unfortunately use on the service is low so we are not in a strong position when arguing for its retention. On a positive note there will be a new service on the main road from the Spice Ship direct to Dorchester via Crossways.

### **The Village Pond**

We held our annual clean up in March with many thanks to the villagers that took part.

## **Events**

There were many social events in the village during the year organised by The Society. These included a vegetable show, history evenings, a cream tea, a summer walk, coffee mornings and a Pimms and Ploughmans afternoon. Committee member Chris Balfe and the members of his artisan baking group raised funds for homeless charities and gained publicity for the village with local television news coverage of their activities. Other organisations were equally active resulting in the village having a strong social life.

## **Forthcoming events**

There will be a number of events over the summer, including new summer coffee mornings being organised outside the Society and all these activities will be circulated by Newsbites – if you are not receiving these please let us have your email address so that you stay informed. Chris Hubbard our noteworthy scribe is the man to contact [chubbard80@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:chubbard80@tiscali.co.uk) – don't miss his enjoyable updates.

## **Other Issues**

There are still a few which I report on briefly here:

- Lids for the rubbish bins around the pond, this has still not been resolved we are currently investigating a method to secure them.
- Dog bins – The Dorset Waste Partnership have been approached and they are not prepared to provide or empty additional bins, they have requested dog owner's bag the waste and dispose of it in their own rubbish bins at home.
- Increase in dog fouling– may I remind all dog owners that by law you are obliged to bag and bin it wherever you are walking in and around the village including on the fields and hills – this is still a problem
- History Board – we are looking to replace the original board shortly.

Mike Blee

Chairman April 2017.