

## **Notes of Parish Assembly (Public Meeting), held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

**Attendance.** Approximately 30 parishioners including all parish council members and the Clerk.

Parish Council Chairman Cllr Paul Thimont was in attendance and took the role of Chair for the meeting.

Cllr Thimont welcomed all to the meeting and explained the proceeding for the meeting.

Cllr Thimont expressed his sad thoughts at the passing of Bob Ayres. Bob was a well-known pillar of the community and ever present in the lives of the community and the whole village.

### **Emergency Planning**

Presentation from Nigel Osborne from the Emergency Planning and Resilience Team at Dorset Council. (Slides are available from the parish clerk.)

Nigel gave a lively and interesting presentation on how communities can come together to create Emergency Plans for their communities. Details were provided on how to prepare for emergencies including the creation of an Emergency Grab Bag and a Home Emergency Action Plan (HEAP). Nigel provided information on how the village can set up a Community Emergency Response Plan (CERP) that will list information on who does what in an emergency: what?, when?, why?, how? And with what?.

Nigel then answered a variety of interesting queries and gave further information on emergency planning. Details can be found at [www.dorsetprepared.org.uk](http://www.dorsetprepared.org.uk) or [www.gov.uk/prepare](http://www.gov.uk/prepare)

In her role as Climate/Resilience Portfolio holder for the parish council, Cllr Martine Simmonds will be looking into the possible creation of a CERP with the help of other willing villagers. If you are interested in helping Cllr Simmonds, please contact her at [martinesimmondssgpc@gmail.com](mailto:martinesimmondssgpc@gmail.com)

### **St Martin's Church**

Presentation from Helen Fry.

Helen explained that the church is cared for by volunteers. She mentioned that the church yard is currently a wonderful wildlife haven, and they are working with Dorset Wildlife Trust.

There will be a Bell Sunday Service on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2025 celebrating everything to do with bells and bellringing. The enthusiastic team practices regularly and has made lots of progress since setting up for Ring for the King for the coronation.

The church is a Grade 2\* listed building which means there are a great many rules and regulations around the maintenance of it. Because it is a historic building there are many tricky issues to tackle which will cost many thousands of pounds. The priority is to keep the building safe for those who need it, and this is where we appeal to the community to help look after it.

There is a new Rector, Andrew, who has taken over the parish last year and he is currently reviewing the pattern of services.

A question was asked as to whether the church tower could hold a mobile phone mast as the tallest building in the village. Helen explained that it is the role of the Advisory Committee at the Salisbury Diocese and suggested that she will be able to take the question back to the Diocese in May where she will investigate further. It was also noted that this has been explored previously and there were issues which prevented it. However, the question will be raised again.

### **New In Support Limited (NISL)**

Presentation from Graeme Foster.

Graham gave a short presentation including the following topics:

What is the NISL purpose?

NISL and Tenancy need to ensure that the pub is popular, viable and a welcoming place for customers, meeting the needs and requirements of villagers and guests. Need to engage with villagers via regular communication and events to ensure sufficient footfall which will then retain and gain profitability through the serving of food, beverages, and accommodation.

Current Status. Current tenant Andrea will be leaving on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025. NISL are actively recruiting a tenant to run the pub on their and the villages behalf. They are using the trade website Find My Pub to advertise. Many applications have been received so far and a couple of successful leads. NISL is using a recognised competency based recruitment process.

The pub needs a great tenant, who is able to communicate through websites/social media and needs to also attract seasonal tourism, support from villagers and be able to provide good quality food and drinks at market prices. Regular relevant events are also needed. Accommodation in the pub needs to be better advertised for greater revenue. All this is required to ensure a viable pub for the future of the village.

What is new? Revitalisation of the FONIS – Friends of New Inn Support – hopefully, the rest of the village coming together to support the pub at different levels, be that gardening, repairing fixtures and fittings, painting etc.

2025 events

26<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - Skalatans, Bridport based SKA band. If the pub is still not open on this date, the village hall has been booked as an alternative venue to ensure this event goes ahead.

16<sup>th</sup> August 2025 – Music event with a group of great musicians playing music you will all love.

Keep an eye on the village website for confirmation of these two events and hopefully more to come.

### **The Village Society**

Presentation from Graham Garner.

Graham thanked the parish council for inviting him to talk to the parish assembly.

Personally, Graham is honoured to live in Shipton and represent the Village Society. They are a committee of six and as other organisations, they always wish that they could do more. Planned activities include Bingo evenings, Quiz evenings and Horse Race nights. The Society also provides the Christmas tree for the pub and set it up with lights and decorations. The main event that brings all together is the village fete. Everybody gets involved to ensure that this continues for the future. The village society are willing to provide any assistance to any organisation in the village that might need help in keeping up a level of activities that makes the village so vibrant.

Finally, Graham stated that he believed these meetings are essential part of communicating to others what goes on behind the scenes. Who knows, new members may be encouraged to come forward and help to continue keeping our village such a special place to live in.

### **Notice of Mrs Beryl Wood bequests to village organisations.**

Graham Garner announced that John and Sue Porter had asked him to read a message to the assembly on behalf of the family of Mrs Beryl Wood.

Graham read from the message that it was with great sadness to those who know Mrs Wood that she passed away on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at St James Nursing Home in Bradpole. Beryl and her husband Freddie moved to the village in the early 1970's and quickly became involved in village life. Freddie was a founding member of the village hall/society. He was supported by Beryl as secretary for a number of years. She was always interested in what was happening in the village, even when she moved to the care home. Previously, when advised that the pub carpark need to be resurfaced, she made a donation to enable it to be done. In her will, and with the permission of the family, we can announce that she has left donations to the Village Hall, Village Society and NISL of £10,000 each. The funds will be available to the organisations following probate. Beryl and friends used to really enjoy themselves in

the New Inn when attending the Senior Citizen meals on a Thursday evening. Funeral arrangements are not known at the present time but will be advised when the family have sorted them. Any query on the content of this message, please direct it to John Porter at 3 Rockway.

## **The Village Hall**

Presentation from Village Hall Treasurer Julie Bartram-Lang.

The village hall is now being used very well, there are increasingly fewer sessions available to book. The hall's use is made up from various weekly sessions including table tennis, dog training, yoga, circle dancing, monthly use by breakfast church, all this as well as the additional regular meetings of the village organisations and the staging of village events. Regular private hire parties and get togethers such as elections also contribute to its use.

Once again, the hall was very pleased to combine with Artsreach and provide three events, one in December 2024 and two in February 2025. Two of the performances comprised folk music duos playing spellbinding music of the highest quality to a packed audience and the third was by a performer who entertained a packed and appreciative audience.

Throughout 2024 the trustees have continued to work on developing plans to ensure that the hall's facilities are brought up to the date and crucially that they are accessible by all. 2023 saw the committee spending time formulating design options, so that by 2024 they were able to apply to Dorset Council for planning approval. Following a bat survey, where none were found, permission was granted. In September 2024 they applied to the Lottery Community Fund for a grant and in November were delighted to receive a grant of £20,000. In December they commissioned an asbestos management survey, and it was confirmed that there is low risk asbestos present. In March, Dorset Council Building Control accepted their application, and the main drawing is on the wall here in the hall. Requirements also include having a fire alarm fitted and provision of emergency lighting. To date, six local building companies have been approached to carry out the project and three are currently preparing estimates for the work. They will soon know if they have sufficient funds to do the work, however, with the extra £10,000 from Mrs Beryl Wood it should not be long before work can begin. Work is likely to commence late summer, early autumn and for this a bird survey may be required as well because if there is a possibility of any birds nesting within three metres radius of the work you have to have a bird survey. Another more intensive survey will be required to check for asbestos in wall cavities. It will be a great accomplishment to complete this project for all of the users of the village hall, so along with the smarter toilets all the thresholds will be levelled in the entrances to the hall.

At all times there is a myriad of day to day tasks that have to be carried out to ensure that the hall is clean, well maintained, safe to use and available to hire. The team of trustees have all played their parts. Along with fundraising by Artsreach and Hundred Club.

We very much look forward to welcoming all members of the parish and from wider afield to use the hall or attend events over the coming year, and of course, participate in our events such as the Artsreach ones.

## **The Orchard and Wood**

Presentation from Anne Crowe

We are always looking for members and new volunteers and always appreciative of the volunteers that do turn up when we do have little working parties in the orchard and the wood.

We are looking into the possibility of running some Science workshops and are seeking experts in specialist interests such as wildflowers, flower identification or bird identification. They might like to get involved.

The gin club is fully subscribed and popular. People like their gin bottle turning up once a month.

The orchard is later to blossom this year, please go and take a look. The hedge at the bottom of the orchard has been re-laid by a couple of volunteers. The hedges on the east and west boundaries have also been trimmed back, again with the help of volunteers.

Volunteers will be working in the orchard again in a weeks' time, clearing around the bases of the trees, putting mulch around them, which helps to suppress weeds.

More insect friendly plants have been put in by the border with the church, and the grass in the orchard is managed to help wildlife, so it is not trimmed everywhere, just some paths are kept short.

Not a great amount of work has been done in Saunders Richardson Wood recently, however we have taken up a dead hedge and put in various trees. Where new hedge was laid last year, they were going to continue to fill in a few gaps this year, however they have now missed the window to be able to do that. They will prepare for further sections to be worked on in the autumn. New saplings have been put in along the edge, to try to bulk it up a little bit.

Volunteers do not have any fundraising currently planned for the year yet, however there will likely be an apple day produce sale in October. They are hoping to hold an even in June or July and will also be releasing a village calendar for 2026. If anybody has any photographs that they would like to be added into the calendar, please send

them to Anne at [annecrowe2016@hotmail.com](mailto:annecrowe2016@hotmail.com) and they may be selected for inclusion. These will be sold later in the year to help raise some funds.

Anne thanked all the volunteers that come and help and said that they would not be able to continue without them. New members are also wanted.

The Chairman thanked all those who attended and thanked all those who had presented over the course of the evening. Also, he gave an extra special Thank You to Graham for the incredible news of the bequests to three of the village organisations.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.