

# Ugborough Annual Parish Meeting

on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7pm

Remotely on Zoom

## Minutes

**Present:** Cllrs Fletcher (Chair), Beable, Cooper, Fairclough-Kay, Hart, Holway, Hosking, Nelson & Slater; SDHC Cllr Abbott, DNPA C Pannell, 6 public

**1. Apologies for absence** were accepted from Cllr Johns

**2. Introduction & Annual Report by Chairman Cllr Joan Fletcher**

Thanks were extended to support groups throughout the Parish who have provided such invaluable help to residents during Covid.

Over the year, the Parish Council has worked with South Hams to improve Donkey Lane play park, funded by S106 monies, to provide 3 additional pieces of equipment for our younger residents to play on and a painted road way around the edge of the play park. Renovations were also programmed at the Bittaford play park, with new equipment funded by the Parish Council together with DCC & SHDC grants. Sadly the seesaw had recently been vandalised recently and repairs were awaited.

Lanes in the Parish have improved immeasurably as a result of the continued work of our Community Lengthsman, clearing drains and buddle holes, resulting in fewer flooding problems.

Works to Kitterford Cross were programmed as part of the A3121 Safer Roads project and, following pressure from the Parish Council, a roundabout would be provided. The B3196 (Loddiswell Road) pinch points petition was presented to Devon County Council and DCC have agreed to undertake a feasibility study to improve the route.

Ugborough Village children presented the Parish Council with a petition asking for a 20mph speed limit and a safe space for older children to play, which will be submitted to DCC. The Parish Council are working with the School to reinstate the license enabling public use of the school playing fields outside school hours.

The Parish footpath map now hangs in Ugborough Village Hall, and will be displayed around the Parish soon. The map will be used as the basis for leaflets showing our favourite walks in the parish.

The Parish Council has worked with Greener Ugborough to identify sites in the parish to plant wild flowers to help sustain our bee and butterfly population, and we now have litter picking equipment available.

The Parish Council finances are in good shape, and it has been able to provide grants towards community initiatives, including community planting in Bittaford & Ugborough, Christmas lights for Ugborough Square and Bittaford, Ugborough community website, Ring & Ride, CAB, Libraries Unlimited and Greener Ugborough. It has also enabled District and County grants for community initiatives, including Covid19 volunteer support groups. Two trees had been planted in the burial ground to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the 1939-45 war. Ugborough and Bittaford toilet buildings have been registered as assets of community value which means South Hams must offer them for sale to any interested community group before they go to the open market.

Challenges include identifying a safe route through Bittaford as part of the Ivybridge to South Brent cycleway, and improved car parking for access to the moor. In the future, we hope to support the Pre-school with their plans for a new building and plan to renovate the flagpole in Ugborough Square.

None of this would have been possible without the support and hard work of the Parish Councillors and the Clerk, and the enthusiasm of our community. Thank you.

**3. The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019** were confirmed and signed by the Chair

#### **4. Reports from District & County Councillors, Dartmoor National Park Authority & Police**

**SHDC Cllr Holway** The Joint Local Plan with Plymouth and West Devon was adopted in March 2019, which demonstrated a Five Year Land Supply and gave SHDC more control over developers offering random sites.

SHDC declared a Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency and resolved to work with Devon county Council and neighbouring authorities towards achieving net zero carbon by 2050. It will be providing Locality grants of £3,000 for each Councillor to support schemes in their ward. Larger schemes will also be supported. Grants will be available to residents to improve the heating & insulation, and SHDC has adopted the Healthy Homes principles. SHDC supports the Local Electricity Bill.

The Council remains a member of the South Devon & Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership and works with health, housing and blue light services to reduce crime and help victims. Please report any suspicious activity in your neighbourhood. drugs,

The Ivybridge Leisure Centre was completed and consultation showed support for the proposed provision of an Aldi supermarket in Ivybridge.

Fly Tipping continues to be a problem and residents are urged to use proper licenced carriers to dispose of rubbish and not unlicenced rogues. Please report any fly tipping you find.

Major Council meetings have been made available live on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

With the **COVID 19 Pandemic**, Council staff and members were able to work from home. The website was improved, hotlines were provided for residents needing help, and a support fund assisted community groups helping the vulnerable. Thanks were extended to the volunteers for their unstinting work. A vaccination centre has now been provided at Follaton House to reduce travel.

SHDC has supported Leisure Centres to open as restrictions are lifted and has earmarked funds to support the recovery of tourism and other businesses, and it has worked had to administer government grants to help businesses survive the problems caused by the pandemic. There will be a consultation on a trial for self-contained motor homes to stay on certain Council car parks for up to two days with no return for two days.

The new Super-recycling scheme has suffered teething problems, partly due to Covid. However, we should be able to recycle more of our waste and put less to landfill and incineration.

SHDC has installed Electric Vehicle charging points at Follaton House and in the Ivybridge car park and will be working with WPD the Distribution Network Operator to plan the roll out of more charging points across the district.

The council has adopted a draft Climate Change and Biodiversity strategy and will be providing Locality grants of £3,000 for each Councillor to support schemes in their ward. Larger schemes will also be supported. Grants will be available to residents to improve the heating & insulation, and SHDC has adopted the Healthy Homes principles

**SHDC Cllr Abbott** outlined the support he had given to Ugborough projects and those in Ivybridge benefitting the Parish, and his involvement in local projects, including improvements to FP16 and litter picking.

**DCC Cllr Hosking** reported that the Devon Local Outbreak Management Board has met throughout year to monitor, help fund, provide guidance and intervene where necessary in the fight against Coronavirus, including overseeing the setting up of the Nightingale Hospital. Cases were down, but vigilance will be needed in the holiday season. He congratulated the support networks of volunteers.

For 2021/22, DCC increased its Council Tax precept by 4.99% and has budgeted a 6.6% increase in expenditure to £578.5m, with a £12m increase in Children's services, £22 million for Adult Care & Health Services and 7.5% for Corporate Services. A £50m deficit represents overspend on the High Needs Block, and Government instruction is awaited on how this is to be financed.

Children's services would be taken in-house from 2022 and DCC is promoting an Early Help to reduce demand for Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) at a later stage.

Connecting Devon & Somerset recently contracted Airband to complete fibre until 2024 for the 90 to 95% sector of properties that do not have Superfast Broadband. The Government Gigabit voucher scheme may be available to business not included in the Airband rollout. For businesses in mobile Not Spots, the <https://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/the-cds-mobile-booster-voucher-scheme-guide/> scheme aimed to benefit 1,250 premises with a voucher for a mobile signal booster.

An application has been made for a feasibility study to reinstate an active station in South Brent. DCC budget of £102m for roads in 2020/21 was the largest ever. The Safer Road Funding for improvements to the A3121 from Hollowcombe Cross to Wrangaton would include two new roundabouts, including at Kitterford Cross.

With the Interim Devon Carbon Plan, DCC remains committed to achieving net zero carbon status and will continue to reduce its Carbon Footprint. The conversion of streetlighting to LED should be completed in about 18 months.

DCC is developing online support for business start-ups, the self-employed, innovation and growth.

School pupil funding had increased to £4,000 per primary school pupil and £5,000 per secondary school pupil. Although this is an improvement, we are still towards the lower end of the range, and lobbying would continue to ensure the full costs of rurality are taken into account.

**DNPA Cathie Pannell** reported the challenges of Covid. Park Marshalls had been employed to cope with inconsiderate visitor behaviour, and highly sensitive environments on the Moor had been damaged, with wild camping and thoughtless parking being particular problems. The Covid Community Grant from DNP helped many Communities.

Visitor Centres had reopened and the second Moor Otters Arts Trail goes live on May 28<sup>th</sup>, which will help businesses as they reopen. Details of the trails are available on the website and from Visitor Centres. The "Leave no trace, give nature space" campaign asks everyone to think about the positive impact nature and the outdoors has had on their lives during lockdown.

**Police Advocate Cllr Beable** explained the Parish Council Advocates Scheme, which engage parish and town councils with policing of Devon and Cornwall, with regular email updates. Over the last year, these have included internet scams regarding the Census, Coronavirus and Festival Tickets, modern day slavery and stalking. The "County Lines" drugs network continues to be an issue, and the public should report any unusual activity. In order to recruit Special Constables, they will now be paid.

Thankfully in the Ugborough Parish we do live in one of the safest parts of the country.

## 5. Reports from local groups

**Greener Ugborough Parish** Faith Matthews outlined the formation of the G-UP Steering Group. It shares information and has been involved in activities, including clearing Himalayan Balsam, tree planting with Ugborough Primary School and a Waste & Recycling collection scheme.

Wildlife and Biodiversity projects include restoring wildflower areas to assist pollinators, focussing on the Burial Ground and Seldons Close, a Parish species inventory and Parish habitat mapping. Future projects include overhauling the green area in Ugborough Play park, a hedge laying initiative, leaving areas of St Peter's Churchyard unmown, and developing a sizeable meadow area at Moorhaven.

The focus is on local skills, taking positive action and shared learning amongst Parishioners, especially youngsters, concentrating on local biodiversity, local pollinator activities and draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

With the need for a lower carbon community and safer, more accessible roads G-Up has fed into PL:21 Transition Town Initiative's Ivybridge Street Design Strategy. It also has links with South Brent Zero Carbon Working Group, Sustainable South Hams and SHDC Community Forum. Thanks were expressed for the Parish Council support.

**The Ugborough & Bittaford Pre-School/Breakfast and After School Club** report was read by the Chair. The Preschool reopened on 1.6.20, with 2 separated bubbles of pre-school children. The Breakfast and After School Club ran at the school for the Critical Worker children attending Ugborough School. It opened fully in September 2020, on occasion running at a loss in order to give care to the children of our many medical and professional Critical Worker parents.

Working life has been much harder, with continual cleaning of resources, social distancing between staff and separating toys into the different bubbles of children. Fortunately, the village hall is large as 6 different bubbles of children are separated with furniture. With no other hall users, it has not been necessary to tidy away every day.

Lower numbers have attended Pre-school, but attendance has increased for Breakfast Club (up to 18 children) and After School Club (regularly over 25 children), showing that we are well used by a large proportion of the parents.

### **Ugborough Village Hall**

Due to Covid-19 and Government restrictions for this financial year, the Village Hall has had limited use. However it has supported the emergency Post Office when its usual venue was unavailable, the Preschool as an emergency venue for key worker children, Breakfast Club, Preschool, After School Club, an Ugborough Take Away event (using the kitchen only) and First Aid courses. The Village Hall worked with Support Ugborough to provide Christmas hampers for vulnerable members of our community, funded by a Western Power Distribution Community Grant.

All hires have been Covid-19 restriction compliant.

This year the head height of the kitchen hatch/servery was raised, with Lottery funding, and a perspex screen has been provided. An updated Asbestos Management Survey Report was carried out, funded by DCC and the Parish Council.

The Village Hall accounts are healthy, thanks to generous Covid-19 small business support grants totalling £21,003 to date.

**Bittaford Village Hall** has been closed most of the year, but has survived due to Covid grants.

### **6. Questions from the Public**

- i. G-UP asked about the future of the former public toilets, as they were interested in adopting them for continued use by the community. Response: They had been registered as Assets of Community Value, although there had been no advice on when they would be sold. Cllr Holway would investigate timing and was pressing for better sale conditions.
- ii. G-UP requested a temporary speed limit of 40mph along the B3213 before the cycle route proposals were introduced, which Cllr Hosking would follow up.
- iii. Cllr Hosking was asked whether the full 4.99% increase in Council Tax would continue in future years. He responded that the increase was capped. A review of local authority funding was planned, but no timing had been confirmed.

*Meeting ended 7.55pm*