

Annual Report 2019/2020

Brexit, Brexit, Brexit, was continually on the news throughout 2019 and going nowhere, but eventually with the December 12th General Election and a triumphant Boris Johnson, leading a very strong Conservative party, the Brexit speculation stopped...Whew!!

Little did he know what was coming and who would have dreamt that we would now be in a lock down situation, due to this un-precedented Virus that has swept the World. COVID 19 now dominates the news and the big question concerning the latter, when will normality resume?

Our unending thanks must go to those of the NHS, who put their lives in danger to save those of us who need help. Yet again, I emphasise our thanks to them all.

I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking the '**Hello Brewham!**' group...who took the initiative and delivered flyers to all households, offering their help with shopping, post and other essentials, namely: - Becky Ewins - Kyli Gulliford - Sue Gulliford - Emma Isles-Buck - Sue Price - Claire Tatum.

Planning

A very much quieter year for planning, with four new residential development applications being granted, one Agricultural Section 73 (condition 3) being removed and one Agricultural section 106 being lifted. Other small retrospective applications also being passed.

Certain decisions by the Parish Council on Planning are still being overturned, the SSDC planners, we are informed are being advised to grant as much building as possible; this I understand filters down from Government.

Highways

Tower Road Bridge was closed for many weeks, due to very slow major repairs by Crestmoor, this caused much inconvenience to those who lived or worked on Kingsettle Hill. Recently the Bridge wall has been driven into again and will need repairing in the near future. Potholes, subsidence & blocked drains being an ongoing fight with highways to repair. The bridge wall between The Chapel & The Village Stores is still awaiting attention.

A new grit bin on Tile Hill has been bought by the PC and kindly filled by Richard Hiscock.

Village Hall

The Village Hall has been shut for over a year whilst undergoing refurbishment and, with Stage 1 now complete and £118,000 later, it finally re-opened on March 14th; everyone was invited to drop in and enjoy tea & cakes while viewing the wonderful work done; sadly the whole country was completely shut down the following Saturday, cancelling all future planned events in the hall. Small grants have been secured for Stage 2, but an enormous amount of money needs to be raised.

Burial Ground & Churchyard

The Parish Council would like to thank Clive Thorman for continuing the mowing and maintaining of the right-hand side of the Churchyard (as well as the Church Path) and keeping it neat & tidy. Also, thanks go to David Nye who manages the Living Churchyard and who has again this year organised sheep to graze the left of the footpath – the sheep do a wonderful job and set a lovely country scene. The Council were only allowed to trim a very small amount of the large Yew Trees that engulf our Village Church; enough clearance (7ft) above the path leading to the Church was allowed and no more! Less than a wheelbarrow full.

Finance

Many thanks must go to Karen Perry who will once again very kindly be auditing the accounts as soon as we are out of lockdown and we are very grateful to her.

The Parish Council have not raised the precept and it remains the same as last year.

Footpaths & Bridleways

Footpaths still remain closed and styles not repaired, Claire Haskins (SSDC) is still ignoring us concerning this matter, lack of funds being the usual excuse!! In particular, styles are non-existent or dangerous from Hoofprints to Cook's Farm. These still remain a problem two years on.

Policing

PCSO Tim Russell was unable to attend most meetings but in those instances he sent reports, crime was mainly in the Wincanton area and he regularly reminded us that we must be aware of suspicious vehicles roaming the countryside. The team make regular patrols through the villages.

Most crimes are opportunists looking for unlocked or poorly secured sheds and are agriculturally/garden related. There have been reports of livestock being taken from fields and suspicious people roaming about at night and leaving gates open.

The Village Church

Since last year the Village Church is still up and running, maintaining (up until the lock down) to hold the usual amount of services, with festive occasions commanding fifty/sixty in the congregation; together with two weddings, two baptisms and one funeral.

Unfortunately, the church wall and railings to the left of the gates were demolished in the Autumn by a very long, articulated, foreign lorry. This has now been repaired together with the other cracks and defects to the right of the gates and behind where the telephone box once stood.

Our Brewham Support Group – Parish Plan

'Below the Tower 2020/21' will be published later this year (again with postcodes); to this and many other publications over the years, we yet again owe our continued thanks to Ric Rogers.

Finally, I would like to thank our Clerk, Sue Price, for her hard work and outstanding assistance to the Parish Council. I would also like to thank my fellow parish councillors, Patricia Stainton, Richard Hiscock, Eddie Harper and Robert Jackson, the latter being co-opted onto the Council in July replacing Ann Saxton when she stood down after the May election. Thanks must also go to our County Councillor, Anna Groskop, and our new District Councillor, Robin Bastable, for their support through-out the year. I would also like to thank David Nye for continuing to maintain the closed Churchyard on our behalf as a 'Living Churchyard Wildlife Habitat', Karen Perry for serving as our internal auditor, the members of 'Our Brewham' support group and the Village Hall Restoration Committee and PCSO Tim Russell for updating us with police issues.

Many, many thanks to Tom & Anne O'Toole at The Old Red Lion, North Brewham, for hosting the Parish Council meetings as well as the Coffee & Chat, while the Village Hall has been closed; thanks too to all the people who attend our meetings and contribute their comments, as well as those who give up their time and energy to organise local community events that enrich life in Brewham.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to convey our enormous thanks to Ann Saxton, who leaves us after serving on the council for thirty-five years.

Stay safe.

David Dabinett

Chairman, May 2020