

**MINUTES OF THE BERE REGIS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, HELD ON  
THURSDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2025 AT THE DRAX HALL, BERE REGIS COMMENCING  
7PM**

**Present:** Cllrs G Curtis, T Bates, S Bardwell, L Fairhurst, K Hazel, J Hawkins

**Chair:** Cllr J Park

**Clerk:** Mrs A Crocker

**Also present:** Sam Dallimore, Community Engagement Officer, Wareham Arc Landscape Recovery

Cllr Park welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting and invited Sam Dallimore to address the meeting.

The timeline for the project, should funding be agreed, will be a 20 year delivery phase but it is still at the very early stages and funding has still to be agreed. It is hoped that the delivery phase will start in January 2026. The project area is about 4000hectares and is spread around the Purbeck area with Wild Woodbury on the western end, the A35 as the northern boundary, and the Purbeck Heath NNR to the south and southeast. There are over 20 partners included in the project. The idea is to restore the natural processes, creating resilient habitats and businesses which deliver environmental benefits. This will give species the ability to move within the landscape rather than going from island to island. In addition, the project hopes to get people out into the landscape and expand opportunities for engagement with nature.

The environmental objectives are to optimise natural processes, such as slowing the flow of rivers to allow nutrients time to drop out, rather than flow directly into the harbour; restore the peat bogs and replacing the trees and creating woodland pasture and making sure the various habitats interconnect with each other. Reducing the amount of non-native species, such as removal of rhododendrons. Socially the aim is to provide more volunteer, work experience and citizen science opportunities. This will include working with Kingston Maurward and local schools. Further details can be found on the Wareham Arc website or by contacting Sam direct.

### **Chairman's Report**

Cllr Park read his report covering the previous year. Particular thanks are given to Peter Wharf who has, this year, stood down from the Parish Council after many years of service due to illness. His knowledge and contacts will be greatly missed. Further thanks are extended to Bryan Benjafield who also stepped down this year. His assistance and knowledge of social media has been invaluable. We wish them both well.

We welcome Kevin Hazel and James Hawkins to the Parish Council and hope they enjoy their time as councillors. We still have one place remaining should anyone wish to come forward.

Thanks to all the councillors for making meetings more entertaining and the work much easier as everyone is very keen and wants to work for their community. Thanks also to the Clerk for taking all the telephone calls at varying times of the day and for the hours she puts in for the Council.

The new Community Bus has now been purchased. The Neighbourhood Plan Review is well underway and will, hopefully, be completed later this year. The new village hall is on-going. We now know what we can and cannot do and what sites can be pursued. Thanks are extended

to Alison Bennett and the Village Hall Committee for keeping the existing hall going. The play park – things are starting to move.

All these initiatives are big and are on-going and will not be achieved overnight but they are all moving forward. Although it may appear that nothing very much is happening, a great deal of work goes on behind the scenes.

Thanks are also extended to Tony King who does go above and beyond his remit and is available at all hours of the day and weekends.

### **Open Forum**

Residents had brought up the following issues:

Discussions and consultations are taking place nationally and locally regarding the current transport strategy. It is felt that, as a community, we should be campaigning for a bus service from Bere Regis to Poole. Poole is a major transport hub for bus, train and coach services and provision of this bus link would make a massive contribution to mobility and may assist in the reduction in car usage. This will be passed on to the Ward Councillors.

Butt Lane bin empties – DWP have made it clear that they will not empty the bins if they are unable to get their lorry passed parked vehicles. Cllr Laura Beddow will be informed and asked if she can bring this up with DWP. It should be noted that if bins are not emptied, it should be reported via the website.

Southbrook – Aster have apparently sold one of the bungalows for £125,000. It was understood that there was a clause covering the bungalows stating that they could not be sold. Cllr Curtis has reported this to Cllr Beddow.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 19.42pm