

SWANAGE AREA FORUM

INCLUDING SURROUNDING VILLAGES

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021 - No. 10



Welcome to the Swanage Area Forum and Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust March Newsletter.

In these dark times, we can see the green shoots of Spring all around us, as the days lengthen and the increasing warmth and sunshine remind us that summer is not that far away. In this issue, you can see this reflected in the many uplifting contributions from our organisations and clubs throughout our communities, and the determination that this invisible Covid foe will not break us.

I would also like to draw your attention to two particular items; firstly, as there is a ray of hope and cautious optimism appearing at the end of the very long Covid-19 tunnel, please read the important article on pages 2,3 and 4 from Dr Jason Clark of The Swanage Medical Practice with the latest Covid-19 update and the changes and possibilities for the near future.

Secondly, you will see that The Swanage Area Forum will co-host a special Zoom People's Assembly next Friday March 12th regarding The Dorset Local Plan Consultation. This public consultation comes to an end on March 15th, so If you would like to know more about the Dorset Plan and participate in the consultation process, even at this late stage, you can find details on Pages 16 and 17.

Mel Norris,
Chair Swanage Area Forum and Swanage & Purbeck Development Trustee
melvyn.norris@icloud.com



Photograph by Robert Field



Swanage Ambulance Car at the end of the road?

The paramedic car which serves Swanage and the Isle of Purbeck villages, is in danger of being withdrawn by the end of March, according to a local reliable source. The hard-fought for service has been in place since 2008 due to the overnight closure of the Swanage Community Hospital Minor Injuries Unit. The car, staffed by a paramedic, provides round the clock emergency care for the town and surrounding area.

The Isle of Purbeck is at the end of the one main road in and out, and when the ferry is closed, it is the road to nowhere. With a large elderly population, and with the huge increase in the visitor numbers during the summer months and other holiday seasons, Swanage is extremely vulnerable to medical emergencies; it is vital that there is adequate cover.

Figures for 2019 show that the car had 996 callouts, with more than half in categories 1-3, the most serious types of emergency. How many lives have been saved or prolonged by the professional attention of the rapid response car when an ambulance is maybe an hour away? The ambulance car has been under threat of withdrawal for the past year and in June 2020 the local council was assured that there would be a stay of execution until "work was done with local stakeholders and representatives to ensure any service meets the needs of the local population."

Current facilities

The ambulance resources based here are one 24/7 ambulance with two staff, and the Swanage 24/7 Paramedic Car, staffed by one paramedic. The Swanage ambulance is now regularly outside Swanage, either because it is taking a patient to hospital or because it is needed elsewhere in the county.

If the car takes a patient to Poole hospital it is away at least one and a half hours and there are 1,400 emergency admissions to Poole each year from Swanage and local villages.

The paramedic car can get to Swanage within the Ambulance Trust's target response time of 7 minutes, giving the best chance to save life. The skills and equipment carried may help to maintain life and give reassurance until the ambulance arrives. The paramedic can treat patients who do not need to go to hospital, and also supports Purbeck GPs with their home visits.

With plans to close the A & E department at Poole Hospital and the Maternity Unit, it is even more crucial that the current emergency services are maintained.

Action plan

Several local groups, including the Town Council, have come together to organise the campaign to keep the car. There is a petition with over 4,800 signatures and we are asking the NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group to continue to fund the car.

Despite assurances that no decision will be taken without full discussion it is understood that the service will be withdrawn at the end of March.

We want to show those making the decisions that this issue has not been forgotten by residents, and that they MUST safeguard the health of our town.

Please show your support for our Paramedic + Car!

To put an A4 poster up in your window or order an A3 garden stake, email swanageambulancecar@gmail.com, ask friends and neighbours to join in too!

Share your experiences of using the service, by sending personal accounts to Cllr Debby Monkhouse cllrmonkhouse@swanagecouncillors.uk or Chair of the Swanage Area Forum, Melvyn Norris melvyn.norris@icloud.com

To sign the petition go to: [Save Swanage Ambulance Car | 38 Degrees](#)

Please add your voice to the fight to stop the ambulance car siren being silenced.



The Swanage Medical Practice

MARCH NEWS

March 2021, the third and “final” Lockdown at last seems to be doing its job with new cases, hospital admissions and deaths all coming down. Very many thanks to all for playing their part in achieving this, by staying at home, working or studying from home, and maintaining the ‘**Hands, Face and Space**’ guidance.

In the last 2 months we have lost some of our local residents to the virus. I would like to send my condolences to all their families and thanks to everyone who has helped to care for them.

The number of cases on average in Swanage is now between one and 5.

The Vaccine

As of 28th February we have done 12,522 vaccinations; usually 450 per day at the Wareham site when we have vaccine. This is a fantastic achievement and many thanks to all volunteers and staff at the vaccine centre, to all those who have attended or helped others to get there and to the practice teams for coordinating the identifying and inviting of our eligible patients. This means we met the target of the first 4 cohorts by 15th February and also equates to 40% of our local population having received their first jab.

All those over 60, the clinically vulnerable and at “clinically risk patients” will have now been offered a vaccine and we continue to work through inviting the remaining cohort of eligible patients, following the government’s strict guidelines.

For the time being, however, it means 60% of the population are still susceptible to catching and passing on the COVID-19 virus. We have not yet got back to the hot weather we had last year that helped control the virus as we came out of Lockdown, and we know the virus circulating this year spreads more easily.

Last September, as the virus increased again, a new variant appeared. The virus mutates about once a month as it replicates. Most of these mutations give no advantage to it, but the more virus that is circulating, the more likely more “successful” strains will develop. As Professor Van Tam said at a recent briefing: “Now is the time we need to hold our nerve and continue the lockdown”. At present the lockdown is still vital to get the virus controlled.

We have now been given a roadmap back to a new ‘normality’ on 21st June, but this is dependent on keeping virus numbers continually moving down. This will need everyone to continue the **Hands, Face, Space** measures and to get everyone above the age of 16 vaccinated twice, unless they are one of the very few people with a contraindication.

We and the BIC are soon to start sending out invitations to the remaining cohorts of eligible patients. Our trial of text and online booking went very well and is continuing in use at the Wareham hub. However, at present this does not allow the second dose to be booked following one text, so Swanage is still sending out letters giving both appointments.

On 25th March we should have our first Second vaccination clinic which needs to be with the Pfizer vaccine. Vaccine supply is still unpredictable and comes when available and not to order. We are hoping this will match our needs for the first round of clinics, but are yet to have the process confirmed.

From 25th March onwards it may well be possible to get a vaccination sooner at the BIC as we may have a reduced capacity at Wareham to invite the younger cohorts due to the Second dose clinics. We hope to have started using an improved text online booking method by that point as this will be much simpler for patients to choose where and when they wish to have their vaccination. So, if we still do not have your mobile number or you have changed it, please let us know.

We were told locally last week to expect a reduced supply of vaccine over the next few weeks, especially of the Pfizer vaccine, but the Prime Minister is expecting a bumper month for vaccinations in March, so we are hoping for the latter.

There is good evidence that both vaccines are effective, the most important thing is to have one as soon as possible, in line with this the offer to you is for a vaccination ‘unspecified’. When we get an unexpected Pfizer delivery this must be used within 3 days, so the type of vaccine to be used in each clinic can change at short notice. At present the BIC are only using the Astra Zeneca vaccine.

Within the practice

Our Advanced Nursing team has continued to expand and increase in experience and over the next month or so, will start to take the lead in assessing all patients who feel they need same-day assessment. This will allow your doctor more time to support this nursing team when dealing with you and an increased number of routine appointments for you to book with him or her.

In between these two options we are continuing to expand the E-consultation service that guarantees you a response to your problem by the end of the next working day.

This gives the opportunity for the most appropriate person to deal with your problem, without utilising the receptionists or your doctor's time unnecessarily. **E-consult** allows you to get a faster response and others to be helped sooner.

Your doctor is one of a team who work together to provide medical care in Swanage. This now includes Social Prescribers, Pharmacists, Care Coordinators, Nurses, Paramedics, Advanced Nurses, the Purbeck Car, and other services from the Purbeck Primary Care Network. Our reception staff have recently had enhanced training to help you navigate these increasing resources that provide the care needed without having to wait for your doctor. Each of the aforementioned teams have skills available that your doctor does not. Please work with our staff to make full use of these services.

The last year has been the most challenging for healthcare since I came to Swanage in 1988. It has been extremely hard for people and many have worked tirelessly to help others. I feel the Town and Practice have worked diligently to make the best of things so we can all look forward to better times. As the Government roadmap progresses, I hope we can continue to help each other and keep some of our renewed interest in enjoying our stunning environment, and the increased amount of exercise and walking, as both are excellent for health.

Remember: "HANDS (wash), FACE (mask), SPACE (2m)"

Dr Jason Clark, Senior Partner,
Swanage Medical Practice [website: www.swanagemedical.org](http://www.swanagemedical.org)



Photograph by Gwenda Yeomans



**Dorset
Council**

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Spring 2021

The government has published the 'COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021', setting out the roadmap out of the current lockdown for England. Pub.22 Feb 2021

ROADMAP OUT OF LOCKDOWN

From 8 March, people in England will see restrictions start to lift and the government's four-step roadmap offer a route back to a more normal life.

The success of the vaccination programme is one factor - so far over 17 million people have had their jabs - but by no means the whole story. The public have also risen to the challenge of suppressing COVID-19: by obeying the law; staying at home; getting tested when needed; isolating when required, and following the 'hands, face, space' and 'letting fresh air in' guidance.

Taken together, this means that even though absolute case numbers remain relatively high, we will be able to begin relaxing the current strict lockdown. While we must all remain vigilant - in particular against the threat from new COVID-19 variants - and continue to protect the NHS, a safe exit from lockdown can begin. It will take place in four steps; and at each step, we plan to lift restrictions across the whole of England at the same time.

In implementing this plan we will be guided by data, not dates, so that we do not risk a surge in infections that would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS. For that reason, all the dates in the roadmap are indicative and subject to change.

There will be a minimum of five weeks between each step: four weeks for the scientific data to reflect the changes in restrictions and to be analysed; followed by one week's advance notice of the restrictions that will be eased.

Only when the government is sure that it is safe to move from one step to the next will the final decision be made. The decision will be based on four tests:

- the vaccine deployment programme continues successfully
- evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated
- infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS
- our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern

The government will continue to protect the public by ensuring local outbreaks are managed quickly and effectively and that we combat new dangerous variants, both within the UK and at the border. The government will also continue to support families and businesses throughout the steps set out in the roadmap - details of which were set out by the Chancellor in the Budget on 3 March.

STEP ONE

8 AND 29 MARCH

CHANGES ON 8 MARCH

Education

In Step 1, our priority is to ensure that all children and students return safely to face-to-face education in schools and colleges from 8 March. Childcare and children's supervised activities can also resume where necessary to enable parents to work or engage in similar activities. We are introducing twice-weekly rapid testing for secondary and college pupils - in addition to regular testing for all teachers - to reduce the chance of the virus spreading in schools.

Higher Education students at English universities on practical courses can also return from 8 March.

Social contact

People will be allowed to leave home for recreation and exercise outdoors with their household or support bubble, if they are eligible for one, or with one person from outside their household. Care home residents will also be allowed one regular visitor.

CHANGES ON 29 MARCH

Social contact

The evidence shows that it is safer for people to meet outdoors rather than indoors. And this is why from 29 March, when most schools start to break up for the Easter holidays, outdoor gatherings (including in private gardens) of either 6 people (the Rule of 6) or 2 households will also be allowed, making it easier for friends and families to meet outside.

Business and activities

Outdoor sports facilities such as tennis and basketball courts, and open-air swimming pools, will also be allowed to reopen, and people will be able to take part in formally organised outdoor sports.

Travel

The 'stay at home' rule will end on 29 March but many restrictions will remain in place. People should continue to work from home where they can and minimise the number of journeys they make where possible, avoiding travel at the busiest times and routes. Travel abroad will continue to be prohibited, other than for a small number of permitted reasons. Holidays abroad will not be allowed, given it will remain important to manage the risk of imported variants and protect the vaccination programme. The government has launched a new taskforce to review global travel which will report on 12 April.

STEP TWO not before 12 APRIL

Business and activities

Step 2, which will be no earlier than 12 April, will see the opening of non-essential retail; personal care premises such as hairdressers and nail salons; and public buildings, including libraries and community centres. Indoor leisure facilities such as gyms will also reopen (but only for use by people on their own or in household groups); as will most outdoor attractions and settings including outdoor hospitality venues, zoos, theme parks, and drive-in cinemas. Self-contained accommodation such as campsites and holiday lets, where indoor facilities are not shared with other households, can also reopen.

Hospitality venues will be allowed to serve people outdoors at Step 2 and there will be no need for customers to order a substantial meal with alcoholic drinks and no curfew, although customers must order, eat and drink while seated ('table service'). Wider social contact rules will apply in all these settings to prevent indoor mixing between different households.

Events

While funerals can continue with up to 30 mourners, the number of people able to attend weddings, receptions and commemorative events such as wakes will rise to 15.

STEP THREE not before 17 MAY

Social contact

As part of Step 3, no earlier than 17 May, the government will look to continue easing limits on seeing friends and family wherever possible, allowing people to decide on the appropriate level of risk for their circumstances.

This means that most legal restrictions on meeting others outdoors will be lifted - although gatherings of over 30 people will remain illegal. Indoors, the Rule of 6 or 2 households will apply - we will keep under review whether it is safe to increase this.

As soon as possible and by no later than Step 3, we will also update the advice on social distancing between friends and family, including hugging. But until this point, people should continue to keep their distance from anyone not in their household or support bubble.

Business and activities

Most businesses in all but the highest risk sectors will be able to reopen. In all sectors, COVID-Secure guidance will remain in place and businesses may not cater for groups bigger than the legal limits. Indoor hospitality will reopen - and as in Step 2, venues will not have to serve a substantial meal with alcoholic drinks; nor will there be a curfew. Customers will, however, have to order, eat and drink while seated.

Other indoor locations to open up in Step 3 include indoor entertainment venues such as cinemas and children's play areas; the rest of the accommodation sector, including hotels, hostels and B&Bs; and indoor adult group sports and exercise classes. The government will also allow some larger performances and sporting events in indoor venues with a capacity of 1,000 people or half-full (whichever is a lower number), and in outdoor venues with a capacity of 4,000 people or half-full (whichever is a lower number). In the largest outdoor seated venues, where crowds can be spread out, up to 10,000 people will be able to attend (or a quarter-full, whichever is lower).

Events

Up to 30 people will be able to attend weddings, receptions and wakes, as well as funerals. This limit will also apply to other types of significant life events including bar mitzvahs and christenings.

Review of social distancing

Finally, before Step 4 begins, the government will complete a review of social distancing and other long-term measures that have been put in place to cut transmission. This will inform decisions on the timing and circumstances under which the rules on 1 metre plus, the wearing of face coverings and other measures may be lifted. This will also inform guidance on working from home – which should continue wherever possible until this review is complete.



New COVID-19 Mobile Testing Site in North Beach Car Park, Swanage

With effect from Thursday 4th March 2021 there will be a new Covid-19 mobile testing site in the Town Council's North Beach car park, on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays each week.

On testing days there will be limited parking spaces available, however, access for coastguards and visitors to the football ground will be unaffected.

If any residents develop coronavirus symptoms, a new, continuous cough, a high temperature, a loss or change of sense of smell, or a loss or change of sense of taste, they must self-isolate and book a test.

People can book a test using the online portal

www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test
or by calling 119.

Home testing kits are available for those who can't get to a testing site.

<http://orlo.uk/Z0P8y>



STEP FOUR not before 21 JUNE

Social contact

By Step 4 which will take place no earlier than 21 June, the government hopes to be in a position to remove all legal limits on social contact.

Business, activities and events

We hope to reopen remaining premises, including nightclubs, and ease the restrictions on large events and performances that apply in Step 3. This will be subject to the results of a scientific Events Research Programme to test the outcome of certain pilot events through the spring and summer, where we will trial the use of testing and other techniques to cut the risk of infection. The same Events Research Programme will guide decisions on whether all limits can be removed on weddings and other life events.

As we move through each of these phases in the roadmap, we must all remember that COVID-19 remains a part of our lives. We are going to have to keep living our lives differently to keep ourselves and others safe. We must carry on with 'hands, face, space'. Comply with the COVID-Secure measures that remain in place. Meet outdoors when we can and keep letting fresh air in. Get tested when needed. Get vaccinated when offered. If we all continue to play our part, we will be that bit closer to a future that is more familiar.

**WAREHAM
HOSPITAL
COVID
VACCINATION
CENTRE**

'I heard from someone today that their COVID vaccination appointment went very well. Smooth as Silk! Well organised and no problems at all. Such a relief ...'



Dorset
Council

LATEST UPDATES ON COVID-19 IN DORSET

Published 27th February 2021

Case rates across the county have continued to fall during the lockdown. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council's case rate (114.1 per 100,000) is now just below the England average of 118.3. However both BCP and Dorset Council (77.7) case rates remain above the average for the South West (70.2). This means we all need to keep working together to bring these rates down further. In line with the reduction in case rates, COVID-related hospitalisations and deaths across the county have also decreased.

Over a quarter of a million people in Dorset have now received a COVID-19 vaccine. This is great news and we'd like to thank everyone involved in the rollout of the vaccination programme. However, we must remain vigilant and continue to follow the rules - even if you've had the vaccine - to avoid an increase in cases.

This week the Government announced the Roadmap for lifting lockdown. (See Dorset Public Health article elsewhere in Newsletter). It is a four-step plan for the easing of restrictions. It's important to remember that the dates set out are the earliest possible dates for restrictions to be lifted. The Government will use four tests to assess whether each step of the plan can go ahead:

1. The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully
2. Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated
3. Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS
4. The assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new variants of concern.

Latest data

The visualisation below shows the seven-day case rate, people in hospital beds and deaths for the latest data periods available. There can be a time lag to allow us to report the most complete data. We provide this local update weekly, but you can find information daily on the [Public Health England data page](#).

Summary of the most recent data

7 day case rates per 100,000

- o BCP: 114.1 (compared to 159.1 in last update on 19 February)
- o Dorset: 77.7 (compared to 92.2 in last update on 19 February)

Confirmed Cases in last 7 days

- o BCP: 451 (compared to 629 in last update on 19 February)
- o Dorset: 294 (compared to 349 in last update on 19 February)

Current COVID-19 patients in hospital beds in Dorset:

147 (compared to 194 in last update on 19 February)

Vaccinations

NHS England publish weekly number of COVID-19 vaccinations given by each local area. Up to 21 February, 275,006 doses had been administered to people in Dorset.

You can find more information about the vaccination programme in Dorset on [NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group's website](#). The NHS will be in touch with you when it's your turn.



Dorset
Council

LATEST UPDATES ON COVID-19 IN DORSET

Published 27th February 2021

Key Settings

Care homes

Where care homes have identified outbreaks, we are working closely with them and key partners to monitor the situation and provide advice and support wherever it's needed.

Although cases are falling, our advice continues to be that visits to care homes should only take place within the guidance rules in exceptional circumstance to protect residents, staff and visitors. If you have a need to visit a relative in a care home, please speak to the home about their visiting policy.

Schools

See the latest updates about schools in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area and schools in the Dorset Council area that have confirmed cases of COVID-19 and any necessary action taken. We have well-established processes in place to work closely with affected schools to respond to cases, ensure all necessary measures are implemented and identify and advise any close contacts to self-isolate. Schools with confirmed positive cases communicate directly with parents and carers regarding any actions that need to be taken and any changes to school provision. All close contacts of confirmed cases are contacted and advised to self-isolate, so other members of the school community do not need to self-isolate and should not get tested unless specifically directed to do so.

Universities

Bournemouth University and Arts University Bournemouth now publish weekly figures on their website. Most university courses are currently being taught remotely.

Community Testing

Public Health Dorset, on behalf of Dorset Council, have set up a [Dorset Rapid Community Testing Programme](#) for local business employees who cannot work from home, due to the public-facing nature of their role.

463 businesses and organisations have already registered and are getting tested under this service.

We are now asking businesses and organisations open under [current government restrictions](#) and employing fewer than 50 (including the self-employed) to register their interest in weekly lateral flow device testing. Employees must sign up to six weeks of testing.

If your business or organisation has been told it is able to access the testing programme you can [book your weekly lateral flow test](#).



Department of Health & Social Care

Free PPE for unpaid carers

Unpaid carers across the country who do not live with the people they care for can now benefit from free PPE through a new national scheme, government confirmed.

Published 9 February 2021



Following a successful pilot scheme to establish the distribution method and logistics, free PPE is now being made available to 'extra-resident' unpaid carers who need it, so they can continue to keep themselves and those they care for safe from COVID-19 if they have to move between households.

Local authorities and local resilience forums (LRFs) were informed of the extended PPE offer by letter sent on 25 January, and already almost two-thirds have signed up to support this.

Minister for Care Helen Whately said:

'Unpaid carers are the unsung heroes of this pandemic. All too often their kindness and devotion go unseen and unacknowledged by society.'

'I know the enormous strain this pandemic has placed on those caring for family and those they love. I'm determined to do everything possible to support them.'

'Working with local authorities and voluntary organisations, we have already improved access for carers to testing and supported day services to stay open safely during this second wave. I'm pleased we can now roll out free PPE for those unpaid carers who are advised to use it.'

Throughout the pandemic action has been taken to support unpaid carers during this challenging year, including through tailored guidance, supported access to respite as well as £500,000 to Carers Trust to help combat loneliness.

As key workers, unpaid carers are also able to access priority testing when they have symptoms through the government's testing portal.

Professor Deborah Sturdy OBE, Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care, said:

'It is important everything is done to protect those who are vulnerable and the people who care for them.'

'Unpaid carers provide a fundamental pillar supporting our social care system and have the gratitude of a nation for their work before, during and after this pandemic.'

'The scientific advice is to wear PPE while caring and we are ensuring extra-resident unpaid carers can now access this for free.'

'The provision of free PPE to unpaid carers builds on the government's commitment to provide free PPE until at the least the end of June 2021 to the adult social care sector.'

'Over 8.1 billion items of PPE have been distributed to protect our health and social care staff.'

The government's infection prevention control guidance has been continually reviewed and has evolved over time in response to the changing epidemiology of COVID-19 and the emergence of new evidence and science.

As part of this, the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) social care working group has recommended that unpaid, extra-resident carers should follow the same PPE procedures recommended for domiciliary care workers.

Work with local authorities has begun to set up distribution systems nationwide following a successful pilot scheme.

Financial support is also available for local authorities and LRFs to support the roll-out, and following information sessions the majority of local authorities have signed up and more are expected.

A number of unpaid carers have been prioritised for the vaccine as part of cohort 6, in line with the independent advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. These include those who are in receipt of a carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill. Plans will be set out to further vaccinate other groups in due course.

PPE is now
available for
unpaid carers

#DorsetTogether



call our helpline 01305 221000



FRIENDS OF SWANAGE HOSPITAL

<https://www.friendsofswanagehospital.org.uk/>

TO THANK OUR WONDERFUL STAFF

You may remember that Terry Buck, Treasurer of the Friends of Swanage Hospital Committee raised well over £3,000 when he did a sponsored walk of 1,000 miles for our Hospital funds. He wanted to think of a way to let all the hospital staff (133 of them) know that The Friends are still thinking of them and their wonderful dedication to our hospital and patients, day in, day out.

Terry said: *"In February, I was in my local Costcutter store at Herston, looking around for chocolate treat ideas, when I bumped into Keith Tomes, the manager. As we chatted, Keith very kindly said that he would do a special order for the gifts we needed. However, when I went to pay for them to take to the hospital, Keith and his son, Chris, told me that there would be no charge and they were very pleased to support us."*

I was blown away by their generosity, especially as we are not talking about a huge supermarket, and I felt I just had to share it with our community. "

The staff were absolutely delighted and really moved when they received their gifts, so a very special 'Thank You' from The Friends on behalf of the staff, to Keith Tomes and his family for such heart-warming generosity.

Jan Turnbull - Chair



Matron Donna and Pat Cooper show the gifts kindly donated for all the staff, by CostCutters at Herston



"HELLO" FROM THE FRIENDS OF WAREHAM HOSPITAL

Having now supported the vaccination team on a weekly basis for the last month I can report first hand on the excellent work being undertaken at Wareham Hospital to vaccinate members of our local community.

The work is led by the Purbeck Primary Care Network (PCN) but facilitated through the hardworking teams of our local six GP Practices who are working above and beyond to get us vaccinated and hopefully on the road to a future more normal way of life for us all in Purbeck.

The Vaccination Centre is supported by an amazing team of volunteers who turn up in all weathers to guide and help the smooth-running process, which I know from comments I have received, have been so greatly appreciated by those attending Wareham Hospital.

It will soon be time for the first cohorts of patients to attend for the second follow-up vaccination, whilst first vaccines are offered to the younger age groups, so the Centre will be busy, but I am confident that the community will continue to receive a great service from a very committed team at Wareham Hospital and the local Practices.

The Wareham Friends support all Purbeck Community services and are grateful for the work being undertaken in both Wareham and Swanage Hospitals and in the wider Community by the dedicated teams in Purbeck; 'thank you' to you all.

As a Friends group, we continue to seek news on the development of new services and await further information on the proposed Purbeck Hub which we are told by Dorset Council has been delayed due to the pandemic. We will, however, maintain our interest and commitment to Purbeck services and will welcome any support we can receive either financially or through membership to the Wareham Friends. We can be contacted through the hospital in Streche Road. Wareham.

Sending best wishes to all,

MAGGIE HARDY, FRIENDS CHAIR

Charity number 252073



The Purbeck Gazette is our independent and brilliant monthly community paper. It is still available online every month, so look out for the March edition which will be out very soon. As we said last month, like so many of our Purbeck businesses and organisations (and indeed nationwide) this prolonged Covid pandemic and the latest national lockdown has resulted in appalling consequences, despite the incredible fightback against this invisible foe. **The Purbeck Gazette** is no different. Because most of the regular advertisers which keep this paper going, are themselves struggling very hard to stay afloat until the easing of lockdown restrictions.

People everywhere struggle to make the best they can of their restricted lives, often just to make ends meet, feed their families, pay their rent or mortgages and to cope mentally and physical with the isolation this brings. It really is a terrifying time for so many of us.

The Purbeck Gazette has always been, for many, many years, a shining beacon for our communities; towns, villages, hamlets and isolated areas. Thousands of people eagerly waited each month for their copy to find out where to eat out, shop at our many unique local businesses, what Music, Art and Children's festivals and events; are on; as well as regular updates from so many organisations. It really is a 'Community Hub', keeping our communities aware of what's going on around them; drawing us together in a unique way. The letters' pages with people's sometimes strong and contradictory views and some regular columnists (dare we mention David Hollister!) are hungrily devoured and can often become talking points in many conversations; either agreeing or disagreeing, either way. We love it!

Hope is definitely on the horizon with the brilliant vaccination programme progressing so swiftly. The government's 4-stage plan on easing of restrictions means the monitored and steadily opening-up of our society; from schools to businesses and shops, pubs, restaurants, built in. Who knows, next month could mean we are at least moving towards a 'new normal'? There is definitely an uplifting feel everywhere; there is real light at the end of the tunnel for all of us and for our wonderful **Purbeck Gazette** too.

So let's ensure that we all move forward - remembering what an important part of our local heritage this monthly community paper is.

Please contact Nico Johnson, the editor at ed@purbeckgazette.co.uk to show your support.



A message from the Mayor of Swanage, Councillor Mike Bonfield

As we enter March, the news is beginning to make us all feel that things are starting to get better. The Government announcement on Monday 22nd February gave us the roadmap to return to whatever the new normal will be. You will see the Government's clear, but cautious roadmap to recovery plan, laid out elsewhere in this Newsletter.

We must all remember that the dates mentioned are the earliest dates that each stage can happen, and each is dependent on the numbers continuing on a downward slope. I hope that we will all carry on doing our bit by being careful and respecting others when out and about.

I know that there is a lot of concern about the coming summer season, and the possibility of exceptionally high numbers of visitors who are expected to holiday in the UK. This is a problem that is being taken very seriously and there are a lot of councils and other organisations working together to try and limit any adverse situations. We also have to remember that the increase of visitors to our beautiful area, that we are so fortunate to live in, will hopefully bring much-needed support for our area's hospitality and retail sector.

I have been fortunate to have had my COVID vaccination and I must thank all those involved at Wareham Hospital for the amazing job they are doing. Everyone is being treated so well by the staff and all the volunteers.

The town council are planning for the opening up of the services that we provide, but unfortunately, things will not all happen at once and, as with the Government's roadmap to recovery, the town council will also take things slowly.

Keep safe.

Cllr Mike Bonfield



COMMUNICARE

TRANSPORT TO COVID VACCINATION APPOINTMENTS

COMMUNICARE have been very busy since the beginning of January, when NHS England contacted us to ask if we could help with transport to Wareham Hospital Hub, for elderly people who have no transport and whose neighbours and friends cannot take them for their vaccination appointment. We have received almost 200 calls and have managed everyone so far, that has asked for transport.

We have recruited extra volunteers and if there are any ladies or gentlemen out in the Swanage area who would like to join us, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please ring the Director, Jenny Lazenbury, or any of our 7 numbers below, to discuss it. These numbers are also printed on our green or blue cards dotted around the town, or in the Health Centre or Swanage Hospital.

We are getting ready to do the second lot of 'Jabs' from about the middle of March. If you have used us before, and have kept the number of your Driver, you can ring that number giving him/her about 1 week's notice. We do have the vaccination second dates on our records, given to us at the outset of the programme by the NHS.

To ring any of the COMMUNICARE telephone numbers for booking your next appointment, or if you are admitted to hospital for any other treatment Please ring one of the following numbers. Do remember, all these people are voluntary, including myself, and we ourselves have to go out sometimes - but we will leave our answerphone on. Leave a message with your name and tel. no. and we will come back to you, I promise.

Tel numbers - for swanage area people only

01929 ... 427576 480932 427346

288177 477114 426644 811375

NOTE: For a return journey we charge 40p a mile to cover our petrol costs only (between £8 - £10)

Swanage Food Bank



WE'RE HERE TO SERVE

Writing this at the end of February but with spring flowers brightening the garden, reminds me that there is hope of life to come even though we're still in winter.

Many of our clients feel only hopelessness in their dire circumstances, although the week's supply of food and the few words of encouragement we can give them provides a brief but helpful respite.

Our number of clients is double for the same period in 2020, and we'd already seen a huge increase then. As a result, our stocks decreased exponentially and recently reached a historic low - for instance, our usual mountain of baked beans was suddenly down to a dozen tins until we shopped for a replenishment.

We have been able to make bulk orders thanks to Budgen Richardson, which has been vital to us, and we have also been assisted by a few people going to Poole weekly who are able to purchase items from Lidl on our behalf.

Fortunately, we can buy all the fresh food needed from our local shops. But above all, we are helped by the generous donations of food which fill our super-market bins each week - the community of Swanage continues to be a valued co-partner in the work of Swanage Food Bank.

As we are asked by would-be donors for a monthly update of current priority needs, these are posted on our Facebook page and to Swanage groups on Facebook, also in church notices, and appear on our blue bins. Our new (pale blue) Covid-19 Update leaflets are attached to bins for anyone interested to take away for essential information about Swanage Food Bank.

Pauline Werba Chair, Swanage Foodbank



It really doesn't seem possible that it is almost a year since the formation of our new Branch. It was on the 31st March 2020 that we finally closed our books on being members of the Wareham & Purbeck MS Society and commenced to "go it alone" in our own right and joined forces with the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust.

As everyone is aware a lot has happened over this past year. All our normal fund raising events had to be cancelled (especially our big Fund Raising event in July on Wareham Quay) and also all of the small fund raising events have also been "put on the back burner" so to speak. This has, as I am sure you are all aware, been catastrophic to all small charities such as ourselves as our bank account has suffered but we have still received requests for funds from our members for help.

We as a group have been fortunate in that we have benefitted from individual private donations (bequests in Wills) and a recent donation from a grateful lady acknowledging all the help she has received over the past years (MS unrelated) from one of the committee. Without these donations we would have struggled to pay for the insurance on our Mini bus and its upkeep and running costs and also has enabled us to make small grants to individuals.

With the injection rates for COVID19 progressing really well (very many thanks to all those volunteers who have enabled this) we are all hoping that by late summer we may begin to see "light at the end of the tunnel" and to see life begin to evolve to the "new normal" thus enabling us once again to open up and tentatively dip our toes into the water so to speak and commence with social meetings and fund raising events.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Debbie Dunford, our Welfare officer and her team for "keeping a watching eye" on all of our members needs throughout this very troubled and uncertain time and hope that my next contribution will be a more positive one. Keep Safe, Keep Well.

Carol Turner, Chair, Friends of Purbeck MS



Hello everyone. This is the new name for Swanage Link Visiting.

It brings us in line with our national franchise and also reflects our widening activities. We have been connecting volunteer visitors with elderly, isolated people in and around Swanage since 2016. Everyone knows how the pandemic has brought the problems of isolation to the fore.

Many in our community have traditionally supported their neighbours long before the pandemic but of course there has been a huge rise in how neighbours look out for each other since. We would expect the new relationships formed to continue as lockdown eases over the months ahead.

However, there are always people gradually becoming more isolated from social contact as they age and become less mobile. Do consider becoming a friend to a lonely person and also flag the needs of others who are alone to us.

Email swanage@linkinglives.uk

**call 07495 53417 or visit
sandpdt.org.uk/linking-lives.**

Our **Place of Welcome** has been closed for a year now. It provided a lifeline to a small group of people living alone. Unfortunately, the venue is too small for social distancing so we are looking for a larger home – and will need volunteer hosts when we open again. Please use the contact details above if you can help us.



Photograph by Robert Field



During the past month our efforts have been focussed on our younger members of the community, with the annual Rotary Young Musician competition taking place - despite being unable to hold as a conventional, live performance event, because of lockdown and Covid restrictions.

Tim and Ali Arnold (Rotarians who organise this event) arranged a "Virtual" competition with aspiring young musicians throughout Purbeck taking part, by making a video recording of their "performance" and sending it to the adjudicators to judge, using the same criteria as if the performance was live.

The competition is judged in two age groups (5 to 11 and 11 – 14 years) and offers young musicians the opportunity to take part in a competition in a "safe, supportive" environment . The winners from each group then have the opportunity to participate in the District event.

Once again, this year, the quality and enthusiasm of these youngsters was exceptional and we thank not only the competitors but those who support and encourage them throughout the year.

Deirdre Selwyn
President, Swanage and Purbeck Rotary



Photograph by Gwenda Yeomans



Swanage & Purbeck Connect

As we head towards Spring, with brighter weather and lighter evenings we will be concentrating our topics at Swanage Connect on Spring and Easter. This month within our community visits we will encourage the people we support to take part in the activities around these topics, enabling them to produce an end product they can be proud of and supporting all in a sense of achievement.

In the Day Services we will focus on making and sending our Easter cards to all our families. We will also be decorating the services to ensure a bright and sunny environment indoors.

We are taking walks in the sunshine, in the garden or along the beachfront enjoying a chat and the fresh air. We always carry all relevant PPE so that both staff and the people we support are protected when visiting and exercising.

Purbeck Day Service will be focusing on Mother's Day, making cards for their mums to receive and bring a smile to their faces. They will also hold a Red Nose day event on zoom for all to take part in and enjoy. Zoom activities remain very popular with the people we support and give them a sense of community as they see their friends and join in the activities.

We continue to work hard and embrace the community work, the sense of achievement it brings to know that the isolated, vulnerable, and lonely are having the support that they need is gratifying. In addition to our activities and exercise support, the staff from both Swanage and Wareham Day Services are continuing with their work supporting the community in their role as the 'community response team' - the roles are varied and changing, including supporting emergencies as required.

Please note that free PPE can be accessed by unpaid carers through the Dorset Council website. This can be collected at the Day Services as required.

Best wishes to all.

Tricuro Swanage & Purbeck Day Service Teams



Purbeck

Purbeck Citizens Advice providing advice by phone and email

If you need help to find a way forward, especially if you have been impacted by COVID-19 - why not contact your local Citizens Advice? Our trained advisers provide free, independent and confidential advice and information whatever your question.

Advisers are available 5 days a week to give advice on the phone or by email.

We offer a full range of up to date advice, including help with:

- Benefits entitlement and claims
- Debt management, budgeting and income maximisation
- Employment advice including furlough, Statutory Sick Pay and rights when laid off work
- Advice for the self employed including the Income Support Scheme
- Energy and water advice, support and schemes including helping you to Check, Switch and Save on your energy bills as part of Big Energy Saving Winter
- Housing and advice if at risk of homelessness
- Referrals for charitable support or to food banks

Purbeck residents needing advice can phone Dorset Adviceline on our new freephone line 0800 144 8848 (Textphone: 0800 144 8884), 10am-4pm weekdays to talk to an adviser.

Alternatively, you can use our webform at www.purbeckadvice.org.uk for email or telephone call-back, and access a wealth of self-help advice online at www.citizensadvice.org.uk



In these strange times, even though most of our church buildings are closed, the Churches in Swanage are still very much 'open!' A variety of worship resources and services are available. Each church website will provide you with details – find contact details on swanagechurches.org.

SWANAGE & STUDLAND TEAM MINISTRY (C of E)

All Saints' and St Nicholas' remain open for private prayer each day from **10am to 2pm**.

St Mark's is open on Sundays and Wednesdays only, but all actual services in these three churches will be cancelled.

St Mary's is open daily from **9am to 4pm** for private prayer. Due to its size, it's a safe place to continue actual church services, but they are curtailed and measures to underline the importance of social distancing are insisted on and will be further monitored. Holy Communion is celebrated each Sunday at **8.00am and 10.30am** and Morning Prayer held Monday to Saturday at **8.00am**.

A simple Sunday service continues to be prepared for the Swanage Team Ministry website. www.swanageteam.com every week, for those unable to get to Church physically. This service, being one to be read at home, is also being posted out to those who wish to receive it in printed form. Please let the Parish Office know if you would like to be sent a copy: ring **01929 421117** and leave a message if there is no answer.

ON LINE SERVICES

All Saints' 10.30am weekly. Sunday service is available on line. Simply go to All Saints' website www.allsaints-swanage.org and follow the links, at 10.30am any Sunday, and any time after.

St Mark's has a YouTube service at **10am** each Sunday and available afterwards via the team website. Go to the website www.swanageteam.com home page, scroll down to St Mark's and click on it. You will find the link to the service on that page.

St Nicholas', Studland, holds a service which anyone can join via Zoom at **10am and at 6.30pm** every Sunday. To join the zoom services, please email Tony to request the link for each Sunday: revtonyhiggins@btinternet.com

Holy Spirit and St Edward's Catholic Church is open for Mass at 9am on **Sunday, Tuesday and Friday**.

Swanage URC is now closed for major refurbishment, we plan to reopen in early May, if lockdown has eased by then. Sunday services are on Zoom at 10.30am. Details on <https://www.swanage-urc.co.uk/>

PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY ON THE DORSET LOCAL PLAN

SWANAGE - FRI 12TH MARCH

7.30PM - 9.30PM



The Dorset Local Plan will shape how we live in Dorset until 2038... Consultation closes 15th March

- *Will we have the right homes and facilities, in the right places?*
- *Where will we work, be educated, spend leisure time?*
- *How will our communities connect and how will we travel?*
- *Will it help reduce CO2 emissions and protect our environment?*

It's a complex consultation, but just come to the assembly and share your thoughts with others. Everyone welcome!

Join the People's Assembly via Zoom
<https://tinyurl.com/47ht3q23>
or visit DTAction.co.uk for more info.



Co-hosted by



Swanage Area Forum

DORSET ACTION

EVERYONE WELCOME...

You are invited to
Join the People's Assembly on the
DORSET LOCAL PLAN
Via Zoom

Swanage Friday 12th MARCH

7.30pm - 9.30pm

To join this meeting via Zoom go to
<https://tinyurl.com/47ht3q23>
or visit DTAction.co.uk for more info.

The Dorset Local Plan will shape how we live in Dorset until 2038
Consultation closes 15th March


Because of Covid and lockdown, you may be one of those people who have found it difficult and confusing to negotiate the complicated Online Dorset Local Plan Consultation Document, the principal method of responding.

So an easy to follow 'Word' document has been produced. Some of the professional planning jargon has been put into clearer language, so it is easier to understand. You can just complete the areas of the form that you wish to make a comment on, ignoring those that you don't: but, you must complete the details specifically asked for, or your document may be rejected.


This document has been approved for acceptance by Dorset Council.

To obtain your full copy of this email Consultation Word Document, please go to:

<https://dtaction.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Dorset-Local-Plan-response-form-WORD-COPY-V3.docx>



**Dorset Council Local Plan
Consultation
January 2021**



Planning affects us all. The council's planning policies are set out in Local Plans which are the legal starting point in determining planning applications. Public and stakeholder engagement is an important part of the plan making process. Involving residents, businesses, organisations, experts, infrastructure providers and town and parish councils allows local knowledge and expertise to be gathered from a wide range of perspectives.

Dorset Council have produced a draft Local Plan containing proposals for guiding future development in the Dorset Council area up to 2038. The plan outlines the strategy for meeting the needs of the area such as housing, employment, and community services including schools, retail, leisure and community facilities. The plan directs development to the most suitable locations near existing facilities and detailed policies promote high quality development that respects and enhances the character of each area. The plan also protects Dorset's natural environment and contributes towards the mitigation and adaptation to climate change.


Between 18 January 2021 and 15 March 2021 you are able to comment on the proposals.

**A consultation on the plan will begin on
18 January 2021 and end on 15 March 2021**

How can you find out what's in the plan?


The Dorset Council Local Plan consultation will be available on the council's website at www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-council-local-plan

Paper copies of the plan are available for loan from your local Dorset Council library (Covid-19 permitting) www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/libraries-history-culture/libraries/find-your-local-library/dorset-libraries.aspx Find out more at:




We are holding webinars throughout the consultation period on key themes within the plan. Each webinar will last approximately 40 minutes and will consist of a short presentation followed by a question and answer session.

dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-council-local-plan-webinars



We also have a dedicated phone line available during the consultation period
Monday to Friday 01305 252500
10am and 2pm



Town or Parish councils, organisations or community groups can attend a planning surgery during the consultation period to discuss any queries with officers. **Limited spaces are available.**
Telephone 01305 252500 to reserve your slot. Tuesday to Thursday, from 10am until 2pm. If you have any difficulty accessing information please telephone 01305 252500.

RETURN BY EMAIL: You can complete the Consultation Form by typing in your responses and returning, by email to:
planningpolicy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk



A TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR PURBECK

Introduction

The Purbeck Transport Action Group (PTAG) has agreed that there is an urgent need for a Transport Strategy in Purbeck. The area comes under particular pressure in the summer, especially around Studland, Swanage, Sandford, Corfe, Langton Matravers and Dancing Ledge, Lulworth Cove and Durdle Door.

The area has a high accident rate and a high proportion of travel to work by car. There is a need for coordinated action to alleviate the problems of congestion, with its consequences for public safety and the environment. There is also a need to improve connectivity in the area and with limited bus services. There is an important role for rail travel, both on the Swanage Railway and on the Bournemouth-Weymouth line.

Such a strategy could be supported by plans for: traffic management, covering traffic flows and parking, including park and ride; cycling/walking, drawing on the recently announced government initiative 'Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking'; integrated public transport, coordinating and expanding bus and rail services and the Sandbanks Ferry.

PTAG comprises representatives from Parish and Town Councils, as well as all transport modes (including the Purbeck Community Rail Partnership, bus companies and cycling groups) and has offered to assist in drafting such a strategy for consideration by Dorset Council.

Since transport is a major contributor to climate change, this strategy and accompanying plans could be used to inform the transport aspects of the DC Climate Emergency Plan.

It can also be seen as an important step towards sustainable tourism in the area, making use of innovative information systems and incentives in favour of active travel modes and public transport, including shuttle buses, particularly to tourist attractions, to reduce the pressures of visiting traffic on the environment and local communities.

Aims and Objectives

A Purbeck Transport Strategy could have as its aim addressing climate change and ecological emergencies through the optimisation of transport in the area. Specific objectives are tackling traffic congestion and parking problems; protecting and enhancing the environment; improving public safety, health and well-being, with particular attention to school students and the elderly; helping local businesses, including tourism, to prosper; ensuring integration of different transport modes and connectivity in rural areas.

Traffic Management Plan

Part of the Strategy will be to develop a Traffic Management Plan with the aim of identifying principal routes and areas of congestion, with possible measures to alleviate problems. These could include traffic flow control and parking solutions, such as transport interchanges (park and ride) away from the main destinations, with an emphasis on encouraging alternatives to private cars. The plan should look at the area as a whole, since changes in one area will have knock-on effects in other parts. The potential for reducing traffic by moving both passengers and goods off the roads on to rail, using existing facilities should be actively investigated.

Plans for alleviating congestion need to be reviewed, with improved signage and information systems, including advance signing from outside the Purbeck area, together with emergency routing and parking.

Cycling/Walking Plan

Existing and proposed cycle-paths and walking routes should be viewed in the context of connectivity throughout the area including transport hubs, so that deficiencies and 'missing links' can be identified and solutions considered. Safe and convenient routes, with good signage are essential to encourage walking and cycling instead of car use, throughout the area, benefiting health, safety and the environment.

Integrated Public Transport Plan

Bus routes and train services should be assessed, taking account of the ferry connection and school services. An increased role for the railways should be considered and the effect of the fluctuating needs of visitors to the area should be borne in mind, both from the point of view of meeting demands of tourism and supporting local needs. In particular, rural transport 'deserts' need to be identified to address community needs and alleviate isolation, both by extending conventional bus services and by more actively supporting community buses.

Coordination

Modes of transport cannot be considered in isolation as they interact, both positively and negatively. So congestion may be alleviated by improving public transport, or encouraging cycling and walking. Transport interchanges such as the Purbeck Park have the potential to reduce car use and congestion in this way, but the infrastructure and links must be put in place and information and incentives (such as free parking) must be provided. The alternatives must be safe and convenient if they are to be widely used. Rural transport hubs should be considered, with facilities for renting bikes, including e-bikes, Electric vehicle charging points and car-sharing schemes.

Desired outcomes

Some measures of achievement should be set, for example: reduced impact of seasonal traffic; increased use of sustainable transport modes; connection of an identified group of communities to main public transport corridors.

Reduced transport deprivation: connecting older people and younger people to main settlements of health, education and employment.

Increased health and well-being in places blighted by volume and speed of traffic by the early imposition of 20 mph limits

Reduced pollution levels – this would require a monitoring system to be put in place.

The Way forward

This draft Strategy has been used as part of a consultation to invite inputs from local bodies. It will remain as a 'live' document to inform specific proposals for the area. This 'final' version will now be submitted to Dorset Council for consideration in the formulation of wider plans.

N. Ward (PTAG Chair)

nick.ward@myphone.coop

MARCH MEETING ON ECOTOURISM

Planet Purbeck, which now boasts a 400-strong membership despite being founded only five months ago, is hosting a second meeting in March on low impact tourism.

This will look at how Purbeck can attract visitors who are keen on ecology and wildlife without spoiling Purbeck's natural beauty and open spaces.

Date for your diary
7pm Tuesday 16th March 2021

Presenters will include speakers from the National Trust, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, RSPB Arne, the Travel Foundation, Swanage Town Council and leading marketing organisations.

Planet Purbeck's Heidi Florence said:

"There is bound to be a range of views on these topics and we feel it is important to learn from one another and move forward."

"We think Planet Purbeck is becoming the area's main forum for discussion and action on environmental issues and we would like as many people as possible to attend our open nights; we think they will be amazed at what is going on around them behind the scenes."

"These meetings will be on Zoom, which we are using as a popular and successful alternative to large hall gatherings under current restrictions."

To join the ecotourism open meeting

To attend our open zoom meetings, there is no charge and if you want to go along to this meeting, or find out more information about what we do, please go to:

www.planetpurbeck.org.



Photograph by Gwenda Yeomans

SWANAGE DISABLED CLUB

Charity no: 1133375



Swanage Disabled Club would like to thank everyone in the community who used our offer of transport for the Covid Jab programme. We have been privileged to be able to take so many local residents to Wareham for this NHS service and are pleased to still be available for everyone's 2nd jab. Thank you.

This pandemic has affected many people in one way or another, and unfortunately we are in a difficult position now where we desperately need more volunteer drivers for our buses plus escorts for the same. Sadly due to health reasons a couple of our valued volunteers have had to resign, so please consider our plea if you would like to give some time to give to Swanage Disabled Club. Full training will be given, and the more volunteers for this particular vital part of our clubs will make it much easier for everyone. The load can then be spread, thus making more free time for everyone.

Thank you again Swanage for all your support to Swanage Disabled Club.

Please contact **01929 423729** or **01929 425241** for further information.



News from our Energy Sub-group

Solar Streets come to Swanage

Despite lockdown, a lot has been happening on the environmental front in Purbeck.

After declaring a Climate Crisis in September 2019, Swanage Town Council recently published their Environmental Action Plan and it was very well received at a Zoom meeting attended by more than 70 people. Now **Sustainable Swanage**, which is supported by Swanage Town Council and other local organisations and hosted by Dorset Coast Forum, is launching an initiative called Solar Streets, promoting the installation of photovoltaic (PV) solar panels by households and businesses in Swanage and the surrounding villages.

Even though many people are keen to install solar panels, the cost is often a barrier. **Sustainable Swanage** looked for a way of making it more affordable, and came across the Solar Streets initiative in Frome, where lots of houses had had panels installed at a discounted price. The company that did the installation was IDDEA. It was able to offer a reduced price because it can bulk buy panels when it does a lot of installations in one area. For every installation done, IDDEA contributes to a Swanage Sustainable Community Fund – £50 for residential and £100 for commercial – that will be used to fund environmental projects in Swanage.

Sustainable Swanage felt that it would be good to offer this in Swanage and the local area. They are launching **Solar Streets** at an on-line Zoom event:

SOLAR STREETS - Wednesday 17th March at 7pm

The project will be explained and any questions you have answered.

Please register for this meeting at
www.SolarStreets.co.uk/Swanage.

So how much might solar panels cost? Prices will vary according to the size and aspect of the property, and what add-ons are chosen, but the starting price is about £4,000 for a 3-4 bedroom house. It may be possible to get a loan to fund the investment. One provider is Lendology CIC, which works with Dorset and other councils in the South to fund home improvements for their residents.

Anyone in Purbeck is welcome to come to the meeting and hear how Solar Streets works, but for the moment only residents and businesses in South East Purbeck – that's Swanage to Corfe, Studland to Worth – are eligible to apply to the Solar Streets scheme. But if it goes well at this end of Purbeck, then Wareham and its surrounding villages may ask to be the next in line!

*Lucinda Neall - Purbeck Energy Group
 Sustainable Swanage Steering Group*

**SOLAR
 STREETS C1**
 CARBON NEUTRAL CITY



The Downs

Local Nature Reserve Project

A public survey was recently undertaken regarding the above, we had a fantastic response. We are hosting an information evening with Swanage Town Council, to present survey findings, provide background to the project and general information on what Local Nature Reserves are, why it is being considered and what it means. This is also an opportunity to ask further questions. This will be a **Zoom meeting** and the details are:

THE DOWNS NATURE RESERVE

Tuesday 23rd March at 7pm

This zoom meeting should last no more than 1 hour with an option to stay on for further discussion. We welcome everyone with an interest in this project to come along and find out more and ask questions that you may have.

Please register in advance for this meeting:

<https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJcldOmspjiH9VFhPPvtrIIB53m98Aj8-wW>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the meeting.

Take care all and enjoy the signs of spring that are popping up all around!



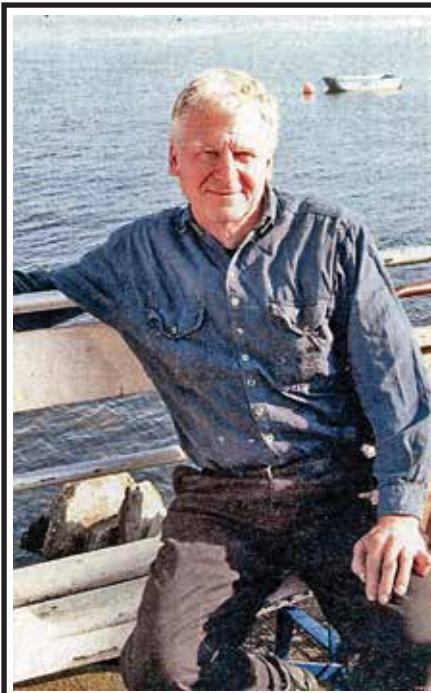


Website: www.swanagemuseum.org.uk

e-mail address: museumswanage@gmail.com



The Albert Memorial site is now making great progress. The site has been excavated to the level of the proposed garden and the walkways around the future, re-erected, Memorial. Shuttering has been erected ready for pouring the reinforced concrete to accept the Memorial once the refurbishment of the existing and cutting the new stone is completed at the Quarry. The foundations have been poured for the walls going behind the Memorial and they are expected to start going up next week.



It is with great sadness that The Swanage Museum committee have learnt that John Page, who was one of our most dedicated and talented volunteers passed away on February 7th. John was the person most responsible for providing the carpentry, joinery, tiling, signwriting and painting skills to the Museum. He also held many leadership positions during his more than 30 years of service and all as an unpaid volunteer. He was one of those people that make Swanage the wonderful community it is.

An interesting fact is that when the site was being investigated it was found that bedrock was near to the surface. It is on the same ridge that forms the reef at Peveril Point. The rock is Purbeck Stone which provides an excellent base for the concrete, for the Memorial, constructed from the same stone.

The four teak benches that will be placed alongside the Memorial to offer the visiting public a beautiful vantage point to rest their weary legs have now been fully sponsored and the adjoining garden plan is taking shape.



THE MOWLEM

Theatre, Cinema & Function Rooms

WE ARE MOVING FORWARD

Many thanks to everyone who has taken the time to complete The Mowlem's questionnaire. At the time of writing we have had over 1500 responses, which is phenomenal and represents a good proportion of the population of Swanage and the surrounding area, so we're confident that we will have a good range of views representing our community.

The survey ends on Sunday 7 March, after which we will analyse the responses and feed them into our plans for both the immediate future and the long-term future of The Mowlem. With such a large response it may take a little time to analyse, but once done we will keep the community informed about our findings and the proposals we have as a result. We will also aim to have some form of continued consultation, hopefully in the form of actual public meetings, once lockdown has lifted!

We are not yet certain of a re-opening date for the Theatre but are hopeful that it will be this summer. Details of our reopening will be on our website and our social media pages, as well as in the displays on the front of the building. You can also sign up to our mailing list at www.themowlem.com



Swanage Pier Awarded almost Half a Million Pounds

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has announced that Swanage Pier Trust is to receive a grant extension to get its restoration project back on track, despite the setbacks created by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Swanage Pier Regeneration Project has been awarded £469,800. It's one of only 22 heritage projects across the country to be successful in getting a share of the £13.5m grant. The open-air Black Country Living Museum in Dudley is to receive the largest slice – it's been awarded £3,740,000.

Major renovation work on Swanage Pier took place in 2018 to replace a number of the wooden piles that support the structure of the pier, alongside the refurbishment of Marine Villas, that now houses the popular hospitality business, the 1859 Pier Cafe and Bistro.

It was hoped that the project, including the replacement of several more piles, would be able to be completed through further fundraising and events but the pandemic meant that the pier had to close and so these plans were put on hold.

Now it's been thrown a lifeline in the way of a grant from the Heritage Capital Kickstart Fund.

Chief executive of Swanage Pier Trust, Ben Adeney said:

"We are absolutely delighted to hear that we've been awarded the grant. This will allow us to complete the work that we started and it will help to safeguard the future of our Victorian pier."

"This is a real investment, not just in the pier but also in our local community. Even though we are a small coastal resort, we're expecting more visitors to Swanage than ever this summer and it's fantastic that we can offer everyone so much to see and do."

"This will help to provide a long-term sustainable future – great news for Swanage!"



THE SWANAGE SCHOOL

COVID testing

Our successful programme of testing will ramp up another notch with all students returning. We have gained a lot of experience since the introduction of school testing in January, having been testing staff, key worker children and, until recently, our primary and nursery school colleagues. Our "testing station" has been expanded to cope with the extra numbers and is ready and waiting for Monday.

GCSEs in 2021

Schools have now received formal guidance on how GCSE grades will be awarded this summer; rest assured we shall be working tirelessly to ensure that our students receive the grades they deserve and have worked so hard for.

Cooking for the Community draws to a close

It has been our pleasure to have been able to support the local community during lockdown by "Cooking for the Community". Since the end of January between 160-200 free meal portions have been freshly prepared and delivered three times a week, totalling some 3,000 portions altogether! The scheme will draw to a close now that students are returning to school - and again our thanks to the Dorset Community Foundation for the funding that made this possible.



Return to school

We are looking forward to welcoming students back to school, to catch up with them face-to-face and to have the school bustling with activity again. We will of course be ensuring we keep everyone as safe as we possibly can.

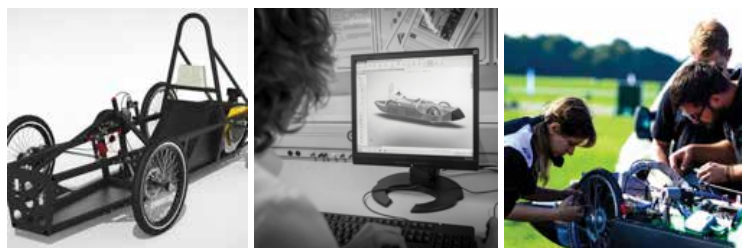
Students' engagement with online learning has been impressive, both in terms of the quality of work that has been produced and the dedication and commitment shown.

STEM at The Swanage School

We've previously mentioned that we are launching a racing team and can announce that our racing car kit has been delivered! In this exciting project, students work together to design and build an electric car and join peers from across the country on national race days. Not only will STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) be brought to life, but students will also have opportunities to gain valuable and enriching experiences beyond the local area. You can find out more about our involvement on our website at

www.theswanageschool.co.uk/news-archive and about the project more generally on the GreenPower website: www.greenpower.co.uk.

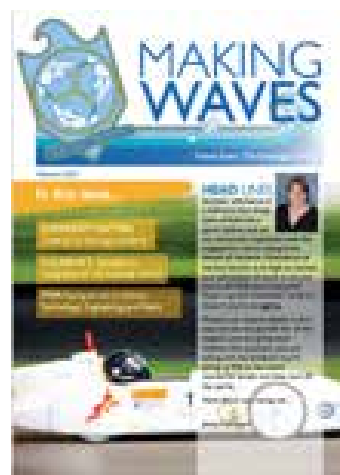
We are looking for sponsors and assistance with technical/logistics support and so if your business would like to be involved please contact DT Teacher Alex Duke on alexduke@theswanageschool.co.uk to register an interest (*image credit: Greenpower*).



Swanage School News

We invite you all to keep up with our news, the achievements of our students and the ways in which we are engaged with local community projects through our half-termly newsletters (which you'll find on our website:

www.theswanageschool.co.uk/news-archive) and by following us on Facebook.



Spring is Coming!

Durlston in March always feels full of promise – like sitting at the top of a rollercoaster just before the plunge into spring! The first Cowslips are already blooming in the meadows and over the next month, they will transform the fields with a tide of bobbing yellow flowers.

In the woods, recent tree work has bathed parts of the woodland floor with light and Snowdrops, Primroses, Spring Crocus and the lovely 'sunshine' flowers of Lesser Celandine are already in bloom. Around them, fresh, fragrant leaves of Ramsons jostle for space with those of Cow Parsley, Herb Robert and Lords and Ladies, while Horse Chestnuts are covered with sticky buds and Hazel catkins dance in the breeze.

Resident seabirds are becoming more active as they prepare for the breeding season. Shags carry nesting material, pairs of Razorbills and Guillemots renew their bonds on the water and Fulmars can be heard cackling from the cliff crevices. At sea, Scoter, Divers and Mergansers continue to pass, while the first Sandwich Terns, Swallows and Sand Martins should be returning after spending winter in Africa. Foxes or a Black Redstart may be around Tilly Whim, and on the cliff, the white-flowered Early Scurvy Grass begins to bloom.

The spring migration is getting underway in earnest with the arrival of Wheatears and overhead passage of Meadow Pipits and Pied Wagtails, plus an occasional glimpse of a quick visiting Ring Ouzel. From the top of the yellow flowering Gorse bush a Yellowhammer or a Stonechat is likely to be seen.

Towards the tail of the month the beautiful white flowers of the Blackthorn will be on show. The early flowers starting to show on the short downland turf include Whitlow Grass and Hairy Violet. A warm day will bring Brimstone and Small Tortoiseshell butterflies to sight and reptiles such as Common Lizard, Slow Worm and Adder may emerge to bask in the sunlight.

The woodland chorus from Blackbird, Dunnock, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Coal Tit, Chiffchaff and Goldcrest can be joined by the thin seep of a Treecreeper. A striking Bullfinch is often glimpsed amongst the new leaves, whilst in the branches Grey Squirrels take part in chases bouncing from one tree to the next.

Caravan Terrace Winter Wonderland!

The brief cold snap in February saw not only a (brief) dusting of snow, but also the transformation of Caravan Terrace (alongside Durlston Castle) into a winter wonderland for a few days. The water, which leaches between the Purbeck Beds, normally creating a rare 'Tufa Spring', creating 'stalactites' on the cliff face instead was transformed into a beautiful display of icicles! These lovely photos were taken by Catherine, while if you have a look at our Facebook page

[Facebook.com/Durlston](https://www.facebook.com/Durlston), you can watch a video of our Ranger Ben getting very excited by them! If you got any of your own photos of this unusual sight to share (or have any other pictures for future newsletters, do send them through!



Seventhwave Cafe News

After a long, cold, lonely winter (of bad coffee!) we are really pleased that Emily and her team from Seventhwave will be reopening the kiosk at Durlston (just next to the Castle) from Thursday 11th March!

The kiosk will be open from Thursdays to Sundays between 11am and 4pm, selling hot and cold drinks, ice-creams, cakes and hot food, if you've worked up an appetite! Do come up and support them while you are enjoying a walk!

Durlston - Whatever the Weather!

The Rangers have been making daily weather records at Durlston since 1988, ably assisted by volunteer meteorologists Dot Kerridge and Howard Oliver. Over the last few months volunteer Hilarie Lewis has been working with our daily weather records to provide summaries of the last few years. We (well, Hilarie!) are now up to date and we thought you might like to see from our recordings what 2020 was like!

Nationwide, 2020 was a year of extremes with the wettest February on record, the sunniest spring, a heatwave in the summer and a day in October breaking rainfall records. 2020 was one of the top five hottest on record for the UK, but also one of the top ten wettest and the top ten sunniest years.

Winter (Dec 2019, Jan, Feb) was the 5th wettest on record (Met Office records from 1862) for the UK, as well as the 5th mildest. The strong jet stream high in the atmosphere allowed a succession of Atlantic low pressure systems to push across the UK, including Storms Ciara, Dennis and Jorge in February. Rainfall totals were well above normal virtually everywhere, with many places getting more than three times their expected average. It was the wettest February on record with the UK recording 237% of its average rainfall. It was also the fifth wettest of any calendar month on record.

Spring (March, April, May). There was a marked change to much drier and more settled weather patterns in mid-March, and the UK had a record-breaking sunny spring. It proved to be the sunniest April and also the sunniest spring with 626.2 hours of sunshine (Met Office records from 1919). The UK saw more sunshine than in most summers, with only three summer seasons being sunnier (1976, 1995, and 1989).

It was the eighth warmest spring on record for the UK, with both England and Wales having their fifth warmest spring on record and the fifth driest spring for the UK overall.

Summer (June, July, Aug) was warmer, wetter and duller than average with all months seeing some settled, hot spells. The third hottest day ever recorded in the UK, 37.8°C, was recorded at Heathrow Airport on July 31st. Unseasonable weather brought Summer 2020 to a close with two named storms, Storm Ellen on August 19th and Storm Francis on August 24th; two of the most notable August storms in the last 50 years.

Autumn (Sept, Oct, Nov) was marginally warmer than average; a relatively sunny and dry September gave way to a dull and wet October balancing out rainfall and sunshine for the autumn overall.

The strong winds and heavy rain from Storm Alex (Oct 2nd) brought some impacts and travel disruption, while large waves affected parts of the south coast exposed to the east – for example at Swanage. Oct 3rd provisionally holds the record for the UK's wettest day on record, (Met Office records from 1891).

November was generally mild, with fewer frosts than usual.

December was generally unsettled and mild but with some colder interludes. Very wet weather affected parts of south-west England and south Wales just after mid-month. Heavy rains led to flooding and Storm Bella brought more heavy rain and strong winds to parts of the UK on December 26th with the highest wind gust of 2020 (106 mph) recorded on the Isle of Wight.

At Durlston

Winter (Dec 2019, Jan, Feb). Lots of rain and mud although there were a few settled spells! 441mm rain were recorded, about 50% more than the 30 year Durlston average. Nationwide, February was the wettest on record. The winter was generally mild and although there were some frosts, the temperatures didn't fall below zero which is unusual, even at Durlston.

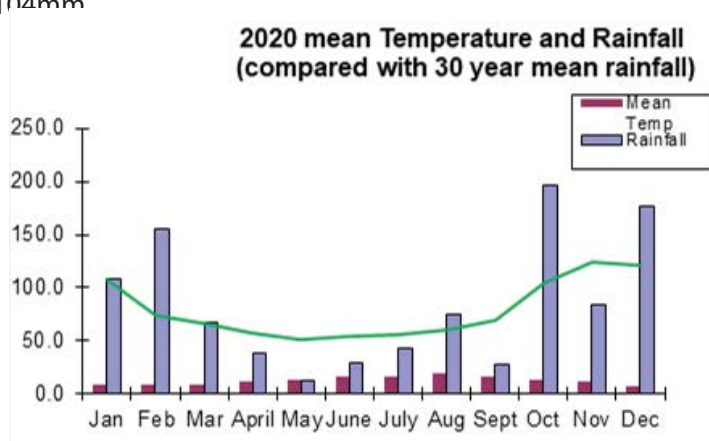
Spring (March – June). Fortunately the rains stopped just as the first National lockdown started and there was a long dry spell from mid-March – mid-Aug when Durlston received less than half the average rainfall for this period. Rain cells passing inland missed the Park. It was sunny for most of the time and nationally both the month of April and the Spring season were the sunniest on record.

Summer (July – Sept). The hottest temperatures were recorded in August and temperatures didn't drop below 19 °C for several nights. The 9th August temperature of 31.3C has only been beaten once on 23 June 2017 (31.9C). There were strong winds in the second half of August as Durlston felt the remnants of Storm Ellen and storm Francis. September was calm and dry until 23rd when it turned colder and wetter.

Autumn (Oct – Nov). Storm Alex in early October caused damage in Swanage and was accompanied by significant rain. Nationwide 3rd October was the UK's wettest day on record since records began in 1891. At Durlston, October's rainfall total of 197mm was almost double the rolling 30 year mean of 104mm

Winter (Dec). The month was generally wet and windy, sunny at Christmas, followed by Storm Bella with 62mph gust and frosts at year end.

There were some very wet and some very dry months in 2020 as you can see from the graph below. The total rainfall for 2020 was 1013.1mm, slightly above the rolling 30 year mean of 945mm.





Photograph by Greg Farrington

A Dorset National Park would help our Economy and Communities to thrive

The Government's road-map and the Chancellor's Budget remind us how important a thriving economy is to the health and wellbeing of local people and our communities.

A Dorset National Park would help secure a thriving, successful and sustainable future for our communities and economy. The **economic and social case** for a National Park is strong. National Parks' role is not only to conserve and enhance the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote health and wellbeing, and enjoyment and understanding of the area. They also have a duty to **"seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities"** and, as part of this, a duty to respond proactively to local housing needs including for affordable homes. National Parks **support thriving local communities and contribute to economic success** in wide-ranging ways, for example by helping to develop affordable housing, by promoting local employment and skills, and by supporting local services such as public transport. A National Park works in **close partnership with local communities** and councils, local businesses and voluntary groups, farmers and landowners.

An independent report for the former Dorset County Council said that **Dorset's environment is its greatest economic asset**, worth at least £1.5bn a year. A follow-on report confirmed that a National Park would offer **wide-ranging economic opportunities and benefits, add value to the area's economy**, boost jobs and skills, lead to higher value tourism including eco, heritage and cultural tourism opportunities, and assist the marketing and branding of Dorset products and services, including food and drink. National Park status would enhance the business and tourism offer and be a unique selling point (USP) for Purbeck and all Dorset.

Please encourage your local council and businesses to support the proposed Dorset National Park and help to make this a reality. You can sign up for e-news here: www.dorsetnationalpark.com

The Dorset National Park Team



Photograph by Richard Brown

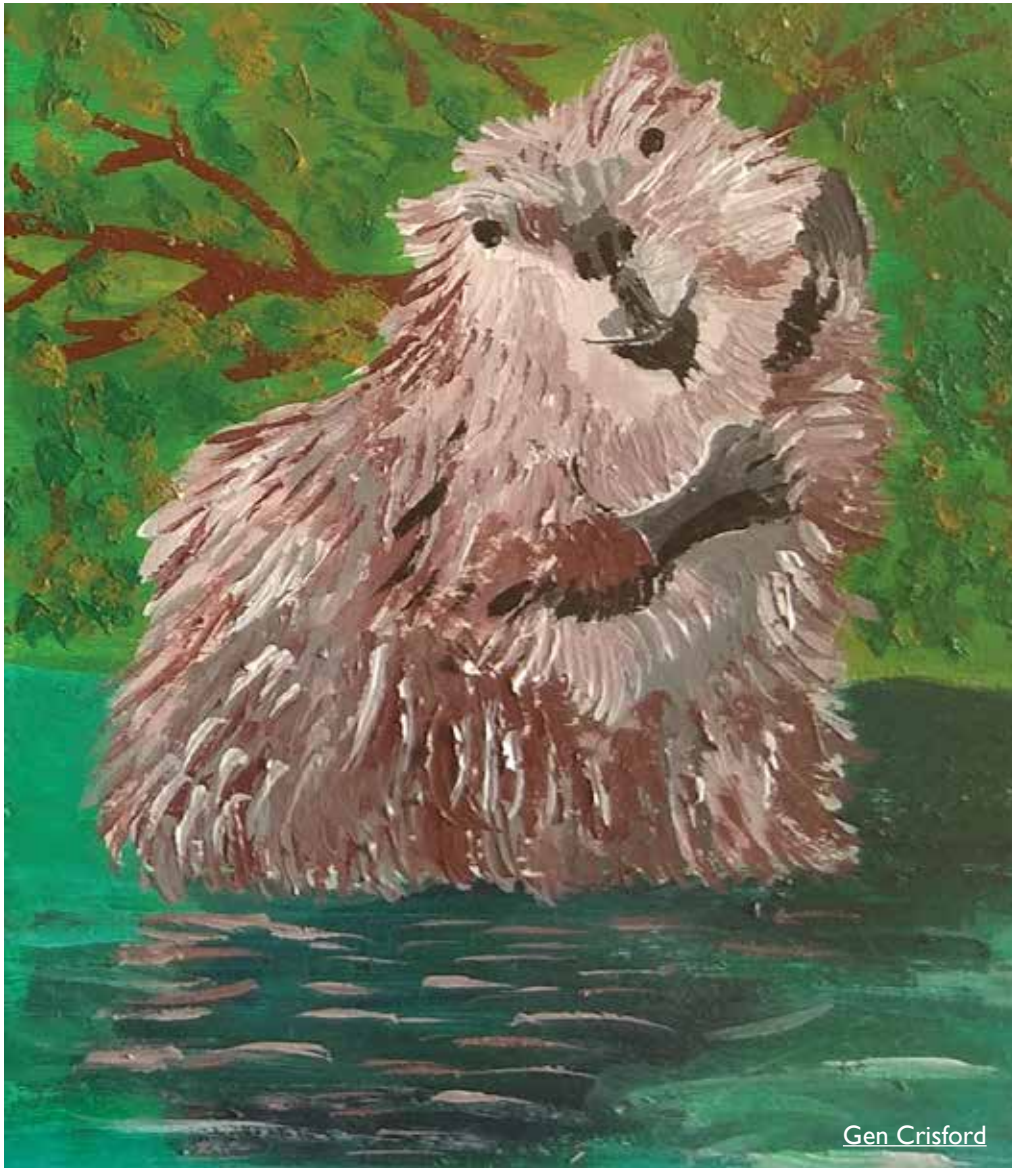
PHASING BEAVERS BACK

Gen Crisford, Engagement Officer for the Purbeck Beaver Project

Beavers are having a bit of a moment, aren't they? Reintroductions continue to grow in popularity as beavers are enlisted to help in the fight to save nature around the country. Seeing their return to West Dorset in the last month, in an enclosed project run by the Dorset Wildlife Trust (please note no public access), is an exciting local milestone and a welcome, optimistic news story amidst the current normal.

In 2019 I began talking with local landowners, residents and people with various different interests, to see what everyone thought about the idea of bringing beavers back to the Isle of Purbeck.

Thank you very much to those of you who took the time to participate in this. The feedback from everyone has been really encouraging – not only in that it has revealed lots of enthusiasm for the cause, but also in the open and honest way that people are able to share ideas. This has helped to understand and identify the long-term support systems that would be needed, to help us as a whole community to live alongside beavers again. Following a little project pause for much of 2020, a phased proposal to bringing beavers back has been developed to reflect this.



PHASE 1

The land around Little Sea at Studland is recommended for Phase One because of the highly suitable habitats, which are already managed primarily for nature. Beavers can help to improve these habitats, creating space within the wet woodland and benefiting struggling plant and insect species. Little Sea is also naturally contained, in that it is surrounded by sea and dry heath, both inhospitable to the freshwater species, so they are unlikely to spread easily from here. Should an escape occur during phase one, the policy would be to trap and return the animals. We will need permission from DEFRA and sufficient funding to go ahead with phase one, but we hope that this may be possible later this year.

PHASE 2

Phase Two would involve us working closely with other landowners to potentially return beavers across the Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve. This brings with it expansive environmental benefits, especially if including the lower reaches of the Corfe River (from below Castle View) where issues of excess nutrients and water quality can be addressed. Before this can happen, local management agreements and support schemes need to be in place to incentivise space for nature, and these need to be in line with upcoming government policies on beaver management and environmental land management. So, there are still a few ducks to line up and we will keep working with everyone to achieve this.

PHASE 3

Phase Three would mark the moment when beavers are allowed to make their return to the wider Dorset landscape, and transition to be a native part of our local wildlife.

All parts of this process will benefit hugely from the involvement of local residents, landowners and community groups, and I will be keeping in touch about opportunities for practical participation once we are all able to get together again.

For now though, why not find out about beavers and the amazing things they do? If I can help with this, or if you would like to get in touch to provide or find out more information about the project proposal, please send me an email on

gen.crisford@nationaltrust.org.uk.

If you would like to get involved in any of our projects drop Tom Clarke, our Engagement Officer a line at tom.clarke@nationaltrust.org.uk



Kit Feeding - Terry Bagley



A Beaver swimming in the River at Holnicote - Mike Symes/Devon Wildlife Trust

SNIPPETS FROM STUDLAND



STUDLAND PARISH COUNCIL

The Council welcomes the initiative by the National Trust to create a path joining up the bridleway from Nine Barrow Down to the Heath via Currendon Farm. This route is based on a former right of way. The route is expected to be open by the summer. It will allow walkers safe access from the heath to Corfe Castle. The issues of making the route into a bridleway and addressing the unacceptable behaviour of a minority of cyclists have still to be addressed.

Further linking of paths from the Obelisk to Ulwell via Currendon Bottom, and from Holmdene to the beach are being explored. Additional paths previously used may need to be registered before June 2026 or they will be lost to public access. The Studland Parish Plan recommended joining up the footpaths. Take a look at the Studland Parish Plan via Google.

There are ongoing concerns over the safety of elderly residents crossing the Swanage Road to visit the village stores. Speeding cyclists sometimes shouting abuse have been witnessed recently. Efforts are being made to have additional road markings, and a 20mph speed limit. Maybe a local speed watch group?

Increasingly visitor vehicles are parking across drive entrances, staying all day, and parking on green verges rather than making use of the National Trust car parks. Dorset Council is being asked how it can assist with resolving these matters.

It is not clear what if any additional measures will be in place to deal with managing visitor capacity to the area. The tensions between access, excess and tourism do not seem to feature on the horizons of those organisations who have the ability to contribute to this matter. Why?

Contact details: www.studlandparishcouncil.org

THE PURBECK SOCIETY

The civic society has major concerns with the consultation on the **Dorset Local Plan**. The identification of more than 150 additional houses for Swanage appears to have no impact analysis and will extend the sprawl of the town. Who will these houses be for? Who will gain from the development? How will local residents and young persons be given an opportunity to have adequate local housing when the affordability issue is not addressed? Next time you visit Ballard Down and Nine Barrow Down you will see just how much the area has changed by building creep. The coherence of the area may well be compromised by the gradual merging of Langton into Swanage and the extension of Swanage towards Godlingston. Surely there are more relevant sites for gypsies in Purbeck than on a flooded area close to Washpond Lane?

All residents and organisations are urged to respond to the Dorset Local Plan and to write to Richard Drax MP about your concerns. Please do this as there is nothing quite like letters to our local MP. So much of the Local Plan process is driven by remote central government via a housing formula rather than a local housing methodology. We need our local MP to stand up for the area.

Contact details: www.purbeckociety.co.uk

THE CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND (CPRE)

The Dorset Local Plan consultation is the major issue at the moment. Members have the opportunity to join a virtual meeting to discuss the plan on 10.03.21. Details available from the website along with the opportunity to sign up to a monthly newsletter. The argument for extending the consultation period is strong as is the need to start again.

Where development has been identified as creating harm, much of current thinking is towards the mitigation of such harm by creating an alternative location for nature. In the development of the Purbeck Local Plan, Natural England actively promoted offsetting by the use of SANGs (Sites for Alternative Natural Green Spaces). Whilst superficially attractive this approach is a compromise and side steps the real issue-that of avoidance of harm. Dorset CPRE claims that bodies such as Natural England and even Dorset Wildlife Trust should adopt the approach of avoidance rather than mitigation. Such an approach is in line with the recent Dasgupta review for the Treasury where the loss of precious eco systems is highlighted. Lets think this through - what does the excessively large SANG created in a green field off Northbrook Road in Swanage really add to enhancing our local environment?

Hedgerows - a project on the Hampshire border by the Merley Estate has received national funding. This is to create new hedges. CPRE Nationally has a campaign to create more hedges. In Purbeck there is a case for better management of the hedges. Flailing of hedges is destroying wildlife and damaging habitats. It is surprising that Dorset Wildlife Trust is not proactive in profiling this concern.

The Green Belt in east Dorset is threatened by proposals in the Dorset Local Plan. It appears that Dorset Council are willing to encroach upon the designated green belt land even though brownfield sites such as the former Poole Power station lay ripe for local development. Whatever is going wrong with planners?

Please take a look at the website for regular updates on matters relating to the protection of rural Dorset. Maybe even become a supporter or member?

Contact details: www.dorset-cpre.org.uk



Community Project to improve the Churchyard for Wildlife at St Nicholas, Worth Matravers

The Church and the environmental group Worth Planet Action have initiated a Community project to improve the churchyard for wildlife, which will maintain and develop the Churchyard as a vibrant and thriving, wildlife-rich area without sacrificing any of its peace, attractiveness, history and accessibility for the whole village and its visitors.

Even though we have to deal with Covid this year, we at least aim to :-

- map the Churchyard and survey and record the species
- establish a new wildflower bank in the area by the 'Holy Bees'
- experiment with different mowing regimes to provide a patchwork of varying grass lengths to benefit different flowering plants
- put up bat, bird and invertebrate boxes
- make log and leaf piles to encourage invertebrates (and maybe a Hedgehog?!)
- lay the hedges
- divide and increase the existing Snowdrops and Primroses
- use no pesticides and herbicides

We have already had offers of help for hedgelaying, bird and batboxes have been donated and are ready to be put up and we are getting ahead with some of the more regular jobs. Do let me know if you can help in any way, one off or regularly. Everyone welcome! There will be news of our progress in [The Dubber](#) and we hope to have an explanatory noticeboard in the Church.

There will shortly be an opportunity to record any wildlife that you see in the Churchyard, using a book/pen that will be kept in the Church Porch (it's always open!). We are also aiming to put these sightings on a national Database, probably [iRecord](#).

St Nicholas has also joined [Ecochurch](#), run by the charity A Rocha, which provides a framework to help churches improve their care for the environment in every aspect of church life. St George's in Langton have already been awarded the Bronze level, as have All Saints and St. Marks in Swanage.

Keep in touch with Worth Planet Action with our email newsletter and/or the WhatsApp group. All welcome to join, just send me your details.

Kathy Hollidge, kathy.hollidge@gmail.com 01929 290210



Photograph by Gwenda Yeomans



HARMANS CROSS VILLAGE HALL

Dear All,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well. At least we now have some light at the end of the Covid tunnel, after the government's easing lockdown plan was announced this week. HXVH has received more enquiries regarding the restarting of activities. Our reading of the guidance, if all goes to plan, is that the hall can reopening for **indoor sport and exercise classes from May 17th**, with Covid secure / social distancing requirements still in place.

Hopefully from June 21st all activities can resume, albeit we expect some of the Covid secure measures will still be needed and we await further guidance nearer the time.

In the meantime I am delighted to announce the following:-

The Post Office Service will resume **Thursday March 4th 2021 9.30-11.30**. Please use this service, otherwise we risk losing it.

The HXVH AGM will be held at 3pm on May 21st. We will wait until end April to communicate details but are hopeful we can have up to 30 people in the hall/patio areas, with Covid-secure measures in place and weather permitting.

To all our **'let-in volunteers'** we will run a briefing session or two before reopening on June 21st.

The Movie Night team will decide when it is safe and cost-effective to reopen for this activity, but more likely this will be after the summer.

Finally, we are hoping to run the **August Bank Holiday Fete on August 30th**. We shall start to plan for it. It may need to be scaled down but we will keep our options open for now.

Over the next two months we will be getting the hall ready for reopening. If anyone can give some time to help please let Alison Clough know (alison.clough@btinternet.com). Or call her on 07768 558341.

We all look forward to getting back in our hall, for the various activities, when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, our very best wishes to you all.

Alison Clough
(Chair of HXVH Management Committee)



Photographs by Gwenda Yeomans



Corfe Castle Parish Council

MARCH NEWS

Parish Caretaker

It was agreed to employ a Parish Caretaker on a self-employed basis, to help look after our wonderful parish. The role will entail duties such as, keeping the square clean and clear during the summer, maintaining all Parish assets such as the playground, cleaning road signs, general grounds maintenance to name a few. To start the role will be based on an average of 5 hours a week which can be organised flexibly. Please see our advertisement in the March issue of Corfe Valley News. If this role is something you like the sound of, please contact the Clerk for the detailed job specifications.

Playground OPEN again

Last month the Parish Council had to notify you that the playground had to be closed due to storm damage to the fence, however it is with delight we can now let you know that the playground is OPEN again as the repair works have been carried out.

Playground Refurbishment

After an initial consultation with the public back in December 2019, and listening to what the parishioners stated they wished to see installed, Corfe Castle Parish Council is excited to let you know that new play equipment for the age range of 8+ is being investigated and will be installed where the adult fitness equipment is currently situated. It is hoped to place an order in the next few weeks. If you have any concerns or views on this, please contact the Clerk.

Footpath from Woodyhyde to Corfe Castle Village

The National Trust & Parish Council are still making progress with the permissive footpath from Woodyhyde to Corfe Castle village. A new pathway has been cut into the grass, and new signs and gates are on the way.

West Street Toilet Contract

Corfe Castle Parish Council is very proud of the West Street Toilets and have over the past couple of years enjoyed reading some of the comments emailed to the Clerk by visitors stating the West Street Toilets are one of the cleanest public toilets they have visited. With this in mind, as the cleaning contract was due to end this year, the Council have agreed as stated within the original contract to extend the current agreement for 1 year. Corfe Castle Parish Council would like to thank JD Facilities for all their hard work and dedication to keep Corfe Castle Clean.

Annual General Meeting & Annual Parish Meeting

The Parish Council have provisionally set 10th May 2021 for the Annual General Meeting and the 24th May 2021 for the Annual Parish Meeting. Both these dates are subject to change should current regulations continue for mass gatherings.

Planning & Licensing Matters

Swanworth Quarry update

Natural England have objected to the Swanworth enhancements, however they suggested ways in which the company can mitigate the problems that Natural England foresee. The Board for the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has also objected.

A planning consultant to Dorset Council Susie Coin is now dealing with the application and has stated that no recommendation can be made at the moment, as formal requests have been submitted to the applicant for further information and therefore the process is currently suspended. Once available the further information will be advertised, and the Parish Council will comment further.

Update from Dorset Council

Due to lockdown and staff shielding, some Dorset Council staff are being re-deployed to other areas, for example some of the highways team are driving the dust bin lorries, so please if you need to contact Dorset Council be patient and be reassured services will return to normal shortly.

The proposed footpath from Purbeck Park to Corfe Castle, is progressing, albeit slowly, and it is hoped there will be more to report back on by the next Parish Council meeting in March.

Dorset Council is looking at car parking charges and has set up area working groups including one for Corfe Castle and Wareham. The Parish Council sees West Street remaining as a minimum 3-hour car park, but a special low charge is needed for those visiting the surgery.

Update from the National Trust

The plan at the moment is for Corfe Castle to re-open on Monday 29th March which is the Monday prior to Good Friday. This will be subject to change depending on the national picture. The National Trust do not see Corfe Castle as an exercise location but as a tourist location, so if lockdown is still in place the Castle will not open. If the castle can open the National Trust plan on reducing the number of entries per day by about half compared to last summer, when about 1700 people were allowed in. A pre-booking system will also be the only method of entry.

Next month David Brown (Partnership Landscape Manager for the National Trust) will give a presentation to the Parish Council during the March monthly meeting on what the trust is doing to reach Carbon Net Zero within the Purbeck area and nationally.



Corfe Castle Parish Council

The next Council meeting will be on the 8th March 2021 at 7pm via Zoom. The Public is welcome to attend and participate in the public half hour at the start of the Council meeting. Details will be posted on the website and on Facebook.

For further information please contact the Clerk Michelle Harrington, e-mail Corfecastlepc@aol.com – 34 Egmont Road, Poole Dorset BH16 5BZ, or telephone 01202 670105. Full minutes of the meetings are available on the Website www.corfecastlepc.org.uk or a postal copy can be requested through the Clerk.

Do not forget to follow us on Facebook, for all the latest updates at <https://www.facebook.com/CorfeCastlePC>

JOB VACANCY

Corfe Castle Parish Council – Parish Caretaker

Corfe Castle Parish Council is seeking to appoint a “Parish Caretaker”. A local person with passion and a caring nature for the area within the Parish Boundaries. The main duties are keeping the Parish clean, maintaining Parish assets (such as the playground), small repairs and jobs, cutting back overgrown and encroaching hedges, clearing leaves as well as identifying and reporting damage or hazards.

Typically working for around 5 hours per week, the ideal candidate will be physically fit, have experience of safety and hazard identification and also enjoy working outdoors. The specific hours of work will by agreement with the Clerk and may vary from 5 hours in one session for part of the year and daily for an hour in busier periods.

You will be expected to use your own vehicle and equipment. The rate of pay is negotiable; however, the Council has budgeted for £15 per hour.

For an information pack containing the Job Description and Contract Details, please contact Michelle Harrington - Parish Clerk, 01202 670105 or email corfecastlepc@aol.com.

Applications can be sent to Michelle Harrington, 34 Egmont Road, Poole Dorset BH16 5BZ or emailed to corfecastlepc@aol.com.

The deadline for applications is close of business on 15th March 2021



Aquarius the ladies group based in Corfe Castle, had their first Zoom AGM afternoon earlier this week - and what a success it was! We could never have thought we would get over 35 attending. It seems those that are able to, are getting more and more adventurous with the technology and their keenness to see their fellow Aquarians overcome their reluctance to engage with the gadgetry. This does not mean that we intend functioning in this way for good, but does show how adaptable we can be. It was particularly nice to see so many smiling faces and for them to share their views. It is just a pity that there were still some people without access to computers that were unable to join us.

As usual, the AGM gave an opportunity to review what had been achieved over the last year and despite the Coronavirus situation it was a remarkably diverse and well-supported set of activities. Wherever we had been able to, in line with the Govt. Guidelines, we had taken as full advantage of the opportunities available as possible. We also had time to change our Bank Account and to continue donating to our chosen charities, although the amount was understandably reduced from previous years, due to less ability to raise funds. We are looking at ways to improve on this for the future.

We have continued our regular ‘phoning sessions to check on members’ wellbeing and have instituted a Spring inspired photo sharing of pictures from gardens and walks to raise peoples’ spirits. The ‘Twiddle Blanket-making’ is continuing well and we saw pictures of some of the inspirational squares already made. We hope that once we are allowed to join together again that is when they will be made into small blankets for us to give to the relevant Care Homes.

Our main hope for the future, of course, is that we will soon be able to meet again, face-to-face in the Covid-secure Village Hall, but we have to wait a while before that is possible. If the vaccination programme continues as well as it is, with no unexpected hazards, then that should be in a couple of months. We have an exciting programme of talks ready to go for either Zoom or face-to-face and look forward to a members’ celebration in the summer, when that is possible.

We would very much like to welcome new members. If you are new to the village or surrounding area and would like to join Aquarius please contact me at the number below It is a great way of meeting people and making friends.

Chris Kemp (Joint Chair) 01929 480007



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS® is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. ... Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other **alcoholics** to achieve sobriety.

This is a very unusual time. It is stressful for many people in many new ways. Some people turn to alcohol to help them cope and get through it. This can be more of a danger than a help to some of us. If you think you have a problem with alcohol we can help:

IF DRINK IS COSTING YOU MORE THAN MONEY
then we can help you. Please telephone our free Helpline today:
0800 917 7650

Swanage & Wareham Depression Support Group

Who Are We?

We are a group of local people in our communities who experience depression or anxiety.

We are not experts, but we know how it feels. At this terrible time with Covid and Lockdown we cannot meet face-to-face at the moment, but we find that a problem shared, is a problem halved.

Weekly Zoom Meetings

Swanage & Wareham Depression Support Group meet weekly, on WEDNESDAYS at 7.00PM.

For those of you who have never used this new way of communicating in these lonely and isolated times, please do not be put off. We can easily set you up with a link through your email address.

You will be very welcome.

Contact us with confidence

To get in touch please contact Nick on nickviney@hotmail.com
Or to find out more please call Nick on 01929 439121 or Mary on 01929 426896

**REMEMBER: THERE'S LIGHT
AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL**



**DOMESTIC ABUSE
CAN
AFFECT ANYONE**

WE ARE HERE TO HELP:

YOU FIRST (Dorset Council)
0800 032 5204

OUTREACH (POOLE-BOURNEMOUTH)
01202 710 777

WOMEN'S AID
email – helpline@womensaid.org.uk

**24HR NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE -
HELPLINE 0808 2000 247**

DORSET POLICE in an emergency **CALL 999**
or go to
www.dorset.police.uk/abuse-help

LOCAL SHOPS, RESTAURANTS, AND BUSINESSES SAY: "WE'RE STILL HERE FOR YOU"

Because we are now in National Lockdown 3, these and many other shops, and businesses etc, are open under government's stiffer rules, Some are continuing to offer special services, allowing residents to phone with their orders, pay over phone, and then either collect at an agreed time and in some cases, Free Delivery is still offered

So, still worth trying those listed below, if you require their help

BALLARD DOWN STORES - 10 Redcliffe Rd, North Swanage - Fresh fruit/veg - newsagents, drinks, frozen foods - much more

BUDGENS SUPERMARKET Station Rd - baked, fresh, packaged goods **01929 422478**
(order by phone, pay over phone, can be picked up from store with assistance)

BURT'S BITS, 11 Station Rd, Swanage - Household goods and much more

CHOCOCO - chocolates and sweet treats **01929 408288**

COSTCUTTERS - 208 High St, Swanage - Fresh fruit/veg, butchers, frozen goods, general store, newsagents and much more

COUNTRY FOODS, 37 Station Rd - Shop open Mon-Sat 9am-4pm. **07789 289289**
THURS ONLY FREE DELIVERY (Orders over £25) to Swanage area only

COURT HILL STORES - Ordering & accept payment for goods on phone **01929 424796**

FOLEYS GARAGE SPAR SHOP HX - Grocery Orders taken 10am-12noon FREE DELIVERY
to: HX, Corfe, Langton, Kingston, Swanage, Studland **01929 480097 to order**

MASALA INDIAN CUISINE - Indian takeaway offering delivery website **01929 427299**
www.masalaswanage.co.uk

McCOLLS - 6 Institute Rd, Swanage - Newsagents, food, and much more

JJ MOORES BUTCHERS - Meat, frozen ready meals, fresh fruit & veg **01929 424891**

NIXONS HOME HARDWARE, - Station Rd, Swanage - DIY store - many goods

PET-LUV - Pet food, fish food, rabbit food, much more FREE DELIVERY **01929 426227**

PURBECK VALET - Dry cleaners & launderette - collection/del.service **01929 424900**

THE SALT PIG - Butchers, ready meals, eggs, veg, fish (Tel: orders) **01929 423616**

WH SMITH 5 Station Rd, Swanage - Newsagents and much more

SWANAGE BAY FISH - Wet fish and shellfish **01929 422288**

SWANAGE NEWS 47 Station Rd - Newsagents, books, art+crafts, etc

SWANAGE & PURBECK TAXIS - **07969 927424**

(Pick up and deliver grocery orders - order and pay directly from supplier by phone then phone our taxi company)



SWANAGE COMMUNITY CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION WEBPAGE:
<https://www.swanage.gov.uk/Community-information.aspx>