



DORMINGTON & MORDIFORD GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Report 2011-12



It is a pleasure to present my second annual report as Chairman of your Parish Council. Following the elections in May 2011, the newly elected Councillors quickly settled in and have already contributed significantly. They bring a fresh approach and have been good at challenging the status quo. I am particularly personally grateful for the support of Melanie Preedy, our Parish Clerk, Ray Dickson, Vice-Chair, and all Councillors while I was incapacitated during my recent series of eye operations. Thank you all!

Like most years, we have made good progress in some areas and less in others. Sadly, we did not receive sufficient interest in using the Iron Room as a community venue. This is frustrating as much time and effort has been put into bringing the building to a certain standard, but more work still needs to be done. We have decided to maintain the lease for another year and hope that we can find a sustainable solution. Equally, we have had a delay on being able to adopt and 'beautify' the 'Village Green' opposite the Moon at Mordiford. We hope that this will now proceed this year.

However, excellent progress has been made with the Affordable Housing Development at Sufton Rise. West Mercia Housing, Herefordshire Council Planning Department, the Parish Council and local residents have worked positively together to develop and refine the plans, based on residents' views and planning/drainage requirements. We are now very close to the final project being submitted for planning approval which will be a further opportunity for you to have your input. This single project will deliver three key 'wishes' identified by you in the Parish Plan – affordable housing, play area and allotments.

Of course, less glamorous day-to-day-activities still have to be done and we have tried to promptly respond to planning applications, requests for highway repairs, footpath maintenance and jobs for the lengthsman. With increasing emphasis on the Big Society and 'local democracy', the role of the Parish Council is changing. We will undoubtedly be expected to take on new responsibilities and a good example of this is our cooperation with Fownhope Parish Council to reinstate the bus service from Sufton Rise to Ross. The first bus received wide publicity on TV, radio and in the Hereford Times and although the service is only once a month, it really is a case of 'use it or lose it'. I hope you will support this initiative which is being watched nationally as an example of 'localism' at work.

Finally, as I said last year, please remember that we are your representatives. We are always pleased to welcome members of the public at our monthly meetings and your feedback to our regular newsletter 'The Dragon', through the Clerk or any Councillor. The year ahead brings plenty of excitement and opportunity, not least the local Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and we look forward to your continuing support, participation and encouragement.

Nick Brewin
Dormington & Mordiford Group Parish Chairman

New Projects:

Queens Diamond Jubilee – a group of residents and parish councillors worked hard during 2012 to help plan activities to celebrate the Jubilee. The Parish Council allocated some money within their annual budget to support these activities and further money was raised through community fund-raising.

Unfortunately the project which residents supported under the **Participatory Budgeting** scheme during 2010 is still under negotiation, but this year residents voted to spend £500 on a bench at Checkley Barn Picnic Site. A bench and table are being made by Morgans and sons and will soon be in place. If you want to know where this beautiful site is please see the walk leaflets produced by the Parish Council on our website (under publications).

On-going activities:

Only six **planning applications** were received during the year, which is a reduction on last year. The Parish Council is able to comment on all planning applications received by Herefordshire Council that relate to the parish.

Applications are placed on the Parish Council website for residents to comment. Planning applications are discussed at Parish Council meetings where possible and parishioners can comment during the meeting should they wish to.

The Parish Council is responsible for the grass cutting in both the **burial ground and closed churchyard**. The Parish Council manages the burial ground, including the granting of burial rights and memorial rights.

Rights of Way – Herefordshire Council provided a grant of £1623, all of which was spent on improving the Right of Way network. The Footpath Officer and the Footpath working group put together a schedule of work for the year; signposts and wayposts were installed or repaired, two ditch crossings were repaired, two stiles were repaired, eight self-closing gates were installed, a hand rail was installed and vegetation was cut back. This represents very good value for money and ensures that everyone can get out and enjoy the countryside.

Thanks are expressed to John Litchfield who continues to mow **Checkley Barn Picnic Site** and **Swardon Quarry** on behalf of the Parish Council. The Parish Council also paid for the Play Area at Sufton Rise to be mown throughout 2011 – we hope those using it have enjoyed having somewhere to kick a ball about.

We continue to produce a quarterly newsletter and keep our website up to date with latest Parish Council news – thanks go to Brian Dukes for supporting both these activities.

The Parish Council continues to pursue **highway problems** such as potholes and broken highways signs, reported by Councillors and residents. Through a grant of £2145 from Herefordshire Council much minor highway work has been completed by our **lengthsman**, this includes verge strimming, digging out ditches and clearing grips and gulleys.

Residents are welcome to attend the Parish Council's monthly meetings which are generally held on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm in Mordiford school. There is always slot for you to raise any issue or concern. Check notice boards for dates and agenda.

Accounts – below is a summary of the accounts. You will notice that the Parish Council tries to seek funds from sources other than precept and strives to strike a balance between the cost to the tax payer and the services and projects it can deliver.

| 2010-2011 | Income | 2011-2012 | 2011-2012 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Year End | | Budget | EOY |
| £ 1,050.00 | Burial ground fees | £ 500.00 | £ 310.00 |
| £ 8,700.00 | Annual Precept | £ 9,155.00 | £ 9,155.00 |
| £ 1,608.75 | Parish Lengthsman Scheme | £ 2,145.00 | £ 2,681.25 |
| £ 1,150.00 | Parish Footpaths Scheme | £ 1,500.00 | £ 1,623.00 |
| £ 147.50 | Grants | £ - | £ 100.00 |
| £ 177.47 | Miscellaneous | £ 25.00 | £ 177.50 |
| £ 52.09 | Vat Recovered | £ 100.00 | £ 416.68 |
| £12,885.81 | Total Income | £ 13,425.00 | £ 14,463.43 |
| | Expenditure | | |
| £ 3,014.67 | Clerks Salary | £ 3,300.00 | £ 3,339.11 |
| £ 511.97 | Expenses | £ 750.00 | £ 665.80 |
| £ 214.50 | Lengthsman Administration | £ 214.50 | £ 214.50 |
| £ 338.18 | Insurances | £ 400.00 | £ 350.76 |
| £ 258.47 | Subscriptions | £ 350.00 | £ 256.32 |
| £ 229.22 | QPS Attainment | £ - | £ - |
| £ 185.00 | Audit | £ 220.00 | £ 185.00 |
| £ 50.80 | Parish Plan Parish Council | £ - | £ - |
| £ 1,289.96 | Burial ground mowing | £ 1,200.00 | £ 1,210.97 |
| £ 290.00 | Commons maintenance | £ 350.00 | £ 280.00 |
| £ 300.50 | Website hosting | £ 400.00 | £ 360.00 |
| | Agency | | |
| £ 1,278.90 | Parish Lengthsman Scheme | £ 1,930.50 | £ 1,762.45 |
| £ 1,236.99 | Parish Footpaths | £ 1,500.00 | £ 1,623.00 |
| | Other Expenses | | |
| £ 722.76 | Parish property | £ 110.00 | £ 75.00 |
| £ 40.00 | Donations | £ 200.00 | £ 169.00 |
| £ 313.00 | Training | £ 300.00 | £ 557.50 |
| £ 185.00 | Meeting Room Rent | £ 200.00 | £ 225.00 |
| £ 475.00 | Contingency | £ - | £ 855.00 |
| £ - | Participatory Budgeting | £ 500.00 | £ - |
| £ - | Elections | £ 500.00 | £ 815.89 |
| £ 44.00 | Miscellaneous | | |
| | Allotments | £ 1,000.00 | |
| £ 407.93 | VAT Paid | £ - | £ 198.03 |
| £11,386.85 | Total Expenditure | £ 13,425.00 | £ 13,143.33 |
| £ 1,498.96 | | £ - | £ 1,320.10 |
| | | | |
| £ 5,260.22 | Opening Balance April 2011 | | |
| £ 6,580.32 | Closing Balance March 2012 | | |
| £ 1,000.00 | Allotments | | |
| £ 1,000.00 | Participatory budgeting (2010 & 2011) | | |
| £ - | Election Provision | | |
| £ 2,871.00 | 33% Precept Contingency | | |
| £ 1,709.32 | Total Unallocated funds | | |

**Dormington & Mordiford Group Parish Council
Councillors May 2012**

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