



# Sutton Poyntz Society

Newsletter No 172 – August 2017

More information at [suttonpoyntz.org.uk](http://suttonpoyntz.org.uk)

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## Parish Council status for Sutton Poyntz?

**Current situation:** Local Government reorganisation is being debated for Dorset. If it goes ahead it is likely that Weymouth will become a Town Council (TC) as part of a West Dorset Unitary Authority (covering the area currently in North Dorset, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland). As a Neighbourhood Forum, the Sutton Poyntz Society has some legal rights to initiate a debate on similar status for the village. The topic was raised at the 2017 Society AGM which decided to ask the Committee for further information on this process. An open village meeting was held on Saturday 24 June and considering that it was held on a sunny summer afternoon, there was a good turnout of over 40 villagers to hear Cllr John Parker and Hilary Trevorah, Chairman and Chief Executive of the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils and Cllr Ian Bruce outline the options and answer questions.

**What is a Parish Council (PC)?:** It is, like a TC, the lowest tier of local government, both of which represent a small geographical part of a Unitary Authority. They focus on residents' local needs and have elected Councillors, open meetings, open finances and employ a Parish Clerk acting as professional manager, who can work from home with an allowance for expenses incurred. PCs can own property and provide local services e.g. litter bins, sports/youth facilities, community centres, bus services. They prepare a budget, and raise money for their activities via a "precept" added to Council Tax. A new PC would create a Development Plan, a process for handling assets, a budget, staff, a calendar for Council meetings, and processes for financial control and communications. 5/6 Councillors (often a-political, but there is no general rule) might be needed, serving for four years and all living within three miles of the village. They would not get expenses for regular meetings.

**Some pros and cons:** A PC deals with Neighbourhood Planning and is invited to comment on all relevant planning applications, but the SP Society is working on the former and already carries considerable weight on the latter. However North Dorset have already taken the decision to divest quite a lot of District functions to Parishes. There might also be advantages in having a larger PC based on Preston and Sutton Poyntz combined. It is worth noting that Weymouth TC has about £4M of assets, which helps with precept costs, as does West Dorset's significant assets from past Council house sales, which might benefit all in a new Unitary Authority.

**Decisions:** The meeting decided that further analysis was needed and left the matter with the Sutton Poyntz Society Committee. In turn they have decided that with the village busy on Neighbourhood Planning and with uncertainty about the way forward for the reorganisation, this is not the best time for investigating such a difficult topic. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is in place, a change to PC status can be requested. The Committee concluded that it would be better to wait to see what form the new Local Government takes, and the matter has been shelved for the time being. In the meantime, if you would like to respond to Weymouth & Portland's consultation on County reorganisation, go to [www.futureweymouth.co.uk](http://www.futureweymouth.co.uk) You have until Friday 1 September to submit representations.

### **Village Defibrillator Installed**

With the assistance and financial support of the Springhead, the defibrillator has been installed in the car park on the side of the wooden building facing the pavilion, or officially, the Blue Duck Bar. Simon Allison, one of our local First Responders, says "It is now



registered on the ambulance service computer despatch system. Anyone calling 999 for cardiac arrest in Sutton Poyntz will be informed that there is a defibrillator at the Springhead pub". It should be clear from the

photograph where it is, and extra signage is being organised, but if you are out and about, make a point of visiting the spot so you know its exact position. Who knows, you might have to accurately describe the way there to a walker or visitor under stress.

### **Ray's work helps to keep the village tidy**

If you have been out around the pond recently you will know that the mess left by the birds emptying the bins has ceased! This is thanks to new bin lids produced and installed by Ray Aggett. The village has been grateful to Ray in the past for his expertise in manufacturing items the village needs, and this is the latest example. Very many thanks are in order to Ray for his sterling work.

### **Presentation to John and Sue Willows**



There was a bumper turn-out at the July coffee morning to see Sue and John Willows presented with a pair of beautiful deckchairs in recognition of all John's help to the village over the years, as he goes into semi-retirement. Guy Bridge, outgoing Fayre Chairman, warmly thanked John for his efforts - which you will have read about in the last Newsletter - and wished him and Sue all the very best in the future. John responded in his usual entertaining style, and said we would still have him in the village - just not as often unfortunately!

### **Stop Press**

A letter received from Sue and John Willows

Dear Guy

Thank you so much for your very kind words at last Friday's coffee morning and to all those who helped to organise, what was for me, such a memorable morning. As I said during 'my few words' I found it a very humbling experience that the village should express their appreciation in such a generous way and to, what was evident from the gathering, my many friends in and around Sutton Poyntz, Sue and I wish to say a big "thank you". We have yet to relax in the deck chairs in the garden, however they are very comfortable and look rather swish in the lounge.

Yours very sincerely,  
Sue and John

### **Pimms & Ploughmans**

Another excellent event in lovely weather, and Bill Egerton reports that over 40 people attended. The result, in addition from some very happy folk who enjoyed the sumptuous spread and Wimbledon nectar, was a very healthy increase in the Society funds. Thanks are due to Bill and all those who helped. This has become a regular and eagerly anticipated event in the Society calendar.

## Forthcoming events

A reminder of dates for your diaries. See Newsbites for details.

**Summer Coffee Mornings** : in the Mission Hall between 10.30am and noon on the first Friday in every month through the summer.

**Village Vegetable Show** : another Mission Hall extravaganza for all you gardeners, on the morning of Saturday 5 August. No Scarecrows this year, but a little bird tells me they will be back in 2018.

**The Village Picnic** : in the Mission Hall Garden on Sunday 6 August at 1pm. Contact Maureen (835533) for details and tickets.

### **Spotlight on Dave Langridge - Village Fayre Chairman**

After a little pressure(!) from his friend Guy Bridge, David is now the new Chairman of the Street Fayre Committee. He is a local man who moved to the village from Rodwell six years ago. Married to Wendy, they have two married daughters, both in the entertainment industry. After working for Microsoft for 17 years he recently set up his own Partner Development consultancy. His interests include cycling, walking and, of course, computing. He and Wendy enjoy the community atmosphere in the village and get involved as much as possible - when work allows! They love village life, but feel that the speed of Sutton Road traffic is too high for safe cycling or walking. David looks forward to future retirement, when he will have more time for Spam, cycling and golf. With the next Fayre now less than a year away we will see a lot of David in the future, and wish him and his loyal band of helpers much success. Watch out for a meeting in September!



### **Business matters**

**Minutes** of the Society monthly committee meetings are on the web site.

**Newsbites** are email news updates. Contact [newsletter@suttonpoyntz.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@suttonpoyntz.org.uk) to receive these. Jez also displays them on the Cartshed notice board.

**Organising an event?** Send the editor a reminder about a week before it takes place so that a Newsbite can be circulated.

**Neighbourhood Plan** - see progress at [suttonpoyntz.org.uk/neighbourhood](http://suttonpoyntz.org.uk/neighbourhood)

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Chairman Mike Blee 568135**

<b>Secretary Bill Egerton 832872</b>	<b>Treasurer Terry Pegrum 834303</b>
<b>Peter Riley 834653</b>	<b>Jez Cunningham 835811</b>
<b>Sue Wintle 834209</b>	<b>Hilary Davidson 834479</b>
<b>Peter Dye 837139</b>	<b>Jill Kelsey 835605</b>
<b>Liz Balfie 837320</b>	<b>Jackie Greet 833557</b>

**Please contact the editor with news and views, but make sure your input is with him at latest by 1 October, ready for the next issue.**