

COMPTON DUNDON PARISH COUNCIL

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Annual Report 2016/2017

The Council

The Parish Council (PC) usually meets on the first Wednesday of each month starting at 7.00pm at the Meadway Hall, Ham Lane, Compton Dundon. The public and press are invited to all meetings and members of the public are invited to speak on any subject relevant to the parish before formal proceedings commence. Additional meetings may be called as required. Notices of Parish Council meetings are placed on the parish notice boards and e-mailed to members of the public who so elect. During the past year the Parish Council held 11 formal meetings. Planning Applications are available to view prior to the meetings and are also available online at the South Somerset District Council (SSDC) website "Planning Search".

Following elections In May 2015 there has been no change to membership of the Parish Council. The following persons performed their duties as Councillors during the last civic year:

| | Postal Address | Telephone | Email address |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| Cllr Greg Jones (Chairman) | Morland Cottage, Peak Lane, Compton Dundon TA11 6PE | 01458 272531 | greg@mor-cott.co.uk |
| Cllr Hugh Thomas | The Beacon, Peak Lane, Compton Dundon TA11 6NZ | 01458 274427 | hughthomascdpc@gmail.com |
| Cllr Diana Churches | The Nook, Ham Lane, Compton Dundon TA11 6PQ | 01458 442078 | diane.churches@live.co.uk |
| Cllr Tiffany Kearton | Keepers Cottage, Ham Lane Compton Dundon TA11 6PQ | 01458 440031 | faerys@gmail.com |
| Cllr Stephen King (Vice Chairman) | Linden Lea, Hayes Road Compton Dundon TA11 6PF | 01458 274926 | Pat SteveKing@yahoo.co.uk |
| Cllr Vicki N Olivier | Clarendon House, Street Road, Compton Dundon TA11 6PY | 01458 441930 | v.oliviercdpc@gmail.com |
| Cllr Geoffrey Walker | Shetland, Compton Street, Compton Dundon TA11 6PX | 01458 446487 | walkermessages@gmail.com |

To assist the Council in its responsibilities the following councillors were members of Council sub committees:

Planning – Vicki Olivier, Stephen King, Geoff Walker

Staffing – Greg Jones, Diane Churches, Tiffany Kearton

Appeals - Hugh Thomas, Vicki Olivier, Steve King

To assist the Council in its duties the following persons took primary responsibility for the following issues:

Parish Paths' Liaison Officer – Greg Jones

Parish Tree Warden – Tiffany Kearton

Parish Environmental Warden – the Clerk

Responsible Financial Officer – the Clerk

Overview of the Councils Achievements

- Funded and contributed to the Parish Newsletter regarding council business (planning, news etc)
- Maintained a listing of all reported Highway problems and progress-chased repair status. Held several on-site meetings with Highway Authority staff to discuss immediate and urgent needs.
- Contracted with the SSDC Parish Ranger scheme to carry out remedial work in the Parish including verge cutting and ditch clearance.
- Prepared a Community Resilience Plan.
- Purchased and erected three dog waste bins.
- Supported Parish clubs, societies and Parish associated groups with grants.
- Maintained the Broadband Facility at the Village Post Office, which includes wireless internet access in the village hall and a public call facility.
- Conducted 36 Planning Consultations, 3 Pre-planning consultations and discussed many other planning related issues.

- Carried out weekly routine safety inspections of the Playground facilities and SSDC Leisure executed quarterly operational inspections and Playdale Ltd an annual safety inspection.
- Directly supported the initiative for a Petanque pitch.
- Issued Queen's Jubilee medals to all under 18 year old parishioners.
- Continued to maintain the Parish Council website providing information for the public. www.comptondundon-pc.gov.uk and to fund the village website www.comptondundon.com (Maintained by Chairman Cllr Greg Jones, Simon Dore and Hugh Thomas).
- Participated on the Village Hall Committee.
- Administered the Annual Parish Meeting.

Local Council Award Scheme

Compton Dundon Parish Council is certified as a Foundation member of the Local Council Award Scheme which replaced the Quality Council scheme in February 2015. The Council's intention is to progress to "Silver" status as soon as amendments have been completed to the council website.

Communications/Newsletters

The Parish Newsletter, which incorporates The Herald (St Andrew's Church newsletter) is issued more or less monthly. It includes a summary of the Parish Council activities and gives up-to-date information on how to contact your Parish Council members. The Parish Newsletter production has been upgraded to a laser printed version and continues to be funded by the PC. It is delivered to all households in the Compton Dundon and Littleton area.

Residents find it convenient to communicate with the Council via e-mail and the Council intends to remain responsive to this method of communication. Agendas and Minutes of Parish Council meetings are sent to an address list of 45 persons. The Parish Council Website www.comptondundon-pc.gov.uk is undergoing a major upgrade to allow the Council to be compliant with the new Transparency Act and to provide better links with the village website, the websites of our Principal Councils and other national websites. The village website www.comptondundon.com and a Facebook site www.facebook.com/comptondundon are funded by the PC and cater predominantly for community information. They are edited on a voluntary basis by Cllrs Greg Jones and Hugh Thomas with support from Simon Dore (Village Hall).

Precept

The precept for 2017/2018 was set at £20,560. Together with the Council Tax Reduction Support grant this is an increase of £4,180 and reflects the Council's decision to continue support for activities in the Parish, its commitment to maintenance work at St Andrew's Church and costs associated with Parish initiated, local maintenance work on roads, culverts and ditches under a contracted arrangement with the SSDC "Parish Ranger" scheme. The Council has budgeted an increase in days allocated for such work as more District and County services are limited in line with Council budget savings. The Council has initiated a project to install a bus shelter at The Cross and budgeted a sum to match external funding raised.

Expenditure

The Council's financial year ends on March 31st so any March approved expenditure covered by cheques drawn in April falls into the 2017/18 financial period.

The major expenditure in the 2016/17 financial period related to (a) Clerk Salary £3,784, (b) Petanque Court £2,400 which was offset by a £1,500 donation from the Village Hall Committee and a VAT refund of £400, (c) Council laptop, software and printer £634, financed from a 2016 grant held in reserves, (d) 3 dog waste bins £632 and (e) Front end fee for compliance with auto enrolment £419. Amongst other expenditure was:-

- Grants using the Power to Promote Well-Being (continued), General Powers of Competence and S137

St Andrews PCC: £1,000

Rights of Way Volunteers: £240

Somerset Wildlife Trust: £30

- Other Spending using PoWB (Cont), GPC (Cont) and S137

Parish Ranger Scheme £1,510

Community Websites £73

Parish Newsletters and Directory £1,212

Village Playing field grass cutting £907

Village Hall & Allotments Hedge Trimming £480

Village Hall Broadband and Telephone Facility £517

Village Xmas Tree £65

Jubilee medals £97

Playground quarterly operating and annual safety inspections £127

Planning

The Parish Council was consulted on 36 Planning Applications – 40% increase on last year. Three applications were recommended for refusal by the Parish Council, which decisions were upheld by SSDC although one was permitted at appeal. The Council also discussed 2 Appeals, 1 Tree Preservation Order, 1 tree management plan for Dundon Beacon and 2 PAMB proposals. 3 pre-planning consultations were heard including Sheperds Close/Robin Way as well as the related drainage amendments and the Section 106 Agreement proposals.

Highways & Rights of Way

The Parish Council has liaised with our Principal Authorities and communicated with other persons of influence to highlight major highways related issues. As a result of such action a consultation document has been presented regarding work to be done at Stock Elm. A Parish response has been made recommending a number of amendments and work should begin in the summer.

The Council has continued to contract with the “Parish Ranger Scheme” in the provision of 1 day a month maintenance service work in the villages and has worked closely with SCC Highways in monitoring necessary action to repair potholes and other road hazards. It is intended to increase the number of days the Parish Ranger will spend in the village during the next 2 years.

The Volunteer Rights of Way subcommittee under the chairmanship of Mr David Shears continues to be very active in the parish, supported financially by the Parish Council. The Parish Paths’ Liaison Officer is Greg Jones. This is a scheme which was started in 2010 by Somerset County Council whereby councils were issued with equipment and information to enable them to carry out minor repairs / clearance to paths in the parish. The Council purchased three dog waste bins and the Rights of Way volunteers located these at strategic positions.

Broadband Services

The subject of the lack of hi-speed broadband was on the agenda of every council meeting. Hugh Thomas led the Council’s drive for improved service and this led to an upgrade of the communication’s box serving Dundon village. For the Compton end, served by Street Exchange various alternative service suppliers were introduced to users to enable an optimal decision on Connecting Devon and Somerset voucher usage.

Bus Shelter Project

The Council has initiated a project to erect a Bus Shelter at the Cross. It is proposed that the Shelter be positioned where the existing telephone box is sited and that it would incorporate the Parish and Jubilee notice boards. Highways and Planning have been consulted and a grant request has been initiated with SSDC.

Allotments

Council has 26 half-acre allotments, each of which is currently let for £20 per annum. These are mostly “agricultural” allotments and consequently are mostly let to small holders and farmers. In the recent past, the Council considered the purchase of land to establish an area of recreation and possibly garden allotments in Dundon. However, to proceed with such proposal the Council needs to see an actual demand from parishioners for garden allotments. Please contact the Clerk if you wish to be placed on the waiting list.

Community Resilience Plan

The Council prepared a first draft of a community emergency plan in case of storm, flood or other major incident. The plan has been discussed with representatives of the Village Hall Committee and the PCC in the context of providing emergency accommodation as required. The document is being refined and when completed with emergency contact numbers etc. will be fully communicated to all households in the Parish.

Archive Minute Books

All of the old minute books dating back to the inception of the Parish Council in 1896 are now permanently with the County Archive. They remain the property of the Parish Council and can be viewed at any time at the Somerset Heritage Centre, Brunel Way, Norton Fitzwarren, Taunton, TA2 6SF, 01823 337600 (appointments), email archives@somerset.gov.uk. Access to all minutes from Sept 2004 are available on request via the Clerk.

Conclusion and thanks

I wish to thank my fellow councillors for their hard work and support. Thanks also to Doug Wright and Chris Perry Smith for their work in keeping the Church Path clear; to Angela Warren for hosting the parish Christmas tree; John Gordon for producing the Parish Newsletter, Jill Champion for producing the Village Directory and the Parish Volunteers for their work on the rights of way and other items in the parish. I would also like to thank District Councillor Stephen Page and District and County Councillor Dean Ruddle each for their hard work and ongoing support to the Parish Council and the residents of the Parish.