

Acting Chairman's Annual Report

2009 / 10

Sitting at the last AGM and obtaining the post of Vice Chair I had no idea I would be writing the year-end report as acting chair. 2009 ended in a manner we all wished had not occurred. I feel however, in some ways, it has made us stronger as a group. We now have a new start, new faces and responsibilities. Hugh De Long: NDDC Community Planning Officer, Jo in her new role in partnership development, not forgetting Pauline in her new role and Hannah our new community resource worker, working with Pauline in a job share. Our congratulations to them all, welcome and thank you Jo for all your help and assistance both to me and DT11 at large. DT11 is different from the other Partnerships; this is both a strength and a weakness. Strong in embracing all parishes within our remit, but not fully working with Blandford Town Council. That is why I am pleased that we have two new Blandford Councillors as representatives on DT11: Bob Brannigan and Frances West. We can learn from other partnerships that have had success and some failure along the way. We can pick the best from their actions. 2010 / 13 could be the most exciting period for DT11, it will depend on you, the NDDC, DCC and others; not much of a challenge then.

In order to assist you all I have circulated a list of Chairs and members of CPEND, officers of NDDC, DCA, DCC, not forgetting our NDDC Cllrs, so that at least you have names with which to identify those involved. Change appears to be a key word: fine provided there is a robust strategy and action plan to go with it, not change for the sake of it. I am pleased that we are reviewing how CPEND operates, identifying how we can work smarter together. I am confident that working for the community at large will benefit all partners.

Sowing Seeds, as a group, is moving forward, but is still sitting on a large amount of money. DT11 and other groups within our area, will try to relieve them of some of it in the near future.

I looked back at Steve's final report and he mentioned the Trailway. We will by August have the new bridge across the Stour on the Trailway, this is a fine example of Groups working together. This project will be of benefit to Stalbridge, Sturminster, Blandford, all the villages along the way, plus others moving on towards Poole. As I put pen to paper, we are in discussion with DCC on the after-use of Milldown Middle School, Blandford, plus the Infant School. It is felt that a Community Arts Centre could use the Middle School; part of the Infant School would be ideal for a Trailway / Environment Centre. A meeting has been held with Sowing Seeds where our thoughts received a positive response.

Steve Adamson and Keith Yarwood are leading a review of Broadband in DT11 and for North Dorset under the umbrella of CPEND, showing that identified areas of mutual benefit across North Dorset as a whole should be a team effort. Several meetings have taken place already. I will ask Steve to give an update later. We are looking for suitable premises for a Community Resource Centre in Blandford. Discussions have been held with AGE UK, NDCAB and others. This would be a one-stop shop for interested groups to share overheads and premises creating a focal centre for information and meetings. We shall be having a Green Week in the Summer. Carrie and others are working hard to develop this theme- more on this later.

I hope you agree we have a large number of potential projects in the pipeline. They will not happen without more involvement from our members. We need to develop our strategy and action plan, owned and agreed by you.

Scott Norman.
Acting Chair.