

Chair's Report For the Term of Office 2020-2021



This has been my second year as Chair of Magor and Undy Community Council. Council has still been unable to meet in person and meetings have been held via an on-line platform.

However, members of the public have still been able to attend Council meetings and make representation. Councillors too, have been able to attend meetings with other organisations and groups using a variety of on-line platforms.

Being able to meet remotely has ensured the business of the Council has continued, and progress has, and is still being made.

Support

I have very much appreciated the support I have received from Councillors during this year .



I have been assisted by Vice Chair Geoff Cook who has also taken on the role as Chair of the Planning Committee. A huge Thank you for all his input and assistance.



Cllr Sally Raggett Chair of the Human Resources Committee has also been generous with her time and support, for which I am very grateful.

A vacancy arose in the Elms Ward and the Community Council were authorised by Monmouthshire County Council to Co-opt to the position - as elections could not take place due to Covid-19 restrictions legislation in place at the time. Council are pleased to welcome Cllr Penny Kirkham as the new Councillor for the Elms Ward.



I would like to thank Mrs Beverly Cawley (Clerk to the Council) and Mrs Alison Sandiford (Administrative Assistant) for their hard work, continued support and dedication ensuring the business of Magor with Undy Community Council is managed efficiently and effectively. Mrs Sandiford has recently left the employment of the Council to take up the position of Deputy Clerk at Chepstow Town Council. We wish her well in her new job.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Community Council's Litter Pickers as well as all those who volunteer to litter pick. The job they undertake is never ending, and they are out and about in all weathers keeping our villages tidy. I find it so sad that people drop their litter around our beautiful villages. Litter causes harm in so many ways, not only is it unsightly, but it can be a serious hazard and danger to others, especially children, and can cause injury to wild life and pets. My message to everyone is to please pick up litter and either place it in one of the bins around the village or take it home with you.



Council have supported Undy AFC by granting monies to allow them to purchase and install additional litter bins at their grounds. A new bin is also to be sited at the Sycamore play park once the second phase of work has been completed.

We have all faced challenging times this year due to Coronavirus and the way we live our lives has been changed; through lock down, working from home, home schooling and not being able to travel out of the area in which we live.

We have found our community pulling together to provide support to others during the last year. Vulnerable people have been supported by friends, neighbours and volunteers. A group of volunteers were able to deliver prescriptions to vulnerable residents who were shielding, whilst the Covid-19 group was set up to support vulnerable residents in a wide variety of ways whilst they were shielding.

The Community Council supported this group by providing administrative support via the office staff as did Monmouthshire County Council. Whilst County Councillors Lisa Dymock and Frances Taylor, along with Community Councillors Mario Bisi, Sally Raggett and myself with resident Catherine Baker co-ordinated the requests and worked with the many volunteers. Thank you to everyone who volunteered, and to those who are still volunteering whilst Covid-19 continues.

Many residents and some of the Councillors supported the NHS and Key workers either in practical terms; making scrubs or by showing their support and clapping on their door step. I got my sewing machine out and made scrubs along with many other residents.

As a Council we supported Monmouthshire County Council's 'Shop Local' campaign re-opening the Square for businesses to try and encourage shoppers back in to the Square following lock downs.



It is great to see Covid-19 restrictions slowly being lifted, however we still all have a vital role to play and need to continue to be vigilant and keep ourselves and others safe.

Community Events

Civic events, like many other events across the community were curbed due to the restrictions. The plans for VE Day celebrations were shelved, but we did manage a small select ceremony at the War Memorial, and I would like to express

my sincere thanks to Cllr Geoff Cook for laying a wreath on behalf of the Community on VE day. As Chair of the Community Council I made a short video encouraging residents to celebrate and remember at home, from their doorstep, or merely follow National events via various media platforms. <https://fb.watch/5ioZtgcHdn/> VJ Day also saw restrictions, but again we



managed a scaled down event, where I laid a wreath on behalf of the community and the Chairman of the Royal British Legion took the salute.



Along with a selected few, I was able to lay a wreath on behalf of the Community on Remembrance Day. The service this year was restricted to 30 people attending and laying wreaths, and was led by Canon Rev Jeremy Harris, and Pastor Harry Place with the Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Gwent in attendance—with all maintaining social distancing. I would like to say thank you to Cllr Bisi who recorded the event which went out on social media.

<https://www.facebook.com/516792895/videos/10157935688087896/>



Village Improvements

During my two years as Chair of Magor and Undy Community Council I have continued to support and promote village improvements. Some significant improvements have already been made, whilst some projects are still on-going.



One of the biggest updates within the villages has been the refurbishment of the Sycamore Play park. Along with residents Danielle Cadden and Catherine Baker I attended a consultation session with school children at both Magor and Undy Primary Schools, asking what type of new Play equipment

they would like to see in the play park. The first phase has now been completed, which is a success with the children, and phase 2 of the development is due to start the first week of May 2021. The play park development has been vital especially during lock

down as people were being asked not to travel and parents and carers needed places for children to play. Council can move on now and start to look at the development of Undy Play Park.



The other large project to be completed during my term of office was the MUGA courts which were finally opened to the public on 21st August. Use of the courts is growing month on month. At the start of the winter months we saw the new floodlighting being used, allowing the courts to open during the evening. However, unfortunately, this was curbed by the Welsh Covid-19 Firebreak, which saw the courts close again for some time.



December 2020 saw the Mill Stream burst its banks, causing flooding to several areas of the village, including the newly refurbished tennis courts and the Sycamore Sports Field. The landscaping and planting of trees – part of the planning approval – had to be put on hold until the ground had dried out sufficiently. The work has been commissioned, which will involve the creation of a wildflower meadow, DDA compliant pathways and the planting of 30 plus native trees. The first of the trees to be planted will be five *Tilia Cordata* (small leaved limes), on the 13th May 2021.



A 'MUGA' working group comprising of Cllrs Raggett, Cook, Kirkham and Zagozda was set up, and has been meeting to look at the whole of the MUGA site and how it can work and benefit the whole of the community going forward. It is hoped that one or two residents will also join to take this work forward during 2021-2022

A second working group was formed to look at improving signage within the community, with Cllrs Hopkins, Bailey, Baicher, Bisi, Raggett and Plow looking at Welcome signs for the villages. These have now been commissioned. This project has



taken some time as the signs need to be agreed by MCC Highways and there are legal requirements which need to be fulfilled

Other works undertaken by the group are the production of Village maps for both Magor Square and Undy Pound. Discussions have been held with a local company and Art work for both these maps has been commissioned.

The group is also looking at placing finger posts around the square pending a final draft and layout.



Other projects either started or completed include a new restraining wire added to the War Memorial to hold wreaths in place.



Long awaited major repairs and renovation works to the Procurators House, were also finally commissioned.

Works commenced in early March and should be completed (subject to weather) by the end of May 2021.

Businesses, Groups & Organisations

Community Councillor's Bailey, Hopkins, Cook, Bisi and Crook along with County Councillor Taylor and a few local residents are having regular meetings with the Magor Brewery. This is to ensure the community are able to understand the future business plans for the brewery and the impact this will have on our local community. These meetings have proved worthwhile as some difficulties regarding traffic flow were identified as a issue for local residents and the brewery has now been able to alleviate the problem.

The brewery is to make available defibrillators they have on site for people in the local community. Details of how defibrillators can be accessed will be available soon.

The brewery also donated a Christmas tree for Undy Pound for which we are very grateful, with the Golden Lion donating a Christmas tree for Magor Square.



The Christmas shop window competition was held this year and was judged by Lloyd

Manship manager of Interbrew UK Ltd (Brewery), local resident Larry Wilkie and Cllrs Wilson and Raggett.

The winner of the Christmas window competition was Edén Hair Studio with Village Greens as runners-up



At Christmas the Community Council provided Christmas lights which were appreciated by residents. The Community Council also supported the local 'Yarn Bombers' who decorated the area with knitted covers for posts at Christmas, these were especially appreciated by children.



The yarn bombers have continued to brighten up the village with knitted covers etc. for valentine's day and Easter.

The Community Council are supporting 'Residents Against Speeding' by allocating a start-up grant for the newly formed group. Whilst the group is resident led, Cllrs Plow, Baicher and Bisi joined this group to represent the Community Council. County Councillors Taylor and Dymock are also part of the group.

A local resident requested that the Community Council support the Covid-19 Families Wales Group. They requested that a building within Magor be lit up yellow to commemorate Covid-19 lockdown day (23rd March 2020) and to remember those residents who lost family and friends to Covid-19. Council agreed to light up the War Memorial and place vases of daffodils on the War Memorial, to be seen during daylight hours. Cllrs Raggett and Taylor took the lead on this project.



Thanks must also go to resident Larry Wilkie who has worked with Vision ICT and the Council office and allowed the Community Council to use some of his wonderful photos of the villages and surrounding areas on the new Community Council visitor website that is being developed.



My thanks to everyone who has worked and given their time and support to the development and improvements within the area in which we live. Having only missed two meetings due to Coronavirus the Council has managed to meet virtually, working on, and progressing projects which will enhance and benefit our villages.

This report only gives a brief insight into what Council and Councillors have done over the last 12 months. If I have missed someone, or something off, then do accept my sincere apologies, it was certainly not intentional. I thank everyone for allowing me the opportunity and privilege to be Chair of the Council for two years.

