

CHAIR'S REPORT FOR THE TERM OF OFFICE 2019/2020

I would like to thank Councillors for electing me and for their support over the past year. I would particularly like to thank the Vice Chair, Cllr Geoff Cook and Chair of Human Resources Committee, Cllr Sally Raggett for the assistance throughout the year.

I would also like to thank the Clerk, Mrs Beverly Cawley and the Admin Assistant, Mrs Alison Sandiford for all their hard work, support and dedication ensuring the administration for Magor and Undy Community Council is managed efficiently and effectively.

The village litter pickers undertake a never ending job of picking up litter. Thank you, you are out in all weathers to ensure that we have a better place in which to live.

We are all going to face challenging times due to the Coronavirus and the way in which we live our daily lives could well be changed. I am confident that residents will find ways to help and support the most vulnerable, develop new initiatives, and continue to work in partnership to meet the needs of the community. For this the whole community will be grateful ensuring Magor and Undy and the surrounding area will be a good place to live and work.

My first official event as Chair of Magor with Undy Community Council was attending the 'Gwent Living Levels Revealed' Launch held at the RSPB Newport Wetlands Centre. A bronze map and timeline of the Gwent Levels was revealed and demonstration stands included flint knapping, willow weaving and the Black Rock Lave Net Fishermen with items they had found in the sand and mud. The Roman Museum for Caerleon was also present with casts of ancient footprints found in the mud including coins and pottery.



During Spring 2019 local residents and businesses within Magor Square helped to supply, plant and water the flower pots in the Square and the Community Council was extremely grateful for their assistance. I assisted the volunteers in this task by weeding and topping up the planters.



Council was experiencing difficulties in securing a contractor to water the planters sited throughout the community until Willow Landscapes agreed to carry out the watering on Council's behalf.



On 14th June 2019 Magor Baptist Church organised and hosted a Community Leaders Lunch at the Church Hall. I had the pleasure of attending along with other Councillors, volunteer groups and organisations.

Jessica Morden MP was also in attendance and paid tribute to the fabulous event held for all those giving their time to help the community living in Magor and Undy.



On 15th June 2019 the community came together in awful weather conditions to carry out a community litter pick of the villages. The event, arranged in conjunction with Keep Wales Tidy and County Councillors Lisa Dymock and Frances Taylor was supported by Community Councillors, Magor Scout and Guide groups and volunteers from the Community.



Refreshments provided by the Co-op, volunteers and Councillors including a selection of home-made cakes

On 23rd June 2019 Magor and Undy Community Hub [MUCH] held a fundraising Duck Race and Teddy Bears Picnic on the Three Field Site.

Despite the wet weather conditions, the event was enjoyed by all who attended.



VILLAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Council supported my request to take forward the Village Improvements project as the focus for my civic year. As part of this project Council was looking to improve signage from the B4245 to specific areas of interest, including Magor Square. I attended a meeting with the relevant officer from Monmouthshire County Council, the Clerk, Councillor Sally Raggett and Councillor Frances Taylor in her capacity as County Councillor to discuss signage for village. Unfortunately, progress has been slow in this matter and we are no further forward in obtaining new/additional signage for the villages. I do however understand that this issue is now being looked at in light of the Covid-19 lockdown being lifted to encourage residents to use the shops and business in the Square.

Another part of the project was to set up a Welcome to Magor and Undy Website to run side by side with the Community Council's website as an information portal for residents and tourists to the area. The website is currently under construction and will hopefully go live in the very near future.



On 13th July 2019 I attended the Gwent Wildlife Trust's first family festival at Magor Marsh Nature Reserve which celebrated the natural heritage of the Gwent Levels.

The event was held as part of the National Lottery Heritage funded Living Levels project to showcase and celebrate wonders of the Gwent Levels, Magor Marsh and its newest planned nature reserve at Bridewell Common.

Around 350 people attended the festival, which offered a host of entertainment and activities including: face painting, bug hunting, pond dipping, guided walks, coracle making, poetry, an archaeological dig and willow making throughout the day.



I was delighted to attend the Civic Service for the new Mayor of Monmouth which took place on the afternoon of Sunday 14th July 2019 at Priory Church Monmouth.



On Saturday 21st September 2019 I had the honour of hosting the re-dedication Service following renovation works to the War Memorial. Rev. Canon Jeremy Harris and Peter Wilson of the Royal British Legion led the service and I was accompanied by the Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent - Brigadier Robert Aitken CBE, Jessica Morden MP, dignitaries from local Communities and the Chair of Monmouthshire County Council, as well as over



300 members of the public, Royal British Legion, local uniformed organisations, Caldicot Army Cadets and local Police Officers. Severn Tunnel Band led the singing, and Serenata Ladies Choir sang "Safe and Sound" and "Mansions of the Lord".

The War Memorial was built and first dedicated, at a Civic Service held in The Square on the same date in 1924 to pay tribute to those men from the local parishes who died on the battlefields of the First World War, or as a result of injuries incurred during those battles.

The Lord-Lieutenant laid a wreath of poppies followed by my bouquet of Rosemary and a wreath of poppies laid by Councillor Geoff Cook on behalf of surrounding communities

The newly commissioned commemorative bench was sited near to the War Memorial in time for the re-dedication service on 21st September 2019.



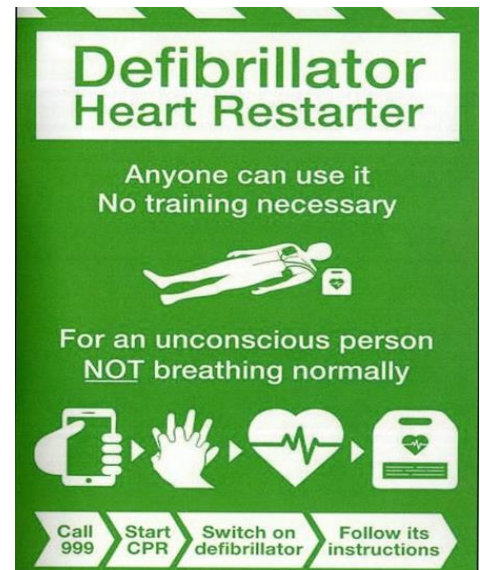
On Sunday 10th November 2019 the sun shone on the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade and Civic Service held in Magor Square.



And the 2 minutes' observation for Armistice Day held at 11am on 11th November.



The Council was proud to sponsor the purchase and installation of a defibrillator for Undy Church & Community Hall and was successful in obtaining grant funding from Caldicot & Chepstow Lions Club in association with British Heart Foundation.



Undy Church & Community Hall Chair, David Buckley and representatives from Chepstow & Caldicot Lions

Following installation Council invited any interested members of the community to attend one of its organised training events organised via Chepstow & Caldicot Lions.



In November I supported the Flower Shed at one of her Christmas Wreath Making Workshop for a wonderful evening of Christmas Craft and home-made sausage rolls!



The annual Open Air Carol Service took place on Friday 13th December in the Square and despite the weather conditions was well attended.



A highlight of the year was in January when I visited both Magor CiW and Undy Primary School Councils with residents (from the working group) Ms Catherine Baker and Mrs Danielle Cadden. I also visited Magor Brownies to consult with the children there regarding proposed additional play equipment for Sycamore play park. The proposals were well received. All of the children were excited at the prospect of additional play equipment in the play park and came up with some good ideas for future play projects.



Whilst it was hoped that the play equipment would be installed in the Spring of 2020 and all tenders being received in time for the proposed installation, due to the Coronavirus Outbreak this project remains outstanding. Council is following Welsh Government guidance in relation to the opening of play parks and it will be Council's top priority when the restrictions are removed.

The winners of the Best Christmas Shop Window competition in 2019 were Village Treats (1st), Flower Shed (2nd) and Magor Brownies (highly commended)



Councillor Sally Raggett and I presented a Trophy and Certificate to Village Treats

An Observance for Commonwealth Day 2020 was held at St Mary's Church, Magor on Monday 9th March 2020.

I was joined by members of the Community Council and Year 6 pupils from Magor CiW and Undy Primary Schools to celebrate this year's theme "Delivering A Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming"



Going Forward

As we continue in these unprecedented times, the Council is still working to improve the area in which we live.

A list of on-going projects includes:

- Repairs to the Procurators House
- The completion of Sycamore Play Park
- The completion of the Multi Use Games Area and landscaping the surrounding area.
- New and improved signage
- Visit Magor and Undy website for the benefit of local visitors and new residents to the area.

I hope you enjoyed reading my annual report and I hope you all stay safe.

Sally Bailey

Chair of Magor with Undy Community Council



Spring at the Community Council's 'Common-y-coed Plantation'