



Annual Report for 2020 – 2021 for

Parish Councils in the Pewsey Community Area

Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership

A busy year despite the pandemic, with many of our members being badly hit by the lockdowns and restrictions. We have done what we can to support our businesses during this very difficult time.

We have ensured that our members are kept up to date on grants, loans and other support that has been available, as well as the latest information on restrictions.

Our focus has been on keeping the Vale of Pewsey in people's minds so that they visit as restrictions ease. We have done this through plenty of social media activity, moving to a monthly newsletter to our public list, as well as creating a number of videos – Insider Guides to some of the walks we published and Staying in the Vale of Pewsey. We also hosted ITV This Morning for a feature on walking and had an article published on the Great West Way in our role as Destination Ambassadors.

The North Wessex Downs Walking Festival in June has been cancelled for the second year in a row. There may be something in the autumn, but more likely it will resume in 2022, when we will host a number of walks across the Pewsey Community Area (which had been planned for 2020 and 2021).

We continue to be active on the Council of Partners at the NWD AONB representing the PVTP and PCAP and tourism. Susie Brew is now also a Trustee of the North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust (this is a role not associated to PCAP or PVTP).

There continues to be lots of content added to our website, social media and YouTube.

Projects:

The PVTP has two projects for 2021 – Walkers Are Welcome accreditation and Itineraries. Our thanks go to the Coop Community Fund for supporting these projects. Thank you also to all the Parish Councils who have been helping with these projects.

Walkers Are Welcome requires us to set up a regular check of rights of way in scope through our Steering Group and other people who have volunteered to help walk the routes, as well as Bedwyn Footpaths Group. We now hold a supply of Wiltshire Council waymarkers so if you have any missing waymarkers, just contact Susie Brew at susie@visitpewseyvale.co.uk and we can drop off some waymarkers to you.

We have everything in place to achieve our accreditation, however we need to get 5% of the population to support our accreditation, so we need to get just over 700 signatures on our



online register - <https://bit.ly/3ivl6Dj>. Please spread the word – at the time of writing we are half way there! Once we have reached the right number, then we will be able to go for review and hopefully be registered as a Walkers Are Welcome destination.

The Itineraries project provides three multi-day itineraries based on walking and cycling routes – eastern half of the Mid Wilts Way, Kennet & Avon Canal Hungerford to Devizes and a new route the Pewsey Vale Circular Way. There are also one-day itineraries based on things to do in the Vale and also beyond the Vale. This information will be available online on the website and will be of interest to visitors and locals.

Pewsey Community Area Partnership

The Covid pandemic focused our efforts on helping get the online Covid contacts for the Pewsey Community Area up and running and assisting where we were able with local groups, for example by running the Buddy telephone service (now closed) during lockdown for the PCCA. In addition, PCAP brought together groups that had been set up to help with the pandemic and other community groups to ensure everyone knew what was going on.

We have also been supporting small, local community groups with provision of insurance and also banking facilities, which in turn enables these small groups to apply for grant funding for their projects. If you know of any voluntary groups who may benefit from this type of assistance, then just email Susie Brew at pcap@hotmail.co.uk.

Parish Councils raised issues with the state of the towpath between Wootton Rivers and Wilcot and after an initial inadequate response from the Canal & River Trust, the issues were escalated to Danny Kruger MP, VisitWiltshire and Wiltshire Council. The matter has now been resolved with a programme of maintenance being put forward by the CRT.

A group comprising of members of PCAP, CPRE and Pewsey Parish Council have been looking at Wiltshire Council's financial scrutiny of a major project - SEND. The project was not specifically targeted, the interest came about through chance resulting from attendance at WC cabinet meetings. The group were surprised to note how the cost of the project escalated from £20M to £33M in 6 months without any real financial scrutiny and without challenge during cabinet meetings. The group raised their concerns to cabinet and have subsequently carried out an analysis of the costings which was submitted to the Leader of the Council. Responses have been received from WC which have generally been unsatisfactory and have not answered all of the questions raised.

Youth Activities – Youth group activities have been on hold due to the pandemic.

Funding has been secured for a couple of Fun Days for young people. The first is set for Sunday 25th July and will feature King Ramps with a portable 6ft half pipe with demos and workshops. The second is set for Sunday 22nd August with Wiltshire Outdoor Learning providing a 20m mobile climbing wall both in Bouverie Hall and in the car park. We hope to offer one or two other



activities as well thanks to the support of Pewsey Parish Council. The hall will be open as a refreshment and rest area. Publicity will be provided closer to the date for you to share with your parishes.

A Mental Health Triage team has been implemented at Pewsey Vale School through funding from the Local Youth Network.

Together with Green Machine, tablets and PC's for all pupils at Pewsey Primary School was achieved early in lockdown.

Pewsey PC has an acoustic engineer reviewing four sites for the long-awaited wheeled sports area which was promised by Wiltshire Council however the planning department rejected their own plans. This stage is necessary prior to Pewsey PC applying for planning again.

Pewsey Vale Health & Wellbeing Group - PCAP continues to run the Health & Wellbeing Group and to administer the grant process with Wiltshire Council. All the grant funds were allocated in the 2020 – 2021 year.

Dawn Wilson has joined the Kennet & Avon Medical Partnership (KAMP) Patient Participation Group and has been working with them throughout the pandemic. The working relationship is much improved and there has been a real community effort and better communication during this period which will continue.

The fortnightly Movement to Music Together exercise class (run by Sylvie Clayden and Henrietta Mackinnon) managed to keep going through most of lockdown on Zoom.

PCAP has funding for running two boat trips later in the year, as well as reopening the café and finding other opportunities for other social cafes.

The Memory Café has been closed since the beginning of the pandemic and is planning to start again in April.

Pewsey Vale Rail User Group - Dawn Wilson and Colin Gale chair and run the Pewsey Vale Rail User Group – working closely with Bedwyn Rail User Group, Great Western Railway, TransWilts and the Great West Way. They have also been supporting the Devizes Gateway Station project together with the Bedwyn group.

Finally, our sincerest thanks go to all the Parish Councils who have kindly donated towards the running costs of PCAP which enables this work to continue.