February 2025: Copy for the Parish Magazine

LYTCHETT MATRAVERS PARISH COUNCIL

Council Tax

Your Dorset Council Tax Bill will show the portion that is allocated to the Parish Council. It is quite a small amount, but that is your contribution to the running of the parish. For the next financial year, starting in April, our portion will rise by 2.7%; basically the rate of inflation. This enables us to keep pace with the rising costs of maintenance around the village. Places such as the Recreation Ground and Rocket Park, Foxhills and its Play Area, Row Park Cemetery, the Astro and the Youth Hall. The Parish Council spend that on your behalf and always look to get the best value for money. If you have any suggestions then come along and join in the debate. Spending decisions are always taken at Full Council meetings in public.

Neighbourhood Plan 2

With the adoption of the latest version of the Purbeck Plan and the government's revision of general planning policy, Lytchett Matravers is destined for a big influx of new houses over the next 5 years. The village is surrounded by green belt, which has provided some level of protection to date. That protection has essentially been removed by the new classification of grey belt. Grey belt is land which Dorset Council considers does not contribute to an open countryside. Lytchett Matravers is being targeted as a convenient development area because much of the rest of Purbeck is either Jurassic Coast or AONB. We are also close to the Bournemouth/Christchurch/Poole area which we understand have insufficient space for their housing allocation. That means they can request to offload some of that allocation to neighbouring councils, i.e. Dorset Council.
The Parish Council will be holding a public consultation in the near future to expand on these points and ask for your feedback in how we should support or oppose these plans. We need to update our Neighbourhood Plan to have the best attempt to shape the village future for residents. We cannot stop new housing; the government initiative is too strong. Perhaps we can affect where they are, what they look like, how they integrate with the rest of the village; all your views are welcome.

Car Parking

Our village is about to grow significantly; could be another 500 or so houses. Car parking is already a problem with many family houses having more than 2 cars. The Parish Council have continually stressed to planners about the need to cater for more parking spaces. Our current Neighbourhood Plan (2017) proposed to make it mandatory for new houses to have 2 off-road spaces each. That was rejected by the planners. We also ran a survey about 5 years ago on the most recent developments and whether parking was sufficiently catered for. The main issue we found was that where developers had created a separate garage block area, it was often not used and residents preferred to park directly outside their own house. Perfectly understandable and backs up our proposal from last time. We'll try again.
Residents should also be aware of others when parking. Parking near corners or on verges may get you closer to home, but it does create bottlenecks and visibility problems for others. And, after all, walking is good for you.

Having a decent public transport system will also alleviate some of our future parking problems. We all need to use the bus to go to town. It is cheaper than the car and parking charges. Petition your local Dorset Councillor to get your views heard.

Dorset Council Nature Emergency

Last June, Dorset Council declared a Nature Emergency (https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/news/draft-dorset-council-declares-nature-emergency-2) and the Parish Council adopted this in August. One of the central goals is to map sites that get recognised and protected for their nature value. This could be open grassland, small coppices, perhaps single trees, ponds and wet areas. Our task is to identify, map and safeguard such areas of local wildlife habitats and broader ecological networks. This should feed into the Neighbourhood Plan as constraints on development areas. Let us know your favourite spot for getting close to our special wildlife places.

Lytchett Astro

We recently had a meeting with the Football Foundation who provided the grant to build the Astro in 2008. While the original intention had been to build a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) that didn't really happen. The current facility is really just good for football. The Parish Council maintain the Astro for everyone to use. The school has sole use during school hours up until 15.45. After that it is open to anyone who wishes to kick a ball around. So it is a public facility and it is well used in the longer evenings and throughout the summer holidays. We know we will have to replace the playing surface in the next 2 to 3 years. It is quite worn and has been repaired several times. So do we replace like for like or go for a bigger, more multi-use facility?

Councillor Vacancy

We have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor, so please call the Parish Clerk to find out more. As we can see from the likely building of new houses, the village is growing and we need your participation in how we manage that expansion in the future.

Parish Council Meetings:

Our next Finance & General Purposes meeting is on February 12th at 7 p.m., but will be in the Lytchett Matravers Youth Hall not the Village Hall. The next Full Council meeting will be on February 26th at 7 p.m. in the Village Hall as usual.

Agendas for all meetings are published online and the associated reports can be requested from the Parish Clerk. Meetings always start with a public participation session, so please come along if you have suggestions or questions that you would like to discuss with the Parish Council or stay and listen to our discussions, because it's all about your village.

Alf Bush,

Chair, Lytchett Matravers Parish Council

For further information please visit our website at: https://lytchettmatraverspc.org/ or contact the Parish Clerk via lytchettmatravers@dorset-aptc.gov.uk. The Parish Clerk can also be contacted directly on 07596-885667.