

Annual Report for 2022 – 2023 for

Parish Councils in the Pewsey Community Area

Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership

Another very busy for the Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership. We would like to welcome Lizzie Humfress and Curly Haskell to the team helping with new members. Frank Knight, Treasurer for many years, has stepped down, but we have been able to continue and hopefully have someone joining us soon.

We have continued to improve the information available for the Pewsey Vale Circular Way, the new long-distance walking and cycling route that was launched in March 2022. Tim Lewis (South West Ramblers) has very kindly put together some walking notes for the route so that it can be promoted through the Long Distance Walkers' Association. His work has provided us with an experienced eye's audit of the route and so Ron Forbes and Susie Brew have been out putting up additional waymarkers and correcting others.

We have also produced a new leaflet on volunteering. This has been given to estate agents in the area so that they can give them to people moving into the area. This idea came from Alton Council where the annual Walkers are Welcome meeting was held.

We have created a Rail Ways in the Pewsey Vale page on the website, bringing together the walking routes that can be done easily from either Pewsey or Bedwyn stations.

Our focus now is on putting an application together for funding from GWR which will include a series of professionally produced map reading videos, bike repair stands and some signage.

Meanwhile, the Tourism Partnership continues to run the 'business as usual' activities such as maintaining the website and its content, publishing articles, producing monthly business newsletters, producing monthly public newsletters, getting new members on board, delivering leaflets on walking and local things to do to our membership, dealing with enquiries as well as social media and advertising.

We have had funds available for bigger and better advertisements in the VisitWiltshire and Great West Way publications. This is a good example of the additional things we can do to promote the area by having a healthy membership.

Susie Brew is on the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners, representing tourism, and continues to get involved in their initiatives. In addition, Susie is a Trustee of the North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust. The Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership will again be organising 2 walks for the North Wessex Downs' Walking Festival in June and Bedwyn Footpaths Group also are organising a walk.



Our commitment to Walkers are Welcome means that we have to demonstrate that the rights of way in our area are being maintained. Bedwyn Footpaths Group (led by Judy Haynes) is the template that other groups should follow – they do an excellent job of maintenance and improvement, liaising with local landowners as well as organising regular walks. We now have contacts in most parish councils for footpaths so that if we find issues we can let them know, however we are looking for a more proactive management of the rights of way where possible. If you are interested in setting up a Footpaths Group in your parish, then just let Susie know – susie@visitpewseyvale.co.uk.

Judy Kunkler has been setting up the Pewsey Footpaths Group and now has all the equipment necessary for rights of way maintenance. Judy Haynes has also purchased the equipment for kissing gate installation. These items of equipment are available for other parishes if they need them and to request them, please email Susie Brew at pcap@hotmail.co.uk.

Our partnership with GWR continues and we are meeting in May with Katie Axford to discuss plans for the coming year.

We are always looking for help – for example delivering leaflets, project work, website content update – if you are able to spare some time, then please contact Susie at susie@visitpewseyvale.co.uk.

The Pewsey Vale Ultra is a running event using the Pewsey Vale Circular Way taking place on Saturday 15th July 2023. Susie has already contacted the Parishes that the route runs through to let them know. It will start and end at Linkenholt.

Pewsey Community Area Partnership

PCAP has continued to support 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. Greener Great Bedwyn group, Bedwyn Footpaths Group and Shalbourne Link all use this scheme. 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.

PCAP has continued to represent the parishes at Pewsey Area Board, Local Highways & Footpaths Improvement Group and Wiltshire Council Cabinet meetings throughout the year to ensure that issues across the community are heard and actioned.

PCAP has worked with Wiltshire Council on the new Pewsey Vale Bus Service and this will be launched soon at The Vale in Pewsey. This is a service funded by the DfT Rural Mobility Fund for demand responsive transport. This bus service also aims to link and connect Devizes and Marlborough with trains at three stations. Pewsey, Great Bedwyn and Hungerford. This will also support the work of PVTP and GWR on the "Rail Ways" walking routes.

Youth Activities – PCAP supports youth work through the local youth network. The blue bus work is now transforming into sports coaching for young people in Upavon. Community First continues their work with young people across the rural community.

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 2022 - 2023 year.

The fortnightly Movement to Music Together exercise class (run by Sylvie Clayden and Henrietta Mackinnon) continues and has been going for 5 years.

The Memory Café also continues on the third Monday of each month at the Bouverie Hall. There is another Bruce Boats day trip on the canal planned for 12th June. We would like to thank all the local groups and individuals who continue to support the café with music, interesting talks and activities. The café has been going for 9 years.

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. The Pewsey Vale Rail User Group, together with others, have put in a bid to become a Community Rail Partner (CRP) with GWR, the Avon & Kennet CRP which will stretch from Reading to Westbury. The Pewsey Vale Rail User Group has been invited to meet with Network Rail to discuss the passenger train timetable for Pewsey and Great Bedwyn for 2029 and beyond, after the fourth platform at Westbury has been completed.

Freight on this line constrains capacity currently but we hope to win some concessions to improve services to the west.

Pewsey Vale Cost of Living & Health Grant - PCAP received funding from the Pewsey Vale Health & Wellbeing Fund to run a grant scheme for households struggling with the cost of living. The fund has been used to assist with a number of situations, such as furniture, clothing and electrical appliances in situations where families has been rehomed or equipment had broken. Often it was to provide shopping vouchers for the applicants so that their own funds were released meaning they could obtain the needed item themselves. Anyone applying must be referred and so primary schools and other agencies are involved in identifying those in need. So far 22 adults and 34 children have benefitted from the scheme. PCAP has been fortunate to secure a further £2000 from Wiltshire Community Foundation to support this project further into this year. All the primary schools, social prescribers and parishes in the area have been made aware of this fund.

Other work

PCAP continues to attend and represent our parishes at informational events such as the EV strategy webinar.

PCAP supports Pewsey Community Land Trust with communications. The aim is to build affordable homes for local people, owned by PCLT in perpetuity. A great aspiration.

PCAP is currently looking for an Environment representative for the PCAP Plan. The work is flexible with a commitment to attending the quarterly meetings when possible. If you are interested, contact Dawn Wilson at dawnwilson917@yahoo.com.

We are passionate about the villages in the Vale and all who live and work here. Without the support of the parishes we couldn't do or achieve as much as we do.

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. We would love to see more Parishes represented at the quarterly meetings.