



Corfe Castle Parish Council meeting

Monday 12th June 2023

Conservation works – The plan of action has been drawn up by the building surveyor and curator in line with the QQ report. We are looking to commence phase 1 works in July. The work will be carried out over 3 phases across 2-3 years. Phase 1 will mainly concern itself with vegetation removal and repointing between the South-west gatehouse and the Great hall up to the base of the Keep. Phase 2 will focus on the West bailey/Butavant tower and Phase 3 will focus on the Keep and Gloriette. We have had multiple contractors attend site to tender for the works. We are currently creating interpretation and fundraising schemes around the works to help inform our visitors and cover a tiny fraction of the cost.

May Half term – We had a busy May half-term with visitor numbers exceeding our expectations. We have been running an adventures in Purbeck trail, which signposts the amazing local landscape and points of interest. We have also had our storyteller back in the castle. His tours have proved incredibly popular, with 40-50 people on each one.

May Fair – We hosted the 'For the Village, by the Village' event on Monday 29th May 2023. The event was open for everyone and was a great success. Many thanks to Steff, Dave and all the others who were involved for all their hard work on the day.

Goat Path – I am having a meeting with Katie Black – Rights of Way Officer to talk about the future of the goat path and to ascertain what the council are willing to do to protect it and prevent any further degradation. The meeting will have happened by the time of the PC meeting so hopefully I will have an update for the meeting.

King Charles's Coronation event – An absolutely fantastic day was had by all. A huge thanks to Cllr Blinkhorn for all his hard work in making it such a success. Whilst we had a couple grumbles from the general public, the vast majority were really impressed that the NT were offering the castle to the village.

Wedding Fair - We hosted a small wedding fair in the castle on Sunday 14th May. There was a great selection of local suppliers, covering everything from wedding dresses to photography and marquee hire. We had a reasonable amount of interest in the fair and are currently reflecting on the day and how to improve it for subsequent years.

Community access passes for entry to the Castle – The National Trust are offering out community access passes to local community organisations. Community access passes give a group free access and parking to NT properties. We have two categories for our community access passes:

First, are charities/ community groups that bring individuals to our sites to provide a place for wellbeing & care. These are likely to be individuals who would not usually have the opportunity to access our sites (be that financial, transportation, situation etc.). An example is the Koru Project, where therapeutic mentors bring young people who have suffered trauma to our sites for their therapy sessions.

Second, are local families who would not normally have the opportunity to visit our sites. In this case, we are issuing the passes to certain local schools, SEND centres and referral centres, and the staff there will issue

passes to families they think will benefit most. We have strong partnerships with all these schools/ centres and trust them to give the card out appropriately.

Bank of New York volunteering day – We hosted a commercial volunteering group of 12 people in the castle on the 24th May. They worked phenomenally to help re-lay a lot of the stone that has been lost from the paths in the Keep and Gloriette area of the castle. By the end of the day they had moved and spread all 6 tonnes of the stone to areas where it was needed.

E-push/mountain trike at the Castle – fundraising for new Zest Plus mobility Scooter We have taken delivery of a brand new Mountain trike at the ticket office which will help people with access needs to experience more of the castle. The Mountain trike is an electric powered chair that makes it easier to reach the top terraces and the south-west gatehouse. We have started to loan it out to visitors and are gathering feedback on it.



We are aiming to purchase a Zest+ mobility scooter for the castle which is fully user controlled. We are going to be doing a little bit of fundraising around this, selling pin badges and asking for donations.

British sign-language interpretation – We have created a suite of BSL videos for our hearing-impaired visitors that can be accessed through smart phones by scanning a QR code in the accessible lodge by the trebuchet. These videos provide a sign-language tour of the castle that compliments the current written interpretation the we already have.

Second-hand bookshop at Castlevew – Shameless plug really. With the absence of a bookshop in Corfe we are looking to raise awareness of our secondhand bookshop in Castlevew visitors centre. We have a wide range of books which range from 50p to £3 in price. It is organised and run by our volunteers. It was brought up in a conversation by one of the local business owners that they get asked where people can buy books from in the village and they had no idea we had the secondhand bookshop, so I'm just spreading the word.

Preparations for Summer – We are beginning to focus on the Summer programme and our offer. The theme is 'Summer of Play'. There will be lots of activities and games to help the young (and the young at heart) to remain active. As normal we will be hosting the Outdoor theatres and the Outdoor Cinemas through the Summer. Tickets for the theatres are available from the Corfe Castle website. We are currently awaiting for the Purbeck Film festival group to acquire the licences before we can announce what films are going to be shown as part of the cinema events.

Corfe Castle First School Sports day – As part of our drive to forge better links with the local schools, we are hosting the village school's sports day this year. Hopefully we can make this an annual event alongside other opportunities to get the children into the castle.