



Chairman's Report 2025

It is with great pride that I present the Chairman's Report for the past year, reflecting on the achievements, challenges and opportunities ahead for Talbot Village Residents' Association.

Community Activities and Achievements

This year has been one of the most active and rewarding years for our association. Through quiz nights, bingo evenings and other social events, we've raised an incredible £1,995 for CommUNITY Kindness, supporting estranged students at Bournemouth University, as well as funding towards future projects such as a community defibrillator.

Our CommUNITY programme with Bournemouth University has developed into a vibrant and much-loved initiative. Meeting every two weeks throughout February- June this year we have hosted sessions on health, wellbeing, technology, digital parenting and free first aid training just to name a few. These events are not only equipping residents with valuable skills but are also bringing together the University and locals in a way that strengthens understanding and trust. We will commence a new season of CommUNITY talks next month and we will invite neighbouring areas also as I feel it is important to strengthen ties with residents in our ward.

One of the highlights of this year was the amazing subway mural project between Talbot Village and St Mark's School. Once a neglected underpass, it is now bursting with colour, telling the story of 200 years of village history thanks to a CommUNITY collaboration with Bournemouth University. This transformation was only possible through the joint efforts of the creativity of Arts University students, Infrastructure Services, Talbot Village Trust, the BCP Culture Team and the many residents who celebrated with us on the day of its unveiling.

We have also made practical progress: securing funding for cycle racks on Gillett Road near the Premier Shop, which will be installed soon and advancing plans for our community noticeboards to keep residents better informed. We were pleased to finally see the long-awaited replacement of the Fern Barrow bus shelter after persistent follow-up.

Seasonal Events and Festive Plans

Community spirit is perhaps most visible during our festive gatherings. Last year's Christmas parties, for both children and adults, were a great success, creating lasting memories for the children. I am delighted to confirm that this year we will again be celebrating together:

- The Children's Christmas Party will be hosted by Bournemouth University on 14 December, organised by our Events Secretary, Carrie.
- The Adults' Christmas Event will take place at L'Arte on 12 December, a chance for neighbours to come together and enjoy good company.
- We are also working towards hosting a new village Christmas celebration, with a Christmas tree, choir-led carols and festive refreshments such as mince pies and mulled wine.

Community Advocacy and Representation

This year we worked tirelessly to represent residents on some of the biggest issues affecting our area.

- On the Community Governance Review, we hosted a public meeting, ran a poll and made strong submissions to BCP Council. With nearly 2,000 consultation responses across BCP, most of them opposed, we will continue to argue that residents' views must be respected.
- On planning matters, we continued our long fight to protect Talbot Heath and surrounding green spaces. Despite disappointment at the planning appeal outcome for Highmoor Farm, we ensured that residents' objections were firmly heard. We will now hold developers to their Section 106 obligations. I was concerned about the future of Talbot Heath and the potential impact of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, so I wrote to our MP, Jessica Toale. She raised these concerns with the Secretary of State, and I have since received assurances that robust safeguards will protect sensitive and protected sites such as Talbot Heath. While this is encouraging, it does not cover all our concerns and I will continue to monitor the situation closely. Talbot Heath is a rare heathland, a haven for biodiversity and a vital green space for our community, it deserves the strongest possible protection.
- On wider council matters, I wrote directly to the Chief Executive regarding wasted spending on the failed BCP Local Plan amongst many other matters. We continue to demand transparency and accountability from those who make decisions on behalf of our community. Now BCP has a new CEO Aidan Dunn, I have every hope things will improve.

Ongoing Challenges

Challenges remain. While the Fern Barrow bus shelter has now been replaced, this was only after long delays linked to investigations and then lack of funding. We remain concerned about future threats to the subway, with some councillors lobbying for its closure. Protecting our assets and ensuring essential services remain properly funded is central to our work.

Future Goals

Looking ahead, our goals are ambitious but realistic:

- Installation of the new cycle racks and defibrillator.
- Continuing CommUNItY sessions every two weeks, with guest talks, practical workshops, and student/resident collaboration.
- Working more closely with Bournemouth University to create projects that benefit both students and residents. We previously considered charity status but with the opportunities we have through CommUNItY, we believe we can achieve just as much without it.

Closing Remarks

It has been an honour to serve as Chair and to work with such a dedicated committee. Thank you to Nick, Carrie, Liz, Matt, Gina, Tony and Lara. My thanks go to our councillors:

- Karen Rampton, who has supported this village for nearly two decades and is always someone we can rely on.
- Matt Gillett for his efforts in the community and we welcome his newly elected colleague Dawn Logan.
- Phil Broadhead, who served the community with great dedication for many years. We wish him, his wife and family every success in their exciting new adventure in Dubai, following her remarkable opportunity as a consultant overseas.

Special thanks also go to Bournemouth University for hosting this AGM and to Layne Hamerston and his team for building such a positive and constructive partnership with us.

Finally, thank you to you, our residents, for your continued support. This year has shown once again that when local people unite with a common purpose, extraordinary things can be achieved. Together, we will continue to make Talbot Village an even better place to live.