



PRESS RELEASE

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Vision Group for Sidmouth AGM: New Chair and New Ventures for 2021

Founded some fifteen years ago, the Vision Group for Sidmouth's recent AGM saw enthusiastic discussion over a wide-ranging list of activities for the coming year.

Newly elected Chair Peter Murphy reviewed some of the projects the group has helped initiate over the years before outlining ideas for a range of ventures to be considered for this coming year.

The group thanked its long-standing representative Robert Crick for his years of work with the Beach Management Plan with its frequent frustrations. Robert hoped that the new spirit of transparency would take the plan forward in a constructive way.

The challenges of regenerating the local economy post-Brexit and post-Covid were discussed, and the idea of establishing a Coastal Communities Team was explored.

The AGM's central piece was a talk from the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Richard Eley, on "How to run a successful project". Among his ten tips, he stressed that the idea for a project should be developed first, with funding sought later. He suggested focussing on small incremental changes for early success.

Cllr Denise Bickley outlined her idea of presenting awards to groups and businesses for their work on reducing waste, carbon footprint or environmental impact – all part of developing sustainability in the town.

Denise proposed that VGS's Sustainable Sidmouth programme and Plastic Warriors could collaborate to create an inspiring and effective scheme.

Bringing the meeting to a close, Peter Murphy looked forward to the year ahead progressing with current ventures and innovations relevant to the local economy. He said:

"It seems ironic that my main contribution to the Neighbourhood Plan was Economic Resilience, now that our local businesses face unprecedented challenges from lockdown and a looming Brexit. We need to track any regeneration and recovery funds that may become available from Westminster. We see the establishment of a Sidmouth Coastal Communities Team as key to this, with a solid list of 'shovel ready' projects to put forward."

If you are interested in getting involved in the work of the Vision Group for Sidmouth, do get in touch at <https://visionforsidmouth.org/contact>

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