**Hinton Martell Parish Fountain Report 2022**

**Introduction**

All those concerned with the maintenance of the fountain as a major village feature were, of course, very disappointed to hear that renovation plans for the fountain did not materialise last year. The fountain was out of action for a period over winter - in anticipation of works starting last autumn and then again early this spring. With no works on the immediate horizon the fountain has been drained, cleaned, serviced, re-filled and chemically stabilised for the summer months. It is, currently, a ‘make do and mend’ situation. The fountain can be maintained in its current state but major refurbishment remains paramount to its future stability. The fountain is a very important feature of Hinton Martell – attracting many visitors and establishing the village as unique in Dorset. The fountain adds considerable value to all properties in the village. It is a very important historical structure and its renovation must be pursued vigorously. We trust our Parish Council will continue to support the project, build funds and seek out suitable contractors. Peter Eaton and I are happy to provide any practical help.

**Fountain Centrepiece**

General condition is good. The surfaces have been cleaned. A repaint will be carried out during the next renovation process. Despite an attempt to seal leaks, water is still escaping from beneath the top bowl. This will need to be tackled again at the next emptying and cleaning.

***Action***: Re-clean, re-seal, paint.

This work can be carried out by Steve Wathen and Pete Eaton.

**Fountain Pump and Feed Lines**

Pump seems to be in good working order. All lines, joints and filters were cleaned earlier this year. One or two connections have been replaced.

Last year a new washer and seals were fitted to the old feed-tap (next to the mains stop-cock) but, when in action, this has started leaking again. This will be looked at – it is a tricky repair because the tap is of a very old design and well-worn. It would be desirable if part of a future re-fit could include a new tap here. Marrying up old piping and new fittings will need some expertise and the access is not particularly user-friendly.

**Main Fountain Bowl and Walls**

This remains in very poor condition and main issues remain the same as for the 2021 report. Rendering is now blown over most areas of the fountain wall. Large pieces of render are missing from wall top and sides. Pieces continue to fall off into road and inner bowl. In places the internal structure is exposed. Patches of waterproof paint are missing from the inner bowl. A crack encircles the inner bowl where render meets paint. The fountain’s exterior structure is unlikely to survive another winter without severe escalation of this type of damage.

***Action***: Remove all faulty render. Check, repair/rebuild internal structure. Re-render and re-seal fountain bowl and walls to existing profile. Stabilise the structure and colour interior bowl. Modern materials could offer a stronger structure, longer-lasting durability and incorporated colour finishes to the bowl – negating need for future re-paints.

***This is a job for a specialist company/contractor.***

**Electric Box**

The electrics are performing well. The general condition of the brick housing-box is below par. Repair was due to be carried out during renovation but, with no immediate renovation date on record, it will now be done during the summer.

***Action***: The box interior needs a clean and a floor lining. The door needs re-fitting and new hinges. It needs a clasp and padlock. (With keys for several keepers.) Plant overgrowth needs to be cleared and a slab laid in front of the door to improve opening and access.

It is also recommended, *for safety and security reasons*, that:

* the box door displays a notice to the effect of, ‘Electrics - No Unauthorised Access’.
* The electrics are inspected and checked by an electrician. This should be done annually with a certificate supplied.

The box renovation can be carried out by Steve Wathen and Pete Eaton.

***The electrical checking needs to be completed by a qualified electrician. A suitable electrician has been contacted and he is willing to carry out the work. A quotation for this work will be submitted later this year.***

(If required at any time, full documentation and photographs are available for inspection.)

Stephen Wathen

May 2022