

Harberton Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes

Annual Parish Meeting at 7.00pm on Tuesday 11th April 2017, Harberton Parish Hall

In attendance: Cllrs Beamish, Bowley, Broom, Camp, Davidson, J.Hockings,, Janes, McDonnell, Williams, D.Cllr Tucker, C.Cllr Vint.

Public: Simon Harrington (Totnes and Rural Community Bus Association, TARCBA), Phil Sheardown (Harberton Playing Field Association (HPFA) Gregory Ward (Harbertonford Allotment Society),

Apologies: Cllrs S. Hockings, Waite

Minutes: Cat Radford (Parish Clerk)

Agenda

1. **Apologies** were received as above
2. **Annual Reports** from groups and organisations who have agreements with, or funding from Harberton Parish Council or the Harberton Parish Community Benefit Fund

2.1. Harberton Playing Field Association *Phil Sheardown*

Our role this year has been largely one of **maintenance** - of our mower; the container; the play equipment; monitoring regular grass cutting (the main field by South Hams contractors and the Play Area, woodland path, banks and around seats/equipment by Ed Blight) and managing the Upper Car Park.

Congestion in the **Upper Car Park**, partly caused by longterm parking of camper vans and trailers has partly resolved. A change in signage, adding 'no trailers' and using the village e-mail to request that vehicles be moved to allow maximum parking for village and hall events has relieved the problem.

The **HPFA constitution** has been updated this year.

The committee is moving forward on a project to provide a **Trim Trail** around the perimeter of the field. A questionnaire has been produced to gauge community interest in the scene, to be rolled out shortly. We are planning to apply to the Community Fund when we have the results from the questionnaire, have worked out all the costings and have investigated other sources of funding. We would also expect to put on some fund-raising events ourselves.

HPFA has agreed to support the application by the Hall committee for low-level, motion-activated **lighting** on the path and steps from the road to the car parks.

The Playing Field is being considered as a night-landing site for **Devon Air Ambulance**. Whilst respecting their valuable work we concluded, after much discussion, that HPFA could not support the proposal as it would negatively impact on present and future activities on the field. However it was agreed that, should there be overwhelming support from the community as a whole, the HPFA would not stand in its way.

Finally, HPFA has done a fair amount of **fund-raising** this year, often in collaboration with other groups. We held raffles in conjunction with the Pantomime committee and another with the Cricket Club at the Oyster 3 Concert. The Dog Show committee also made a generous donation to our funds. The Snowdrop Walk and Coffee Morning at Jan & John Culf's made a record amount this year.

This Summer we have a wedding reception, a croquet tournament and the Dog Show planned as well as occasional small group camping.

2.2. Harbertonford Allotment Society *Gregory Ward*

After a very wet, slow start, it got warm and very sunny, but growing wasn't quite as good as the previous year. Two sets of people have joined HAS this year, and there is a waiting list of one.

The Society had a health bank balance so it was decided to spend it on things that the committee decided were worthwhile to do. We reinforced one of the paths, built a communal area with tables and benches

which are now regularly used by members and their families. This will be useful for work days and workshop days for people to meet and to have lunch there. It is hoped to install a barbeque area this year.

The bank balance stands at just under £740, having paid rent and insurance and for the completed projects mentioned. The Society has a commitment to the Parish Council to carry a balance of £250 in the account, so the committee try to consider likely expenditure such as maintenance of the strimmer and lawnmower. The lawnmower has worked very well this year, but it is now in a bad state of repair and considered unsafe for further use. A discussion of purchase of the new machine will be had at the next meeting.

2.3. St. Peter's Church, Harbertonford *Hazel Willis*

We have just had our APCM and our first full year with our new priest in charge, David Sayle. It's been a very interesting year.

We had a good Summer Fair although the weather wasn't on our side, and our Harvest Festival was well attended – Christmas case and we had a very enjoyable carols and readings service.

The children from our local church school came down for their annual Easter, Harvest and Christmas service, these were very well attended with standing room only.

This year we have our 5-yearly quinquennial. We have had repairs done on electrical and the boiler this year, the grass cutting has gone ahead as normal and the church yard has looked very nice thanks to the help of the grant.

This APCM we said goodbye to our Churchwarden Mrs F Harvey who has retired after 25+ years service. We will miss her. Also we said goodbye to Mrs M Ball who has also retired. We wish them well.

2.4. St. Andrew's Church, Harberton *Written report from Freda Wheat, Church Warden*

First of all thank you for your annual contribution of £450 for the upkeep of the churchyard. It is much appreciated.

St Andrew's continue to have successful Bazaars and we combined with Harberton Parish Hall for the Strawberry fair which was very good. We had a very good Christmas Bazaar starting at a different time to include lunch which was very successful and we were over-run with stalls! We continue to have our monthly Coffee mornings round the village and our Harvest Praise reverted back to an Evening service followed by Supper on account of our Sunday services now being 9.30 am every Sunday.

We now have a team of volunteers who are keeping up with the everyday maintenance of the church clearing gutters etc. and we have an independent team raising funds for all the major repairs that need doing, especially after our Quinquennial Report. At present we have no heating because the boiler has finally packed up. Also the tower needs seeing to.

Revd David Sayle has made quite a number of changes because he is virtually on his own trying to cover 7 churches with the help of Rev. Peter Povey (once a month) and visiting Clergy and we have a Reader, David Stafford who is now able to give Communion by extension.

It was reported that Freda is resigning as Churchwarden from April 2017, it is hoped the position will be filled at the Annual Meeting.

2.5. Harberton Parish Hall *Ginny Davidson, Report by Les Wright, Chairman of the Harberton Parish Hall Committee*

As with previous years, the Committee has had the aim of managing our Parish Hall for the benefit of the village and all prospective users.

A safe environment within the hall is a priority. To that end, the hall and its surroundings are inspected on a monthly basis and any matter that relates to health and safety, also good housekeeping, is reported in

writing to the committee. During the course of that month, the necessary action is taken. Written records are kept of both the reports and the action taken. Additionally, the inside of the hall has a strict cleaning regime.

A completely new Fire Risk Assessment has recently been carried out and recommendations arising from this are currently being acted upon.

The twenty-year-old Constitution has been carefully appraised and a new document, the Hall Governance Policy, is being drafted to include, extend and clarify some elements of the constitution which, with the passage of time, have been found to be inappropriate. In parallel with these documents, the hall hiring policy has been closely examined and a new document is being prepared. This will present potential hirers with a clearer picture of the facilities available, their responsibilities as hirers and other matters such as hall evacuation in the event of fire.

Improvements have been made to the heating system and a programme for the various temperature requirements of hirers is being set on a weekly basis. A thorough inspection of the halls' electrical systems has just taken place by a qualified electrician and an up to date certificate should be forthcoming shortly.

The hedging and trees bordering the hall on Tristford Road have been extensively cut back and are now in a more manageable state. In time, the re-grown hedges will form an attractive and effective boundary to the hall.

Our major income earner this year was our Pantomime, *Sleeping Beauty*. It was reckoned by some to be the best ever produced at the hall. However, the highlight of our entertainment year was the celebration to mark twenty years since the hall was completed. We were pleased and honoured to be joined by a number of the people who had the foresight and the determination to make the hall in Harberton a reality. This was a huge successful and valuable village event, which was really well attended.

The hall bookings have been quite healthy this year. During the week, we have regular activities including yoga, Pilates, table tennis, bowls, machine embroidery, dance and craft classes. Also, the hall is booked most weekends for events such as weddings, dances, parties, concerts, craft fairs and many other activities.

Our reserves currently stand at approximately £13,000. It is necessary for us to keep this figure above, say, £10,000 because we need to prepare for any unforeseen emergency repairs or renewals requiring major capital. The roof will have a lifespan which needs to be kept in mind.

Expenditure items which we are currently investigating are the cost of renewing the main public access through the hedgebank at the front of the hall. Being, again, in place for twenty years, the bank and its timber supports are showing signs of decay and instability. In a similar fashion, the ramped vehicular access to the front door is contaminated with earth from the adjacent banks and ideas are being investigated to restore its originally firm surface.

Our next AGM is scheduled for Wednesday 12th July 2017. We have a couple of new members which is good as a couple have indicated that they will be stepping back.

2.6. Harbertonford Village Hall *Written report from committee Secretary, Jean Blackler*

The village hall is continuing to flourish with new members joining the committee during the year. Early in the New Year and due to ill health Bob Monaghan has had to step down from chair of the committee and this position has been filled by the vice chair – John Blackler.

Work continues on improvements to the hall with the fitting of new fire doors, refurbishment of the store room and new lighting for the stage.

Bookings are on a par with past years but there is little use on a regular basis as many clubs are finding it hard to support themselves. This appears to affect other halls and indeed some in North Devon have closed despite having good facilities.

We have a dedicated committee who wish to see the hall continue to provide a facility for the village and hope people will continue to support.

2.7. Harberton Feofees *John Hockings*

The Harberton Feofees is a Trust of gifted money and church land sold that is invested. Gifts are regularly reinvested, but has been difficult in recent times to find bank accounts that provide interest.

Traditionally the Feofees would distribute coal to people in need at Christmas. This tradition has made way for a gift of £25.00 given to pensioners and those in need who live in the Parish.

The Feofees also respond to requests for gifts, for example it recently contributed to the costs of drying equipment for a Harbertonford resident whose property was flooded.

The committee meets twice a year and is made up for 4 co-opted members, 2 from the Parish Council, 3 from the church who have good local knowledge.

2.8. Harberton and Harbertonford Defibrillator Project It was reported that fundraising continues in Harberton with a collection box at the Church House Inn and a request for donations from residents. Harbertonford Villagers fundraised for the project last summer and Jane Hutchinson is running a marathon to raise money. The Parish Council has not received notification from BT with regard to adoption of the Harberton telephone box.

2.9. Harberton and Harbertonford History Society *Written report from Society Secretary, Jill Powell*

The Society was very pleased to receive the grant of £279.77 from The Community Fund. We purchased film/ recording equipment for the sum of £251.98. Which consisted of a digital camcorder, camera case, tripod and memory card. We had to adjust our purchases as the prices of original items had increased when we made the purchases. The remaining sum of £27.79 remains in the Society account and will be used during the project. In the meantime we have been researching other oral history projects, including consulting Holly Trubshawe at the Cookworthy Museum, Fiona Clampin, Project Manager, Britannia Naval College Oral History Project and the Oral History website.

We had a meeting with Graham Thompson who organised the project 'Voices of the Teign Valley'. We have now devised Information and Consent Forms to use in the project. In addition, we have had a practice runs with the equipment!

At our most recent meeting , we made the decision that our first project would be 'The Harbertonford Woollen Mill'. Our intention is to advertise and to approach people in the two villages who had connections with the mill. We will then ask permission to interview them and our eventual aim is to create a short film which we hope to show at a history society meeting. The recordings will be archived, possibly at the Devon Rural Archive.

A further project has been suggested , which would be to interview villagers from Harberton to recount their stories of life in the village . From our consultations ,we have deduced that these projects are time consuming, not least transcribing the recordings and editing the interviews .We therefore anticipate that this initial project could take 18 months -2 years .

2.10. Eve Sanders

Eve reached her fundraising target to climb Killamanjaro and to raise funds and awareness of the work of the Meningitis Research Foundation. A condition of her grant from the Parish Council was that she arrange a talk for the community on her return, focusing on raising awareness of meningitis and septicaemia. She has made a small video of the climb itself which she will also play at the end. Cllr Williams offered use of a projector and the Clerk agreed to put Eve in touch with a local doctor who could support the talk.

3. **Chair's report** This has been a fairly quiet year compared to some recent years. There have been no major planning applications although some raised discussion in terms of differences from the original approved application. Generally the Parish Council observations were not generally supported by the District Council. District Councillor Tucker organised a briefing session with the senior development manager to clarify the planning decision process.

The Neighbourhood Plan group continued their work. The publication of the draft local plan for South Devon should help to clarify some outstanding issues before a final round of consultations.

ON the health side, the Parish Council has supported the provision of defibrillators in both villages through the Community Benefit Fund. We are currently waiting on our application to take over the telephone box in Harberton having already secured the one in Harbertonford so that the project can go forward. We have also supported the provision of a lighting mast at Harbertonford football field to facilitate night landings by the Air Ambulance through funding from the TAP fund. We intend to take forward implementation subject to a public consultation meeting and planning approval.

Flooding continues to be an ongoing issue in the Parish. We purchased a limited supply of aquabags to be used in emergency instead of sandbags. A possible scheme to relieve flooding in Harberton proved unfeasible on investigation but the Environment Agency has offered assistance to try and identify possible management measures which might be taken with farmer's assistance to reduce the rate of run off from the Cholwell stream catchment area to ameliorate flooding problems in Harberton.

In terms of the Parish Council administration, we have restructured our banking arrangements with some efforts, two councillors have stepped down from the Council during the year; Jane Hutchinson who was instrumental in the setting up for the Harbertonford Children's play area and more recently the defibrillator scheme and Charlie Wynne, who is currently chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

We thank both councillors for their service to the Council and trust they will continue to contribute to the life of the community through their ongoing projects.

Cllr Chris Bowley has joined the Council to replace Jane and there is now a vacancy for the Harberton Ward.

Finally thanks to all the councillors for their work during the year, and to Cat, our clerk, who keeps us on the straight and narrow!

Meeting closed at 7:45pm