

Annual Parish Meeting May 2024

1. Planning:

One of the duties we are obliged to perform is a review of any planning application put in front of us and despite having no specialist knowledge or expertise, we are obliged to comment on each application as we see it (with technical guidance of course from our Parish Clerk). In a small village like ours, the potential disruption from a development can be alarming (as has been the case on many occasions) and so we entered a dialogue with Cornwall Council (and with input from a small group of parishioners) to see if a form of words could be put together, to manage contractors better. This was finally achieved to our mutual satisfaction (but in the process created an unfortunate delay to progress at Lantyan House) However, when this was used again with the next development, Cornwall Council retreated from the framework of our previous discussion and our form of words has been somewhat diluted, with contractors now only “invited” to follow the guidelines laid down by Cornwall Council.

2. Toilet Block/Kayak Store:

At our last meeting a year ago, I was able to confirm that as part of DEVOLVEMENT from Cornwall Council, we not only acquired the carpark, but we also gained the toilet block which as you know was already two thirds redundant. Courtesy of a lot of background work and input, Councillor David Johns (together with helpful parishioners) has gone on to develop a village Kayak Storage facility which is now virtually completed and almost full of kayaks. Our grateful thanks go to him for this seeing this project through to an effective conclusion.

3. Toilet:

Having mentioned the toilet, I should touch on the issue that we faced earlier in the year, when our provider of toilet cleaning services (Corserv) elected to up their charges to the equivalent of our annual precept! Despite attempts to negotiate a more reasonable settlement, they were determined to stick to their pricing policy and we were equally determined that we should therefore accept their contract termination and find an alternative provider. Our thanks to Debbie who on our behalf sourced our

new toilet cleaning service provider at annual costs similar (if not lower?) than before.

4. Ticket Machine:

We have enjoyed a virtually faultless year from our new ticket machine, but we were put into a quandary when it did fail for once and we had to try and repair it with telephone assistance from our maintenance provider. But in the process, they admitted that their response time might be as long as three days to our single machine and in discussion with our car park management company, we also discovered that their terms would oblige users to park elsewhere if the machine was **out of order**. In either event, we would lose essential revenue that provides the backbone of our Parish income. So, our plan going forward is to add “pay by phone” with a company called “JUST PARK”, (who are used by Cornwall Council) as a fall-back position if this were to happen again.

5. Community Chest:

As a reminder, the Parish Council is allowed to make available a small “pot” of money each year to support “good causes.” It isn’t a fortune and is calculated by statute, but it does assist our village organisations to make certain decisions easier and can help with their annual costs. So, this year for example, we have been able to support the village hall with their ‘wifi’ running costs, the electricity for the Boatwatch Hut, some money for the Christmas Fayre and art trail, and some funding for the new village web cam.

6. Highways:

As you know, one of the perennial issues in our village is the need to keep on top of the state of our roads. I have now attended a number of presentations by the Highways part of Cormac and I can confirm that there is no other way to get a pot hole repaired other than by using their system. But having said that.....by a process of lobbying and with support from our Cornwall Councillor, we did manage to convince Highways that rather than keep repairing Water lane, they should instead re-surface it! And I think they did a very good job of it in the process! (Church Hill is next on the radar!)

I might also mention in passing that we also secured the funding for Highways to erect a more prominent sign depicting the junction at the Castledore crossroads, which hopefully will be beneficial in alerting drivers to the crossroads ahead?

7. Playground:

I have deliberately left the best item until last!

A year ago, and with the knowledge that a fully-fledged playground was going to cost us money that we didn't have...(and with our old and tired village playground falling into disrepair) we set about a 'fund raising' exercise that has generated the magnificent playground that we can see today. Simple words cannot express the generosity of "giving" that this community has provided either in terms of money or input to the various projects undertaken to achieve this and there is a danger in naming individuals, in case others are overlooked. But there have been some staggering financial donations (with many provided in confidence!) I do have to mention the work by Andrew who not only prepared the ground works, laid the new turf, installed the seesaw, rebuilt the tyre swing, but also built us a new gazebo. We are very grateful! Ultimately, the key to achieving the funding target was a GRANT obtained from Cornwall Council, spearheaded by Siobhan (our Parish Council project leader) who was ably advised and assisted by Fayre and Sue, who pulled all the finance together. And who can forget the inaugural village fete organised by Nick, where so many parishioners got involved? The dog show, the car boot, money from village organisations, the list goes on!

On a personal note, can I simply say a very big thank you to everyone who made this happen. It has just been amazing!

David Jenkinson

Chairman St Sampson Parish Council