



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

Date: Saturday, 11 March 2023
Time: 9:45am
Venue: Parish Hall

Present

Cllr Vivienne Hodges (Chair)
Cllr Mike Jeffery (District Councillor and Chair of Planning Committee)
Cllr Jan Evans (Chair of Finance and Policy Committee)
Cllr Richard Short
Cllr Malcolm Chudley

Also Present

Samantha Parkin (Clerk)
Representatives from the following groups and organisations:
Neighbourhood Police Team, Moretonhampstead Swimming Pool, Moretonhampstead Twinning Association, Trees in Time, Moretonhampstead Tennis Club, Moretonhampstead Parish Hall Management Committee

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and wished the groups and organisations success in the coming year.

2. MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Jeffery, seconded by Cllr Evans and **resolved** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 26th March 2022 as a correct record.

3. SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S YEAR

The Council had a presentation summarising the Council's activities which included:

The Clerk had prepared the Accounts and the Council approved them at the June meeting. There were no issues to report on the External Audit Report carried out by PKF Littlejohn. Internal checks are carried out monthly. The Council are grateful to Sian Colridge for volunteering to carry out the Council's internal Audits.

Members of the community joined the Council for the first leg of Beating the Bounds. We walked approximately 7 miles from Didworthy to Fingle. The next leg will take place on April 2 from Brinning to Fingle.

Working with the community, the Council hosted the town's Jubilee celebrations. Events included the lighting of the Beacon, the Queen's Green Canopy, Coffee morning, Family tea party, Carnival fun day followed by a Jubilee knees up.

The Council have maintained the Churchyard to a high standard throughout the year. St Andrew's Churchyard achieved a Certificate of Merit in the 'Devon's Best Churchyard Competition'. The council agreed to restore the gates and railings at the churchyard. The railings and gates were shot blasted to remove decades of rust and damage. Classic Gates and Railings carried out the necessary repairs and replaced missing iron work. The gates and railings were then taken for galvanising to provide rust proofing and finally were powder coated black.

Every year the Council gives grants to Organisations based in the parish that provide services which enhance the economic, social or cultural well-being of the community of Moretonhampstead. Last year successful applicants included:

- Community Swimming Pool – £500 to upgrade and modernise the toilet facilities
- Moretonhampstead Tennis Club - £250 to replace two tennis nets
- Moretonhampstead Twinning Association - £400 to fund a cultural, educational and fun outing
- Parish Hall - £400 to replace the fire door and replace two window frames
- Green Hill Arts - £300 to purchase materials and build storage units for the flag project
- Trees in Time- £50 to purchase trees

The Council agreed to sow wildflower seeds in the wildflower area. The seeds have been sowed and the council are excited to see the results.

Working with HM Prison and Probation Service, South West, the Council has installed a composting area in the Churchyard for the whole community to use.

The Councils Climate Change and Ecological Working Group have created a monthly Green Tip of the Month to encourage the community to think about their carbon emissions and the environment.

The Council hosted another successful event despite the miserable weather. 9 stall holders braved the rain to delight us with treats and Christmas gifts. Moor Voices entertained us with Christmas Carols before Killian and Matilda, the winners of the 'Design a Christmas Hat' competition led the countdown to switch on the lights which was met with a cheer from the crowd. The switch-on was followed by the Primary School Choir who sounded delightful singing a selection of Christmas songs around the Christmas tree kindly donated by Baskervilles.

2023/24 Objectives:

- Churchyard Restoration – The Council has agreed to continue the restoration project
- King's Coronation – The Council has agreed to host a Cream tea on Saturday, 6th May
- Housing Survey – The Council has agreed to work with Teignbridge District Council to conduct a Housing Needs Survey and to review the Local Lettings Plan

4. UPDATE FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MIKE JEFFERY

2022/23 was a bit of a disruptive year at Teignbridge. Work on the council building has been going on for some time; the contractor went into liquidation and a new one had to be found which took time. The council meetings were held at Newton Abbot racecourse and then Buckland football ground. Meetings were frequently disrupted by members of the public and some council members. This resulted in meeting adjournments, one meeting having two adjournments. A councillor who was dissatisfied with the way a meeting was being run reported it to the ombudsman who gave a damning report back to the council. The leader made a public apology to the councillor concerned and said the ombudsman report would be taken on board.

The Government introduced a new surcharge for second homes in its levelling up and regeneration bill last year but the new tax power for councils is not expected to be introduced until next year at the earliest. Teignbridge has provisionally agreed to adopt a new power allowing it to double council tax faster on properties that have been empty for 12 months. The council's analysis suggests doubling the council tax for second homes could generate £2.5 million in extra revenue.

According to a council report, there are approximately 1250 people with a registered housing need in Teignbridge and TDC believes 1240 properties are furnished but not currently being used as a main residence.

A drone trial is being investigated for planning applications, this would be run by a private contractor to see if it would be a success.

There are ongoing discussions about whether the town centre and Alexandra theatre should be redeveloped; the council is currently split but if the work is not agreed the offer of £9.5 million could go elsewhere.

Car parking charges are set to increase on April 1st by 4%. Sunday parking will remain at £1 for all day and overnight parking will still be free. Winter charges will now apply in car parks such as Moretonhampstead and Widecombe. There are ongoing discussions whether camper vans should be allowed to stay in car parks overnight and use the facilities; this would mean toilets being left unlocked overnight – currently they are locked.

Garden waste bin collections will increase to £55 per annum, an increase of £5, but I believe it is still good value.

The councillor community funds will be halved. An officer report on alternative uses of the remaining 50% will be considered by the new council. A review of the discretionary business rates relief will also be reviewed by the new council.

A fly tipper has been successfully prosecuted to the tune of £1500.

District and parish council elections will be held on 4th of May but you will need ID to be able to vote.

5. UPDATES FROM LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

Local Community Clubs/Groups/Organisations attended the meeting and the following updates were provided:

Neighbourhood Police Team

The following report covers the period from 1st April 2022 to 9th March 2023 when report was compiled.

During this period, Moretonhampstead has had an identifiable neighbourhood team run by Police Sergeant Seth Sanders.

PC David Gibson is the Neighbourhood Beat Manager (NBM)

PCSO's Tina Jordan and Paul Wilson are the PCSO's for the area.

In this period, we have seen approximately 61 recorded offences across the Moretonhampstead Parish area. This area includes the Town of Moretonhampstead, as well as the area down to Docombe and parts of Dartmoor.

This total is up slightly on the previous 12 months. However, many of these offences are linked.

The most recorded offences in this period are,

Assaults 14

Harassment; 14

Theft; 9

Criminal Damage; 7

Communications offences;7

In the same period there have been over 140 other calls for Police assistance however, again many of these were linked to a specific concern for welfare. Others includes anti-social behaviour, road traffic incidents, missing persons, and Weather-related incidents

We have begun to hold Police surgeries in Moretonhampstead and this will continue through the year

We will continue work with The Parish council, community groups and partners to remain connected too and serve our communities in the coming year.

PCSO 30382 Paul Wilson

Chudleigh & Ashburton

Neighbourhood Police Team

Moretonhampstead Swimming Pool Trust

The 2022 summer season was our first "normal" season since 2019. Following the success of the new pool surround in 2021, the big project for the start of the 2022 season was to renew the floor in the pavilion and refurbish the toilets. We are grateful to have received funding towards this from the Parish Council. As always, with the exception of the work that the trustees undertake themselves, we employed local tradespeople where and when possible. We were also fortunate in our bid for the Co-Op Community Fund for 2021/22. The allocation enabled us to offer discounted or free-swimming lessons and concessionary season tickets to those in our community facing financial hardship. 2022 was also the 40th Anniversary of the swimming pool in its current location. We celebrated by joining the Carnival procession with a 1980's themed entry and our final fun event of the 2022 season was the "dog swim" which, once again, proved very popular.

As ever we are always looking for volunteers to help prepare/maintain the pool, to staff the shop and lifeguard. We also have paid lifeguarding opportunities for young people who we will train. Please also look out this season for our fundraising activities. As you all know these are tricky times for public swimming pools in terms of energy prices - with no government support. Whilst we have been able to stay afloat financially these last few years this is getting harder, and we will be calling out to the community to pitch in across the season to raise funds to make sure we continue in a stable financial position. We are also always happy to receive donations from the local community and in kind contributions from local businesses. If you would like to contribute in any way to the pool, please get in touch: moretonpool@hotmail.com

Moretonhampstead Twinning Association

This brief report follows on from the grant given in March 2022 by the Parish Council to cover “financial support for a cultural, educational and fun outing in which our French guests and particularly our younger guests will take part in a day out with young people from Moreton”.

2022 Visit to Moretonhampstead.

In August 2022, we hosted 30 people from Betton including 12 young people as part of our annual exchange programme with this town in Brittany. Many members of the local community were involved in making this visit a success. The Twinning Association took care to reach out in particular to younger members of our population through the provision of fun activities (Dartmoor walks, visit to Chagford Show, games at Little Mardon and canoeing on the river Exe and a Ceilidh) and there was a good take-up on this offer.

We specifically used the grant from the Parish Council to provide a morning’s water experience on the river Exe which was very popular amongst both Moretonhampstead and Betton young people (though it did result in a capsized and some rather wet but happy participants!).

The support from the Parish Council and the success of the visit has given us renewed enthusiasm to promote a return visit to Betton in 2023.

Lucy Patrick
Secretary Moretonhampstead Twinning Association

Moretonhampstead Tennis Club

Last year’s activities included:

- Coaching sessions for 4 groups in age groups 5-7, 8-11, teens, adults with our professional coach from April to September
- Year-round join in and play sessions on Monday & Thursday evenings.
- Mid-summer barbeque at Budleigh Farm

Trees in Time

Trees in Time planted over 735 trees across 5 sites, between January - March 2023

450 were funded by Devon wildlife, 75 grown at the nursery on the allotment. These went to the Community Sports Centre.

Remaining trees, guards and stakes were purchased in part with £50,00 from the Parish Council, sale of locally donated books and a local private sponsor.

Additional sites were: Blackentone rock, Pepperdon area in two places and North Bovey.

66 volunteers helped make this possible. Folk from 5- 88 years took part; they came from Moreton, Bridford, Chagford, Manaton and 10 from Plymouth. People stored trees in their gardens to keep

them safe, provided hammers, made tea, and helped support in categorising the trees into groups to ensure a good species mix. For 5 Saturdays we started at 6am to ensure each site was well planned.

We are looking at new sites for 2025 possibly under the Plymouth/ Dartmoor/South Hams tree scheme. With maintenance for 2023/24

Moretonhampstead Parish Hall

In the last year the Parish Hall committee has been working hard to upgrade the facilities in as many areas as possible.

We started in August with a complete redecoration of the Peter Gunning Room at the back, taking down the curtains and the wobbly mirrors and adding a dado rail and painting the room and kitchenette area. Jake Samsom generously donated his time as did Misty Angel helping with this work and materials were kindly donated by Bradfords. We replaced damaged ceiling tiles as well. We think it looks much fresher.

Today we have set up a couple of table tennis tables in the Peter Gunning Room for people to have a go with. These are inherited from the Table Tennis Club which was based here and formerly run by Ken Underhill and these tables are available for hire. Do let us know if you are interested.

We have also, with the help of a grant from the Parish Council, replaced the fire door in the main hall which was in a desperate condition and mended the bottom of the two window frames either side.

We have changed the chair covers in the Warnes Room and just hung curtains to match. Also, local artist Lucy Patrick is now displaying some of her artwork there, as is Margaret Spittles displaying some of her local photographs. I think you will agree this room has improved.

A great step forward was managing to get a free Wi-Fi deal with Airband, so we now have broadband to offer which is free to all. Sam Parkin alerted us to this offer for Community Buildings so many thanks to Sam.

Our latest acquisition is a replacement cooker in the kitchen. This has an electric oven and five gas hobs. The old one had become difficult to light. We also now have a fridge freezer in the kitchen and the kitchen fridge has been relocated to Warnes Room, so we now have 3 fridges, one in each room. We were also donated a couple of kettles and a toaster during the year.

To help fund some of our improvements we put on a dance with music by Moorfire in the evening with Baskervilles providing delicious food. Halloween was celebrated in the afternoon with scary kids in fancy dress and a dubious tea of coloured "eyes" and other nasty looking goodies. Nearer Christmas we held a market day which was supported by 12 stalls and Father Christmas was in attendance for the children. The school choir also sang us carols. It was a lovely day.

To finish off the year we had another dance with the Fire Blockers playing for us. Another good evening which kept us on our feet. In the year we also received donations from The Variety Group and from the Unitarian Association, the organisation which sold the Smethurst Hall, as it was formerly known, in 1952 to the Charity Commission, to be managed by a Parish Hall Management Committee, ie now us.

So, it has been a busy year and there is always something that needs doing. A leaky pipe, a drip through the roof, a flashing strip light - the hall keeps us on our toes. We are hoping to upgrade our smoke alarms in the next year, and we are also looking to upgrade the heating system.

We are in the process of setting up a website which will include a booking diary for the two halls and Warnes Room. This will greatly improve visibility of available "slots" and make booking easier. There is also the spin off that the diary will help advertise users' events. We are hoping to add a tab on the site to help users promote their activities.

We welcome any suggestions you might have for improving the facilities here although, as you can imagine, there is much we would like to do funds permitting. We are also always looking out for new

committee members so if anyone is interest or wants to know more, please, again, just ask one of us. And finally, we would like to take this opportunity for thanking everyone for supporting the Parish Hall which is such an important community facility.

The meeting finished at 12.00pm.