

ALWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Notes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 3rd May 2022, at the Old School Rooms, Alwington.

Present: Cllrs Gordon Lester, Sarah Bourke, Neil Rothney, Alison Browning, and Christine Moore.

Cllr Phil Pennington – Torrridge District Council, Cllr Jeffery Wilton – Love – Devon County Council.

In attendance: Malcolm Harris – Parish Clerk, and 10 Parishioner's

1. Apologies – None received.
2. Welcome, and introduction to the meeting – Cllr Gordon Lester
- 2. Report from Cllr Gordon Lester, Chairman of Alwington Parish Council.**

The summarised report is as follows:

The work of the Parish Council over the next few years will focus on the following:

1. The state of our roads remains a problem. Cllr Brian Adams has toured the Parish and logged and reported the potholes to the Devon County Council. (DCC)
2. DCC no longer employ a lengths man to maintenance roadside ditches. The Parish Council will look to appoint a contractor to undertake essential works.
3. Speed of vehicles on the A39 and rural roads, continues to be an area of great concern. The Parish Council will continue to push for speed reductions on the A39 through Fairy Cross, and on key rural roads in the Parish.
4. There continues to be pressure for the provision of new houses. A new Local Plan is due for development over the next few years, and the Parish Council will continue to try and influence policies that protect the character our villages and hamlets.
5. The Parish Council will continue to develop the Parish website to ensure local information continues to be available to all.

4. Report from Cllr Phil Pennington – Torrridge District Council

Summary as follows:

- 1) Swimming Pools and Leisure facilities. Prior to April 3 swimming pools and leisure centre services were provided by an outside provider. And leisure Councillors decided to take the service in house when the contract came to an end at the end of March. The new company is called Active Torrridge. Please check on the website about opening times. Any comments about the service would be gratefully received
- 2). Parks maintenance
Similar comments as to the previous entry. Although Arlington does not have any parks of its own run by Torrridge, I am sure that many families will use either Victoria Park or other sites throughout the district.

- 3). Covid. There was a spike in infections during March and early April. Torridge has seem to have managed them fairly well
- 4). £150 council tax rebate. Officers will begin administrating the rebate from the 16th of May
- 5) Ukrainian refugees. Porridge officers will be assisting in assessing host families coming to the

4. Report from Cllr Jeffery Wilton-Love, Devon County Council

Key areas of work impacting on the Parish Council:

1. There has been a slow down in road repairs, and a slight fall in the DCC Highways budget.
2. DCC is working to look at ways to mitigate the cost-of-living crisis.
3. DCC is investigating options to deal with the Housing Crisis.
4. Special Education Needs are a priority for review and are seeking additional funding.
5. Speed – issues on the A39. Build up of data required to support requests for speed reductions. This issue continues to be a priority for a number of local Parish Councils.
6. Rural Roads – there are over 136 applications ongoing for a reduction in speed limits, and only 5 are being taken forward at the moments. Other options for encouraging speed reduction should be considered.

5. Matters raised by Parish Residents

1. **Roadside maintenance** - there were concerns over the current level of maintenance on roadside verges. The Parish Council will look to engage a contractor to review and manage the work.
2. **Local Plan** – concerns relating to the timescale of the review, and the impact of policies on rural communities. The Parish Council confirmed that it is considering engaging a Planning Consultant to advise the Council on a response to any consultation on the Local Plan, of Housing Land Review.
3. **St Andrews Church maintenance** – the Church and its environs require funding to sustain the buildings for the future. Both the District Councillor, and the County Councillor agreed to research any available funding sources, and report back.

6. To receive reports from community groups.

Summary as follows:

Alwington Village Hall

1. Impact of Covid on income, was helped by receiving grants. Some of the money used to improve the Hall whilst it was closed. Skirting replaced, new LED lights in the Hall, 3 HEPA filters were installed to improve air circulation.
2. During lockdown no events were held. The scarecrow competition took place and provided some fun in the Parish.
3. September saw the return of most of our Hall users. March saw the return of the Hearty Breakfast, August the return of the Horticultural Show, and October 15th is the date set for the Autumn Hearty Breakfast, and 5th June the Community Lunch to celebrate the Queens Jubilee.

The Village Hall Committee welcomes any suggestions for future events, and activities in the Parish.

The Parish Church of St Andrew in Alwington – The Old School Rooms

1. Work done recently

Old direct fired lpg heaters have been removed, and replaced by a new domestic lpg boiler, radiators, and fan assisted heaters.

2. Work planned for 2022. (based on fund raising)

Renew and improve lighting with low energy fittings. Cost: £2000

Renew 2 rotten windows. (awaiting estimate)

Repair and renew West end entrance door and threshold. (awaiting estimate)

Internal redecorations, and repairs to stained/flaking surfaces (circa £5000)

3. Future work

A simple porch to shelter at western entrance door from the weather.

Remove the hollow render from the external south wall, and re-point or re-render.

Renew kitchen floor covering, and perhaps the structure.

Alwington Residents Association

1. Initial meeting has taken place with over 20 residents attending.
2. A constitution has been put in place, and the association has registered with TDC/DCC.
3. A bank account has been set up, and TDC have been approached for funding.
4. The Association are now beginning to develop an Action Plan.
5. The next meeting will be arranged soon, and new ideas will be discussed.

CLr Gordon Lester thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.