

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE 2014 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD AT LITTLEHAM VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY
22nd MAY 2014.



Present: Cllrs. Atkinson (Chairman), Beer, Corkery, Fishleigh, Hamilton, Hassall, Hopkins, Smith and Stevens.
DCC Cllr Dezart and TDC Cllr Pennington.

Apologies: Cllrs Haddrell & Hopkins.

Cllr Ian Atkinson, Chair of the Parish Council, welcomed all to the 2014 Annual Parish Meeting.

2014(a) – Minutes of the Annual Meeting, 23rd May 2013: Cllr Hassall asked that under Minute 2013(c), para 3, the phrase “under the Draft Local Plan” be inserted “this Parish has been designated”. After this amendment it was Resolved, on the motion of Cllr Beer, seconded by Cllr Fishleigh and duly carried, that the Minutes were correct.

2014(b) – Guest Speaker – Matt Edworthy – Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area.

This is the final year of a 3 year Project, based on information gathered in the 2008 Bio-Diversity Survey to identify significant sites such as Ancient woodlands [those in existence before 1600] and significant County sites which were not designated SSI's. Part of the role is to create connections between these areas of habitat and those smaller sites in urban areas, on farms and in private ownership. The project has access to advice, and some funding, to help improve existing sites, dedicate new areas or incorporate help for wildlife habitat on farms or private land. The aim is also to connect people with nature – what it provides; food, water [filter], flood alleviation etc. They want to help Communities, schools etc to form wildlife groups, create habitats – such as verges and ponds to create greater access to wildlife.

A lively Q&A session followed, at the end of which Cllr Atkinson thanked Matt for his presentation.

2014(c) – Report of the Chair of Littleham & Landcross Parish Council:

Cllr Atkinson invited Cllr Beer to give the Report. See below.

2014(d) – Reports of County and District Councillors:

DCC Cllr Gaston Dezart presented his report –

“I have – as requested by this Parish Council – requested Devon County Council to undertake a survey of the Landcross Tunnel to include wildlife habitats. Again I have raised the question of the Whitehall landslip but still have no action plan or time scale for remedy. Between meetings I have been involved in the Elections [MEP's]. I urge Councillors and parishioners to get involved with local consultations on Devon Libraries; and also draw attention to the newly formed Bideford Forum, which initially will deal with Bideford Town issues, wishes to involve adjacent Parishes. [Notes from the inaugural meeting held on May 8th were tabled]”

TDC Cllr Phil Pennington presented his report – see below.

2014(e) Any Other Reports: PCSO McGovern presented a review of the last 12 months during which time 9 crimes had been reported in the Parish which included theft from unlocked sheds, domestic incidents, and some “road-rage” – by non-residents. He could not remember the last time there had been any damage to vehicles – but recently there were 4 incidents reported on the same day. These 4 incidents not only increased the overall numbers of crime year on year, but showed as a 400% increase in vehicle crime for the Parish! Fortunately no further incidents have been reported. He continues, with some success to trace incidents of fly-tipping and encouraged Parishioners to report incidents of this, dog-fouling and littering to himself and TDC. The local Policing team was enhanced by Liz Rendell who joined in September last year; they continue to attend as many fetes, and community events as possible.

2014(f) Questions from members of the Public. None.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL: CHAIRMAN'S 2014 NOTES

Finance y/end march 2014:

Receipts £ 3789 [4267] –including £213 Council Tax Support Grant, and £139 VAT refund.

Payments £2030 [2940] - reduced capital expenditure, and some invoices not received on time.

Balance at 31st March 2014 was £5400 [£3640]. This sees us in a healthy position & should enable us to cover any future Election fees and has enabled us to lower our Precept Rate for the coming year, although with the variable calculation for the Council Tax Support Grant this has translated into the Rate paid by Parishioners as being the same as last year.

We have had a busy year for Planning with a Total of 8 applications 7 in Littleham and 1 in landcross With some contentious issues handled well by members – We have initiated action by the TDC Planning Enforcement Officer where we had concerns over possible unauthorised activity. We have been concerned that the District Council[s] have taken a long time to get the Local Plan agreed at Central Government level so causing a vacuum in planning guidelines which has been utilised by some developers.

Things we did during the Year:

- Atlantic Array: You will recall that this Parish took action to co-ordinate responses to the RWE npower proposals, which led to the creation of a 5 Parishes Group to fight the cause for mitigation of effects on the parishes. It was a welcome message that the project proposals were withdrawn.
- I am happy to report that Members have achieved a high attendance record during the course of the year. May I take this opportunity to thank Mr Frank Heard for his commitment to this council and to the residents of Littleham during his time as a Littleham Councillor and wish him and his wife all the best in their new home in Northam.
- Cllr Atkinson remained as our link to the Parish Plan meetings.
- Cllr Hamilton continued to be our Representative Trustee for the Village Hall & Rifle Range
- Luckily the winter was not severe and our Snow Wardens were not called into action.
Cllr Frank Heard Littleham and Cllr Pat Fishleigh Landcross
- We regularly sent a representative to Torrington Area Advisory Group
- We continue to support the Littleham & Landcross Website – which is proving to be a very good communication vehicle.
- Highways: with budget cutbacks for Devon County this is becoming an increasingly unsatisfactory situation. We continue to work closely with Julian Roskilly of DC Highways to ensure our road infrastructure is maintained to the best possible standards. We wish to thank Mr Roskilly for his help during the year.
- We continually press for the pot holes to be filed in especially the problem at Chapel Hill And although it is not in our Parish but in Bideford Town Parish we keep asking when is something is going to be done about the land slippage at Whitehall.
- We continued to support the Littleham & Landcross Biodiversity Group.

County and District Councillors: Both, County Councillor Gaston Dezart and District Councillor Phil Pennington have attended most of our meetings and they have supported us in many other ways during the year. Their work in the Parish is much appreciated and we thank them for involvement and dedication.

Littleham & Landcross Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting 22nd May 2014

Report by Phil Pennington, TDC member for Monkleigh & Littleham

TDC members have now completed the 3rd year of a 4year cycle. Much of the present thinking is preparing for reductions in government support grants for the next 3 years.

It was sad loss that Cllr Steve Clarke passed away in Dec 13. Sam Robinson won the resulting by election, thus maintaining the political balance as both represent/ed the independent group. There was a further sad loss of Brian Lacey in April 14 , Brian had served TDC from 2007-11.

Main topics for the year.

Council Tax. This was set at 1.99% .

Atlantic Array. After a very pressurised late summer and autumn period the project has been withdrawn by the developers. No development has ever drawn the amount of public responses to the development—in excess 1800 of which the vast majority were against.

Joint North Devon and Torridge Local Development Plan: This has now in the public arena for further consultation. Copies can be viewed either by internet or at Riverbank House. The plan covers the period up to 2031 with over 16,000 new homes in the pipeline

Future financial pressure as central government support will reduce in the 2/3 years. In total looking to make a £2.2 million saving for the period. Service changes will inevitably be needed.

Weather damage: The slipways at both Westward Ho and Bucks Mills need action after the February storms

Assisted Area Status: Advantageous grants for businesses – details through Vanessa Saunders TDC

Devon County Council changes to adult and youth services: Torridge has raised concerns at County Hall as the district may be disproportionately affected.

Hottest topics from residents 1) Parking 2) Dog mess