

BORDEN GATE
The Parishes of Hockworthy, Huntsham and Clayhanger
Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
held at Clayhanger WI Hall on Wednesday 29th May 2024 at 7.00 pm

In attendance: The Chairman of Borden Gate Parish Council & 7 Members of the Public Including
MDDC Cllr G Westcott

Also in attendance the Clerk to Borden Gate Parish Council P Bainbridge

1. Hilary Corcoran, Chairman of Borden Gate Parish Council, welcomed members of the public to the Annual Parish Meeting of 2024.
2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17th May 2023 where unanimously adopted.
3. Chair's Annual Report 2024 Borden Gate Parish Council

I would like to start with a short silence in remembrance of those in our community who have died within the last year. Including, from Hockworthy John Doble who kindly hosted the Platinum Jubilee bonfire and died early in 2023, Jeff Vinter whose wife is the organist at Hockworthy Church and in January this year Caroline Nicholas who farmed at Stallenge Thorne before living at Staple Cross for many years. There will be others from Clayhanger and Huntsham of whom other councillors may be aware.

There was a local election in May 2023 – at that time only 8 councillors were re-elected, but as the year progressed all remaining vacancies were filled by co-option. We also welcomed 2 new district councillors then, Jane Lock and Gill Westcott and appreciate their contributions. Ray Radford continued to serve as Devon County Councillor, and I will just mention thanks for him attending the March meeting where he faced a barrage of comments concerning potholes. Progress on that particular issue has been patchy in more than one sense of the word.

A lot of time was taken up focussing on Chimney Down and how the available S106 monies could be utilised. A public consultation meeting was held in October which was well attended and brought forth a variety of differing views. Helpfully some of the commoners attended and explained how they didn't cut the grass until after the ground nesting season was over. At a subsequent meeting the council took the feedback into consideration and made a decision to submit an application proposal including seating boulders, a picnic bench, and a seating bench with native trees to provide shade around the carparking areas. Offers of support from volunteers had been received which will help to keep the overall cost down and close to the funds available. So, the topic is still ongoing but hopefully this will be resolved within the next few months. Some additional funding is expected via Ray Radford and a small amount has been identified within the budget that the council has set for 2024/25

Trees planted there during 2022/23 are thriving. Thank you to those who diligently watered them in the early days including Cllr T Bainbridge.

Parish Paths - Devon County Council has done much work across the parishes of Hockworthy and Clayhanger with substantial work on Clayhanger Footpath 19, new horse rider gate Hockworthy Bridleway 3 and the replacement of missing signs. It is hoped that people will now make more use of the paths. Unfortunately, one of the new signs for Bridleway 4 was subsequently damaged twice. MDDC is promoting a walking festival in September and the Clerk has prepared one or two routes locally, with detailed leaflets.

Benches and notice boards – A replacement noticeboard has been erected in Huntsham and councillors are currently choosing a suitable site and type of bench to be installed. Currently no bench has been requested for Clayhanger due to lack of a suitable site.

Training – an event was held at Bampton in June which was attended by five councillors. Cllr Coates also attended new councillor training with Tiverton Town Council. Online training on a variety of issues is available through DALC. Planning is always an important area for training as objections need to be made on planning grounds, not just because neighbours might be falling out!

Planning applications received for comment throughout the year continued to be varied and where the council thought it appropriate, responses were fed back to Mid Devon planning.

June 2023 - Coronation bring & share events were held in Hockworthy and Clayhanger and we again ordered commemorative mugs, in the same style as those for the Platinum Jubilee in 2022. I even got interviewed by Radio Devon about the Hockworthy Big Lunch event.

Defibrillators – following the addition of one at Staple Cross a year or two ago, another has been recently installed at Hockworthy Village Hall, partly funded by a grant and the rest from hall funds generated by local events. A training session is to be arranged shortly. Sadly, the Huntsham defibrillator was activated following an incident, but the cyclist involved did not survive. New disposable pads etc have been recently added to the Clayhanger equipment.

The council continues to receive police reports and although we had hoped to get an in person visit, this has not been possible so far. Cllr Gabb has been on patrol as an observer getting an insight into the work of the police locally. Email alerts from Devon & Cornwall Police are shared to the Parish Council's Facebook page

Fast fibre is finally up and running in Huntsham – after years of waiting.

Turning to governance - standing orders, code of conduct, financial regulations, bank mandates and the risk register have all been reviewed. The asset register has been updated as required. Civility and Respect Project – members, although agreeing with the ethos of the project did not feel it was necessary given that Councillors must follow the Code of Conduct.

A limited number of tickets for a royal garden party were available to the local parishes. Cllr H Bainbridge's name had been put forward and been successful, and she attended the event last week.

Finally, thank you all for bearing with and supporting me over the past year and for your contributions to the work of the parish council.

4. To invite the public to raise any matters of interest and suggestions for future annual meetings – none were forthcoming.

5. The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.18 pm.

Hilary Corcoran

Chairman, Borden Gate Parish Council, 29th May 2024