

**BORDEN GATE**  
**The Parishes of Hockworthy, Huntsham and Clayhanger**  
**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**  
**held at Clayhanger WI Hall on Wednesday 17th May 2023 at 7.00 pm**

In attendance: The Chairman of Borden Gate Parish Council & 8 members of the public.

1. Heather Bainbridge, Chairman of Borden Gate Parish Council, welcomed members of the public to the Annual Parish Meeting of 2023.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022 where unanimously adopted.

3. Chairman's Report:

This year we have achieved several goals including the following: -

- a. Defibrillator outside the Staple Cross Inn achieved with the support of Devon County Councillors Ray Radford (Locality budget, now sadly disbanded), the generosity of St Peter's Lodge and various public donations. Training was later arranged courtesy of Wiveliscombe Community First Responders.
- b. 2000 daffodils were planted by volunteers in the three parishes kindly donated by the charity Allies Mid Devon in memory of lives lost during covid. Another tree, a silver birch donated by Devon Wildlife Trust was planted on the Chimney Down with the help of volunteers. All trees are thriving.
- c. The undoubted highlight of the year was the Beacon Lighting for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee held by the kind permission of the late John Doble at Daggeridge Barn. This joint event between Hockworthy Church, Hockworthy Village Hall, Borden Gate Parish Council and volunteers from the villages including music provided by Sue Francombe created a magical community evening bringing everyone together. The views of the Quantocks and Exmoor as night fell and the Beacons lit was truly memorable. Thank you, John. Proceeds from this event went to the Devon Air Ambulance and towards the defibrillator.
- d. Devon County Council's Parish Paths Partnership (P3) has led to extensive work especially in Clayhanger and Hockworthy, clearing paths, hanging gates and replacing signs. The signs removed from Chimney Down had to be replaced by the Parish Council, such wanton vandalism is very anti-social and not to be encouraged as we all suffer. If this happens again we will have to think long and hard how we go forward to preserve the Down for the quiet enjoyment of all, not just Hockworthy.
- e. Although not a Parish Council matter, Huntsham now has its very own superfast broadband and this is largely due to the chivvying by Cllr Williams, otherwise they might still be waiting!
- f. I now come to the emotive issue of planning, often controversial, especially when people feel due process has not been followed. Although most applications to MDDC went ahead smoothly, including houses, barn conversions and Class Q applications, a very misguided piece of legislation bringing about odd results. There has been one such occurrence which caused much upset and an extraordinary meeting had to be called to allow everyone to express their views, however these should be material planning considerations, and this was not really evident. So, despite formulating a response to Mid Devon District Council and the application going to the Planning Committee, retrospective permission was granted, as I knew it would be. Just because we don't like something is not a planning consideration. I hope in the coming year Councillors who can take advantage of training will do so, especially in planning.

I thank all the Councillors for their diverse contributions and their attendance at our meetings, especially when the weather is not that inviting. A special mention of Cllr Maltby's patrol with the local police. This was long, but they eventually released him! It was very interesting to hear about all they have to deal with on a daily basis. It is hoped that more councillors can go on patrol as it is quite an eye opener and leads to a better understanding of their role in society.

In the last year there was another sad loss in the Huntsham Parish, Peter Cope, a previous Chairman of Borden Gate and much loved by all who knew him. I thank Julia Heard and Cath Hill who have been councillors and MDDC Cllr Jo Norton who was always very helpful but has left the area.

I apologise for any omissions and thank you all for your attendance tonight. So, it is over to you to now raise any issues as members of the public.

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

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.11 pm.

**Heather Bainbridge**

**Chairman, Borden Gate Parish Council, 17th May 2023**