

On behalf of the Chair and the Parish Councillors I would like to begin by thanking all of those who came to the Parish meeting on Tuesday 13th. With over 20 parishioners present this was probably the best attendance we've had at a Parish Meeting in a very long time.

There were presentations from a variety of different contributors through the meeting.

Simon Thompson from Lydford Gorge shared some of the challenges the National Trust has faced over the past year, with damage to the Gorge caused by falling trees, flooding and passing traffic. Simon stated that there is some early evidence that perhaps visitors to the village are parking in the Gorge car park and walking to the village to avoid paying the parking charges. There are plans to work on a retaining wall within the Gorge which will result in the closure of the road. Details will be circulated when known.

Caroline Mott on behalf of Dartmoor National Park explained that the fees from car parking will be used in part to pay for the re-opening of the public toilets in the village, which is now planned to happen before the summer holiday season begins in July.

Our new Dartmoor Ranger Kit Hancock described some of the problems that he and his colleagues are dealing with on Dartmoor. Over 100 allegations of breaches of the local by-laws have been received in the past year, mostly relating to camping. There have been 11 cattle attacks on people reported in the last year, mostly on the south moor, and predominately involving one belted galloway cow.

The Nicholls Hall have received a full alcohol licence and are hoping that this will increase the usage of the hall for events, which are presently only just covering running costs. The plan is to use funds raised, together with some grant funding, to update the kitchen.

There was a deal of discussion at the meeting about the Sports Field. One parishioner talked of a "disconnect" between Trustees and the users of the field. Another spoke of the increasing issue of dog mess on the playing areas, even though the new dog waste bin is being filled each week. Richard Hollingsworth for the Trustees explained that a lot revolves around the success or otherwise of the Fayre, which this year takes place on Saturday 5th July between 11:30am and 4:00pm. The event generates approximately 95% of the Field's income for the year. Richard asked for additional volunteers to help on the day, and encouraged everyone from the parish to come to the event. There is a band in the evening called the Smoking Pilchards.

Sue Powne briefly outlined the activities of the local bell ringing group. Many of the group are reaching the age where they should be thinking of stepping down from ringing. Sue expressed the concern that without fresh volunteers to replace them, the group will not be able to continue and there will be no more bell ringing in Lydford.

Paul Brookes gave a brief presentation outlining the Lydford Walking group which meets on the 2nd and last Thursdays of each month. The Archangels Way pilgrimage walk this year will end in Lydford on 13th September with celebrations. Details will be published in due course. Paul is also working on a re-write of the booklet on the history of Lydford, which he hopes will be available by the end of the year.

Steve Hulett gave a brief summary of his Chairman's report, which is available in full on the website. The council has booked a stall at the fayre so that parishioners can meet Councillors and raise any concerns or thoughts on village life that they may have.

The council is organising a Field Maintenance day on Saturday 28th June, with a litter picking day to be announced in the near future. Volunteers are always welcome.

Following the Annual Parish Meeting the council held its own annual meeting where Steve Hulett and Katie Lenton were returned unopposed as Chair and Vice Chair respectively for the coming year.

Council objectives which were set for the coming year were – a) commission an audit of facilities for disabled people within the village; b) complete the survey on affordable housing needs in the village and follow up on actions identified.