

# Frithelstock Parish

## Minutes of 11th Combined Annual Parish Meeting and Village Hall Management Committee AGM Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015 - 7:30pm Frithelstock Village Hall

Parish Councillors Present: Mr M Poole (Chairman), Mr R Hunkin (Vice-Chairman), Mr A Heard, Mr M Baker, and Mr M Stokes

Village Hall Representatives Present: Adrian Green (Chair), Lizzy Hunkin (Secretary), Sylvia Debnam (Treasurer), Jean Short (Bookings Secretary), Maureen Poole (Deputy Bookings Secretary), Marcelle Paton-Smith (Chair, Entertainments Committee), Lesley Ball (Secretary, Entertainments Committee), Eileen Brown, Colette Henerty, Roger Hunkin, Peter Hutchings, Arthur Poole, Derek Raymont, Gale Riddell and Mike Stokes

Playing Fields Committee Members Present: Mark Thomas and Terry Warrington

Clerks: Patrick Blossie and Lizzy Hunkin (Village Hall AGM)

Also In Attendance: Cllr. Gaston Dezart (DCC), Cllr. Phil Pennington (TDC), Greg Ball, Gwen Barrow, Ann Carrington, Julian Carrington, Dave Debnam, Mark Goldman, C Heckman, Audrey Hunkin, Richard Joseph and Michael Short

1. Welcome: Mr Poole, Chairman of Frithelstock Parish Council, welcomed all to the meeting.
2. Apologies: PCSO Melissa Baker and Melanie Goldman
3. Minutes of the 10th combined Annual Parish Meeting and Village Hall Management Committee AGM, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014: The minutes of last year's meeting were agreed and signed. (Proposed: Mike Baker, Seconded: Andrew Heard)
4. Annual Crime Report: PCSO Melissa Baker was unable to attend the meeting but had sent a written report that was presented by the Clerk.

*Over the past year we have had 32 logs created from phone calls – 3 personal anti-social behaviour, 8 road traffic accidents, 9 highway disruptions, 2 suspicious circumstances, 1 concern for welfare, 5 nuisance anti-social behaviour, 2 information calls, 1 dangerous driving and 1 road related offence.*

*Over the same period we had 7 crimes recorded – 1 complaint re dogs (minor/non-injury), 1 theft, 1 theft from a motor vehicle, 1 burglary, 2 criminal damage to property and 1 drink driver.*

Mackie Poole commented that these low figures demonstrated that this was a good place to live and he hoped that it would carry on.

5. Village Hall Management Committee AGM: Adrian Green took over the Chair.

***To be provided by Lizzy Hunkin or Adrian Green***

6. Entertainments Committee Annual Report: Marcelle Paton-Smith presented the following report:

The Entertainments Committee is an informal sub-Committee of the Management Committee. Four members of the Entertainments Committee, Adrian Green, Melanie Goldman, Steve Beer and myself, are also on the Management Committee but it is not a requirement for membership and it is open to anyone to become a member, contribute ideas and to help at village events.

During the reporting year, six significant events were organised by the Committee beginning with the 2014 Annual Quiz, which was held a little later than previous years and so falls into the 2015 financial year. The 2014 Quiz was very well attended with a nearly full Village Hall so that additional tables had to be provided in the skittle alley. Unfortunately this meant that some quizgoers, who were in the skittle alley, sometimes found it difficult to hear the questions. The problem was resolved for this year's quiz by the purchase of a wireless speaker for the skittle alley. A cheese and pate supper was provided half way through the 11 rounds of questions and the quiz was won by a team from Dolton while the runners up team came from the village. The net profit I am reporting for all events includes notional profit on bar sales. On this basis the net profit for the 2014 Quiz was £ 406.

The Scrumpy Stroll was held, as usual, in May. Despite it being quite a wet day we had more than 50 adults and children who came on the Stroll, plus a few four legged friends. The Stroll was led by Steve Beer with numerous cider stops along the way, as well as ice creams to keep energy levels high enough for the steeper hills. After the last cider stop, a short tractor trailer ride took everyone back to the village hall for the BBQ and bar. As it was too wet to have children's games along the way these were held in the village hall, after everyone had dried out. The Committee would like to express their thanks to Mr and Mrs David Brown for allowing us to cross their land at East Hele Farm. In all, the net profit for the Scrumpy Stroll was £259.

In June, we held the Music Festival on the Playing Fields. Unlike the day of the Scrumpy Stroll, the weather for the Music Festival was glorious sunshine and we had a gate of nearly two hundred people. The annual tug of war battle between the Hutchings Contractors team and the farmer's team resulted in a win for the farmers on this occasion. We also organized a number of other competitions to amuse people before the music started and these included bale tossing and nail hammering competitions. After the competitions, with lagers from around the world on a World Cup theme, plus an assortment of local ales, people were soon in the mood for music. The night's entertainment was provided by the North Devon Band Wild Strawberries; this appears to have been quite a popular choice of Band and so we have booked them again for this year's Music Festival. The evening was a great success and raised a total of more than £1400.

The Fritelstock Hallowe'en Fun Night was held in October. The Village Hall was transformed into a Hallowe'en cave for the night with spiders, ghostly lights and pumpkins and most adult villagers and their children came in fancy dress. The evening began with a pumpkin carving competition, with prizes for the best junior and adult carved pumpkins. Villagers brought in their home grown pumpkins for weighing and measuring to find the biggest pumpkin on the night and there were also prizes for the best junior and adult fancy dress. We held children's games on a Hallowe'en theme and the whole evening was accompanied by Hallowe'en themed music. A supper of hot dogs was made available throughout the evening and the bar did a modest trade. Although the intention was not to maximize profit, but to provide a fun night for the children of the village, the Hallowe'en Night made a modest net profit of £126. It is probable that we shall not hold another Hallowe'en night again for two or three years so that it remains a bit of a novelty.

Regrettably, the December Christmas Fun Night had to be cancelled. The decision to cancel was mainly due to two factors: one factor was that there were other Christmas events which clashed with the Fun Night date; the other factor was that there were insufficient acts confirmed for the evening, (this was partly, though not wholly, due to the clash of dates). Lessons learned by the Committee include:

- Setting the date for the Fun Night as soon as is practicable each year.
- Increasing the effort made in trying to identify other events which may 'clash'.
- Preferably choosing a date which means that children do not have to get up the next day to go to school.
- Confirming acts for the Fun Night well in advance.

The last event of the Reporting Year was the 2015 Quiz. This was even better attended than the 2014 Quiz, with the Hall at nearly maximum capacity and the skittle alley again used to accommodate additional tables. The numbers were particularly good given that there was a quiz for cash prizes on the same night at Weare Gifford. Both the winning team and the runners up were from the Village with bottles of wine as usual for each of the winning team and a seasonal Easter Egg consolation prize for the runners up. The 2015 Quiz made a net profit of £443.

In addition to these events, the Bar has been opened for the regular First Friday Social Night; a wedding reception, an 18th Birthday Party, an annual skittles competition, charitable fund raising and several other events.

Together, all these events and the bar have contributed nearly £4,000 towards funds for the Hall; the Committee would like to thank everybody who was involved, in whatever fashion, in organising and putting them on.

The events that we are planning for the coming year include a Scrumpy Stroll on Sunday 24th May and the Music and Beer Festival on Saturday 20th June, when the band will again be Wild Strawberries. We have yet to decide on an event to be held in September or October but we do have a draft date for the Christmas Fun Night; subject to checking for potential clashes the draft date for the Fun Night is Friday 18th December.

There will also be the 2016 Quiz Night on a date to be confirmed in March or April next year.

If there are any other types of events that you would like to see organised in the hall, or if you would like to be involved in helping with any of the events, please don't hesitate to talk to a member of the Entertainments Committee.

Finally, the Committee would like to thank everyone in the village who has attended the various events we have organised during the past year; we hope that you have enjoyed them and thank you for your continued support.

Mackie Poole took over the Chair and thanked Adrian and the rest of his team for their hard work. He said that the Village Hall and the Playing Fields were the heart of the village and applauded the work of everyone who contributed their time and effort towards them.

7. Playing Fields Annual Report: Terry Warrington said that it had been another great year. There had been a Spring working party and he thanked the many helpers who had taken part in cleaning maintaining the equipment. The next one will be on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2015. He asked for volunteers to assemble at the playing fields at 12:00. The Friends of Frithelstock Playing Fields email list now had 14 members and anyone who wanted to add their contact details could do so. At last year's Spring clean it had been decided to reposition the gates, which had proved to be much better, and signage had been provided about dog mess and opening times. Following adverse comments from last year's Best Kept Village competition, new picnic tables had been installed. He was looking forward to working closely with the Village Hall on this year's Beer Festival and had been happy to make a contribution towards the cost of the new marquee. There will be no Tractor Safari this year. Mark Thomas gave a finance report. The Tractor Safari had been the best money-spinner. The highest expenses during the year had been on equipment repairs. The opening balance had been £1,832.28 and the closing balance £1,622.89. A grant for £1,000 from TDC had been delayed and, although it had now arrived, it would not appear in the accounts until 2015/16. Roger Hunkin thanked Cllr. Phil Pennington for approving the grant.

8. Poorlands Charity Report: Gale Riddell explained the history and purpose of the charity. It has been established from a small investment in Treasury Stock that provided a return of about £18.00 a year. This was usually topped up by donations in a collection tin at the Clinton Arms but this had not happened this year. He thanked the Parish Council for contributing £30 to provide sufficient funds for this year's gifts. This year's accounts were as follows:

Opening balance:	£4.61	Purchase of Gifts:	£48.00
Investment Income:	£17.98		
Donation:	<u>£30.00</u>		
<u>Total Available:</u>	<u>£52.59</u>	<u>Balance C/D:</u>	<u>£4.59</u>

Gale said that the organisers would be doing some fund raising themselves during the coming year.

Mackie Poole said that this would be a good cause for anyone to contribute to and thanked Gale and his team, especially Mary Goaman, for their hard work.

9. 50 Club Report: Michael Short said that the scheme had lost 2 members during the past year but that 5 people had joined and the membership now stood at 79. £890 had been given in prizes this year. The total contribution that had been made to the Village Hall since 1989 now stood at £21,220.
10. Speedwatch and Website Report: Richard Joseph thanked his team of Dave Debnam, Mark Goldman and Marcelle Paton-Smith for their stalwart support, coming out in all weathers to help with **Speedwatch** sessions. There had been 19 sessions this year, mainly concentrating on the stretch of road past the village hall. 255 speeding vehicles had been registered this year, compared to 269 last year – (14½ % of the total of passing vehicles). The highest speed recorded averaged at 51.1 mph past the village hall entrance and the highest recorded was 62 mph. The average speeder was 42 mph. Richard would like 2 or 3 more volunteers. He hoped that the proposed flashing sign would be installed this year and he would monitor its impact. In February, Terry Warrington noticed a white van acting suspiciously and had alerted Richard who was able to send out an alert by email to residents immediately. Moving on to the **website**, Richard said that there had been 4,935 hits last year, an increase of 62% on the previous year. Statistics showed that the site had been accessed by users in the USA, China, Russia, Canada and elsewhere but he could not tell how much of this was automated systems crawling the network. There had been lots of local activity as well. Richard was concerned that the system was now much larger, at 623 megabytes than the 25 megabytes that the Parish Council were paying for through Eclipse. This was possible because Richard was hosting the website on his own servers. Also, Microsoft is no longer supporting the Front Page software on which the website is based. In answer to a question from Roger Hunkin, Richard explained that the site was also maintained by one of his colleagues (Kevin). Lizzy Hunkin felt that there should be someone else to support Richard but that she felt this ought to be someone from the village.
11. Rowing Club Report: Charlie Heckman explained that the Rowing Club had started in 2011 following a suggestion by Terry Warrington. It now had 20-25 members and had so far raised £3,000 for local schemes and charities and had achieved 3 world records. He thanked everyone who supported the rowers.
12. Parish Council Annual Reports:
- 12.1. Finance Report: The Clerk presented a provisional Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. The precept for the year was £4,750.00. A TAP Fund application that had been submitted recently together with Buckland Brewer, Monkleigh, Langtree and Peters Marland Parish Councils resulting in an award of £331 towards the flashing speed sign scheme. The Clerk proposed earmarking a separate reserve within the accounts for this scheme. A grant from the locality budget of £1,500, generous donations by two of the parish councillors and a transfer of £500 from the general reserve will provide a total of £2,881 for this scheme and hopefully this can be completed in the coming year. About £300 has been retained in the Defibrillator Fund to meet the cost of replacement pads etc., and a reserve of £750 has been established to help meet the cost of any future elections. Total expenditure for the year had been £9,427. The general reserve now stands at just over £3,400, which is about 68% of the Council's regular running expenses.
- 12.2. Defibrillator Report: Mike Stokes explained the fund raising that had supported the purchase of the defibrillator. The suppliers had kindly loaned a machine for a number of months until the new one could be delivered. This had now been installed in the telephone box. The machine had been registered with South-West Ambulance Service. A 999 call would direct the caller to the nearest defibrillator. Fortunately, the defibrillator purchased is the same as those used by SWA, ensuring that their medical staff are also familiar with them. Registration requires us to complete weekly checks and to submit monthly reports to SWA. Mike had been doing these himself but had recently been able to recruit Ann Carrington, Terry Warrington and one other helper to take over this responsibility and he thanked them for volunteering. Dr Aussie Connor had attended a recent Parish Council meeting to explain the operation of the machine and had offered a demonstration when the new machine was available. Michael Short will let Mackie Poole know when the Village Hall would

have a suitable date free. Mark Goldman suggested that it could take place at a First Friday social evening, after the rowing, and suggested it should be sooner rather than later.

12.3. Chairman's Report: i) Mackie Poole said that it had been a difficult year for the Parish Council and that he, and half of those who had put their names forward to stand again this year, had needed a lot of persuasion to do so. There had been only 5 nominations for the new Parish Council, all from existing councillors. ii) The new owner of Caer Bryn has obtained planning permission to carry out a lot of work on the property and has asked if parishioners could cooperate in not parking opposite the property. Mackie explained that parking in Hele Lane has been an issue recently with tractors and emergency vehicles unable to get through. The Village Hall's agreement to offer parking spaces in the hall car park might help to solve the problem. iii) One positive thing this year had been the completion of the war memorial steps. Grants had been received which covered 99% of the cost of the works with the Parish Council picking up the cost of some additional safety works. iv) Progress on the flashing sign had been more difficult. Julian Roskilly, the local Highways Officer, had been unsupportive so the Parish Council had approached a more senior officer in Exeter who had recently given the go ahead for a sign to be erected. The Village Hall had offered to supply the electricity but getting a supply from the hall to the pole was very difficult. Mackie thanked Peter Hutchings for his advice on this issue. There was now a problem with Western Power, who were reluctant to allow the Council to tap into their power source instead. Hopefully, a suitable solution would be found so that the sign could be installed this year. v) There had been no contact from the Best Kept Village organisers this year but Mackie said that we could still keep the village looking tidy. vi) Some photographs taken of an event at the school (now the Village Hall) in 1953 had been supplied by Maureen Poole. She and Richard Joseph had reproduced these and had them framed in a very effective display which would now be put up in the Village Hall. He thanked Maureen and Richard for their excellent work. vii) Mackie closed by thanking the outgoing Parish Councillors and the Clerk for all their help and support throughout the past year and looked forward to the next year, saying that he hoped that some younger people could be attracted to sit on the Council. He said that this would be the last year that he would be chairing the Annual Parish Meeting.

13. Open Forum: Cllr Gaston Dezart (DCC) said he had little good news. Cutbacks were continuing at Devon County Council with a further £45 million cut from this year's budget and £28 million more anticipated for next year. The most obvious cuts would be in the Highways budgets. Health and safety issues would be prioritised but there would be few funds for anything else. He urged parishioners to continue to report things though. He congratulated the parish for the wide range of activities and projects that it took on and the number of parishioners who actively contributed to the life of the parish. A new organisation called the Bideford Town Centre Partnership had been set up to help improve tourism. The Chamber of Commerce was an active contributor and many other agencies were being approached to take part. Mackie Poole pointed out that there were two signs, a SLOW sign at Furzedon and a village sign at Horwood Barton that needed to be replaced. Cllr. Dezart undertook to chase these up. Adrian Green reported that the broken parapet at Windy Hill and another at Southcott had both been repaired recently.

Cllr. Phil Pennington (TDC) said that he thought Frithelstock was a wonderful community and also offered his congratulations. He said that this was largely a tribute to Mackie Poole and his dedication over many years. Torridge Council had had a good year. £2 million of cuts had been absorbed without the need to increase council tax. He was now waiting for the results of the election on 7<sup>th</sup> May to see how the future would develop. Only about half of the standing councillors had submitted nominations so there would be many changes among the council members and the make-up of committees. He was pleased to report the opening of the new Holsworthy Market and that the Refuse Collection team continued to offer a good service. Environmental Health was also highly regarded but he said that the Planning Department continued to get very low satisfaction rates and he received many complaints about staff not returning calls and emails. He said this was a difficult time for them with the drafting of the new Local Plan.

Dave Debnam spoke out strongly about the lack of progress with the flashing speed sign and suggested that there should be sufficient funds now to install a solar panel to power it.

Adrian Green i) urged the Parish Council to make more use of the website and the email network, which now had 64 names on it. As an example, Adrian said that information could have been distributed about who was nominated as Councillors for this year's election. Mackie Poole pointed out that this was a matter between the nominee and the Elections Office and that there had been a change in the rules this year that meant that nominees could no longer withdraw their application in the 24 hours after the close of the nominations register. ii) Adrian also talked about the possibility of installing broadband in the village hall. He said that North Devon Council had a grant scheme of up to £500 for each of their parishes to do this but Torridge Council had not offered a similar scheme. He was now negotiating with a local supplier who provided the broadband for free but the initial installation had to be paid for. Phil Pennington offered to follow up on this. iii) Adrian asked the Parish Council to make representations to Torridge Council about a Planning Officer's response to a recent planning application as a "settlement without services" because of the negative connotations of the description. Cllr. Phil Pennington offered to take up the matter.

Roger Hunkin led a demonstration of support for Mackie and thanked him for his many years of duty to both the Parish Council and as a governor of Monkleigh School. He thanked him for his assistance over the past 20 years and praised the number of hours, the effort and the numerous telephone calls that he has made while working for the parish. He reminded everyone that Mackie had been a councillor for 20 years, Chair of the Parish Council for the past 12 years and Chair of Governors for the school for the past 30 years. Mackie Poole said that it was now time to bring some of the younger parishioners forward.

14. Date of Next Meeting : Provisionally set for Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016, 7.30pm Frithelstock Village Hall.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:55 pm**

Signed as a true record: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairman)