

Morwenstow Annual Parish Meeting

Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 26th May 2021 at 7.30pm in the Community Centre

1. Attendance and Welcome The meeting was chaired by Jonathan Hobbs, Morwenstow Parish Council Chairman, who welcomed everyone. Also present were: Cllr. Julie Phipps, Cllr. Shorne Tilbey, Colin Ingram, David Miles, David Savage and Susan Joyner (Clerk).

2. Apologies for absence were received from: Cllr. Ken Boundy, Cllr. Richard Savage, Kingsley Bryant, Judith Ingram, Carol Nesham, Nigel Steer and Jenny Vanstone.

3. Minutes of the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 22nd May 2019 were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Address from County and Parish Councillor Shorne Tilbey

Cllr. Tilbey expressed his thanks to all those that voted for him in the recent County Council elections. He confirmed that he felt passionate about representing his local community and that this was his 3rd attempt to do so. He gained his seat with a majority of 131. He is busy at present dealing with a number of emails and queries that had not been dealt with by the previous County Councillor for our area. Cllr. Tilbey has been elected to sit on the following committees: Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee; Health and Adult Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee and a Planning Committee, areas which are of particular interest to him. He was honoured to have been asked to lead the recent County Council A G M with the opening prayers. He is looking forward to a meeting with Scott Mann MP that is due to take place soon.

5. Reports from Community groups and organisations

Badminton Group report from David Miles

As with most organisations Badminton has been closed for the past 15 months with the North Devon League also suspended. We are hoping to get the club up and running again soon but, unfortunately, I don't think that Morwenstow will have sufficient interest to join the North Devon League from September, if it does get going again.

Community Centre report from Colin Ingram

Mr Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen Good evening.

As for everyone else the past 12 months have been difficult for the Community Centre, it has sat here like a big white elephant, the only visitors being local wildlife.

That is not say we (the Committee), not included as 'local wildlife' have not been in attendance when required:

Issues during 2020

We had an issue with the Hall floor again during the warm weather, this was resolved by replacing some of the floor tiles and purchasing a de-humidifier to bring down the ambient humidity.

There was a small problem with the Fire Alarm continuously ringing, apparently due to a possible intruder, a spider in the Detector, all unwanted insects were evicted.

The Security lights overlooking the car parks have also needed attention during the year.

The internal walls in the Hall have recently been repainted.

Refurbishment Programme

The next major refurbishment project is on hold, pending full Committee agreement of plans and required funding when available.

But we have quotes to upgrade the Toilets but keeping them in the same area to help reduce costs. I am sure that will be a 'relief' for everyone.

Web Site Progress

Our Web Master Renhart Gittens is currently updating our web site, which hopefully will be up and running by mid-June.

Fundraising during 2021:

Morwenstow Calendar Competition for 2022 – the last date for entry is imminent and so far, the numbers entered exceed anything we have had before, 152 entries to be precise. Some serious judging will need to take place after the closing date.

Morwenstow Jute Bags sales continue.

The sales of both the above are mainly thanks to the Bush, Rectory Tea Rooms and of course Furze Stores.

Conclusion

The hope and wishes of the Committee are, that we provide a safe, warm and comfortable facility for the Parish to enjoy.

When it was approaching the recent Election Day we carried out a Covid Risk Assessment of the Centre then followed that up with a request to the Committee for assistance in getting our big white elephant up and running.

True to fashion the Morwenstow 'A' Team were there with mops, dusters, vacuum cleaners etc. the Hall, Toilets, Kitchen, Committee Room, and outside surrounds - all attacked with vigour. They are a fantastic team who have a great pride in the Community Centre.

I understand that many of our regular Users Groups may still feel rather nervous about attending and mixing with others, just yet, but we will do our best to ensure the Community Centre is as safe an area as we can possibly make it by following the National Guidelines.

If, as is possible, some of these groups do not continue for whatever reason then we need to look for Community Users that can help sustain the facility and keep the interest going. Please contact any member of the Committee if you have good ideas.

The Community Centre booking system is temporarily being looked after by Jenny Vanstone, until Hilary is fit enough to take back the task.

We will also be looking forward to assisting the Parish Council in celebrating The Queens Platinum Jubilee in June 2022, surely a momentous occasion which should not be missed.

Mr Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen, thank you for your time.

Morwenstow Community Players report from Nigel Steer

Due to the continuing impact of Covid 19 on public events we were unable to stage a production in 2021. We will continue to monitor the situation and Government advice with a view to staging a production as soon as this becomes feasible.

The financial and assets situation remains the same as last years as there has been no income or expenditure.

Morwenstow Football Club report from Kingsley Bryant

Obviously the Covid-19 situation has had a catastrophic effect on footballing activity during the last year, as well as on everything else. It currently looks like we are emerging from that situation, and we hope we can have a "normal" season from August onwards. Nevertheless some football was played between lockdowns.

1 The St. Piran League (East Division) aborted the season before the halfway point but decided to arrange a recent cup competition. Our first team participated but results were variable. We are more optimistic about next season with a new manager already on board and a number of promising youngsters coming through the ranks.

2 The North Devon League (our reserve team plays in Intermediate 3 Division) decided to complete the season and abandon the cup competitions. As a result the team still have four matches to play. Results have been disappointing and we will finish in the lower half of the table. Again, there will be a new manager next season.

The Youth Section has continued to flourish with more youngsters than ever on our books. Lisa Cornish and her dedicated band of coaches and volunteers must be congratulated for the superb job they do. We now run teams at most age groups, and results have been good. Our U11's recently won their Cup final, and the U16's still have their Plate final to play.

The "walking football" (for the Over 50's) is going well and we have a very good team. We have won every tournament we have entered in the last two years (five in total, I think), Unfortunately, there is no silverware to show as the ethos is all about participating rather than winning. Mmmmmm.

We have again retained our FA Charter Standard Club status, the benchmark for stable and well run clubs, and we are proud to be one of the first local clubs to have achieved it many years ago. We continue to have excellent working relationships with Cornwall FA and the Leagues we participate in and, whereas there will always be challenges, we have a good framework for further development.

The financial management of the club remains sound and we are able to maintain a healthy bank balance, due in large part to our successful fund raising activities, sponsorship and, during the difficult last year, grants from the footballing authorities to assist with the infrastructure needed to counter the Covid-19 threat. The FA have eulogised about grassroots football for a long time, but at last it looks like they are now backing those comments with action, including financial help where needed.

We are rightly proud of the infrastructure we have built at the club, and of the fact that, despite being a relatively small community, the name of Morwenstow is known far and wide within the football community. We look forward to next season with much optimism, especially after the last two.

The date for the Club's AGM is Monday 21st June, 7.30pm in the Clubhouse. Everyone is welcome to attend, and we will obviously adhere to the prevailing government rules and guidelines. Let's all hope that we can all get back to "normal" next season, football-wise and in every walk of life.

Morwenstow Methodist Church (Shop Chapel)

As many of you will be aware, we decided to close in March 2020 shortly before the announcement of the first lockdown. Since then, we have listened to the Government's restrictions and the Methodist Church advice and have felt that, for us, the time hasn't been right to reopen. At Shop, music and singing along with a coffee together, are very much part of our worship. We hope that with the success of the vaccination programme, restrictions will ease and we will be able to move forwards. Our Circuit is hoping to start a preaching plan again from September. If all continues to go well, we may also have one or two locally arranged services at Shop during the summer.

We would like to thank all of our members, our families and friends, the Parish Council and all Morwenstow parishioners for their continuing support during this difficult year. We are hoping that we will be able to welcome you, and the children from St Mark's, to Shop Chapel again soon.

Morwenstow Society Report from Judith Ingram

Like all other groups in the Parish, Morwenstow Society has been unable to meet since January 2020. Who would have guessed at that meeting that we were all going to be affected in one way or another by COVID!

We are hoping to hold our Annual Meeting in the autumn of this year once we can all meet safely together.

Sadly our membership was decreasing before COVID so fingers crossed we will be able to encourage more of you to join us once we can meet up in the coming months.

It would be very sad to see the Society going into mothballs after almost 40 years so please show your support and come along to our future meetings which will be posted in the Hamlets.

Morwenstow United Charities report from David Savage

The charity is one of the earliest on record and was set up in 1655 with two donations, £5.00 and 40 shillings from two benefactors of the Parish to benefit the poor of Morwenstow. Grants can only be made at the trustees discretion, not by application. There are restrictions on where the funds can be invested and the terms of the charity state that the capital can't be spent, only the interest. It is not easy to identify who is a 'deserving member' of the Parish and for the last few years a small donation has been given towards the Senior Citizen's Party. At the last meeting it was agreed that the funds should be spread amongst all age groups and it was resolved to make a donation to the Parish school. The current Chairman is Reverend Richard Ward-Smith and Ken Boundy and David Savage are trustees.

A question was asked; Does the capital have to be kept in a bank or building society? David answered that the funds can only be held by certain organisations to comply with Charity Commission regulations.

A question was asked; Could money be given to food banks? David answered that this was something that was being consideration but the funds were only to benefit local people.

Patronal Festival Organisation report from David Savage

The Festival Committee are pleased that events for the Patronal Festival will take place this year but they will be different to previous years.

Monday 21st June 7.30pm – Barrel Border Morris will be dancing in the courtyard of the Bush Inn and then move inside to continue with musical entertainment.

Wednesday 23rd June 7.30pm – Quiz in the Bush Inn. Numbers limited to 12 teams of 6.

Thursday 24th June – Patronal Day Festival.

2.30pm Church Service with limited congregation numbers. There will be no school children taking part in the service.

3.45pm Festival Field - Reverend Teresa Folland will give a blessing.

4.00pm Festival Field – Children's Sports.

5.00pm Festival Field – May Pole dancing by St. Mark's pupils.

5.30pm onwards Festival Field – There will be no Festival Tea this year but people are invited to bring their own refreshments and enjoy a socially distanced Parish Picnic. There will also be various sideshows organised by the PTA, games and challenges organised by Matt Hodgson and a penalty shoot out organised by Morwenstow Football Club.

7.30pm – Music in the Bush Inn by singer and guitarist James Morris.

Friday 25th June – Poets, Pasties and Pints in the Bush Inn

All events will be subject to whether Covid rules and regulations are relaxed, as planned, on 21st June.

St Mark's School and Pre-school report from Carol Nesham

It goes without saying that this has been an exceptionally hard year for pupils, staff and parents.

Since March 2020 we have had two school closures which have involved teachers setting learning to be carried out at home and liaising with parents and pupils to give support and feedback on this in such a way that keep learning as on track as possible.

During these periods we have had children of Key Workers and vulnerable children in school.

Pre-school has been through some financial difficulties but has been open to all since last summer and is looking stable in terms of numbers.

The Autumn Term was comparatively normal and we even got out on some trips. We are trying to do as much as possible this term that we would normally do, in a Covid safe way and this includes a trip for each class to the Olde's Farm to find out the processes of food production, the importance of farming and the countryside code. Pupils from Y2-6 are going swimming and we would love to be able to fit in a trip to Bude beaches.

Next year we hope to be back in the hall for Collective Worship and singing together again and are looking forward to increased socialisation and adults and children throughout the school and getting back to normal in terms of community involvement.

We have a strong governor team going forward, led by Matt Payne and Tash Ellerington and are planning initiatives to ensure educational losses are addressed.

St Morwenna PCC report from Shorne Tilbey and Bridget Inch

As with our Chapel friends, the last year has been a challenge for all our parishioners, whilst we all have had to observe the Government's directions regarding the Pandemic restrictions. We have been able to offer private / personal worship, with worshippers fully following COVID restrictions.

We were able to offer our usual Christmas Festivity Services following COVID restrictions, however all other annual services were put on hold. From Easter Sunday, due to the COVID restrictions being lifted, we held our usual 9:30am Service. The virtual service, held on Zoom at 10am for the whole of The North Kernow Team has continued, but is now held at the earlier time of 9am; this has been very well supported. Due to our location and inclement weather at times our congregation numbers have been well below our usual attendance.

Our much beloved Rev Richard Ward-Smith retired for the second time in January (C of E Rules); as you can only expect of Rev Richard, he is still there for our parishioners, carrying out pastoral care, being an integral part of our PCC team, and will hopefully soon be back to assisting our Team Leader Rev Teresa Folland. Teresa has settled well into her position; leading us not only in our services but also very involved and keeping us advised of what is happening within the Diocese.

Our bell-ringers have also been inactive this year and are very keen to get back to our tower under the guidance of our Tower Captain Arthur Bryant, and the first time may be at our Patronal Service on 24th June 2021.

We are so blessed and fingers crossed, we shall be welcoming six couples in the next few months to take their wedding vows, host the COVID restricted Patronal Festival Service, Harvest Festival, Blessing of the Sea Service, Pets Service, Remembrance Sunday, and a full Christmas Service programme.

PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE: morwenstowchurch@wordpress.com for all our proposed Worship Services.

Looking forward to welcoming and worshipping safely with all very, very soon.

God's Blessings to all

Woodford Chapel report from Jonathan Hobbs

Although the Chapel has been closed to Worship for the past 15 months, the members have still managed to be active in the community and be there for people. We have arranged care packages and meals for older members and over Christmas 8 of us went around Woodford, respecting covid regulations, singing carols which were very warmly received and we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves in the process.

Recently we have been able to meet online for Sunday morning services led by Barry Byrne which have been uplifting. We would like to thank everyone for your support during this year and look forward to welcoming you back into the chapel before too long.

6. Correspondence

No correspondence received

7. Chairman's annual report

The Parish Council has continued with its role to serve the community during the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. Since June of last year until April of this year Parish Council meetings have been held via a virtual platform. This May we were able to hold our meeting in the community centre.

Outside of the everyday responsibilities and roles, we have created a new playpark for the younger parishioners to enjoy. This has been achieved with the help of several grants that Mrs Denise May applied for on our behalf and we thank her for her help. We now have our new website up and running that is fully compliant with the Government's accessibility regulations. I am confident that this will be a great medium for the future.

As always I would like to thank the Councillors and the Clerk for their support. Following the Parish Council elections this year we have 5 vacant seats and this is the third successive Council that we will have had to co-opt people to fill empty seats. With five vacant seats the next year will be a challenge, but I am sure we will overcome.

8. Any Other Business to include any questions

Question: Why isn't Hamlets being printed again?

Answer: The Chairman replied that the Parish Council wanted to lead the way in sustainability and it is published on the new website. The cost of printing was over £1000 per annum, they had to be delivered here, then distributed to each of the volunteers to be delivered to individual houses and since the outbreak of covid, a number of the volunteers have decided not to resume with the deliveries. Although we know that some of the older residents liked receiving a paper copy, it is also known that a great number of the magazines are not read at all. The council has received as many positive comments about having Hamlets online as it has negative. It is published on the Morwenstow Facebook page when each issue is available with a direct link to the page.

Question: Could there not be one last copy advising people of the above?

Answer: The Chairman replied that this was not possible for the reasons mentioned above; cost of printing, lack of deliverers, sustainability. A notice will be put on the Council noticeboard and on the Morwenstow Facebook page. This is an opportunity to be in on the start of something and with the publication of Hamlets online the Council is trying something new and being environmentally friendly.

Question: When will the public toilets outside the Community Centre and at Duckpool be opened?

Answer: The Chairman replied that risk assessments had been carried out on the public toilets outside the C C and the scores indicated that it was just not safe enough yet to re-open the toilets. It will be looked at again following the Government's next 'road map' change due on 21st June. We have only had 1 person offer a quote for the cleaning of these toilets, who herself is in a vulnerable age group, and we have to also be mindful of this. With regard to the toilets at Duckpool, as you know, these are owned by the National Trust. Their current criteria is that they are cleaned a minimum of twice every day and we would not be able to meet this criteria so they must remain closed. Furthermore, we have had no one submit a quote to clean the toilets even if they were able to re-open and we will need to have a discussion with the National Trust about this.

Question: Are we going to be planting trees to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee next year?

Answer: The Chairman replied that we would be looking into organising this. He also suggested that it might be an idea to have bulbs planted on verges around the Parish to bloom each Spring.

Question: Shouldn't we leave the verges as they are with wild flowers?

Answer: The Chairman replied that yes we could, but we could also think about planting some of the wild daffodil bulbs and possibly crocus.

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and expressed the hope that next years Annual Parish Meeting would be back to the usual format, with refreshments, guest speakers and news of more clubs and organisations that were back to normal and thriving once again.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm