

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PARISH COUNCILLORS – TUESDAY 15TH MAY 2007

Our new year started on June 13th when our annual Open Meeting was addressed by the Chairman of North Devon District Council, Councillor John Wiltsher.

On June 17th I attended a day conference on planning at the Castle Street Centre, Barnstaple – a very interesting and helpful day on the complexities of planning.

On June 28th I attended a Codden Alliance meeting. The Codden Alliance is a group of parishes within our area that have been meeting monthly to discuss mutual problems within our parishes. It was decided to abandon our monthly meetings and only call on the Alliance when any parish required help.

During that month I also visited Lynmouth to meet the Town Clerk and the Lady Mayor to ask permission to transport three boulders from Lynmouth to Filleigh in memory of the three Scouts that died at Shallowford during the Lynmouth Flood Disaster of 1952. After putting our request to the full Council they agreed and were very supportive. During the following months I visited Lynmouth several times and arranged with A&B Contractors to bring the boulders back to Filleigh. I also met with several stonemasons to discuss and get a price for the inscription on the boulders.

We took part in the Filleigh Fete, selling hotdogs and sold £600 worth, and I was grateful to Steven Cook, Ian Dennis and my younger son Matthew for their help.

On August 29th we held a Dedication Service at the Recreation and Picnic Area in Filleigh. It was a great success with people coming from all over the country, representing the families of the three Scouts that died. Also a Professor Penauld from Toulouse University who was saved from the flood at Heddons Mouth and who was anxious to show solidarity with the families. I am grateful to Lady Arran for allowing us to use the Recreation Area for this purpose.

On September 28th Councillor Joe Tucker and I met at 7.00am to monitor the traffic from Filleigh Garage to the crossroads at Heddon Cross and encourage people to reduce their speed. We spent two hours on this project and we felt it was a worthwhile exercise.

During most months I have been in touch with Highways as we seem to have considerable problems with drainage, clearing the hedge verges and the condition of the road.

On November 1st I attended with Steven Cook a Tree Foundation meeting at the Civic Centre.

On November 22nd I represented Filleigh at our local meeting of the Devon Association of Parish Councils.

On December 18th I attended, with Roger Bowen, Paul Smalley and Karen Toms, a meeting at the Norbord factory as we were anxious to discuss their future plans for the factory.

In January I visited the Planning Department with regard to our bus shelter. We were also very grateful to Councillor Joe Tucker who was able to find £1,300 within the Devon County Council budget. I also contacted Torridge Transport and they kindly donated £200. Norbord also kindly gave £250. In February I took two local carpenters to see bus shelters that had recently erected. The bus shelter was started in March and completed during the first week of May. Constructing the bus shelter at Shillingford cost Mid Devon Council £5,000, and we have managed to reduce the cost by half, and our bus shelter here in Filleigh will cost approximately £2,400.

On February 27th I met with Paul Smalley and Mr. Colin Savage to discuss affordable housing for Filleigh.

On March 22nd Roger Bowen, Karen Toms and I attended a visit to Norbord with many of their suppliers to see new plant. I think it is helpful to have a good relationship with Norbord as they are right on our parish boundary and I am grateful that they take note of our concerns.

We are still having problems with fly tipping, as you can see as you turn off the link road that a large amount of tarmacadam with concrete blocks was left on the side of the road. A few months ago we as a parish and with the help of the WI had a clean up of our parish one weekend and I was grateful to Roger and Yvonne Bowen and also members of the WI for their help. We collected 22 bags of rubbish.

The Parish Council received a letter in January from Councillor Wiltsher, Chairman of North Devon District Council, asking if we could discuss at our parish council meeting a person that has done outstanding service in the parish during the past 12 months and it was unanimously agreed that we recommend Tanya Hussell for that award. Last month I took Tanya and Beryl Morgan to a special reception at the Civic Centre where Tanya received a certificate in recognition of her work within the parish.

As you can see, we as a parish council, have had a very busy year but I hope a fruitful one. I am grateful to my fellow parish councillors for their support. I would also like to thank our parish clerk, Veronica, for all her help and I am always grateful for her advice and knowledge with regard to running a parish council. That, ladies and gentlemen, concludes my report.

Roger Watts