



MARY TAVY PARISH COUNCIL REPORT 2015-2019

Presented to the Parish 10th April 2019

This report is a summary of the work of the Parish Council including a list of the Councillors, plus a list of projects undertaken and a summary of 2018-2019 accounts.

John Hill
Chairman

Introduction

Chairman

Cllr. John Hill. Born in the Village 46 years ago and 4th generation farmer. It has been a privilege to serve my second year as Chairman.

When I'm not busy at the farm you might have heard my voice at various Community and School events throughout the year.

Councillors

Vice Chair/Cemetery Committee Chairman – Cllr. Peter Jarvis

Cllr. Michael Fife Cook

Cllr. Roger Page

Southern Link Committee and DNPA Representative – Cllr. George Hill

Cllr. John Bright.

Staff

Penny Clapham PSLCC – Locum Parish Clerk/RFO

Craig Gardner – Maintenance and Gardner

Resigned from Parish Council – Shane Honey ~ Clerk

I would like to thank Shane for the hard work and the sense of duty she showed when she undertook the role as Clerk for our Parish Council.

Projects

It's been a very productive four years on the Parish Council with a number of projects completed, which have and will bring great benefit to our parish of Mary Tavy.

So, what have we done?

- **The Community Night Landing Light for the Devon Air Ambulance.**



The first night landing light on Dartmoor National Park. Erected to help save lives and injured parishioners in Mary Tavy and also all the villages in our area. Funded by Grants from Southern Link, central government (*from fines to the banks*). All the parish had to pay was £1075 to have it fully installed and operational.

Worth noting, over 25% of the cost was the planning to DNPA, which included maps, time and application for planning permission. Yes, we still had to pay for planning!

- **Community Defibrillator.**



Mary Tavy Parish Council were recently awarded a grant of £1,249 from the Town & Parishes fund. The money was used to purchase a Public Access Defibrillator for the village. Located on the outside wall of Mary Tavy PO & Stores the device is available to anyone who has need of it. Mary Tavy Parish Council would like to thank West Devon Borough Council for awarding the grant. Greater thanks go to Martin and Tracey Bradford, owners of Mary Tavy PO & Stores for agreeing to locating the device on their wall. Please take the time to have a look next time you're passing.

- **'Bal Lane' road Safety Signs for our School.**



It's taken nearly 4 years of constant campaigning. Finally, highways have put up some extra signs but one of them isn't the right one.... No surprise, it's highways.

- **The Parish Gritter 'The Winter Dragon'**



Parish Council were able to keep a majority of the roads operational in the past two years by spreading over four and a half tonnes of rock salt on the most vulnerable parts of the parish road network during 10 trips. The cost for this great piece of kit was £1,160 ~ a price worth paying to keep the parish safe and mobile during winter for many years to come. (Hospital & Doctor appointments, Care Workers, School and anything else you can think of happened due to our little gritter 'The Winter Dragon').

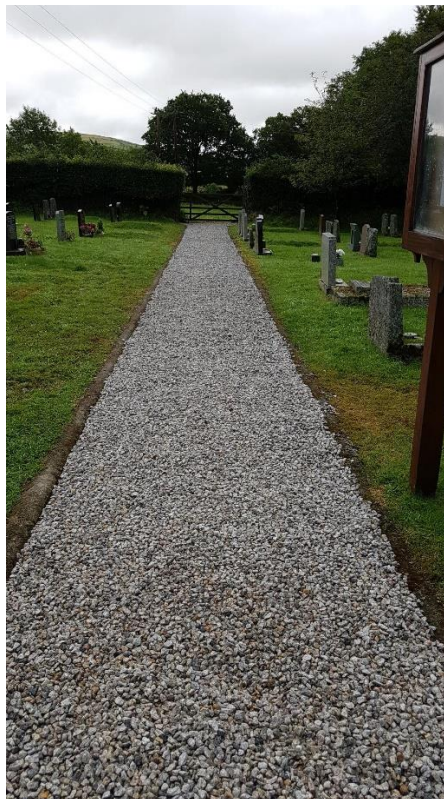
Worth noting, the salt was FREE from Devon County Council and spread FREE by our Emergency/Snow Warden Cllr. John Hill, who also cleared away the majority of the snow from the roads before anyone was awake. 4.00am start.

- **Cemetery Improvements.**

It's been 8 years in the making... but finally the fence which separates the Church owned churchyard and the Parish Cemetery has now been completed.



Not only that, we've done other improvements. The path has been re-chipped, the hut has been painted, 20-tons of earth spoil has been tidied up. Costing over £2500.



- **Beating the Bounds**

After many, many years finally Mary Tavy's Beating of the Bounds returned on the 12th August 2017. This ancient ceremony dates back to at least Anglo-Saxon times. All arrangements were in place for our modern version with the 27km distance being split into 3 sections. Registration was mandatory as we had to satisfy Health & Safety regulations. Well done to the 25 walkers took part, the youngest being just six years old. Plus, a big thank you to Kerri Higham (Parish Clerk,) Cllr Roger Page and all the others who walked the boundary prior to 12th August to undertake RISK ASSESMENTS! Cost of £399

Some of the Grants Given

- **Coronation Hall**

Just over £1000 towards a new heating system for the Coronation Hall, which now includes a thermostat to save electricity.



- **Recreation Ground**

Four new recycled plastic picnic benches bought for the grounds to replace rotten wooden ones. The Parish Council bought two for just over £400 in a 50% match funding with the trustees of the Recreation Ground. Made of plastic they should last for well over a decade.



- **Reading Room**

£1500 was agreed to help with the refurbishment of this historical building.

Allotments



Allotments are an incredibly valuable community resource, and asset. Councils are required by law to provide allotments if none already exist in the council's area when they are requested to do so by 6 or more parishioners. The only lawful reason not to do so is if there is no suitable land within the council's area or nearby.

There are two principle types of allotment: Statutory Allotments and Private Allotments. Those provided by councils are referred to as "Statutory Allotments" and as such enjoy considerable protection under law. Holders can keep a wide range of livestock, sell produce semi commercially, use part of their plot as a leisure garden, construct shelters for animals. Councils have the power to buy or rent land (by compulsory purchase if necessary) to provide allotments. However they can only dispose of the land if it falls into complete disuse. Even where only one allotment holder persists on a site which could otherwise be considered as unnecessary and surplus to requirements that holder must be found suitable alternative land nearby. Allotment land can only be disposed of with the Secretary of State's consent which will only be given if the Minister is satisfied that adequate provision for displaced allotment holders has been made. It is the responsibility of councils to manage statutory allotment sites. This includes maintaining pathways, keeping unallocated allotments cut and in reasonable order, disposing of abandoned sheds, greenhouses, frames, waste etc. In summary, statutory allotments are a considerable burden on the finances of any council. Many councils are disposing of their allotment sites by transferring the land free of charge or for a very nominal sum to private allotment associations. By doing so they are disposing of land which is of almost no commercial value and at the same time they are releasing themselves from a not insubstantial financial burden.

Private Allotments by contrast do not enjoy the same protection under law, and are provided through a private agreement between a landowner and individual plot holders or (more typically) an Allotment Association. It is this agreement which dictates the conditions under which the land can be used. Land can be reclaimed by the landowner at the end of the lease period or if conditions of the lease have not been upheld.

The council decided to go the Private way, after land was made available by the Recreation Ground Trustees. The Allotment Association is now under the contract with the Recreation Ground so that if less than 50% of the land is used the Recreation Ground have the right to take it back. Not only that but there is a rent which is also paid to the Recreation Ground, funds which are needed for the eleven-acre grounds as they don't receive any Local Government funding.

To help get the ball rolling, the Parish Council decided to pay for the fence and water supply at a cost of £3,433. Funds were available and after looking at the options on the table this was the best. **End of the financial year we are 8% below our 2018/19 approved budget**, this includes the expenditure on this new great facility.

2018/19 Finances and Vote of thanks.

It's not 100% confirmed yet but it looks like we've underspent by 8% of our approved 2018/19 Budget, contrary to what has been published in a local newsletter by one of our own Councillors.

This has only been due to the hard work of a select few, Penny our Locum Clerk, who through her professional abilities has been able to do the job of our Clerk in a very cost-effective way. Thank you Penny for the fantastic service you've provided the Parish.

A huge thank you to Cllr. Peter Jarvis who has been acting as our Burial Clerk. Not only has he saved the Parish money but he has been extremely professional in his handling of the Cemetery. Thank you Cllr. Jarvis, for going far beyond what is expected from a volunteer.

Lastly a vote of thanks to Cllr. Bright who has handled very professionally the Personnel Committee.

Files from the Cemetery and also the Personnel Committee will be made available to the new Parish Councillors

My sincere thanks to everyone who has helped in the parish over the last four years ~ the parish where I was born.

Running a Parish Council sometimes can be very hard with everyone having a different point of view, but no matter what anyone says, the Parish Council has vastly improved the parish over the past four years.

Councillor John Roy Hill

Chairman

Mary Tavy Parish Council