

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 21st March 2016 in the Village Hall, Priston.

1. Attendance and Apologies –

Councillor Pattison, as Chairman of the Parish Council, presided with the Parish Clerk in attendance. Parish Councillors and the large number of electors of the parish attending the meeting were welcomed. A Register of Attendance was circulated for signature. Three apologies were noted.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 25th March 2015, having been distributed by email to Councillors, published on the Priston Website and Parish Council Noticeboard, were accepted, agreed as a true record of proceedings and signed by the Chairman. Agreed there were no appropriate Matters Arising.

3. Chairman's Report – Councillor Pattison commenced his report by advising that, at the local elections in May 2015, Mrs Clare Cross and Mr Gathorne Girdlestone did not stand for re-election and Mrs Fiona Hassard and Mrs Clare Lawton were elected in their place. He thanked Clare and Gathorne for their support to the Parish Council. In November Mrs Christine Hunt had announced that she would retire at the next AGM and Mrs Louise Callan had applied for the vacancy and would take over in May.

Village Design Statement - The Chairman continued by congratulating the Working Party which had produced an excellent draft document which was based on the results of the previous year's questionnaire. The cost of developing the VDS had been less than expected which had led to a small decrease in the precept for the year 2016/2017.

Planning had been a relatively quiet year with responses being sent to Planning Services on just two applications: Parcel 5856 High Street and Truespeed Cabinet, Church Farm Lane.

The Chairman advised that the Parish Council was still negotiating with Highways for a solution to reduce the flooding by the dairy on the Farmborough lane and also that Truespeed were in the process of installing cabling which should mean that superfast broadband is available to the whole of Priston village.

The Chairman concluded his report by thanking Mr Bottle and Mr Wilkinson for looking after the Priston Website and the Defibrillator and also the Parish Clerk and all Councillors for their good work and support over the past year..

Councillor Pattison's full report had been placed on file and published on the Priston Website.

4. Financial Report of the Parish Council – The Clerk reported briefly on the Parish Council's finances advising the year at 1st April 2015 had commenced with an opening balance of £4,429.86 in the Parish Council's general account and a balance of £142.27 in the PRIDE/Defibrillator account. A very generous anonymous donation of £2,295 had been received to enable the purchase of a more up to date defibrillator.. A precept of £6,210 had been received and VAT of £30.93 reclaimed in respect of transactions during the previous financial year. There will be a balance of approximately £5,500 in the Parish Council's account at 31st March 2016 although figures had not yet been finalised. A typed version of this report has been placed on file and published on the Priston Website. A detailed financial report would be presented at the Annual General Meeting.

5. Report of Priston Village Hall –

Mr Cross, the Treasurer of the Village Hall Committee, reported that the Hall continues to be widely used and is obviously appreciated by the community.

Income from all sources was £7,267 with an improved contribution from MayDay and the Annual Village Social. Expenditure was £6,101 which was lower than the previous year.

A copy of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Village Hall have been appended to the Minute Book.

- 6. Reports of Village Organisations** – The Chairman invited representatives of all village organisations to report on their activities in the past year and plans for the coming year. Reports were received on behalf of the Priston Action Group for the Environment (PAGE), Bellringers, Cricket Club, Priston Defibrillator (PRIDE), Festival, History Group, Jubilee Morris, Kid's Club, Parish Church, Saturday Café, The Link and the Website. Thanks were expressed for the very interesting and informative reports, copies of which have been included in the Minute Book and also published on the Priston Website.

After closing the formal business of the meeting, the Chairman invited Councillor Hopwood to give an illustrated talk on his life at Priston Mill entitled "A Miller's Tale" which was very much enjoyed by the attentive and interested audience.

Parish Council Chairman's Report

Annual Parish Meeting - March 2016

Council membership - at the elections last May, Clare Cross and Gathorne Girdlestone did not stand, and Claire Lawton and Fiona Hassard were elected in their place. The Chairman thanked Clare and Gathorne for their support to the Council. In November Christine Hunt announced that she would retire at the next AGM, and after a competition Louise Callan has been appointed to take over in May.

Village Design Statement - the Working Party are to be congratulated in producing an excellent draft document, heavily based on the results of last year's questionnaire, which is with BANES for comment. If the Statement is adopted by BANES it will give greater authority to our community over planning matters.

The Queen's 90th Birthday - arrangements are in hand to light our brazier on Pensdown Hill in celebration.

Finance - developing our Village Design Statement cost less than expected last year, and this has led to small decrease in the Precept this year.

Planning - This has been a relatively quiet year, but responses have been sent to the following applications:

**Parcel 5856 High Street Priston, variation of condition.
Truespeed Cabinet, Church Farm Lane, Priston**

There has been no response yet from BANES to our proposal to change the Housing Development Boundary to exclude the garden between the apple store at Church Farm and the Village Hall.

Highways and footpaths - with the assistance of our District Councillor David Veale we are still negotiating with Highways for a solution to reduce the flooding by the dairy on Farmborough Lane.

Defibrillator - Thanks to John Wilkinson for his continuing support to this project, and to an unknown benefactor who has paid for a second, more capable defibrillator, positioned as before at the Village Hall. The original defibrillator has been re-positioned outside Willow Barn, thanks to the Pais.

Priston Website - Once again thanks to Richard Bottle for his efforts on our behalf, and for his assistance with:

Broadband - BT and BANES "Connecting Devon & Somerset" have installed "fibre to the cabinet", in Tunley, which gives some homes in Priston faster broadband, though definitely not superfast. Truespeed are installing their cabling at the moment, which should mean that superfast broadband is available to the whole of Priston village.

Thanks - Finally thank you to our Parish Clerk, Christine Hunt, and all of our Councillors for their good work and support over the past year.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - MONDAY 21ST MARCH 2016

FINANCIAL REPORT OF PRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

It is customary at this meeting to give a brief report on the Parish Council's accounts for the previous and the current year - to give an overview of the financial situation.

Therefore, last year, the year 2014/2015 commenced with a balance at the bank of £3,095.41 in the Parish Council's general account plus £275.74 in the PRIDE/Defibrillator account. A precept of £5,460 plus £40 Council Tax Support Grant was received from the District Council and VAT of £60.36 refunded by Customs and Excise. A total of £472 was received as donations to the PR

The total expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2015 was £4,831.88 including £632.80 on training in the use of the defibrillator.

1st April 2015 commenced with a balance in the Parish Council's "general" account of £4,429.86 plus £142.27 in the Defibrillator account. During the year a very generous anonymous donation of £2,295 was received to enable the purchase of a more up to date defibrillator. A precept of £6,210 was requested and received from the District Council plus £40 Council Tax Support Grant. A refund of £30.93 VAT was claimed and received.

The Parish Council's expenditure in the current year is approximately £7,600 including the purchase of a new defibrillator in the sum of £2,754 and training in the use of the equipment £322.40.

The year ending 31st March 2016 will see a balance in the Parish Council's bank account of approximately £5,500.

These are obviously not the final figures at the year end. An itemised account of the Receipts and Payments will be presented at the Annual General Meeting on 16th May and copies will be available for all attendees at that meeting. The end of year accounts will also be published on the Priston Website in due course.

Christine Hunt
21st March 2016

PAGE report to APM, 21 March 2016

PAGE continues as a very informal group of villagers interested in various things relating to the environment. No new initiatives this year but

- The bulk oil buying continues. About 35 households are now involved. One householder missed a call to join a delivery and reported spending £60 extra on a tankful. Just a reminder that this is a completely voluntary undertaking and no one gets any commission or fee for arranging the bulk buying discounts.
- Litter picking takes place, with ditch/sign monitoring, on four Saturday mornings a year. The next one will be on 16 April. At least 10 people regularly take part, whether on the Saturday itself or some time around that day. While we are all dismayed by rubbish louts, we do feel oddly satisfied by actually doing something about the litter.
- We have an informal email group to pass on information and ideas, and this information is also displayed on the village website, and even Facebook. We've promoted, among other things, conservation measures for hedgehogs, the RSPB great garden bird watch, an annual butterfly count and an offer of free home-made bird boxes from Owain and John, and various energy efficiency measures.
- John Wybrow continues to let people pick his surplus apples every autumn and John Marsden's apple crusher and press were used to good effect.

As I said, PAGE is a very informal group. The idea is to pass on information and ideas in order to benefit the environment, and any proposals for future activities, including talks in the village hall, are most welcome. If anyone would like to discuss how we could do things differently to get more people involved, I would be only too pleased!

Penny

BELLRINGERS' REPORT for the Annual Parish Meeting 21st March 2016

MEMBERS

Geoff Allen, Simon Barnes, Vicky Pai, Gail Pattison, Vivienne Perriton, Maggie Rideout, Jill Wilkinson, John Wilkinson, John Whybrow.

Simon joined us from Newton St Loe where he learned to ring.

Last year we rang on the following occasions:

V.E.Day on Saturday 9th May

St Georges Day 23rd April

New Years Eve

8 weddings

We are currently teaching Ruth Summers, who is making very good progress

Bellringing is a sociable hobby, as a ringer there is always a warm welcome as a visitor to other towers

Ringling is a hobby that can be enjoyed by people of all ages, from 11 to 90! !

If you would like to try please talk to me.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tim Hughes for the maintenance of our beautiful bells.

Jill Wilkinson, Captain of Ringers

15th March 2016

CRICKET CLUB Report to Annual Parish Meeting 21st March 2016

Priston Cricket Club had a successful if, on too many occasions, wet season in 2015 under the excellent captaincy of Josh Sutton. More games were won than lost and we enjoyed a mini tour to Chedworth where former Priston player Tim Hamilton now lives. Our scorebook on that occasion was completed by a lady scorer fresh from scoring England's match against New Zealand at Lord's.

The Club is fortunate to have the support of the local community, some of whom are Social Members and enjoy tea and cake with us, all for a subscription of £20 pa. There was a record turnout at the New Year 2016 Duck Race, and we are still coming down from the wonderful reception to our fifth Pantomime 'Beauty and the Beast' performed at the end of February. Thanks to everyone who helped to make it such a success and supported us so well. Now all we have to do is to see if we can replicate the effort on the cricket field, with our first match of the season on 24th April.

Paul Barclay

11th March 2016

KIDS' CLUB Report to Annual Parish Meeting 21st March 2016

The Kids' Club has gently drifted apart simply due to the fact that all the children involved are older and are now at school too late into the evening to be able to get together in the way that we did.

As there are currently no children of appropriate age in the local area it was decided not to reinstate the club in the foreseeable future.

Extracted from email communications with Mothers organising the Kids' Club
Christine Hunt, Clerk to Priston Parish Council, March 2016

SATURDAY CAFÉ Report for Annual Parish Meeting 21st March 2016

The café is still as popular as ever. We have a few new volunteer couples which makes things easier. An extra coffee machine was purchased last year which has been a real asset. Without trying very hard we still manage to make a profit each week and have been able to send donations to the following recently:

Medecins Sans Frontier
Send a Cow
British Red Cross
Priston Festival
Restless Development Nepal

We held a special Christmas cafe which enabled locals to run stalls and raise funds for their own charities. Christine Hunt continues her prolific jam making and always gives some of her profits to the cafe 'pot', which in turn goes to suggested charities.

A short message appeared in the Link to confirm that the café is NOT a fundraiser for the Church, although it was originally a Church initiative. ALL profits benefit charities, some small and local and some larger concerns. It is lovely to be able to give away, and to make a difference, and to see the café running for the benefit of the local community. Long may it continue!

Sue Copperman
20th March 2016

VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 2016

The hall continues to be widely used, but there are, however, concerns that the demise of the Priston Morris and the Kids Club will leave gaps in both income and usage.

In 2015 further significant improvements have been made, the most expensive item being the replacement of the curtains.

Overall income was £7406 and expenditure £6546, so assets increased by £882 and now stand at £9660.

It is now reasonably clear that a major overhaul of the roof is highly desirable which will require funds greater than currently available, so significant fundraising and/or obtaining of grants will be required.

Niels Cross
Treasurer
21st March 2016

Defibrillator Report to Priston Parish Council for 21st March 2016.

Maintenance records are up to date with no known problems.

I can now report that the new defibrillator cabinet now has the new HeartSine defibrillator installed on the wall of the Village Hall. It is now fully operational. An external light has been provided as it was a trip hazard on the curb in front of the device.

I also have great pleasure in announcing the old AED and cabinet are now fully operational on the wall of Willow Barn at the lower end of the village. I am most grateful for the great kindness of Mr & Mrs. Pai for their generous offer of allowing us to locate it there.

During the near future an updated information leaflet, detailing the codes of each cabinet and those villagers whose training is in date and who are willing to be called out in an emergency, will be delivered to each household.

There were 16 villagers who attended the familiarisation course for the new AED so we now have a substantial core of knowledge in the village so that the new device may be used with confidence.

I am looking to arrange a refresher course for those whose certificate expires this year.

John Wilkinson

AED Administrator.

PRISTON FESTIVAL – REPORT TO PARISH MEETING MARCH 2016

- We are now in our 9th year. Last year 98.7% of the audience surveyed considered their Festival experience "Very Good" or "Good" – reflecting the efforts of the many villagers who help with the Festival as well as those of the Committee.
- The 2016 Festival takes place 16-18 September and features some amazing award-winning and nationally-renowned performers, including Jim Moray, Phillip Henry & Hannah Martin, Reg Meuross, and the Drystones.
- The programme pattern this year will be similar to last year. We intend to feature Morris dancing again on the Festival Sunday. We would like to express our appreciation of the huge contribution that Priston Jubilee Morris has made to the Festival over the years - we will miss them greatly!
- The Festival wouldn't be possible without the huge amount of help and support from the village. Pristonians can take pride in the comments from visitor surveys on the friendly village atmosphere of the Festival.
- Our philosophy of "Live 'n' Local" has provided opportunities for villagers and other locals to perform, as well as experience a high-quality and largely free event on their doorstep. The Festival has also helped to increase the profile of Priston overall across the region and brings substantial custom to the pub over the weekend. We are also pleased that the village is able to use Festival assets eg. stage lights/curtains/gazebos etc. throughout the year, and benefit from our work with the VH Committee in improving pedestrian access to the VH car park.
- Last year's event cost about £10,000 to stage. Approximately 50% of the income of the Festival is provided by visitors (through ticket sales, food/drink purchases, and car park charges) and from stall fees. The great majority of the remainder comes from grants, sponsorship and donations.
- The Priston Festival is a registered charity. Its charitable purpose is "to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music and other cultural endeavours in all their aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts, recitals, festivals, exhibitions and similar events for the benefit of the people of the parish of Priston near Bath Somerset, and surrounding area". All income needs to be devoted to this purpose.
- We are aware the Village Hall Committee is considering options for repairing the VH roof. The Festival Committee has indicated its willingness to organise a concert on behalf of the VH to help raise funds for this, once the VH Committee has confirmed its plans for the roof project.
- We appreciate the support from Priston Church, in agreeing to allow us to stage events in our historic and beautiful church building.
- We look forward to continued support from the village. We are very grateful for the local sponsorship and donations we receive - anybody wishing to support the Festival in this way should contact any Festival Committee member.

Richard Bottle
on behalf of The Priston Festival

THE HISTORY GROUP

Priston History Group was formed at the beginning of 2013 with the aim of investigating the history of the Parish and several talks were given in 2013* and one in 2014. Whilst there were no talks in 2015 there is still an ongoing archaeological [geophysical investigation] project of two fields on the edge of the village. A report was produced at the end of 2014* on the work surveying Town Hill and if any significant results are logged from the survey of Goosemead, which will be carried out this April, John Oswin of BACAS has agreed to produce a further report and come and talk about both fields to the Parish at a later date.

*Copies of the 2013 talks and of the 2014 survey of Town Hill field are on the Priston Web.

Clare Cross

Priston Jubilee Morris

It is with much sadness that I present this report. After 38 years, 10 months, 4 weeks and 2 hours Priston Jubilee Morris will disband after their stand at the Mayday Celebrations.

You may ask why. The answer is simple. We have been unable to attract recruits, both from the village and elsewhere. Frankly it galls me that after an intensive recruitment campaign when no fit and active chaps came forward, to hear them say how sorry they are the Morris is folding.

The reality is that with an ageing membership, many are over 65 and a significant number over 70, individual members are increasingly liable to injury we cannot guarantee to honour our booking obligations. On Mayday we are intending to go out with a bang.

I wish to thank the village for it's overall support over the years since our inauguration and particularly to those villagers who, throughout the years, have been members as dancers, musicians or in other capacities.

Priston, we salute you and will bow out disgracefully.

See you all on Mayday.

John Wilkinson

Founder Member.

St Luke & St Andrew's Church.

Thank you for inviting me to give what is intended to be a brief report of St Luke and St Andrew's Church, Priston

The church of which I am grateful to be Rector is geographically and emotionally the centre of the village, although that may well be contested by the Ring O Bells. As you are all aware, the church has been at the centre of village life for 800 year or more, and I hope it will continue to be for many years to come.

We continue to celebrate together weekly worship and the great festivals of the Christian Calendar: Christmas, Easter, Harvest & Wassail, and also those significant rites of passage: weddings, christenings and funerals. Villagers will be aware from the ringing of bells on Saturdays that the church is busy with weddings throughout the summer months and we have some 6-7 couples tying the knot in Priston in 2016. In celebrating marriage, we are privileged to welcome to Priston people from all over the world, all of whom express a delight in our beautiful church and village.

The church is a centre of village life in other respects as well: we are delighted to be a venue for the Priston Festival and have hosted some marvellous concerts and talks in September last year. As a church we are very open to providing the building for other cultural activities

We are grateful to the village for continued financial support. As I wrote in my October letter, the Church costs around £26,000 a year to maintain and run and we do not receive any state or regional support to find this sum. I would like to thank the community for their generosity in helping find that sum. I am grateful too to our Church Fundraising Group for organising 12th Night this year, the Safari Supper last autumn and the Grand Commemorative Dinner to mark the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo on 21st June last year. This year we are looking forward to the return of our magnificent Flower Festival over the weekend of 17th-19th June where we will be celebrating Her Majesties' 90 Glorious Years.

As a Church we are committed to help the less advantaged in our own society, and this year we will be making charitable donations to 'Send A Cow', Julian House in Bath and to our Link Parish in Uganda. Through our own trust, administered by the redoubtable Bill Drake Brockman we are able to make modest grants to village youngsters to assist with educational expenses. More details from BDB.

In this report, I would like to put on record my thanks to Mr Richard Windsor who has so diligently and carefully cut the churchyard grass for many years.

The village of Priston is a unique place, and I am aware that to a high degree, the village works together to care for each other and make it the place it is. I am very honoured to be called to play a small part as Rector of Priston.

Revd Martin Blewett

THE LINK
Report to the Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting
21 March 20165

The Link has had another good year – we're 38½ years old! Our readership continues to rise. As well as about 100 paper copies we also send out over a dozen 'electronic Links' each month, and we think this figure is likely to rise. as well as 100 paper copies. Originally we sent these out free, but we now ask for a donation and have been very gratified at the response. From now on we will charge £3p.a. for an electronic subscription.

As well as the communities of Priston, Nailwell and Inglesbatch we send copies to other local destinations such as the police, the Somerset Guardian and the Duchy of Cornwall, to ex-pat Pristonians as far afield as Argyll and Brittany, and to assorted Priston visitors, who, having been to Priston, like what they see and ask to have The Link so they know what's going on here. Our farthest electronic Link goes to Vancouver, B.C.

We are a not-for-profit organisation, but we do of course have to remain solvent. Under the careful housekeeping of our Treasurer, Perry Perriton we not only stay 'in the black' but are able to offer, on occasions, small monetary prizes for competitions in the magazine or occasionally we support a village activity with a one-off donation.

We do not charge for villagers' one-off advertisements (e.g. lawnmower for sale or a one-off charity event); however we do charge outsiders for similar advertisements. We also like a donation from charities which use our pages a lot. We are not a charity, and still have to make ends meet!

We work closely with Richard Bottle and the Priston Web. It's interesting that there is room for the two mediums in disseminating news. I remember when the Web was first set up thinking it might spell the end for The Link, but in fact it has had quite the opposite effect.

We continue to have a good working relationship with our local police and our neighbourhood PCSOs do get The Link.

We are very grateful to Priston Parish Council, Priston Parochial Church Council and Priston Village Hall for their continued financial support.

Of course my main thanks go to Sue Hunter-Jones and Perry Perriton, because without them there would be no Link!

Our son Henry Anderson has more or less finished digitising back numbers of The Link. We now have a fascinating picture of Somerset life over nearly 40 years – all on a memory stick. We are also actively pursuing "Priston Memories" by getting those born and bred in Priston during the War years to write down their memories. Anyone who read Mo Richardson's article in last month's Link will have enjoyed the fact that she ended up tracing the Bedboroughs back for 8000 years. Makes The Link sound very young.

Aylet Anderson

The Priston Web

The Priston Web has been operating since 2002. It is operated on behalf of the Parish Council by Richard Bottle.

It is an important means by which the Parish Council communicates with the village – all Council agendas and minutes and significant documents are published on the website.

The Priston Web normally has between 150-200 repeat visitors each month, who on average make 4-5 visits per month. This supports the view that it is a helpful means of communication for the village. 50% of accesses are via desktop computer, 30% via tablet, and 18% via mobile phone.

The Priston We is always very happy to support local organisations and initiatives. It provides a web-presence for the majority of village organisations, most recently web pages have been added in support of the Saturday Café and the Village Design Statement initiative. The Calendar is kept up to date and so is a helpful reference to organisations when planning events.

The Priston Web works closely with The Link. The two channels complement each other well, with the Link well suited to ephemeral material while the Web can retain lengthy material indefinitely, and present images more easily. More recently the Facebook page for Priston set up by Louise Callan has been a useful mechanism for alerting people to additions to the Priston Web.

Any suggestions or contributions should be provided to Richard Bottle at web@priston.org.uk.

Richard Bottle