

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Totland Parish Council
Held at 6.30pm on Monday 26th April 2021
Via Microsoft Teams

Present

Councillors: Jan Cave (Chairman), Gareth Wyre (Vice-Chairman), John Howe, Vince Fennell, Steve Blamire and Hilary Benns.
Helen Gibbs (Clerk & RFO)
1 signed in member of the public.

Apologies: Councillor Helen Wood - accepted

1 To receive and approve minutes from the previous Annual Parish Meeting

The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting were accepted as read. There was no Annual Parish Meeting for 2020 due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

2 To receive the report of the Parish Council for 2019/2020 from the Chairman

The Parish council met 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 as follows:

Full Council & Extra Ordinary x 12 meetings

Finance x 1 meetings

Planning x 2 separate meetings

And attendance of your Councillors has been as follows:-

Councillor	No. of Meetings
Hilary Benns	15
Steve Blamire	11
Jan Cave (Chairman)	13
Vince Fennell	15
David Filby	8
John Howe	13
Helen Wood	10
Gareth Wyre	15

I would like to thank the Councillors for their hard work and I would also, on behalf of myself and my Councillors like to thank our Clerk, who's deep knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment has steered us through a very strange year. Even through the Coronavirus Pandemic we have still managed to achieve a good few of our projects and keep up with our commitments to the Parish.

We purchased the lovely Memorial seats which replaced some rotten benches on Cokes Green and we plan to replace some more on Cokes Green and around the Parish.

We refurbished the toilets with a view to upgrading Colwell and possibly one for the Recreation Ground.

We have succeeded in organising the buoys for safety along Colwell beach with the Isle of Wight Council and we are working towards keeping Widdick Chine safe by installing some buoys.

We continue to carry out repairs to the Fitness and Playground equipment and have plans for a Cycle/Pump Track on the Recreation Ground this summer/autumn.

The Broadway Roundabout Island will be dug out and refreshed with new soil and planted. Replacement trees have been planted on Colwell Common thanks to Councillor Blamire who organised this.

We are restarting the Car Boot Sales on Colwell Common from 1st May and have taken over the Allotments at West Wight Nursery, so allowing self-sufficiency for up to 10 people.

We hope to plan a Seawall Parade and Picnic on the Common and the Older Persons Xmas Lunch can go ahead in December at the Memorial Hall.

We have been actively looking into a new building for the Parish Office which is looking favourably to be the Parish Hall we are in talks to include the Car Park with this project.

We have extended the on street parking along The Broadway from 30 minutes to 2 hours.

We would like to extend our thanks to Dave Filby for the years of service to the Parish and welcome our new Councillor Mike Locke.

Councillor Jan Cave, Chairman

3 To receive the report for the 2019/2020 Parish Open Space Committee – Councillor Blamire

Our parish is blessed with an extensive range of public open spaces; from wildlife havens to sports pitches to formal parks. They have played an important role during the covid pandemic, allowing residents to get outdoors for exercise, relaxation and organised sport (when allowed). We had to scale back some of our planned works and activities at the start of the year, however, we have still managed to make some significant improvements as outlined in the following report.

Tree Planting

During March 2020 we planted a new avenue of Liquidambar styraciflua (American Sweetgum) trees through Colwell Common as well as a perimeter of alternating Acer x freemanii (Freeman Maple) and Acer rubrum (Red Maple). All three trees are known for their spectacular autumn colours and should provide quite a spectacle as they mature over the coming years. We lost a small number to wind/vandalism but they have been replaced with more robust specimens over the winter. We also planted 120 Pinus nigra maritima (Corsican Pine) across the area between the pier and Stokes Green. We have lost many of the original Victorian Corsican pine plantings that once covered Totland and those remaining are now up to 150 years old and coming to the end of their lives. The aim is to start to replant significant numbers of pine over the coming years to maintain this important character of the parish. We have lost 20-30 due to damage by landscape contractors, a small number to the elements and we will look to see what can be replaced during the autumn this year. We have continued to

add more fern species (including a number of Dicksonia Antarctica tree ferns) to the verges of the road cutting down to the beach (Pier Road/Madeira Road) with the long-term aim of creating of spectacular entrance to the bay/beach. This project will take a number of years to establish but if you stand above on the bridge you will notice lots of small fronds emerging – once mature some of these will extend up to 2m in length. During 2021 we will be looking at options for further planting schemes during winter/spring 2022, these will include some options where residents can get more involved in our tree planting schemes and projects.

Weston Football Ground

The former school field at Weston has now been fully restored with an outstanding playing surface for our West Wight Youth FC teams. Reports from the managers say it is one of the best youth pitches on the Island in terms of surface and drainage. It is currently home to the Under 8s and Under 9s teams with hopefully a new Under 7s team being formed for next season.

We have planted a number of trees (what we have had left over from other projects) around the perimeter to help form more of an enclosed space and we are currently working to build a storage shed for the mower, line marker and flags etc.

Beaches & Boats

Our beaches have been hugely popular over the past year and we expect this to continue as the parish and surrounding area continues to grow in popularity with both Island residents and visitors. This renewed popularity has significantly increased the number of boats visiting Totland and Colwell Bay and caused some issues, particularly at Widdick Chine, where boat owners have been anchoring very close to the beach, restricting access for swimmers and those using the shallows. It has also raised some safety concerns. We are arranging an area of Widdick Chine to become a boat-free zone, clearly marked by a line of buoys. This is backed up by an old bylaw which restricts the activities of boats within 200m of the shore. The 200m and channel markers are also being returned to Colwell Bay.

Bins

We have a system in place where the popular bins are now emptied on a daily basis during the summer months. We have also hired an additional large four-wheeled bins to be located at Colwell Bay and Totland Bay during the summer holidays.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Considering the increasing popularity of our open spaces we have had little increase in antisocial behaviour. The increase in the number of irresponsible boat owners as previously mentioned has been the biggest concern and hopefully we will have measures in place to prevent those issues during the coming summer. The only other significant issue has been the ongoing damage to the view point in One Horse Field – police have responded with an increased presence in the area which will hopefully reduce further problems this summer.

Moles

This report would not be complete without an update on the parish mole population. We have implemented an ongoing programme to manage the moles affecting Stokes Green, Turf Walk and the Recreation Ground. And so far, the results seem encouraging.

Get Involved

Want to get involved? We have a whole range of future projects involving more tree avenues and street trees, park enhancements and habitat development that we are keen to recruit a team of volunteers to help deliver.

We are also keen to see new Corsican pines planted throughout the parish in private gardens (particularly in areas around Madeira Road/Cliff Road/Heatherwood Park/Church Hill/Granville Road) and could potentially bulk buy trees during next winter.

Please contact the Parish Clerk or Cllr Steve Blamire if you are interested in getting involved.

4. To receive the report of the Memorial Hall Joint Committee – Councillor Wyre

I accepted the role of chairman in December 2020 after Councillor Bamford stepped down from the Management Committee after 6 years, 5 of which were as Chairman. I thank her for her hard work and leadership over those years when many positive changes and improvements were made to the Hall and its facilities.

Shortly after becoming Chairman the Country went into lockdown and the Memorial Hall could not operate as an Art & Leisure facility. The Hall had to be shut and Staff were furloughed. We are receiving various Grant Monies from the Local Council and National Government. As soon as we are legally able to start Hiring out our venue, we are ready to do so.

As things start to normalise, I will provide you with an interim report later in the year.
Cllr Gareth Wyre
Chairman Memorial Hall Arts & Leisure Company

5. Questions at the discretion of the Chairperson

Chris Jarman mentioned he had 2 Allotment spaces available if the Parish Council has someone on their waiting list who maybe suitable.

Councillor John Howe.

I have been a Parish Councillor for nearly 50 years and thank all my fellow Councillors for their enthusiasm towards Parish business. We are lucky to have a Clerk who is extremely enthusiastic and works with us all.

The Chairman thanked all for coming and closed the meeting at 7.00pm.