
TALATON

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023

WEDNESDAY, 26TH APRIL 2023
AT 7.30PM
AT THE PARISH HALL, TALATON

MINUTES

Present:-

From Talaton Parish Council - Cllr Patricia Lenehan (Chairman); Cllr Gerri Hawkins (Vice-Chairman); Cllrs Bos, Wood and Gray and the Parish Council Clerk – Mrs C McIntyre

Other Councillors:- DCC Cllr Iain Chubb and EDDC Cllr Phil Skinner

Members of the Public:- 18

1.Welcome

The Chairman of the Parish Council welcomed all present, to the meeting

2.To confirm that the Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 11th May 2022 are an accurate record

The Vice-Chairman proposed that the Minutes be confirmed as correct and Cllr Bos seconded the proposal. The Minutes were signed accordingly

3.Chairman`s Report – Cllr Leneham presented the following report

Cllr Lenehan welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting of Talaton Parish Council which is not a regular monthly meeting for conducting Parish business. She explained that the legal purpose of this annual meeting is to enable the Parish Council and other elected officials to report to the electorate, on their work and activities over the previous 12 months.

The scope of the meeting extends to all groups and organisations within the Parish, who are also invited to give a report.

Cllr Lenehan spoke about the time restrictions for each speaker, based upon the previous year's lengthy meeting. She also recognised the need for flexibility given the legal purpose of the meeting but asked for co-operation from speakers.

As we are in an Election Year, we are officially in a Pre-Election Period (also know as Purdah) which imposes restrictions on Publicity and Decision Making for those directly involved in the Election. This only applies to District Cllr Skinner as Talaton PC are uncontested and have already been elected for another term. County Cllr Chubb is not involved in the election.

Ten full council meetings were held plus one APM, with no meeting in August. Six Planning meetings were held (other planning matters were included in full council meetings) and we hosted four Drop-In sessions throughout the year.

Whilst there were no changes to the Cllrs in the last 12 months, Denise Main, the Clerk, resigned in Oct 2022. Christine McIntyre took up the position of Clerk in Jan 2023.

Matters that we dealt with every month:

- Parish Maintenance – Potholes
- Planning Applications – Solar Farms

Regular annual items in December:

- Provision of the Village Christmas Tree
- Grant Giving Evening of £500 to groups/activities that benefit the whole community

One-off / Major activities:

- PLATINUM JUBILEE for HM the Queen in June 2022 with a Garden Party for 250 people in the grounds of Talaton House. Planting and commemoration of an Oak Tree on The Moor as part of the Queen's Green Canopy – Plant a Tree for the Jubilee
- VONEUS FIBRE BROADBAND CONNECTION to residents surrounding The Moor were put on hold because the wayleave agreement between Voneus and the private landowner was not in place
- CORONATION CELEBRATIONS were set up in December 2022 and are well underway for 7 May 2023

4.To receive reports from Devon County Council Councillor Iain Chubb and East Devon District Council Councillor Phil Skinner

DCC Cllr Iain Chubb presented the following report and took questions from members of the audience on various DCC issues including highway maintenance (particularly potholes), the perception that there was no proper relationship between the different tiers of government and potential heavy vehicles using Talaton as a short cut for Straitgate quarry/the proposed solar farm

Devolution deal for Devon, Plymouth and Torbay moves a step closer

A new deal that will transfer money and powers into the hands of local Leaders across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, has moved a step closer with the backing of the Government's Levelling Up Minister, Dehenna Davison. Outline approval has been given for a Devon-wide devolution deal which could bring greater local control and allow partners to tap into additional resources to help tackle key local priorities, such as affordable housing, better public transport and connectivity, and providing for the skills that the local economy needs. The deal wouldn't require a change to the established democratic structures across the area, or the need for an elected Mayor. Instead, new powers would be devolved to a partnership of existing local councils who would deliver on a joint programme working alongside a wide range of other local stakeholders. Local partners across Devon have now been invited to work together to prepare a final business case to present to Government for approval later in the year. Any final deal would require local consent with the full agreement of all the constituent councils as well as Parliamentary approval.

Every penny of the extra £9.4m will be spent making our roads more resilient

Every penny of the extra £9.4 million for Devon, announced in the Chancellor's budget recently, will be spent on improving our roads and making them more resilient. Chancellor Jeremy Hunt announced the extra cash specifically to fund vital highways maintenance. Most of it will go towards the Local Area Capital Programmes, which will reflect local priorities identified through our elected members and Neighbourhood Highway Officers. Using inspections and survey data, the remaining funding will be directed to preventative works to stop potholes forming in the first place. Prolonged spells of very wet weather and freezing road temperatures this winter have been hugely detrimental to the condition of our 8,000 mile road network. To tackle it, over the past few months, we doubled the number of pothole teams, introduced weekend working and extended working hours across the network. That resulted in up to 2,200 potholes being repaired each week

Introducing the Transitions Adult Social Care (TASC) service

There are many teams across the council supporting young people through their transition into adult care services. We are changing and improving the transition pathway for young people in Devon. As part of this year-long transformation project, the Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) service is going to be called the Transitions Adult Social Care (TASC) service from Saturday 1 April 2023.

DCC have secured additional funding to help households weather the rising costs of living, to help pay for food, energy and other essential items.

This is the fourth tranche of the government's Household Support Fund that we've been able to secure. The latest bid amounts to a little over £10 million, to cover the period from April 2023 until March 2024. It will

take Devon's total level of Household Support Funding received so far to just over £25 million. The funding is to support households in most need that are struggling to pay for food, energy, water bills and other related essentials. And specifically, those households that may not be eligible for other support that is already available from the government. We have to submit plans mid-May to the Department of Work and Pensions, setting out how we, with our Team Devon District and City councils and other voluntary and community partners, will make the latest funding available. Plans are expected to include:

- a funding allocation to specifically support families in receipt of Free School Meals, to provide food vouchers that can be exchanged at supermarkets to buy food during school holidays. 20,000 children in Devon were eligible for free school meal vouchers during the last holidays
- some funding will also go to provide financial support for food, energy and other essentials to eligible low income households with children and young people, via the County Council's Early Help service.
- Team Devon's District/City councils will plan to continue helping households that are in greatest financial need and struggling to pay for food, energy and other related essentials. They will publicise further details soon, once plans have been finalised
- Citizens Advice Devon will continue to receive funding to support households that are using pre-payment and credit meters, to help with energy costs
- working with the Sustainable Warmth project, the fund will also be used to pilot a scheme to provide minor but rapid energy efficiency improvements to the homes of eligible households
- and the Devon Community Foundation is exploring how best to deploy funds to voluntary and community organisations that support specific groups who may struggle to access the help and support they need

The Household Support Fund is one aspect of the support that councils across the county are making available to households. [For more information about the range of support available, visit our website.](#)

New roadside posters encouraging road users to slow down for horses and their riders are being displayed in parts of Devon.

We're supporting [The British Horse Society's \(BHS\)](#) "Dead Slow" road safety campaign, teaming up with the [BHS, Horses & Road Safety Awareness \(HRSA\)](#) and [Vision Zero South West](#) to promote the campaign in the county. The aim is to educate motorists on how to approach and pass horses safely on the county's roads, with the posters advising drivers to reduce their speed to a maximum of 10mph and leave at least two metres space. Since 2018, around 375 incidents involving equestrians on Devon's roads have been reported to the Police and the BHS. These collisions have left 19 horses injured and three dead, while 29 horse riders have been injured and one rider killed.

Alan Hiscox, Director of Safety at The British Horse Society, said: "Horses are still being killed and injured on our roads, riders continue to be seriously injured and too many drivers underestimate the importance of driving carefully around horses. This is detrimental to the safety of equestrians. You only have to look at the two horses who were tragically killed in the space of just two weeks at the beginning of 2023. "Together, we can stop these tragic incidents from happening over and over again. To do this, it is essential that we all follow the Highway Code guidelines in place, which are aligned with our key Dead Slow behavioural messages. Collaborating with Devon County Council, and displaying these posters, will be a critical step towards driving greater awareness and ultimately improving the safety of all vulnerable road users."

EDDC Phil Skinner

Cllr Skinner had not provided a written report. He spoke about the responsibilities of EDDC and his role within the organisation. He spoke about pertinent issues, particularly solar farms and took a question from a member of the audience on this subject.

5. To receive reports/presentations from local organisations of the Parish regarding their activities/projects during the last year and future plans

Payhembury School – Penny Hammett presented the following report and took questions from members

of the audience

Payhembury Primary school has had a successful and quiet year since the last AGM. We are still awaiting an inspection from Ofsted which is expected in the next few months. Our last inspection was 2018, so we are overdue. We currently have 105 children on roll with an additional 15 pupils in Pre-school. 15 pupils currently come from Talaton Village and surrounding areas. We have a daily bus provided by the local authority for the children to get to and from school. We are still in a federation with Awliscombe Primary school and across both schools we now serve over 230 pupils and employ 33 members of staff. Payhembury Primary School has four classes. Each class has mixed ages.

*Pre-School and Reception – Willow Class
Year 1 and 2 Children – Ash Class
Year 3 and 4 - Beech Class
Year 5 and 6 – Oak Class*

We have just under a full cohort of children starting in Reception in September which is excellent news as most schools are experiencing falling rolls. Currently have a waiting list for places across the school. We are a Church of England voluntary controlled school and work collaboratively with both the Diocese of Exeter and the local authority. Payhembury Primary School is a feeder school to The Kings, Ottery St Mary. We also work very effectively with all the schools in the Ottery Learning Community, which consists of the Kings, Feniton and Tipton Primaries, Ottery St Mary Primary and West Hill Primary School. The Headteachers continue to meet regularly and we have a well-established sports programme that runs throughout the year for all ages in Primary School.

Current Issues affecting our school

- *Staff recruitment*
- *School budgets –*
- *Increase in service level contracts e.g. our school meals*
- *Increase in fuel prices*
- *Pay increases not matched by government support.*
- *Devon County Council services failing to deliver quality support.*

Our school improvement focusses this year have been centred on the development of a new curriculum across the school, embedding of a new PSHE curriculum (personal, social, health and emotional). Premise works- Internal cracks and damp areas repaired and improved and finally raising standards across the school in all areas including vulnerable pupils through the use of national tutoring programme and specific intervention programmes. We run after school clubs – numerous sporting clubs, drama, Choir, forest school club. We are able to use the local farm's swimming pool to ensure the children meet the national curriculum expectations for independently swimming 25 metres before they leave in year 6. Finally, we have a dedicated PTFA who continue to work so hard to raise funds for the school.

Feniton School – no report had been received

The Wildings School – Mike Rees Lee presented the following report and took questions from members of the audience

April 2023

Short Term:

- *Supporting 5 of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people in the locality. All young people thriving within the school.*
- *Full OFSTED completed. Report on the Website.*
- *Pushing ahead with plans to purchase Royston Farm in September 2023 – seeking funding to support the purchase.*
- *Committed to developing strong links to support the community shop.*
- *Hoping to open up some of Royston Farm for a community resource – phase one around growing food. Especially out of school hours (weekends and holidays)*

Medium Term:

- Reapply for planning permission to develop the outbuildings into educational facility.
- Increase numbers of families we support to between 10 and 20. Huge demand for places and a waiting list of approaching 50 young people.

Long Term:

- Locate further sites for sister schools around Devon
- Develop the Wildings school site into a community hub to support wider community.

Clay Shoot Club – David Hirt presented the following report

The shoot continues to thrive despite rising costs in every aspect of the sport. Not mentioned in our last report but after many years of sterling service to the Club, Gordon Pring has stood down from the Chairmanship yet continues to play a significant role in the running of the Club. Our new Chairman is David Hirt who is already making a great contribution and is ensuring that we meet the needs of our members. Additional equipment has been purchased during the year. This includes a new clay trap, batteries and a Solar Panel to keep the batteries topped up throughout the year without them being removed from site. Our Top Gun competition brought some spice to the season and was won by Peter Turner. The Handicap was won by Trevor Churchill who narrowly beat Gordon Pring; both scores exceeding the Top Gun maximum of 120 by some margin. Given all the controversy that prevails regarding Gun Licensing, the Club is mindful of its safety obligations and is keen to demonstrate a responsible approach to shooting. It is important we provide a safe environment and culture that is 'fit for purpose' yet still enjoyable. We remain open to new members from the locality, particularly youngsters from the village where their experience of guns and learning is done in a monitored/accountable environment. We would like to thank the 'Village' for the support we receive particularly Maria and Jan at The Talaton Inn who host our Christmas Prize giving dinner and also all those associated with the production of the 'Calendar' journal.

Parochial Church Council (PCC) - Rick Spencer presented the following report *I guess I have to start with news of our rector - Marc Kerslake: following an accident he has been very poorly and unable to work for many months - I'm pleased to say that he is making progress - slow but definitely progress! Marc is responsible for a large group of churches, we are just one of them, and a lot of work has fallen on our church warden, Charlie Hutchings, in Marc's absence. My thanks to him, but also to the others who contribute to the care and maintenance of our beautiful church!*

So, very unusually, the church itself was closed to the public for several months last year, whilst long needed redecoration, and the installation of a wonderful new lighting system, was carried out. Our village church now does look truly magnificent inside as well as outside!

Some while ago, we were faced with part of the church boundary, alongside the entrance to Rob and Lizzie's farm, collapsing into the road! I'm taking this opportunity to thank publicly Rob and Lizzie Buxton, for their patience, but also their support and help in working with Richard Batten to carry out the repair work, which has been done to a really good standard, and, to support the church, at a very good price. Thanks to them all.

Perhaps now's a good time to mention the PCCs work in raising over £25,000 to help pay for all this work, during Covid, by approaching charitable foundations and persuading them to support us.

So, a few reminders of the church's local involvement: Open Gardens last year, and hopefully this year! A major success; due in no small part to the hard work of Pam Weston and Alan and Liz Franklin, but also to the wonderful gardeners who opened, and maybe will open their gardens this year! Thank you!

The Carol Singing, in conjunction with the shop and others, is now a fixture in the village calendar - but last year we had Mo's speech - hard to follow!

Peppi Shaw runs an invaluable mothers and toddlers group at the church - it's very well attended, and should perhaps, and maybe it is, more properly called parents and toddlers! A very happy gathering! The church also runs regular coffee mornings which are open to all!

The future - the church is open, both for formal services, but also to anyone who wants to spend some time quietly appreciating its atmosphere and beauty - Open Gardens again, and, the church BBQ is back!

Garden and Produce Association – Pam Weston presented the following report

We managed to fulfil our beautifully prepared Calendar of Events for 2021/22. I shall begin where we left off at your last AGM. Our plant stall in May '22 was a great success, thanks to some good quality donations, raising almost enough money to subsidize both the Annual Show and the Pumpkin Competition, which remain free to enter. This was followed by a gloriously relaxing trip to Greenway, Agatha Christie's holiday home. In July members were treated to a wonderful evening in the Liz and Alan Franklin's garden. Our Annual Show was back to normal at the beginning of August. Entries were good. In fact we had such a splendid number of entries for the children's classes that there was hardly enough room to exhibit them all. There were some complaints that the cake class required no baking, so was no challenge for the star bakers in the village! (it was the Queen's favourite cake and it was her Platinum Jubilee) In September a small, but keen group visited RHS Rosemoor. It was an absolutely lovely day. The gardens looked beautiful. This was a subsidized trip due to the Associations membership of the RHS, but sadly we didn't manage to fill the coach. Much closer to home, we ran the Decorated Pumpkin Competition. It was the best pumpkin competition for a long time, with 33 entries and a pub full of happy families. Very many thanks to Maria and her staff for making us so welcome and to Nickie Witchy and Sybil, who flew in to do the judging! Our AGM in November, could have been sabotaged by the speaker pulling out at the last moment, but Andrea Rye from Coombe Garden Centre kindly stepped in at the 11th hour. Who would have known we could have so many laughs at a talk on Poisonous Plants? Subs are always collected at this meeting This year the committee had agreed to raise the annual membership to £5.00. Our treasurer of many years retired at this meeting. Steve Spratt kindly agreed to step up and was swiftly voted in! Our first event of 2023, a talk on Gardening for Wildlife had to be postponed, but I am glad to say Dr Mick Street is now booked in to speak on 23rd June. At the end of March a good number of members enjoyed a talk on Herbaceous Plants, by David Usher, retired head gardener. On 15th April our first trip of the season was to Regency House Garden, at Hemyock. We decided to car share to avoid the losses incurred when we failed to fill booked coaches. It was a short journey and was a great success. We were met by the garden owner, given a gentle guided tour, saw some choice plants, magnificent trees and lovely country views and then sat in the sunshine eating delicious homemade cake, enjoying birdsong, butterflies, views and good company.

What next.....

May 13th Plant Sale in the Church Car Park 10.30am until noon
June 23rd Dr. Mick Street's talk on Gardening for Wildlife
July 20th Social Evening in Sarah and Laurence Wood's Garden
Aug 5th Annual Show
Sept 23rd Knightshayes trip
Oct 23rd Pumpkin Competition
Nov 14th AGM

The Calendar – Simon Spencer presented the following report

The Calendar goes out 10 months of each year in print, and in digital format where it is arranged. It is linked to the Parish Hall, and Parish Councils websites. It is, I hope, well received and read. We have a wonderful band of deliverers across the Village for the paper copies, and mostly the copies are in letterboxes during the last weekend of the month. Our compiler Arnie James has been putting together each edition with me, since he took on the job with Dennis Oakley in the early noughties. Presently the Calendar receives advertising money on an annual basis. Costs are kept to a minimum as far as we can and the income usually matches expenditure each year. We do benefit from donations from time to time, and have a good buffer in the bank, in case of lean times. However, printing costs have risen considerably recently, in the region of 20%. We are keen to retain the colour on the front covers, but can only now afford colour centre pages on special occasions. Arnie and I are not a closed shop, and if there is anyone out there who would like to take over, do please let us get chatting. We are not getting younger!

ROBOTS – Phil Moir presented the following report

The ROBOT Club advances in much the same vein as it has done for several years, where the objectives of the Club are to foster and encourage social interaction and events for retired and semi-retired men. The club is open to all, being non-political and non-sectarian. Membership remains at the 30 mark and

attendance of our regular monthly meetings carries on at a steady 20 or so members. We continue with our excursions and despite the weather, we have been lucky enough to enjoy some very good days out. These are well documented in the Talaton Calendar! We are looking forward to a very busy summer where we plan to help in village events that have been arranged by others - the Coronation and the Church BBQ being a couple that we will be heavily involved with. Whilst the ROBOT(s) are not a Charity, the Chairman and Committee remain content with the way in which the Club continues to evolve, with our members being supportive of many other village groups/activities and projects. We would like to thank all villagers for their on-going interest and support. We would particularly like to thank Maria and Jan at The Talaton Inn, for kindly hosting our regular monthly lunchtime meetings.

Knit and Natter – Jo Spencer presented the following report

Knit and Natter has continued to meet fortnightly throughout the past year with numbers varying from single figures to over twenty. Sometimes the time is used to share craft skills and work on joint projects but the emphasis is often on the Natter part of our name. We continue to meet in The Talaton Inn and we would like to thank Jan and Maria for opening early to enable us to get plenty of Knitting and Nattering done before it's time for lunch – an optional add-on. We continued to knit pocket sized teddies for Ukrainian children who had been displaced, often without any toys; these were delivered to Poland by Scott Cheadle and totalled over 200 by the time the help required changed. The “yarn bombing” of the village has continued with a Remembrance Day display, another one for Christmas, and for Valentines Day and Easter. We were fortunate to receive a grant from the Parish Council in 2022 and this has enabled us to extend and amplify what we are able to do – we wish to thank the Parish Council for their generosity. Until receiving this grant we had personally funded each project, but with central funds to purchase materials it has made it possible for everyone to be actively involved and be more inclusive. Our future plans involve more “yarn bombing” – but as is the nature of this we can't give too much away or the surprise is spoilt. I can just say “watch this space” over the Coronation and leading up to Open Gardens and hope you will have some pleasant surprises. Looking further ahead we are going to be involved at the Church Barbeque, and possibly the How d'ye Do. We are also considering a “show and tell” event in the Village Hall for ALL craft people in the village to show their creations and perhaps demonstrate their skills. I would like to finish by saying that the group is open to everyone – crafter or not. The dates we get together are usually in The Talaton Calendar.

The Community Shop – Philippa Bushell presented the following report

The standout feature of the past year has been the excellent response of local people to our leafleting exercise, asking them to shop in the village and to volunteer if they have the time and ability. We had a good crop of new volunteers to train in January, many of whom are now on the permanent rota, others working ad hoc, and takings have risen from their low point last year, although we need to keep encouraging everyone to spend £5 a week (or more) with us. In January we returned to our pre-covid pattern of trading from 9am-6pm on weekdays, 9 -1 on Saturdays and 10-12 on Sundays, largely thanks to the new volunteers. This has increased footfall and takings, and provides an extra level of service to local people. We try to source as much as possible locally, using Bakers of Honiton, Oak Park dairy in Aunk, Orchard Lea (formerly ISCA), Miles for tea and coffee, Moores Biscuits, and Blakes Bakeries, which are all south west companies. The outreach Post Office service we negotiated when Jo Ware retired is still providing 2 hours every Wednesday afternoon, and is much used and appreciated. We still deliver grocery orders to housebound residents, and we have returned to offering local DofE students placements to acquire their volunteering experience. Our function as village box office and communications hub continues to bring a steady flow of people in, and facilitates local events and performances even though the shop makes no profit from it. During the year, like most businesses, we have suffered from the increases in energy costs and the rising cost of purchasing stock, which has to be passed on to customers. Our aim is to keep the price of basics as low as we can, and to carry enough interesting and changing lines of products to keep customers coming in to look. We now have a whiteboard which people are using to give us their requests, which we then try to source. We are in the process of buying a new freezer. We already have a new community notice board, and we now have three mobile card machines, mainly for use at Beautiful Days festival. The festival continues to be an important part of our business each year, and we are delighted to have been guaranteed sole general store status at the 2023 festival.

Neighbourhood Watch – Andy May presented the following report

Status of our scheme

This year little has changed. We have a one to one dialogue with all levels of the local policing team although it's clear the attention of the Ottery Rural team is focused on busier parts of their patch stretching from Cowley to Feniton. The scheme is still managed by Andy and Jan May with the help of local co-ordinators and we have been in touch with:

- *Police Crime Commissioners office (OPCC)*
- *D&C Rural affairs team*
- *D&C Ottery rural policing team*

There have been no changes in ward boundaries but the co-ordinators for Newtown have changed to Helen and John Reeves. Our page on the Parish Website is constantly updated. 15 events have been posted in the appeals section. Links to relevant reporting sites, crime or policing related resources are regularly checked and updated. The Calendar is still used to publicise events, crime prevention advice and points of contact. TNHW still offers direct contact with households and businesses by email, in person, by phone or in writing.

Statistics

This year has seen a reduction in advice given and matters dealt with, and reported crime is the lowest in 5 years. Figures for 01/04/2022 to 31/03/2023 (Figures in brackets show previous year).

TNHW have dealt with 16 (19) incidents and made 4 (7) referrals to the police.

We have reviewed 150 (178) separate Alert notifications of which 8 (15) were passed on either to a select portion or all of those who have requested our enhanced service.

Using the crime mapping service on www.police.uk for the calendar year there were 20 crimes in 2017 and 2018, in 2019 it was 24, in 2020 it was 18 and 2021 it was 16 but in 2022 it was just 8. The information is very general with no clear pattern but notably on this occasion, no crimes were recorded at Beautiful days, an event that usually accounts for around half our annual reports leading us to wonder if police adopted a different process for recording or reporting crime last year. By comparison for Cranbrook in 2022 just the monthly figure varied between 21 and 44, and in the small London ward of North Walworth just under 1km² (Talatons is 9.6km²) it varied between 197 and 351 per month. Crimes across our parish remain exceptionally low by both local and national standards.

Councillor advocate scheme

TNHW have performed this role for the Parish Council since 2017, forming a link with the Office of Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC). Seminars for councillor advocates restarted during this period however none of the topics addressed were specifically relevant to life in Talaton. Despite the lack of relevant content this year, TNHW have concluded that continued membership has potential benefits for this community, giving us early warning of changes in policing that may affect us. We will continue to attend select events that appear to have a relevance to Talaton, remain on the mailing list of the OPCC and will pass on information to the Parish Council relevant to their role.

Talaton Parish Hall Managers Committee – Alan Franklin presented the following report

After many years in the role Mark James has stepped down as Chairman and we wish to record our thanks to him for all the work he has put in which has benefitted Talaton hugely. Simon Spencer has vacated the Secretary's role to take over as Chairman. Alan Franklin has moved from Garden & Produce Rep to become Secretary. We welcome Tanya Jones and Kathy Gray as new members of the committee. Since the last report the Hall has organised a very successful Quiz night and of course the How do ye do. More events are planned for the coming autumn.

The costs of running the hall have increased and so we have had to increase our hiring rates. They do remain competitive when compared to other halls in the area and thus we think offer good value.

Residents are now able to hire the chairs, tables, gazebos, cutlery and glasses for use away from the hall. The gazebos have all been thoroughly checked over and repaired where required.

The gazebos, tables and chairs were all made available for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations both at the pub and in the grounds of Talaton House. Sadly we were unable to benefit from one of our normal fund raising activities as we had insufficient helpers to provide the teas for the Open Gardens Weekend however our loss was FORCES gain. We aim to rectify that issue this year. We have joined Devon Communities Together which is an independent charity engaged in a wide range of projects and services with the objective of helping communities provide services for their communities. Two immediate benefits for us have been that our hall is now included on their website as being available for hire and secondly they have provided advice regarding our legal responsibilities on hall safety issues. The hall is being used on a regular

basis by Gentle Fitness and Pilates, the Book Club, the Befriending Hub with TRIP and the Parish Council. Other users of the hall are Talaton Shop, Garden & Produce Association, Whimble and Broadclyst YFC for rehearsals. We also host the Barsteward Sons of Val Doonican every year and events such as the How Do Ye Do, Open Gardens teas and local and national elections. We are particularly pleased by the use of the Hall by the Community Theatre for All Group for rehearsals for 'Talaton A War-Time Refuge' and more recently for the rehearsals and staging of 'The Real Inspector Hound' and 'Rats'. There have also been several events organised by local charities and over the year there have also been a range of parties and family lunches and teas. Income is just about matching expenditure and we hold a reasonable amount in the bank. Energy costs in particular are increasing and there are costs for electrical testing, which is due every 5 years, now imminent so we can't afford to be complacent.

Community Theatre 4All – Tom Samsom presented the following report

It has been another busy and highly productive year for Community Theatre 4All.

In January four members of the group visited Derby to present a specially prepared programme based upon the lives of Paula and Hedwig Frajdenreich, two of the six Kindertransport children who had been homed in Talaton during the second world War. Paula and Hedwig had ultimately been adopted by the Richards family who had lived in Newtown. The programme that was presented formed one evening of an extensive range of events that were put on in Derby University as part of Holocaust Memorial Week 2023. We had been invited to Derby because Tania Saunders, Paula's eldest daughter, who is a Derby resident, had shown a copy of the published play "Talaton A War-Time Refuge" to a friend and ultimately this copy had been read by members of the Derby Holocaust Committee. This committee had considered the play "Talaton A War-Time Refuge" particularly appropriate for the National Theme for 2023 which was "Ordinary People". The programme that Community Theatre 4All presented was entitled "Ordinary People – Extraordinary Lives". The evening consisted of performed extracts from "Talaton A War-Time Refuge", projected video material from the recording of the first night's performance and narrated interludes. At various stages during the presentation the action was paused for interviews with Tania Saunders about how the experience of being a Kindertransport child, homed in Talaton and ultimately adopted, had shaped her mother and aunt's lives. The evening was concluded with an open question and answer session. It was a powerful, very moving evening, raising much interest and many compliments. The history of Talaton spreads far and wide!

In February the company gave three sell-out performances of Tom Stoppard's comic masterpiece "The Real Inspector Hound". The production, which was directed by Mike Gray, was highly successful, causing much audience laughter and making the task of learning what had been a very difficult script to memorise well worth all the effort. In March the children's group, now known as Young Community Theatre 4All, and numbering 16 children between the ages of 8 and 13 presented four sell-out performances of "Rats! – The Musical". For this project Tom and Frances Samson were reunited with Julia Green, thus bringing back together the creative team that had launched the adult group in 2015 with the musical "Godspell". During the year Young Community Theatre 4All has gone from strength to strength and the quality of their final performances in terms of acting, movement and singing both surprised and impressed not only their audience but also the creative team who had guided their work! One of the performances was seen by the Head Teacher of Whimble school who was so impressed that she would like to further develop connections between the school and the group. We very much hope that the opportunity to build similar connections with Payhembury Primary School will also present itself in the coming year.

Looking to the future, next year will see an autumn performance project for the adult group, currently still in the planning stages. Young Community Theatre 4All (open to children in school years 4 to 9) will reconvene on the 5th September and work towards a performance in February before then joining the main company in rehearsing and presenting an open-air production of "Toad of Toad Hall" in May 2024.

6. Public Forum

No questions were raised

7. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at: 9.41pm

Date and time of next meeting: To be arranged between 1 March and 1 June 2024

SIGNATURE OF THE CHAIRMAN	
DATE OF SIGNATURE	