
TALATON

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

WEDNESDAY, 23rd APRIL 2025

AT 7.30PM

AT THE PARISH HALL, TALATON

MINUTES

Present:-

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

Other Councillors:- None

Members of the Public:- 9

1.Welcome

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

2.To confirm that the Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24th April 2024 are an accurate record

The Minutes were confirmed as correct and accurate and were signed by the Chair. *Proposed by the Vice-Chair and seconded by Pam Weston*

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

Talaton Parish Council (‘the Council’) is the tier of local government closest to the electorate and is best placed to serve the community. We have our eyes and ears to the ground and are very responsive to our community’s needs. We have policies to decide how money will be raised and spent for the benefit of the whole community. We always attempt to make balanced, informed decisions with complete impartiality. The Council is an essential part of the structure of local democracy and has a vital role to play in acting on behalf of the community we represent.

Village organisations are an integral part of the community and the Council provides grants so that they can continue and thrive. In 2024 we granted £450 to Talaton Parish Hall towards their film projection system; £150 to Knit & Natter for costs of materials, £250 to Tale Valley Trust for their conservation work, and £500 towards the running costs of Talaton Calendar. All very worthy causes that we are proud to support.

We provide allotments; we ensure that the village is neat and tidy by employing contractors to maintain the verges and the village green, along with the telephone box, benches and shelters; we ensure that any matters of concern raised by parishioners are reported swiftly to the various agencies.

We provide the dog poo bins, the village Christmas tree, the two defibrillators that are checked every month and recorded on the National Defibrillator Network. This means that when anyone dials 999 for an ambulance, the authorities are aware of the nearest defibrillator and will give directions to it.

We also deliver free training sessions on how to access and use a defibrillator, with hands-on practical training on delivering lifesaving CPR. Look out for our posters, or notices in The Calendar, or posts on social media, for our next sessions.

In addition to the 11 formal Council meetings every year, we also host informal Drop-in sessions on a Saturday morning every quarter, here at the Parish Hall. The Drop-in sessions are not official meetings, but an opportunity for parishioners to meet with councillors to raise any issues or concerns they may have and enjoy the tea, coffee and biscuits provided.

Planning applications: Every single planning application will have a site visit by members of the Council.

This is to ensure that we are treating everyone on a fair and equal basis. Once armed with a full understanding of the application, we then submit comments to EDDC, based purely upon planning regulations / statutory requirements. Some of these site visits are very interesting, not to mention educational – especially the site visits to farms. We consider ourselves to be quite the experts now in what the Environment Agency requires farmers to do, in keeping their clean water run-off separate from their dirty water waste. We did three site visits in one day on this subject alone! We now know what a loafing area for cows is. Just think about where the expression “loafing around” comes from!

Cllr David Hirt was co-opted onto the Council in July 2024, which is a perfectly legitimate process to recruit a councillor in the absence of an election. Councillors are all unpaid volunteers, whereas the Clerk to the Parish Council, Christine McIntyre, is our employee. She is exceptionally well qualified and her professional memberships give her access to a wide range of topics and advice, so she can always help us to deal with anything that comes our way.

My sincere thanks to her and all the councillors for the fantastic work that they do on behalf of the residents of Talaton Parish.

The Annual Parish Meeting (‘APM’) is not an official Council meeting. Whilst it is a legal obligation for us to host the APM, I prefer to think of it as a celebration of what makes Talaton a great place to live – it’s the people and the organisations! Tonight, we are going to hear a report from every group in the village.... And it comes as no surprise that there are plenty of them! Which is why time limits must be strictly observed and will be monitored – a maximum of 5 minutes for councillors and three mins for village organisations. As usual, the order of reports from village organisations will be drawn randomly.

4.To receive reports from Devon County Council Councillor Iain Chubb and East Devon District Council Councillor Richard Jefferies

EDDC Cllr Richard Jefferies

Cllr Jefferies did not attend the meeting. No report had been received

DCC Cllr Iain Chubb

Cllr Chubb did not attend the meeting. However he had forwarded the following report:-

Division members report for Whimble & Blackdown Division April 2025

This is my final Division members report for this version of Devon County Council, where a new, much different in member composition, (largely due to around half of DCC Councillors retiring from at times can be an unforgiving role) that will be elected on May 1st.

I would like to thank Parish Councillors and members of the public for the support that they have given me in the last 4 years. This has seen a huge amount change taking place, as we emerged from Covid and continue to recover from that dark time, set against a background of a severely underfunded Local Government sector facing huge challenges to fulfil its statutory obligations, particularly in Adult, children’s and

Highways services.

My report is limited and of a factual nature only, given we are currently in the election regulated period or ‘purdah’ which restricts what Councillors can and cannot say or do. The period ends on the 2nd of May following the completion of DCC elections.

New Domestic Abuse Support Service launches

A new integrated Domestic Abuse Support Service has been launched by Devon County Council, and it aims to transform how people in the county access and receive support. The service will be provided by the Devon Domestic Abuse Alliance, a partnership of seven local organisations. North Devon Against Domestic Abuse (NDADA), Encompass Southwest, CoLab Exeter, More Positive Me, The Olive Project, CRAFT Training and Development and Surviving Abuse North Devon. Each partner brings a wealth of expertise, which will help ensure that those in need of the service, their friends and families as well as professionals receive the right advice, information and care at the right time. At the heart of this approach is My Story, a person-centred approach led by a dedicated support team, which aims to avoid individuals being referred to

multiple services and then asked to share their traumatic experiences multiple times.

The service will include:

- Single Entry Gateway – A single point of contact offering clear, accessible pathways to support, with phone, text, email, and online chat options to make help easy to reach
- Community Domestic Abuse Support – Specialist teams providing risk management, and safety planning tailored to each person's situation, as well as whole family support and interventions to address the behaviours of those causing harm.
- Safe Accommodation, Staying Put, and Resettlement Support – A range of refuge and dispersed safe accommodation solutions and help for people to remain safely in their own home.
- Trauma-Responsive Recovery – Dedicated one-to-one and group therapeutic interventions and peer support, ensuring survivors receive the emotional support needed to heal.
- Specialist Support – Addressing complex needs such as mental health, substance use, and homelessness, including safe accommodation and outreach options.
- Behaviour Change – Interventions to help those who harm break the cycle of abuse and take responsibility for change.

For more information, support, or to refer someone to the service from April 1st, Children with EHCPs allocated places in their first-choice mainstream school One hundred per cent of families of children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) have been allocated places in their first-choice mainstream school from September. Families sometimes request that we consider specialist education alongside mainstream provision, and where specialist provision was requested by families, 87 per cent have been allocated places suitable to their child's special educational and disability needs. Thirteen per cent were allocated places in their mainstream school of choice or their nearest suitable school that can meet their child's needs. The latest figures follow our announcement earlier this month describing an overall increase in the number of families being allocated their first choices of Devon secondary school places for September. Seven thousand, three hundred and ninety-eight allocations were made in total for places at Devon mainstream secondary schools this September. In allocating places for pupils with EHCPs, we first consult with the requested school. or other setting to ask if they are suitable in being able to meet the child's needs, and whether they have space. We consider the schools' or settings' response against a legal criteria as well as the parents' preferences before deciding to determine a setting by name (of school, for example) and/or what type of setting or provision to name on their EHCP. DCC to maintain Free School Meal vouchers as support fund reduced. The Government has confirmed a 11.87% decrease in this year's Household Support Fund allocation. The Fund, operating since 2021 and now in its seventh round, was introduced to help individuals and families that are struggling financially with the rising cost of living, such as the costs of energy, food, and other essential household items. Over that period, DCC channelled our allocation of Household Support Funding into providing a range of support, including the provision of Free School Meal holiday vouchers to families with children and young people who are eligible free school. meals during term time. Citizen's Advice Devon has used some of our allocation to support households that use pre-payment meters, often paying higher unit costs and digital meters to help. them afford and budget for their energy usage. Devon's District Councils have used their allocation of the Household Support Fund to support older residents and individuals known to be on low incomes and/or claiming certain benefits, and who are struggling with the high costs of living. The Department of Work and Pensions' decrease means that were last year, we received £10.1 million, this year Devon will receive £8.9 million. The impact is likely to hit some of the county's most vulnerable residents, at a time of continued high prices for food, fuel, and other essential household items. DCC has confirmed that it will maintain the Free School Meal holiday vouchers, at the same £15 per week per eligible child level, for this Easter and May half-term holidays. Beyond that though, with Devon County Council heading towards local elections on 1 May, it will be a decision for the council's new administration about how it will allocate the reduced purse to its partner organisations that support people struggling with the cost of living.

A quick reminder that photo ID is necessary to take when voting on the 1st May!

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

The Wildings School – Mike Rees Lee was not presented. However he had supplied the following report:-

Short Term:

- Supporting 10 of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people in the locality. All young people thriving within the school.
- Full OFSTED inspection completed June 24. Wonderful feedback on our progress. Report on the Website.
- 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) Poly tunnel erected and producing food for the school community.

Medium Term:

- Reapply for planning permission to develop the outbuildings into educational facility.
- Seeking other sites around the south west to replicate our groundbreaking provision and support more young people that are currently without a school placement.

Long Term:

- Compassionately and respectfully grow the Wildings in Talaton.
- Develop the Wildings school site into a community hub to support wider community.

The Talaton Talk Facebook Group -Judith Colin presented the following report

Talaton Talk was created in March 2020 as the country entered the first lockdown. A few villagers felt it was necessary to have a COVID safe means of communication in the village for quick communication and support and to help ease isolation. We were very aware that some of the people we hoped to reach were not regular Facebook users so steps were taken to ensure that we made the group as safe as possible. It was created as a closed group meaning that one of the admin team has to approve every request to join. That all seems a very long time ago now and although we remain a closed group we are now more open in accepting requests to join. We now have 1,300 members – this is obviously greater than the population of Talaton! We have requests to join from family members, visitors, prospective house buyers, people wanting to rent in the village, individuals from other villages and the Facebook groups from those villages. We also have a lot of requests to join from businesses.

From the outset we were determined to be a social group rather than a marketplace; one of the group rules is that commercial advertising can only be posted on the first Monday of each month and it should have relevance to the village. The Community Shop, the Talaton Inn and the Village Hall are not included in these restrictions and are free to post throughout the month. Villagers with items to give away or sell can also post at any time (within reason) as can charities. As an admin team we have had to become very strict in how we police this but feel we have now got a fair balance; we encourage members to help with this by reporting to admin any posts which breaks the rules. Any advertisers wanting a higher profile are encouraged to use the Talaton Calendar.

The admin team feel that Talaton Talk Facebook group is a valuable community resource for the village, alongside the Talaton Calendar and the village website.

Clay Shoot Club – David Hirt presented the following report

Talaton Clay Pigeon Shoot is a 'not for profit organization' run by its members to encourage villagers to use their firearms on a regular basis with the aim of improving their shooting ability and competent use of their guns. Weather permitting we shoot on the first Saturday of each month and hold two competitions a year towards the end of the calendar year with the names of the winners displayed on the trophies in the pub. The club caters for all abilities and we can provide both guns and ammunition so it is an ideal opportunity for villagers to come along and dip their toe in the water and see if it is for them, no prior experience is necessary as coaching will be provided as well as safety instructions. Clay Pigeon shooting can be enjoyed by both sexes and by people between the ages of 14 to well into their 80's so is a truly inclusive sport. This year we had to increase the annual membership fee to £100 this was done to help offset ever increasing costs, the bulk of the this payment pays for personal liability insurance which is important in case of an unforeseen accident. The cost of each shoot of 40 clays is £10 and cartridges are currently available to purchase at £12 per fifty, both these costs are considerably lower than attending a commercial shoot. We currently have 22 members in the club, this includes one female and two junior. All adult members hold

a current firearms licence. The number of members attending each shoot has been steadily increasing with fifteen people taking part in the April meet.

Any small amount that is made from each shoot is reinvested in the club and in the last three years we have been able to purchase two, second hand, Olympic standard clay pigeon traps that provide more challenging targets. This year we have invested in a club gun which can be made available for anyone that does not have their own as well as for new members and people that wish to come and enjoy the sport out.

We have agreed terms with the owners of the field (three members of the club) to extend our use of it for a further period of five years.

If anyone would like further information or would like to come along and try their hand at shooting then in please call either myself, David Hirt on 07484 706 989 or Phil Moir on 01404 822523.

Parochial Church Council ('PCC') – *Charlie Hutchings presented the following report*

I begin by thanking everyone who supports the village church in so many ways – particularly those who give their time but may not go to a Sunday service. So many keep the building and grounds looking great for all to enjoy – and we are always looking for more help, be it opening/closing the church, raising the flag or just coming to the village BBQ!

A somewhat controversial subject is that of 'safeguarding'. The PCC aims to work towards compliance with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

The church receives no funds from the government or the Church of England to keep it going – just donations. Even so, in 2024 we were able to support other charities such as the Ottery Help Scheme, Hospiscare, Shelterbox, WaterAid and Barnardo's.

Marc Kerslake continues to look after the nine churches in his 'benefice' with his usual calmness and sense of humour.

Talaton Garden Club (formerly known as the Garden and Produce Association) – *Pam Weston presented the following report*

The year 2024/25 since the last Parish Annual Meeting has been one of two halves. Up until our own AGM in November, it was business as usual – our plant stall in May was well supported and gave us much needed funds; the talk by Julia Tremlett and the follow up visit to her beautiful garden were attended by the faithful few; the proposed trip to Arlington Court was cancelled due to lack of support; our Annual Show in August had a good number of exhibits brilliant children's entries and a successful new photography class; finally the Pumpkin Carving Competition filled the skittle alley with a stunning display of village carving talents, imagination and good humour.

At our AGM in November after much work by the committee, in particular Chairman Chris Harwood and Alan Franklin, we became the Talaton Garden Club with a constitution.

As Talaton Garden Club we adopted the first Monday of the month as Club Night. A fun quiz successfully launched the very first club night on Feb 3rd. When we had the best evening attendance for years. March 3rd brought us an informative talk on Wildlife Friendly Gardening and April 7th a very interesting take on Pests, Diseases and Weeds. All Club Nights in the Hall end with tea/coffee and delicious cakes! Our next meeting on 5th May will be a visit to Sand Farmhouse at Sidbury. Travel will be by car share, so please get in touch with Alan Franklin to enable him to sort out lifts.

This will be swiftly followed by our plant stall on Saturday 10th May in the church car park.

Details are always in the Calendar and are emailed to all Club members who have the technology, together with the remaining events up until our AGM in November. The Annual Show is, as always, the first Saturday in August and the Pumpkin Competition the Friday nearest Halloween.

Many thanks to Maria and her staff for the use of the skittle alley and for decorating it so beautifully and to Daniel Hawkins for adding all the spooky touches. Many thanks to all those, on and off the committee for their help in our various events, especially Alan Franklin for masterminding and producing the club's program of events for 2025.

ROBOTS – *David Loaring presented the following report*

AIM : To foster and encourage social interaction with events for retired and semi retired men.

During the last 12 months' April 2024/2025 we have:-

1. Contributed to the Church BBQ day.
2. Helped with the Church annual external cleanup.
3. Many ROBOTS assist with the weekly village hall coffee mornings.

For our own amusement we organised the following activities:

1. A Red Coat guided tour of the Exeter quay area, including its historic Custom House.
2. A Dartmoor ramble from Princetown.
3. Our second attempt at mackerel fishing was again cancelled due to poor weather conditions (third time lucky)
4. A day at Exmouth to watch Devon play Somerset at cricket.
5. Our second visit to Westcott for Lazer Clay shooting, followed by a cream tea.
6. We travelled to Yeovilton to visit The Fleet Air Arm Museum, where the star of the show was Concorde.
7. Our Bi-Annual visit to Exeter University's Great Hall and with our partners, we enjoyed Classics Galore
8. The football fans amongst us went to see Exeter City vs Lincoln City and enjoyed a thrilling nil - nil draw.
9. We have had two skittles evenings at The Talaton Inn.
10. Our trip to The Haldon Racecourse in January was well attended.
11. In February we relived our youth with a competitive 10 pin bowling match at The Ocean, Exmouth.
12. A lovely circular springtime walk on tracks and footpaths from Broadclyst to Killerton, followed by lunch at The Red Lion Inn.
13. Our Christmas meal with partners at The Red Lion Inn was a great success.

We have many new monthly adventures planned, as well as repeating some of our favourites.

The club membership has risen to 36. We are open to new members, so if you are or have a Retired Old Boy Of Talaton (ROBOT) looking for some fun with kindred spirits, please come along to The Talaton Inn on the last Thursday of the month at noon.

You will be made most welcome.

Knit and Natter – *Judith Collin 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.

During the year we created a variety of displays to mark festivals and seasons. The Newtown post box has been included more and also the chain from the Talaton Inn to Orchard Close. Both post boxes were decorated to say thank you to our retiring post man Andy – he was touched by this and the photo of him by the postbox had the most ever likes on Talaton Talk. One very big project was the Christmas trees on The Moor and the postboxes; there were over 700 knitted and crocheted squares used. The assembly was "interesting" and more than one house was keeping them out of sight ready for the big reveal. They are now in storage and we hope we will be able to use them for many years to come.

We have some new plans for this year – one will be seen imminently and will hopefully be a big surprise.

We have also planned to mark the months where charities have an awareness and fund raising focus.

We were approached by Social Services to enquire whether our skills could be used to produce some "dolls" to represent people and experiences they may encounter on their journey through the care system.

This is an ongoing project and will eventually build into a valuable resource for them to help children understand and express their feelings. The creation currently on the needles is a cat.

We were fortunate to receive another grant from The Parish Council for which we are very grateful. Most of this money has been used to purchase items to support our yarn bombing plans for later in the year. We are very conscious of using the grant money wisely and to be as green as possible, recycling and reusing wherever we can.

In July we ran the "Summer Fruit Punch" stall at the church barbeque and were able to raise a good sum for church funds. We have agreed to do this again this year.

In December we had a stall at the How d'ye Do with a range of handcrafted items for sale; we were very pleased with our sales and the contribution it made to our funds.

We met at the Talaton Inn again for our Christmas meal which was well attended.

The social aspect of our group is very important to us and we hope that our joint creations put a smile on people's faces as they move around the village. Everyone is welcome (crafter or not) and our dates are published in the Talaton Calendar.

The Community Shop – *Bob Murphy presented the following report*

The year 2024-2025 has seen Talaton Community Shop Ltd continue to trade much as the previous year. We said last year that parish residents must wake up to the fact that if they don't use their shop it will not be able to carry on operating indefinitely. While our annual presence at Beautiful Days makes up in large part for the lack of community spending, we can't rely on it to keep us afloat for ever. We need more customers, and more volunteers to enable us to stay open longer hours.

For our part, we are doing our best to entice customers in. We have invested in two new freezers, one display unit in the shop and a backup freezer behind the scenes. We now have a wider range of frozen veg and fruit, we have brought in a new range of frozen ready-meals which we haven't been able to source since Covid made life difficult. We have recently added frozen baked and deli goods, pies etc.

Refrigerated deli lines are also being expanded, including sandwiches and lunch items. Local south-west produced goods are being sought to supplement the everyday lines we carry, some of which make great gifts or treats.

We now have a social media specialist who has revitalised our Facebook presence and is posting regularly to reach a wide section of the local community, telling them about new lines of stock, special offers and promotions and news from the shop. We know we're being noticed, we need that to translate into people coming in and actually buying things!

Our hard working treasurer, Chris Jervis, has just stepped down after 5 years of dynamic service. John Reeves has taken over that role; we wish him well in his mission to supply the shop committee with timely and detailed financial information needed to make the shop competitive and successful. Another committee member, Tracy Lavallin, moved away during last year, and we have welcomed on board Bob Murphy and Janette Hoole, who are already making strong contributions.

Our team of committed and enthusiastic volunteers are doing an amazing job of keeping the doors open, and behind the scenes more faces that customers don't often see are keeping everything running and pushing forward ideas to improve operations and efficiency. The shop is a hub of communication for the whole village, a social service and a place to share news and information. Let's keep it that way.

Neighbourhood Watch – *Andy May presented the following report*

Status of our scheme

We remain in contact with the local Ottery Rural policing team and have had excellent dialogue with the new Neighbourhood Inspector although much of their attention is focused on busier parts of their area stretching from Cowley to Feniton. The scheme is still managed by Andy and Jan May with the help of local co-ordinators, and this year we have been in touch with:

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

There has been one merger of ward boundaries; Talewater and Lashbrook Road are now both overseen by Sarah Wood. The co-ordinator for Woodmans Orchard has changed to Sandra Deacon. Our page on the Parish Website is constantly updated. 8 events have been posted in the appeals section and emailed to the community. Links to relevant reporting sites, crime or policing related resources are regularly checked and updated. The Calendar is still used to outline our services, publicise events, provide 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 slight reduction in matters we have dealt with. Reported crime has remained extremely low but has risen sharply to 43, nearly double the previous highest year since we began noting the figure. This has been explained by Insp Helm as related to repeat incidents at 3 locations which don't

have a relevance to the wider community and a small cluster at Beautiful Days. The number of "Neighbourhood Alerts" reviewed was the highest since we began.

Figures for 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025 (Figures in brackets show previous year).

- TNHW have dealt with 6 (8) incidents and made 3 (3) referrals to the police.
- We have reviewed 264 (247) separate "Alert" notifications of which 7 (10) were passed on either to a select portion or all of those who have requested our enhanced service.
- Using the crime mapping feature on www.police.uk for the calendar year over the last 8 years since 2017 in order the totals were 20, 20, 24, 18, 16, 8, 12 and in 2024 there were 43 recorded crimes. The information is very general but the mapping does provide rough location information and apart from the clusters already mentioned by Insp Helm there were just 3 other matters evenly dispersed across the parish. By comparison for Cranbrook in 2024 the monthly figure varied between 30 (17) and 61 (41) and annual total was 499 (358). Our parish remains exceptionally low crime 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).

TNHW have concluded that continued membership has potential benefits for this community, giving us early warning of changes in policing that may affect us and a louder voice when communicating with our neighbourhood policing team. We will continue to attend select councillor advocate seminars that appear to have a direct relevance to Talaton, remain on the mailing list of the OPCC and will pass on information to the Parish Council where needed.

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

After many years in the role Tony Hoar has stepped down as Treasurer and we thank him for all the work he has done in this role. Thankfully Tony is remaining on the Committee. Simon Jones has taken over the Treasurers role. Graham Rooms has joined the committee as the representative of the 100+ Club.

The Hall has been decorated in the last year, the curtains replaced, blinds installed in the kitchen and bar area and additional cupboards installed in the kitchen. A big improvement I hope you'd agree. The decorating was not trouble free with 2 decorators backing out at the last minute for medical reasons and we are still waiting for 1 of them to return the £300 deposit he was paid!

Since the last APM the Hall Committee have organised the How D'Ya Do, a very successful Call My Bluff evening, the Open Gardens teas and concerts with Phil Green and Jim Causley. Two events aimed at the children was a lantern making session with the resulting lanterns being used in the Wassail procession and a story telling event organised by Villages in Action. The coffee mornings on a Tuesday morning continue to be run and are proving very popular.

The Hall has seen regular use by the Community Theatre 4 All group both for rehearsals and the recent King of the Golden River production. There was also a Scott Doonican concert. In addition there are regular Keep Fit classes, the Produce Show and the regular Parish Council and Talaton Garden Club meetings plus a number of private events.

The committee has spent time getting our policies up to date with the most important one being the Safeguarding policy. This has now been completed.

The current project being worked on is the installation of a digital projector and we are very grateful for the grant given to us by the Parish Council. We have also received a generous donation from a Talaton resident. We are in the process of obtaining quotes for the installation so hopefully it won't be long before it is up and running.

The Hall is an active member of Devon Communities Together and attend the quarterly meetings of the East Devon cluster group comprising of about 15 halls. It's proving a good forum for the exchange of ideas and obtaining advice.

We all continue to manage the Hall for the benefit of the Village and are always open to suggestions as to events that you would like to see in the Hall. We would really welcome more volunteers to help organise and run events.

Community Theatre 4All – *Tom Samson provided the following report*

The last year was once again a high successful and production one. The two sections of the company joined forces to present an open-air production of “Toad of Toad Hall” in the grounds of Rull House Whimble. This production was directed by Tom Samson. Despite the very mixed weather and the necessary decision to postpone the performances from late May to mid-July the production did manage to perform in one of the brief windows of warm and dry weather that happened to occur last summer. Four performances of this production were given over three days, with a matinee performance on the Saturday afternoon.

The Youth group, currently with a membership of 13 have just performed, in Talaton Parish Hall, a script especially written for the group called “The King of the Golden River”. The script, written by Tom Samson was an adaptation of the children’s book of the same name by John Ruskin. The three performances we well received and attended.

The next adult production will be a comedy entitled “Par for the Course” and will be directed by Lucy Earnshaw. This piece will go into rehearsal in the early autumn and perform in early 2026. The Youth group will now pause their activities until the autumn when they will reform to begin work on a new, yet to be decided, production. The Youth Group is led by Tom and Frances Samson both of whom have Enhanced DBS clearance and is open to all young people between school years 5 and 9. New members are always welcome and no previous experience is necessary.

Feniton C of E Primary School *Amanda Fulford Executive Headteacher provided the following report*

It’s been a busy year developing adaptive teaching strategies across the school. With a higher than ever percentage of pupils with special educational needs we are needing to review our approaches to teaching, so we can include all pupils in classroom learning and ensure everyone can achieve their very best. In the coming year we will be hoping to further develop children’s oracy skills and will be looking for local partners who can support our children’s wellbeing with alternative therapies, such as play therapy / music therapy etc. If you have any contacts, let us know!

We are continuing to enjoy fortnightly visits from Open the Book and Reverend Dave Carrington and Graham Harry visit several times a half term. It was a pleasure to take the whole school to St Andrews Church for our Easter Act of Worship just before the holidays started. We also held our UKS2 Christmas Carol Service and Reception Nativity at the church this year. We were also delighted to welcome Messy Church in school for a special Easter event. It has been a while since we visited Talaton Church and it would be great to build in this opportunity for the coming year. One of the barriers has been the expense of travel, but we will be able to overcome this.

You are probably aware that school attendance is a key priority nationally. It has not yet returned to pre-covid levels. Although Feniton is not immune to this trend, our attendance is better than most and is above Devon and National levels. At Feniton we pride ourselves on cultivating excellent relationships with the families within our community and are using this strength to support us.

Looking ahead we will be impacted by a decline in local pupil numbers. This is a problem facing many schools across Devon. At Feniton we can accept 30 children each September into our Reception Class. In September 2025 we have only 18 children enrolled. At Feniton we typically get a low year every four to five years, but numbers look lower over the coming years, due to fewer children being born in the local area. We will be relying on families moving into the area and seeking a place at Feniton Primary. In 2025/26 we will also be losing a class of 30 children. (We have a cohort of 60 who have moved through the school) this will mean that the school will be hit -hard financially. Each child brings in £4,500 annually; the reduction in pupil numbers, already known to us, will amount to an annual loss of £184,500.

Looking ahead to the summer, we will be supporting our Year 6's as they complete their KS2 SATs, Civic Award assessments and begin their transition to their new schools. We have our VE Day Commemorations to look forward to on May 6th and our Summer Music Concert, Arts Week and Sports Day.

At the end of term we will be saying a fond farewell to Mrs Casson, a higher-level teaching assistant who has worked at the school for over 30 years. She has mentored many teaching assistants over the years and has led the federation in developing a computing curriculum.

Mrs Evans our Head of School will also be moving on to a new role in Bridgewater at the end of the summer. In the last two and a half years, she has led many positive changes in the curriculum. The governors have recruited a new Head of School, Mrs Mansfield, who will work with Mrs Fulford, leading the school from September 2025.

The Calendar – *Simon Spencer provided 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. After a difficult past 18 months, when the Calendar was losing money through rising costs, we are now coming back to liquidity, with the support of the Parish Council, and other benefactors, plus increasing advertising rates which had remained static for some time. So now our print costs are covered by the income we have, and provided this does not diminish we should be stable, for the time being. We are investing in a new laptop for Arnie our compiler, but hoping the software we use continues to be valid and usable as Windows 12 approaches. I am hoping, but not promising the second advertising rate increase this Autumn, may not yet realise. Watch this space! 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 thanks go to them. Don't forget, Arnie and I are not a closed shop. If there is anyone out there who would like to take over, do please let us get chatting. We are not getting younger, and it could be time for a change as we have been doing this for many years....!

6. Public Forum

Questions were raised about the village green and whether it could be fenced off, as a security measure. The Clerk would investigate and report back. It was questioned whether the Council was actively seeking land for a childrens play area. The Chair advised that the Council would always consider any suitable/affordable land that became available for use as a play area in the vicinity. However land in Talaton was scarce but the Council would always keep its ear to the ground` with regards to any possibilities. A notice had been received by several parishioners from SWW advising of a road closure in August. Saplings that had been planted by EDDC some time ago, at a gap adjoining the highway, had again been cut down; however it was concluded that the area would be filled in by overgrowth shortly. The proposals that the Wildings School were `*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)*` was questioned by a parishioner who was involved with the Clay Pidgeon Shoot. He was concerned that the proposed weekend use by the school may conflict with the clay pigeon shoot which was operated on adjoining premises on a Saturday morning. The Clerk would make enquiries and request that the Head of the school (Mr Rees Lee) correspond with Cllr David Hirt about this issue

7. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at: 8.55pm

Date and time of next meeting: To be arranged between 1 March and 1 June 2026

<i>SIGNATURE OF THE CHAIR</i>	
<i>DATE OF SIGNATURE</i>	

