

Annual report 2023-24

Cllr Adrian Cole, Chair of Menheniot Parish Council

Tencreek, the most significant development for many years in the Parish, has continued to occupy the Council's thoughts and time. The working group has continued to meet and review the proposals, making comment on how the scheme does not meet our Neighbourhood Plan (NP) policies. The last application made in 2022 has yet to be determined. The latest iteration submitted at the end of March is being treated as a new application as it omits the outline element for self build plots. Liaison will continue to ensure the detailed application meets the policies in the NP.

During the course of the year the Parish Council has formally commented on over 20 Planning applications.

The General Power of Competence, which gives the Parish Council the ability to perform functions for which it has no other specific statutory power, has been adopted to enable your Parish Council to pursue a number of projects to support the community, more of which later.

The precept for 2024/25 has reluctantly been increased by 6.5% which equates to a rise of £2.13 per annum per property. The increase was agreed to enable the reserves to be released to invest in some key improvements and initiatives during the next year as shown below.

An important issue for residents was the removal of the regular bus to and from Liskeard to the parish. Following lobbying the weekly bus services introduced to Liskeard and Saltash are well supported by the community and are expected to continue for the remainder of the year at least. The position is being closely monitored by the Parish Council who have continued to play an active role in supporting the service and ensuring it continues.

The long awaited highway safety improvements in the Parish, after on going lobbying, are now due to be delivered in the coming municipal year. Design work on the speed activated junction warning signage at Merrymeet is hoped to start in the next few months and the design meetings and consultation will begin in October for 20mph zones to be introduced in the following year. Remarking of roads and general tidying up will also be included in the Cornwall highway budgets. The Parish Council continues to be involved in actively lobbying for key safety improvements on the A38 to be commissioned as soon as possible.

A number of residents have suggested the formation of a speed watch group which is being actively pursued with the Police and Liskeard Speedwatch in time to support the enforcement of the 20mph speed limit zones and to act as a deterrent in conjunction with the new A390 signage. This item is on the Agenda for discussion later.

During this year of incessant rain and frequent storms the Community Emergency Plan has been activated on a number of occasions and work undertaken to clear fallen trees and keep roads open. I would like to recognise those engaged in our response particularly Cllr Ball and our Clerk John Hesketh.

The last year has seen a range of projects delivered by the Parish Council to improve the environment in the parish including refurbishment of the East Rd children's playground and replacement of fencing as well as supporting the community planting at Merrymeet, the Green and Holywell and the Tree for Life scheme in conjunction with Menheniot School. This year will see the reseeded of the popular wild flower bed in the recreation ground sponsored by D J Ball Solutions together with Roskilly and Henwood Ltd.

Residents have faced in the past year unprecedented increases in the cost of living and increased housing pressures resulting in rising concerns about wellbeing which has affected us all. The pressures continue. The Parish does try to support when and where it can the many community groups across the Parish.

It is not for the Parish Council to address these issues direct but it can lobby and influence in many ways Cornwall Council and Central Government. Examples of the ways in which the Chair and Councillors have been actively involved in representing the Parish include:

- *forming and chairing an Economic Growth Strategy working group as part of the SE Cornwall Community Area Partnership aimed at bringing inward investment , more jobs and greater prosperity to SE Cornwall.

- *discussions with Cornwall Council on promoting the take up of sites identified in the NP designated for Extra care, Affordable and rented housing schemes

- *promoting the availability of geothermal energy opportunities in the Parish and ensuring Community Benefit from any schemes is achieved

- *working with community groups in particular the Menheniot Sports Association and affiliated clubs to continue to make available to residents, as wide a range as possible of sport and recreation facilities.

To support the delivery of these initiatives the Council formed in September 2023 five working groups to support the delivery of the various strands of work that have developed. A Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy has been adopted to meet the Councils responsibilities to protect young people and vulnerable adults from harm by ensuring the appropriate agencies are notified.

To ensure the Parish Council continues to be effective and efficient ,it aims building on the Foundation level of the Local Councils Award Scheme, to reach the next level of Quality this year.

To finish on some further positive notes, the Parish Council has coordinated the entry in this years RHS South West Best Village in Bloom competition involving many groups, individuals and businesses across the Parish. So please join in in any way you can.

This builds on the success of last years National Open Garden Scheme, which will be repeated this year in the summer on the 23rd June when more gardens will be open.

There was success again in the RHS South West “Its Your Neighbourhood” award scheme for, The Green, MineHill bank, Merrymeet planting and the Community Garden.

Presentation of certificates.

The Parish Council would also like to recognise the outstanding achievements of some of our community in particular;

Zoe Harris for the award of Tennis Coach of the Year in Cornwall particularly for supporting our young tennis players,

Charlie Walters on reaching the finals of the BBC Master Chef Competition,

Gary Walters for 40 years of unstinting service to the village running the Post Office and shop, long may it continue.

I would like to congratulate Keira De Villiers on selected for Cornwall County Cricket Club Ladies Cricket Team, Having played for the Menheniot club to move to County is a great role model for the girls in the village in any sport.

Cllr Adrian Cole

Chair

16 May 2024