

Membury Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting
27 April 2013

Chairman's Report

Simon Birks

After nearly a year of great anxiety parishioners' concerns were finally laid to rest with the news that, following the decision of the Crown Court, Simon would not be returning to the village.

During their investigation the team from the Devon Partnership NHS Trust will have been made well aware of the concerns of the parishioners from the one-to-one meetings that were held. These interviews will have made a crucial contribution to the investigation and thanks are due to those who were prepared to reveal their experiences and anxieties.

Our thanks have been expressed to the Devon Partnership NHS Trust, and especially to Jo Hammond, for their sensitive handling of their contacts with Membury.

Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

Every Parish Council was required to consult with parishioners to find out whether there were any sites available for housing development. For sites to be considered, numerous criteria would have to be satisfied, All parishioners were asked to fill in a questionnaire but no sites meeting the criteria were identified.

Flood Prevention Scheme.

This is now operational and has benefited from various tweaks to its administration. An update on the Scheme will be given during the meeting but I would like to reiterate, on behalf of all parishioners, our thanks to Alex Tasker and the Flood Wardens for the months of effort that have been required to make it work.

Diana Byrde

The fact that the church was filled to capacity for Diana's Memorial Service will have come as no surprise to Membury parishioners and it must have been a great comfort to her family to be reminded of the high regard in which she was held. For forty years Diana had been a vibrant member of our community and for many of these she served on the Parish Council, latterly as Chairman. She had been Churchwarden and a key figure in the introduction of the lay-led Family Service. She was an indefatigable visitor to those who were unwell and a welcomer to those who came to live in the village. Her picture on the front cover of the Mercury, following the Jubilee celebrations, summed up the character of Membury's First Lady and it

was so fitting that this should have been reproduced on the Order of Service. There seem to be fewer and fewer of those who can be called 'one of a kind'; Diana was one of these.

Jubilee Celebrations

These were an unqualified success thanks to the work of The Merrymakers led by Richard Barrell. With the year's miserable record for dreadful weather it was providential that the day was fine and sunny ; tea in The Street in the rain would have been uncomfortable and the fireworks might not even have been lit!

Playing Field

John Stevenson has retired from the position of Chairman of the committee and our thanks are due to him for all the hard work he has put in to keep the site in good order. Most recently he was responsible for the preparation of the site for and installation of some of the new equipment.

Church Roof

Following the theft of much of the lead from the church roof initial protection of the fabric and subsequent re-covering of the roof were achieved thanks to the notable efforts of Marilyn Burrough and Debbie Burrough. Their work is invisible to the passer-by but should be appreciated by all who value our beautiful church.

Potholes and Road Maintenance

With the notable exception of those on the Greendown Road pothole repairs have generally been carried out without much delay. Preparations are in hand for the top dressing of the Policeman's Hill road .

In spite of the awful weather the roads were only briefly icy and grit bins were replenished as needed.

Our thanks to Sandra Little who was poised to tow the salt spreader behind her quadbike if required.

Planning

There were 27 planning applications during the year. 11 of these were for agricultural buildings -a mix of covered yards and stock/feed buildings. There were 4 for house extensions and 4 for garages.

Parish Clerk

My thanks, as always, to Nick Yool for his tireless work on behalf of all parishioners.

Harry Tennant