

Annual Report on the activities of Axmouth Parish Council

The year from April 2012 to March 2013 has been a busy one for the parish councillors who have been skilfully guided by our new parish clerk, Annie Dallaway, appointed in May 2012.

Local Plan Consultation – Village Boundary Consultation

Following on from the Local Plan consultation EDDC asked each village to participate and undertake a review of their village boundary. The parish council were tasked to consider areas that may be large enough for potential small housing developments to help meet the Local Plan target of 10 dwellings for Axmouth. Landowners were contacted and asked if they wished to submit a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). These areas were reviewed by EDDC, only one being acceptable. This was the land behind Axe Farm, above the Flood Zone. This was followed by a public consultation in the village to gain local views about this site and other local priorities. The results of these consultations have been fed into the Village Plan which forms part of the Local Plan process which is currently due for adoption during 2013.

Traffic issues

Several schemes to control traffic through the village have been designed and discussed over the past years and for various reasons rejected by DCC's HATOC committee. Funding from Cllr Knight's locality budget over the past 2 years enabled the parish council to fund a traffic study for the village. The item was reported to HATOC at their meeting in March 2012. Funding for 2012/13 was set aside to implement a scheme in the village. However, problems with the design have meant that this pot of funding has now been carried over into 2013/14 whilst an acceptable scheme is designed by DCC engineers.

Viewing Platform

The viewing platform at Coronation Corner was officially opened by Cllr Jim Knight on July 14th, 2012. The walkway and the new viewing platform and the Interpretation Board have all received praise from the public. Funding was secured from the 'Investing in Devon airport money' Devon County Council, the Davis family as a memorial to their parents and grants secured from Axe Vale & District Conservation Society and Devon Bird watching and Preservation Society. Funded by Cllr Knight's locality budget, a series of bird silhouettes have been attached to the close boarded fence along the SW Water site. This silhouette collection will continue to grow as more funds become available.

Community Day

On Saturday July 14th 2012 the first Community Day was held in Axmouth and it was a great success. A list of maintenance work was compiled, focussing mainly on the brook, which had flooded the previous weekend during torrential rain on Saturday July 7th. A huge number of local people of all ages spent much of the day working very hard. This was followed by a celebratory barbecue organised by The Ship Inn. We intend to repeat this event this summer.

Community Flood Plan – Emergency Snow Plan

A community Flood Plan is being developed with the assistance of the Environment Agency to ensure that we are prepared for any further flash flooding events. This plan is in the early stages and will undoubtedly involve community volunteers to take responsibility individually and collectively for actions in this plan. This plan will be closely linked to our winter snow warden arrangements where volunteers hold 25kg bags of grit salt for use on

steep parts of the road network in the village. We also have use of a towable spreader for salting the roads to be undertaken by our Snow Warden Julian Langworthy.

Active Villages

In December, we were approached by the Active Village project, aimed at promoting sport and physical activities within the local community for ages 5 to 95. Subsequently we applied for 2 Table Tennis tables and associated equipment and taster sessions will be organised in the Village Hall.

We are also discussing the possibility of Jive dancing taster sessions through this project.

Bus Services

Our concerns over the loss of the X54 have been registered with First Group and DCC and we have urged them to look at alternatives. We have also approached AVMT for details of their local bus routes and how they connect so that a more comprehensive timetable can be displayed in the Village.

Burial ground

The site for a new burial ground is being discussed with the landowner and it is hoped to finalise this over the next few months. Funds are allocated annually towards the purchase and enclosing of a new site, currently £8500.

Telephone Box

The Council has procured the redundant village telephone box from BT. Repairs to the Box have been organised and painting will follow this summer. Sarah Williams has offered to erect the first display in the Phone Box, focussing on ecology and the brook and many thanks to her. Other suggestions from residents for future displays would be appreciated.

Parish Plan

To help us reach our objectives set out in the Parish Plan, several groups have been active this year. The Council continues to work with outside organisations to look for funding to allow us to reach these village objectives.

Neighbourhood Plan

The parish council have registered their wish to produce a neighbourhood plan which will help ensure that proposals for our parish are considered in the future. Until now there has been no funding for these plans but very recently the Government has announced a 2 year support programme for local communities however details have yet to be divulged.

The Footpaths Group

A proposal for a number of circular walks is being developed by this group. With the help and support of a DCC rights of way officer, Steve Gardner, steady progress is being made to develop a permissive path along this route.

Negotiations are underway with landowners for the section running from near the Village Gateway to Stedcombe and Boshill and an additional section running down to the estuary edge.

Playground Committee

The playground committee, led by Judith Simpson, is continually looking for volunteers to assist with the maintenance of the Jubilee playground. The council will continue to support them financially with an annual grant. A big vote of thanks to Judith for taking this on.

Jubilee Day

A sponsored walk, suggested and led by the late David Tresize, raised funds for a fantastic jubilee celebration in the Church and the Churchyard. Although it poured with rain, it was a wonderful day of music and drama, culminating in the Teddy zip wire from the church tower and the launch of Rocket Ted.

A plaque to commemorate the donators and the planting of the six Jubilee Oaks around the Show field has been placed on the gate to the field.

Commemorative Jubilee Mugs were purchased and given to all children in the parish.

Jurassic Coast Forum

Mike Green of Beer parish is a Jurassic Coast Ambassador and he gave a short talk to the parish council about the Jurassic Coast Community. Carol Rapley volunteered to get involved as an Ambassador and anyone else who is interested in this please make contact. Mike is very keen to promote this part of the Jurassic Coast.

Best Kept Village

The village entered last year but was not selected in the top three. We have entered again this year and hope to gain a better result!

Parishes Together Fund

This new fund represented £1.10 per elector, approx £450 in total. The fund had to be used jointly with other parish/es. Therefore, in partnership with the coastal town and parish councils of Seaton, Exmouth, Sidmouth, Budleigh Salterton, Beer and Branscombe, Axmouth joined a Jurassic Coast Marketing project. Exmouth Town Council is taking the lead on the project which aims to produce a leaflet featuring all the Jurassic towns and villages and promoting the World Heritage Site.

A further use of this fund was to enter a joint venture with Beer to use a contractor to clear areas of waterway in the parish.

Next financial year we are told that this fund will be allocated to each parish to spend without the need to collaborate.

Precept

The precept has been increased by 2% to £6834 this year to reflect increased salary costs associated with the ever increasing demands from local and central government initiatives.

Finally, we would like to thank all those members of the community who help keep our village looking clean and tidy by cutting grass, reporting potholes, picking up litter and numerous other helpful tasks.

We are proud to represent our small, vibrant village and look forward to serving the residents through the next year.

Carol Rapley, Chair of APC

15.04.2013