

Halberton Annual Parish Meeting

The Halberton Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **Thursday, 18 May 2023** at 7.00pm in Halberton Village Hall.

Ian Batchelor

Chairman, Halberton Parish Council

11 May 2022

- 1 Welcome from the Chairman of Halberton Parish Council
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 3 May 2022
- 4 Matters raised for discussion by members of the public
- 5 Annual Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council
- 6 Presentation of the Parish Council Accounts for 2022/23
- 7 Annual Report from the Mid Devon District Councillor
- 8 Annual Report from the Devon County Councillor
- 9 Annual Report from Halberton Primary School
- 10 Annual Reports from Clubs, Groups and Organisations from across the Parish
- 11 Introduction to the Businesses and Traders who advertise in the Parish Newsletter
- 12 Any other matters for discussion

REPORTS RECEIVED

Halberton Parish Meeting 18th May 2023- Devon County Councillors Report

The past 12 months have been busy at Devon County Council as we returned to near normal working following the pandemic.

I have continued in my role of Chair of the Devon Pension Board, Chair of the Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee and Vice Chair of the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Committee. I also sit on several other committees.

I have regularly attended Halberton Parish Council meetings and have supported their call for a 20mph zone for Lower Town, which is still ongoing. I have worked with Highways Officers to get roads repaired, resurfaced and potholes fixed. Things have certainly improved in the last few months, but there is still more to do. I have also arranged with MDDC to clear up fly tipping on several occasions.

I have also been negotiating with DCC/ Southwest Norse to establish a community growing area for the village. At the time of writing this will be a decision of the Farms Estates Committee and we will hopefully know the outcome soon.

I have been pleased to have supported the Parish Council, Village hall and Ash Thomas village hall with my locality budget, as well as the HCA for whom I have funded Hi Viz jackets for the community.

Unfortunately the budget for this financial year has been reduced to £5000, but I will still welcome applications from local community organisations.

Finally on a personal note I would like to thank Ray Radford for his work on the District Council for so many years. Ray is no longer a district councillor (neither am I), but we will continue to work together on Devon County Council.

As always I am here to help whenever I can, so please feel free to contact me.

Best Wishes

Colin Slade

Devon County Councillor for Tiverton East

Colin.slade@devon.gov.uk

07948432942

Halberton History Group; report on activities 2022

Way back in January 2022 Covid cases were on the rise again and we were expecting 2022 to be another difficult year for the History Group. In the end the year turned out far better than we had initially feared;

1. During 2022 there were 28 members of Halberton History Group, the highest number we have had for several years
2. Our short term financial problems were overcome thanks to the generosity of our members and the Village Hall Trustees who ran the duck race for the benefit of 3 local organisations.
3. Our first face to face meeting of the Group for two years (which was also streamed via Zoom) was held in early 2022 and we held our AGM in April (also streamed live via Zoom)
4. Over the Queen's Jubilee weekend (1st to 5th June) we mounted an exhibition at St Andrew's church. The exhibition included our "Big, Fat Jubilee Quiz" which was also displayed at the Methodist Hall and published on our website. The quiz raised £10 which was donated to the DEC Ukraine appeal.
5. Three of our Committee members have been active members of the Footpath Review working group which is being chaired by Councillor Furmedge.
6. A member of our Group is the Senior Archaeologist and Historic Environment Advisor – SW Hub, Environment Agency. He is leading the work of a project team that has been set up to prepare an application for National Lottery Heritage funding for the proposed Battens Farm Roman Villa Community Excavation Project. One of our members represents Halberton History Group on that team.
7. We began opening the Twose Room to the public again on a regular basis and to hold our Committee meetings there.
8. We were joined by a young lady who came to help as the volunteering segment towards gaining a Duke of Edinburgh's bronze award. She helped with scanning and filing and wrote a piece for our archives about the involvement of several generations of her family as bell ringers at St. Andrew's Church.
9. We continue to collect copies of documents relating to Halberton and answer queries where possible. One item sent from Australia is a charming plan of Town Mills and surrounds. Our research work continued; for example one of our members is transcribing old Halberton Wills
10. There were about a dozen visitors to the Twose Room during the year, mostly local, a few from further afield in England and one from New York State. Some of the visits were in connection with family history (one going back to the 14th century) and several were from people who have not been living here long and wanted to find out the history of their new home. One of the most memorable was the return of the Liverpool family, our last visitors just a few days before lockdown in 2020. They couldn't wait to return to have a closer look at the place where their mother lived as a child and were thrilled to be shown the area by one of our members who knew it well.
11. We continue to respond to enquiries, mostly coming via email, on varied topics such as location of properties, reasons for emigration from the area and general family history. We can't always provide an answer but quite often can suggest possible other sources.
12. Our website continues to be a well used online resource for people interested in the history of Halberton, people who want to know more about the Group and those who wish to contact us. During 2022 our website received an average of 1,036 individual visitors each month, roughly half from Great Britain and half from the rest of the world. That is an amazing number and in part we guess it may have been caused by people browsing the web during the pandemic.

We emerged from the most difficult period we have ever experienced with a committed and generous membership, a committee vacancy has recently been filled and we now have a healthy balance at the bank. Perhaps it is too early to be unreservedly optimistic but a sense of normality which has been missing for so long has started to return.

2023; A note about The Twose Exhibition

On the 1st April this year we held our Twose Exhibition at the Village Hall, originally planned as our 10th Anniversary event but which we had to cancel because of the pandemic.

The Parish Council had generously granted the Group £100 towards meeting the cost of the event and we had also received a grant from Devon County Council via Councillor Slade (£175) and McConnell Ltd (£250 towards the cost of publishing a book).

We split the event into two sessions. The morning (starting at 11am) was reserved for ex employees of Twose Tiverton and Medland, Sanders and Twose. We opened to the public in the afternoon (from 1.30pm).

The attendance was probably the highest for any event ever organised by the Group and a total of 157 people signed in (77 during the morning and 80 during the afternoon). Our visitors came from as far afield as Salcombe, Morebath, Chard, Honiton, Axminster, Taunton and Totnes. Thanks to our willing volunteers the catering arrangements were exemplary. We sold almost one hundred copies of our book ("Twose") on the day. The feedback we have received from those who attended the event has been nothing short of glowing.

Staging this exhibition required an immense amount of hard work and goodwill on the part of the volunteers tasked with carrying out the research, designing and setting up the displays and hosting the day. We congratulate and thank everyone involved.

Halberton History Group Committee

SAMPFORD PEVERELL TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Our Twinning is a coming together of several villages in the Pays d'Auge, Normandy, and several of our local villages. Normally they visit us one year and we visit them the next. Although most of our recent activities have been based in Sampford Peverell, Halberton is very much part of the group and we would love to see more of you.

This last year has seen our Twinning Association waking up after an enforced sleep due to covid and other problems. In June 2022 we held a very successful Cheese and Wine party to interest new members, and since then we have had two French Breakfasts to which all have been invited. A jumble sale in January helped to increase our funds which enable us to entertain our French visitors when they come.

This year they will be visiting us from Thursday evening 20th July until Monday morning, 24th July. An outline of the programme arranged for them will appear in your June/July magazine and we hope you will be able to join with us sometimes, or perhaps offer a bed for one or two of our French friends.

Report from the Grand Western Canal Country Park by Mark Baker, Canal Manager

I'm sorry I'm unable to attend the meeting but can provide a brief summary of what's been happening in the Country Park over the last year.

The general picture is one of stable visitor numbers, funding and staffing arrangements. Although the annual revenue budget is very tight, in recent years we have been successful in applying for DCC capital funding for towpath resurfacing and countryside stewardship funding for various maintenance works.

Sadly there has been a trend for more antisocial and inconsiderate behaviour by a small but growing proportion of visitors and local residents. This takes the form of perennial issues such as dog fouling and dangerous cycling, but also includes rowdy drinking; damaging benches and grass with portable barbeques; dog attacks on wildlife and other dogs; and fish theft.

In response, the Canal Ranger team have become accredited by Devon and Cornwall Police under their Community Safety Accreditation Scheme, giving us the police power to require name and address for persons suspected of antisocial behaviour or committing offences against the Canal Byelaws or the Mid Devon Public Space Protection Order. Failure to provide name and address is in itself an offence. When provided with a report and a name and address the police will then pursue the case. Through the scheme we will be building closer links with local police, receive training on identifying and dealing with offences and hopefully deter, or at least respond effectively, to the bad behaviour that can spoil a visit to the canal.

In the last year, the following works have taken place along the Canal within Halberton Parish:

- Dozens of new standard trees have been planted along the hedge beside the towpath
- Around 100m of hedge on the offside bank beside the boat moorings at East Manley Bridge has been laid by staff and volunteers
- Dozens of offside bankside trees have been coppiced
- Around 20 Ash trees suffering from Ash Dieback have been felled for safety reasons
- Works to repoint the external walls and arches of the aqueduct have been completed
- Following the resurfacing of the towpath between Crownhill Bridge and Tiverton Road Bridge, loose stones have been swept from the surface to provide more comfortable and safer access.
- New noticeboards have been installed at Tiverton Road car park and Greenway Bridge. In time all of the noticeboards along the canal will be replaced with this new, more robust and more attractive design.
- Corroded bridge nameplates at Rock Bridge and Watton Bridge have been replaced with new ones thanks to funding generously provided by the parish council.
- Several new memorial seats and benches have been installed
- The gate hanging post at Greenway Bridge has been replaced after the previous one rotted through
- A new gate and fencing have been installed at Rock Bridge

Looking forward, a significant date on the horizon is the 50th Anniversary of the horse-drawn barge operating on the Canal. We will be assisting the Tiverton Canal Co to mark this important milestone, with celebratory events most likely to take place in May 2024.

Finally a big thank you to the parish council and all the local residents for their ongoing support for the Country Park; and I hope you are able to get out and enjoy some quality time along the Canal during the rest of the year.