

Buckerell Parish Council Chair's Report May 2022

Our last Zoom Parish Council Meeting due to Covid restrictions was in May 2021. Since then, we have met face to face five times and members of the public have also been present, which we warmly welcome.

The main source of finance for the Parish Council is from an element of the council tax, which is known as the parish precept. It is set each January by the PC and the level has remained unchanged for several years. Councillor Phil Twiss, who is in charge of resources for the whole of Devon, has stressed how difficult budgets are this year. Buckerell's finances remain on a sound footing. We are able to support local charities and in March, as we witnessed the awful horrors inflicted on the people of Ukraine, it was agreed that we make a donation of £500 to the Disasters Emergency Committee. Our budget is also spent on the Village website, which is a valuable source of up-to-date Village information, insurance and the Voluntary Emergency Telephone (VETS) support system for our defibrillator. The telephone number to VETS is 01404 565310, a useful number to have on your phones. We also contributed monies to the Buckerell Festival week and fund the Village maintenance which is conscientiously carried out by Steve Triner as well as our Clerk, Ian Tucker's wages. Thank you, Steve and Ian.

The condition of our road network has improved during the last year. Including patching repairs on the road from the Village centre towards Hembury Fort, changing the camber above Summerhayes Farm to address surface water issues and improving the access onto the A372. Councillor Phil Twiss informed the PC in September that he had been given verbal confirmation from DCC Highways that the 30mph speed limit will be extended from Sunningdale past Hillside. This is an issue that the Parish Council will continue to pursue in the coming year. We will continue to monitor our road network. There are bids for resurfacing work from Buckerell to Curscombe Cross, Fenton and Cabbage Lane in 2022/2023. Thank you, Councillor Twiss for all your continued interest in matters that affect Buckerell.

The Parish Council has been consultees on a number of planning developments within our parish boundaries. Although we have no planning powers, East Devon District Council seeks our views and we endeavour to give a balanced view on behalf of the village community. Councillor Alasdair Bruce, who was elected as District Councillor in July 2021, has been helpful in these matters. We are grateful for his support.

Earlier in the year we decided to look into the logistics of restoring and renovating the Village Pump and surrounding walls. It is Grade 2 listed structure, dating back to 1844 in the time of Vicar Edwin Coleridge and was for use of the poor. Upon inspection it appears that the actual pump mechanism is no longer in place and if anyone has any information on the pump, please contact us.

This year we are celebrating the Queens Platinum Jubilee. Parish Councillor Helen Howard investigated the possibility of acquiring a small piece of land for a community space and tree planting. Although we were unable to fulfil this aspiration, East Devon District Council gifted Buckerell an oak tree which is planted in the grounds of the Church. In addition, Fiona and Steven Joyce planted a lovely cherry tree in order to further enhance the setting of the War Memorial. Thank you both.

The community spirit in Buckerell continues to thrive. We recently saw this in abundance when David Wayne launched a Ukraine Appeal. The Church was filled with essential supplies for fleeing refugees. I am sure there will be other ways to help our fellow Europeans in the future. Others pick up litter or support neighbours to name just a few examples. The role of the Parish Council is to support the community and allow Buckerell to have a voice. I am very thankful to all those on the council for their support, Geoff Wright, Sandra Money and Helen Howard. There is no limit on the number of parish councillors we have and it would make a difference if we had a few more. So please consider joining us, it's an easy process just contact any of us. Ian Tucker is our able Parish Clerk without whom I'm sure we all agree we would be lost. Thanks Ian.

Best wishes
Clare Slater Chair Buckerell Parish Council