

LONG ASHTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Long Ashton Village Hall - 7.30 p.m. Monday 29th April 2019

Chairman Councillor Andrew Wilkinson

The meeting was attended by 42 electors

1. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd April 2018, copies having been circulated, were signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

2. Annual reports of the Parish Council:

The Chairman Councillor (Cllr) Wilkinson welcomed everyone and introduced Cllr Miss Uppington as Chairman of the Planning Committee, to give the first report:

Planning Committee report

The Chairman of the Planning Committee, Cllr Miss Uppington gave her report:

“A steady flow of applications has kept the Committee on their toes at all of their meetings. It is important that our recommendations made to North Somerset Council (NSC) are constructive so we have endeavoured to look at each application in detail, always taking into account how proposals will affect neighbours. Requests for extensions to existing properties have accounted for around 50% of the applications with work to be done on trees continuing to show a definite increase. The policies in our Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) often give support to our recommendations and we note that Planning Officers at NSC are often quoting them in their comments which they make about applications.

A decision on future development at 58 Long Ashton Road (Cox's Shop) is still awaited. However during this last week some amended details have been received to the most recent application for 4 semi-detached properties, so it is to be hoped that North Somerset (NS) will find these acceptable and grant permission for these dwellings in this Conservation Area. An application for a loft conversion and extensions at 13 Parsonage Road, having been recommended for refusal and objected to by a number of neighbours, was refused by NS Planning and Regulatory Committee. Following that decision the applicant appealed against it and the Inspector allowed the appeal.

In January, we received an application for 9 residential properties to be erected at 1 Providence Lane after demolition of the Royal British Legion building. Whilst we accept there will be some development on this site, we found these plans quite unacceptable; NSC has not made a decision.

Sports facilities at Clevedon Road, Failand are continuing to increase and neighbours have been particularly concerned about the permission given for QEH to provide artificial surface sports pitches with floodlighting close to the main road and nearby properties. Discussions have been taking place about development for 4 dwellings at 1 Warren Lane. This is an important site which lies at the western end entrance to the village, so we are anxious that buildings here should be suitable and hope our comments will be noted.

Following the closure of our library, permission was obtained for a change of use to a Café. This is in the process of being organised and it is to be hoped that this facility will be a benefit for our community. A mobile library visits the village twice a week but this service in no way makes up for the library closure. A group of Councillors and residents have been working very hard to find a more satisfactory solution and they will be giving us a report about their discussions.

From time to time, Taylor Wimpey publishes information in the local press emphasising why they consider their plans for 'The Vale' should be supported. You will remember the land they wish to develop for housing is all in the Green Belt but as the Parish Council (PC) is strongly opposed to development in the Green Belt, we shall most likely object to the official plans when they are received and do all we can to protect the landscape which lies between our village and the city.

As well as looking at planning applications, the Committee has considered and commented on a number of national and North Somerset documents which have covered planning policies including detailed information about the proposed expansion of Bristol Airport.

We are very fortunate to have such an efficient Tree Officer in NS who deals very quickly with applications from residents who have to apply for permission when they wish to do work on trees which are designated with a TPO or are in a Conservation Area. Trees and hedges in many of our gardens have needed their usual attention so that overhanging foliage does not obstruct our pavements and footpaths.

I want to thank members of the Planning Committee who have made such a valuable input to our discussions and our District Councillors who have followed up so many planning issues. Thank you also to Tracy who has minuted our meetings, to Janet our Clerk whose help and advice is readily given and appreciated."

Highways and Burial Ground

The Chairman of the Highways and Burial Ground Committee, Cllr Moorcroft gave his report: "I wish to thank the Officers and members of the council especially those retiring after this last term of office.

I think it has become very evident that there are increased traffic flows through the village and that some errant people are traveling at speeds in excess of 30 mph. In an effort to stem these speed we have engaged NS and others, in our VES scheme which has been guided by Rod Sterland who will explain this new venture."

Cllr Sterland gave the following report:

"You may recall that the Village Enhancement Scheme was first proposed in the Neighbourhood Development Plan which was approved in 2015. Since then a lot of work has gone on in the background to make proposals, sort out priorities and discussions with North Somerset, culminating in eventually getting drawings and costings done by North Somerset. The Parish Council has also set aside some money each year for the project.

The aim of the scheme is to improve the village centre, reduce the impact of the traffic making the area more inviting and improving the viability of the shops. You will be aware that Long Ashton / Weston Road was the main road to Weston super Mare before the bypass was opened in 1968 and very little has been done to it since that time. We have looked at ways to improve the road visually and to reduce traffic impacts. Our original scheme looked at the entire road from Ashton Court to Cambridge Batch; however the cost was, to say the least prohibitive.

We have concentrated our efforts on the centre of the village, the section between Providence Lane and Lovelinch Gardens. This should provide the most benefit for the relatively modest sum of money that we have. What we intend to do is:

- 20 mph zone from Providence Lane to Lovelinch Gardens; for this section, additional traffic calming measures, are not required.
- Improved crossing at Brocks Lane; a pedestrian crossing here is not possible so we have improved the signage in what will be a 20 mph zone.
- Raised pedestrian crossing by the Co-op.
- Extended curb line in Birdwell Road; to aid pedestrians in crossing the road.
- Improvements outside Piccalos and the vets.

Every household in the village will have had a leaflet detailing these proposals. We have undertaken an extensive consultation and received overwhelmingly positive comments. Many people have asked why we are not going further. We are limited by funds and we are limited by highways rules and regulations and it takes a lot of work by councillors and others to pull these schemes together. Also, experience elsewhere shows that these schemes are more effective if they are brought in incrementally so that drivers don't get too used to the traffic layout.

You may have noticed that when the road was resurfaced, the central white line was, at our request, not re-instated. This has a small effect in reducing traffic speeds.

Last week we had detailed discussions with NS and they are confident, subject to any political upheaval in the forthcoming elections that the scheme can be delivered in this financial year, after all, LAPC will be paying for it. The PC will be liaising closely with NS and their contractors to ensure this does happen.

The consultation showed that there is strong support for the principles of the VES and a number of additional possible actions have been identified. The PC has taken notice of this and within the considerable constraints that apply to highways schemes, will be taking this forward.”

The VES drawings were displayed on notice boards for all to view.

Cllr Moorcroft finished his report:

“In regards to footpaths, we welcome the reopening of the footpath from Parsonage to the cycle track which will be reopened hopefully in three to six months and will become part of the PROW network. We will also welcome the restoration of the speed bumps in Yanley Lane

We would also like to thank Liz Lansley and her volunteers for their efforts and this next part of the report is from Liz. Cllr Moorcroft read out Cllr Lansley's report:

“We continue to have the active support of most landlords in the parish. Long Ashton golf course, Will Jones of Yanley Farm and the Athertons of Kingcott Farm stand out as being particularly supportive. Because the Athertons agreed to make their access lane a permissive path, North Somerset Life included a 'Walk to Seven Streams' which appeared in last May's edition of the Council's Life magazine. It must be said however that our foot path volunteers carried out the most significant footpath improvements. This was to the steps and kissing gate leading to Toboggan Hill. Thanks are due to Andrew Hughes, Farm Manager for UOB Research Station for supply of materials; now less mobile walkers can climb the hill and sit on 'Tony Hibbitt's' bench and enjoy a fantastic view of the village.

Long Ashton Parish Council wants to encourage areas of biodiversity within the Parish managed by the Council and partner organisations. We all know that many species including crickets, grasshoppers, swallows, bees and butterflies are not as numerous as they were in the 1950s and '60s. The Parish Council aims to reverse this decline and increase awareness

in the village about what makes up good habitat for a wide-range of insects, birds and small mammals within our area.

Several projects are already underway and we would like to encourage others to join in since everyone can do something to help our wildlife. Current Projects includes:

- Dawson's Meadow near the bridge; efforts are underway to minimise invasive plants in particular Himalayan balsam.
- Keeds Wood and the Brake; community woodland activities include: annual coppicing which in itself increases biodiversity (grant for tools from PC).
- Peel Park; allowing grass to grow on the banks, providing food for wildlife during summer.
- Keeds Park Community Orchard; a variety of fruit trees in the park providing food for pollinators and other insects
- Arch Bank; nurturing native plants
- Heaven Scent Garden; A mixed fruit orchard and a variety of wild flowers, in the burial ground
- Keedwell Hill Church garden; soft fruit and a variety of wild flowers
- Community garden at the Community Centre; with lavender beds and herbs"

And finally we are trying to reduce the amount of foliage cover in the burial ground to aid in its tranquillity although one has to mention the vast increase in road noise from the opening of Collitors Way the by-pass between the A38 and the A370.

In conclusion I wish to reiterate my thanks to the PC"

Finance & General Purposes Committee Report

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Cllr Hardingham, gave her report:

"F&GP sees to the financial and legal business of the PC, in particular it has to consider the budget and oversee spending. For the financial year just ended, the council received a precept from Council Tax of £158,000. So how was this injection of funds used in Long Ashton and Leigh Woods?

The Youth Club received £17,500 so that Epic Youth could continue to provide 3 sessions a week; two of these are in the Club Room and Sports Hall which includes activities like street dance, and one evening is outreach to engage with the young people on the streets and the Rec. The village clearly benefits from providing these regular positive activities to those young people who don't enjoy the uniformed activities so thanks to the management committee and Epic Youth for sustaining the club. However their fundraising continues to be vital, so please do support their 500 club.

The largest grant is to the Long Ashton Community Association (LACA) towards running this Community Centre - that was £33,050. Amidst all the challenges in the public sphere, it is tremendous that the community here clearly wants, uses and values a public facility like this. Congratulations and thanks to all those involved as they approach the 60th anniversary celebrations, including Sarah Leong the Centre Manager, for her enthusiasm and hard work.

A long term plan for the Community Centre is important, but sadly LACA doesn't have the time or volunteers to draw up a strategy at present. May I on behalf of LACA, make a plea for volunteers as the PC wants to protect the future of this Centre and make sensible financial planning for it.

The cost of maintaining Peel Park and the public open spaces at Chancellors Park and Kings Croft are covered by funds received from the developers. There are still some loose ends to tie

up regarding the footpath at Peel Park and then we are hopeful we may at long last achieve the Public Art promised some years ago.

Various small grants were made including to the Girl Guides, junior football club, junior cricket club, Nailsea Community Transport and Light Up Long Ashton towards the Christmas lights. A total grant of £4,500 was made towards the Battles Over commemoration. It was a great achievement to organise such a sober and telling event. Many thanks and best wishes to Dave Addis.

We received some good news from NSC about funds available from the development at Tydings Close, which were to be used only for outdoor play or sports facilities. As a result, we will see a new playground off Gardeners Walk on the land owned by NSC, although they will lease the play area to the PC. Some of the funds have gone towards new play equipment here at the Community Centre.

The Council also received a grant of £769 as part of the government's High Street Clean-Up fund, which has been used towards planting in the shopping area.

The PC received its first payment of CIL; Community Infrastructure Levy, which is the new system for payments from developments, in this case, the changes at the Apple Tree Nursery building. We are hoping to use part of this money for some road safety measures at the junction of Wild Country Lane and are talking to NSC about this.

Again the Community Grant did not have many applications so a public decision meeting was not held. Plastic Free Long Ashton received £1,050 which has been used for a Terracycle bin, also re-usable water bottles and coffee cups and useful publicity material. They are hoping to arrange a litter pick soon. The Terracycle bin is at the Post Office for recycling crisp packets and snack packaging and is well-used. Long Ashton Men's Shed was the other recipient of £500 for tools. The deadline for this year's Community Grant is only a few weeks away on 14th May, and grants of £1000 and £500 are available. Details are on the PC website but if you know of any village group that could use a grant for the benefit of the parish, please encourage them to apply.

As to the budget for the current financial year, the new consideration was the provision of a community library service. It was decided to increase the precept to £172,000, which means that the Band D Council Tax payable to the PC is £64.66 a year, which is an extra 41p a month per Band D home. This increase of 8.2% is above inflation and it was a difficult decision, but we knew that if we did not have the money for a library, then we could do nothing about it. The library working group worked hard to sound out support in the village and received backing for local funding.

Our budget discussions were mindful that parish councils are being asked to take up more services so the question is always "what aspirations does this community have?" There will be interesting discussions ahead for the new council. Long Ashton is one of the 9 service villages in NS, which are the larger villages; our precept per home still remains the second lowest of those 9, with Pill being the lowest, so it's still good value for money.

The Earmarked Reserves include a fund of £100,000 to protect the Green Belt, also a fund of £2,000 for tree planting, so the new council can consider where and how to use that. Another fund is for the VES.

With many long serving Cllrs retiring, it has been sad to have our final meetings. Although we certainly don't agree on everything, we've spent many Monday evenings sitting round the same tables, discussing all manner of local issues usually with good humour, but definitely

with healthy debate. Thanks to the Finance Committee for staying engaged with all the detail that is part and parcel of any public organisation. As to the vacancies on the council, if you care about where you live, do please get involved, we have so many different and interesting projects that are possible.

Thanks also to the Council staff; the 2 Village Orderlies, the burial ground gardener who is moving away after many years sterling service, Tracy our Assistant Clerk, and above all to Janet, the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, for keeping the whole show on the road.

The audited accounts for the previous year are in the hall. There are also wheelie bin stickers to pick up if you live on a busy road, to send the message to drivers to slow down”

Library Working Group report

The Chairman of the Library working group, Cllr McQuillan gave his report:

“I am Stuart McQuillan, Parish Councillor and Chair of the PC library working group, I just wanted to talk to you about the library for 2 minutes and give you an update.

Some of you will remember that at last year’s annual meeting, North Somerset confirmed that the Long Ashton Library was to close and sadly, the library did indeed close in December. The Parish Council stated then it would see what could be done to mitigate the impact of this.

Thanks to support from residents, it was able to establish a working group of Councillors and residents to explore the possibility of setting up a community library.

I have been privileged to lead this working group which has met regularly and worked very hard to establish what can be done; thank you to those involved.

We have surveyed residents to establish levels of support for a community library and whether there would be volunteer support for this. We received over 500 responses to our survey, with residents strongly supporting the development of a community library and expressing dissatisfaction with the closure of the library and the proposed mobile library only, service from NS.

Using these survey results, the working group made the case for support from the PC to establish a volunteer-run community library to supplement the mobile library service. We have assessed several suitable locations and determined a temporary structure on this site is the optimum location. The PC has agreed a budget for this and we have had lots of volunteers come forward.

We are currently in the process of contracting for a formal site survey and determine the exact location and size of structure. We very much hope to be able to open this year, and we are producing a business plan now. If you want to be kept informed, join the working group or volunteer in the library, please get in touch with myself or the Clerk.

Chairman’s report

The Chairman of the Council Cllr Wilkinson gave the following report:

“This is the last Annual Meeting for the current council. I would like to thank all the councillors for their hard work over the last four years, particularly the Chairs of the committees.

Unfortunately, an election for the new council will not be necessary as out of the 21 available councillor positions only twelve people put themselves forward. As I stated at last year’s meeting, the council can only function with people giving their time voluntarily. The council can co-opt individuals to fill the vacancies, so if anyone is interested in making a contribution to the community and be considered for one of the vacancies, please let us know.

In addition to the day to day working of the council, you have heard in the reports some of the initiatives the council are working on. The Library and Village enhancement scheme is only part of this and work is ongoing in a number of other areas including investigating the potential

for a skate park in the village and supporting the Scouts in their efforts to secure a new Scout Hut. Pressure on council resources is likely to continue over the next few years and it's essential we continue to support issues that are important to our residents whilst ensuring what we provide is value for money.

Finally, we have a number of councillors standing down after a considerable number of years on the council and I think this needs some recognition. It's hard to single out individuals as so many of them have contributed so much, but two Councillors, in particular, have served considerably longer than anyone else. Councillor Pullin has served for almost 34 years, which is remarkable in itself, but even that level of dedication has been surpassed, and one councillor stands out for the years of service she has done for the village. It's strange to think that she joined the council when I was probably about to start infants school. After 55 years on the council, latterly as the Chair of our Planning Committee, Councillor Mary Uppington is standing down. It's a milestone that I doubt will ever be surpassed.

I think we as a community should show our appreciation of Mary and Jean and in doing so also thank the other councillors standing down"

Cllr Miss Uppington and Mrs Pullin were presented with retiring flowers and gifts.

Cllr Miss Uppington thanked the Council for her gifts:

"I have enjoyed 55 years on the council which started as a small council with little to do, with everything done in one evening once per month in the office of LACA. Things have changed, with an increase of over 1,500 houses and going to planning enquiries and other meetings, to speak, it's been good fun. I have enjoyed it and I will miss the Monday evenings"

Cllr Mrs Pullin spoke to thank the Council for her gift:

"I echo Mary's comments; I joined the Parish Council 34 years ago when Mary started her role as the Planning Chairman so she has completed that role also for 34 years. I was here when we celebrated 100 years of Parish Councils with celebrations; we had fun that year which the village supported and this is an event as an offshoot of the Parish Council that was enjoyed and is missed. Thank you"

3. Parochial Charity Accounts for 2018

The accounts of the Trustees to the Parochial Charity were made available at the meeting.

4. Resolutions

The Clerk had not received written notice of any resolutions.

5. Question and answer session

Question from resident: Why is the footpath planned between Tydings Close and Theynes Croft not to proceed?

A: Cllr Hardingham - By time we were told of monies available, it was impossible to make arrangements for the footpath; the ownership of the land is not with NSC. Tydings Close has remained as a private road and North Somerset Council haven't any plans to take this on.

A: Chair - We were notified very late in the day; NSC misplaced some funds. The PC has identified a scheme to make good use of the funds but this might not have been our first choice if we had had more time.

Question from resident: Was it part of an agreement with the Developer?

A: Yes. Because of timing, the money needs to be spent extremely quickly; the order has been put in for works.

Resident comment: But this is not part of Tydings; the plans showed a footpath to Theynes Croft which wasn't done.

A – Yes this wasn't taken up by NSC, the PC was told just before Christmas that money was available to be spent within 3 months for a footpath or play equipment.

Question from resident: Will this preclude the football there?

A: No

Question from resident: What was the reason of closing the footpath from Parsonage Road?

A (Cllr Moorcroft): The Developer who owned the field decided they no longer wanted people walking across the field. A temporary notice was put up but removed by public which upset the owners who then closed the footpath. Members of the PC and I went to a meeting with NSC in Weston–super-Mare and NSC agreed that this was an important footpath to be considered. However, before NS began the process to the developer agreed that the path could be dedicated as a Public Right of Way (PROW). The developer Persimmon owns the land with it rented by the farmer.

Resident Comment: I congratulate NSC's traffic calming measures by putting manhole covers 2" below the road surface; this is terrible.

A: Cllr Moorcroft – I agree but NSC budgets are under pressure.

Resident comment: I wrote to you in February about the number of Cllrs we have; I don't understand the reply I got from Mrs Turp.

A: Chair - The number of Cllrs has been discussed in the past and will be discussed again.

Resident comment: I don't understand why we have more Councillors than Clevedon.

A: Chair - Historically, there are 2 Councillors in Leigh Woods so to make same proportion, Long Ashton needs 19 Councillors.

Resident comment: No there was 21.

Question from resident: I applaud the work but why so many?

A: Chair – even with 21 Councillors, it is hard to get people to cover the workload. The amount of work Councillors do is tremendous.

Resident comment: I think the question raised was that it is not democratic.

A: Chair - This is the system.

Resident comment: The sentiment needs to be raised.

Question from resident: Have you heard the latest on The Vale; they want to build 3 villages; what's the latest?

A: Chair – Developers are still proposing the 4,500 houses with 3 villages. NSC are stating this is not necessary but there are a number of villages subject to development that think The Vale is the best thing since sliced bread, as they hope it would relieve pressure for development in their own villages, so it isn't going to disappear soon.

Question from resident: So will Long Ashton fight it then?

A: Cllr Moorcroft – if this was ever built, the electorate would outvote us; Long Ashton would suffer as we wouldn't have the number of votes. The promises of schools would have to be funded by NSC, precept and central funding, not the developer. The developers make lots of promises but these aren't always carried out. Cllr Cave can comment on this.

A: Cllr Cave – It is important we are aware of the real threat. Other parishes are well organised; they are facing a direct threat under the Joint Spatial Plan which we aren't, but that

doesn't mean we are not threatened. Parishes like Churchill and Yatton think that by supporting The Vale, they are not threatened. An Inspector will be shortly inspecting the Joint Spatial Plan and might say you aren't building the houses promised, so these parishes may support The Vale. Under any housing development plan, the allocation for affordable housing will go to Bristol and so Bristol is likely site this within North Somerset which will bankrupt NSC. We need to be aware of the danger; Long Ashton Parish Council is preparing, but it is not as geared up as other parish councils are.

Resident comment: I am a born and bred resident and deplore the grand plans, the communication of the South Bristol Link road (SBL). The noise from the SBL by the churchyard is horrendous and all day long. If 4,000 houses going to be built, this will get much worse.

A: Chair – Taylor Wimpey have deep pockets for marketing and state the infrastructure is there but we know it is already at near full capacity, boasting of green areas but we know these are old tips that can't be built on. The PC has set a system that if they have made press releases, we respond.

A: Cllr Moorcroft – also if you add the traffic to the airport and development, into NSC, we are looking at huge traffic numbers on the A38.

Resident comment: When the new road was done, study plans showed traffic coming down the bypass will have its own lane, and not coming down the bypass.

A: Cllr Moorcroft – Agree the original plans were changed. Remember if you want to comment on the airport, a submission needs to be in shortly.

Resident comment: It is interesting that for the recent meeting at Woodspring golf club, Long Ashton wasn't leafleted.

A: Chair – Agreed. This was followed up and the developers insisted they had made arrangements for Long Ashton to receive leaflets.

Question from resident: Talking about the airport; have the PC put in a response? What are the views put in on behalf of the PC?

A: Cllr Moorcroft – Yes, that it is over capacity in the area.

A: Chair – We're members of the Parish Council Airport Association who put in very detailed responses; we use this information and tend to agree with them; they look at everything including financial analysis.

A: Cllr Moorcroft – There is an airport in the South West that is underutilised with good communications and now with a free bridge but it is not mentioned.

A: Chair – Remember Bristol airport does bring a wider benefit to the wider Bristol area; it is massively supported, so we need to be a little bit careful how we look at this.

6. Sarah Merriman, General Manager, Tyntesfield gave a presentation about what is happening at Tyntesfield and the National Trust's plans for the future.

Sarah thanked the members of the audience that are National Trust members and that the National Trust couldn't do what they do without them. She is at present the General Manager in the Bristol area but is leaving in 2 months' time and her presentation will touch on what can be expected to be seen in 2019 and the future.

Tyntesfield as a Gothic building, with its full story not yet told; we will see the story of William Gibbs who created the wealth that allowed Tyntesfield to flourish, and start to explore more of his history and Hispanic links, he was born in Madrid. Tyntesfield is a story of love. Visitors to the estate this year will see items Gibbs brought back from his travels, his influence and tastes seen in the items of his collection. The raffle tickets this year helped fund the restoration of ornamental peacocks, and a foot of a rare and fragile Malaga figure.

In the first year, the NT will be focusing on the house but next year will focus on the gardens which will include pineapples, dahlias and chilli plants; the original gardens were designed to show how good Guano was as a fertiliser. Tyntesfield will be celebrating the replanted orchard which has been a 5 year project with the help of volunteers.

Conservation is looking after what's already on the estate; volunteers have been trained in hedge laying and dry-stone walling and habitats have been looked at to allow them to thrive. Finally, the Victorian themed Christmas is a tradition but the NT recognises it could do more and is hoping more lighting of gardens will happen at Christmas so fewer people are turned away.

This year assuming all goes well, a new visitor welcome building will be built. Currently when entering, visitors have to go through a challenging, non-obvious route to find the welcome centre; the entrance made sense when buses arrived from Nailsea, but not from entering from the car parking areas now. The new level-access architect-planned centre will be set in the woodland belt and it won't interfere with the historic building – this means that the original buildings can be developed. It is hoped work will commence at the beginning of next year.

The lake that was drained in the war to stop the reflection is going to be re-surfaced and filled. Archaeological investigations have started; a bore hole has been completed and when filled will be a good habitat for Great Crested Newts. Funding of £150,000 is required for the project. The Rose Garden will have beds restored to the original planting plan as a partnership with volunteers.

NT's spending on local conservation is between £1.2-£1.5 million/year for the conservation of Tyntesfield and the wider estate which supports 40 cottages. The minimum essential cost is £800,000. It is membership that keeps the restoration works going; the backlog in the South West area for conservation works is £500 million. We don't say thank you enough to the visitors so thank you.

A presentation given to the 750 volunteers was shown highlighting some of the tasks big and small that staff and volunteers carry out to keep Tyntesfield going. It showed that it's not all glamour.

Question and answer session addressed to Sarah:

Question from resident: I am a Sustrans volunteer ranger for the area; the new welcome building, will it welcome walkers and cyclists and how do you think they will get there?

A: We are looking to enhance access from the top road and also the part funded Festival Way extension from the bottom of estate and there is also a footpath.

Comment and question from Resident: I helped maintain this. For cyclists, an upgrade of the bridleway within the estate to touring cycling standard, is needed. It is important to encourage walking from B3130 up through the Home Farm track and modification to link it to the welcome building. I did comment on the planning application; has this been approved?

A: Yes, all comments were taken note of. Thank you for your comments.

Resident comment: My father said the holly hedge is the longest in England.

A: We would like to accept that, thank you for letting us know.

Resident comment: I would like to endorse the comment from the Sustrans gentleman; it should be a high priority to create a sustainable route from Long Ashton to Tyntesfield and to Nailsea; regular walkers and cyclists take their life into their hands.

A: I agree that many of the NT estates are in awkward sites for green transport and not the easiest to get to, and that we need to address the Sustrans link; there is not an easy answer.

Resident comment; it would not be a big deal to turn the wide track beside the B3130 into a cycle path.

A: It is not Tyntesfield land but we are open to any voice being added.

Resident comment: I understand the shop and café are popular with those not members of NT who now will have to pay parking fee.

A: If you are not a volunteer of the site or a member, there will be a parking charge; we are concerned with the number of cars coming onto site; if we're not making it worth your while to be a member of NT, I'm interested to know how we can. We want reasons for people to come and return and ideas to encourage this. We know that paying for the privilege of town centre parking prohibits shopping but have to weigh this up; it is not an individual site decision.

Question from resident: Years ago the water for the house and estate was collected, there are tanks; are these still available for the use of the lake?

A: We don't have plans of the waterways around the estate; it would be fascinating to map them out. Following the tragedy of our sister site near London which burnt down, we would like to have water for fire-fighting. The tanks are there but not in working order - sections of pipework need replacing to be used again.

Question from resident – Is the ground pump still there?

A: This is unknown.

Resident comment: Last time I was there it was there, it used to feed the estate; they were effective and free of charge.

A: We have completed a borehole into the aquifer; as there will be public access we have to be careful; the lead pipes would need replacing; it would be a good public resource.

7. Mr Alan Atkins (architect) gave a presentation on behalf of the Long Ashton Churchyard and War Memorial Trust regarding plans for a new war memorial in Long Ashton:

Leaflets of the proposed plans were given out to the electors and A3 display boards of artist impressions of the memorial and site were presented and Mr Atkins gave a report on the work completed so far and the aims of the memorial:

“Sadly 2 world wars were needed to defend the freedom and liberty of this country; nearly 100 died from this parish. The average age of the 63 who died in WW1 was 26 and included teenagers. Money raised in the years after the war was put towards the village hall which was erected as a memorial. Memorials in villages tend to be out of view or incomplete and we want to bring these together. Following attendance at the RBL Battles Over, a committee was set up. A Trust was formed to provide a suitable memorial as a prominent landmark and ensure sacrifices are not forgotten.

A number of people in the village have given their time; the Chairman and also students from UWE have worked on the design for the leaflet. Many local residents involved in the conflicts went to Northleaze School. The site chosen is opposite the old school which has views over the surrounding country side and is in an ideal location.

The proposed memorial design is modern but traditional in materials of granite and stone. It is intended for everyone; for both rest and memorial with a garden for contemplation. The pamphlets give an illustration of the scheme.

The design principle is of 3 different heights of stones to represent men, women and children who have died in the conflicts they are arranged in a trail pattern with the heights to spiral skywards to the union jack in the centre of the triangle. At the top of each stone, a circular stone is placed as a symbolic eye; it will reflect the real memories of the people. The spaces between the stones allow people to stand close, engage and be involved with the memorial and be at peace for what they have done. The courtyard is open to the road for prominence and to locate it. There will be spaces with benches and wheelchairs for peace and contemplation with space in a garden and looking out to the countryside.

The Trust will be applying for planning permission. The intention is to launch fundraising in June with the World War II memorial events. The handouts are for village to get a proper understanding of the memorial; the committee will be obtaining costs, bring a design to successful conclusion and provide an important contribution to the village and residents.

Question and answer session addressed to Alan:

Question from resident: Do you have an estimate of costs?

A: It would be foolish to jump in now; it is not expected there will be much change from £50,000 but we have to consider maintenance, planning fees, cleaning and repair. The amount to be raised could be much higher.

Question from resident: Are the monies looking to be raised by public subscription?

A: Yes.

Question from resident: How are you looking to start work without funding?

A: No idea at present.

Question from resident: Is this near the old Northleaze school site?

A: yes, the school is Victorian, a lot of children attended at that time. It is now a residential house. It is an important location from Church house; now there can be the wreath laying at the memorial and the car park will provide space for people. The design allows access from Garden of remembrance from the back.

Question from resident: This will be a raised area?

A: It won't be raised; it will be level with the existing pavement - the walls will make up the difference in height.

Resident comment: The PC and the Church in the past looked at access from the car park through into Church House.

A: A ramp is intended at the back; the proposal will be on the corner – it doesn't stretch far enough to get the access being requested.

Question/comment by resident: At the request of the Parochial Church Council, a design was prepared to allow access to/from the forecourt of Church House. 3 different schemes were prepared; these weren't taken forward due to financial reasons with other pressing requirements which the church is still carrying out. The scheme is in suspense but would you like to be copied in on these?

A: Yes, it may help influence designs.

Chairman comment: We have previously had a presentation from the group and the PC has agreed it would like to support this scheme.

Chairman thanked the Councillors, Committee members and electors for attending. The meeting ended at 20:55 with refreshments.