

Sourton Parish Council annual report to the Annual Parish Meeting 2018

During the year the PC has had representatives on the Neighbourhood/ Plan Group, Destination Okehampton, Dartmoor National Park Forum and the Northern Links committee. Councillors have also received planning training from West Devon's lead officer for planning. A copy of the Good Councillor's Guide has been purchased and is being circulated.

In May the PC agreed to donate £250 towards Bridestowe PC's project to obtain a Devon Air Ambulance Trust lighting mast on Bridestowe Sporting Green, having supported its application for a grant towards the cost.

Town and Parish's grant fund money was used to do extra grass cutting around the parish including strimming around Trescote Way and along the verges in the village. Also used for clearing blocked drains and ditches.

The Sourton bus shelter was painted and varnished to a high standard in the autumn and it is expected that this will last for several years.

Thorndon bus shelter was damaged in the winter, and Cllr Spry kindly repaired it with no charge.

The PC has tried to obtain 'No HGV' signage for Forda, and offered to pay for it, but DC highways will not allow it. Highways have requested a list of road works that need doing in the parish including potholes on the minor roads so please can parishioners report any problems to the Clerk.

The PC has asked DNP to put Tree Preservation Orders on some of the trees on Sourton Green. This is still ongoing. Evidence that they are at risk is required.

In September Cllr Kacznow resigned and Mr Peter Deacon was co-opted in January.

Following BT's decision to remove most phone boxes from the parish, the council decided to purchase the telephone kiosk at Thorndon for £1. A group of residents of Thorndon has since got together with the aim of purchasing a defibrillator for the kiosk and getting appropriate training and systems in place..

The PC obtained a TAP grant for the full amount for the project and the group is waiting for BT to decommission the box, so that it can go ahead. The PC has made a financial commitment of up to £100 a year for the upkeep of the kiosk and defibrillator.

West Devon has withdrawn support for the Parish Council website.. It is now compulsory for PC's to have a website and publish certain data such as minutes, accounts etc to comply with the Transparency Code. A grant has been obtained to pay for the new website and some training to manage it. Construction of the website is underway and it will be going live shortly.

Following some years of discussion about the purchase of land for an extension to the churchyard and land for a car park, it was agreed to go ahead with both, providing parishioners showed their support. Parishioners had already been consulted about the cemetery and shown strong support for that so it was agreed to hold a public meeting about the car park. The conclusion of the meeting was that there was not enough support for a car park in the proposed field, but that another field on the other side of the current parking area would be a better possibility, if for sale. The PC are looking into this. The church has since received an offer to buy ground from another benefactor so the PC is no longer involved with that project.

The parish council recently nominated parishioner Tony Batten for a WD Mayoral Award for the work he does and the help he gives in the parish, which we were delighted to hear he has won.

Due to increasing time taken to complete meetings, it was agreed in December to have a 6 month trial of holding monthly meetings.