

Ladies Group

2018 saw us raise our biggest yearly total for the village charities. In December we handed over £6,000 in total, a share for the Church, Chapel and village hall of £2,000 each. To date we have raised over £33,000 which has all been ploughed back into the village to help with general running costs etc. This year we are continuing our fund-raising efforts by means of undertaking a variety of activities; the most recent being catering for a funeral of over 400 mourners.

Our membership has continued to grow, and in spite of us losing a key member of the group just recently, we now have a membership of 30 which is amazing. We still have a variety of speakers and demonstrations....this month we are engaging in some willow weaving which is pleasing to the "crafty" members of the group. In May we have been asked to help out and assist the Merton Monks at the yearly Rally. Although on a much smaller scale, due to a bereavement, there will be no stalls, however, we have been asked to serve an afternoon tea. Any profit made at this event will be shared with us, Cancer Research and the local hospice.

We will continue to raise as much as we can for our village charities. This can only be achieved by the time, effort and generosity of the group members and we thank everyone for the support they have shown us at our various events over the years.

100 Club

Thanks to the subscribers, there is just under £100 to donate to the Baxter Hall.

Stevenson Hunt

We would like to pass on our thanks to local landowners for continuing to welcome us onto their land.

Footpaths update

There appears to be some confusion over the cycle route at North Town Cross. It directs cyclists up the hill to Sheepwash rather than Brandize Hill.

St Petros Church

The PCC were very disappointed to learn just before Christmas that we failed again to get a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards the repairs to the church roof. We will have to go back to the drawing board but at the moment our thinking is to go for smaller grants which mean the work will take longer to do. We are grateful to the village for supporting us either in donations, attending fund raising events and coming to services.

Susannah has led some lovely services with help from David and Jane Birk who brought their puppets along. Susannah wearing her Christmas pudding hat and getting us all to sing happy birthday baby Jesus on Christmas Day was well worth going to church for!

The PCC continues to care for the Graveyard and pay for having the grass cut. It is quite an expense out of our budget every year, we do receive a grant of £250 from the Parish Council but that doesn't cover the cost of one cutting.

An Alpha course held last September was very popular and led to a fellowship group which meets once a fortnight. We do hope to hold another Alpha course this year so if you are interested please speak to me or David French.

Our fund-raising events were well supported, the ferret racing was very enjoyable and we hope to do it again. The cider and pasty walk was also well supported thanks to Emma Richards and Richard Gooding for planning the route. The Victorian evening saw everyone really go to town on their outfits which were wonderful.

The PCC hopes the church will continue to grow in membership and that the village will continue to support all our efforts.

Merton and Petrockstowe Heritage Group

We have had varied and interesting speakers throughout the year and enjoyed trips to Tapley Park, Lew Trenchard Manor and Holsworthy Museum where we heard about the prison camp sited in Holsworthy during WW2. Many of the prisoners were sent to work on local farms as labour was in short supply. Talks have included early photography in N Devon, old postcards of Dartmoor and Conchies held at Dartmoor Prison.

The group put on a display in St Petrocs church remembering men from the village who had fought in WW1 and also contributed photos for a display about the Baxter Hall which celebrated its 40th anniversary.

Membership has fallen slightly as some members have moved away. Philip Collins stepped down as chair at the AGM after many years of service for which we are most grateful. His place has been taken by Roger Vooght.

We look forward to more interesting speakers and trips this year. Meetings are split between the 2 villages.

Ladies Skittles

We continue to play in the Holsworthy Ladies Skittles League. Unfortunately, we have lost a few players this year but, I am hopeful we will be able to field 2 teams again, if anyone here would like to 'have a go' or they know of anyone who would like to play, please contact me. Our club was represented at all 3 cup matches – something I think we should be proud of – some of the teams have opted out of this. Our challenge cup girls got through to the semi-final where they were beaten by 10 pins. We start again in late September/early October.

Flex & Tone

This group goes from strength to strength and the numbers attending varies between 7 and 13 ladies. This year we replaced all the gingham tablecloths for the hall, plus some really good cooks' knives and a few other things for the kitchen. I still have some money left which I will keep until there is something the hall needs.

Baxter Hall

The focus is on replacing the roof and the response from the village has been excellent with over 70 letters of support. Our thanks go to all those who give of their time and/or money!

Petrockstowe Sports & Social Club

There has been a big increase in dog walkers using the rec since the sheep have not been put in this winter. I have done a fair amount of exterior painting whilst the weather was dry, whilst Andy Holmes has agreed to undertake repairs to the toilet floors, doors and outside tables. Charles Inniss of Hatherleigh Cricket Club has agreed to supply fertiliser to the Square in the next few weeks. The club are holding their AGM tomorrow evening in the Methodist Chapel Hall at 7.30pm when the dates of the 2019 season will be agreed, however the date for the Fete and Dog Show has been set for Saturday 6th July. One major alteration this season is the fact that Petrockstowe Cricket Club has resigned from the North Devon Cricket League and will therefore only be playing friendly matches. This decision has been made due to the lack of players available in order to make up a team of 11 players. A revised list of Friendly Fixtures will be published shortly. Finally, on behalf of the Committee I would like to thank Geoff Fox for draining the water in the pavilion and buildings during the winter months. Lastly, may I ask for support from the village during the coming season please.

Gardening Club

We have held our normal 10 meetings plus Summer BBQ and Christmas meal. We have had varied talks and visits to 2 gardens. Chris Smith has resigned as treasurer and we are pleased to announce that our membership is up slightly.

Petrockstowe Newsletter

We have recently had an issue with emails being spammed so are looking at which contact details are given out. Distribution is up by 5 copies. Ford currently print for free but it is unknown how long this will last for but we will need to encourage people to become paperless. Revenue is still coming in from the ads. I have decided that I will resign as Editor next year. I would like to recruit a young reporter for the village, but have not found anyone willing to take up the role.

Website

Dee French is the current webmaster but would like a deputy to cover her for holidays etc. Currently looking to update the distribution list and become compliant with Data Protection regulations.

Cllr Wiseman

£1.5million has been given in grants over the past year. Recycling is up and the uptake for garden waste is 30% higher than expected.

Bellringing

It's a year since the bells were last rung, but we now have a group of bell ringers again. The intention is to be able to ring at Weddings and Christmas etc. During our training, please be patient with use – we are improving. It is nice to hear them ringing again. Anyone interested, please come along.

General comments NHW is due to be relaunched. There are several new people in the village. It is difficult to get young people involved/engaged in local groups/clubs, and it is still the same people doing a lot of work; same people who attend events and functions. St Petrocs Church

produce a welcome pack to the village and are happy to distribute it – please let them know if you have new neighbours.

Clr Saywell

(Following on from a discussion about engaging youth) I am the youngest Clr on the County Council but it can be difficult finding younger people wanting to join the council or get involved, and I would urge the Council to look at other ways of engaging young people to get involved in village life (e.g. through social media). The County Council's projected budget is on track. Children's Services have overspent by £11 - £12million. There was a mild winter so Highways and Adult Social Care were not overstretched. I am pleased to have been able to give £850 to Baxter Hall, and the recent success with road signage. Road at Berry Cross will be resurfaced in mid-July and the road through the village is also scheduled. Within Torrington Rural there is £1.4million for capital highways work in the budget. DCC work hard to look after those who need it; the old, young and vulnerable. I'd like to thank the PC for all their help and support and look forward to working with them moving forward.