

Notes from public meeting 20th Feb. to launch Parish Plan Questionnaire

Introduction

Nick Ferguson introduced the Steering Group. Richard Haigh explained the deadline for return of the questionnaires and the process for their return. Questions from the audience were then invited.

Questions raised

a) Housing:

A concern was raised regarding Dartington's potential plans to build houses at the land at the back of Garden Close. Richard Haigh confirmed that a gentleman's agreement (unwritten) had been made between the Parish Council and Dartington Trust re. gifting the land to the Parish, for the use as community gardens/allotments. However, Dartington had since changed their minds. Whilst planners had agreed, in theory, that the building of 5 houses would be possible, a full planning application would have to be made. Richard also stated that, in the Joint Local Plan, it was unlikely that there would be any allocation of building land in small villages, such as Rattery. The prospect of getting planning permission would, therefore, be difficult.

There was also a query regarding the housing allocation process for the new houses in Garden Close, which was also explained. It was confirmed that Dartington also owned the children's playground field (for which the Parish Council are currently negotiating a very long-term lease), and Kettle Well field. Richard Haigh stated that, in meetings with Dartington Trust, it was clear that they were keen to keep good community relations.

It was emphasised that completing the questionnaires would give useful support for the Parish Council in representing the views of the local community.

b) Community Energy Renewables Scheme:

Had one been considered? The answer was no, not yet, but if sufficient interest was noted in the questionnaires, this could be considered.

c) Highways:

Concerns were raised regarding the A385, particularly speed and weight issues potentially affecting the railway bridge. Sue Tett explained that she had spoken to the Highways department, but, due to lack of reported incidents, no action would be taken. It was noted that there were lots of minor incidents, but these were not reported.

The poor state of the road from Ashbourne Farm to A38 was also raised. Sue Tett confirmed that she had already made an official complaint, but that it was unlikely to be repaired, due to lack of funds. Therefore, the Parish Council was considering adopting the road warden self-help scheme, whereby the community get given materials, and do the repairs themselves.

An issue regarding speeding on the 'rat-run' between the A38-A385 was also raised. With regard to putting up signage to ameliorate this, Sue Tett explained that it was a complicated and expensive process to do anything with Highways, so this would be unlikely.

With regard to putting signs in Garden Close to alert drivers to the possibility of children playing in the vicinity, Richard Haigh stated that these would be going up very soon.

Conclusion

It was re-iterated that it would be much easier to take action on any concerns if there was hard evidence to back them, so timely return of the completed questionnaires was essential.

A vote of thanks was given to the Steering Group, and in particular Richard Haigh, for all their hard work in putting together the exhibition and questionnaire.

Date of next meeting:

Tuesday 11th April – Parish Assembly. Results of questionnaire and draft Parish Plan to be presented.