



# RATTERY PARISH COUNCIL

## STATE OF PLAY MARCH 2023

The parish council has very few things it **must** do *but quite a few things it can do.*

It must:

- follow **correct procedures**
- hold at least **4 meetings a year**
- consider **biodiversity** in all its decisions and
- do all it can do to prevent **crime and disorder**.

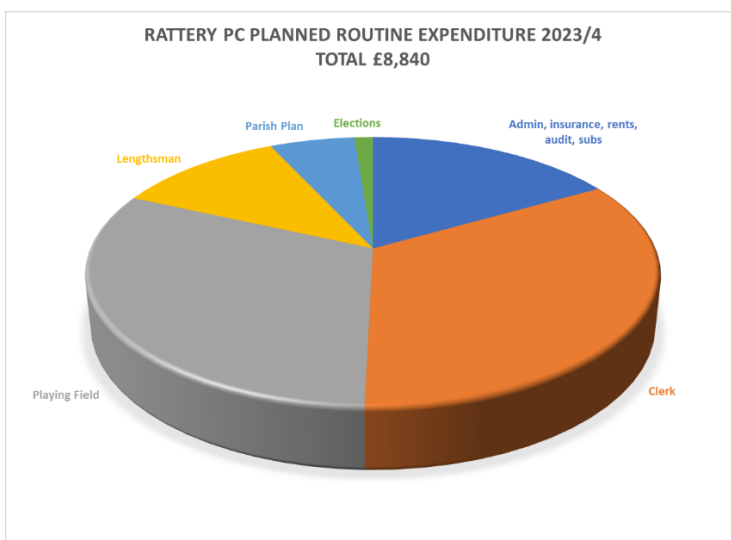
It is expected to:

- Give views, on behalf of the community, on **planning applications**.
- **Alert relevant authorities** to problems, or work that needs to be done.
- Help the other tiers of local government **keep in touch** with their local communities.

**This is all many parish councils do - anything else is up to the council.**

## MONEY

- Parish Councils get their money as part of the Council Tax by setting a “**precept**”.
- Rattery Parish Council sets our precept at **£8,000** a year - £37 a year for a Band D property. This places us 49<sup>th</sup> out of the 61 councils in the South Hams – well below average.
- We also get grants (about £1500 p.a.) from the County Council to fund some of the work we do to maintain footpaths or carry out work on road repairs and drainage.



If we set a precept at the average level for rural councils in the South Hams we would raise over £13,000.

Should we do so?

How would we spend the extra budget?



## WHAT CAN WE DO?

Specifically, Parish Councils have the power to create/manage/maintain the items on the list below. Items in bold are those currently undertaken or planned in Rattery. Are there others on this list we should be doing?

- Allotments
- Buildings for community use, athletic, social or educational clubs, offices and meetings
- Burial grounds
- Bus Shelters, roadside seats, and shelters
- Byelaws for local open spaces and car parks
- Car sharing schemes, grants for bus services, and taxi-fare concessions
- Christmas Lights
- Crime prevention measures
- **Ditches**
- Entertainment and support for arts, festivals and celebrations
- **Footpaths**
- Lights on streets and public places
- **Litter bins in public spaces**
- Lotteries
- **Websites**, Newsletters and Public information
- Parking
- **Provide traffic signs and other notices**
- Public conveniences
- Purchase land, including compulsory purchase
- **Recreational facilities**
- Tourism promotion measures
- Tree planting
- Verges
- **Village greens**, common land, and open spaces

We are not limited to the items on the list. We can take action with some degree of freedom “in the interests of all or some of the inhabitants of the parish” so long as the expenditure is commensurate with the benefit.

**To do more we would have to raise more money through Council Tax. Should we spend more?**

## WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

Since 2017 Rattery Parish Council has been following an agenda set by the Parish Plan.

We set up Advisory Groups to harness the expertise, enthusiasm and energy of parishioners who would like to get involved. The initial membership of each group was drawn from the volunteers who have helped to produce the Plan.

With the completion of the Parish Plan the system of advisory groups has been replaced with one where each councillor has responsibility for an area of the council's work. The final review of progress is available on the village website. Most objectives were achieved with the major exception of that of providing a full range of facilities and services for children and young people.

The groups were:

- Building and Land Development
- Business and Telecommunications
- Highways and Drainage
- Environment
- Children and Young People.



**Much of the work is done by volunteers.**



We are part of the Devon CC Road Warden scheme. DCC supplies the materials, but volunteers do the work (under the supervision of Road Warden Lister Bass). They go way beyond what is done in other parishes, repairing potholes normally left to DCC.

Councillors themselves do jobs like minor repairs to the playground, delivering circulars, etc.

Special mention to:

Trevor Paul, who manages our parish website.

Ray Willis, who monitors drainage in the parish and supervises the work of our paid Lengthsman, Daniel Underhill.

Peter Smerdon, who provided the garden waste trailer service from the Village Hall car park.



## WHAT NEXT?

### WE NEED A NEW COUNCIL AND A NEW PLAN.

## NEW COUNCIL

#### The seven current parish councillors.



Richard Haigh  
Chairman



Lister Bass  
Vice Chairman  
Road Warden



Linda Jopson  
Link to St Mary's



Kim Howard  
Environment



Rob Hatt  
Business and  
Telecoms



Peter Smerdon  
SHDC Councillor



Will Edwards  
Recent recruit –  
no specific brief  
yet

- Their 4 -year term of office ends in April this year.
- Some, but not all, of the current councillors will stand for office again.
- We will need at least 3 or 4 new councillors.
- In recent years we have not had to hold elections because the number of people standing has matched the number of vacancies.

#### ELECTIONS

The formal process will start on 23rd March with the Notice of Election. Nomination papers must be delivered to the Returning Officer by 4th April and Polling Day is 4th May.

**Can you think of someone who would make a good parish councillor?**

**Would you consider joining the council?**

To participate in the monthly meetings at which decisions are made.

To take an active interest in parish matters.

Find out more about being a councillor by contacting any of the existing councillors - contact details on the village website.



## A NEW PLAN

The plan reflects the views of parishioners on a wide range of issues and so guides the Parish Council in its policies and decisions.

**Later in the year, to put together a new plan, we will be sending out a questionnaire to every household to find out what matters to you.**

**Can you to help put that plan together? Can you identify any of the key issues? What ideas do you have? What would be important to you?**

**Issues that have emerged so far.**

Like most local councils, we have declared a **Climate and Environment Emergency**. What does that mean in practice? What could we do collectively? How can we make Rattery more resilient to climate change? How can we protect and improve our local environment?

In terms of the 2017 Parish Plan, the big failure has been in providing facilities and services for **Children and Young People**. What should we do?

Are there **facilities** we might provide for the parish? If so, what? Should we increase the precept to pay for them?

The South Ham DC plan suggests that about 10 or so **new houses** could be built in the village of Rattery. What should be our response to any planning application?

There are proposals for **community energy** schemes. Should we participate?

## COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND OFFERS OF HELP

**The easiest way is to send an email to clerk to the council, Sharon Raggett**

**[sharon.raggett@sky.com](mailto:sharon.raggett@sky.com)**



## RATTERY WORD PICTURE

In 2017, in the questionnaire that formed the basis of the current plan, parishioners were asked for five words or phrases that expressed why they like living in Rattery and five that expressed what changes or improvement that they would like to see.

The results were used to create this word picture, the good points are in blue, and the desired changes are in red. The size of each word or phrase is determined by how many times it was used.

What words or phrases would you use now?

