

St Stephens by Launceston Rural Parish Council

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held 15/05/25

Present: as per attached list

Chairman's report was received in writing and is attached.

A reports was received from Recreation Ground Committee and is attached.

Meeting closed at 1930

St Stephen by Launceston Rural Parish Council Chair's Report 15 May 2025

Truscott Village Green suffered vandalism and new planting was destroyed. This was logged with the police. A sign was purchased to clarify the status of Truscott Village Green. Conservation work was carried out at Truscott Ponds and Green.

The Parish Council contacted Inspector Hodgkiss of Devon and Cornwall Police to express our concern that Launceston Police Station did not have a front desk. Residents requested that reassurance in the light of continuing anti-social behaviour.

A Code of Conduct breach was found by Cornwall Council Standards Monitoring Officer against a Parish Councillor and a copy of the councillor's apology was requested by the Monitoring Officer. The councillor informed the parish council that he would not apologise as required as he had appealed the decision. The Monitoring Officer did not receive an appeal request nor a copy of the requested apology. The Parish Council then censured the councillor as advised by the Monitoring Officer. The Parish Council agreed to place the Code of Conduct Decision notice on the website for clarification.

Truscott Noticeboard was renovated by a resident. Thanks were extended by the Parish Council. The bus shelter by the cemetery has had roof repairs, new guttering and seating. The bus shelter on Menheniot Crescent has been professionally cleaned. The defibrillator at Truscott had a new battery.

A legal letter was received from Langore Village Hall Charity regarding the lease of parish land ex-VG666. The Parish Council was waiting for a response from the solicitors before it could take any further action.

Thanks were expressed to Cornwall Council for actioning the reopening of the Public Footpath 548/4/1 between Cross Lanes and Homeleigh Garden Centre to ensure safe pedestrian passage. Thanks were expressed to Blake Poultry Farm for kindly storing road salt for parish salt bins. The Parish Council purchased a second Radar Speed Sign to monitor traffic speed at recognised speeding areas in the parish. Thanks were expressed to Cornwall Council for erecting poles to mount the equipment.

The Parish Council expressed its concern to Cornwall Council about the lack of pedestrian off-road passage at Dutson and need for a proper crossing between the two sites of Homeleigh Garden

Centre. It was suggested that the Parish Council apply for funding to the Community Area Partnership (CAP) for the latter.

The Parish Council delivered a survey questionnaire to Menheniot Crescent residents for their response to the decision of Cornwall Council to turn off street lighting from midnight to 5am. The response was decidedly against turning off the lighting, suggesting dimming instead. The request to Cornwall Council was rejected.

There was prolonged fly tipping on Langore Village Green VG630 over the winter months on the children's hard standing play area. The Clerk contacted the Recreation Grounds Charity requesting a copy of their Risk Assessments and Safeguarding Policy.

Bank closures in Launceston were a concern for parishioners. The Clerk contacted the MP. A renal dialysis unit for Launceston is being pursued by the MP on request from the Parish Council. Residents in Truscott were concerned about agricultural vehicles accessing a boundary hedge on Truscott Village Green and damaging new planting. The residents produced a Statement of Facts which has been disputed by the adjoining landowner. The Parish Council acknowledged receipt of the landowner's information which will be considered by the new council after election.

The Clerk contacted Cornwall Council Planning Department for clarification regarding conditions of a barn in Truscott.

Joan Heaton
15 May 2025

Recreational Ground Trustees Report

Another year has passed and unfortunately no progress has been made with a Deed of Variation regarding the Lease agreement between ourselves and the Village Hall Committee. The sticking point seems to lie with the Parish Council and the lack of knowledge they have on their responsibilities as custodian trustees. A qualified solicitor was even instructed to remind the Parish Council of their role as Custodian Trustees to no avail.

The response from the Clerk was quite Juvenile, unprofessional and inappropriate given the nature of the action required as Part of the Parish Council's responsibility in this matter. As we the Recreational Ground Managing Trustees are astute well advised and knowledgeable individuals, the trustees find the response "we don't think it needs changing from the Clerk, an inadequate response and woefully insufficient.

It has now been more than six months since this matter was last discussed so it can now be put back on the Parish Council's Agenda!

Many families have enjoyed the new play equipment over the last twelve months and many parish events have been held on our Village Green, from Cream Teas, Easter egg hunts through to Parish Day Fete's and the annual Beer and Pasty evenings.

The Village Green is a well used and cherished part of our community. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has helped make these events happen over the last

year and thank all those involved from spring cleaning the village green. litter picking, planting bulbs and maintaining the Village Green.

A big thank you must be said to Councillor Ranson, who laid the dividing hedge Free of Charge to our Parishioners which enables us to maintain the hedge better in the future. The Managing Trustees do now however appear to have a problem which has occurred over the past twelve months, which unfortunately is as a result of the Parish Council's failure to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

As we are a charity we have no money ourselves or any source of Income, therefore we do require and rely on the Parish Council for help and have done so since the very beginning when the Parish Council created the Recreational Ground Charity with an agreement that the Parish Council would continue to fund the Recreational Ground mandatory responsibilities as the Parish Council receives money through Parishioners Council Tax.

In order for the Village Green to remain open and operational for the public to use, who are required to have Insurance. ROSPA reports on play equipment and Grass Cutting, which has always been paid by the Precept money the Parish Council receives in taxes, which was an agreement between the two parties right up until last year where 4 councillors out of the 7 voted to NOT pay the Insurance BIN.

I ask you to please remember that this is public money, and if the Parish Council refuse to reimburse last years payment and refuse to pay this years insurance we would have no choice but to stop people using the Village Green.

Let's hope the Parish Council finally do the Right Thing