

Lifton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held in the Tamar Room at The Arundell on
Thursday, 24th April 2025

These minutes are provisional until they are agreed and signed by the Chairman at the next meeting of the parish council

Present: Mr. Edmonds (Parish Chairman), Mr. Alexander, Mrs. Dunn, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Gynn, Mr. Measey, Mr. Sutton-Woodhouse, Mrs. Gynn, Mr. Hill (Head Teacher, Lifton Community Academy), Mrs. Major and two other residents

1. Apologies: Mr. Lees and Mrs. Glen

(Please find below reports kindly provided by organisations/groups unable to send a representative to the meeting along with the reports that were provided at the meeting itself)

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly on 25th April 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Parish Chairman

3. Chairman's report

Over the past year, Lifton Parish Council has continued to work on behalf of the community to address local concerns, enhance public spaces, and promote safety and wellbeing across the village.

Road Safety and Traffic Management

As part of ongoing efforts to address concerns about speeding through the village, a new speed sign has recently been installed. This addition aims to encourage safer driving and increase awareness among motorists traveling through the area.

The new sign is currently in place in Tinhay but is intended to be moved periodically to other locations around the village.

It should be noted that the village's two existing speed signs are currently not working, and attempts are being made to repair them. These signs may need to be replaced in the near future, subject to the availability of funds.

Alongside this, a Village Road Safety Plan has been proposed, which includes the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in key areas of the village to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. The Council is currently awaiting a decision from Devon County Council (DCC) Highways regarding the implementation of these proposals.

Concerns surrounding parking and congestion along North Road have also been raised with both DCC Highways and the Police. However, it has been acknowledged that significant improvements are limited by existing infrastructure constraints.

The issue of potholes, particularly on Park Road and the short stretch of road in front of the village seat at the top of Darkey Lane, has also been a regular concern. DCC Highways have confirmed that these areas are on their scheduled maintenance programme, and the Parish Council will continue to press for timely repairs.

The Community Speed Watch Team, led by Cllr. Dunn, has continued their excellent work monitoring and promoting safe driving within the village.

Village Environment and Maintenance

The Parish Council remains committed to maintaining the appearance of the village. Regular grass cutting, including the cemetery, has been undertaken throughout the year to ensure a tidy and welcoming environment.

The Parish Council would like to extend sincere thanks to the Lifton WI and a team of Ambrosia staff for organising and participating in litter picks, contributing to the upkeep of public spaces.

QEII Play Area Project

A major achievement this year has been the completion of the QEII Play Equipment Project, which has delivered new play equipment, improved safety surfacing, and better disabled access. The Council is grateful to the QEII Management Committee for their close collaboration and support throughout the project. The play area is now widely used by families not only from Lifton but also from neighbouring communities.

Two new waste bins are being provided—one at the Arundell Gardens play area and one at the QEII Play Area. One bin has been generously donated by LiveWest, and the other has been funded through a grant from the Borough Councillor.

Community Representation

Cllr. Gynn has continued to represent the Parish Council as part of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Councillor Advocate Scheme, ensuring that local voices are heard in wider community safety discussions.

Governance and Support

The Parish Council currently has one vacancy and continues to welcome expressions of interest from residents who wish to play a more active role in village life.

The Parish Clerk has once again provided excellent support to the Council and the community. Sue's dedication, efficiency and commitment are greatly appreciated. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all Parish Councillors for their contributions, time, and commitment throughout the year

4. Financial report:

The Parish Clerk/RFO presented a summary of the financial picture for Lifton Parish Council for 2024-25.

5. Reports and news about local group activities

- **Community Centre Annual Report 2025**

It is good to see many of our regular hirers returning year after year. Also, there have been new groups and individuals booking the hall or meeting rooms. Many newcomers have commented favourably on the facilities we offer and say they will return; in fact, a few have already booked for 2026.

CCTV has been installed to help protect the building and the users. All entrances are covered and also the rear of the building.

Due to being successful in obtaining a Community Resilience Grant, we have recently installed Solar panels on the south side of the building, which will help reduce our electricity bills during the summer months. Thanks must go to Chris Edmonds for encouraging us to apply for this and for all the help he has given us throughout the year.

The hall will be used as a polling station once again in May.

Thanks must go to the volunteers that run the twice monthly coffee mornings, which continue to prove popular. This is a time for a catch up and to savour some homemade cake.

The Salvation Army clothes bank is proving useful and is being emptied regularly.

Once again, WDBC have granted us the 20% discretionary rate on our business rates for 25/26.

Finally, thanks must go to all the groups, individuals, volunteers and Parish Councillors that have supported us during the year and we hope they will continue to do so in the future.

- **QEII Recreation Ground**

The refurbishment outside of the QEII pavilion has taken place. The problems with standing water at the entrance gateway has now been cured. Dog owners are asked to take on more responsibility for picking up after their pets and using the bins provided on-site; issues with dog fouling continues to be an issue. Overall, the QEII Recreation Ground is a very well-used and well-liked facility.

- **Lifton Community Academy**

The new Head Teacher, Mr. Adam Hill, who only took up the role yesterday, was in attendance at the meeting. He reported that it was very much his goal to imbed the school and its children into the Lifton community. Road safety is an important issue and the congestion on North Road was highlighted. Mr. Hill said that the school has signed up to the 'Living Streets Scheme' and will be covering walking to school, safe crossing, safe parking etc., with the children and their parents/carers. He welcomed the opportunity for the Community Speed Watch volunteers to attend school (with their equipment) to provide information on the local speed watch scheme. He was also keen to establish links with the local churches and community groups; and wished for the school to become involved with things such as a village litter pick. Mr. Hill confirmed that there is a defibrillator located within the school building.

- **Lifton Scouts**

Over the past few years, the Lifton Scout group has seen considerable growth and development. During 2024 the Group maintained steady numbers of young people in all age groups. In 2022 we introduced a Squirrel Scout section, for girls and boys aged 4 - 6 years old. There are now two other Squirrel Dreys in West Devon District, one in Tavistock and one in Walkham Valley. The 1st Lifton continues to be the largest Scout group in West Devon.

Starting a new section is not an easy task! Over the past four years we have started up a second Beaver Scout section, a Squirrel Scout Section and a second Cub Scout Pack.

Currently we have just over 100 young people: Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and young leaders. This is thanks to our incredibly dedicated team of 24 leaders who ensure a varied and exciting programme is offered week by week. The leaders not only give up their time for our weekly activities but also complete ongoing training and training for specific activities.

The Scout Group Trustees play a really important role in ensuring the continued development of our group, assisting with our strategic planning. We are grateful to the contribution and expertise of Peter Morris who is in his eleventh year as the Chair of Trustees. We are also grateful to Kay Dunn who has served for several years in the role of Secretary to the Trustee Board.

We appreciate the range of facilities in the village which enable us to meet week by week including Lifton Community Centre, Lifton Methodist Church and the Queen Elizabeth Recreation Ground. In addition, we make good use of the water-sports facilities at Roadford Lake each summer for sailing, kayaking and rafting.

We are grateful to both the Lifton Parish Council and West Devon Councillors for their support. In addition, we appreciate the Lifton & Tinhay businesses who have continued to support us in the past year.

Over the next few months, we will be fundraising in order to replace our store for our camping equipment which is in the water-sports car park at Roadford Lake - this is a major project and we need to raise over £20,000.

Robert Weston, Group Scout Leader, 1st Lifton Sea Scout Group

- **Cricket Club Annual Report**

Last season was interrupted by poor weather conditions. Despite the unpredictable elements, the club was still able to enjoy a number of competitive and good-spirited matches with a good mix of young and experienced players.

Looking ahead, preparations will soon be underway for the upcoming season. As in previous years, the club will once again focus on friendly fixtures against local clubs. We look forward to another summer of cricket, camaraderie, and community spirit, and we remain hopeful for more favourable weather this time around.

The club would like to thank all players, volunteers, and supporters for their continued involvement and dedication.

- **Men's Institute**

The Lifton Men's Institute continues to provide recreational opportunities for people who live in the parish. We have recently upgraded one of the snooker tables and will shortly be improving the lighting

- **Lifton Village Show**

The Lifton Village Show continues to successfully bring together people within our community.

The Village Show is held on the first Saturday of August each year and now incorporates the Village Scarecrow Trail. This has grown from the first year and in 2024, there were approximately thirty scarecrows throughout the village dressed up as favourite Disney characters.

In 2024, the theme for show classes celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Royal National Lifeboats Institute.

The Village Show welcomed new judges for all the classes and they were very complimentary about the many entries, which were almost back up to pre-covid numbers.

The committee carefully plans the programme each year and the type of fruit, vegetable and flower classes are now targeted towards plants which will be ready in August. This has been necessitated due to climate change and the effect it is having on our growing season.

The raffle was well supported and we were very grateful to the many local businesses who supported us by donating good quality prizes.

The Show would not be possible without all the people who volunteer their time both prior to and on the day, as well as those who prepare for and enter the classes.

Plans for the 2025 show are in progress and we look forward to another successful show.
Suzy Weston - Secretary of Lifton Village Show Committee

- **Lifton Local History Group**

During 2024 the Committee endeavoured to provide speakers offering a wide range of topics. Our first meeting of the year began with an interesting talk about the Medical Dogs Charity, not necessarily a Local History subject but the talk was aided by Tim Sutton-Woodhouse who lives in Lifton, now retired having worked for the charity for many years.

In March, Ellen Chaplin enlightened the group with her knowledge of Local Field Names, a subject she has encountered through her studies. It was a stimulating talk which members related to with enthusiasm.

Our summer visits to Dingles Fairground Museum, The Church House South Tawton, Sticklepath Heritage Centre and Launceston Steam Railway came to an end all too quickly before our winter programme began in September with a memorable talk about Lydford, The Stannary Laws given by Simon Dell. It was interesting to hear how the mining industry controlled much of the local social structure by wielding its power.

Other talks included Bude at War, Dartmoor Myths and Legends and The Mayflower Facts & Fiction. The Committee has welcomed some new members to the group this year and hope the trend continues in the coming year. New members and visitors are always welcome.

The committee aims to create a programme that is as wide and inclusive as it can be for the History Group; and to facilitate this, members are encouraged to put forward ideas for consideration.

Looking forward we have some interesting talks and visits booked for 2025, details of which are available on our Facebook page and notices and placed each month in the notice boards at Tinhay, Lifton and Lifton Store. Please contact Jane Rogers at janneanne22@btinternet.com for more information.

- **St Mary's Church**

Two main projects have been completed - the new vestry which is a great addition to the building and the installation of electric clock winders. Both these projects have been made possible thanks to the generosity of our late Churchwarden, Mrs. Molly Andrews, and Treasurer, Mrs. Pat Pollard.

For the 5th Sunday of the month, a new style of service was introduced across the Mission Community with services held at venues other than a church and followed with a lunch. In the summer, the service was held in the Rectory garden. These services have been very well attended.

The Remembrance Day Service was well attended and the attendances at the Christmas services were considerably higher than last year which is very encouraging.

A choir from Germany came to stay during the summer. They performed at several venues during their stay including at a welcome event at the Fox & Grapes Pub and at a concert at St Mary's. It was a wonderful occasion enjoyed by many from the local community.

The Church joined in the village Scarecrow Trail which had the theme "All Things Disney" so a Sorcerer's Apprentice was placed by the gate.

A Junior Choir has been established. They meet on a Friday after school and this is led by Reverend Conway. The choir have sung at the Carol Service and the Mothering Sunday service.

We are delighted that the school has continued to make use of the church for their Harvest and Christmas services led by Reverend Conway. The church was full on both occasions with children and their parents. We were also pleased to welcome the Lifton Scouts for their annual carol service.

Elizabeth Brown - Churchwarden

- **Lifton Singers**

Our singing group is going from strength to strength. We have 27 members now, both male and female. We enjoy learning four-part harmonies and our group includes sopranos, altos, a tenor and basses. Mary and Leslie Mazur-Park, who are professional musicians, are still our amazing accompanist and musical director and they lead us in a mixed repertoire of songs with some numbers accompanied by Leslie on the oboe.

We are always looking for new members and there are no auditions to join the group - anyone who loves singing is welcome. We meet up each Wednesday evening to sing, chat and share a cup of tea and coffee and the occasional baked treat.

We have had another enjoyable year of singing, performing and socialising. We performed at the local nursing homes such as Springfields Residential Home, accompanied one or two Liftondown Methodist chapel services, sang at the open gardens event at Coombe Trenchard and entertained a few private wedding anniversary parties. We sang at the St Eustachius' church Christmas tree festival in Tavistock, joined in the fun of the Christmas concert at St Mary the Virgin in Marystowe and finished off the summer term with a concert for friends and family. On 24th May we have a concert at Liftondown Methodist chapel to raise funds for their property renovations.

We cover easy listening numbers, songs from the shows and a lovely selection of Christmas music in the autumn term. We currently meet on Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm at Liftondown Methodist Church (PL16 0DA). You are free to come along for a taster session before deciding if you would like to join us but the key message is, if you love singing, why not give us a try.

If you would like to purchase tickets or if you require any more information about the group, please feel free to contact Barbara Scott at miss.scott@btinternet.com

- **Lifton WI (Please see page 7 for report)**

- **Busy Bees**

Mrs. Major reported that the group has been running for a few years now and has 14 to 15 ladies in attendance. The group meet on a Tuesday night and they enjoy a natter, sewing etc. The group are responsible for such things as creating the post office toppers and are currently working on a quilt-making project; they hope to display this in the church in the future. New joiners are always welcome.

6. Questions and comments from parishioners about any other matters

The local Lady Bugs toddler group at the Community Centre was mentioned; this had diminished in numbers recently due to those starting at the primary school. New participants were always welcome to come along.

The Parish Chairman, presiding at the meeting, thanked those who attended the Annual Parish Meeting and those organisations that contributed a report.

The Annual Parish Meeting closed at: 19:30. This was followed by the April Parish Council Meeting.

SIGNED..... Date.....

LIFTON WI President's Report for Lifton Parish Council April 2025

Another eventful year for our WI, as our Committee has been very active and we have had representatives at a lot of Devon Federation events as well as our own events.

Last April our W.I. ladies took part in the 'Tamar Group Meeting', a gathering of 5 different local WIs, which on this particular occasion was organised by Lewtrenchard W.I. The chosen theme was 'An Elizabethan Evening' and we were delighted with the result of the competition as we won, regardless of the strong competition from other WIs.

Now we have just held this year's Group Meeting in Lifton Community Centre, when we were responsible for hosting "An Evening of Folklore". It is not every day of the week that Lifton has a ghost, devil, pixie, witch, herbalist and country dancers in the village!

Another major event in our locality was the Lifton Village Show in August where some of our WI members were involved in stewarding, officiating and providing refreshments. Entries were good and an encouraging number of local residents came in the afternoon to see the results of the judging and presentation of the prizes.

We have had an interesting year of speakers and craft workshops and I would like to think that we have provided something for everyone in our 2024/5 programme. Ones that stand out are our 'Shall I put an Airfryer in my basket?' evening which was an improvised evening of participation to replace a 'foody' speaker who couldn't come. Also enjoyed by many was our visit to Alder Vineyard for a tour and tasting in the summer. It is good to support local businesses.

As mentioned earlier, several Lifton Ladies have attended various Devon Federation WI events during the year, this takes more time and effort because we are quite far away from many of them. Two members attended the Spring Council Meeting at Ifracombe when we were lucky enough to have the National WI President as the main speaker. A team of 4 ladies entered the County Quiz and they went to the first round at Lamerton in February. Unfortunately we did not make it through to the final, but a great deal of fun and amusement was generated.

I have had an active and committed team for support this year, without which the WI could not continue. Susan Swanepoel and I are retiring as President and Secretary, as we have completed 3 years, and we hope that others will be willing to step into the breach.

Finally, I am pleased to say we have welcomed a few new members during the year and hope that this trend will continue.

Marion Kneebone, President, Lifton WI