

# Lifton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held in the Tamar Room at The Arundell on  
Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026

*These minutes are provisional until they are agreed and signed by the Chairman at the next meeting of the Annual Parish Assembly*

**Present:** Mr. Edmonds (Parish Chairman), Mr. Alexander, Mrs. Dunn, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Gynn, Mr. Measey, Revd. Arscott (Lifton Methodist Church), Mrs. Gynn, Mr. Hill (Head Teacher, Lifton Community Academy), Mrs. Major, Mrs. Barriball. Mrs. Maynard and Mrs. Willis (Parish Clerk)

## **1. Apologies:** Mr. Lees

(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 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025 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 diligently on behalf of the community to address local concerns, enhance public spaces, and promote safety and wellbeing throughout the village.

### **Road Safety and Traffic Management**

Addressing concerns regarding vehicle speeds through the village has remained a key priority. A new speed sign has recently been acquired, and signs are currently in use at Tinhay and Liftondown. In the near future, the Tinhay sign will be relocated to the green opposite the Community Centre, with the aim of reducing traffic speeds in this particularly busy area of the village.

Parking and congestion issues along North Road have also been raised with both Devon County Council (DCC) Highways and the Police. While the "Keep Clear" road markings outside the doctor's surgery have been repainted, they continue to be ignored by some motorists, leading to congestion at peak times. The Parish Council will continue to work with the relevant authorities to seek improvements.

The condition of local roads, particularly potholes on Park Road, New Road and Gatherley has been a recurring concern. DCC Highways has confirmed these roads are included in their scheduled maintenance programme, and the Parish Council will continue to press for repairs to be carried out promptly. During the year, repairs were completed to the stretch of road in front of the village seat at the top of Darkey Lane.

The Community Speed Watch Team has once again carried out excellent work, helping to monitor traffic speeds and promote safer driving within the village.

### **Village Environment and Maintenance**

The Parish Council remains committed to maintaining the appearance of the village. Regular grass cutting has been undertaken throughout the year, including at the cemetery and the QEII recreation ground, ensuring a tidy and welcoming environment for both residents and visitors.

The Council would like to extend sincere thanks to the Lifton Women's Institute and staff from Ambrosia for organising and taking part in village litter picks. Their efforts make a valuable contribution to the upkeep of our shared public spaces.

### **QEII Play Area and Recreation Ground**

The QEII recreation ground continues to be a very popular facility for the community and for neighbouring areas. However, the ongoing costs of maintenance and operation are becoming increasingly challenging in the current financial climate. The QEII play equipment has proved highly successful and is greatly enjoyed by families from Lifton and beyond.

The Parish Council is grateful to the QEII Management Committee for their continued collaboration and support throughout the year.

### **Community Representation and Governance**

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

This year has seen two established and valued Parish Councillors, Vicky Glen and Tim Sutton-Woodhouse, step down from the Parish Council. I am extremely grateful for their valuable service to the parish over a number of years.

The Parish Council currently has three vacancies and would warmly welcome expressions of interest from residents who wish to play a more active role in village life.

I would like to thank the Parish Clerk for her excellent support to both the Council and the community. Sue's dedication, efficiency, and commitment are greatly appreciated. I would also like to extend my thanks to all Parish Councillors for the time, effort, and commitment they have given throughout the year.

As we look ahead to the coming year, the Parish Council remains committed to listening to residents, working constructively with partner organisations, and doing what we can to protect and enhance our village for everyone who lives, works, and spends time here. On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank all residents for their continued support and engagement, and I look forward to another year of positive progress for the parish.

### **4. Financial report:**

The Parish Clerk/RFO presented a summary of the financial picture for Lifton Parish Council for 2025-26.

### **5. Reports and news about local group activities**

- **Community Centre Annual Report 2026**

The number of hirers has increased and a few new groups and individuals are coming along and using the Centre, which is good to see. I am sure some of this is thanks to Michelle who is our Booking Officer and doing an incredible job.

The twice monthly coffee mornings are proving popular due to the homemade cakes and the volunteer helpers. Recently a few new people have been coming along and can't believe they have a

drink and cake for £1. There is still room for more who wish to meet with others and have a chat. Everybody is made welcome.

The solar panels and battery we had fitted last year will reduce our electricity bills over the year and recently we have had a smart meter fitted. As a result, we have applied to be recompensed for the exported electricity. This will help with keeping the hire charges at a reasonable rate.

We are now planning to develop a picnic area near the car park entrance and thanks must go to Lana for overseeing this. Also, our car park is rutted in places and this will be attended to when the weather improves.

Sadly, the Salvation Army clothes bank has been removed due to lack of use, but probably this was due to people being able to recycle their clothes in the weekly recycle bins.

Once again, we have been granted the 20% discretionary rate on the business rates. We wish to thank Chris Edmonds for help he has given us throughout the year.

We have been fortunate in a few people coming along and helping to run the centre. Thank you for this. It is a great help.

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

- **QEII Recreation Ground**

Quiet year without issues but the building/pavilion is an aging parish asset. It is well used by the community by the sports team, birthday parties.

- **Lifton Community Academy**

The Headteacher, Mr. Hill, provided a verbal report at the meeting. He has now been in post for a year and wanted to reassure the village that the school is in significant better shape now and will continue to improve going forward. An extremely positive outcome was received after a visit from OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education); a follow-up visit is expected in the Spring/Summer.

The school continues to build links with St. Mary's Church; the Vicar comes into school every week for singing, at Easter etc. 'Open the book' come in regularly too. Traffic on North Road has been and will continue to be addressed. Mr. Hill has spoken with DCC Highways who have confirmed that enforcement on the painted lines outside of the school cannot be enforced as there is no warning/enforcement road sign in place. DCC Highways could put a sign up on schools' fence but that has not happened yet. The painted lines are swept regularly so they are not covered in leaves. The school's parent body have responded positively that parking/congestion is better than it was but the area will still remain busy going forward.

Mr. Hill is keen to do more in the local community in line with the school vision and values 'Inspiring Future Citizens.' They plan to undertake local litter picks and continue to engage with the community centre and church. Finally, Mr. Hill provided an update on school class sizes and numbers on the school roll.

The Parish Chairman offered to help the school with the signage from DCC Highways.

- **Lifton Scouts**

Over the past five years the Lifton Scout group has seen considerable growth and development. During 2025 the Group maintained steady numbers of young people in all age groups. In 2022 we introduced a younger section called Squirrel Scouts, for girls and boys aged 4 - 6 years old. There are now more Squirrel Dreys in West Devon District, in Tavistock, Walkham Valley and Buckland. 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 five years we have started up a second Beaver Scout section, a Squirrel Scout Section and a second Cub Scout Pack.

We have maintained our young people numbers and have just over 100 included in our Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and young leaders. This is thanks to our incredibly dedicated team of adult volunteers who ensure a varied and exciting programme is offered week by week. We have a few vacancies in the adult volunteer team due to some retiring from their roles, some moving due to work commitments, and some stopping due to family circumstances. On the plus side, we have been joined by a new Cub leader, who moved to the area from North Wales.

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 Rob Wiggins who has returned to our group as the Chair of Trustees. Our AGM takes place in May and we hope to recruit some new volunteers as Trustees.

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.

We have been busy 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 have raised most of the £20,000 required. The hope is that we will complete this project in the summer of 2026.

Robert Weston, Group Lead Volunteer, 1st Lifton Sea Scout Group

- **Cricket Club**

Lifton Cricket Club is preparing for the new season, with a programme of friendly fixtures arranged against other local clubs. The focus this year is on enjoyable, good quality cricket and maintaining strong links with neighbouring teams.

Membership remains healthy, and the club continues to attract interest from new players. Anyone wishing to join—whether experienced or completely new to the game—is very welcome.

The club is working to keep the ground and facilities in good condition ahead of the season.

Volunteers have been helping with routine maintenance, and further improvements will be made as needed.

Lifton Cricket Club continues to play an important role in village life, offering sport, social connection, and opportunities for all ages to get involved.

- **Men's Institute**

The Lifton Men's Institute remains a well-used community space. We currently have around 25 members, and the building is used regularly throughout the year. It is especially busy during the winter months, when it provides a warm, welcoming place for people to meet.

continues to play an important role in reducing isolation and giving members a friendly, low-cost place to spend time.

The committee is keeping the building in good order, and day to day running costs are being managed responsibly. We aim to maintain the Institute for the long term and encourage new members where possible.

- **Lifton Local History Group**

Lifton Local History Group meets on the first Wednesday of each month. Generally, the group meet at 19:30 in the Tamar Room at the Arundell in the village centre however during the months of April, May, June and July offsite afternoon visits are organised. Both members and non-members are invited to attend these talks and visits. All talks and visits are centred around local history and events.

In 2025 there were many exciting talks and visits starting with our visit on metal detecting by Detectorist Keith Sampson. He inspired the members with his display of finds and the process of authentication by the British Museum.

A talk in March by Helen Wilson brought to life the work of the talented Pinwill Sisters who against the background of polite middleclass life became woodcarvers with extraordinary talent. Ecclesiastical commissions saw them rise to huge popularity; a local example of their work still exists in Lydford church.

One of our summer visits took us to Tavistock Guildhall, recently restored and now a visitor centre. Our guide gave us a lively talk as we moved from custody cells to the courtroom reliving the lives of the people who were held and worked there.

Our September talk saw the return of our long-standing friend Simon Dell who told us about the construction of Tavistock Canal, an amazing feat of engineering brought to life for us by Simon's wit and knowledge. Simon will be visiting again in 2026 when he will delight us with his September talk entitled Sermon in Stone – the Carved Rocks of the Reverend Bray on Dartmoor.

Other talks so far this year have included the History of Dartmoor Rescue given by members of the rescue service and the Arsenic Murders an illustrated talk given by Andrea Tester, the project Officer from the Museum of Policing in Devon and Cornwall. Our first visit of the year will be to St Morwenna and St John the Baptist at Morwenstow.

For more information on attending these talks and visits please just attend the event or email [janneanne22@btinternet.com](mailto:janneanne22@btinternet.com)

- **St Mary's Church**

### **Worship**

The new Saturday evening service at Kelly has a good regular attendance each week and the 5th Sunday service with lunch is popular. During the year, these included a Mothering Sunday service at Lewdown Victory Hall and a service at Kelly followed by a BBQ in the rain!

We were delighted to welcome Sulu Pike who spent Holy Week with us during her training.

A special service with Bishop James was held in the garden of the Fox & Grapes Pub to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VE Day.

We joined our friends from Liftondown Chapel for the Good Friday Walk of Witness followed by a service in the Chapel. We also joined them for a service during the week of prayer for Christian Unity.

The Remembrance Day Service was well attended and it was good to see the Scouts, Beavers and Squirrels represented.

### **Fund Raising and Social Activities**

The churchwardens were invited to tea in the Bishop of Exeter's garden in the summer. This was an event to thank churchwardens and treasurers for their work.

We participated in the village scarecrow trail which this year was a character from a children's book and we made a Hungry Caterpillar (one of 3 in the village!)

We had our first Crib Festival with around 30 different crib sets on display. This concluded with the Carol Service with mulled wine and mince pies.

### **Mission**

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. The church was used to host an afternoon tea raising money for Breast Cancer Now.

- **Lifton Methodist Chapel**

We have had a very positive year at the chapel but also one which has brought sadness because we have had 4 faithful church members die – one of these was our supernumerary minister, known to this meeting in the past, Rev Howard Curnow.

The positive part is that we were left a generous amount of money in June 2024 and this was to use for the chapel. We met to discuss as a church what we would like to do with this gift and called our project "Hopes and Dreams". Our hopes exceeded the amount we were given and so Frank Arscott began applying for grants. The work began in Spring 2025 and is still ongoing.

A lot of the work entailed necessary (and expensive!) repairs to the building and we had our water pipes replaced; the kitchen has been improved, solar panels and batteries have been fitted, and the building has been painted throughout. We are now connected to Wifi and we have a TV screen in the chapel; a new bookcase and table have been purchased for the chapel, new blinds are up in the Sunday School room, and a new noticeboard has been fitted to the outside wall.

The builders are currently working on an extension at the back of the chapel which will house two toilet cubicles and give us more storage space. They have also replaced the rear roof elevation. A new carpet will be fitted in the chapel and the Sunday School room once all the work has been completed.

We are planning to hold an Open Day once the work is completed this summer to which we would invite local residents and also a Celebration Service in early Autumn to give thanks for our Hopes and Dreams project.

We have just held a Church Council meeting and we wanted to explore the possibility of a defibrillator being fitted to our outside church wall for easy access for residents of Lifton Down. Is it possible for this meeting to award a grant for this?

The Parish Chairman agreed to liaise with Revd. Arscott regarding the siting of a defib in Lifton Down and defib funding options for the chapel to explore further.

The traffic continues to speed past our chapel and this is a safety concern. As well as Sunday mornings, the chapel is used for small groups during the week. Is it possible for the council to have a road sign put up by our entrance to warn drivers of our concealed entrance?

DCC Highways confirmed that no changes would be made to the speed limit on this part of the A388, following a previous request submitted by the parish council.

Further requests for road signs can be made via the DCC Highways website: [Report an alternative issue - Roads and transport](#)

- **Lifton Singers**

Hello Everyone

Another year has flown by and our singing group continues to thrive. We have 27 enthusiastic members but we are always looking to welcome more. We have a good balance of altos and sopranos but we would really like some more tenors and basses to come and help us. Our group is about people who love to sing coming together so there are no auditions to join the group. Anyone who loves singing is welcome to meet up with us each Wednesday evening to sing, chat and share a cup of tea and coffee and a few treats.

We sing a combination of four-part harmonies and unison numbers. We cover easy listening numbers, songs from the shows and a lovely selection of Christmas music in the autumn term. We are led and accompanied by Mary and Leslie Mazur-Park, who are professional musicians, and they lead us in a mixed repertoire of songs with some numbers accompanied by Leslie on the oboe.

We have had another enjoyable year of singing, performing and socialising. In May we had a concert at Lifton Down Methodist chapel to raise funds for their property renovations. We performed at the open gardens event at Coombe Trenchard and sang at the St Eustachius' church Christmas tree festival in Tavistock and finished off the summer term with a concert for friends and family.

We currently meet on Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm at Lifton Down 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 any more information about the group, please feel free to contact Barbara Scott at [miss.scott@btinternet.com](mailto:miss.scott@btinternet.com)

- **Lifton WI**

We started the year with Lifton hosting the Group Meeting and it was a very successful event thanks to the detailed planning of our previous President, Marion, and the committee.

Our May meeting was an evening of mirth and magic which was great fun and fascinating to watch a magician close up. The outing in June to Boscastle was blessed with wonderful sunshine. In July we watched Michael and Karen paint silk scarves and a couple of members had a go at decorating a scarf which was later given to us to raffle. Then in September, we had a slight change of plan and held a reminiscing workshop which was very enjoyable. I think we would like to have another go at this as there were more questions to get the memory working.

Then in October, the lone kayaker, Rupert Kirkwood came and it was exciting to see the wildlife just off our coast. In November, Celia Moore was the speaker and she told us about the journey of writing a book through to getting it published. In December we had a Christmas party and then in January, Heather Gynn provided us with an evening of board games and introduced us to some new ones.

In February we were treated to a demonstration and talk (and tasting!) of sourdough bread and then in March we had a very interesting and entertaining talk on life as a child of missionaries in India.

Several members have had a go at glass fusion and other workshops provided by the Food Craft & Skills team. Sadly, there was no WI competition at Launceston Show this year so we couldn't repeat the win of the year before! We did, however, enter two teams in the County Quiz and Team A got through to the final.

The walking group continues to meet once a month and we have recently started a coffee group which meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

Elizabeth Brown, President

- **Lifton Busy Bees Craft Group**

Busy bees craft group meets on Tuesday evenings 7 to 9 in the Lifton community Centre, all welcome to come along bring your craft and have a cup of tea and chat.

The group has gone from strength to strength with a few new members. last year we undertook to make a patchwork quilt for the year which was very successful. Each person was given the pattern of month to complete, thanks to Susie and Heather for working out with the nine pattern squares to complete a lap quilt.

We also supplied the village with the post office topper, which posed a problem when the post office changed the design of the postbox but nothing was to put us ladies off and at Christmas we put on a fine show.

We went on a trip up to Exeter to the craft fair where we came back with lots of ideas, and bits and pieces to share with the group.

Our annual Christmas party was held at the Bedford Hotel in Tavistock with a nice meal and dancing, some of the ladies now go to the cinema once a month in Oakhampton.

We are a welcoming group with knowledge and are able to help with most crafts if you're not sure what to do and I'm happy to help.

Thanks were expressed to Heather for the postbox toppers.

- **Ladybugs baby & toddler group**

Our baby and toddler group has been meeting in the community centre for the past 8 years. We offer a safe environment for little ones to play and parents/grandparents and carers to relax with a cuppa. We meet on term time Tuesdays 9.30am-11am in the main hall.

Sandy and Michelle run the group voluntarily with the help of Mike setting up our soft play. We have a large variety of toys and ride ons.

Fees are £10 for a 5-week term. All money donated pays for Hall hire, weekly refreshments and end of term parties.

Drop in welcome but booking in advance is much appreciated. We have a Facebook page or contact Michelle on [michellegrenney@yahoo.com](mailto:michellegrenney@yahoo.com)

- **Thursday coffee group**

The community centre hosts a coffee group in the foyer every 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month. 10.30am -12noon.

A £1 donation is appreciated for a slice of cake and coffee or tea.

This is manned by a fabulous group of volunteers, who bake cakes to share each session with the regular attendees.

This is a friendly well attended group of local villagers and new members are always made to feel welcome.

The monthly proceeds are saved throughout the year and we enjoy Christmas buffet celebration lunch from the proceeds.

A Macmillan coffee morning in September and last year's raised £260.

**6. Questions and comments from parishioners** about any other matters:

Mr. Gynn mentioned that play equipment has been installed at the Oakdene housing development. The Parish Chairman confirmed that this will not be the responsibility of the parish council.

Mrs. Gynn raised safety concerns of those crossing Fore Street/A388 to/from the Oakdene housing development and asked whether a crossing could be installed.

The Parish Clerk confirmed that a request had already been made to DCC Highways (the highways authority) and that Highways were due to carry out an assessment to consider this request along with the request for a crossing by the village shop and for 'wig-wag' signs by the primary school on North Road.

Mrs. Major raised the question about the planting of daffodil bulbs in the village on behalf of the Busy Bees Group. A daffodil grower has been found who could potentially supply bulbs for the grass areas into the village. This matter would be discussed at the April parish council meeting which followed this annual parish assembly.

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 19:32. This was followed by the April Parish Council Meeting.

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