

### Highlights from the Altarnun Parish Council meeting on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Chair Dowler and 6 Parish Councillors; Parish Grounds Man Smart; Parish Project Officer Parsons; Cornwall Councillor Hall and 1 member of the public attended the meeting in St Nonna's Church Hall.

A late **Planning Application PA14/005570** to erect a replacement porch at Tresmaine Farm, Altarnun, PL15 7RL, raised **NO OBJECTION**. The application arrived after the agenda was posted on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

The Clerk informed the meeting that the Parish Council vacancies had been advertised. With the closing date of 18<sup>th</sup> July fast approaching, several residents had approached her with queries on the role and how to apply.

She advised that Cornwall Council & the Dog's Trust were promoting a joint scheme for free dog chipping across Cornwall. Posters with details on how to take advantage of this offer will be posted.

Mr Smart reported that the first phase of the public footpath LMP scheme had been completed in June. Support had also been given to D & C Police and Altarnun School with the purchase of the paints needed to complete the new bus shelter murals. Erection of the new murals was scheduled for late July. A new access gate had been erected between the Parish Cemetery and the grazing land behind it. Planned maintenance for the coming month included preparation for fun week on Altarnun Village Green including bench & picnic tables repainting/treating.

The Parish Council agreed to sponsor support for a grant being sought from Comic Relief for three modern table tennis tables in the Village Hall for the introduction of a reconstituted Table Tennis Club in the Hall.

The Clerk reprised the outcome of the APC sub-committee meeting with A. Wilks (ADW design Group/Architect) & J. Clark (H2OK/Drainage Engineer) to review proposals to mitigate potential flood risks if the Gratton Field affordable housing scheme were to go to planning. She circulated documents, plans, photos and a copy of the drainage report. The sub-committee members had been satisfied that all their questions had been answered professionally & honestly. The case made was very convincing and all agreed that the visitors obviously believed that they had addressed the problems of surface water run-off from the site, as raised by the Parish Council and wider community. After a wide ranging debate the Council agreed that if the proposed larger than usual storm drains diverting surface water into the underground water table and rain water harvesting tanks retaining/recycling water for domestic use were delivered, the risk of additional surface water run-off from this specific site would appear to have been significantly reduced, if not addressed. A new point of interest, however, had surfaced in the discussion i.e. the unknown risk of the law of unintended consequences of diverting surface water into the underground water table causing a knock on impact on nearby underground springs.

The Clerk had also met with the Cornwall Council Housing Needs Team Manager, to validate Affordable Housing Register numbers & walk through the local housing eligibility criterion; the banding & bedroom assessment criterion and the process behind the interaction between the Affordable Housing team and the Planning Office. It was important for local people to register with the Housing Needs Team as the register was a critical touch point in shaping the mix of affordable housing provision under the 106 agreement procedures. Applicants to go on the register need to meet a Cornwall County local connection criteria, demonstrate that they, or a member of their household, meet one of the following criteria: They are resident in Cornwall (for the past 12 months continuously) & that residence is of their own choice; They have been resident in Cornwall for a continuous period of 5 years at sometime in the past; They have permanent (ie 16 hours or more per week – exceptional cases will be considered on their own merit) employment in Cornwall and this employment is not of casual or seasonal nature; They have a close family connection (normally mother, father, sister, brother, son or daughter) where the family member is currently resident in Cornwall and has been so for the past 5 years; Special circumstances exist creating an exceptional need to move to the County e.g. those needing to move closer to specialist medical/support facilities; applicants accepted as homeless and owed a full housing duty by Cornwall Council; and Cornwall care leavers living outside of the County. These cases are considered on an individual basis in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance & finally those in the Armed Forces under the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012. In addition to the **County** connection there is also a **Parish** connection criterion which can be applied to vacancies in rural areas.

A review of the register revealed that there were 36 people with "Altarnun" connections on the register. Only 6 of these, however, had Altarnun as their 1<sup>st</sup> choice; 7 others had it as their 2<sup>nd</sup> choice. These 13 required 1- 4 bed; 2 - 3 bed; 6 – 2 bed & 4 – 1 bed homes. 12 sat in band E with 1 in Band B. The Clerk reminded the Council that two affordable housing schemes had been approved for 6 - 2/3 bed homes in Bolventor and 5- 2 bed affordable homes and 3 private market homes at Trewint. No work had commenced on either scheme which was a great disappointment to the Parish Council. The Gratton Field scheme now under discussion would provide an additional 16 affordable homes (the mix of which would have to be determined under a new 106 Agreement) & 8 private market homes. These three schemes would more than satisfy the need for affordable homes in Altarnun Parish in both the short & long term. After the immediate need for local affordable homes was met, the surplus homes would be opened up to the remaining 23 on the register as of now, with priority given to those in adjacent parishes. The homes would then be opened up to those on the Home Choice register across Cornwall and potentially elsewhere. After a lengthy discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should invite Ms Mason-Jones to a future meeting. Council members agreed to urge those locals known to need a local affordable homes opportunity to register with the Housing Needs Team urgently so that their needs can be incorporated into the inevitable planning, housing need negotiations & subsequent consultation. Contact would be Ms Mason-Jones, Housing Needs Team Manager, Cornwall Housing Ltd, Room 9, Luxstowe House, Greenbank Road, Liskeard, PL14 3DZ. (Telephone No: 0300 1234 161 or email on [rmason-jones@cornwallhousing.org.uk](mailto:rmason-jones@cornwallhousing.org.uk)).

The rest of the meeting was dominated by an intense discussion on the pro's and cons of the generation of a Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk distributed a presentation entitled "Definition of the Development Section of a formal Neighbourhood Plan 2013 – 2017. "Pro-active or Re-active – that is the question". It outlined decisions the APC would need to take about what sort of Parish they wished to see. All ideas would need to be pro-actively shared and agreed with the community as a whole through extensive communications, referendums & community involvement. To date most parish issues were addressed effectively but re-actively. Most successful parish communication & engagement with the wider community eg recent coffee morning resulted from specific propositions, triggers, initiatives or incidents which stimulated the generally apathetic but content rural community to actually come out and voice their views eg public toilet closure, bus services, dog fouling, speeding, moto-cross noise, affordable housing & other planning applications; sustainable energy schemes, flood risk problems etc. An Information Bulletin issued by CC states that a Neighbourhood Plan should set out local policies & earmark/allocate land for development. Once approved via public referendum/s it then has to be used to assess planning applications. The guidance stresses that it is primarily a development plan – which means it must support development within the Parish rather than prevent it. 38 Cornish Town/Parish Councils have started individual plans. There are also 6 cluster schemes involving another 16 Councils underway. 30 others, including Altarnun Parish, have yet to decide to take this route. The guidance emphasises that before deciding to proceed Councils should consider what policies are in place; what need to be added, if any; the costs; effort; skills; resources & time required in its production but most importantly of all it needs to be clear about what it is trying to achieve & whether a neighbourhood plan the right tool given other tools are available. The emphasis was on self help & local involvement but there are resources available to advise Councils and some funding grants are around. The bulk of the Councillors were clear that any plan should be parish led, not part of collaboration with nearby parishes. They were not convinced that a neighbourhood plan was needed at this time & concern was expressed that if work on a plan were to commence it would drain Parish limited funds/resources and divert focus on delivering already agreed projects designed to satisfy the immediate needs/issues raised locally at the recent parish council coffee morning meeting. After this intense strategic debate the Parish Council decided to retain the status quo for the foreseeable future. The meeting closed with a run through correspondence received in the month, the authorisation of various financial transactions and the collection of a small number of other business matters including a request for a new bus shelter at Trewint to be included on the agenda of the August meeting, scheduled for 7.30pm on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> August in the Bolventor Reading Rooms. All residents are welcome.

Clerk to Altarnun Parish Council – July 2014.