**Lydford Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting -10 May 2022**

Chairman’s Report

There was no report for 2021 as there was no Annual Parish Meeting possible due to covid restrictions.

From April 2020 until May 2021 Parish Council meetings were held on-line with no face to face meeting possible until July 2021. Face face meetings were initially held in the main hall to allow greater separation between attendees, but as Covid Restrictions are now eased, meetings will return to the WI Room.

**Public Toilets**

Managing these facilities remains the Parish Council’s largest regular expense. Initially cleaned by volunteers, since reopening after the pandemic closure the council has employed a cleaner who initially provided twice daily cleaning which is now reduced to once daily. During 2021 there was significant vandalism of the toilets, and with parishioner support, CCTV has been installed to cover the entrances.

**National Trust**

The council receives regular updates from the local National Trust. During the past year the NT regretfully found it necessary to close the shop at the Devils Cauldron end of the Lydford Gorge to support a restructure of their finances following the pandemic.

**Traffic**

Parishioners continue to be concerned with the speed and on occasions the volume of traffic passing through and visiting the village. The post-lockdown surge in “staycations” has led a large increase in visitor numbers to the area.

After a long wait the second VAS warning sign was installed opposite the Farm Shop. This was not the council’s preferred site but various restrictions imposed by Devon Highways made it the “least worst” option. After significant teething troubles, the VAS does seem to be operating.

Speed of traffic from the A386 junction down through the village continues to raise concerns. Attempts to initiate a speed watch initiative have faltered partly due to police workload and partly due insufficient volunteers. There is now a County wide trial of local 20mph limits which we have applied to join.

**Railway**

Once again, following the re-establishment of the Okehampton-Exeter service, reopening the line to Tavistock via Lydford is being discussed openly. TORS (Tavistock Okehampton Reopening Scheme) is seeking government funding to examine the case to reopen the line. The LPC Chair held an online meeting with the TORS Director. No significant progress has as yet been made but the LPC will keep a close eye on developments.

**Climate Change**

The LPC is still exploring the installation of a car charging point in the carpark.

**Finance**

It was unfortunately necessary to raise the precept this year to maintain a stable financial position in the face of increasing costs. The council is still able to consider reasonable requests for grants to support local initiatives.

My thanks to my fellow councillors and to our Clerk John Bright whose efficiency and support is highly valued.

Steve Squires

Chairman Lydford Parish Council