Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council

Tel: 07768 82951 email: parish.clerk@rackenfordpc.com Website: www.rackenford-devon.co.uk/parish-council

There was a Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 3rd September 2024 at 7.30pm held in Rackenford School.

Members Present: Parish Councillors Peter Jones; Scott Ware, Stewart Warne, Fred Phillips, Jenny Cox & Sarah Child.

Also Present: Peter Grugeon, prospective councillor

In attendance: Rob Martin, Clerk

Others: Five members of the general public

MINUTES

2425-026 **APOLOGIES**
Apologies were received from Cllr. Lamb who was on holiday.

2425-027 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)**
Cllr. Jones declared a personal interest in relation to planning application 75212, the site of which would be directly opposite his house.

2425-028 **MINUTES**
Minor adjustments were required to the draft minutes to include a personal interest declaration made by Cllr. Jones in relation to planning application 75212 the site of which would be directly opposite his house and the inclusion of Cllr. Warne on the list of those responsible for the play area.

On a proposal by Cllr. Child, seconded by Cllr. Jones, it was **Resolved** to approve, as a correct record, the adjusted minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 28th May 2024

2425-029 **COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION**
Two people had applied for the one position available for cooption as a councillor, one of which had withdrawn in the last two days.

Peter Grugeon outlined his experience as a former parish councillor, in particular in relation to planning and stated that he would, if coopted, be the only councillor for his part of the parish.

On a proposal by Cllr. Warne, seconded by Cllr. Child, it was **Resolved** to co-opt Peter Grugeon as a councillor to fill the vacancy.

Cllr. Grugeon then joined the meeting as a councillor.

2425-030 **CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**
The clerk stated that most of the matters he had experienced since May 2024 had been included as agenda items and would be dealt with accordingly.

He had received an email from Rob Mathews regarding the eradication of Himalayan Balsam

in Rackenford which had been circulated to councillors. It was agreed that this would be considered at the AGM in May 2025 perhaps with a team put together to go around pulling the plants up.

The Chairman suspended the Parish Council meeting to hear presentations, reports from District and County Councillors and take questions from members of the public.

2425-031 PUBLIC AND OTHER BODIES' SESSION

District Council

District Cllr. Jones reported that water testing had been done on some local streams resulting in proof that pollution was occurring on a regular basis. This had been reported to the Environment Agency (EA) which had requested that further tests be carried out. The EA was now investigating this matter further. He went on to say that since the testing had been carried out a local planning application to install a slurry pit had been received which was interesting.

He had also had meetings with Cllr. Milton about the operation of the Batsworthy Grant Fund. There had been changes in the management of the fund, including the political membership and the small, medium and large funds were now reopening for applications.

County Council

County Cllr. Yabsley was not present and had not provided a report.

Public Questions

The tennis court refurbishment contractor asked about the comments being made on the quality of the work carried out carried out by his staff. The chairman outlined that the complaints related to an uneven surface, and that the tennis net post sockets were loose. The answers were that the surface was within the normal tolerances for a court such as this and that the post holders should not be loose, which the contractor would arrange to be put right. The contractor then left the meeting.

Another member of the public questioned the answers being given by the contractor and expressed concern that £24,000 of parish council money had been spent on the refurbishment. The chairman explained that the outcome was not all that it might have been, but that it had been about what the parish council deemed as good value for money.

Competitively, the price would have been in excess of £30,000 which was beyond the scope of the parish council's available resources and more than could be justified on the one asset without compromising the maintenance of the other community assets for which the parish council was responsible. In effect, the parish council got what it paid for.

The clerk had been concerned about the process undergone when the contract was arranged and would look for this to be more robust for future projects, hence the consideration of a new set of Financial Regulations (2425-039) later in the meeting. The chairman agreed that there was a need to ensure transparency in parish council work which he would try to ensure happened. Whether a better finish for the tennis court/MUGA was necessary and could be achieved might be something for the ongoing community consultations being undertaken together with conversations on funding.

2425-032 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GROUP UPDATE

A community engagement group event had been held in the school hall on 13th June 2024, with 50-60 people attending. The idea had been to find out what people might want to have

in the parish going forward and this resulted in survey questionnaires being sent around to the whole village and a report being published on the results of this. Other village matters had been a priority subsequently and it was now a question of the future of the group and whether it should become an official part of the parish council. Another meeting of the group would be convened to suggest a way forward to enabling the ideas to come to fruition.

One of the main threads coming from people surveyed was how could the community make the best of the assets currently in existence, such as the Stag Inn and Rackenford Club. If the pub were to be offered for sale, then the community should be ready to acquire it and the work on this might have to be done sooner rather than later.

Cllr. Jones brought up the potential for running a community bus service using volunteer drivers. This could also be a matter to be considered by whatever community group structure is adopted.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting

2425-033 THE COMMON

The following updates on the progress of maintenance work on the Common were made:

a) A **Clearance Working Party** for the clearance of footpaths had been suggested but had not been actioned. The chairman believed that the potential work that would be undertaken by such a group would need to be identified before it could be taken forward and he would discuss this with Ed Nicholson to determine that.
b) The **Common Maintenance Contract** was not discussed on this occasion.
c) The provision of **new benches & tables** had previously been discussed, in particular where they could be located. The current request was that picnic tables, similar to the one installed at Big River would be better for the school to allow children to draw when working outside. Cllr. Phillips believed that a wooden table would provide a better surface for this that the recycled plastic one. The current thoughts were that a bench be provided alongside the Common and a picnic bench available for the schoolchildren. Costs to be obtained for the provision of both in both recycled plastic and wood for a decision to be made by the next meeting. Cllr. Phillips handed the clerk a price list for Heard & Sendell Ltd for the provision of such furniture in wood.
d) Cllr. Cox also wanted the subject of potential **passing places** to be installed next to the Common, not of tarmac, but of compacted stone. (see 2425-036 below)
e) At least one of the **trees at Rackenford Cross** needed to be removed. Cllr. Grugeon explained that the three trees on the traffic island at Rackenford Cross were struggling because they were planted close to the edge with their roots unable to spread sufficiently. He suggested a number of alternative replacements that would be able to sustain growth with such restrictions. On a proposal by Cllr. Grugeon, seconded by the chairman, it was **Resolved** to get a quotation to remove the worst affected tree and replace with a more suitable variety and to eventually replace all three with suitable replacements. Councillors would accompany Cllr. Grugeon on a visit to the site.

2425-034 MUGA RESURFACING

a) The current surfacing situation was discussed under the public session, minute 2425-031 above, the conclusions of which the council accepted.
b) Fencing around MUGA – the Chairman undertook to arrange the replacement of the

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wooden fencing using the wood already purchased on behalf of the council.

c) Storage Facility – the chairman had obtained a price for a Keter type box for the storage of the nets and attachments amounting to £150. Cllr. Cox questioned whether a metal corn-bin would do, which the chairman would investigate before arranging to purchasing anything.

2425-035 ACCESS AGREEMENT FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES

Cllr. Phillips declared a personal interest in this item, and the parish council **resolved** that he should be permitted to join the discussion in order to be questioned on the details involved. Cllr. Child expressed a personal interest as a Shop Committee director. She would also continue to take part in the discussion.

Cllr. Child explained that the shop committee had for some time been considering an expansion of the shop facilities and that Cllr. Phillips had offered to donate some of his land for this purpose. In order for this to be done, however, there would be a need for a new access from the highway across land which was believed to be owned by the parish council. Further investigation, however, revealed that this was not the case as the land still belonged to the 'Village Hall Trust', a charity for which the parish council was merely a trustee.

On a proposal by Cllr. Child, seconded by the Chairman it was **resolved** that the parish council would support Cllr. Phillips gaining easement over the land in question for the potential expansion of the shop facilities, whilst his land continues to be used for agricultural purposes.

2425-036 HIGHWAYS

It was **resolved** that the work done to fill in the ditches either side of the road be filled in and compacted to provide passing places for cars be **approved**. The work would be carried out by BG Phillips in the sum of £1,000 plus VAT.

The chairman would organize a walk around the Common to identify any further work necessary to ensure the integrity of the highway edges elsewhere.

2425-037 NORTH DEVON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

The North Devon Local Plan review was underway which would include, following the new government guidelines, an increase in the number of residential dwellings to be provided.

Cllr. Jones was proposing that he would arrange a meeting with planners for the local parishes to go along and identify what they can expect in terms of allocations and how they could influence where these would be positioned.

The clerk explained the difference between a 'Parish Plan' and a 'Neighbourhood Plan' in particular focusing on the process of constructing the latter, which then becomes part of the district-wide 'Development Plan'.

Cllr. Jones pointed out that for the allied Infrastructure Plan, there would be a need to ensure that a future village hall provision be included alongside the shop project and the potential community purchase of the Stag Inn. This would need to be added to the next agenda to finalise what can be put forward.

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2425-038 EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2023/24

The 2023/24 External Audit report from PKF Littlejohn had been circulated and it was noted that the only comment had been that the AGAR was submitted without being signed by the chairman of the council. This had been an error by the clerk caused by the cancellation of the 2 July 2024 meeting and would not occur in the future. Other than this, the parish council's accounts had been given a clean bill of health.

2425-039 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

A set of Financial Regulations based upon a new model version issued by NALC in April 2024 had been circulated, with the financial thresholds highlighted as being those in the model document could be the subject of a future review.

The clerk undertook to send the complete original April 2024 version to the chairman.

On a proposal by Cllr. Grugeon, seconded by Cllr. Jones, it was **resolved** to adopt the Financial regulations as presented with a review to be undertaken in the next twelve months.

2425-040 BANK RECONCILIATION

The bank reconciliation as at 31st August 2024 was **noted**.

2425-041 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS TO DATE COMPARED TO BUDGET

The statement of Receipts and Payments compared to Budgets for the period from 1st April 2024 to 31st August 2024 had been circulated. This statement was **noted**.

2425-042 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

On a proposal by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Warne, it was **resolved** that the payment of the invoices on the schedule below for the period since the last meeting:

PAYMENTS

Payee	Services	Month or Ref.	Amount £	Payment No.
2024/2025				
RJ Martin	Salary	July 2024	305.86	2425-09
HMRC	Tax Deduction	July 2024	76.40	2425-09
STAG Construction	MUGA Resurfacing	00397	14,400.00	2425-10
BG Phillips	Bench Installation		638.40	2425-10
RJ Martin	Salary	Aug 2024	305.86	2425-11
HMRC	Tax Deduction	Aug 2024	76.40	2425-11
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit	SB20240440	252.00	2425-12
Parish Online	Mapping System	18UE048	36.00	2425-12
Avon Road Mark Ltd	MUGA Lining	34075	1,674.00	2425-12
RJ Martin	Salary	Sept 2024	305.86	2425-13
HMRC	Tax Deduction	Sept 2024	76.40	2425-13
BG Phillips	Passing Places		1,200.00	2425-14
Exmoor Luxury Loos	D-Day Event Toilets	Inv 5718	366.00	2425-14
RJ Martin	Salary	Oct 2024	305.86	2425-15
HMRC	Tax Deduction	Oct 2024	76.40	2425-15

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RECEIPTS

Received from	Services	Amount £	
2024/2025			
None			

2425-043 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To consider the following Planning Applications and to agree comments:

Reference	Location	Proposal
75212	Land at Rackenford Cross Rackenford Devon	Erection of 11 dwellings with associated landscaping, access and infrastructure. **Decision:** On 17 June 2024 RPC Objected to this application on the bases of Material finish, the mix of properties, lack of affordable housing, the number of properties and a dangerous access. Cllr. Jones explained that this was now due to be considered by the district council planning committee in October 2024 but as he has a personal interest in the decision, he cannot represent the community at the meeting. The Chairman would represent Rackenford at the planning committee, focusing on the matters raised in the parish council's objection.
79085	Broad Close Rackenford Tiverton Devon EX16 8ED	Prior approval for change of use of agricultural building to 4 dwelling houses (under Class Q (A&B)) **Decision:** No comment

2425-044 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

a) **Chairman**

The chairman asked whether the matter of the replacement village marquee had been resolved with Cllr. Cox confirming that it had not. Cllr. Lamb had provided a marquee when it was needed by Cllr. Cox, but it was one that had holes in the roof and other damage, so would not do long-term. Cllr. Cox had not seen the original since the day that it was used and damaged so was unable to say whether it was repairable or not. This would be added to the next agenda for a decision on providing the replacement.

b) **Other Councillors**

Cllr. Phillips wished to point out that there were a number of roadside hedges that needed to be cut back, some of which were the responsibility of the parish council. He was wary of asking farmers to cut back when the PC had not. It was agreed that councillors would go around the parish to determine what the PC needed to do.

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The question of when the fireworks/bonfire night event should be held was brought up with the conclusion that further investigation on other events around that time had to be undertaken before a date could be set.

Cllr. Jones wanted to thank all those that had contributed to the event the previous weekend, which he believed had been enjoyed by all present.

2425-045 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council would be on Tuesday 5th November 2024, at 7.30pm in Rackenford School.

2425-046 MEETING CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 9.55

Chairman's Signature:

Date:

2425 - 052

Rackenford Community Engagement Group

DRAFT

Review of community facilities and amenities

Findings and recommendations

Autumn 2024

Cllr. Sarah Child
Justin Denno
Jane Isaac
Cllr. Peter Jones
Jenny Nash
Cllr. Scott Ware

2425-052

1 Community Engagement Group

The community engagement group was set up to advise the parish council of the community's priorities, in terms of community buildings, spaces, transport and other community assets.

The Community Engagement Group met with various existing groups, chatted with residents and held a community survey in Spring 2024 followed by a public engagement meeting to discuss community needs and dive deeper into the survey feedback.

During the engagement period there have been changes in village amenities which have shaped the community's priorities including the announcement from the current owners that the Stag Inn will no longer operate as a pub and the community's increased use of the club.

2 Community engagement survey

A survey of village opinion on facilities and services was distributed in mid-March 2024. Paper copies of the survey were hand delivered to most properties in the parish, additional copies were made available from Rackenford shop and the survey was available to complete online.

Eighty-nine surveys were returned, forty-six were from individuals and forty-three on behalf of households. In total the views of 178 people from the community were represented. The survey saw a relatively equal gender split and good age distribution.

The presentation from the engagement group which included the findings from the survey and all data, can be found here:
https://www.rackenford-devon.co.uk/post/community-engagement-event-13th-june-2024

Key findings from the survey include:

- Village Hall - 63% of the community said a village hall was needed, 10% said a hall was not needed.
- 52% of the community also said they think we should make use of existing facilities before considering building new facilities.
- The activities suggested were grouped by the space required and are shown in table 1

Table 1: Activities suggested in survey responses

Meeting Room (c 4 x 4 m)	Hall (c 10 x 8m) plus kitchen and toilets	Sports hall (tennis court size)
Clubs e.g Art, Book club	Bowls/Petanque	Sports e.g.
Bingo	Bring & Buy	badminton
Board Games	Cinema evenings	indoor football
Cooking Groups	Dances (Social)	Village Show
Craft/Craft Group	Dancing eg Le Roc, Line, social	
Photography Group	Dog Club	
Children's Story Book Club (School holidays)	Exercise Classes - e.g. Yoga/Pilates/Resistance Training	
U3A	Indoor Community Gatherings - Fairs, Fetes, Sales Etc...	
	Events such as Harvest Super, Cheese & wine	
	Film Nights	
	Kids Clubs (Gymnastics)	
	Music/ Parites	
	Pickle Ball/ Skittles	
	Quiz/Bingo/ Film Nights	
	Wedding Receptions	
	Scouts & Guides (Brownies, Cubs Etc)	
	Skittles	
	Table Tennis	
	Toddler Mornings	
	Wakes	

- Stag Inn - 70% of the community said community ownership should be pursued. Comments included: that the pub is the "heart of the village", and that the pub needs to be a place where people can eat and drink regularly.
- At the time of the survey Rackenford Club was ranked as one of the least important assets of the community. However, it should be considered that this came before the current owners announced they were closing the Stag Inn and the club started to be used regularly for community events.
- Public transport/community bus – 40% of people would like public/community transport.
- Post office - 60% of people stated they would like post office services available in the parish.

3 Community engagement event (13th June 2024) and additional information

About fifty people from the local community met at Rackenford Primary School on Thursday 13th June to hear the results of the facilities survey and explore the key findings.

The Engagement Event included a presentation on the survey findings and then break-out groups discussed key themes - village hall, a meeting space, community hub, transport, post office and the pub.

The ideas were collated and prominent themes were:

- A village Hall
- The Pub
- Rackenford Club
- Community Transport
- Meeting room / shop space
- Combined Hub
- Post office services
- Use of the Church

These areas are described below.

3.1 Village Hall

Points noted in relation to a village hall was a clear preference to focus on existing facilities - the club, pub and church.

Points noted include:

- Cost of building a new hall is thought to be prohibitive.
- Use the club or the pub.
    - Build a hall at the club.
    - Reinstate the hall at the pub or extend that hall.
- Concern around a viable location for a hall
- Many activities identified in the survey could be carried out using existing facilities.
- A hall would be beneficial for Rackenford Primary School if built nearby to the school site.

3.2 The Pub

The pub was a frequent discussion point across the range of tables. Having a comfortable and attractive space which provides a place to socialise, eat and drink were the key points of discussion. The pub previously having a hall used by the community for events was also mentioned several times.

Discussion points included:

- Several people stated they wanted a place to meet, eat and drink with friends which serves good, simple food at affordable prices.
- "The Stag" was highlighted as the ideal option due to its central location and historical significance to locals and visitors.
- There was strong interest in a community buyout of the pub, however, concerns were raised over running costs, management and feasibility of the community having the opportunity to own/lease it.
- The cosy, high-end feel of the pub was highlighted as a benefit of the venue over other amenities.
- The value of the venue for those offering tourist accommodation was noted.

3.3 Rackenford Club

Whilst there was no group to discuss Rackenford Club specifically, the facility was discussed within other groups

Key points included:

- Amongst "straw poles" Rackenford Club was the first solution to meet the needs of a community space followed by the pub and then a dedicated hall.
- Explore safe access to the club from the village.
- Can the space be modernised / improved?
- Why invest in the pub when we have a perfect space with room for development already.
- Kitchen available so can provide food.
- Build a new hall on the club site to replace the current dilapidated hall to the rear.
- Could benefit from family friendly outside space.
- A place to watch sports, host social events and live music.

At the engagement event, club manager Debbie Attrill invited the community to use the space, and there are now a range of regular activities at the club including monthly Friday night drinks, a monthly quiz, and a wine club. The community have been invited to use the club during the day for activities and groups.

3.4 Community Transport

The community survey highlighted the need for community transport. There is not and is very unlikely to be any public transport to Rackenford. The subject was raised, and feedback included:

- Immediate response could be a volunteer scheme potentially using existing school bus.
- Use of the school bus could raise essential funds so that Rackenford Primary can fund the bus without depending on the wider federation meaning the bus can be kept in the village.
- Liaison with Exe valley community bus could provide a solution.
- Potential community bus drivers volunteered.
- A demand for the service was expressed.

3.5 A Meeting Room / Coffee shop space

The recent shop survey asked about a potential meeting room which was further explored in the facilities survey and at the Engagement Event.

The feedback was:

- A multi-function space combining a coffee/tearoom with regular opening hours and the ability to book for meetings and other activities outside of these hours would be beneficial.
- Being linked with the shop would make sense in terms of location and synergy of facilities. Being close to the school for drop-off/pick-up and the common/play area would maximise usage.
- Room would provide potentially private space for meetings and small groups.
- Could benefit from an outside area.
- More parking space required.
- Separate community toilets would be beneficial.

3.6 A Combined Hub

A growing trend is to combine facilities such as pub, hall, shop, cafe to create a community hub. This was explored at the Engagement Event.

Discussions included:
The idea of creating a hub was thought to be a good idea to make existing facilities more viable into the future.

- Scope for an existing facility to accommodate all amenities was thought to be challenging.
- The pub building could include a bar, shop, games room, B&B, coffee shop and gym.

- Standalone would be more expensive than combined and more difficult to staff with volunteers.
- New combined modern building would reduce energy costs.

3.7 Post Office Services

The twice weekly provision of a post office service to Rackenford is no longer available from Dulverton Post office. The discussions around this focussed on identifying the services needed and looking to see if they can be replaced by an alternative solution.

Points raised included:

- Provide drop off and pick up lockers for deliveries.
- Is there a mobile post office or mobile bank which could be leveraged?
- Do some people need help utilising online services?

3.8 Use of the Church

The use of the church as a community facility was brought up through the survey and at the community engagement meeting.

Ruth Fennell, member of the Parochial Church Council noted that the church would support community use, but that conversion with additional facilities would be challenging and prohibitively expensive due to the current lack of services (water, toilets etc).

4 Recommendations

It is the recommendation of the Engagement Group that the Parish Council

Set up working groups or liaisons to take forward ideas and develop options in three key areas:

- The Stag as a Community Pub
- Engaging with Rackenford Club to enhance the space for community activities
- Community Transport – Look to use existing assets to offer a community bus.

Additionally, the Parish Council should support the Shop where necessary in relation to:

- Post Office - address meeting the needs of the community resulting from the Post Office closing
- Meeting Room/café - support the existing shop project.

Any working groups should be set up with appropriate terms of reference and include objectives laid out below.

The existing Community Engagement Group should now be stood down.

4.1 The Stag as a community pub

A working group should be formed to look at the feasibility and options around the Stag operating as a pub and community space.

- Potential purchase and lease options should be explored.
- Research both successful and unsuccessful community pubs elsewhere.
- Potential grants and funding identified.
- Potential ownership and business models.
- Progress discussions with current owners.
- Explore the potential for the pub to offer combined facilities (e.g. function hall).

Lead: Community engagement group member Justin Denno has offered to set-up the Pub Working Group and take forward these actions.

4.2 Rackenford Club

It is recommended that engagement with the Club's committee / leadership is undertaken to support the club including assisting in ways to enhance the facilities. This could include:

- Engaging with existing Club committee members.
- Creating safe access to the club from the village.
- Assisting in undertaking surveys to find out the membership needs and wishes.
- Assisting with fundraising to undertake facility extensions or upgrades.
- Explore the potential for the club to offer combined facilities (e.g. function hall)

Lead: Current engagement group member and councillor Peter Jones has offered to reach out to the existing committee as a liaison from the parish council.

4.3 Community Transport

A working group should be formed to look at the feasibility and options for providing a local and affordable transport service

Actions to include:

- Explore setting up a new scheme using the school bus or sharing resources with the existing Exe Valley Community Bus to enhance the existing service and include Rackenford.
- Look at potential demand.
- Review other options.

Lead: Current engagement group member and councillor Scott Ware has offered to lead the work, creating a working group, if necessary, to support the review.

4.4 Post Office

It is recommended that a liaison is set up to support the Shop committee to look at potential solutions to address issues arising from the loss of the Post Office. Actions to include:

- Identify the individual services that are most in demand.
- Look at alternative solutions such as drop off and pick up lockers and mobile post office options.

Current engagement group member and village shop director Sarah Child has offered to undertake and liaise on behalf of the parish council to take these ideas forward.

4.5 Meeting Room / Cafe

This project is already being undertaken by the shop committee and should be supported by the parish council.

2425-055

RACKENFORD PARISH COUNCIL
BUDGET ANALYSIS 2025/2026

Receipts & Payments Account

2023/2024 Outturn		2024/2025 Budget		2024/2025 Expected Outturn		2025/2026 Budget
£		£		£		£
	RECEIPTS					
15,000.00	Precept	15,900		15,900		15,900
-	Grants	-				-
-	DAA Lighting Donations	-				-
-	Community Building Donations	-				-
1,897.00	Jubilee/Coronation Events Income	-				-
-	PROW Grant	-				-
400.00	Interest & Other Income	400		200		400
2,049.92	VAT Refund	-		9,827		-
19,346.92	**TOTAL RECEIPTS**	**16,300**		**25,927**		**16,300**
	PAYMENTS					
-	Common Maintenance	4,000		1,740		3,000
-	Grass Mowing	-				-
78.50	Playground Inspection	120		82		120
-	Common Playground Project	-				-
1,055.76	Sports Equipment	-				-
12,000.00	Hard Court maintenance	3,500	Keter Box £131	13,526	Wood + Bolts	600
900.00	Salt spreading / snow ploughing	2,000	Balance in reserve	300	In Reserve	2,000
-	Trinity Well	-				-
225.00	Audit fees	450		405		450
4,587.82	Clerk Salary	4,750		4,750		4,900
180.00	Clerk Expenses	150		150		150
1,106.00	Website & IT services	520		450		460
937.98	Insurance	1,000		968		1,100
-	School Room hire	100		300		100
202.00	Memberships/subscriptions	220		247		300
-	Air Ambulance Landing Lights	-				-
-	Election	-				-
967.10	Jubilee/Coronation Expenditure	-				-
-	PROW Expenditure	-				-
1,800.00	Defibrillator	500	Into Reserve	500		500
1,775.60	Gazebo & Barbecue	-	Replacement Gazebo	300		-
-	Benches	-	Benches & Picnic Table	1,500		-
	Highway Maintenance		Laybys	1,305		-
395.00	Non Section 137 Grants & Other	-	Churchyard Grant	300		300
-	S137 grants & other	-				-
3,994.84	VAT Expenditure	-		4,000		-
30,205.60	**TOTAL PAYMENTS**	**17,310**		**30,823**		**13,980**
39,755.81	Balance 1st April	28,897		28,897.13		24,001
19,346.92	Plus Receipts	16,300		25,927		16,300
(30,205.60)	Less Payments	(17,310)		(30,823)		(13,980)
28,897.13	Balance	27,887		24,001.13		26,321

RACKENFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Reserves Balances

Description	Balance 31st March 2024	Budget Transfer	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31st March 2025	Budget Transfer	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31st March 2026
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Earmarked Reserves									
Hard Court	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Computer Replacement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Defibrillator	-	500.00	-	-	**500.00**	500.00	-	-	**1,000.00**
DAA Grant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DAA Donations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DCF grant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Winter Maintenance	**2,695.00**	1,700.00	-	-	**4,395.00**	-	2,000.00	-	**6,395.00**
Community Events	**1,859.80**	-	-	300.00	**1,559.80**	-	-	-	**1,559.80**
Community Building	**5,000.00**	(5,000.00)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General Reserve	**19,342.33**	2,800.00	25,927.00	(31,123.00)	**16,946.33**	(500.00)	14,300.00	(13,980.00)	**16,766.33**
Total Reserves	**28,897.13**	-	**25,927.00**	**(30,823.00)**	**24,001.13**	-	**16,300.00**	**(13,980.00)**	**26,321.13**

2425-055

Z425-058

Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council

Bench & Picnic Table

Report by the Parish Clerk

1. At the last parish council meeting I was asked to get some prices for the provision of a new bench for the Common and a new picnic table that could be used by the general public and by the children at Rackenford School.
2. The last time a bench was purchased for the area next to Big River it was made of recycled plastic on the basis that it would not rot, and the only maintenance would be an occasional rub-down with a cloth. It had a 25-year guarantee against falling apart.

Wooden Furniture

3. At the meeting however Cllr. Phillips handed me a leaflet from Heard & Sendell Ltd indicating that the parish council should consider wooden alternatives and that he could get a better price than those shown on the leaflet. In my opinion however, I believe that these items are meant for a garden location rather than a public open space such as the Common. I have contacted the company directly to obtain a quotation from them and asked for their thoughts on the robustness of the items for this type of location.
4. In addition, I have done online research into the subject of the supply of wooden benches from other companies with the conclusion that the price you pay depends on a large number of factors, not the least of which is the material from which they are constructed, ranging from Pine to Teak.
5. As an example, the Sustainable Furniture Company (www.sustainable-furniture.co.uk) can supply a Teak 4-foot bench for an overall price of £385 but this goes up when the size is increased. The same company does a 4-foot Douglas Fir Picnic Bench for around £450. Both of these items would need to be treated at the time of installation and again probably on an annual basis to keep them looking good and functional.
6. Corido (www.corido.co.uk), another company can supply a 5-foot teak bench for £425 whilst their Picnic Benches come out at £525, but these are in teak as well.
7. In short, the options for wooden furniture are endless and in order to get comparable prices, the details have to be honed down somewhat.

Recycled Plastic

8. As far as recycled plastic is concerned the variations are less obvious and they are produced primarily for public installations rather than private gardens. There are, however, various options that could be chosen.
9. The company used the last time for this type of furniture was DCW Polymers (www.dcwpolymers.co.uk) with the bench costing £420 and a picnic table £426.

There are alternative options for both of these as a look at their website will confirm.

10. Glasdon (www uk.glasdon.com) are a company which supplies local authorities with this sort of equipment but their prices start at £750 for the Picnic Table.
11. NBB Recycled Furniture (www.recycledfurniture.co.uk) has a range of items for both the bench and the table. A 5-foot version of the picnic table, in brown, comes to £516. This company does however provide things like a wheelchair accessible table or on that is specifically designed for Junior School children although that comes out a £800.
12. Please note that the prices quoted above all include VAT, so the cost to the parish council is lower than these. Examples are that £240 is £200 plus VAT whilst £800 is £666.66 plus VAT.

Conclusions

13. I did as part of this exercise produce paper copies of the companies websites, but the amount of paper this entailed was huge and was really confusing. My suggestion is that you look at the websites I have detailed above to decide exactly what you want.
14. There is no doubt about the fact that some of the wooden options are cheaper to buy but are far less resilient. In my experience, by the time a wooden table is ten years old, it is looking in a sorry old state even if it is periodically treated whilst the guarantee for the recycle plastic version is generally 25 years.
15. On the basis of opting for the plastic version it would appear that DCW are competitive on price, although NBB offer a wider choice of options albeit at a higher price.
16. In an ideal world it might be thought that the provision of the Junior table would be the best option, although this would make the seating low for adult users. DCW do a Wellington Picnic Table that enables seating for 8 around a wider tabletop, which comes out at £774 including VAT, £645 excluding and this might be an option for both adults and children. There is also a wheelchair version of this for the same price.
17. The need now is to conclude at the meeting exactly what you want and I will get that for the best price.

Rob Martin

29th October 2024

2425 - 059

28 October 2024 (2024 - 2025)

Rackenford Parish Council

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____

Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

	Bank Reconciliation at 28/10/2024			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2024			28,897.13
	ADD			
	Receipts 01/04/2024 - 28/10/2024			22,342.30
				51,239.43
	SUBTRACT			
	Payments 01/04/2024 - 28/10/2024			25,864.22
A	**Cash in Hand 28/10/2024** (per Cash Book)			**25,375.21**
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	28/10/2024	0.00	
	Lloyds Treasurers Online	28/10/2024	25,375.21	
				25,375.21
	Less unpresented payments			
				25,375.21
	Plus unpresented receipts			
B	**Adjusted Bank Balance**			**25,375.21**
	A = B Checks out OK			

2425-059

LLOYDS BANK

Treasurers Account Statement

Printed: 28 October 2024

Rackenford Parish Council
14 STATION ROAD
YEOFORD
CREDITON
DEVON
EX17 5HU

Sort code 30-90-89 Account number 39081463
BIC: LOYDGB21256 IBAN: GB31 LOYD 3090 8939 0814 63

The data shown on your statement was correct at the time of printing. Please remember, this isn't an official bank copy.

Please check your statement. If you think that something looks incorrect, please call us on 0345 072 5555 Monday to Friday, 7:00am - 8:00pm; Saturday, 9:00am - 2:00pm (+44 (0) 1733 347 338, from outside the UK). Or Textphone 0345 601 6909.

Date	Description	Type	In (£)	Out (£)	Balance (£)
24 Oct 24	HMRC VTR XPV126000107746	BGC	3584.73		25375.21
18 Oct 24	HMRC - ACCOUNTS OF	BP		76.40	21790.48
18 Oct 24	RJ MARTIN	BP		305.86	21866.88
30 Sep 24	NORTH DEVON DISTR	BGC	7950.00		22172.74
26 Sep 24	ICO ZA275101	DD		35.00	14222.74
20 Sep 24	HMRC - ACCOUNTS OF	BP		76.40	14257.74
20 Sep 24	RJ MARTIN	BP		305.86	14334.14
13 Sep 24	EXMOOR LUXURY LOOS 600000001421594302 INV 5718 309314 10 13SEP24 14:22	FPO		366.00	14640.00
13 Sep 24	BG PHILLIPS 300000001425268875 00003416 309897 10 13SEP24 14:22	FPO		1200.00	15006.00
22 Aug 24	PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP 500000001408569701 DV0295 400231 10 22AUG24 12:09	FPO		252.00	16206.00
22 Aug 24	GEOXPHERE LTD 300000001411928829 18UE048-0007 090129 10 22AUG24 12:09	FPO		36.00	16458.00
22 Aug 24	AVON ROAD MARK LTD 200000001404487741 34075 209474 10 22AUG24 12:09	FPO		1674.00	16494.00
20 Aug 24	HMRC - ACCOUNTS OF	BP		76.40	18168.00
20 Aug 24	RJ MARTIN	BP		305.86	18244.40
25 Jul 24	BG PHILLIPS 300000001395557140 00003370 309897 10 25JUL24 10:50	FPO		638.40	18550.26
25 Jul 24	STAG CONSTRUCTION 200000001388113639 INV 00397 208526 10 25JUL24 10:50	FPO		14400.00	19188.66
19 Jul 24	HMRC - ACCOUNTS OF	BP		76.60	33588.66
19 Jul 24	RJ MARTIN	BP		305.66	33665.26
20 Jun 24	HMRC - ACCOUNTS OF	BP		76.40	33970.92
20 Jun 24	RJ MARTIN	BP		305.86	34047.32

2425-060

Rackenford Parish Council

28 October 2024 (2024 - 2025)

Summary of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes

Administration

Code	Title	Receipts Budgeted	Receipts Actual	Receipts Variance	Payments Budgeted	Payments Actual	Payments Variance	Net Position +/- Under/over spend
1	Precept	15,900.00	15,900.00					(0%)
2	Grants							(N/A)
3	Donations							(N/A)
6	Interest Received							(N/A)
9	VAT Refund							(N/A)
21	Clerk's Salary				4,750.00	2,675.82	2,074.18	2,074.18 (43%)
22	Clerk's Expenses				150.00	29.91	120.09	120.09 (80%)
23	IT Equipment							(N/A)
24	Website & Email				520.00		520.00	520.00 (100%)
25	Insurance				1,000.00	967.77	32.23	32.23 (3%)
26	Room Hire				100.00	300.00	-200.00	-200.00 (-200%)
27	Subscription DALC				150.00	138.99	11.01	11.01 (7%)
28	Subscription SLCC				70.00	43.00	27.00	27.00 (38%)
29	Internal Audit				240.00	195.00	45.00	45.00 (18%)
30	External Audit				210.00	210.00		(0%)
31	Subscription ICO							(N/A)
81	Elections							(N/A)
103	Parish Online Mapping					30.00	-30.00	-30.00 (N/A)
105	ICO					35.00	-35.00	-35.00 (N/A)
	SUB TOTAL	**15,900.00**	**15,900.00**		**7,190.00**	**4,625.49**	**2,564.51**	**2,564.51 (11%)**

The Common

Code	Title	Receipts Budgeted	Receipts Actual	Receipts Variance	Payments Budgeted	Payments Actual	Payments Variance	Net Position +/- Under/over spend
41	Common Grass Cutting				1,800.00	1,740.00	60.00	60.00 (3%)
42	Common Maintenance				2,200.00		2,200.00	2,200.00 (100%)
	SUB TOTAL				**4,000.00**	**1,740.00**	**2,260.00**	**2,260.00 (56%)**

Village Maintenance

Code	Title	Receipts Budgeted	Receipts Actual	Receipts Variance	Payments Budgeted	Payments Actual	Payments Variance	Net Position +/- Under/over spend
5	PROW Grant							(N/A)
51	Grass Cutting							(N/A)
52	Playground Inspection				120.00	82.00	38.00	38.00 (31%)
53	Playground Maintenance							(N/A)
54	Playground Equipment							(N/A)
55	Sports Equipment							(N/A)
61	MUGA Maintenance							(N/A)
62	MUGA Refurbishment				3,500.00	13,395.00	-9,895.00	-9,895.00 (-282%)
71	Salt Spreading & Snow Ploughin				2,000.00	300.00	1,700.00	1,700.00 (85%)
75	Trinity Well Maintenance							(N/A)
91	PROW Expenditure							(N/A)
102	Benches					532.00	-532.00	-532.00 (N/A)
104	Highway Maintenance					1,305.00	-1,305.00	-1,305.00 (N/A)

Created by Scribe

Rackenford Parish Council

Summary of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes

SUB TOTAL				5,620.00	15,614.00	-9,994.00	-9,994.00 (-177%)

Village Services

		Receipts			Payments			Net Position
Code	Title	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
4	Events Income							(N/A)
7	MUGA Charges	400.00	200.00	-200.00				-200.00 (-50%)
82	Event Expenditure							(N/A)
92	Defibrillator Maintenance				500.00		500.00	500.00 (100%)
93	Community Equipment							(N/A)
100	Community Grants							(N/A)
101	Churchyard Grant					300.00	-300.00	-300.00 (N/A)
	SUB TOTAL	400.00	200.00	-200.00	500.00	300.00	200.00	(0%)

Summary

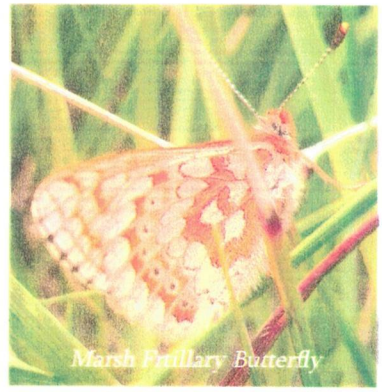
NET TOTAL	16,300.00	16,100.00	-200.00	17,310.00	22,279.49	-4,969.49	-5,169.49 (-15%)
V.A.T.		6,242.30			3,584.73		
GROSS TOTAL		22,342.30			25,864.22		

2425-063

Devon Culm

Marsh Fritillary Project

The aim of the project is to provide 10,000 devil's bit scabious plugs to be planted within Devon Culm's priority area. This will assist with habitat connectivity between the colonies of marsh fritillary butterflies on Knowstone & Rackenford Moors and the colonies on Witheridge Moor. It will also increase awareness of Devon Culm and the importance of the habitats provided by culm grassland.





Marsh fritillaries are one of Britain's and Europe's rarest butterflies. There is a 6km gap between the colonies of these butterflies on Witheridge Moor and the colonies on Knowstone/Rackenford Moors, where Devon Culm's nature reserve will be. Witheridge Moor has the most stable colony of Marsh Fritillaries in the country. Marsh fritillary butterflies cannot cover this distance by flying. Increasing the area between these moors that is suitable habitat, increases the chance of creating connectivity between the colonies. devil's bit scabious is the food plant of marsh fritillaries. It's presence or absence is the biggest factor in whether habitat is suitable or not. If the expansion of habitat allows the colonies to meet, this will expand the gene-pool, making the colonies healthier and more resilient.

The plants will be given away to anyone in the priority area and to children at Rackenford Primary School. They will mainly plant them themselves. On larger sites, it will be a good job for volunteers.

If the average planting site takes 100 plugs, this will create 100 new areas of devil's bit scabious. Some of these will not survive, but others will spread and the seeds from them will create more areas of devil's bit scabious.

It will create an understanding of the importance of devil's bit scabious, in the local community, which should lead to people taking more care of any devil's bit scabious which is growing on their land. We will provide information about the ideal habitat for marsh fritillary butterflies, to help people create the ideal habitat, whether in their garden, or on a field scale. This project will encourage the local population to appreciate and feel a connection with the habitats that the culm offers.

