

CHRISTOW ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Friday 24th April 2026 AT 7.00 PM

Councillors present- Cllrs AJ Orme, G Read, R Slack, A Cook, B Green, clerk Mrs C Retallick and 3 Members of the Public.

Welcome and Apologies received.

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting - received from P French, Teign Valley Scout Group, Jill & Phillip Arthur TVCH, C Edwards CCLT, Cllr J Orme, Cllr T Archer. Cllr H Tucker.

Energy Club – Peter Cooney introduced a proposal to establish a community energy scheme:
Concept:

- Residents with solar panels (or other generation capacity) contribute energy to a shared scheme.
- Other residents can purchase this energy at reduced rates.
- Producers receive slightly higher returns than standard providers; consumers pay less than market rates.
- Any surplus funds are reinvested into community initiatives.

Potential Benefits:

- Reduced electricity costs (approx. 10–30% savings).
- Support for renewable energy expansion.
- Community-controlled, non-profit model.

Possible reinvestment into:

- Additional solar installations
- EV charging points
- Energy storage solutions
- Structure & Scope:
 - Initially local (possibly involving nearby villages).
 - Based on shared electricity substation coverage.
 - Could expand over time.

Funding:

- Government grants available (up to ~£40,000) for feasibility studies and setup.
- Minimal financial input required from the parish council.

Next Steps:

Gauge community interest.

- Engage with existing schemes (e.g., Totnes, Mortonhampstead, Ashburton).
- Form a working group.
- Pete offered to help initiate but cannot lead alone.

Discussion Points:

- Possibility of collaboration with other community initiatives (e.g., oil cooperative).
- Need for volunteers and wider parish engagement.
- Clarification that the scheme operates within electricity infrastructure constraints (substations).

Action:

- Pete to share presentation materials for the website.
- Parish to explore interest and potential working group formation.

Review the minutes from last year

Minutes from last year's meeting were available online.

No objections or amendments were raised.

Chairman's Report for the year 2025/2026.

I WOULD LIKE TO START BY THANKING THE COUNCILLER'S FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO DUTY OVER THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS, WE ARE LUCKY HERE TO HAVE OUR FULL QUOTA 8 COUNCILLERS, WHICH IS MORE THAN A LOT OF VILLAGES CAN SAY, ALSO THANK YOU TO CAROL OUR CLERK FOR KEEPING EVERYTHING IN ORDER.

I WOULD SAY THIS HAS BEEN AN INDIFFERENT YEAR, WITH THE USUAL PROBLEMS, FIRSTLY THE PLAY PARK, THE INSPECTION EVERY YEAR SEES MORE ITEMS CONDEMNED, WHICH IS FRUSTRATING FOR PARENTS WITH CHILDREN SEEING IT DISAPPEAR, WE MUST IN THE NEAR FUTURE TRY AND REPLACE SOME OF THESE ITEMS.

THE MAINTENANCE OF THE FENCE BETWEEN CAR PARK AND RECREATION FIELD WAS COMPLETED, WITH LARGE SECTIONS BEING REPLACED.

ALSO PUT IN THE RECREATION FIELD WAS A NEW BENCH PUT DOWN BY THE SKATE PARK, WHICH IS MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIAL AND THERE IS A SECTION WHERE PUSH CHAIRS AND DISABLED CHAIRS CAN PULL RIGHT UP TO THE TABLE.

THE CEMETERY EXTENSION HAS GONE AHEAD A BIG JOB WITH A LOT REMOVAL OF DEBRIS, IT HAS NOW BEEN LEFT LEVEL FOR GRASS SEED TO BE PUT ON.

THE ALLOTMENTS ARE BEING WELL USED WITH THE OCCUPANTS WORKING WELL TOGETHER

THERE ARE OTHER JOBS BIG AND SMALL THAT CROP UP DURING THE YEAR, I MUST MENTION JAKE OUR LENGTHSMAN WHO IS DOING A GREAT JOB KEEPING OUR DRAINS AND GULLIES CLEAR.

LASTLY, I DO THINK THE 20MPH SIGNS ARE WORKING, THEY ARE VERY VISIBLE THROUGH THE VILLAGE.

THANK YOU TOM ARCHER

Reports from Clubs and local Organisations

Bridford & Teign Valley Garden Club - Is open to all local residents. Annual membership fees are £8. Please contact Saul Ackroyd saualackroyd@googlemail.com or tel 07974405122 Visit our website www.bridfordandteignvalleygardenclub.co.uk to see what we have been up to.

Our general programme format is:-

Indoor meetings generally at 2pm on the first Thursday of the month, in the Bowden room of TVCH for a talk, usually by an outside speaker on a topic of garden interest, in November, February and March.

Same time/place in December for our annual AGM, quiz with mince pies and drinks

In January we hold our annual lunch in a local hostelry.

Through the rest of the year we visit gardens, nurseries of interest (usually also NGS gardens but not always) within a 20 mile radius from here, again often on the first Thursday of the month at 2pm. Have tea and cakes. Lifts can be arranged. Join us it is great fun.

Programme for rest of 2026

Thursday 7 May at 2 pm, Heathercombe, Manaton, TQ13 9XE, Contact Saul Ackroyd

Thursday 4 June at 2 pm, Wildside, Buckland Monachorum, PL20 7NP, Contact Jan Traylen

Thursday 2 July at 2 pm, Am Brook Meadow, Torbryan, Ipplepen, Newton Abbott TQ12 5UP

Saturday 18th July at 5 pm, Summer Gathering, Easternhill Farm, Nr Dunsford, EX6 7BW
Contact Jo Macdonald

Christow Show - the club will not have a presence this year at the show

Thursday 6 August at 2 pm, Shilston Garden and Devon Rural Archive
in conjunction with the History Society, Modbury, PL21 0TW. Contact Paul French

Thursday September 3 at 2 pm, Littlehempston Agroforest Gardens and Edible Canopy
nursery, off Higher Drive, Dartington, TQ9 6EA. Directions to follow.....

Thursday 1 October at 2 pm, Chevithorne Barton, Chevithorne, Tiverton EX16 7QB
Contact Lorraine Hart

Thursday 5 November at 2 pm, Volunteering at Sissinghurst, talk by Gilly Wilford, Bowden
Room, TVCH, Christow, Contact Hibly Woods

Thursday 3rd December 2:00 pm, Annual General Meeting, Quiz & slide show of this year's
garden visits, TVCH, Christow

1st Teign Valley Scout Group sent a poster advertising the group and seeking volunteers
with contact details for more information.

TVCH

Having had our TVCH committee meeting yesterday evening, I can confirm that there are no
significant issues relating to the management of the hall, the finances are healthy and the
bookings for the coming year are up.

We look forward to hosting the Banterfest music festival being held 7th – 11th May, and
would like to thank the Parish Council for allowing the recreational field to be used for
camping and parking.

Christow Community Land Trust Ltd

- The main activity of the Land Trust is now the Community Shop, which is run by its own management committee with oversight from the CCLT Board.
- The shop continues to thrive and to make a surplus for reinvestment in the community in due course. Over the coming months the CCLT and shop management committee will be discussing how best to reinvest this surplus, for example, to support a more permanent shop once the existing 5 year planning permission and site lease with the Parish Council ends.
- Pre-planning advice is awaited from DNPA on the updated plans for an extension to Stafford Close. Due to the challenges presented by the size and topography of the site, the viability of this project remains uncertain.
- The CCLT has this year awarded community grants to Christow Palace Football Club and Teign Valley Players in addition to covering the £235 cost of bin stickers and banners for Christow Parish Council's '20's plenty' campaign.
- The 2026 CCLT AGM is at 7.30pm on Thursday 8th October at TVCH. All are welcome.

Teign Valley Larder CIC

- The Larder remains in demand as there is no let-up in cost of living pressures. It is a sad fact of life that there are residents in the parish of Christow and neighbouring Teign Valley parishes who struggle to afford to buy sufficient food for themselves and their families. Many of those using the Larder have children to feed.
- We continue to supply our outlets in Bridford, Dunsford and Christow with ambient storage, basic food items that we have bought alongside fresh produce from the charity Fareshare. We also provide weekly food boxes direct to households in Doddiscombsleigh.

- We no longer have Larder outlets in Ashton (lack of demand) or Doddiscombsleigh.
- While demand remains high, unfortunately grant funding sources have all but disappeared in the last year and our income has dropped substantially. This is a national issue across all charitable sectors. We have therefore been working to increase the proportion of our income raised direct from members of the community while cutting back our weekly purchases by almost half.
- We are no longer purchasing any non-food items such as toiletries and the amount of food we can afford is reduced. The result is that the food we buy is insufficient to keep the main larder in Christow fully stocked and many items run out before the end of the week.
- Our current spending model will allow us to remain viable for the foreseeable future while still fulfilling our core principle that no-one in the valley need go to bed hungry. The food available to stave off hunger is now an even more basic and reduced range, however, with fewer protein items such as tinned fish or stew available while we focus on cheaper items such as pasta, baked beans, tinned soup and cereals.
- We would urge any local groups planning fundraising activities and looking for good causes to support to consider the Larder as a beneficiary.

Teign Valley Tennis Report to the PCC 24/4/26

The tennis courts continue to be well used several times a week, even during the cold and wet Winter months. Beginners are always welcome and soon find they are able to hold their own in the different types of games that we offer. You will find more information on our website:- <https://www.teigntennisclub.com/>

Several "Mini" mixed Tournaments between club members of the Club are planned and will continue through the Summer. We continue to play across the County and beyond in the local Mixed and Ladies Doubles Leagues, which have been good social events and closely fought matches played in a good spirit.

The Club will once again be represented at the Christow Show on Saturday 15th August, but we have decided not to hold a Barn Dance this November. This will be replaced by several smaller events throughout the year. Our Christmas Feast has also proven to be a popular event.

This year has seen tennis continue to be enjoyed on the 3 courts near the Hall. The newly surfaced Court 3 is now looking good and has already seen plenty of use.

We are grateful to Tim our coach who as continued to encourage skill levels in all of our players, along with organising local and county wide tournaments for the Juniors.

We thank all those who have supported the club through their time, money and efforts in many areas. We have recently had cause to be grateful to all those who helped at the Courts Maintenance Day, which was enjoyable and sociable. It has certainly much improved the facilities and kept them looking good for the Summer.

Open Forum

Several Matters were raised as matters of concern one being the Play Park and the other with Community Engagement Issues

Discussion focused on lack of public engagement:-

- Multiple attempts made to involve residents:
- School outreach
- Parish events (e.g., village show)
- Social media and WhatsApp
- Very limited response from parents/community.

Challenges:

- Cannot apply for grants without a defined plan.
- Cannot define a plan without community input.
- Risk of installing unwanted equipment.

Additional Complications:

- Uncertainty around Stafford Close development and potential funding contributions.
- Past consultations yielded minimal participation.

Suggestions:

- Increase communication via:
- WhatsApp groups
- Parish magazine (“Unity”)
- Emphasise urgency (play equipment removal).
- Consider forming a small working group.
- Possibly install temporary, lower-cost equipment as interim solution.

Actions: - Cllr Read to draft communication for wider distribution.

Continued efforts to engage parents and community members.

Parish Award

The council made the decision to award the Parish Award posthumously to Barbara Brown. This is to be presented to her family at a suitable event in recognition of her contributions to the hall and community.

Meeting Close

The Chair thanked attendees and closed the meeting at 19.40pm