

## Mary Tavy Parish Council

We are pleased to be able to report that a meeting has been held with an officer of WDBC regarding the condition of pathways and the need for boundary management and tree work in the parish churchyard. The outcome was very positive and we are certain that better physical management of our churchyard will occur as a result. This in turn will allow us to improve the appearance and functionality of the adjoining parish cemetery. However, we are saddened to note that problems still appear to exist with regard to headstones and floral tributes in our parish cemetery. We have reviewed the matter in depth and have given very specific instructions to our contractor concerning the removal of dead flowers and the need to replace flower vases after grass cutting has been completed. Floral tributes are of course easily damaged and displaced by the elements and are often the target of small animals such as rabbits. It is unreasonable to expect our contractor to have the time or the knowledge to replace them on the correct grave. However, we must stress that we depend on those parishioners visiting graves to be understanding and to use common sense when placing floral tributes to allow for the easy cutting of grass by either mower or strimmer. We regret that our cemetery noticeboard has had to be removed for some very necessary repairs to be carried out. Therefore any parishioner who is unsure of the regulations governing our parish cemetery should, in the short term, seek advice from our Parish Clerk.

I have been asked to point out that, following this Council's decision to cancel plans to extend the parish cemetery, we are always looking for an alternative site. This decision to cancel was, of course, taken on the grounds of the unsuitability of the proposed site and the high costs involved. Unfortunately land in the parish is highly sought after and commands high prices. Therefore if any parishioner can assist us in this search please contact us as soon as possible.

Recently MTPC received a complaint from a parishioner concerning the felling of mature trees within the Parish and the apparent failure of the Council to stop such work taking place. Needless to say it is a complete misconception to believe that a Parish Council has statutory powers in such matters. Many parishioners rightly take the view that, as the tree work they wish to undertake is on private property without the hindrance of Tree Protection Orders and Conservation Area restrictions, they are not obliged to inform us of their plans. If we believe such work to be ill-advised or extreme the only course of action open to us is to bring the problem to the attention of the Trees & Landscape Officer of the DNPA. We also examine closely all planning applications involving trees but as none of us holds professional qualifications on arboreal matters we rely on common sense and the professional advice of others. We always recommend to parishioners who approach us for guidance that they should seek the advice of a properly qualified Tree Surgeon and if necessary the consent of the relevant authorities before commencing work. In the last 2 cases reviewed by MTPC this is exactly the procedure that was followed to the satisfaction of all concerned.

MTPC will undertake the Beating of the Bounds on the 12<sup>th</sup> August. This ancient ceremony, which dates back to at least Anglo-Saxon times, is of course a reflection of an age when maps were a rarity and literacy the privilege of the very few. Parishioners walked the parish boundary to establish in everyone's memory the exact limits of their own parish with its necessary rights and privileges. All arrangements are in place for our modern version with the 27km distance being split into 3 sections. Please note that if you wish to take part prior registration is mandatory as we have to satisfy Health & Safety regulations. Entry forms are available from our website and from Mary Tavy Post Office and Stores.

Finally, I have been asked to remind all parishioners who use local moorland and public footpaths to exercise their dogs to keep their animals on a lead. We have already received complaints of sheep worrying by dogs not properly controlled. Frankly it is little wonder that when this happens the farming members of our community begin to consider the need for drastic action against both uncontrolled dogs and their irresponsible owners.

Councillor Peter Jarvis ~ Vice-Chairman, Mary Tavy Parish Council.