

Whitstone Localism

Report for Annual Parish Meeting, 9th April 2014

There has been much talk about localism over the last year, with service cuts and Neighbourhood Planning as the 'hot topics'. There is increasing pressure for local organisations to fill the gap where Cornwall Council or central government have cut back on funding. Many services are under threat including public toilets, mobile library, one stop shops, school transport. . . the list goes on.

The main forum for attempting to address these issues is the Bude Community Area Network which holds regular quarterly meetings. Whitstone Parish Council, along with all the other 10 parishes in our area, is represented at those meetings. During this year I have attended these meetings and meetings at Bodmin and Boyton on Neighbourhood Plans.

We have yet to decide if we are to embark on production of a Neighbourhood Plan. This will require some very careful consideration as there is a lot of work involved and it will require the support of the whole community if we are to go ahead. We have attempted to consult for your opinions on this and many other matters by updating the Parish Plan, you will have had a questionnaire through your door. Unfortunately the response rate to this was very poor, only just over 10% of the parish has returned the questionnaire. I fear that this level of response will not enable the Parish Council to strongly represent your opinions when dealing with Cornwall Council and other organisations which provide the services and planning decisions which affect us. However the analysis of the responses we have received is underway and will be published when completed. Here is an interim analysis of three of the more topical questions:

Possible Projects

Q1. A petition has been submitted to the Parish Council requesting a pedestrian crossing point on the main road through the village near the entrance to Paradise Park.

Do you agree with this idea?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
29	21	8	9	3

Q2. The Parish Council are considering a project to erect a war memorial in the village.

Do you agree with this idea?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
15	28	17	5	4

Q4. Neighbourhood Plans will largely take the place of Parish Plans and the Localism Act makes it possible for these to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents. That means that the local opinion stated in the Neighbourhood Plan must be taken into account when planning applications are considered.

Do you agree/disagree that our area should produce a Neighbourhood Plan?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
14	27	9	1	2

I hope that the full analysis of Parish Plan Update will be completed within the next 2 months.

Cornwall Council is currently consulting on the Mobile Library Service which looks likely to end or face severe budget cuts. If you have an interest in this please make your views known quickly to the Parish Council or to me directly as this is an agenda item for the Community Network meeting on 14th April!

Mike Sutton (WPC Portfolio Holder – Localism)

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