

Report for the Annual Parish Meeting on 16th May 2023 from the Charltons Memorial Community Trust

This year has seen a return to a more normal year after the two years of the COVID epidemic. The hall is now being used regularly two days a week by the Pickleball Club, once a week for badminton and weekly for the youth club and meetings of the Horticultural Society as well as community fundraising events, parties etc. The developments on the field have encouraged much greater use of the field and playground by families.

A very successful four-day Diamond Jubilee celebration was organised in early June 2022 which included the commissioning of a beacon, a jubilee cream tea, a village day and a full day live music megabash. This proved very popular and was blessed with very good weather.

During the year the Trustees have worked with the Community Council for Somerset to update the legal status of the Trust from a registered charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which offers more protection to the Trustees and meets current regulatory requirements. CIO status was granted on November 2nd 2022. We are now working on merging the two charities and transferring the custodianship of the title deeds of the field from the Parish Council to the CIO.

Following the successful consultation with the village in 2021 on future plans for the building a working party has been set up to undertake the necessary planning to upgrade the building. This is urgently needed not least because the roof leaks regularly. They have recommended the commissioning of architects to the Trustees and work is now in hand developing the plans. Fundraising for the improvements to the building has started in earnest with a grant of £1000 from the Parish Council towards these costs. A fundraising committee is in the process of being developed to lead on the direct fundraising activities and scoping work on potential grant funders is being undertaken.

In the meantime regular work takes place to ensure the building is maintained to the necessary standards. New signage has been installed which has greatly improved the visibility of the Community Centre for visitors to the villages.

The website www.charltonscommunity.org has been significantly developed and booking of the hall can now be arranged online. Community News has been produced and delivered bi-monthly to all residents of the villages and the village email group with 176 subscribers regularly updates villagers with useful information, Parish Council information and local events.

We have just laid out the beginning of our re-wilding scheme with a view to creating wildlife friendly areas within the less used sections of the Memorial Playing Field. We hope to involve the Youth Club in creating Bug Hotels and other interesting wildlife based projects.

We are enormously grateful to the many volunteers without whom the Community Centre could not function. We are always very happy to welcome new members to the team. Our AGM will be held on Monday 11th September at 7.30pm at the Community Centre.

AdeB 12.5.23

Rev: RH 12.5.23