

## **May - Instow Annual Parish Meeting Minutes (Draft)**

Held at Instow Village Hall on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 7pm

**Attendees** – Cllrs. Arthur, Bunclark, Foster, McCrum, Scott, Yeadon.

NDC Cllr Coombs. Parish Clerk (JAM) and five members of the public.

**Apologies** Resolution to approve apologies (with reasons) made to the Clerk prior to the meeting. Cllrs Hopkins, Johnson, DCC Cllr Biederman. due to personal commitments. Approved.

**Min 1/25** – The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

**Min 2/25** – Reports from Village.

### **Appendix 1**

1. Instow Sand and Flood Action Group (ISFAG) Delivered by Jacqui Poole
2. Parish Church – delivered by Pam Cante
3. Twinning Association – delivered by Sue Brown
4. Parish News Magazine – delivered by Peter Cante
5. All Saints Chape and Community Centre – delivered by Mary Jane Scott
6. Chairmans Speech– delivered by Chair MJ Scott
7. Chairmans Financial Report delivered by Chair MJ Scott

The following organisation and groups were also invited to attend the meeting and submit a report. Ferry Company, Instow Primary School, Women's Institute, Cricket Club, North Devon Yacht Club.

**Min 3/25** – Parishioners Questions:

Pam Cante asked further to the removal of the derelict garages at Marine car park. What is new cost for a reserved space with a lockable bollard. Cllr Foster stated the last correspondence on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 NDCC have reviewed the charge and confirm the lower amount to be £24.03 per week therefore £1,250.00 per year, per licence, which was rejected by previous renters of the lockable garage.

**Min 4/25** – Date of next Instow Annual Parish meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of May 2026

Meeting closed at: **7.28pm**

## Appendix 1

### 1. THE INSTOW SAND AND FLOOD ACTION GROUP REPORT TO INSTOW PARISH COUNCIL AGM

The ISAFAG grew out of an article published in The Instow Parish News a little under a year ago. It seems much longer! The article expressed frustration at the build-up of sand on the pavements along Marine Parade, the consequent flooding of the highway and the apparent lack of action on the part of Devon Highways to clear it away.

At first there were just two of us and then a committee came into being. We discovered that clearing sand from the highway and getting sand on the beach moved away from the wall were much more complex matters than we had anticipated! Many so-called 'agencies' were involved. Getting clarity on the way forward and finding solutions turned out to be challenging and time-consuming. The Parish Council were working on it, and we offered our help in terms of putting pressure, as local residents, on the decision-making bodies like Natural England.

Instow is part of a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' (an SSSI). As such, according to regulations established by Natural England, permission, in the form of a licence, has to be granted before any movement of sand can take place.

A combined effort on the part of members of the Parish Council and ISAFAG has resulted in a licence being granted to Christie Estates (owners of the beach) which gives permission to return sand to the beach for a six-month period until the end of June 2025 and for sand to be re-sited away from the highway and to an area on the beach designated by NE. It is hoped that this licence will be renewable.

The cost of moving large volumes of sand was the next hurdle to be crossed. Instow has been very fortunate to have The Marines on site and willing to help. Local residents with appropriate equipment have also been involved. At the time of writing this report, approximately half the job is completed.

There are now attempts by the various agencies, working together, to produce a long-term plan to prevent ingress of sand onto the highway and the consequent flooding of Marine Parade. This has been tried before by the creation of artificial dunes planted with marram grass. This is a classic solution but is now agreed that the last version of this didn't work and has now been dismantled.

So, what about the medium term? What happens while we wait for the experts to find a way forward? Well, ISAFAG has now over 50 volunteers on its books! This has meant that we've been able to start a pattern of monthly sand-clearing sessions. We've completed three of these so far. It's been a heart-warming and community-building experience. We've had offers of drinks and sustenance from The Commodore on the first occasion and The Boathouse on the second and on both occasions, Chris Hopkins from the Wayfarer has provided the workers with bacon sandwiches and refreshments at the end of their stint!

We feel we can now look forward to a brighter future for Instow's continued status as an attractive tourist resort and as a beautiful home for its residents.

Read by Jacqui Poole 15.05.2025

## 2. St John Baptist Church Instow report for IPC 2025

The church remains in good order. The churchyard is closely monitored for tidiness and grass cutting. Monuments and plaques are also carefully scrutinized and inspected for safety. This year the unsafe gravestones laid down have been placed back in position paid for by the PCC. The yard is public and receives a grant towards upkeep from IPC. We are proposing to make enquiries about extending the churchyard which will mean approaching the Christie trustees.

The church fabric which is inspected every 5 years, has had the guttering and down pipes painted this year. Repairs to roof slates are constant. The electric supply cable between the church and church room also required attention this year. We expect to reorder the area around the font having obtained a faculty from Exeter to make more space inside the front door. This work commenced at the end of April and is being financed as a personal gift. The church room has had a slate problem with the roof but hopefully this has been addressed. The undercroft continues to store items for IPC, village hall and Community on Show for which a small charge is made.

The PCC consists of 5 members and the Vicar Rev Chris Painter. The annual church meeting will take place on May 11<sup>th</sup> at 10.30 am in church. Sadly, our churchwarden Mrs Carole Roberts died last month and will be much missed. We are hopeful that replacements will be elected at the Annual meeting. The PCC meets quarterly. We look forward to meeting the new curate for TTEC in June, Rev James Moore who will be living in Lane End Close.

Attendance at services is average 10 to 15 persons. The electoral roll has been completely reviewed this year. Any parishioner can be on this roll. The finances are very well managed by Mrs MaryJane Scott. We are able to pay our diocesan share and keep a prudent balance in the fabric account against repairs. There are only two services a month which does affect our income. There are 3 weddings booked this year. All Saint's chapel is also our responsibility and is now licensed for weddings. It is used in the winter months. The Community centre has a separate management committee on which the PCC is represented. The church is open daily, and we are indebted to Mrs Glenis Woolacott of Glebe Cottage for this service.

P Cantle PCC Secretary May 2025

### 3. Instow Twinning Association Report for Instow Parish Council AGM 2025

Instow Twinning Association enjoys continued good relationships with our friends in Arromanches.

In 2024 we enjoyed providing a warm welcome to friends from France. The weekend included a trip to Plymouth where we toured The Box (highly recommended) and the Mayflower Museum. The day also included a fish and chips lunch and tour of Plymouth Gin. Hospitality included a lovely dinner dance at the Golf Club and a lunch at Instow Cricket Club.

We hold events in Instow in order to provide generous hospitality to our guests. This takes considerable effort by the organisation in order to be able to provide a warm welcome. Events over 2024 /25 have included a very successful talk on the role of North Devon Community leading up to D-Day. This was over- subscribed therefore we decided to hold a second, equally successful, repeat event. We also hosted a tour of Branton Burrows – which turned out to be quite an adventure with the local historian Richard Bass and US military –re-enactors from the Assault Training Centre. The tour was a blended walk and ride in vintage WW2 military vehicles. We are planning another talk and tour in June 2025. We appreciated the support of the Parish Council in this being a joint project.

We join up with the community for the Community on Show and hold other events during the year. A Beetle Drive, kindly hosted by Morris Poole, was great fun and we valued the support of the local community at the annual springtime Sunday lunch event.

We appreciate the support of everyone in Instow, and beyond, in order to be able to continue the Association fostering continued shared friendships, which has continued for many years. The close connections we have with the community supports cohesion and positive relationships within the village.

The small committee work hard to provide the base on which the members can enjoy close connections and friendships.

At the AGM in November, we presented an updated Constitution and Policies (Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, Avoidance of Bullying and Harassment and GDPR) were approved. This took a lot of work in development, and we believe provides assurances for all of our members and community.

Our membership is currently increasing, and we welcome interest from anyone wanting to join the Association.

We are planning our next trip to Arromanches in September 2025 and will take with us warm wishes from all of our friends in Instow.

SB/MF 28/4/25

#### 4. Instow, Westleigh and West Yelland Parish News Team Report

The Parish News is organized by a community team supported by the members of the two Parish Churches. Free copies (1160) are distributed monthly to all households in the two parishes by a team of 37 distributors. The content is edited by Colin Frajbis of Westleigh who also enables a coloured online version. He is supported by Pam Cantle for Instow.

The News is financed by council grants from Instow, Westleigh and Fremington Parish Councils; regular contributors make donations; readers also make annual donations.

We are looking for a person to take over the commercial advertising from Pam Cantle.

There are no free adverts except for the Hospice. The annual income in 2024 was £6035. There is a good bank balance as printing cost have to be paid out monthly.

At the present time the News is financially stable. Max Buckingham of Sticklepath is the treasurer. This is a big voluntary effort of which the parish can be proud and is independent of any church financing.

Peter Cantle May 2025

## 5. All Saints Chapel & Community Centre

The good news is that the finances are in good shape, and bookings to hire the Chapel have increased over the last 2 years both regular and new. We are grateful for an annual donation from Instow Parish Council and other individual donations.

Everyone loves the ambiance of the Chapel and as well as the regular Monday morning coffee and lunch, other regular users are Creative Writing, Thai Chi, Pilates, Qi Gong, Story bears and W.I. craft and gardening groups. Other bookings include meetings, elections, and parties. In September we held our first wedding now that the Chapel is licenced, this venue will appeal to smaller intimate wedding parties. This all helps towards the running costs, fabric and capital expenditure.

The `Drop-in` for coffee & light lunches on Mondays is ticking along nicely and can have up to 15 people attending enjoying the lively atmosphere and company, as well as the home-made cake provided by Anne, Jenny & Sheila, ably supported by Jacquie, Jane, Patti & Sue. We are always looking for helpers, so if you can spare a few hours please get in touch or drop in for a chat.

The play area had had its annual check by ROSPA, and they recommended the bench round the Mulberry tree be treated with preservative. The WI tree has died and had to be cut down, we will approach the WI to see if they want to replace it. Michael the gardener has cut back the corner bush to aid a clear view of the road when leaving. Our next annual meeting is on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025, so please come along or drop in any Monday morning. Written by Sheila Secretary – Read by M.J. Scott

## 6. Chairmans Speech at 2025 AGM

This has been a very busy year for Instow.

The Parish News continues with a comprehensive coverage of what is going on in the Village. Some of the articles might cause controversy – but we are much envied by many villages that we have such a magazine. Thank you to Colin Frajbis and your team of helpers.

The Village Hall committee are doing a wonderful job, holding many very popular and well supported events and also making many refurbishments. The new village hub, twice a month, is popular providing a library, games and social interaction. Thank you to the Village Hall committee and the team.

The All-Saints Chapel Community Centre continue to run a drop-in centre on Monday mornings which is very popular. Thank you to Sheila Moores, Anne Thorn and Jennifer Jackson for this.

Instow is lucky that we have the Ferry, and let's hope they have another wonderful season, providing such a useful link to Appledore.

Last year there was a very successful Community on Show in the summer. All elements of the village came together for this, great fun was had.

Thank you to the Instow and Yelland WI for their help in keeping village flower beds so well. We get many appreciative comments.

The Commodore Hotel kindly provided refreshments for our annual thank you party for the people who 'do' things for the community in Instow.

During the year the council along with its usual business, dealt with the effects of the two bad storms, and Eliot Johnson has been very effective in dealing with Christie Estates, Natural England and the rest of the agencies involved with the beach, and Chris Hopkins has been wonderful on the practical side of things. The plan for the beach is ongoing and we will be informing the village when we hear more.

During the year we welcomed Dom Yeodon and Jane Bunclark and John Edwards resigned.

The attendance during the eleven meetings of the year was:

Councillor Arthur	5
Councillor Edwards	4
Councillor Foster	7
Councillor Hopkins	8
Councillor Johnson	6
Councillor McCrum	10
Councillor Scott	11
Councillor Bunclark	3 (from January)
Councillor Yeodon	1 (from January)

Finally, I would like to thank all the Council for their help this year and for putting up with me as Chairman.

## 7. Finance Report AGM 2025 Instow Parish Council

We did well this year with receipts (not including VAT) of about £86,000. The car park receipts were much higher as the price per hour was increased to £1.50. It has not been increased this year and the hours for charging have decreased to finish at 6pm.

Our payments were nearly £61,000 (not including VAT). Once again, the biggest annual expense for the council was the toilets, whose normal running costs were nearly £12,000. The costs of the car park include business rates of £1200 which will be £1800 next year, rising by £600 each year, until they reach about £6500 a year.

The costs of the handypeople are much higher this year due to the clearance of sand from the pavements. A big thank you to Paul Fletcher.

There was net zero of income from the moorings as the amount we receive from Peter Short just covers the amount we have to pay to Crown Estates. Part of the payment was late and falls into next year.

The receipts from Christie Estates were for two years, and the DCC grants for footpaths are late and will be included in next year's accounts.

I would like to thank the rest of the Finance Committee, Nick Arthur, John Edwards and Eliot Johnson for their support during the year.

And, finally, I would like to thank James Hellyer, our Internal Auditor, for the excellent and thorough work he does checking our accounts.

MJ Scott 150525