

CEC/TOC AGM 2020 - Annual Reports

Tolmen Centre

The Tolmen Centre continues to develop successfully & its financial stability has been maintained at a satisfactory level – underpinned by the continued success of Cafe Tolmen, but most of our activities also make a contribution to funds. We now have accumulated a reasonable reserve fund, but are faced with several large expenses within the building over the coming months and years.

The year has also seen a sustained and successful effort to raise funds for the maintenance and improvement to the exterior of the Tolmen Centre building. Led by our Chair and an enthusiastic group of helpers, a successful Crowdfunder appeal started the ball rolling early in the year, giving us a financial platform on which to build. Subsequent successful grant applications plus a number of generous donations have put us within sight of the target needed to implement a major overhaul of the roof, windows and car park. This will sustain stabilise the building for the future and represents an important landmark in securing the long term prospects for the Centre.

A good range of activities have been taking place regularly in the building - among them Yoga, Fitness Dance, a Bowen Therapy Practice, Sign writing, Art exhibitions, The Trengilly Singers, Farmers Market, and many more. The Community Lunch is becoming a regular and well attended event. The Farmers Market comes to us in the summer months.

The garden at the rear of the Tolmen Centre is now maturing well and thanks are due to Peter Tatham for endless devotion to keeping the lawn beautifully mown and the garden spick and span. It is increasingly used as a space and much appreciated.

The Tolmen Centre continues to fund the operating costs of the excellent village website – a credit to the village and to its unpaid webmaster.

The Centre continues to maintain our established county wide reputation as a venue for the Performed Arts, with approximately 40 performances per year of theatre, music, dance and film. The Theatre is also a popular rehearsal space for several of Cornwall's premier drama dance and music companies. All these things allow us to claim delivery of an exceptional level of arts, culture, social activity and entertainment in a small isolated rural community with few alternative sources of provision.

We continue to operate almost entirely based on volunteer help, given in large volumes by a wide range of individuals for the good of the community.

Charlie Pugh – Centre Manager

Constant Times

Once more, thanks to Peter Binns for all his efforts with editing and printing, and to Sue Yates for administering the advertising and recruiting more advertisers to more than replace those who withdrew. Thanks also to the folders, staplers, and all the various distributors around the parish. From time to time some of the distributors move away or need to withdraw, but thankfully there always seems to be someone at hand willing to take over. Constant Times continued with its five issues in the past year, with no shortage of interesting content from contributors, regular or otherwise. Like almost everything else, the April / May issue was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with the result that paper distribution of this issue was abandoned. Instead, every effort was made to make people aware of the electronic version that is always available on the village website.

Transition Constantine

As in 2018, the Community Day event formed a major item in the year's activities, this time held in September. It was more of a shared event, organised in collaboration with the church community and other village organisations. Activities took place in the Tolmen Centre and the Church, with the 'village lunch' being the central event, with well over a hundred people taking part. The day was blessed with beautiful weather that allowed everyone to take full advantage of the Tolmen Centre garden, enjoying lunch in or around the marquee that was erected there for the purpose.

The Transition film screening seems to have become an annual event, this time with the film 'In our hands' shown in May. It focused on a variety of approaches to agriculture beyond the current norms of large-scale intensive food production. The film was followed by a panel discussion involving members of the local farming community.

In last year's report it was mentioned that the TC group had made various investigations into whether it would be desirable for Constantine to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan - and concluded that it wouldn't! The main reasons were the long timescale involved, the high level of community effort required, but mainly that Constantine was not suffering the same level of development pressure that neighbouring parishes nearer Penryn and Falmouth were. Instead there has been a movement to look into the development of an emergency plan for Constantine. This is a process supported by Cornwall Council, with funding available to help. The aim would be to document resources available locally and the communications necessary to mobilise them. The chair of the Transition group attends meetings of the Penryn and Falmouth Community Network Area (a group co-ordinated by Cornwall Council), where emergency planning for local parishes has been promoted.

2019 saw a continuing growth in awareness of the impacts of climate change. Cornwall Council was among those to declare a climate emergency, and is now developing a Zero Carbon plan for Cornwall. Members of the Transition Group have supported a number of Extinction Rebellion events throughout the year, and have been liaising with Cornwall Council regarding the content of the Zero Carbon plan.

For the general election in November, the Transition group arranged yet another Hustings event in the Tolmen Centre. We were fortunate to have Kim Conchie (CEO of Cornwall Chamber of Commerce) to chair the event, and to have all the candidates available on the day. The event was well attended, with over a hundred people turning out to hear what the candidates had to say.

The set of communications about the plans to develop the Church, and the likelihood that the church community would at some point give up the lease on the Church Hall, prompted discussion about invoking the Community Right to Bid. The Localism Act (2011) gives communities the right to nominate certain buildings as 'Assets of Community Value'. If a nomination is successful, it requires that if the owner of a such a building wishes to put it up for sale, the completion of the sale must be delayed by six months in order to allow the community to raise funds to make a bid. It was felt that CEC, as the parent organisation of the Transition group, would be the more appropriate body to make the nomination. In further discussion, it was resolved that any nomination would best be made by the Parish Council. This was proposed to the Parish Council and agreed. In the event, both the Church Hall and the Queen's Arms pub (and associated car parks) were nominated, though the outcome of the nomination process is not yet known.

At the time the Church plans were discussed, it became apparent that Savills (as agents for the Truro Diocese) were keen to see the the Glebe Garden let or sold. In late autumn 'For Sale' and 'To Let' signs were put up beside the Glebe Garden, prompting discussion as to whether the Transition Group should revive an earlier interest in leasing the land. The outcome of this was that it appeared there was much wider village interest in seeing the Glebe Garden retained for community use.

Thanks to the efforts of Caitlin DeSilvey, a large body of promised subscriptions were secured to cover the costs of lease and insurance. The board of CEC trustees agreed in principle that the lease should be in the name of CEC, subject to seeing the terms of the lease. The Transition group submitted a tender (as required by Savills) but qualified by the need to see the terms of the lease. The tender has been accepted but communications with Savills had ground to a halt even before the Covid-19 outbreak. We are still expecting that CEC & the Transition Group will take on the lease of the Glebe Garden.

At the turn of the year the Transition Group had some discussion with Drs. Adrian and Paula Roberts about the possibility of some community involvement in their plans for planting out as woodland a field they own towards Gweal Mellin. Some members of the TC group visited the site in February, and discussion will continue.

Finally, to report on one item that hasn't yet made it into the light of day, work on a revived 'Who's Where' sadly stayed firmly on the back burner this year, apart from a demonstration that a new document could be generated automatically from the data gathered so far. It is hoped that current levels of increased time at home, free from distracting activities, may bring this to completion!

Chris Hussey - Secretary to Transition Constantine

Literary Pod

As far as the Litpod report goes for this year, we have only had one event which was the William Dalrymple evening. This was our most successful evening yet with a need to have the talk upstairs owing to the numbers booked. Although this required slightly different organisation, it went well and made a good surplus which we sent to Charlie for the Tolmen funds. The future is looking iffy as we all know and although we had Raynor Winn booked for the end of May to talk about The Salt Path and her new book, this is looking increasingly unlikely to take place.

Gia Shaw

Bosahan Woods

Meetings: We held three meetings during the year, the last one in March 2020 was cancelled due to Covid19.

Finance: After expenditure on the path restoration, Tree surgeons, insurance etc. We then sold some firewood as a result of felling some dangerous trees last autumn, plus had a donation and VAT was reclaimed giving us our current balance is £9533.06

Path Restoration: The main event of the year was the restoration of the middle path which was started on 9th October. It was very slow work, because it rained every day, so we did not complete the whole path, about 100 metres remain. We had over 400 volunteer hours and thank everyone for your input, especially John Williams and Richard Mann, who without their expertise and equipment the work could not have been done. We also thank all those who contributed in many other ways, donations, cakes and food gifts, all very much appreciated. This restoration work cost £5,675.64. which includes £720 of tree surgery work.

Tree Surgery: We dealt with a number of dead and dangerous trees along the sides of the paths. Quotes and felling licences were obtained prior to work.

Forest School: Continued throughout the year, and had been recognised across the county as excellent work. Forestry school also teamed up with Fal Class in Constantine Primary School to use the woods in the future.

Dens swings and tree houses: Were monitored regularly throughout the year, and in the main left alone. Where anything was dangerous this was dealt with under Health and Safety regulations

Muriel's Oak Bench: .was fitted and has slotted into the landscape very well and it has been noted that it is used by many walkers.

Glebe Garden: Transition Constantine asked us to consider the possibility of taking Glebe Garden under our umbrella and insurance if it could be leased or bought for the village. In principal this was agreed.

Trebarvah Permissive Path: This is not part of our remittance, as it does not belong to the CEC. However we were approached with regard to cutting back the undergrowth along the permissive path, as dog walkers and Pre-school children were having problems. A benefactor provided the money and a local contractor did the work.

Insurance: with public liability for the woods was renewed

Signs: Quotes for producing signs at the entrances to the woods were obtained and work has gone ahead to prepare existing granite boulders for the erection of A4 signs.

Invasive plants: The presence of Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed are part of our routine checks in the wood and where the Balsam spotted it has been removed.

Woods long Term Management: We have looked at long term management of the woods and after consideration of the companies available, we asked Tim Scott-Ellis BSc.Hons (for) Dip Arb (RFS) F Arbor A, MICFor, MRICS a Consultant Arborist, who is well respected in his field to look at our woods and report back his findings to us and to Cornwall County Council who had concerns about digger work cutting into the path banks. Tim was able to reassure CCC in his report (which included photographs) that he did not believe any significant damage had been done to any existing trees, or would affect their continued health and condition in the future. The full report has yet to be discussed by the team.

Over the past few weeks I have been getting emails and phone calls, saying thank you for the path restoration as this has enabled so many dog walkers, and families to self isolate observing social distancing, but get out for a walk in the woods safely Enjoying all it has to offer

Liz Pearce - Bosahan Woods Management Team

Constantine Museum

Since last year's report there have been many changes affecting the smooth running of the museum. On the volunteer front, Chris Hillyer has taken over the archive, attended Cornwall Archive Network meetings and appears to be settling into his new role well. Kate Graves has been off for most of the time, first with caring duties and then with serious health issues herself. Sally Coot has started as a volunteer and is, I think, enjoying herself cataloguing books for us, although she finds it hard not to start reading them all! She will also be involved in recording some of our older villagers, along with Simon Hamling and Tracey Clowes, with a view to putting together memories and reminiscences for future archive use.

We still need more volunteers and in October 2019 Jacqui Hessing attended a training session organised by Volunteer Cornwall on how to attract volunteers. It seems that the most effective way is to ask them!!! There were hints and tips on how to go about doing this, but the shortage of volunteers is widespread in most other charities and so the numbers may well be spread very thin. Once again, while the museum was shut for the winter, the volunteers spent time cleaning and maintaining our metal objects, and also taking the opportunity to clean and rearrange our display cabinets while updating the information that goes with each cabinet. This work is by no means finished, but we will continue it when we can.

The much-anticipated Village Photo project was progressing nicely thanks to Alan Pearce and all the photographers that took part. The Committee has seen some 'mock-ups' of photographic layouts for the proposed book, and Terry Swainsbury (one of the photographers) has agreed to put the book together for us. Don Garman had also booked 3 days in August, 14th, 15th and 16th at the Tolmen Centre for an opening ceremony and subsequent display of the photos. However, as we all now know, that will probably not happen! The Coronavirus lockdown has brought village life to a stop. We closed the museum towards the end of March and we have no way of knowing when we can

safely open again. The majority of our volunteers are self-isolating so that is not going to be any time soon.

So, the museum, like many other enterprises, is left in limbo until we get to the other side of this global emergency. We can only hope that things start to improve soon.

Jacqui Hessing - Chair of the Museum Management Committee