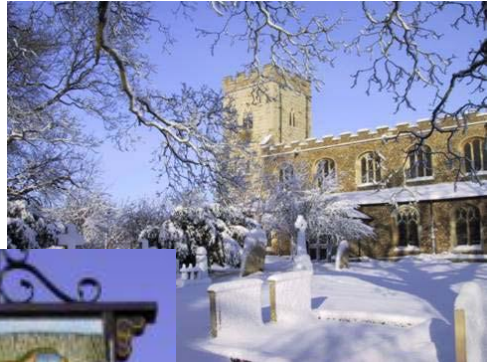


COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL Annual Report 2013



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PRINT PLEASE CONTACT THE CLERK ON
01954 210241**

Chairman's Report

Is it really a year since I wrote the last one of these, so much has happened.

We have had three resignations over the year, Mr Antony Bateman, Dame Veronica Sutherland and Mrs Mary Richards. I am grateful for all they did whilst they were on the Parish Council. We now have a new Vice Chairman, Mr Hywel Griffiths. We welcomed Mr Nick Taylor onto the council.

Following the Annual Parish Meeting 2012, on a suggestion by a parishioner, the Parish Council set up a sub committee to give the Village's response to South Cambridgeshire District Councils Local Development Framework proposing that 300 new houses were built in Comberton. They put together the Parish Council's response to this (subsequently they have also put together a response on Bennells Farm as well) and at a meeting in September 119 people gathered in the Village Hall to air their views and hear the parish councils response against the development of Comberton. This can be found on our website.

On the 2nd June 2012, the Queens Diamond Jubilee, the Focus Group worked with St Mary's Church for the lighting of the beacon on the Church Tower, a very good evening but rather cold if I remember correctly.

In October we had a Japanese film crew come to film a Parish Council meeting for their Open University Course on Local Government in England. The clerk has a copy of this and I am hoping that she will put it on the website.

The Recreation Ground extension is progressing and there is a group raising monies for the new playground equipment for the Recreation Ground.

The Connections Youth Bus continues to visit on a Tuesday, meeting on the recreation ground carpark. It is well received by the youth of the village and provides a vital service and a safe place for young people to meet and chat. The night it meets will be changing to Wednesday evening in future.

The annual Christmas Lights event took place in December and again was well supported, with a good number people turning out

The Parish Council continues to support a number of village groups and activities through the S137 grants – St Mary’s Church, Scouts and The Summer Reading Challenge.

Earlier this year we have flooding in the village as well as raw sewage etc. running down Swaynes Lane and in people’s gardens etc, this, at the time of writing, seems to have been sorted out but it is a case of wait and see.

I feel at this time I should express my thanks to Fiona Whelan, our County Councillor who is not seeking re-election this time, she will surely be missed and I, for one, appreciated all her hard work for her and the new County Councillor whoever it may be will have hard shoes to fill.

As always I am indebted to my fellow councillors, Gail Stoehr, the Clerk, and parishioners who serve on committees and working groups – the Tree Group, Transport Working Group, Recreation Group, Local Development Framework, Affordable Housing, Focus and Planning Committee, and you will be able to read about their many and varied activities in this report.

Amanda Bacon, Chairman

Members’ reports

Footpaths – Parish Path Partnership (P3)

All public rights of way (PRoW) have numbers and different definitions, Footpath, Bridleway and Byway. Essential work on footpath between Swaynes Lane and Barton Road (Footpath 5) has been completed and a new pump fitted at the northern end. This work has enhanced this ancient right of way in the centre of the conservation area and protected village amenity. Annual maintenance of The Causeway (Footpath 8), an ancient cobbled pathway that leads to the church, has taken place. The permissive pathways linking The Drift (Byway 7) with The Causeway (Footpath 8.) continue to be

well used. We are grateful to the landowner and this does indeed make a delightful edition to the areas for walking and enjoyment. As with all rights of way and permissive paths walkers are reminded to show consideration for nature and wildlife and to ensure they do not leave litter and clean up after their dogs. The last stretch of this link path crosses the new church yard, walkers are asked to respect this area and keep dogs on leads.

The hedging on the western boundary of Byway 7 (Herringfield Drift) has been coppiced and cleared and this has increased the width of the byway. 4 x 4 users are reminded not to use the full width and to leave the western side for use by others. The deep ruts will hopefully receive some attention when the drier weather arrives and a scheme to install some drainage at the wettest points is also planned.

Focus Group

The group is responsible for community events and enhancements. The jubilee activities and beacon lighting with live music at St Mary's was a great success...although a little chilly for June!

and every household has received a Jubilee booklet. Interest points on the walk are The Jubilee Walk has been created marked by a post and Jubilee Logo disk. (Disk designed by Emma Hatherly and posts installed free of charge by The MEARS group). If you have misplaced your booklet, it is available on the village website www.comberton.org.uk

The usual Christmas Lights event took place in early December, with good numbers turning out on a cold evening to enjoy the Salvation Army band, festive punch, chestnuts and mince pies.

Flooding Group

Since the bad flooding in Comberton in the summer of 2002, the drainage of surface water and sewage has gradually improved over this last decade.

South Cambs District Council has regularly cleared the vegetation from our awarded ditches and this last year farmers and landowners have noticeably cleared ditches and drainage channels.

Highways have been encouraged to maintain and clear road drains to good affect.

This last year, after many complaints and sewage spill over, Anglia Water have been forced to install two new pumps and flow meters at

the pumping station in Bush Close. This is where all sewage from Toft and Comberton gravity flows before it is pumped off to Haslingfield and beyond.

Our climate, at the moment, is delivering bursts of extreme weather. Whether it is rain, drought, heat or cold. As councillor with special interest in flooding, I feel relatively confident that Comberton now has an adequate drainage system to cope with sudden downpours of rain that has in the past caused flooding at various pinch points in the village.

As you know, Comberton is built on a North/South gentle slope, so that water will always drain to its lowest point where flooding may occur. Drainage channels must be controlled and maintained. The District Council is only contracted to maintain awarded ditches – not to improve them by widening or increasing them in depth. Therefore land and property owners are responsible for maintaining their riparian ditches and drainage channels.

Any large housing developments in the village where water is prevented from soaking into the ground where it falls, is bound to cause flooding problems simply by over burdening an existing drainage infrastructure that is only just adequate for a rural village of this size.

Tree Group

As a group we have considered a number of applications for tree removal and maintenance work. All trees under the ownership of the parish council have been recorded using GPS and a survey of these trees has been completed.

2 trees have been removed along the pathway leading from Harbour Avenue to Hillfield Road. And a large ancient ash has been removed on the corner of Harbour Ave/Barton Road. Routine maintenance on a number of trees has also taken place.

Watts wood continues to provide an area for walking and nature. Some felling/thinning of trees with the main area has taken place at no cost to the council. Meridian Primary School as part of their Forest School initiative regularly uses Watts Wood.

Recreation Ground Working Group

It has been a busy year for the Recreation Working Group (RWG). We have been keen to get under way with the development of the recreation ground extension as additional sports pitches.

As a first step, we undertook a consultation with users of the recreation ground, in particular the sports clubs. We obtained useful advice from Agrostis Turf Consultancy and from the Football Association's Regional Development Officer about developing the recreation ground extension and the pavilion. Agrostis came along to the Village Hall in October for an open meeting at which several of the sports clubs were represented.

Once Agrostis had prepared a specification for the works which would have to be carried out, we were able to submit applications for grant funding. At the time of writing, we have been successful in securing funding from South Cambridgeshire District Council and await the result of applications we have made to Sport England and the Cambridgeshire Community Fund administered on behalf of AmeyCespa.

We are grateful for the letters of support we have received from Comberton Crusaders FC, Comberton United FC, Comberton Cricket Club and the Play Equipment Group: these have enabled us to demonstrate community support for the development of the recreation ground extension, which is a critical requirement for obtaining grant funding.

We have been working in tandem also with the Play Equipment Group in their project to reinvigorate the children's play area. The Play Equipment Group is keen to hold a summer event on the recreation ground and the RWG would like to support this community activity.

It was a condition of the planning approval for development of the recreation ground extension that the recreation ground car park be improved. Gravel has been laid to improve the surface of the car park, space has been marked for disabled parking and bicycle racks have been installed.

Work has also been carried out on the tennis courts. One of the net winders had broken and has been replaced. The courts have been swept and arrangements are in hand for the court markings to be repainted and for the perimeter fence to be repaired.

When the snow and ice finally melted, the RWG organised a working party to repair the path leading from the recreation ground to the bridge leading to the extension. The Jubilee Wood has been planted on the eastern side of the recreation ground extension. The trees will not interfere with the development of additional sports pitches and we believe that, as they mature, this little wood will enhance the area as a pleasant amenity for the village.

A great deal of work has been done to improve facilities at the recreation ground. If you have any thoughts on how the area could be improved further, do contact me (Hywell Griffiths).

Transport Working Group

Speed Limit Reduction Barton Road

We successfully applied for a speed reduction between the roundabout at the bottom of Long Road to Horizon Park. Reduced from 60 mph to 40 mph. This came into effect in November 2012. This was well received by residents on that part of Barton Road.

Hillfield Road Verge Protection

We had numerous complaints about cars parking on CPC verges which was causing considerable damage to the verges. After local consultation about the issues involved CPC took the decision to protect the worse affected verges by placing bollards around certain verges. Cars found ways to circumvent the bollards and subsequently we put a stop to that by adding further bollards. The verges are now in a stage of recovery.

Grant application for minor highways improvements

We put in a bid to CCC Highways for £10,000 towards the cost of placing raised platforms on the junction of Barton Road and Harbour Avenue as part of an ongoing safety improvement scheme for the village.

We have yet to hear if we have been successful in our bid.

Cycle route between Coton and Comberton

A Coton resident has been trying to get an off road cycle route between Coton and Comberton for several years. The route would benefit:

Coton children travelling to/from CVC, especially returning from after school clubs when there are no buses.

Commuters (in particular those trying to access the north of Cambridge)

A leisure route for residents and tourists (eg those staying at the Long Road campsite)

This aim has the support of Coton and Comberton Parish Councils. One potential route is to establish a route alongside the east Long Road (on the field side of the hedge) to join the existing bridleway. Another is to re-establish the link between Barton and Coton, although there are issues with the MOD firing range.

One potential source of funding is Natural England's 'Paths for Communities'. However applications have to be in by Dec 2013 and all work complete by Feb 2014. The total fund is £2m and is likely to be oversubscribed.

The next stage is for the Clerk of Comberton Parish Council to write to the Landowners to see if they would be willing to look at establishing a Permissive Cycle Route.

Bus consultations

Cambridge County Council will be cutting subsidies to buses from April 2013, although the subsidies may be extended while alternative solutions are found. The 18/18A service from Comberton to Cambridge is unlikely to be affected as it pays for itself, but it will affect the service beyond the village. South Cambs has set up a working group to look at the alternatives. One favoured solution is a Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) scheme, which involves minibuses which can be booked in advance and are not tied to the existing routes. A DRT scheme has been in operation in Suffolk for a long time (covering ~2/3 of the County) and 7 members of the working party visited it last month to see it in operation and ask questions.

Local Development Framework Working Group

This working group was setup in June 2012 after a request from the 2012 Annual Parish Meeting (APM) to prepare a response on behalf of the Village to the South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) Local Development Framework (LDF) 2012 consultation. The Working Group (WG) included other residents of Comberton who volunteered time and expertise. Members attending SCDC LDF planning meetings and workshops to aid their understanding of the process and sites being proposed. It prepared a working document assessing the impact of the LDF proposals from potential Comberton resident viewpoints.

This resulted in a consultation with the village residents during the summer with draft responses available on the village website.

2012 Consultation results

138 leaflets containing 248 signatures with names and addresses were returned plus 19 leaflets with 31 signatures but not full addresses. In the light of Keith Miles' advice the WG felt these might be regarded as a petition in support of the CPC responses. 57 emails and letters from 84 individuals were received supporting CPC's position. Six emails were received from six individuals supporting some development.

Some residents responded to the Council directly without informing CPC and thus not in those numbers.

From what we understand the Comberton Consultation exercise appears to have produced more than twice as many replies in relation to its population size as the SCDC average !!

2012 Consultation

At the September 2012 CPC meeting the 109 members of the Public eligible to vote were asked to indicate by a show of hands whether they supported the view that Comberton should retain Classification as a Group Village. 106 supported the proposition, 3 people were against with no abstentions, i.e. **97% support**. Parishioners were also asked whether they supported development on the 3 larger Green Belt sites. All 109 people voted against building on those sites i.e. **100% opposition**.

CPC voted to accept the WG's Draft Response as its submission to the SCDC Consultation.

The Comberton LDF2012 response (121 pages) was submitted on Friday 28th September together with a 60mm A4 binder of individual endorsements and responses collated from the village.

2013 Phase 2 Consultation

SCDC released phase 2 of the LDF consultation in January and there was a new large site (H10) proposed at Bennell Farm just outside the village envelope, in Toft. The WG organised both a leaflet outlining the proposal and seeking input and a consultation exhibition in the Village Hall. This was staffed by the WG and SCDC planners. There were also a couple of minor village framework changes being proposed also at the west of the village, supported by CPC.

Two members of the WG met with Cllr. Pippa Corney (Portfolio Holder for Planning) and Keith Miles (Dir of Planning) in December to understand the background and decision processes since the LDF2012 consultation.

As far as SCDC Planning is concerned DELIVERABILITY is key as, although they may have new town coming on stream later, they need houses available within 5 years. Big sites take time to come on stream; other sites would be ranked on sustainability. It is very likely that village sites will be needed in the plan.

Cllr Corney implied that there will be developments everywhere including villages to deliver housing before new towns come on stream. SCDC have taken on board Comberton concerns on its 'better served village status' but nevertheless have to consider new sites such as that at Bennell Farm under its previous LDF ratings.

In regards to any Parish Plan or Design documents it was advised that after 18th February input would be disregarded until after the Plan is adopted July 2013 but that CPC should carry on so that Comberton has guidelines in place for the developers. The WG plan to address this in the second quarter of 2013.

The H10 site, being within Toft Parish, meant that Toft PC get all the income from the parish precept (if it were 2012 and in Comberton CPC would gain £7,202). Comberton would obviously be impacted by demands on infrastructure and service. Representatives of CPC and Toft Parish Council met to see if an accommodation might be reached in moving the Parish boundary to incorporate Bennell Farm or to share precept/section 106 funding due from the developers. There was no consensus reached at that time. Subsequently Toft voted to support the development.

2013 Phase 2 Consultation results

The Comberton LDF Phase 2 leaflet responses as of March 2013 were as follows:

Of 99 responses on additional site options, 87% objected to site 10 and 12% supported site 10 (including one Parish Councillor and the Comberton District Councillor).

Of 61 responses on Village Frameworks VF3, 23% objected to and 77% supported the VF3 proposal

Of 67 responses on Village Frameworks PC3, 36% objected to and 64% supported the PC3 proposal.

As a consequence the WG proposed to CPC that it should not support the H10 development proposal as defined. The CPC meeting in February approved this response from CPC to the SCDC LDF Options 2 consultation and it was submitted to SCDC on February 18th and we await feedback.

2013 timetable

The draft plan is due for SCDC cabinet review of 27th June. The WG expect to be able to release those aspects affecting Comberton directly on 4th June. The approved draft plan will go out for public consultation in July 2013.

As always all documents are available for perusal on the village website at www.comberton.org.uk/ldf2012

Budget and Finance Working Group

The Budget and Finance Working Group has a responsibility to create an annual budget, which takes into account the income, expenditure and aspirations of the parish. We meet approximately three times per year outside of the regular monthly parish council meetings. The budget takes the previous year's budget as reference and carefully assesses any necessary changes and importantly tries to identify any improvements. The draft budget then gets a thorough interrogation at the January Parish Council meeting and is modified as necessary until approval is gained.

Income into the budget is dominated by the precept, part of your council tax. Other income could be from rentals or grants. Income can also be released into the budget from the Council's reserves, in other words the monies prudently built up in the Council's bank accounts

over the years and held to cover us for unexpected events (or for a rainy day).

This year we were pleased to be able to reduce the precept very slightly, while releasing some funds from reserves to balance the books and support the activities and improvements planned for the village over the coming year.

Expenditure is grouped into three categories, Administration, Maintenance and Capital/Special Projects. Highlights from this year's budget are:

- Support for the Connections youth bus. This service has suffered cuts to its other sources of funding, but we have significantly increased the support from the Parish to offset this to ensure this valued service continues. We are working with the project to move towards a lower cost building-based club to ensure these higher costs are not continued year on year.
- Support for the recreation ground extension. This is an important and expensive project to fund. We are currently awaiting news on whether grant applications totalling approximately £70,000 have been successful, which would provide the bulk of the money to convert an area on the rec extension into high quality playing fields for us all, but especially the children, to enjoy. Fingers are crossed.
- Support for transport improvement. We recognise that road safety is an important concern, particularly on the various school routes through the village and have set aside funds for the Transport Working Group to work with.

The overall expenditure is budgeted to be 32% higher than last year, despite the small reduction in precept. We hope this shows our commitment to press ahead with projects to benefit the village without adding to ever-increasing household budgets.

Who and what is the Parish Council?

The Parish Council comprises of 13 councillors who serve for a term of 4 years and represent an electorate of approx. 2227.

The Council meets on the second Wednesday of each month except August with additional Planning Committee meetings being held as necessary. The agenda is displayed on notice board in South Street.

All meetings of the Parish Council are open to the public and at the beginning of the meeting there is a short period on the agenda when residents may speak with the Council. During the rest of the meeting however members of the public may listen to but not take part in the discussion of the Council's business. Meetings take place in the Village Hall on the second Wednesday of each month (except August) usually starting at 7.30 pm and finishing by approximately 9.30 pm. Planning Committee meetings are advertised on the parish notice board.

Anyone wishing to raise a matter for consideration by the Council should write to the Clerk. Any letter received by the day before a Parish Council meeting will be reported to that meeting. If information is readily available the Council may decide its action right away. If not then the item will be dealt with at the next meeting. Members will be available in the Village Hall for a short period before the start of the meetings to talk to residents about any Comberton Parish Council related matters.

The Parish Council has representatives on other bodies outside the Parish Council and Councillors attend meetings on the Council's behalf.

Each member of the Council either serves on a committee or working group or has an area of responsibility. Many members have multiple responsibilities

There is currently a vacancy on the Parish Council. If anyone is interested in standing for co-option, please contact the Clerk.

Budget for the FY 2013 & 2014 (R&P)

PAYMENTS	Budget 2013	Actual Mar-13	Budget 2014
Advertising	400	550.00	550
Agency Services (Parish Paths & CCC Verges)	880	444.00	880
General Admin	15601	15879.33	16057
Salaries	3249.60	3632.38	3700
S137 Grants/Donations	2000		2000
St Mary's Churchyard Maintenance		750.00	
CCC Summer Reading Challenge		40.00	
Comberton Scouts		600.00	
Village & Assets Maintenance	19200	14911.97	20200
Special Projects			
Village Events (Christmas lights)	100		100
Rec. Ground			12500
TWG – Interactive signs & road markings	10000		10000
Youth Projects	8600	4767.00	6000
Footway Lighting	185		200
2013 Projects	0		7500
Jubilee Project	0	673.45	0
Contingency Fund (5%)	3000		3950
Reserves Payments		23670.07	
TOTAL PAYMENTS	63215.60	65918.20	83637

Any under spend on the budget headings is considered by the Parish Council and as appropriate may be carried forward in an earmarked fund or is released into general reserves.

RECEIPTS	Budget 2013	Actual Mar-13	Budget 2014
Precept	58815.60	58815.60	58000
Interest	300.00	0.00	
Agency Services (CCC Verges)	900.00	918.72	900
Lands, Rec Ground & Pavilion Income	3200.00	1761.36	3200
Reserves Release			12017
2013 Projects Reserves Release			9520
Misc Receipts		326.41	
Reserves Receipts		12153.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	63215.60	73975.09	83637

Reserves (R&P)	Balance B/F	Payments	Receipts	Balance C/F
P3 grant	1484.00	304.87		1179.13
Parish Pump	434.80			0.00
Recreation ground prep fund	25348.58	21768.20		2500.00
Parish Plan	196.99	530.00		0.00
Youth facilities	350.00			0.00
Village Hall insurance	0.00			0.00
Leach Homes (S106)	42115.83	430.00		41685.83
Long Road S106 (rec ground)	4258.90			4258.90
The Valley (S106)	0.00		12153.00	12153.00
LH (donation Rec Ground)	397.40			397.40
TWH Highways fund	1000.00	637.00		0.00
General fund	96047.90			117933.62
Total	171634.40	23670.07	12153.00	180107.88

Please note the budget figures above do not include VAT

Bank Reconciliation

BROUGHT FORWARD

NS&I	101386.04
SANTANDER	71565.62
O/S 2012	<u>-1317.26</u>
	171634.40

RECEIPTS	84374.47
	<u>256008.87</u>

CARRY FORWARD

NS&I	101386.04
SANTANDER	79272.20
O/S FY2013	<u>-550.36</u>
	180107.88

PAYMENTS	75900.99
	<u>256008.87</u>

Summary income and expenditure accounts

2011/2012

2012/2013

Assets

101386.04
71565.62
-1317.26
0.00
<u>171634.40</u>

NS&I
Santander
O/S at bank
Cash in hand

101386.04
79272.20
-550.36
0.00
<u>180107.88</u>

1461.36
1209.04
0.00
<u>2670.40</u>
0.00
174304.80
-23537.57
150767.23
0.00
0.00
<u>150767.23</u>

Debtors
VAT recoverable
Payments in advance

2321.34
792.45
0.00
<u>3113.79</u>
0.00
183221.67
-1816.00
181405.67
0.00
0.00
<u>181405.67</u>

Income in advance

Total Assets

Creditors

Total Assets less

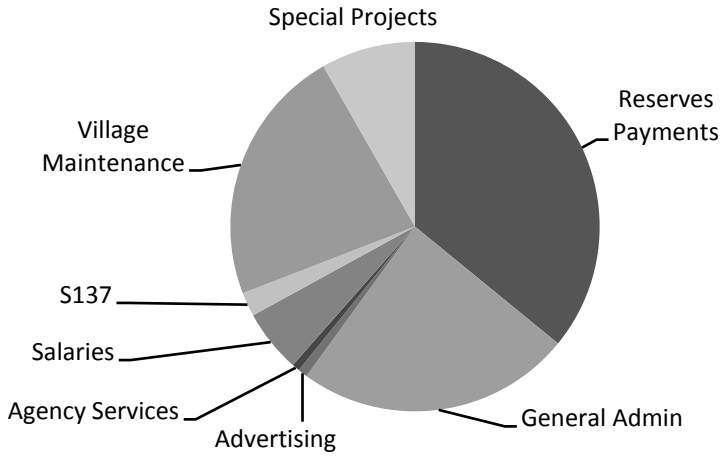
Liabilities

Long term liabilities
Provision for doubtful
debts

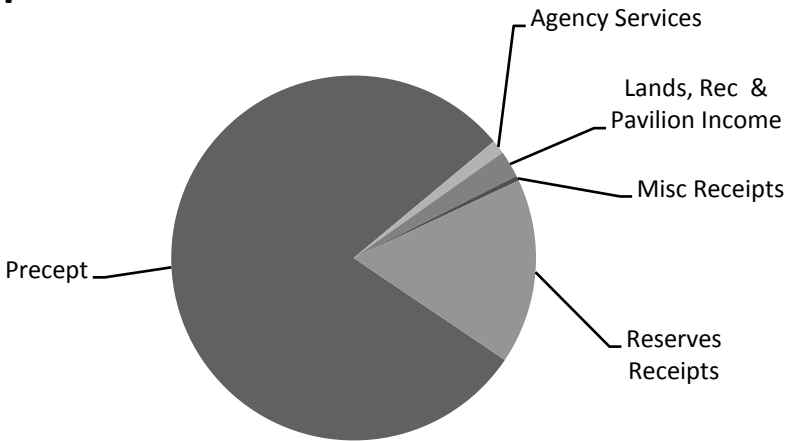
Net Assets

Please note the above accounts are in draft.

Payments



Receipts



Contact Details

<u>Parish Councillors</u>		(01223)
Miss Amanda Bacon (Chairman)	92B Swaynes Lane	264711
Mr Hywel Griffiths (Vice Chairman)	18 Barrons Way	263390
Mr Peter Crossley	59 Barrons Way	262517
Mr Richard Elleray	30 Green End	262433
Mr Andrew Hollick	73 Swaynes Lane	263089
Dr Janet McCabe	3 Westcroft	263387
Mr Simon Moffat	86 Swaynes Lane	
Mr Ben Pemberton	35 West Street	262445
Mrs Jill Preston	45 Long Road	262445
Mr Tim Scott	65 Green End	263077
Mr Nick Taylor	41 West Street	263419
Miss Chris Westgarth	85 Barton Road	263242

Email: initial followed by surname @comberton.org.uk, eg
abacon@comberton.org.uk.

Parish Clerk

Mrs Gail Stoehr

30 West Drive, Highfields Caldecote, Cambridge, CB23 7NY

Tel: 01954 210241

Email: parishclerk@comberton.org.uk

Website: www.comberton.org.uk

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

will be held on

Wednesday 22 May 2012 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

AGENDA

1. Approval & signing of the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting on 23 May 2012
2. Matters arising from the minutes
3. Report of the Parish Council for the year from Cllr Amanda Bacon, Chairman
4. Report from Gail Stoehr, Responsible Financial Officer, and presentation of the last audited accounts
5. District Council report
6. County Council report
7. Reports on the work and activities of groups and organisations including those which have either received a grant from the Parish Council or which have Parish Council appointees on their charity or organisation including:
 - Herringland Charity
 - Comberton Village Institute
 - St Mary's Church
 - CCC Library Services
 - Comberton Scouts
 - Comberton Play Equipment Project

Questions on any of the above reports

8. Reports from other village groups and organisations on their activities
9. To consider resolutions of which advance notice has been given (*If you have an item or resolution for the meeting to consider please let the Clerk know before the meeting*)
10. Any other parish matters).
11. Closure of meeting

This meeting is open to all residents and electors of Comberton who may by Law discuss all parish affairs, ask questions, put forward views and pass resolutions at the meeting.