

APPLEDORE PARISH COUNCIL



STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF APPLEDORE PARISH COUNCIL

Dear Fellow Appledore Residents,

I am writing this statement on behalf of the Parish Council in response to the questionnaire recently circulated in the village.

We are concerned that the questionnaire provided an incomplete picture of the facts.

The sum of £437,000 for the refurbishment & extension of the village hall also includes the completion and resurfacing of the village hall car park.

The price we are paying for the house is significantly lower than the market value. The house will be reserved for an Appledore family in housing need. The Parish Council will earn approximately £8000 per year from the house, to be spent on facilities and services for residents. This income represents a return on our investment of 3.2%, significantly higher than anything available elsewhere.

We remain committed to a new Pedestrian Crossing near the Public Toilets. There is no 'cash for yet to be identified projects', the £40,000 is currently allocated for road safety improvements. Any remaining money will be spent on projects in the village to be agreed in consultation with residents.

The proposals to build a Community Centre and buy No1 The Street have been publicly discussed at Parish Council meetings and public consultations. Neither is affordable or viable, the same applies to the idea of buying the Black Lion.

We cannot 'Save money for the longer term', it is against the law. We have to spend the money from selling the field on capital investment projects within Appledore.

The Parish Council has for many years supported the idea of creating an outdoor exercise area.

The Parish Council obligations and our commitment to Appledore

After public consultations starting in March 2018 the Parish Council entered into a contract for the sale of the Council Field to Martello Developments Ltd in February 2019.

The Parish Council is legally committed to the contract. We are obliged to use our best endeavours to bring the contract to a successful conclusion. The Parish Council must work within the law. We cannot legally pause or renegotiate the contract.

It has been suggested that COVID-19 creates a basis on which to renegotiate. This is not correct.

The terms we have negotiated deliver an exceptional level of benefits for Appledore and the £8000 per year income from the house will allow future Parish Councils to continue investing in the Village.

With regards to the Village Hall, we developed the plans for the refurbishment in consultation with, and with the full support of the Hall Committee. The amount of money we are investing is substantial, but it needs to be, the fabric of the building is failing and the electrical, heating and plumbing services are coming to the end of their life. A wider range of spaces is needed to meet the variety of uses Appledore residents require.

We want the hall to continue as the social centre of the village, a place where we can come together for events, meetings, clubs and classes and to attract enough users to ensure it remains self-funding. To do so we have to make it fit for purpose, which is why we are renewing it now, to serve future generations.

Together with the rest of the Parish Council I am committed to delivering the best for Appledore and want everyone to know their voice will always be heard.

I will happily discuss any concerns with residents, please call me on 07789 916132 or 01233 758107, or email me at apc.jperkins@gmail.com

James Perkins
Chairman
Appledore Parish Council