



NEWSletter

WELCOME

The Commissioners of Santon Parish would like to welcome you to the first edition of our Parish newsletter, where we hope to keep you informed of matters arising in our Parish, that concern you, our residents.

CHAIRMAN:

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THE RATE FOR 2022 – 2023

The rate for 2022/23 will be 141pence in the £.

We would have liked to keep the rate at the same level as last year or with only a small increase, but with inflation already at 6% (Isle of Man CPI) as at 1 December 2021 this was just not possible. The rate was held unchanged for 2021 so in some respects we are now playing catch up as we come out of the pandemic, and we are still relatively low compared to our neighbouring parishes.

Most of the increase, represents our need to keep pace with anticipated increases in the amounts charged by external bodies for services already provided to the rate-payers of Santon – rubbish collection and disposal, dealing with the hedges and verges of our many rural roads, and the subventions to the Eastern Civic Amenity Site and the Southern Swimming Pool.

We are also planning our response to the Island's Climate Change initiatives in the coming year, pressing Manx Utilities to speed up their programme of replacing all our street lights with significantly lower electricity consumption LEDs and supporting recycling in the Parish. Both of these should help keep our costs down in the long run as well as contributing to a lower carbon footprint for the island.

Remember that your bill from Treasury will include amounts for water and sewage, and the burial rate – none of these are part of your Parish rate.

SUBSIDY OF KERBSIDE RECYCLING

From 1 April 2022 the Commissioners will pay 1/3 of the basic two-box subscription to RecycleCollect.

We know that many of you want to recycle and already use the local bring-banks and the civic amenity sites. Collection at your door is obviously even more convenient – but when we last tried kerbside collections, there was not sufficient take-up to warrant the cost to the Parish. One 'encouragement' would be to reduce the normal rubbish collection to once a fortnight, but the

solution that we want to try this year is to continue with a free weekly rubbish collection for everyone in Santon, and a subsidy for those of you who really want the convenience of kerbside recycling.

If you go to the website recyclecollect.im you will find full details of this Santon-based operation, and if you sign up, your Santon postcode will automatically get you the discount.

If you have any queries regarding how the service works, the direct contact is hello@recyclecollect.im and further information is also available on their Facebook page.



recyclecollect.im

Ballanoa Meadow – also known as The Orchid Field

A secret haven for biodiversity, the orchid field is probably unknown to many residents of the Parish other than those who look across at it from the Ballanoa estate.

It is a species-rich meadow containing a variety of flowering species including a good number of spotted orchids (protected Wildlife Act 1990 Schedule 7 plants), yellow rattle, eyebright, marsh horsetail, greater and common birds-foot trefoil and marsh woundwort. All these then provide a habitat for bumble bees and butterflies and the site is undoubtedly of great value to other pollinators and insects. Such a habitat cannot be left unmanaged or it becomes overgrown by brambles and bracken – so a combination of cutting back in the spring, an annual cut and low-level grazing is required.



Rubbish collection

For this year we shall still provide a weekly rubbish collection, paid for from your general rate rather than as a separate charge. It is right that we make clear that the disposal cost of your rubbish accounts for nearly a quarter of the parish's expenditure and is charged for by weight – so the less you put in your bin, and the more you recycle or compost, the more likelihood that we shall be able to keep the rates down.

Quite apart from the environmental reasons for extracting glass, metals, batteries etc – remember that these don't even burn to produce electricity at the EFW plant (Energy From Waste): their weight just adds to the cost of disposal.



Hedges and hedge-cutting

Every year we get questions on this – either “why have the hedges not been cut?” or “why have they been cut at the wrong time?”

The DEFA Ecosystem Policy Team have issued a new advisory note, clarifying that it is not illegal to cut hedges between March and August, but that it is recommended to avoid this period because of the risk to nesting birds and because of the importance of hedges, sod banks and grass verges for a variety of other wildlife including pollinators. This is why our standard policy is to cut hedges in early September.



On a related issue – the roads are swept clear of leaves when it is clear that most of the trees have finished shedding them: the actual date each year may vary wildly depending on the effects of wind and weather!

Incidental work

The Commissioners invite expressions of interest from suitably qualified persons, companies or organisations in respect of incidental work required from time to time in maintaining the hedges and verges of the Parish. This would include, but not be limited to – gully emptying, pavement sweeping, grass cutting, removal of weeds and street cleaning. The areas to be covered are roadways and attendant adopted footways in the Parish of Santon but excluding the New Castletown Road, greenways and public footpaths in the countryside.

Full details can be obtained from the Clerk to the Commissioners.

Proposed works on the New Castletown Road

Those of you living on the New and Old Castletown Roads may have received notification of the proposed works on the main road from Ballalonna to Brown Cow Hill starting in autumn 2022 (after MGP).

All affected businesses and residents can sign up for email updates by emailing the Dol on SantonA5@gov.im

The Dol have appointed two liaison officers –

Karl Millar (Tel: 464544)

Andy Kneen (Tel: 850060)

They can also be contacted via the above email.



Ballanoa playground

The playground is another Santon amenity hidden away from the main road. Sadly this suffered from vandalism a little while ago, with the fencing being knocked down one night. Various repair and remedial works are in hand – but it continues to be a traffic-free area for children to play in.

Residents with children may also want to keep up with progress of a planned Island-wide initiative with pilot schemes running at the start of the summer holidays. Isle of Play and Active Travel are bringing the popular 'Play Streets' initiative to the Isle of Man. This involves temporary road closures allowing outside safe play in a local neighbourhood. The closures are supervised by volunteer stewards. There will be none in Santon this summer but see www.facebook.com/isleofplay during the holidays for feedback on the pilot schemes and how to get involved in the future.

The Department of Infrastructure and Santon

Not everything that happens in the Parish is the responsibility of the Commissioners. Many things can only be fixed by the Dol. Obviously if you are not sure, feel free to contact the Clerk to the Commissioners (details on page 1) – but for some things all he can do is log the issue with Dol and if you do so directly, it may be quicker.

What should you report to the Dol?

Things such as:

- Potholes
- Missing signage
- Broken traffic lights
- Broken street lights
- Blocked drains (not gullies – see note below)
- Anything to do with the New Castletown Road

How should you report to them?

Online – at the specific website reportaproblem.im – or using the free app which can be found by searching for 'NotifyIM' from wherever you normally get your Apps.

Once downloaded users must enter the code 'IOM' to report an issue.

For emergency repairs call 850000

What is a gully? What is a drain?

Gullies are the heavy grids on the roadside designed to accept surface water and take it to a suitable outlet point via the horizontal drain running under the road. The Parish is responsible for clearing the grid and the vertical shaft: the Dol for clearing the horizontal drain.

Southern Wellbeing Partnership

Is Santon Southern?

Well – for the purposes of this initiative, your location is driven by your GP surgery, so if you are on the books of the Ballasalla or Castletown Medical Centres or the Southern Group Practice, this has relevance to you. If your GP is in Peel then you may already be aware of the Western Wellbeing Partnership which has been operating since 2020. This new collaboration, co-ordinated by Manx Care, aims to provide seamless locally-based delivery of health and social care services; also working with charities, voluntary organisations and other community-based organisations such as the police. The hub at Thie Rosien in Port Erin officially opened at the end of 2021. The first point of contact is the Referral Co-ordinator Wiktoria Bartlett, and her contact number is 686109.

War Memorial

Thanks must go to Don Gelling (Captain of the Parish) and also to Karen Wernham and her son Liam for their work in maintaining the area around the Memorial. This commemorates those of the Parish who lost their lives in the first and second world wars.



Community support and involvement

In this time of ominous inflation, being generally financially 'squeezed' and with the additional demands made upon Local Authorities by Government through long-term efforts towards becoming 'carbon neutral' and 'climate aware' – the need to keep your Rates under control and reasonable is ever more acute.

To this end, the Commissioners invite the business sector and private individuals to assist in providing benefits to the community such as, for example, helping with the upkeep and maintenance of the Ballanoa meadow or playground. Covering the modest cost of this newsletter is another possibility and we would also welcome any tidbits of Santon news or history (with photos if you have them) for inclusion in a future newsletter.

Should you wish to discuss any support for your community, please contact the Clerk to the Commissioners.

