

Minutes of the Timberscombe Annual Parish Meeting 2023

Present : Present: Councillors:- K.Attwater (KA) Chairwoman, S. Campbell (SC), S. Walker (SW), K. Walker (KW), A.Sutton (AS), I.Ware (IW), L. Webb (LW)- Clerk.

Apologies: Flo Lloyd (FL)

1. The Chairwoman Katy Attwater, welcomed everybody to the meeting. She thanked councillors for their efforts throughout the year and welcomed new councillor Ian Ware.
2. The minutes of the 2022 APM were unanimously approved.
3. The Chairwoman presented her report for the last year.

Last year saw the departure of two Parish Councillors, Peter Pilkington and Cait Collins. Peter was an excellent chairman to the PC over several years. His contribution to the PC was outstanding and he will be sorely missed. Cait had been with us for a shorter time but made a real impact with her eco-friendly initiatives.

The councillor vacancies were filled by Flo Lloyd, Scott Walker and Ian Ware. With the resignation of Peter I took over the role of chair in February 2023 with Flo Lloyd becoming Vice Chair, succeeding Allan Sutton.

Over the last year the PC supported 9 planning applications: Bramley, Applecombe, The Methodist Church, Allercott Farm x2, 1 The Forge and Old Stowey. Details of these applications can be viewed on the ENP website.

The PC's efforts to make Timberscombe a more eco-friendly village continued. We joined the No Mow May campaign again and planted more wildflowers on the verges. A few were visible last summer but we hope for a better show this year. Selective mowing of the grass will continue again this year but we have listened to the many divergent views on this and amended our plans accordingly.

The wildlife mapping of Timberscombe has now been completed and a large biodiversity map is now on show at the village hall. A follow up to this project is planned later this year by West Somerset Together.

Once again, the village was given free trees to plant and these were distributed to villagers to plant on their property.

The village now has a Parish Online website to map the village resources and assets and the PC would be very keen to speak to anybody interested in helping to develop this site.

Throughout the year the PC has organised village maintenance, including the cutting of hedges and grass and the clearing of roadside weeds. We contract the emptying of the dog and rubbish bins and the filling of the salt bins and bags.

On the roads numerous potholes and damaged or missing signs were reported to Somerset Council for repair by the clerk. Parishioners should be aware that they can report problems themselves by using the "problems on the roads" page on the Somerset Council website. Alternatively, they can be reported to the PC clerk.

Footpath problems have been dealt with by our Footpath Liaison officer, Gary Southon, Cllr. Allan Sutton or the PC clerk. Reports have included trees down, vegetation blocking pathways, broken and discarded tree guards and rubbish.

The PC has not forgotten the perennial problem of the surface water in Great House Street, or the damaged trough and we are still working with Cllr. Frances Nicholson and Somerset Highways to try to resolve these problems.

As you may be aware, WS and T Council no longer exists and easy to solve problems such as overhanging trees or rotated road signs are reported to the local Highways Steward by the PC clerk. Both the clerk and I have attended the Exmoor Panel meetings which have been

working to set up new Local Community Networks (LCNs) to ensure that local issues are dealt with locally.

Speeding has long been an issue in the village. The parish survey, completed by Peter Pilkington, indicated that a Speed Indicator Device (SID) was the most popular proposal. Three members of the PC met with Somerset Highways recently to check out proposed sites for a SID, which the PC plan to purchase for the village. This is not a simple issue, with numerous regulations governing the placement and type of SID we can have. We are currently awaiting Highways' feedback before purchasing the SID.

A 20 mph speed limit also proved popular in the survey, although sadly Somerset Highways instructed us to remove the "20 is plenty" signs earlier in the year !

The PC have received complaints from riders about abuse and dangerous driving around horses and riders on the roads. Whilst we had the Somerset Highways team on site, we took the opportunity to discuss other road issues. We are hopeful that Highways will approve "horse in road" signs for the Bickham bend and near the Methodist Chapel. The Police have suggested that body cameras, worn by horse riders, would be helpful, as they are able to prosecute bad behaviour using body camera footage.

In February the PC organise a defibrillator training session in the village hall. The session, run by Minehead Defibrillator Group" was attended by 19 villagers and was really well presented. The PC gave the MDG a donation of £100, to add to the collection made on the night. Replacement pads and a spare prep kit have been purchased by the PC.

The PC supported the Jubilee celebrations by purchasing commemorative mugs for all under 17s in the village and these were distributed by Cllrs Pilkington, Sutton and Campbell. The PC also funded the Jubilee party organised by villagers.

The PC works closely with other agencies. PCSO Linda Brooks was called in to speak to villagers about unlawful fireworks following complaints to the PC. Ellie Bishop, our village agent, attended the January meeting (see minutes online). In July the PC invited Mr Woods, from Magna Housing, to attend the meeting, to follow up on concerns raised with him last year. The PC continues to press for better liaison between Magna and the Village Agents. We would also like to acknowledge the outstanding work done by Joy Booth and her team of volunteers to assist both of these agencies. The village now has three registered emergency contacts with Somerset Council to liaise in emergency situations.

The local Citizens Advice team attended our February meeting to tell us about their work with Timberscombe residents and request a donation to help their work.

The PC gave a donation to the Poppy Appeal and our internal auditor donated her fee to the Red Cross.

Cllr Kathy Walker is our representative on the local bus forum looking at services in the area.

As trustees to the John Arlott Playing Field, the PC looks after the play area. Thanks to Cllr. Scott Walker who has carried out weekly checks on the equipment and completed minor repairs. As a result of our work the play area received a good annual inspection. The time has come, however, to replace the large slide and wooden structure which is well passed its best. It is hoped that we can raise sufficient funds to replace it with outdoor gym equipment suitable for teenagers and adults. Help is always needed to raise funds and our amended constitution allows for non-council members to be co-opted to the committee. The PC would be very pleased to hear from anybody who would like to help us raise funds or join the committee.

K.Attwater.

4. Report from other organisations in the village:

a) Village Hall Report for Parish Meeting

Timberscombe may be a small village but when it comes to community spirit we have a big heart!

At the Annual Community Buildings Conference, Timberscombe Village Hall was, once again, awarded a Hallmark 3, the highest possible level, in recognition of good management and practices. The hall has maintained this level since 2010 which is unique for a hall in West Somerset. The assessors noted the very well-maintained and scrupulously clean building. The hall already has good facilities such as free Wi-Fi, cycle racks and a hearing loop. The assessors were impressed, however, by the committee's determination to improve the hall further following recent access and energy audits.

Better than the level 3 award, however, was that Timberscombe was one of just three halls in Somerset to receive a special certificate of excellence! What was noted as unique was the level of community collaboration and communication within the village, with so many village organisations working together to offer a variety of events alongside social and emotional support. Credit for this must go to the whole village with the church, Orchards Social Club, the school, the mill, the pub and Timberscombe Good Neighbours supported by so many of you!

The village website and email system were highlighted as real positives. Thanks for help in setting this up must go to Bill Hodgson, but it is the work of the 6 village editors who regularly post notices and update pages which keep the site vibrant. To ensure that those without internet access are not forgotten, the Dunkery Tidings and regular leaflet drops all help to keep the village connected. The assessors also noted that the Parish Council were using the website for their village survey about speeding and that they were now working on the most popular item, a speed indicator device near Duddings. The PC and the Village Hall Committee would like to use this survey method to develop other areas in the future.

Of course, all of this work relies on volunteers in the village, so if you are now feeling inspired why not volunteer for one of the many village organisations and help us to keep Timberscombe the very special place that we all know it is. The Village Hall Committee currently has vacancies, so reply to this email if you are interested!

5. Date of next APM 20th May 2024

6. Meeting closed 7.43pm