

Minutes of the Timberscombe Annual Parish Meeting held on 1st June 2026
at 7.30pm at Timberscombe Village Hall

Present: Councillors Ian Ware (IW)- Vice Chair, S. Campbell (SC), Jayne Daniel (JD), Richard Jeffrey (RJ), County Councillors S.Pugsley (SP) and Frances Nicholson

(FN) , L. Webb (LW)- Clerk and one parishioner.

Apologies for absence: K. Attwater (KA), Claire Gibbard (CG).

1. The Vice Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.

2. The minutes of the 2025 APM were unanimously approved and signed by IW.

3. Matters Arising - None

4. The Chairman presented the Chair's Report supplied by KA.

There have been 2 changes in personnel on the Parish Council this year. With L.Davis and H. Moore stepping down from the Parish Council. We thank them for their efforts whilst on the Council. In May 2025 I was re-elected as Chairperson for the year. I will not be continuing as Chair in the forthcoming year.

The Parish Councillors are now K. Attwater (KA, Chair) S. Campbell (SC), C. Gibbard (CG), J. Daniel (JD), I. Ware (IW, Vice Chair) and R. Jeffrey with one vacancy about to be filled. The clerk is L. Webb (LW)

Our County Councillors are F. Nicholson (FN) and S. Pugsley (SP)

The following areas of responsibility have been agreed by the councillors:

KA – Chair, LCN rep, Housing Enabler link

SC – Village eyes and ears and JAPF chair

CG – Liaison with the School

IW – Defibrillator monitor, SID. Bus representative

JD – Facebook

All Parish Councillors are also trustees of the JAPF.

Over the last year there has been 5 planning applications.

1-4 Orchard Bungalows (TA24 7TF) AND 1-27 Orchard Way (TA24 7UL)

Proposed installation of external insulation panels with a smooth rendered finish as well as the installation of solar panels. Also removal of several stacks.

Providence Methodist Chapel, Church Street. TA24 7TR

Variation/Removal of condition application.

Pero Cottage, Timberscombe TA24 7UE

Proposed demolition of front porch and single storey side store and erection of two storey side extension and front porch.

Jubilee House, Timberscombe. TA24 7TU

Demolition of unsafe building.

East Harwood Farm, Timberscombe. TA24 7UE

Discharge of condition 3 (render, brick & slate)

Details of planning applications and our responses can be viewed on the ENP website. 3 of our councillors attended planning training at Wootton Courtenay.

The Parish Council reported alleged planning breaches to ENPA planning department regarding work at Ye Old Malt House. ENPA responded that all the changes to the building were within the permitted development rules. The letter made no comment on the loss of parking spaces for villagers!

The Parish Council has received further inquiries regarding possible housing on the Glebe land to the north of the main road. The Council continues to raise the sewage concerns in that field and concerns about additional social housing, given the high proportion already in the village.

Throughout the year the PC has organised village maintenance, including the cutting of hedges and grass and the clearing of roadside weeds. Mr Dunsford has been employed on an ad hoc basis to tidy up areas in the village.

We contract the emptying of the dog and rubbish bins and the filling of the salt bins and bags.

The grass cutting regime, which caused much discussion, seems to have been more successful this year. The new contractor seems to be doing a good job.

Mr Evans has rebuilt the bus shelter, with a small brick wall and a greater paving area for users to stand on.

Numerous potholes and damaged or missing signs and a blocked bridge were reported to Somerset Council for repair by the clerk. Problematic street lighting has been reported for repair. Parishioners should be aware that they can report problems themselves by using the “problems on the roads” page on the Somerset Council website.

The trees leaning on the wires in Church Street were reported to Open Reach by the clerk. These have now been removed.

Following a report by the Parish clerk the crumbling fencing alongside the river, near the green, was replaced by Somerset Council.

Thanks to a parishioner who came forward to repaint the Church Street sign. Thanks also for the parishioners who have allowed us to put speeding signs in their garden in Church Street.

The Parish Council has requested a “bends in road” sign for Totterdown and Somerset Council are looking into this. We have also requested that white lines are refreshed throughout the village, in particular around the pub and post office junction. This will be completed shortly.

The Council requested that the signage at Couple Cross be included in a review of Cutcombe signage, as inappropriate lorries continue to comedown Church Street and then get stuck.

The problem light in Orchard Way took a great deal of effort to change but the work has finally been completed.

“Pick Up After Your Dog” signs have been purchased and have been installed around the village.

JD and KA met with a representative of the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group regarding flooding issues and the erosion of top soil. The representative is in contact with local farmers on this issue.

Footpath problems have been reported by LD or LW. Reports have included trees down, vegetation blocking pathways, holes in footpaths, discarded tree guards and rubbish. Two missing road signs were recovered by the council, with the help of the Police.

The PC has not forgotten the perennial problem of the surface water in Great House Street. The Parish Council has been working with Somerset Highways to try to resolve this problem. We have been promised that this work will be completed in the current financial year and markings on the road appear to indicate that some progress is underway.

Speeding has long been an issue in the village. The Parish Council has purchased a Speed Indicator Device (SID). Thanks to IW and CG for their efforts in erecting the SID by the Old Dairy and to IW for attending the required training course. Readings have shown a considerable reduction in the speed of vehicles in the area. Unfortunately, the SID has proved too heavy to move between sites and the post at Duddings has not yet been used. The Parish Council are looking for grants to purchase another SID to be used at Duddings.

The PC works closely with other agencies. A huge amount of time has been spent by councillors on the Magna heating problems. The work to replace the heating, improve insulation and instal solar panels is currently underway. A great deal of support was given by the Council and Good Neighbours team to residents who found themselves, once again, without heating over the winter period.

We continue to have discussions with FN, SP, Rachel Gilmore and Somerset County Council to try to ensure Magna are held to account at County level and above.

Timberscombe Parish Council hosted a resilience workshop for the Exmoor parishes. The aim being to prepare councils to act in emergencies such as the recent Cutcombe coach crash. The meeting was extremely well attended.

The local Citizens Advice team continued to support our residents and this year the Parish Council agreed to a donation to help them with their work with Timberscombe residents. Sadly we have just heard that the CA is to be closed. We are, as yet, unaware of how this hole in services will be filled.

The Parish Council also gave a donation of £20 to the Poppy Appeal and our internal auditor donated her fee of £40 to the Red Cross. The church was given a donation of £420 to help with their grass cutting and a donation was given towards the Dunkery Tidings. We continue to fund the village website.

A large donation was given to the playing field committee to enable them to pay for the lease extension, legal fees and insurance. We now have a 20-year lease and are looking for help in securing funds for new equipment by fundraising and grant applications.

The clerk and I have been regular attendees at the Local Community Network (LCN) which meets to ensure that local issues are dealt with. The worrying financial crisis at Somerset will inevitably mean that the Parish Council will have to do more than in the past to take up the slack. The Council has a good financial reserve. It was, therefore, agreed not to increase the village precept by more than the rate of inflation, which was 3.2%, at that time.

The electoral boundary review undertaken in 2025 initially placed Timberscombe in the Exmoor East division with Dunster and Carhampton, separated from most of the rest of

Exmoor. The Parish Council restated its desire to remain part of the Exmoor group of councils and we were delighted when their initial decision was overturned and Timberscombe was permitted to remain with the majority of Exmoor.

Last year the Parish Council was able to obtain a grant of £3000 to enhance village resilience amongst the elderly or infirm. This grant has now been paid out to the Good Neighbours team which has improved communications between villagers and micro-providers, increased the number of providers in the village, connected people to those who can provide help and supported the work of the Good Neighbours by organising Information Hubs and paying volunteers for travel expenses.

As trustees to the John Arlott Playing Field, the Parish Council looks after the play area. As a result of our work the play area received a very good annual inspection in October. Several minor repairs and replacements have taken place over the year.

Although the Parish Council does not own the football pitch, we would like to thank the local family who have just provided the funds to replace the old football posts. The Parish Council paid for the installation of the posts. We would also like to thank the Coopers who donated a replacement gate for the football pitch. Once again, the Council paid for the installation. We have also applied for a Dog Exclusion Order for the football pitch to mirror the one which has been renewed for the play area.

K.Attwater.

5. Report from Other Groups – None.

6. Date of next meeting 17th May 2027

Meeting finished 7.50 pm