

LEIGH ON MENDIP ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Meeting held at the Memorial Hall on Saturday 18th May 2024

Present: Cllrs Vicki Taylor (Chair), Iain Kirby, Estelle Kirby, Paula Freeland, Sue Sweet

Attending: Joe McGhee (Clerk); 16 members of the public

Apologies – Cllrs Barry Clarke, Philip Ham (Somerset Council)

1 Welcome by the Chair of the Parish Council

Cllr Vicki Taylor welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting

2 To approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 24th April, 2023

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 24th April, 2023, were accepted as a true record.

3 To receive the Chairman's Annual Report, this will also include reports from Councillors and their areas of responsibility

Cllr Vicki Taylor read out the Annual Report

- **Cllr Vicki Taylor – Highways (M Carter)**
Cllr Vicki Taylor gave an update on Highways.
- **Cllr Iain Kirby – Quarries, LCN and Finance**
Cllr Iain Kirby gave an update on Quarries, the LCN and Finance
- **Cllr Paula Freeland – Planning**
Cllr Paula Freeland gave an update on Planning
- **Cllr Estelle Kirby – Cemetery, School, Quarry Meetings**
Cllr Estelle Kirby gave an update on the new Cemetery, liaison with the School and Quarry Meetings
- **Cllr Sue Sweet – Community Plan**
Cllr Sue Sweet gave an update on the Community Plan

A request was made for information on the quarries' Community Fund and Long-Term Stability Fund to be provided. Cllr I Kirby pointed out that these are on the agenda for each quarry liaison meeting; he will forward relevant information to the Clerk for publishing on the website.

A brief discussion was held on the possibility of using one notice board, outside the Bell Inn, as a general community notice board and the other as the formal, Council, notice board. Consideration will be given by the Council to how this would be managed.

4 Report from the County Councillors

Somerset councillors both sent apologies so there was no report available.

5 Report from the Chair of the Memorial Hall Committee

Denis Pattison, vice-chair of the Memorial Hall Committee, read out the annual report

6 Report from the Recreation Field Management Committee

Vicki Higgins as Chair of the Recreation Field Management Committee read out the annual report

7 Report from the Allotment Association

Tim Spurgeon as Chair of the Allotment Association read out the annual report (included with these minutes)

8 Report from the Parish Path Liaison Officer

Chris Cudmore as the Parish Path Liaison Officer read out the annual report (included with these minutes)

9 Report from the Parish Tree Advisor

Tom Kemp, the Tree and Biodiversity Adviser, read out the annual report

8/24-25

10 Report from the Village Rangers

Chris Cudmore and David Sparkes representing the Village Rangers read out the annual report (included with these minutes)

11 Matters to consider and Questions

There was a brief discussion on the issue of hedge growth obscuring views of traffic and the possibility of this being cleared. It was advised that given the hedges mentioned, this seems a safety issue and most likely the responsibility of Somerset Council Highways.

A request was made to consider publishing high level financial information as part of the annual report. The Council will bear this in mind.

The Chair of the Parish Council thanked Parish Council Councillors, the Village Organisations present and all the wonderful volunteers in the Village for their continued work in ensuring Leigh on Mendip is such a splendid place to live.

Meeting closed 15:15

Allotment report to Leigh on Mendip Parish Council

May 2024

The past year has seen another productive season for allotment holders. The start of the year saw hot sunny weather with allotment holders using large amounts of water to keep plants at their best. The water is supplied and metered by from the Rec Pavilion. The second half of the season and into the winter required much more use of wellies and waders to get around! The development of putting in new equipment to the Coronation Park resulted in very soggy access to the allotments – and surrounding areas - making it a chore for some to transport materials to and from the car park. This is especially so for taking away plant material which members can't compost on their own plots. Since doing away with the unsightly 'communal' compost area, members are responsible for disposing their own waste material.

There are now 20 allotments of varying sizes catering for 24 members. These include 2 new plots created since taking over the triangular area to the west of the allotments from Coronation Park.

Our allotment association is a member of the National Allotment Society (NSALG) and the fees we charge our members include membership of the NSALG for each person. As well as insurance cover, membership includes free advice and information as well as reduced costs on seeds and gardening sundries from the NSALG.

During the year we have improved storage facilities in the cabin with shelving where members can store tools, etc., and have partly cleared the area behind the cabin. We also purchased a picnic bench where we can rest weary limbs and sit for a chat – if we have time between slaving away on the plots!

We are very grateful to Graham Witts for the donation of a grass cutter to keep all the pathways around the plots in order.

The allotments continue to suffer from the occasional ravages by marauding wildlife especially with hungry deer and an increasing pigeon population. Netting and other defences are increasingly used. This spring seems to have started with a challenge of poor germination, etc., which is also happening with other groups and individuals in the area. A particular issue for us in Leigh on Mendip this spring seems to be plants not growing properly – they seem to shrink back into the soil which I can only put down to them being a bit frightened by the screams from delighted children using the wonderful new equipment in the adjacent Coronation Park.

Thanks must go to the Allotment Committee for all their work, in particular to our Secretary Sue Dunford for keeping all the paperwork and reminders organised and to our Treasurer Rose Martin for dealing with the finances, including working out all the payments due and income from membership fees and dividing the water bill we receive twice yearly from the Recreation Field to each plot holder. This is all without having to deal with our Bank which increasingly seems confused about what a community organisation is and being able easily to provide bank statements

Our allotment community continues to share information, advice, help and plants with each other. And the Leigh allotments remain a valuable community resource, not only for our members but also as a talking point and friendly chat to the many passers-by. We were very pleased to take part in the Friends of Leigh Church Open Gardens day where a rota of members were on hand to answer a range of questions from visitors who enjoyed having a closer look at the allotments.

Public Footpaths – 2024 APM Report

As the Parish Public Paths Officer I provide liaison between the Parish Council and the Somerset Rights of Way Area Warden.

In the last year :-

- The Right of Way (RoW) around Tweed Farm has been Way Marked,
- Tarmac have agreed to clear the overgrown RoW south of Halecombe Quarry from Park Corner to Great House Farm
- Following a request from the Parish Council, Somerset have agreed to replace some stiles with kissing gates.

We are lucky to have about 40 Rights of Way in our parish. Primarily the landowner is responsible for their maintenance, but thanks also to our 10 volunteers who each adopt footpaths to report any issues.

If you do find any issues with a public footpath please either let me know or report it online at "[Explore Somerset](#)". You can find more on the village website ([Information/Public Footpaths](#)).

Chris Cudmore 01373 813735

LoMe Rangers – 2024 APM Report

The LoMe rangers are a group of volunteers who perform small maintenance jobs around the village to keep public spaces looking tidy and safe.

Over the last year we've met ten times. Tasks have included:-

- Clearing pavements and overhanging vegetation
- Cleaning the bus stop
- Clearing around the village signs, finger posts, road signs and salt bins
- Helping to plant the hedging in Coronation Park and helping with the churchyard spring clean.

Each Ranger has agreed to the Rangers' Risk Assessment & Mitigation Statement to ensure we are covered by the Parish Council insurance. It has been noted that before anyone volunteers any other ad hoc tasks, they must get agreement from the Chair or Vice Chair of the Parish Council who will confirm insurance cover.

We now have a pool of 14 Rangers who join the working parties when available. A special thanks to David Sparkes who started the Rangers 7 years ago, ran it until this year and continues to be a regular Ranger.

If you notice any public space which needs attention and you are unable to resolve it yourself, please let me know.

Chris Cudmore 01373 813735