

LEIGH ON MENDIP ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Meeting held at the Memorial Hall on Saturday 17th May 2025

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

Attending: Joe McGhee (Clerk); Tom Kemp; Chris Cudmore; 5 members of the public

Apologies – Cllr Paula Freeland; 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 18th May, 2024

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 18th May, 2024, were accepted as a true record.

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

Cllr Taylor read out the Chair's Annual Report (included with these minutes).

- **Cllr Iain Kirby – Quarries, LCN and Finance**

Cllr I Kirby read out a report on Quarries, the LCN and Finance (included with these minutes).

- **Cllr Paula Freeland – Planning**

Cllr Freeland had provided an email report on planning (included with these minutes).

- **Cllr Estelle Kirby – Cemetery**

Cllr E Kirby gave a verbal update on the new cemetery, including the procurement of new benches, the development of a planting plan and an upgrade to the access path.

- **Cllr Sue Sweet – Community Plan**

Cllr Sweet gave a verbal update on the Community Plan, including improved communications in the village, information on community transport on the website, work on a new community notice board, investigations into the provision of a "men's shed" or repair shop, unsuccessful attempts to get any bank to provide mobile banking facilities and a named liaison with the local health centre.

4 Report from the County Councillors

The county councillors were not present so no report was available. The Chair pointed out that they routinely attend parish council meetings and provide updates there, which are included in the published minutes.

5 Report from the Chair of the Memorial Hall Committee

Cllr Taylor delivered a report on behalf of the Memorial Hall Committee (included with these minutes).

6 Report from the Recreation Field Management Committee

Cllr Trundle delivered a verbal report on behalf of Vickie Higgins of the Recreation Field Management Committee who was unable to attend.

7 Report from the Allotment Association

Cllr Taylor read a report on the Allotment Association from Tim Spurgeon who was unable to attend (included with these minutes).

8 Report from the Parish Path Liaison Officer

Chris Cudmore, Parish Path Liaison Officer, delivered a report (included with these minutes).

9 Report from the Parish Tree Advisor

Tom Kemp provided a verbal report covering a planting design for the new cemetery, assessment of a tree on Park Hayes, tree advice to the Recreation Field Management Committee, an assessment visit with the Clerk to the churchyard/cemetery (resulting in a proposal to develop a biodiversity plan for it, which will be discussed at the next parish council meeting) and the possibility of advertising the availability of advice on biodiversity to parishioners.

10 Report from the Village Rangers

Chris Cudmore delivered a report on the work of the Village Rangers (included with these minutes).

11 Matters to consider and Questions

There was some discussion on the situation with flooding at Barns Close. The parish council will continue with efforts, including via Somerset Council, to resolve that recurring issue.

Concern was expressed at the amount of proposed development in the parish.

Council will continue to assess any applications very carefully and make appropriate representations to Somerset Council.

A request was made to publish quarry meeting minutes on the website; the Clerk will publish these as they become available.

The hedge at the rear of the churchyard/cemetery will be assessed and trimmed as necessary.

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

Chair's Report to Parish Meeting - Sat 17th May 2025

Thank you for coming, there will be refreshments at the end of the meeting (including cake!)

It's been a busy year on the Parish Council; all the councillors have taken on responsibility for different areas of our work, which they will tell you about shortly.

This year, Vicky Trundle has rejoined the Parish Council (a glutton for punishment!) and we're very grateful to have her input and experience.

Joe McGhee continues as our Clerk to PC and Cemetery and Responsible Officer. We consider ourselves very lucky to have him.

Tom Kemp continues as our Tree Officer. He has also taken on the role of advising on biodiversity.

Chris Cudmore is our Footpaths Officer (an appointment from Somerset Authority.)

Martin Carter leads on Speedwatch, which is a PC initiative.

I'll let the other counsellors tell you what they've been doing.

But, to conclude - while the PC undertakes an important role on behalf of the Parish, there is so much work undertaken by the groups and organisations, who you will hear from shortly.

I also wrote a report recently on the number of volunteers working in the village, the total I got to was 130, the report is on the Leigh on Mendip website, if you wish to read it!

Quarries, Finance, LCN

Quarries

Throughout the year the Parish Council has continued to attend and participate in both Halecombe and Whately Quarry Community liaison Groups. Minutes of our meetings can now be found on the Council website. This year Halecombe have donated three large boulders for the Coronation Park and Whately have provided money to allow the Parish Council to purchase two new benches for the new cemetery.

Finance

This year has again been a challenge financially as we have struggled to understand what Somerset Council will stop providing and what could become a Parish Council responsibility. As we all have experienced we have seen price increases for services we purchase but through careful financial management and the support of various local hardworking volunteer groups with the community we have not yet had to rely on our reserves. As at 31st March 2025, total receipts were £17,897 and expenditure £10,866. Planned spending in the following areas didn't occur and have therefore been carried forward to this financial year:

- New cemetery extension
- Community plan developments
- Councillor training

LCN

We have continued to attend the quarterly Local Community Network meetings set up by Somerset Council to allow participating Parish Councils to have more involvement in decisions affecting their community. Although now in their second year of existence there is still a way to go before they operate as designed. We will continue to engage in this process in the hope that the LCN will finally deliver.

Planning

At virtually every parish council meeting, the parish council have reviewed and made recommendations to Somerset Council on planning applications affecting the parish. It's surprising for such a relatively small community how much development activity requiring permission takes place. Proposals have ranged from householder applications for extensions, to new buildings in the gardens of existing buildings, sometimes new dwellings and conversions of farm buildings.

Your parish council will always express a view on all applications consulted on by Somerset Council and will incorporate your view into any response. Please remember though we should consider planning rather than personal matters. So that's things like the character and appearance of a proposal, impacts on neighbour amenity, highways implications.

Please remember that you can also make comments yourself through the Somerset Council website and any of the parish councillors will be happy to help you do this.

Do look at the parish council agendas to see which applications we intend to review comment on each month and for those who follow us on Facebook we notify upcoming planning cases.

Leigh on Mendip Memorial Hall

Annual Report 2023/24

Trustees Annual Report - 30th September 2023

The Trustees present their Report for the year ending 30th September 2024, which should be read in conjunction with the separate Statement of Accounts for the same period.

Legal Status

The Hall Committee became Trustees of the Charity on 22nd October 1996. Leigh on Mendip Parish Council remains Custodian Trustee of the Charity.
Charity Commission No 304574.

Objects, Policies and Organisation

The charity was established to provide and maintain the Village Hall for the benefit of the inhabitants of Leigh on Mendip and its immediate vicinity, without distinction of political, religious or other opinions with the object of improving the quality of life for the inhabitants. The Hall is available for hire by any individual or organisation accordance with the hiring agreement and scale of charges adopted for the year. It is intended that the scale of charges be sufficient to generate enough income to meet the ordinary expenditure incurred in providing the Hall. Significant improvements are funded by specific appeals, fundraising and grants. The Management Committee is elected or appointed on an annual basis, with Officers being elected from the membership. The Annual General Meeting is usually held in November.

Managing Trustees Committee Membership

Vicki Taylor - Chair and PC rep
Denis Pattison - Vice Chair and Treasurer
Brenda Wigmore - Secretary
Ann Orpwood - Joint Bookings Clerk
Roger Orpwood - Joint Bookings Clerk
Emma Brooks - Media Officer
Barbara Turner - WI rep

Our constitution allows for up to 6 members representing other groups in the village, plus up to 8 other members, with a maximum of 14 and also allow for an additional 2 to be co-opted if required, so plenty of room!!

Review of the Year

Firstly, my grateful thanks to the committee for their willingness to undertake all the responsibilities, which have been required to keep the Memorial Hall running during the last year. The Hall is almost fully booked busier than has ever been. Each member of the committee cheerfully gives of their time and skills, Bren as secretary, Emma posting all our media reports, Denis looking after our funds and Roger and Ann who take bookings no matter where they are!

Maintenance

Normal maintenance has been undertaken over the year to ensure the hall is a safe environment for activities, we are indebted to Roger Ann and Denis, for the ongoing 'jobs' they undertake.

This year we have also been pleased to undertake several notable improvements to the Hall.

- New chairs
- A new storage shed
- New taps

Lally Lee has taken on responsibility for our planters outside of the hall and they are looking wonderful, thanks Lally.

I can't believe I'm saying this AGAIN but.....

THE ROOF, remains our biggest "bug bear", who knew it would be **so** difficult to find out how the water is coming in!! We are now on the 9th/10th attempt! The war continues!

Bookings

In the last month we had 70 bookings! 54 last year. We are indebted to Ann who raises all those invoices as well as her and Roger juggling the bookings.

We have many different regular activities and classes, as well as one-off events, such as children's parties.

Of course, we continue to host the regular groups in the Village.WI, Parish Council, short mat bowls, Pilates, Line Dancing to name just a few!

AND FOLC have started running Bingo!

Fund raising

No fundraising has been undertaken this year. However, the Hall committee support many other fundraising events in the village, such as the Classic Car Meet /Village Day.

Personnel

As noted above we only have 7 people on our committee.

Please do give thought to whether you may be able to come onto this committee and help keep this important facility in our village open and in 'tip top' condition.

Finance - is detailed separately.

Vicki Taylor - Chair

Date 4/11/24

Allotment Report to Parish Council

May 2025

There is very little to report since last year. As always, allotment holders have had to battle with the change in weather conditions from almost marsh conditions during the winter to the now desert conditions this spring has brought.

There have been a couple of changes with two new plot holders taking over from plots others have given up during the year. We now have 21 members using the 18 plots. For the first time we have a waiting list – with just one person waiting for a plot.

A wide variety of crops are grown from vegetables and fruit to flowers. As always, there is plenty sharing of advice as well as seeds and plants between members.

Thanks to the Rec Committee for the – at the moment – eradication of the mole problem. However, this has led to the multitude of mole tunnels collapsing on the allotment paths making them very uneven.

Thanks go to the Allotment Committee for all their work during the year with keeping up with the changes and the close liaison without affiliation to the National Allotment Society.

Tim Spurgeon, Chair

Public Footpaths – 2025 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:-

- Restoration of the Right of Way south of Halecombe Quarry from Park Corner to Great House Farm (below the bund). Tarmac agreed to this in January 2024. A further meeting was held with the new Site Manager in September, some clearance was completed in December and I held a further walk-through with the contractor in March. Detailed agreement is awaited. This path will reopen an alternative to part of the popular circular bund walk which is part Public and part Permitted.
- In June Somerset Council replaced some stiles with kissing gates and pedestrian gates. The Right of Way between Three Acre Annex and the top of Blackers Lane now has no stiles. Thanks to the landowners. Noted that changes to stiles is with permission of the landowner. Further stile replacements are being planned where the landowner agrees.
- Somerset Area Warden has changed from Clare Haskins to Daniel Gordon, who I am meeting on Monday.

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.

Finally, 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

LoMe Rangers – 2025 APM Report

Firstly, a BIG thank you to the LoMe Rangers are a group of 12 volunteers who perform small maintenance jobs around the village to keep our public spaces looking tidy and safe.

Over the last year we've met on 13 days with over 70 work hours spent on:-

- Clearing pavements and overhanging vegetation
- Cleaning the bus stop
- Repainting village stone signs
- Clearing around the village signs, finger posts, road signs and salt bins
- Helping with the churchyard spring clean, over three days
- Preventing floods - clearing scoops & drains. We cleared the mud at Barnsclose entrance when it was dry in August. However, the mud soon returned with vengeance as soon as it rained and continued to cause severe flooding on Quarry Lane. This is beyond the Rangers' capability and the PC is requested to persevere with preventing the flow of mud from the quarry.

Thanks to founder member Daggs who stepped down this year but John & Jo Reynolds and Nick Cooper have joined.

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

Chris Cudmore