

LEIGH ON MENDIP ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Meeting held at the Memorial Hall at 2:00pm on Saturday 16th May 2026

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

Attending: Joe McGhee (Clerk); Tom Kemp (Tree Adviser); 11 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 17th May, 2025**

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 17th May, 2025, 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 Vicki Taylor - Planning**

Cllr Taylor delivered a verbal report on the Parish Council's planning role. This is the council's largest and most challenging item of work ensuring that parishioner's views and interests are represented on planning applications to Somerset Council.

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

Cllr Kirby delivered a verbal report on quarries and finance.

Councillors from the PC attend the Community Liaison Meetings of both Halecombe and Whatley quarries, including voting on motions where appropriate. A suggestion was made that the minutes of the Halecombe meetings be published on the website. The Clerk will look into this.

The council's careful financial management means that reserves are healthy and the council is prepared to weather any difficulties arising from the financial situation at Somerset Council. This means, too, that the council avoided any increase in the precept for 2026-27.

- **Cllr Vicki Trundle - Recruitment**

Cllr Trundle emphasised the importance of having a full complement of councillors (seven). At one point in the year there were three vacancies. An advert published on the website, notice board and in the Village Connection resulted in a number of expressions of interest, with further information being sent out to interested parties. One new councillor, Cllr Parry, has been coopted and a follow up will be carried out to see if any of the others would like to apply.

- **Cllr Sue Sweet – New Cemetery**

Cllr Sweet gave a verbal update on the new cemetery. New benches have been installed, the gates have been upgraded and are about to be painted, new signage is being organised and work has begun on fencing. The cemetery should be complete in a month or so.

4 **Report from the Tree and Biodiversity Adviser**

Tom Kemp gave a verbal report, concentrating on the new biodiversity scheme which has been implemented in the churchyard/cemetery. A similar scheme will be

considered for land at Park Hayes when the transfer of that from Somerset Council is complete..

5 Report from 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

Vicky Higgins gave a verbal report on behalf of the Recreation Field Management Committee. A wildflower meadow is being developed. Funds were obtained from the Halecombe Quarry Community Fund to procure a new, more powerful PA system. Overall upkeep remains a challenge with a lot of work to be done. New volunteers would be welcomed. Tuesday bowls are well attended. Thanks were noted to Vanessa Barnes and family as well as Martin and Jo Carter, and special thanks to the outgoing secretary.

7 Report from the Allotment Association

Tim Spurgeon provided a report (included with these minutes).

8 Report from the Parish Path Liaison Officer

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

9 Report from the Village Rangers

Chris Cudmore provided a report (included with these minutes).

10 Report from Estelle Kirby on the Repair Shop

Vicki Taylor provided a report on behalf of Estelle Kirby. Interest was canvassed via the annual newsletter delivered to every household. Response was light but the idea will continue to be developed with a visit to a repair shop in Shepton Mallet for further ideas and feedback.

11 Report from Martin Carter on SpeedWatch

Martin Carter provided a report (included with these minutes).

12 Matters to Consider and Questions

A request was made to publish the summary of Parish Council meeting minutes on the website as well as the notice board. These will be passed to the Clerk in future for publishing.

The Clerk will look in to scanning and publishing a history of Leigh On Mendip written by Mary de Viggiani and provided by Nick Dixon, a family friend.

A suggestion was made that the Parish Council Facebook page is redundant, since all information is also posted on the Leigh On Mendip group page, and so could be deleted. The Parish Council will consider this.

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.

Chair's Report to Parish Meeting - Sat 16th May 2026

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.

2 Parish Councillors resigned this year, Paula Freeland and Estelle Kirby. I thank them both for their hard work and expertise they have offered the council over the years.

I'm delighted that Allison Parry has joined the Parish Council, just last month! She is very welcome and will bring a different perspective from her experience, especially in South Africa.

Joe Mc Ghee continues as our Clerk to the PC and Cemetery and as our Responsible Officer. He does a marvellous job and we consider ourselves very lucky to have him.

There are many people in the village who volunteer their services and expertise willingly to support the wellbeing of our community. They are too numerous to mention all by name, but on behalf of the Parish, the Council formally thanks you.

Key volunteers linked to the Parish council include,

Tom Kemp who continues as our Tree Officer and Biodiversity Advisor. He is happy to give his advice to Parishioners and Land Owners.

Chris Cudmore is our Footpaths Officer, (an appointment from Somerset Authority), also Rangers Lead and Web Master

Martin Carter leads on Speedwatch, and Family Day with Classic cars.

Estelle Kirby who is leading on Repair Shop

Finally, I am resigning as the Chair of the Parish Council after 4 years.

I'm grateful for all the support I've received, and it has been a pleasure working with such dedicated people.

Memorial Hall - 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. We have this year welcomed Sue Adams as representative for the WI.

Maintenance

Normal maintenance has been undertaken over the year to ensure the hall is a safe environment for activities, as well as new doors at the front of the hall.

Also, the new cooker recently installed, funded by Tarmac Halecombe Quarry Community Fund.

We are indebted to Roger Ann and Denis, for the ongoing 'jobs' they undertake.

Lally continues to ensure the outside of the hall looks welcoming, caring for the planters and managing to have wonderful flowers there all year!

I'm saying nothing about the roof, which despite the wet winter, seems to be behaving (fingers crossed)

Bookings

We must be the busiest Village Hall on the Mendips! In the last month we had 50 bookings! With the Hall being used every single day!!!!.

Fund raising

The committee took part in the Village and Car day as fund raising. The Hall also supports many fundraising events in the village.

Personnel

We only have 6 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.

Vicki Taylor - Chair

Date 16/5/26

Allotment report to Parish Council

May 2026

As in previous years we have had a few changes with three new members taking on plots vacated by others. One of these occurred because previous holders did not maintain the plot. The other two was because the plot holders decide to give up their plot. So, as with last year's report, we have come back to 21 members on the 18 plots. A further two people have asked about availability of plots and have been sent application forms. They will go on the waiting list.

As always a wide variety of crops are grown from vegetables and fruit to flowers. Plenty of sharing has continued with sharing of advice as well as seeds and plants between members. And of course, chatting to the many people who take the footpath past the allotments.

All plot holders are automatically affiliated to the National Association of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. The benefits of this mean access to the reduced costs of the of seeds and materials, online support and insurance covering us all.

During the year we had plenty of visitors during the FOLC Open Gardens day. The allotments will again be part of this year's event.

Thanks to those who help with keeping the paths around the plots cut and the hedge between the allotments and Coronation Park trimmed.

We are grateful to Nick Cooper for his supply of horse manure that will hopefully increase our crops growth this year and to asterion and co from the Old Vicarage for the large sack of seed potatoes.

Finally, thanks again go to the Allotment Committee for all their work during the year with keeping up with the changes and the close liaison with our affiliation to the National Association.

All this continues to make sure the allotments a valuable resource for the village.

Tim Spurgeon, Chair

Public Footpaths – 2026 APM Report

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

- Restoration of the Right of Way south of Halecombe Quarry from Park Corner to Great House Farm (below the bund), FR8/24. As the landowner, Tarmac have a legal duty to maintain this footpath and agreed to restoring it in January 2024. I met with the new Site Manager in December 2025. A quote for the work has now been reviewed and a staged funding programme is awaiting approval. This path will re-open an alternative to part of the popular circular bund walk which is part Public and part Permitted. **It is important that the Parish Council continue to expedite this at the Halecombe Liaison meetings.**
- Further stiles have been replaced with kissing gates
 - One just north of Pitten House. Now no stiles on the path from Pitten Street to Tufa Falls.
 - Two north of Leigh Wood. Now no stiles on the path between Leigh (Sparks Farm) and Coleford (via Packsaddle Bridge).
 - Please let me know if further stile replacements are required (landowner agreement will be needed).
- I have regular contact with the Somerset Rights of Way Area Warden, Daniel Gordon.

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 and perform light maintenance.

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 – 2026 APM Report

Firstly a BIG thank you to the LoMe Rangers. We 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 10 days with over 60 work hours spent on:-

- Clearing pavements and overhanging vegetation
- Clearing around the village signs, finger posts, road signs and salt bins
- Clearing the footpath beside Barnsclose quarry
- Cleaning the bus stop
- Preparing the Rec for the Village Day
- Trimming back the brambles on the bank next to Great House Farm (opposite Island Cottage)
- Clearing the brambles next to the wall beyond Thrice Barn
- Helping with the churchyard spring clean, over two days
- Preventing floods by clearing scoops & drains.

I've reported 15 instances of fly-tipping which have all been collected promptly by Somerset Council. **If anyone sees fly-tipping please report it via the SC website.**

Special thanks to Chris Ingren who paints the fingerposts and telephone box and John & Jo Reynolds who keep the Townsend verges cut.

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

LoM CSW report 16 May 2026

The village CSW team was formed in December 2023 following the response from a question in the PC village survey, where a large number of residents commented about their concerns of the speed of traffic travelling through the village and support for a CSW team.

We are a team of 10 volunteers (to whom I give my thanks to their dedication and time. This includes for the mandatory training we have to complete). We have 3 authorised locations in the village. We meet roughly every 3 months to set dates of our sessions for the following weeks. **As with any volunteer group we would welcome interest from anyone who can spare an hour every now and again to join us.**

The team have been relentless with the numerous sessions on behalf of the local community to keep everyone safe. We have recently been successful in securing two electronic Speed Indication Devices to encourage people to respect the speed limits in the village at all times, not just when we are out and visible. We would much rather deter drivers from driving above 30mph, than record them travelling in excess of the limit and report them.

The SID's have been provided by the police and a successful bid by the PC to Halecombe Quarry Community Fund. We are now awaiting authorisation from Somerset Highways before mounting them either end of the village.

I will demonstrate a device after this meeting

DATA.

In 2025 we carried out 50 sessions, (sometimes at all 3 sites at the same time). Data returns were:

- 76 vehicles recorded travelling above 30mph
- 21 reported to the police due to their speed
- 2189 vehicles travelled through the 50 sessions

So far this year we have carried out;

- 20 sessions (nearly one a week),
- Noted 25 travelling over 30mph.
- Reported 5 to police
- Of a total of 736 vehicles checked.

The highest speed recorded this year is 40mph.

49mph is the highest speed recorded since we started.

We are also encouraged to randomly check vehicles we see. This has led to one vehicle being seen on more than one occasion that was last subject of a MOT and road tax in 2010! The police, who we liaise with regularly and are supported by, are investigating this case.