

Yarlington Annual Parish Meeting

A meeting of the Parishioners

“Draft” Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Held on Wednesday 23rd April 2025 at 7pm in

Yarlington Village Hall, BA22 7DG

The Chairman of the Parish Council (PC), Andy Keys-Toyer, opened the meeting, which was attended by twenty three members of the public and ten parish councillors.

1. **Minutes of Yarlington Parish Meeting held on 24th April 2024** were received and confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman
2. **The Chairman of North Cadbury and Yarlington Parish Council** gave his report, which is included at attachment 1.
3. **Report from Zoe Young, Community Liaison Officer for The Newt and Emily Estate:**
Key points from the last year:
 - First year of a Community Liaison and a Village Steward at The Newt. Hopefully you'll agree that this has been a positive step in improving access of information. I have endeavoured to represent your views, whether positive or negative, within the organisation and call for improvement where needed!
 - We recognise the continuing impact of development work within Yarlington, whether site noise, traffic or visual changes. Yarlington Lodge, The Trout Pond and Wheelwrights have been the main culprits, not to mention the significant impact of the new farm planning application.
 - Additionally, an acknowledgement that living next to a working farm is not always easy!
 - However, as part of the presence within Yarlington, I am pleased to say there have been perks! The sorts of thing, that as neighbours and as an organisation within a community we commit to.
 - The resurfacing of Pound Lane. The creation of permissive footpaths, including use of the bridge to cross over into Yarlington. Practical work from the Village Steward – Saul has been strimming, mending stiles, walls, and even helping out in gardens as I hear! We have furthermore donated to various charitable causes and committed to various natural flood defence measures as advised by the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) and Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA). These include swales, leaky dams and ditch clearances. We will be making further commitments in the coming year and look forward to hearing about initiatives by other landowners, as flood prevention is an ongoing collaborative effort.

- Perhaps most relevant currently is the intervention in buying The Stag's Head following extensive public consultation. I am personally grateful for the formation of the local working group which helped uphold the integrity of the selection process.

Current update:

- The lovely David and Louise have been appointed to run the Stag's Head, and they are moving in imminently. They hope to be open for drinks within the next couple of weeks and serving food by the end of May.
- Elsewhere, works at Yarlington Lodge are expected to be complete by Christmas and handed over to the operational teams in the New Year.
- The Trout Pond has been planted up and the path for the permissive route, as promised, will be open imminently.
- The Shatwell Farm planning application is ongoing with a decision not expected until June.
- As for the commencement of the farm, the pre-commencement checks are all underway. A lot of paperwork at this stage and I wouldn't expect the works to start until June. The first stage will be the track, to enable access to the site via Avalon.

The year ahead:

- I have had the first community engagement plan approved which holds different departments of the organisation accountable. Better communication, more opportunities for education, increased charitable donations and improved custodianship.
- And a pledge to continuous improvement of communication starts with an invitation to councillors to a tour of Avalon next Wednesday at noon. I will follow up with an email invitation. We are also planning an open day, with invites extended to the parish for the 5th July, I will provide details when I have them.

4. Report from Henry Hobhouse Somerset Councillor:

- Marlene Masters, long time resident of the parish and retired parish councillor was recently buried at Yarlington Church, following a very unique service in accordance with Marlene's wishes, which included Christmas trees, decorations and carols.
- Budget. Somerset Council's budget was set for the next financial year. To address the financial pressures in Childs' services - support is being given directly to schools in terms of supporting enhanced SEND (special educational needs and disability). However, next April, SENDS may have accumulated a debt of £100m over the years and, if there is no additional help from the Government, forty plus councils could effectively go into receivership and issue section 114 notices.

5. Reports from Local Groups and Organisations

- a. Yarlington Village Hall. Chairman of the Hall, Andy Keeley, reported as follows:

"The kitchen is complete. We now have a stainless steel catering standard kitchen and inventory of all the equipment has been made and is all properly stored.

I'm pleased to say the opening weekend in June was a great success. We had approximately 30 visitors attending. It was followed by a weekend of events including a noggin and natter, Saturday Breakfast and Sunday BBQ.

Regular activities include Pilates, life drawing classes and yoga. A memorable first this spring was a lecture on Snowdrops by Arthur Cole.

BBQ's have become a regular thing; No.4 was on Easter Monday.

The new kitchen has meant that we have been able to hire the hall out to catering and wine specialists who have put on an Italian night and a Greek night. Both evenings were a great success and brought people to Yarlington who did not know the hall. The hall committee arranged a village Christmas lunch cooked by a local Chef, which was a great success.

Breakfasts have been cooked on Saturday mornings and we hope to do more. We've opened the hall on Friday nights for our noggin and natter evenings, where friends and neighbors can get together for a drink. In the past we would have met in the pub.

Yarlington Fringe Weekend starts on Friday 2nd May. The Hall will be used for the art exhibition.

Saturday 10 May the village will be involved in helping out at the Yarlington House Rare Plant Sale.

In conclusion, our hope for the future can be divided into four:

1. We wish to continue to improve the Fabric of the hall and its facilities. The most urgent job, which is in hand, is to lay car parking mats on the grass around the hall.

We are looking into installing a PV system with batteries, both as a green measure and to reduce our running costs. I've recently completed the decarb Somerset course which will add to our credibility when we apply for grants.

2. The Hall's finances will continue to be prudently managed, for which I'd like to thank John Parry for the time and effort he puts into being treasurer.

3. We aim to promote the hall to potential users both by traditional means and modern. We have an up and running Facebook page! Not bad for a bunch of mostly pensioners.

4. Finally we will continue in our efforts as committee members and trustees to promote our charity and it's building to ensure it survives and flourishes."

b. St Mary's Yarlington Church. Clare Leavold read out her report as secretary of the Parochial Church Council, which is included at attachment 2.

c. Yarlington Parish Cllrs. Cllr Maria Viney gave her report on behalf of herself and Cllr Clare Leavold, which is included at attachment 3.

6. Open Public Parish Forum

A Blackford resident was present to discuss the ongoing antisocial behaviour in the local parishes. He was recently involved in a fail to stop road traffic accident and the car that hit his car, failed to stop and made off at high speed from Compton Pauncefoot towards Sandbrook Lane North Cadbury. The collision was captured on dashcam as evidence.

Subsequently, as a result of making enquiries, the resident was able to establish that the vehicle wasn't insured at the time of the accident or taxed.

The incident was reported to the police who appeared to be disinterested due to a lack of resources and available police in the area. There is no policing at night and negligible police presence in the rural areas in the day.

The resident and councillors expressed their concern over the manner of driving and behaviour of several local residents who regularly use the old A303 in Compton Pauncefoot as a rat run and the surrounding country lanes where they drive at excessive speed and dangerously. These are single track roads and it was only a matter of time before someone is hit and seriously injured or killed.

The Chairman had asked a member of the police to be present at the meeting. He received a response from the Wincanton Rural Support Officer that a ["colleague had also gone out that same day to do patrols in those exact locations which had been mentioned to see if these vehicle/individuals could be sighted. Unfortunately, we are a small team with limited resources now, but this does not stop us from getting out and being proactive of which we are also doing. With the intel report that got submitted this allows other officers to do the same that are not on our team. On Facebook under South Somerset Neighbourhood Policing, you will be able to see updates that we do on recent outcomes and positive work we get up to."]

Cllr Hobhouse had reported these issues to Police Chief Inspector Andy Pritchard on at least five occasions.

Action: Following a full discussion, it was agreed that the situation needed to be elevated by writing to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset, Clare Moody, inviting her to a Parish Council meeting to discuss these issues and to provide explanations for the apparent lack of action.

Everyone should take a Zero tolerance approach and report every incident.

The Chairman would also bring this matter up for discussion at the upcoming Local Community Network meeting scheduled for 30th April 2025.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.00pm and the ordinary meeting of the PC followed.

Signed
Chairman

Dated

DRAFT