

Minutes of Queen Camel Parish Council meeting on Monday 17 March 2026 at 7:30pm, Marples Room, Queen Camel Memorial Hall

Present - Councillors John Brendon, Bryan Norman, Harriet Chappell, Angus Davidson, Roy Lawrenson and Phillip Hall.

2 members of the public were in attendance and Somerset Councillor Henry Hobhouse.

03/01/26 Public Session

- Anne Beveridge has cleared a lot of brambles on Church Path opposite the Old School. Parish councilors expressed their thanks.

03/02/26 Apologies and updates on any vacancies

- Somerset Councillor Kevin Messenger, Councillor Hewlett and Councillor P Jones. These were accepted.
- Councillor Brendon advised there is currently one vacancy on the parish council.

03/03/26 Declaration of interests in the agenda

- Cllr Chappell declared an interest in St Barnabas activities as she chairs The Friends of St Barnabas .

03/04/26 Minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 19.01.2026

These were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by the chair.

Proposed: Cllr P Hall

Seconded: Cllr A Davidson

All councillors present in agreement

03/05/26 Actions from last meeting

- Heritage Trust update – Mr Davidson advised that Mr Hewlett and he still need to meet with the other trustees. This will be completed before the next full parish council meeting.

ACTION: Cllr Davidson and Cllr Hewlett

03/06/26 Somerset Councillor Report – Henry Hobhouse

- Council tax increase by Somerset Council will be increased by 4.99% which is the maximum allowed without a referendum. The central government has been late releasing information for the local authorities to enable them to confirm their council tax increases and set their budgets.
- Each local authority has a deficit for special educational needs funding which has been placed in a separate budget line. The government has agreed to pay 90% of this deficit but it could increase again and depending on the 2028 special educational needs reform proposals. The main costs arise for special schools fees and transport for those students.
- Friends of Mudford Action Group – Mudford Parish Council has been granted a judicial review for the housing development at Primrose Lane and the court case date has been set for 28 April 2026.
- Dirty Business documentary on television – recommendation that people watch this as it shows how the water companies have been performing and concerns with sewage. Sewage farms serving less than 2000 houses do not have to improve their facilities. This impacts Sparkford, which handles Queen Camel and North Cadbury which are close to Queen Camel with overspill waste water running into the River Cam. Interestingly Dorset Council have amended this requirement and with improvements being made in areas where there are over 1000 houses. Councillors agreed that a

contact with the local MP, Sarah Dyke, would be beneficial to ask her to follow this up with a view to getting Somerset Council to consider the action that Dorset Council had taken. There is also a Wessex Water event at Wincanton on Wednesday 25 March from 1000 to 1200.

ACTION: Clerk to send out details of future Wessex Water events

ACTION: Clerk to contact Sarah Dyke re upgrading sewage works

- RAMSAR – this is an agreement that is dedicated to conservation and wise use of wetlands. Cllr Hobhouse advised that the Somerset Levels were added as a designated area and believes this was completed without the appropriate paperwork and is therefore working on resolving this.
- Station Road in Castle Cary closure – this will commence on 10.04.2026 for ten weeks. Also from September Ansford Hill will be closed for six months.

03/07/26 To RECEIVE the Clerk's Report of actions taken and updates for information

- Clerk's Report has been circulated to councillors and placed on the website.

03/08/26 To CONSIDER the following planning applications received and RESOLVE to submit comments where appropriate.

- **25/02948/S73A Holiday Cottage at Rectory Farm, West Camel Road, Queen Camel, Yeovil BA22 7ND** – S73A Application for non-compliance with Condition 03 (restriction of occupancy) relating to planning permission 15/03631/FUL; Demolition of an existing farm building and erection of a single storey timber framed and clad building to provide 2no. holiday lets. Councillors discussed and agreed that it was originally granted with the remit of being a holiday let and nothing has changed so therefore the restriction needs to stay in place. This is also not a designated residential area.

Objection sustained by all councillors.

ACTION: Clerk to submit letter of objection to Somerset Council Planning

- **26/00452/FUL Land Adjacent to Fletcher Moss, Spark Hill Lane, Sparkford, Yeovil BA22 7JF** – Phased creation of 3 x four bedroom dwellings and 2 x three bedroom dwellings intended for Custom Build and Self Build. Councillors acknowledge that this application has been made previously and there were issues with access to the site as it would be out onto the A359 at a point where there was limited visibility. There was also a concern that additional housing would bring additional flooding down into the Cam River

03/09/26 To RECEIVE approved planning applications

- None notified.

03/10/26 To RECEIVE other planning information

- Friends of Mudford Action Group (FOMAG) – the judicial review process will go ahead and the court date is 28.04.2026. Mudford Parish Council are requesting financial support from neighbouring parishes. Councillors were in agreement that the Primrose Lane development would have an impact on Queen Camel as it would put additional pressure on the A359 and general flooding in the area as there will be more drainage into the River Yeo, causing backups on connecting rivers. At this stage Queen Camel are willing to make a contribution to Mudford Parish Council of £500 but could review this in the future if required.

Proposed: Cllr J Brendon

Seconded: Cllr R Lawrenson

All councillors present in agreement

- Somerset parish councils group working together to challenge current Somerset Communities Response Against Poor Planning (SCRAPP) – review of SCRAPP draft constitution. Constitution has been circulated to councillors and advises that the group aims to act as a pressure group across Somerset against poor planning. The first

meeting will be on 25 March. The cost of being part of the group is £150 and this is recorded in the constitution. Councillors were in agreement to accept the constitution and pay the £150.

Proposed: Cllr John Brendon

Secoded: Cllr Harriet Chappell

All councillors present in agreement

ACTION: Clerk to contact SCRAPP and advise the constitution is acceptable and Queen Camel will pay £150.

- Sutton Farm and the HGV Problem – feedback from the working group. Peter Cook is the chair of the group that represents four parish councils to raise concerns about this problem. Somerset Council have not responded to concerns raised and the next potential actions are to approach the Ombudsman or seek legal advice. A quote of £25000 has been obtained for the legal advice to assess if there is a legal case. The two parish councils who are able/willing to share this legal cost are Sutton Montis and Queen Camel. Queen Camel agreed to make a contribution towards the legal costs but would like the other parish councils to do so as well. Councillors believe it is important to understand if there is a legal case that can be pursued. Councillors agreed to contribute up to £1250.

Proposed: Cllr Bryan Norman

Secoded: Cllr Harriet Chappell

All councilors present in agreement

ACTION: Clerk to contact Peter Cook

- Old surgery planning response re boarded up windows update – Cllr Brendon sent information onto Councillor Hobhouse and will copy him into a chaser email.
- Potential name for the Ashford Homes development – councillors noted that Forum Way as a name that has been put forward to Ashford Homes and needs to be confirmed with them.
ACTION: Clerk to confirm with Ashford Homes
- Notification from Planning Inspectorate – The Somerset Council (No.4) Modification Order, 2021 Parishes of Sparkford and Queen Camel. This order has been submitted to the Secretary of State for confirmation and relates to a Right of Way. This is a change from a footpath to a bridleway up to the old quarry. This was objected to as there was no proof that it was originally a bridleway. Await outcome of Planning Inspectorate.

03/11/26

Highways and Traffic

- Updates on HGV traffic through the village update – a recommendation has been put forward to carryout a traffic survey and this was agreed by councilors. The this new data can be compared with the previous data.
- Blocked drains and gutters update – clerk provided a list to Councillor Hobhouse after the last meeting as he was meeting with Somerset Highways on 18 January and a spreadsheet has now been collated that tracks progress on concerns raised.
ACTION: Clerk
Clerk advised that the response from Somerset Highways was that the drains and gullies were cleared last June on Mildmay Drive and England's Lane where flooding has been reported, and they are on a four year cycle so not due again until 2029. Cllr Norman also raised flooding in Church Path which he has reported to Somerset Council and raised at the recent LCN Highways meeting that he attended.
- Resurfacing of bridge and High Street by the Old School – councilors requested that the diversion put in place for this work to be carried out should not be through Blackwell Road.

03/12/26

Flood Working Group update

- Flood Working Group Chair Report – report was circulated to councilors prior to the meeting. The following points were noted:

- River monitors installed after the major flood in 2023 worked well during Storm Chandra.
- The road was closed by the police, over the road bridge adjacent to the Old School when it flooded and was exacerbated by the culvert being blocked
- Flood Warden required for Queen Camel and Martin Lilley has agreed to step into this role.
- Councillor Hobhouse is trying to resurrect the ability for parish councils to be able to close their own roads when there is flooding. Currently need to have Section 14 which requires undergoing some training. Cllr Lawrenson advised there are people in Queen Camel who already have attended this training. Councillor Hobhouse will come back to the parish council if there are any updates.

03/13/26

Playing Field Working Group updates

- Report back from working group meeting on 09 March
Problems with the Ransom mower – currently not working and will need to be looked at within the 20 hours existing guarantee.
Gang mower has been listed for sale on ebay.
Question raised of when the new playing field will be handed over as part of the new development. This will not happen until the development has been completed and will be at least four years. The Section 106 money comes after a set number of houses have been sold as per the agreement.
Pavilion showers low water pressure – it is unclear if the water pressure is an issue with Wessex Water or the plumbing at the Pavilion itself. Cllr Chappell will investigate this further.
ACTION: Cllr H Chappell
- Review of finances – spending is within the budget allocated by the parish council.
- Cracking in Pavilion wall – Cllr Chappell has sought a quote for this with a local tradesman who will also complete the other tasks of taking away the chain link fencing, lockbox on the Pavilion, clear the gutters and remove the old goad posts. The quote for this is £300. Councillors were in agreement for this work to go ahead.
- Cricket Club new cricket nets – the Cricket Club have confirmed that they probably need planning permission for the new nets. To be certain if planning permission is required then an assessment can be undertaken that costs £66.50. This would confirm if planning permission needs to be applied for which will cost £250.
- Play inspection quote from Somerset Council for 2026-7 in the sum of £108.64 – councilors were in agreement to continue these inspections. Clerk to advise Somerset Council.
ACTION: Clerk
- Exploration of new football posts – councilors discussed as there is a question if they wish to purchase the goals when there are not regular bookings from football teams currently. It was agreed that an agreement would need to be put in place which places the responsibility of putting the nets up and down by the team and also painting the white lines using the Playing Field white line machine. The hire will be £31.50 for residents and £40 for non residents. Cllr Chappell to draw up agreement and seek commitment from football team that has expressed an interest.
ACTION: Cllr H Chappell
Posts to be considered in the sum of £1680 at the beginning of the season.
- Somerset circular regarding Dog Control and PSPOs – these will come into effect in April.

03/14/26

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

- Meeting with consultant on 20 January 2026 and with the Somerset Council officer, Jo Wilkins responsible for Neighbourhood Plans on 17 February – the advice is to await the Somerset Land Supply and Site information that is due in the spring before undertaking many amendments/revisions.

- 03/15/26 Update from the last Local Community Network (LCN) meeting**
- LCN Highways meeting in January – Cllr Norman attended.
 - Dates for next Highways meetings are 03.03.2026 and 02.06.2026.
- 03/16/26 Grant Applications**
- There were none submitted.
- 03/17/26 Finance and Banking**
- Budget update and forecast for 2026-7 – there have been no further changes.
 - Precept request for 2026-7 - clerk confirmed that the request was submitted to Somerset Council in the sum of £26 400 and acknowledged. Council tax bills have been received and the parish council's precept increase is the lowest of the increases of the various bodies billed.
 - Reserves position – this has been updated and circulated prior to the meeting. The allocations from the Community Benefit Fund were noted.
 - Payments made since January parish council meeting
Standing Order for clerk home office allowance - £26 on 01.02.2026 and 01.03.2026
PATA for payroll services - £37.35
Clerk salary for February - £495.30 on 01.03.2026
DD British Gas in January £38.09 but none in February as in credit
DD for UTB Bank charges in January and February - each for £6
Inland Revenue (PAYE) - £1256.94
Loxston Groundcare (mower maintenance) - £582.81
Payment to Phil Jones for Playing Field – signage £14.75, mower parts £66.84
DD Water2Business - £95.03
 - Receipts since January meeting
Abercornyn Solar Ltd - £7493.64
 - Upcoming payments prior to next meeting
Clerk salary for March and April
HMRC payment in April – amount unknown
Credit card for April and May – amount unknown
Office allowance for March and April - £26 x 2
Bank service charges for March and April – 2 x £6
These payments were approved by councilors
Proposed: Cllr A Davidson
Seconded: Cllr B Hall
All councillors present in agreement
 - Bank balances as at 28.02.2026
Current - £9767.45
Instant Access - £53 175.92
 - Bank reconciliation
Prepared and shows the balances above. Signed.
 - Bank signatories – Mrs Chappell and Mr Hewlett have been set up and awaiting signatures on the new forms.
 - Internal auditor – parish councillors were in agreement to approach Simon Pritchard to request he completed the internal audit again this year. Clerk to approach.
ACTION: Clerk
 - Internal audit arrangements – clerk has spoken to the auditor and arranged to send accounts to him and then have them signed off at a parish council meeting.
 - Risk register and Asset register – these need to be reviewed prior to the audit.

03/18/26

Policy review

- IT Policy – this has been circulated and councilors were in agreement to adopt. Clerk to place on website.

ACTION: Clerk

03/19/26

Annual Village Meeting – Friday 15 May

- Preparations are taking place and it was agreed to invite local MP, Sarah Dyke.

03/19/26

Correspondence Received and circulated

- SALC newsletters
- Flood information from Somerset Council during January
- Request to use metal detector – new resident in the village has asked if they can use a metal detector and would like to scan between the rear of the pavilion and the new build estate behind South View. This land currently belongs to the developer, Ashford Homes and therefore clerk will advise the resident to contact them.

ACTION: Clerk

- Somerset Council circulars
- Parish Online newsletters

01/21/26

Date of next meeting

Thursday 07 May 2026 at 1930 in the Marples Room at the Memorial Hall for the Annual Parish Council meeting and normal parish council meeting.

Dates of future meetings

Full Parish Council Meeting – Monday 20 July 2026 at 1930

Full Parish Council Meeting – Monday 21 September 2026 at 1930

Full Parish Council Meeting – Monday 16 November 2026 at 1930

Annual Village Meeting – Friday 15 May 2026

Finance Personnel and Risk Committee – Monday 20 April 2026 at 1930

Playing Field Working Group – TBC

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – TBC

Meeting closed at 09.49pm