***The Annual Parish Meeting is a meeting of the Parish electorate. It is not a Parish Council meeting. The Parish Council Chairman calls and chairs the meeting. The Annual Parish Meeting must be held between March 1st and June 1st (LGA 1972, sch 12, para 14). There is no prescribed format for this meeting and its recommendations are not binding on the Parish Council.***

# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

## HELD ON MONDAY 11 MAY 2026 AT 7 pm AT THE CHURCH CENTRE

**Present:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Councillors* | John Roberts (Chairman) | Lesley Bowditch |
| | Kevin Ferriday | Andrew Jeanes |
| | Becky Hannam | Margaret Hogg |
| | Three residents | |
| In Attendance: | Caro Slaymaker, Clerk to the Parish Council | |

**1. Welcome**

John Roberts, Chairman of the Parish Council, welcomed those attending to the meeting.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Colin Falla, Somerset Cllr Brian Bolt, Somerset Cllr Mike Caswell, Rev Eleanor King and three residents.

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting, held on 12 May 2025, had been published, were agreed and were signed by the Chairman.

**4. Chairman's Report**

The Annual Parish Meeting is an opportunity to reflect on the vibrant life of Nether Stowey and all the various groups and organisations. Most of them had produced reports which were available at the meeting and on the Parish Council website. They would also be available from the Parish Office. The Chairman gave an abridged version of the Parish Council's Report for the past year, summarising the Council's activities and recording the Council's thanks to many residents and local groups for their services to the community. A copy of the full report is appended to these minutes.

**5. Community Reports**

Community reports were available at the meeting or later by e-mail or from the Parish Office and website at www.netherstowey-pc.gov.uk/about/annual-parish-meetings/.

**6. Items for Discussion**

There were no matters raised.

The Chairman thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at 7.15 pm

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2026
# MONDAY 11 MAY AT 7PM AT NETHER STOWEY CHURCH CENTRE

The Annual Parish meeting is an opportunity to showcase life in Nether Stowey, with the range of village groups and activities that cater for all ages.

A number of people and organisations have reported their activities for the past year and these reports and others are on display for you to read. Please help yourself to copies – we haven't printed too many, but if we run out we can e-mail one or you can collect from the Parish Office and there is a list you can sign up to on the table.

There are also a lot of local people working for the furtherance of the village who get little recognition. So can I say thank you to Tony Edney and his team who continue to look after the clock, Danny Hicks who looks after the toilets, Sam and Pete Councill who keeps the Cross, car park and other areas tidy, and the hard-working volunteers of Stowey Green Spaces for the work they do around the village looking after and improving our green spaces. The Thomas Poole Library continues to go from strength to strength with many new projects and events.

I would also like to pay tribute to the ongoing work of the Nether Stowey Village Hall and Recreation Ground CIO: they have made continued progress towards the new Stowey Centre, despite the frustrations of the planning system.

The Stowey Shuttle and it great team of co-ordinators and drivers continue to help villagers with transport needs.

It must be remembered that all these people are volunteers who give their time freely and we should be grateful for the time and effort they put in.

## PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

We were pleased to welcome Becky Hannam to the Council in October. The Parish Council still has two vacancies to fill, so we remain thinly spread to try to cover all the activities where we would like to represent the village.

The situation with Somerset Council and their precarious financial situation remains very difficult to navigate and like everyone else we find it very difficult to get any response or co-operation from most areas where we overlap.

We have had to take on all sorts of work that Somerset Council used to do, but now just shrug off mainly, we presume, through lack of funds or staffing shortages. The promised partnership of Towns, Parishes and Somerset Council has unfortunately failed to materialise.

Despite this we were pleased that we were able to reduce the parish part of Council tax this year. This was largely due to careful management last year, and by successfully applying for grants to meet costs that we would otherwise have had to cover.

As many residents are aware, there are three footpaths which cross the A39 and which are not served by either of the pedestrian crossings at the traffic lights. We have however secured Highways agreement to have road safety signs in both directions along the stretch of the A39 between the traffic lights, warning drivers that there are pedestrians crossing and these will be installed in the near future.

Following many reports of inconsiderate, and sometimes dangerous parking at the junction of Castle St and Lime St., Somerset Highways will be installing double yellow lines along a short section of the road at the junction in front of the Post Office. Although it is recognised that parking space is in very short supply in the village, cars are often parked in such a manner as to force pedestrians into the road as well as restricting visibility at the junction, particularly for traffic emerging from Castle Street. Accordingly, it was felt that action is required to address this situation.

Parking on the Cross is meant for loading and unloading only but more recently cars are being parked overnight on the loading bay or between the bollards. As well as being dangerous for pedestrians in some places, this has resulted fairly regularly in the low wooden bollards being knocked over, the repair costs having to be paid by the Parish Council. As a result, new cast iron bollards will replace the oak ones which will be more visible and more resistant to being knocked down.

We are please to say that the parish has been able to instigate the installation of two new benches for the use of the village. One will be on the path from Banneson Road to the playing field and the other will be on the grass area behind the old garage on the path to Oak Rd.

We have continued to represent the Parish's interests at the various Hinkley Point fora and Site Stake Holders meetings.

The Parish Council is always keen to support local groups and activities which enrich the lives of so many of our community. In the last twelve months we have awarded grants to local groups including for equipment for Stowey Green Spaces, the Short Mat Bowls Club, the Wednesday Club and NS Football Club. We also paid for training for Stowey Green Spaces volunteers and for the DJ at Party in the Park, and contributed to the repairs to the tennis courts… If your organisation would like to apply for a grant, please contact Caro for details or there is information on our website on the Local Organisations page. At this meeting we normally display reports from those who have received grants from the Parish Council, sadly this year, not all the recipients have submitted reports.

Lastly, The Parish Council represents the village and is made up of people who live in the village, it is the level of local government closest to and in contact with the community.

Parish Councillors are not paid; their only incentive is that they care about the village and are willing to put a little time and effort into representing that village.

So if you care about our village and its future I would urge you to consider putting yourself forward to becoming a Parish Councillor and represent and speak up for the village we all believe in.

Thank you all for coming.