

Annual Parish Meeting / Annual Assembly of Electors 13th May 2026

Chair's Report

The 4 yearly election will be on May 6th next year. This is the last Annual Parish Meeting for a number of your councillors who have decided that they will not be standing for reelection next year. We would encourage people to consider standing next May.

I would like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors, Jenna Ho-Marris, Kamala Das our vice chair, Martin Walker and Ros Delany.

I would also like to thank our Parish Clerk, Nic Rice, who is also the Parish Clerk for Pill and Easton in Gordano. Congratulations to Nic who has now successfully passed the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)

The duties of the five volunteer councillors are : Kamala is the vice chair and takes responsible for Highway matters; Jenna, liaison with District Council, Recycling and Rubbish, Community innovation; Martin, finance, Abbots Pool, Public Footpaths, Website; Ros, Community Groups, Civic Society Liaison, Communication Link Contributions, Village Green, Abbots Leigh Charities; myself, Chair, Planning, Village Hall, Old School Field. Nic our parish Clerk who works from home in Pill is the responsible financial officer and covers the secretariat, Insurance, Police Coordination, and manages the village maintenance contractor.

Thanks to Jenna our District Councillor who is Ward Councillor for Pill and Abbots Leigh, and also the Cabinet Member for Homes and Health.

Review of the year.

Maintenance works for the Parish Council. Kevin Weeks carries out most of the maintenance works around the Parish, grass cutting, hedge cutting, dog bin emptying, repairs to equipment in the school field, small painting works etc. These are done when required and as instructed by the Parish Clerk. The highway verge outside Poundbatch Farm, opposite Sandy Lane, is currently being looked after by the Abbots Leigh Wildlife Group with help from the St George's Flower Bank Team. The Parish council also pays David Smith the farmer to mow a number of the verges in the Parish for which North Somerset are responsible, but don't have the funds to do the works.

Annual Litter Pick. Thanks to the more than 30 volunteers who came and cleared rubbish from around the Village on a Sunday at the end of March. Thanks also to The George for kindly providing everyone with sandwiches afterwards.

Old School Field.

New swings were installed, helped by a generous anonymous donation from someone in the village, replacing those installed in 2004. We also carried out other significant maintenance including replacing the top beam for the monkey bar and installing a new climbing net and some stepping posts.

Thanks very much to Andy Cunliffe who voluntarily puts the rubbish out every three weeks and keeps the dog poo bag dispenser replenished.

Abbots Pool. The Parish Council have continued to work with Jason Cox of North Somerset Council in order to keep Abbots Pool in good condition for the local community. The volunteer working parties on the second Sunday of every month, organised by Jo Chiverton have continued and our thanks are to her for the hard work that she and the volunteers put in.

Communications and The Link

The website is a very valuable asset to the village. Martin Walker is the webmaster

We are very grateful to Mick Scanlan of Dennyview Road who is the editor of the monthly Link Magazine which is run by the Church for Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods. Mary and Richard Oliver have taken on the task of the distribution and thanks to the 20 or so distributors who collect them from the church and deliver them across the whole village every month.

Surgeries of Parish and District councillors in the cafe on second Saturday morning every month have continued, although not many people do come to see us.

Community Payback team

We have visits from the Community Payback Team typically every 4 weeks. They have done lots of footway clearance across the village, clearance of an overgrown public footpath and have worked clearing graves and removing piles of stones in the churchyard.

Planning. As a statutory consultee the Parish Council have commented on a number of Planning Applications through the year.

There is an increase in permitted development applications, some seemingly inappropriate which get agreed on legal grounds. Lists are provided in the Link magazine with reference numbers and details can easily be found by on North Somerset Council website search for a Planning Application and put in the reference number

Village Hall

Thanks to Mick Dillon our caretaker who is generally available all days and evenings all days of the week, even though he is part time.

We have had a full year since the solar panels were installed. They are performing well. Over the whole year we have generated 14,831kWh and the total usage in the hall, by the Fit Tank and the Caretaker was 14,949 kWh, so in effect carbon neutral. The economics are that we cannot store all of the electricity generated so we export what we don't use and import when there isn't enough sun, particularly in the winter. We charge our tenants for the metered electricity they use without the standing charges. The net result is that we break even on the electricity costs. Unfortunately our export tariff has been halved for next year so we will end up not breaking even this year. We will be looking for a new supplier and export buyer when our contract expires, to hopefully improve the situation.

As we have established that the cost of heating the hall with imported electricity in the winter is £4 per hour we are proposing to introduce an additional £2 per hour charge for the hire of the hall in the winter six months. Otherwise general booking prices have not increased for the last couple of years and income has remained steady.

Simon Talbot-Ponsonby
12th May 2026