

# WALTON-IN-GORDANO CIVIL PARISH

*In the North Somerset Council Ward of Gordano Valley*

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**May 12th 2025 - 8pm - The Village Hall**

Attendees: Residents 5 - including B Cannell, Chair of the meeting

Minute Taker - Don Hill

## MINUTES

### **APM25/01 Apologies**

There were four apologies received. N Ashton, C Flower, N&B Wyliman, E Edwards

### **APM25/02 Matters arising from minutes of last year's meeting**

The 2024 agenda and minutes can be found on the minutes and agendas page of our website at [waltoningordanopc.org.uk](http://waltoningordanopc.org.uk). These minutes were circulated to all attendees for approval and were signed as a true record at the June 2024 meeting of the Parish Council. The 2024 minute on Traffic Speed was referred to and became subsumed within the Open Discussion.

### **APM25/03 Reports from Interest Groups**

This meeting was not as well attended as usual but, in addition to the Parish Council Chair's Report, reports were received from The Cross Tree Chronicle, The Village Whats App Group, St Paul's Church, Walton-in-Gordano Events Committee and The Village Hall Committee. These are attached to form part of these minutes. These reports merely hint at the amazingly diverse range of interests that keep such a small Parish buzzing throughout the year.

### **APM25/04 Discussion**

The Open Discussion, which forms the core of Annual Parish Meetings was wide ranging, but revolved around the issues summarised below:

**Kerbside Recycling:** This was discussed in the light of the letter NSC sent to to all households. It was noted that our Parish bin collection day will remain a Tuesday. In addition to the move to 3 weekly black bin non-recyclable waste collections, the weekly recycling collections will include soft plastic waste and a new red bag. What goes in what container will take a little getting used to, but the key NSC objective is to get everyone aware of the cost savings that can be made by better recycling routines.

**2026 Centenary Village Fete:** Other ways of fund raising - a request to all households for example - were looked at, but not deemed workable. The basis upon which the Council came to its decision that it could not offer to contribute more than £500 for the cost of the marquee was looked at, based on Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, which sets out what a parish council can and cannot do in terms, both legal and best-practice, when deciding on a donations request. The £500 is a minuted commitment from the Parish Council towards the cost of hiring the marquee.

**Speeding Traffic:** This was a topic at last year's Annual Parish Meeting but, as Council minute observers will have noted, it has temporarily ceased to progress. The main reason is that, as there were no volunteers coming forward to operate the Speed Indicator Device (SID), an essential data gathering tool, it could not be purchased. Highways, above all other aspects of Parish life, are ultimately controlled by NSC, and progress is impossible without the support of NSC Highways. As with the 30mph speed limit along the B3124 which took some 25 years to become a reality, times finances and attitudes change, and speed restrictions and their enforcement may become attainable in the future. In the meantime we are hugely grateful for the vital work of the SpeedWatch team, which is certainly having an effect. We could ask the police for the erection of a Police DCB (data collection box), but experience indicates that it will take many months before one would become available for us. It was noted that, within the context of national governmental guidelines, signage and engineering solutions to speed control can only be operated at particular points in relation to 'prevailing conditions'. An example of this is the number of entrances off a road dictating the possibility of a speed restriction: a farce for the two thirds of our population who live at Walton Bay with only three exit points on to Coast Road and not concentrated number of domestic entrances. **Dave Wherrett undertook to contact the responsible NSC officer re speeding issues along the Coast Road and the Parish Council is asked to contact the police about the use of a DCB.**

**A Public Session at Parish Council Meetings:** This was suggested. It is certainly normal practice in most Parish Councils. Our Council has always operated on the basis of suspending Standing Orders on a topic that invites a public contribution and then reinstating standing orders after the particular point has been discussed. As Best Practice would steer our Council towards the introduction of a Public Session before the commencement of its formal meeting, **a request from the Annual Parish Meeting will go forward to the Parish Council's June meeting asking that they consider adopting one.**

**Blocked Gullies from Springhead to the Cross Tree:** These gullies, which along this stretch drain surface water into the Somerset stone and culverted sections of Walton Brook, need clearing. The point was noted and **the blockages reported to NSC via the Parish Council.**

**Parish Maintenance:** There is a provision of £2500 in the current budget for various unforeseen costs and for the contracting out of ad hoc maintenance work that used to be done by NSC.

**The meeting closed at 9.25pm**

## REPORTS FROM INTEREST GROUPS

### Walton-in-Gordano Parish Council Chair's Report

Looking back over the reports I have given to these meetings in previous years, they are all much the same in content. Such is the reality of a small rural Parish Council, where for decades the main focus of issues involves traffic and road speed, buses and transport challenges, footpaths, verges, drainage issues, planning applications...

This year is little different from previous with a few exceptions. Full details are published on our website via the meeting minutes.

As of today - Walton-in-Gordano Parish Councillors are Mr Brian Cannell, Mr Dave Wherrett and Ms Claire Flower. Today, Mrs Rachel Dickinson has temporarily stepped down in order to concentrate on family and work matters. We are hopeful that she will re-join the Parish Council in the future.

Today the Annual Meeting of the Council was held. It is at this meeting that various posts are decided for the coming twelve months to the following May, ie to May 2026. After discussions, Councillor Brian Cannell was elected as Chair. We do not have to have a Vice Chair, so this position is currently unfilled.

?? will represent the PC on the Village Hall management committee. We have no PPC representative. Councillor Brian Cannell will continue as representative on NSC Standards Sub committee.

North Somerset Council was represented at the Parish Council meetings by Councillor Nigel Ashton, our Ward councillor with North Somerset Council. Unlike most Wards, ours has 5 parishes: Nigel attends when he can, and is a greatly valued advisor. He also does a lot for the Parish 'behind the scenes'.

Fortunately, during this last year, reported crime in the parish has been very low. Neighbourhood watch schemes continue to operate in various parts of the Parish.

Planning applications have been few in numbers this last year – down from last year, being made up with a mix of redevelopment, conversions and tree orders.

Community Speedwatch is being enthusiastically led by John Jackson, who is leading a group of volunteers who are running the activity in the Parish. If you would like to be involved please contact John.

#### The other main topics this year were:

**Streetlight** – Finally, we have a new and re-located street light on the northern pavement opposite Moor Lane. This came in at a cost just short of £2500

**Walton Brook:** At last after more than a year of chasing and escalating the matter, the Gabion that was mostly blocking the open section between Old Rectory Farm and Church Farm has been removed by North Somerset. Many thanks go to Cllr Nigel Ashton for facilitating this.

**Traffic Speed** – Cllr Claire Flower is heading up this topic. To progress any changes, evidence is required. Speed Indicator Display Signs (SIDS) were being investigated and budget sought to purchase. A call for volunteers produced no replies, so this is on hold for the moment.

**Walton Bay Transport** – Cllr Dave Wherrett is leading this. Extensive work had been done although the progress seems to have stalled in other local councils. Full details in the council minutes.

**Village Hall Car Park** – This too appears to have stalled apparently due to some objections being raised.

**Parish maintenance:** New stiles for the Plum Tree to Common path have been installed. The Council is continuing to explore the scope and funding for a Village maintenance contractor.

**Recycling:** North Somerset, along with many other Councils are moving to a 3 weekly Black Bin collection schedule. An audit of refuse last year showed that 45% of the Black Bin waste (costing £135 per ton to dispose of) could be recycled. 27% of the bin contents was food waste, 50% still wrapped up and un-used! Weighted Red bags for plastic have recently been handed out. Soft Plastic kerb-side recycling is imminent, we are told.

**Finance:** As to finance, the Budget for 2025/26 was set during the January 2025 Parish Council meeting at £8190. After including future capital expenditure (£1000) and an election provision (£200) the amount of the precept from North Somerset Council was £9390.

The Parish Council has been approached to help fund the Centenary Village Fete 2026. Following discussion and advice regarding Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 and common practice from other councils, the Parish Council offered a £500 donation to this event.

I would like to thank those who have shown an interest in the Parish and its Council over the last year and encourage those who have yet to do so.

Finally, on behalf of the Parish, I would like to thank my fellow Councillors: Mrs Rachel Dickinson, Mr Dave Wherrett and Ms Claire Flower - not forgetting the Clerk to the Parish Council, Mr Don Hill - for their hard work and support over the last year.

**Brian Cannell May 2025**

## **Cross Tree Chronicle**

At the beginning of 2025 we welcomed 2 new parishioners to the team, Rose Cowan and Nicola Spencer who now collate the Chronicle every month, this brings our team up to 9 in the delivery team, 2 collate and 1 Editor that writes and oversees the publication a total of 12 parishioners makes up the Chronicle team. We deliver 200 paper copies, 90 emailed and 69 on what's app, our thanks to the Parish office for supporting the village with a discounted rate for printing and the social committee for providing the funding.

**Emma Edwards May 2025**

## **Village Whats app**

The village whats app celebrates 5 years of contribution in our village in 2025, thanks to Abby Coad and Emma Edwards the what's app supports community cohesion and tackles social isolation which is ever present in a rural location like Walton. It now has 69 participants sharing good news, important information and weekly updates on community activities, we link up with the book club, craft club, Walton bay and Norton wood what's app groups, we look to provide a warm welcome to anyone new to our community.

**Emma Edwards May 2025**

## **St Pauls Church Yearly Report**

2024 has been a very interesting year as we have navigated the challenges of reestablishing the church. We welcomed Pat & Nick Wood to the newly formed PCC also Kevin Edwards. All aspects of church housekeeping were examined and dealt with accordingly. The monthly service has been warmly welcomed, the Village coffee morning has proved very popular. The clergy in 2025 will be depleted as retired clergy will be able to offer less support with services but we gain Micheal Dyne who will be ordained in June and join the benefice with his wife from July. The church has been able to address some important maintenance issues this year and we are pleased to say we are watertight now. In 2024 we had one funeral, and we are pleased to say in 2025 a village wedding. As with all Village churches finances are difficult and St Pauls is no different, it costs over £8000 a year to 'keep the door' open. We have introduced a Parish giving Scheme and QR code which can be accessed in the church for one off donations. In 2025 we are introducing Music evenings and informative talks to encourage the community to see the church as an asset, we are also keen to work more closely with the whole community recognising the need to work cohesively to achieve a greater community atmosphere, we are stronger together. The PCC work as joint Churchwardens and have individual roles within the church also. We look forward to 2025 with enthusiasm, if you wish to get involved contact Emma at [Waltonchronicle@gmail.com](mailto:Waltonchronicle@gmail.com)

**Emma Edwards May 2025**

## **Walton in Gordano Events Committee** (Previously known as the Social Club committee)

*It was decided at our March 2025 meeting to change our name from the Social Club Committee to Walton in Gordano Events Committee. This was in order to reflect the fact that we organise social events for the benefit of our community – and are not, in itself, a social club – exclusively operating for its members.*

The successful 2024 Village Fete enabled us to donate £2000 each to the Village Hall and to the Village Church. This money will help towards keeping these two vital village community spaces open.

We are currently working towards this year's Village Fete which is undoubtedly the biggest event of the year and our main fund raiser. We receive incredible support from our Committee and from the wider community – and I would like to thank everyone for every contribution they make.

Plans are in development for the Centenary Village Fete in 2026. I should point out that the Fete is great fun – providing a great afternoon of entertainment and socialising for our residents and our wider village family (as well as incredibly hard work).

Other events held include a fun January Wassail evening and supporting a Village Bonfire in November. Both events were well attended and enjoyed by all. There is no charge for these events. December also sees our Annual Christmas Quiz - always popular.

In May – our allocation of flowers from NSC arrive and these are planted (involving constant watering through the summer) which enhance the surroundings of our village.

In December we display the Christmas Lights and encourage the local area to join in and this promotes a festive and community atmosphere.

Both of these endeavours incorporate the Bay area where our committee members from Walton Bay organise displays of flowers and Christmas Lights.

- We support the production of our Village Chronicle by paying for the printing.
- This year we have been particularly successful implementing a small amount of support for the creation of a Craft Club which is doing really well with many members enjoying their time there – and a new Book Club has been formed – both clubs being incredibly well managed by two of our committee members.
- An additional event this year will be a Boules Afternoon/Evening in August.

*Barbara Wyliman May 2025*

## **Report from Village Hall Committee**

Our treasured village hall has undergone its most recent change of guardianship since the AGM in March which saw 3 members of the committee stand down and 2 new ones step up to help. Deb stepped down as booking secretary and caretaker and was acknowledged by the committee with huge gratitude and praise for keeping the hall in great condition and regularly booked, especially through very tricky times during COVID restrictions. Alison also served in the committee for many years alongside Deb and has stepped down from her role in keeping inventory and assisting in hirings. Jane also stepped down from car park research, application and communication for now with promise to return if she is needed on car park matters.

Rosie, and Rose were welcomed on board formally to the committee at the AGM. Tracy has taken on the role of treasurer and continues as secretary subject to change in the coming months as more volunteers come forward to take one of the roles. Anne will be, chairperson, caretaker and booking secretary with assistance with hirings and maintenance from other committee members as needed.

After much discussion, research and pre application it has been decided that the car park will not be going ahead for now. The physical issue of the very busy main road being a major factor as well as difficulties aligning all concerned parties.

New craft and book groups have formed and use the hall regularly as a result of the committee decision to hire the hall to the local community wherever possible. A positive result from the lengthy discussion of the car parking issue.

We will also welcome a regular musician, table tennis groups and other ad hoc hires including several parties throughout the coming months. The hall will also be hosting the summer fete in July.

The hall received a generous donation of £2000 from the events committee in 2024 which was gratefully received and has helped with running costs and much needed repairs.

Overall the start of the year has been one of change and positivity from the small but dedicated committee and we are looking forward to ways that the community can become involved in the future of the hall, building on the hard work of the previous guardians to keep it used and in good order.

Any queries or comments about the hall can be directed to the committee via this email address and I look forward to hearing of your plans too in the coming months!

*Anne Wilson May 2025*