

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD AT HIGH HAM VILLAGE HALL
TUESDAY 27th MAY 2025 AT 7.30pm

Present: David Vigar (Chairman), approx. 21 Parishioners,

Apologies: Carla Pilkinton and Mike Stanton
Opened 7.05pm

1. **2024 Minutes** Had been displayed on the website. No actions were outstanding and they were signed as a true record.
2. **Chairman's Report** – This is attached to the minutes as Appendix 1
3. **Unitary Councillors Report** – Presented by Richard Wilkins

A short verbal report was given. It was noted that there would be a road closure in Langport including the area of the railway bridge. Junction 26 (Wellington) was also to be closed for modernisation and surface improvements.

4. **To receive the following reports**

4a. **School Governors report** – Presented by Sally Roy

The school had 162 pupils which was an increase over the year. It was encouraging that parents were coming to look at the school and move the kids to High Ham. There were 6 teachers. Pupils on the SEND (special education need/disability) were increasing. Some of whom required 1:1 assistance all day. The school had written to the MP about the pressure that this put on the school with sharing teaching staff across the school. In addition many were only funded for half a day of this support every week. It was pleasing that the key stage one results were well above the national average. A recent OFSTED inspection had rated the school as good. It was noted that it was a church school but currently there was no vicar. There was some concern about the lack of support from the diocese. The school however were to be congratulated on providing a wonderful learning environment for the children in their care. All the staff and the head teacher were thanked for their dedication and hard work in achieving this.

4b. **Village Hall report** – Sarah Lawton's report presented by Nancy Green

This report is attached as appendix 2

4c. **High Ham Parish Community Land Trust** – Bill Bishop (Chair) presented a short verbal report.

Historic England had complained about the application for the CLT site and therefore the application had to be withdrawn. The housing association the CLT were working with had now changed and plans had to be redrawn to satisfy 'Historic England'. The CLT were working with Steve Watson. Further funding would be required to build the 6 affordable homes in the parish.

4d – **The Hext Almshouse Trust** – Jane Vigar presented the report attached as appendix 3.

4e. **Footpath Users' Group/Somerset Strimmer Project** - Presented by Nick Fear

Harry Plant was to stand down, but was thanked for his strimming work over the last year. Nick Fear would continue and would focus on well used paths that are no longer cut by Somerset Council, with the aim to cut them back at least once per year to keep them passable.

4f. **Parish Lengthsman – Lengthsman Team Craig and Rachael Howe** – Presented by Amanda Chuter
Attached as appendix 4

4g **Playing Fields Report** – Presented by Rob Webb

This year Rob Webb will stand down as Chair (Rob was thanked). Rob Rice would take over the lead on fund raising.

The Playing Field AGM was due to take place on 2nd June at 7.30pm.

Everyone who had been involved in helping the playing fields in some way were thanked. A fete was being arranged for this year. Self-closing gates and fencing were being considered for an upgrade. Luke Timewell thanked for some hedge trimming work around the edge of the playing fields. Tesco had accepted a grant application. A small community orchard was to be planted. A long-term plan was being put together of the aspirations of the playing fields committee for the field.

4h– Millennium Wood report from lengthsman (Craig and Rachel) – presented by Amanda Chuter

The report is attached as appendix 5. It was noted that some frequent visitors with an interest in wildlife had volunteered to undertake a free door-mouse and newt survey.

4i. Cemetery Report - Presented by Nancy Green - Attached as appendix 6

4j. History Hut – Presented by Karen Cooke – Attached as appendix 7

4k. Christmas Crew – Presented by Karen Cooke – Attached as appendix 8

4l. Luncheon Club – Presented by Mike Tottle – A short verbal report was given. The lunches had developed into a community hub with an average of 50 meals a month. All the people who made it possible by sharing their time and catering expertise were thanked.

4m. High Ham Church St Andrew’s Church, High Ham – Presented by John Vigar - Attached as appendix 9

4n Low Ham Church - Presented by Peter Dent – Attached as appendix 10.

4o Low Ham Chapel – Presented by Barry Briar - Attached as appendix 11.

4p Henley Chapel – Attached as appendix 12

4q. Bellringers - Presented by John Vigar – Attached as appendix 13. The historic significance of the big bell was noted. It had remained over the world wars and not been taken to be melted down. In part due to the significant location and its ability to sound the alarm if required. The bells were rung for 60th wedding anniversaries and 100th birthdays.

4r - High Ham Ladies Group – Presented by Jane Brown – Attached as appendix 14.

4s. High Ham Knitting for Charity Group - presented by Jackie Tottle. The report highlighted the knitting for young children in Ukraine.

END OF REPORTS

5. To receive the annual account of any Village Charity. There were none.

6. To Consider any Matter or Motion. There were none.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm