

# Coombe Bissett Parish Council

Mrs Jay McGowan, Clerk - parishclerkcoombebissett@gmail.com

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## **(Unconfirmed) Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting.**

Coombe Bissett Parish Councillors met for the Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at Coombe Bissett Village Hall starting at 6.30pm.

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**Present:** Cllrs Abi Bird(Chair), Simon Boxall (Vice-Chair), Michelle King, Lynn Reed, Stephen Gledhill, Des Hobson.

**Also, present:** Jay McGowan (Clerk), Cllr Richard Clewer and 7 members of the public.

### **Agenda**

**1. Welcome.** Cllr Bird welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**2. Apologies for absence.** None.

**3. Minutes of the last meeting.**

**Resolved:** Minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting held Tuesday 9th May 2023 were approved by Councillors as a true record. Cllr Bird signed the minutes.

**4. Matters arising from those minutes.** None.

**5. Chairman's annual report – A Bird.**

It has been my privilege to be Chairman of Coombe Bissett Parish Council for the past year. I have enjoyed the role and I hope both Councillors and Parishioners have confidence in me to continue in the role.

At the end of March 2023, Chris Chelu stood down as a Councillor. His work and commitment have been missed, but we are fortunate to have enrolled Michelle King to the Council and she has settled in well. More recently Kim Byatt has chosen to step down from the Council, and I thank her for everything she has done during her time as a Councillor. We now have a vacancy to be filled.

As well as their regular responsibilities, the Parish Council have been pleased to support additional projects within the village. This includes supporting the new War Memorial Plaque at Coombe Bissett Church, providing funding for a new car park for the Tennis Club and a potential pavilion extension for the Cricket Club.

The organisation of the "Coombe Bissett & Homington Active Volunteers" (CHAVs) has lapsed in the last few years, but this is to become a new role for Michelle, and hopefully a meeting will be arranged soon to re-ignite members and interest in the group. There are always plenty of jobs to do!

I would like to thank PC Murphy for his more visible presence in the Village. It has been a busy year here one way and another for the police, and it is good to get updates at our meetings.

Thank you to Stephen Gledhill for his work on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

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Thank you to Nic Artiss and David Parson for their roles as Flood Wardens. Nic will be taking the lead on this moving forward, and their input has been invaluable. Thank you again to David for also auditing the financial summary.

As always huge thanks to Richard Clewer for his support, knowledge and advice. He rarely misses a meeting, and his time is very much appreciated.

Finally, but most importantly, my most grateful thanks go to Jay. This job would be impossible without her. She works incredibly hard and is literally worth her weight in gold to the Parish Council.

I look forward to the coming year and thank all of the Councillors for giving up their time voluntarily for our Villages.

## **6. Annual reports from representatives.**

Cllr Abi Bird:

### Playground and Recreation Field

Ian Newman, the cricket club groundsman, continues to be paid an annual fee to maintain the hedges around the playpark, and keep the park weed free.

The annual RoSPA inspection noted some minor issues, such as paint deterioration and some minor repairs. Ian has addressed most of the issues identified. A bolt on the climbing rope has sheared and a playpark equipment provider has been contacted to arrange a repair.

A bi-monthly inspection report is completed to identify any new issues. A small amount of graffiti was noted.

The Cricket Club has been given a grant to extend the pavilion to provide storage for a new mower, subject to appropriate planning consents. Work is yet to commence.

### Parking

A group of representatives from the Village Hall, School, Cricket Club and Parish Council meet every 6 months to monitor and discuss the parking issues around the school and Village Hall. The cause of most issues appears to be if Hall users have not requested permission to use the field for parking. The padlock code number is changed every 2 – 3 months to reduce unauthorised access.

### Coombe Bissett Planning Applications

There have been 13 planning applications submitted in the last year.

Two controversial applications are:

Beech Farm Solar Park and "Churchill Place"

The decision deadlines for these are 17<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May respectively, though there is always a possibility these dates will be postponed further.

Cllr Gledhill:

## **2023-24 HOMINGTON REPORT**

### Parish Councillors

Homington Residents Des Hobson, Simon Boxall and Stephen Gledhill have been Parish Councillors throughout the year. Simon Boxall has also been Vice Chair of the Parish Council.

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## Planning Applications

Four Planning Applications in Homington have been considered over the past year. Three of the applications were non-controversial. The fourth application for a solar farm at Wellhouse Farm Homington (albeit technically in Britford Parish), is of concern and potentially could have an impact on the whole Parish not just Homington.

Cllrs Gledhill and Hobson drafted the Parish Council's statutory consultee comments which were submitted to Wiltshire Council on 22 Jan 24 objecting to the planning application. The main reasons for the objection were: absence of details on connection to the national grid; loss of agricultural land; ecological impact; and highways issues during construction. The Parish Council's comments can be seen on the Wiltshire Council Planning Portal at <https://tinyurl.com/2p8vuxh2>

As is usual with complex planning applications the process is lengthy and has yet to be determined. However, it should be noted that if the responsible Wiltshire Council Planning Officer recommends that planning permission is given, the application will go to the Southern Area Planning Committee for a decision.

## Flooding

The risk from flooding in the village, particularly from run-off following heavy rain has continued to be monitored. The Parish Council has worked with Wiltshire Council to ensure minor works to improve drainage are completed. This has included the Parish Steward clearing a number of drainage grips around the village.

## Roads and Traffic

The Parish Speed Indicator Device (SID) has also been deployed in rotation on the C12 in the village. In addition, the Parish Community Speed Watch volunteer team has also conducted speed checks on the C12. Full details of the data collected by the SID are available on the village website. Analysis of the data suggest that the majority of drivers travel either below or close to the legal road speed limit. However unsurprisingly a small minority of drivers continue to break the speed limit.

## 2023-24 Coombe Bissett CE VA Primary School Report

We are lucky to have our own village school in the Parish.

The School has a current roll of 103 pupils, compared to the maximum number it could teach of 119. Children are taught in four classes: Oak Class (Reception and Year 1); Elm Class (Year 1 and 2); Fir Class (Year 3 and 4); and Ash Class (Year 3 and 4).

Following the resignation of the Head Teacher in August 2022 and an extended period when the School was led by interim head teachers, the Governors appointed Mrs Emma Howarth as the new permanent Head Teacher in September 2023.

It is notable that the School has increased its engagement with the local community, including: coffee mornings, raising money for charity, school services in the CB Church and attending a Parish Council meeting.

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In addition, the School also has a very active support group called Friends of Coombe Bissett School, which amongst other things raises money to provide extra opportunities for the children.

Further information about the School is readily available on its website: <https://www.coombebissett.wilts.sch.uk/> and through the School Newsletters which are usually published weekly in term time and can be found on the School Website.

### **7. Open Forum:**

**PC Marc Evans.** PC Evans introduced himself as the new Neighbourhood Police Officer. He hopes to increase police presence in the Parish and encourages all residents to report any unusual behaviour.

He would like to highlight a particular 'Fraud Scam' which is circulating in the area and neighbouring parishes. Information of the scam is published on the Village Facebook Page and in the next edition of The Express.

If any residents have any concerns, he stresses the importance of calling 101 or contacting him directly on [Marc.Evans@wiltshire.police.uk](mailto:Marc.Evans@wiltshire.police.uk) or in an emergency call directly on 07876 817927

### **8. To close the meeting.**

**The meeting was brought to a close by The Chairman at 7pm**