

Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Parish Council Meeting

held in The Community Room on the 1st July 2026 at 7.30pm

Minutes

Present; Cllrs Griffiths (Chair), Sturgis (vice Chair), Barker, Phillips, Gravell, Evans, Harrison & Harper

Also present: Claire Mann (Locum Parish Clerk), Cllr E Threlfall (Wiltshire Council) and four members of the public

68/26 Public Participation (limited to 10 minutes)

Four members of the public were present with concerns over the maintenance of a Horse Chestnut Tree on Manor Park. The background was provided and research shows that ownership of land that the tree is on is not clear and therefore where the responsibility for the maintenance of the tree lies. Cllr Threlfall stated that she would get the Tree Officer to have a look as it had last been inspected some years ago.

Cllr Harper arrived

Cllr Griffiths stated that the Parish Council is definitely not responsible for the maintenance of the tree and that it doesn't have the power to spend public money on something that would benefit such a small minority of Parishioners. Cllr Griffiths suggested that the residents might wish to raise funds themselves to fund the work to the tree. One member of the public noted that the Local Authority, i.e Wiltshire Council, could take on the land ownership as there is no current claim of ownership. Cllr Threlfall will pass on contact details for Legal Services at Wiltshire Council to the Residents. Another resident stated that leaves etc are falling onto their property from the tree and causing problems, it was noted that this is an issue for Wiltshire Council to address.

69/26 To receive declarations of interest.

Cllrs Gravell and Harper declared an interest in item 10 and will not vote during discussion.

70/26 To receive apologies.

Apologies received from Cllr Todd.

Four members of the public left the meeting

It was agreed that the order of business to be transacted was changed.

71/26 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd June and the extraordinary meeting held on the 24th June.

Cllr Phillips proposed that the Minutes of the 3rd June meeting were a correct record, seconded by Cllr Harper and all agreed. Cllr Sturgis proposed that the Minutes of the meeting on the 24th June were a correct record, seconded by Cllr Griffiths and all agreed. Both sets of Minutes were signed by Cllr Griffiths.

72/26 To receive report from Cllr Threlfall, Wiltshire Council.

Cllr Threlfall reported that the Local Plan had been withdrawn, housing numbers are a great concern. This will be completed by 2029 and will include a revised Gypsy and Traveller Plan.

The Planning system at Wiltshire Council will be changing in October and applications will no longer be 'called-in' by Councillors.

The Highways Officer has been on extended sick leave which is creating a back log of issues to be resolved.

Parish Councillors asked Cllr Threlfall about the property which has 'overtaken' land on the verge at Winkins Lane and who should be contacted. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk will write to the property owners requesting that any changes they have made to the verge are re-instated to its original condition.

Cllr Threlfall reported that she is organising a 'Techy Tea Party' for residents who are less familiar with electronic devices. Volunteers are requested to help and it will take place at the Church Coffee Morning on the 31st July. The Parish Council will assist with promotion of the event in every way it can.

73/26 To receive Finance Report.

The report was noted. Cllr Harper proposed its approval, this was seconded by Cllr Phillips and all agreed. Cllr Griffiths signed the reports.

74/26 To consider request and quote from residents of Manor Park.

This had been covered during Public Participation, the Parish Council will not be paying the quote as requested.

75/26 To approve draft Heads of Terms for lease of Glebe Field as proposed by Glebe Field Working Group.

Following discussion Cllr Sturgis proposed, seconded by Cllr Gravell and the subsequent Heads of Terms were approved;

- Details of known boundaries and maintenance responsibilities.
- Schedule of outstanding maintenance with quotes to equal agreed term rent free.
- Right to erect MUGA for community benefit subject to planning permission and community support.
- Use by School.
- Use for National celebrations.
- Limited grass parking area.
- Fencing where necessary.
- Perimeter path connecting Gt Somerford 2 with gate to Gt Somerford 1.
- Break clause for development with compensation for MUGA.

76/26 To consider planning applications received.

WC Ref. [PL/2026/03540](#)

Address SAYERS, FROG LANE, GREAT SOMERFORD, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 5JA

Comment by extension granted.

Proposal Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area - T1 Large Horse Chestnut is to be reduced all over by up to 2.3 metres. T2 Adjoining Walnut is to be reduced all over by up to 2.3 metres.

Resolution It was agreed that the Parish Council has no comment to make on this application.

WC Ref. [PL/2026/03611](#)

Address SOMERFORD COTTAGE, GREAT SOMERFORD, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 5EL

Comment by extension granted

Proposal T1 Norway Maple is to be reduced back to a pollard framework. T2 White Poplar is to be reduced back to a pollard framework. T3 Larch is to be have the lower crown pruned by up to 1 metre to maintain form. T4 Cypress located at the front of the property is to be removed to ground level.

Resolution It was agreed that the Parish Council has no comment to make on this application.

77/26 To note Notification of Planning Appeal - PL/2025/03194 - Stable Yard at No 61, West Street, Great Somerford, SN15 5EH and determine next steps.

Following discussion it was agreed that Cllr Sturgis will submit a comment before the 28th July based on the original objections of the Parish Council and other representations.

It was noted that Cllr Sturgis had attended the Lime Down Solar Park Public Hearing on the 30th June; there are concerns over flooding, loss of footpaths and no sustainable urban drainage plan.

There is no update on the 8 self-build application nor land at Seagry Road.

78/26 To consider quote for accounting software package.

Cllr Harrison proposed, seconded by Cllr Evans and agreed by all to accept the quote for licence and software from Rialtas Business Solutions for the Parish Council accounts.

79/26 To consider actions for the Parish Steward.

The Clerk was asked to request that the Parish Steward clears overgrowth from the path in the Glebe Field and to spray the weeds at the kerbed pavement from Little Somerford into Great Somerford.

80/26 To receive an update on Winkins Lane Playground.

Cllr Phillips reported that he had forwarded the aerial runway inspection to the Parish Clerk. A note will be drafted for the Signpost stating that the table tennis bats are being continually damaged.

81/26 To receive an update on the Community Room.

Cllr Todd was not in attendance.

82/26 To receive updates on Standing Items;

- i. Footpaths**
Nothing to update.
- ii. Free Gardens**
Cllr Evans was appointed PC Trustee of the Free Gardens.
- iii. Goss Croft Hall**
Nothing to update.
- iv. Startley Cemetery**
Nothing to update.
- v. Communications & Website**
Cllr Phillips is researching options on WCAG2.2AA compliant websites and .gov.uk domains and will report to future meeting. Various articles on the current website were identified as obsolete and will be removed.
- vi. Gt Somerford and Startley Defibrillators**
Cllr Todd not present.
- vii. Book Exchange**
Cllr Todd not present.
- viii. Emergency Plan**
Cllr Gravell will update the plan and circulate to all.
- ix. School's Liaison**
Cllr Evans is currently storing the new grit bin and will install once the salt has also arrived. Cllr Gravell will make arrangements with PEAS (Winter Resilience) as necessary.

x. War Memorial

Cllr Todd not present.

83/26 To confirm date of next meeting.

The next meeting was confirmed as the 2nd September.

84/26 To exclude press and public due to Personnel sensitive nature of following item.

It was agreed to exclude the Press and Public from the remainder of the meeting for personnel reasons.

Cllr Threlfall left the meeting.

85/26 To appoint Parish Clerk, agree Statement of Particulars and agree banking arrangements going forwards.

The Parish Council offered Claire Mann the role of Parish Clerk with a start date of the 1st July 2026. Claire accepted and will sign the statement of particulars when received. Cllr Griffiths will make arrangements for Claire to be added to the banking system.

Meeting closed at 9.19pm