

# Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Parish Council Meeting

held in The Community Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2026 at 7.30pm

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## Minutes

**Present;** Cllrs Griffiths (Chair – part of meeting), Sturgis (vice Chair), Phillips, Gravel, Harrison, Harper, Barker, Evans & Todd

**Also present:** Claire Mann (Parish Clerk) and Cllr E Threlfall (Wiltshire Council)

Cllr Sturgis Chaired the meeting in the absence of Cllr Griffiths.

**91/26 Public Participation (limited to 10 minutes)**

There were no members of the public present.

**92/26 To receive declarations of interest.**

None received.

**93/26 To receive apologies.**

None received.

**94/26 To receive report from Wiltshire Councillor Elizabeth Threlfall**

Cllr Threlfall reported the following; The Government's new scheme of delegation means that the majority of planning applications (anything up to 9 houses) will be decided by officers (ie she can no longer call into committee) including such things as reserved matters on developments up to 500 homes. This will greatly reduce local democratic input into the planning system - contrary to the stated aims of devolution of powers. This comes in at the end of October.

The preparation of a new Wiltshire Local Plan has started after the minority administration withdrew the draft plan just before submission. This will take some years and several consultations, the first of which runs until 30th September. This Scoping consultation is the least important in some ways since it is about what is contained in the plan (largely mandated already) and how consultations will be managed. Nonetheless it might be worth the PC or individuals responding - for example to suggest that the hierarchy of the last Local Plan is maintained - ie significant development is primarily aimed at larger settlements from Town to Large Village and is not supported at Small Village or open countryside sites - if that is their view? \_\_\_\_\_

Parking - the rates and hours for parking in WC car parks has changed. The new rates and hours seem to be different for almost every car park (depending on the level of pressure by local residents?) and so she recommended that drivers check details again before they park.

HRCs/tips - the 'pilot scheme' of booking visits is starting on 14th September (booking opens 9th September) at Purton and Stanton St Quintin. There is a limited issue with queues at Stanton occasionally on weekends/bank holidays - but none at Purton - but this is proposing an inconvenient complication to residents' lives. A telephone number will be provided for



people without access to online services. [Wiltshire Learning](#) This scheme may also lead to an increase in fly-tipping as was seen during the duration of the COVID booking system.

Internet signal. Many areas have extremely poor signal. Digital Wiltshire is running a survey which has had 1500 responses but needs 2000 to take further. Please do follow the link to the questions and encourage others who suffer from this to do so: [Digital Wiltshire Survey](#)

Highways - our local engineer is coming back after several months away - slowly at first - but this will be a great help as we have struggled to get updates or new work done during her absence.

he was appalled at highways comments based on speed check.  
Cllr Sturgis stated ~~the eight houses that have been approved in the Village~~ is an appalling ~~decision~~ when ~~road obstructed~~

Cllr Harrison asked about the HGV signage at Winkins Lane, Cllr Threlfall replied that photographic evidence of issues with HGVs should be forwarded to her to be able to put forward a case to Highways.

Cllr Sturgis will draft an email to the resident who had raised an issue about invasive weeds.

**95/26 To approve and sign the minutes of the meetings held on the 1st and 22nd July.**

Cllr Phillips proposed that the minutes of both meetings were a correct record. This was seconded by Cllr Gravell. All agreed.

**96/26 To receive finance report and bank reconciliation**

The Clerk will forward bank reconciliations and reports once all data has been inputted into the new accounting software.

Cllr Harper will review payments and receipts report and forward comments.

It was agreed that the Clerk will amend the banking system to revert to three approvers for each transaction.

Cllr Griffiths arrived.

**97/26 To consider earmarking CIL fund for MUGA (if need identified following public consultation)**

Following discussion it was agreed that all existing CIL projects will be collated and discussion will take place at next meeting.

Cllr Sturgis will follow up actions with the Diocese.

**98/26 To consider CIL Request from Somerfords Walter Powell Gardening Area**

It was agreed that this was to be deferred to the next meeting once all potential CIL projects have been identified.

**99/26 To consider means to identify vulnerable residents in the Parish and actions that could be taken in the event of an emergency.**

Cllr Griffiths will make contact with the Street Champions to determine a way forward.

**100/26 To consider planning applications received;**

WC Ref. [Wiltshire Council](#)

Address MARSHLANDS, STARTLEY, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 5HG

Comment by extension requested.



**Proposal** Replacement of a stable block with a single storey outbuilding for use as a gym, office and games room. The outbuilding will not be habitable accommodation and will provide additional amenity to the main house only. Change of use of land to garden.

**Resolution** Cllr Sturgis will submit the Parish Council comment highlighting concerns over proposed materials and height of the development.

**101/26 To consider actions for the Parish Steward.**

There was nothing to put forward to the Parish Steward that had been brought to the attention of the Parish Council.

**102/26 To receive an update on Winkins Lane Playground and other recreation.**

Cllr Phillips reported that the RoSPA inspection has been scheduled.

**103/26 To receive an update on the Community Room.**

There were no issues raised about the Community Room.

**104/26 To receive updates on Standing Items;**

- i. Footpaths**  
Nothing to update.
- ii. Free Gardens**  
It was noted that there is now water in both bore holes. A Plant & Seed Share Project is planned and fundraising activities are being considered.
- iii. Goss Croft Hall**  
Nothing to update.
- iv. Startley Cemetery**  
Cllr Harrison reported that the trees are still alive despite the extreme heat of the Summer.
- v. Communications & Website**  
Cllr Phillips reported that the website site map had been completed by himself and Stephen Mansfield in preparation for the meeting with Aubergine the day after the Council meeting.
- vi. Gt Somerford and Startley Defibrillators**  
Nothing to update.
- vii. Book Exchange**  
The Book Exchange is well organised.
- viii. Emergency Plan**  
Queries had been raised about the increased danger of fire given long, hot Summers and how the Parish Council will react. It was considered that the issue is covered by the Emergency Services.
- ix. School's Liaison**  
Cllr Evans stated that the success of the grit bin siting as a deterrent for inappropriate parking will become obvious as School returns for the Autumn Term. Cllr Evans has a meeting with the Head in the coming week.
- x. War Memorial**  
Cllr Todd will investigate the respraying of the monument.

**105/26 To confirm date of next meeting.**

The next meeting was confirmed as the 7<sup>th</sup> October.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

 7/10/26