



Annual Parish Assembly Minutes - DRAFT

held on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 19.30, in the Main Hall, Village Centre.

Present: Cllrs Dave Burlison, Jeanette Davies, Patrick Foote (Chair), Phil Jeffrey, Ed Makgill, Dave Peart, Gwen Randall,

In attendance: Parish Clerk, Maxine Owen Members of the Parish: 30+

Meeting start: 19:30

Parishioners were able to access the Main Hall from 19:00 for Welcome Drinks, and to take the opportunity to view reports from organisations operating within the parish. Seven Parish Councillors, the clerk, two Borough Councillors & a County Councillor were available to speak informally to.

Reports were made available from:

SMB Village Centre
Hill & Valley
SMB Parish Community Fund
Holdway Almshouse Charity
The Lunch
Sustainable Bourne Valley
Rural Crime Prevention Team
Testbourne Community School
St Mary Bourne Cricket Club

The above reports, the Parish Council Chairman's Report & The Clerk's Financial Report are available on the parish website <https://www.stmarybourne-pc.gov.uk/community/st-mary-bourne-parish-council-12760/2024-reports-from-apa/> or from the Parish Clerk by emailing clerk@stmarybourne-pc.gov.uk

Welcome and Introduction led by the Chair, Councillor Patrick Foote

- 1 **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Bridget Culley, Cllr Glenda Mew, The Gerrard Family & Mr and Mrs Maclay.
- 2 **Approval of the Minutes** of the 2023 Annual Parish Assembly was granted. Proposed by Ms Jean Hardie, seconded by Mr Chris Smith.
- 3 **Borough Councillor Reports**

Cllr Sam Carr: Cllr Carr introduced the new Borough Councillor Jo Perry. Cllr Jo Perry will be representing St Mary Bourne Parish in her role as councillor in the ward of Evingar. Cllr Carr advised that the Conservative Party lost 7 seats in the election on 2nd May 2024.

Cllr Carr gave an update on planning applications in Wash Water near Newbury which is going through judicial review in the high court currently. The result of this could affect the number of new houses required to be built in the ward, so could affect St Mary Bourne Parish. Cllr Carr stressed the importance of keeping the Neighbourhood Plan up to date to protect the parish from speculative planning applications in the area from developers. He

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Signed Date



advised the Lower Wyke Solar Farm planning application was still undecided.

Kit Malthouse has been attempting to get the status of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty changed to a National Park, which would protect the area more from development.

Cllr Carr acknowledged the community’s issues with Southern Water – Flooding, Tankering, Damaged Roads and Verges, and advised he would be attending a meeting arranged by Kit Malthouse in St Mary Bourne Village on Friday 17th May 2024, where Kit Malthouse has requested senior managers from Southern Water, the Environment Agency, Hampshire Highways & the Flood and Emergency Group from St Mary Bourne Parish Council to attend. The aim of the meeting to look to finding solutions to the sewer failure along the valley and to find meaningful infrastructure improvements.

Cllr Carr confirmed the next Borough Elections would be in 2026, County Council Elections will be in 2025, and the General Election will be soon.

Cllr Carr advised that there were a variety of grants available from the Borough, such as the Strength In The Community Grants, and Councillor Grants. Local organisations present should look on the BDBC website to see if any would be appropriate if they had projects planned.

Cllr Jo Perry: Cllr Perry, a previous St Mary Bourne Parish Councillor, then stood and thanked the audience for their support in the recent elections.

A member of the public (MOP) asked for clarification on something Cllr Carr had said earlier about ‘lessons learned’ asking what the Cllr Carr had meant, and could he give an example. Cllr Carr clarified that he had had been referring to the Parking Charges in Whitchurch and the national picture generally.

4 Patrick Foote, Chair of St Mary Bourne Parish Council, then gave his annual report. The full report is available on the Parish Council Website listed under Parish Council Meetings/APA.

5 Maxine Owen, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer shared audited figures from previous years Annual Governance and Accountability Return and the unaudited figures for financial year 2023-24. A snapshot of that information is shown in the table below. The full report is available on the Parish Website.

	Balances Brought Forward	Year Ending 31 st March 23 Audited	Year Ending 31 st March 24 Unaudited	Variance
1	Balances Brought Forward	£47583	£81801	
2	Precept	£35725	£40726	
3	Total Other Receipts	£119564	£88062	-26%
4	Staff Costs	£13905	£13902	
5	Loan Interest/Capital repayments	£0	£0	
6	All Other Payments	£107166	£67110	-37%
7	Balances Carried Forward	£81801	£129576	
8	Total Value of Cash	£81801	£129576	
9	Total Assets	£343834	£341924	
10	Total Borrowings	£0	£0	

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The AGAR each year requires an explanation from one year to the next of any variances above 15%. The Explanation of Variances are available in the full report online.

The Internal Auditor inspected St Mary Bourne Parish Council on 2nd May 2024 and was satisfied with how the Clerk is managing the finances and processes.

Once the Full Council has approved the AGAR documents at the Parish Council Meeting on 14th May, they will be submitted to the External Auditors BDO LLP for examination and will be available for public inspection from the 12th June 2024.

6. **Representatives of Local Organisations Invited to Speak**

Representatives from local organisations listed below spoke to share information or give an update. A summary of these talks will be available on the Parish Council website

The Boundary Shop & Café – Dave Burlison. The Boundary is owned by its members. It is trading well despite the current economic conditions. Vicky Pettitt is the new Shop Manager, and Sandra Grunsell is the Café Manager. A thank you was given to all the current volunteers and a shout out to anyone wishing to become a volunteer.

SMB Cricket Club – Mark Lancaster. Full Report available online.

SMB Bowling Club – John Alchin. Advised of an Open Day on 25th May 2024, and the opportunity to have a go on a Tuesday evening from 6pm. Flat shoes must be worn.

Horticultural Society – John Banbury. Last year's show allowed a distribution of funds across many organisations to the sum of £7000. This year's show is on Saturday 27th July 2024. In recent years the growing/competition part of the show has been declining, but last year's show brought a small increase in interest and entries and appears to be gradually improving. This year there will be an expanded class base.

SMB Parish Community Fund – Ruth Widen. Full report available online.

St Peter's Church – Dodie Marsden. An update of recent repairs and renovations to the church. £50K on one side of the church roof, repairs to the wall roadside. The Bell wheels taken down in the 1990s were now displayed. A place has been established for the Royal British Legion Flag. Planned upgrade to audio-visual technology. The boards from 1774 will now be in the Bell Tower. All trees overhanging neighbours' properties have been dealt with. The 'greening' of the graveyard is continuing, School visits continue as part of the curriculum. There's been a bit of a run-on funerals, a boom in baptisms, and the number of weddings held is growing. Dodie also advised that the Vicarage in St Mary Bourne is being sold.

The Lunch – Chris Smith. Full report available online.

Hill & Valley – Michael Widen. Explanatory poster available online. Michael also added that the Parish Magazine has now recovered from all the vacancies reported last year with a new treasurer and new editors in SMB, Hurstbourne Priors and Longparish. The distribution of the magazine in our parish involves about 60-70 volunteers, but often anyone retiring from their patch will find a replacement.

7. **County Councillor Report**

Cllr Tom Thacker has provided his full annual report which is available online. Cllr Thacker advised that SMB Bowling Club had received one of his grants last year, and he has funds available this year up to £8000. The grant is simple to apply for, you need to be a registered

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organisation with a bank account, and the funds must be used for the good of the community. The Hampshire County Council (HCC) budget and finances were discussed, and Cllr Thacker advised that HCC was currently in a position to cover its commitments up to April 2026. A large proportion of HCC budget is spent on Social Care. Only one eighth is available to Highways, but HCC are determined not to give up on fixing the roads. People must continue to report defects. The highways budget is divided up into Maintenance, Repair and Capital Projects.

8. Questions from Parishioners.

An MOP suggested to the Parish Council that a survey of the electorate might be useful at this point to gauge feeling towards the sewer problems in the parish. There are a limited number of houses directly affected by the sewer/ground water problems, but EVERYONE is affected by the ongoing tankering which Southern Water (SW) deem a satisfactory solution to the problem. There seems to be a general feeling of apathy towards the situation, people are not reporting issues anymore, and this may well be giving senior management in SW the impression that there is no longer a problem. The MOP communicated very strongly that a Tanker directly outside your property pumping almost 24/7 for 9 months of the year has to be seen as unacceptable. Traffic lights disrupting traffic about every mile along the whole Bourne Valley and most of the Test Valley CAN NOT be the solution each winter (correction 9 months of the year). The damage caused to verges and the roads was discussed, and Cllr Thacker advised that Hampshire Highways do have the jurisdiction to make Southern Water pay for the damage repairs. The Parish Council Flood and Emergency Group (FEG) are collating the information as to where there is damage which is seen as being caused by flooding and the tankers.

The MOPs asked that the Parish Council keep communicating what is going on in discussions with outside agencies, because it doesn't look like anything is progressing. Members of the FEG assured the audience that they were still doing their utmost to get to a good outcome for the residents of the parish.

Cllr Patrick Foote then thanked everyone for their valuable input and for attending and closed the formal meeting. Refreshments were continued to be served.

Meeting Ended: 20:45

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Initialed..... Date