

Cary Moor Annual Parishes Assembly (Grouped Parishes of Alford, Lovington, North Barrow and South Barrow)

A meeting of the Parishioners

“Draft” Minutes of the Annual Parishes Assembly
Held on Tuesday 19th May 2026 at 7.00pm in
North Barrow Community Hall

Present: Eight parish councillors, Somerset Councillors Henry Hobhouse and Kevin Messenger, nine members of the public and the Clerk.

The Chairman of the Parish Council (PC) Mark Main opened the meeting by thanking those present.

1. **Welcome**

a. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Andrew Wake,

2. **Minutes of Annual Parishes Assembly held on 13th May 2025** were received, approved as a true record and signed by parish councillor Mark Main as Chairman of the meeting.

3. **Report from the Chairman of Cary Moor Parish Council.** Cllr Main read his report on the proceedings of Cary Moor Parish Council during 2025/26 (Appendix1).

4. **Open Public Parish Forum:**

A member of the public (MoP) wished to discuss the AA traffic route to the Bath and West Show, which takes traffic along the B3153. He was advised that the Parish Council had tried many times to re-route the traffic, however, HGVs are unable/have difficulty in performing hill starts on the A37 at Wraxhall Hill when the traffic is heavy/queueing. It is also the strategic network route due to the location of the entrances to the Show. A MoP also advised that Highways consult with the Bath and West Show Team and the police regarding such matters. A MoP wished to discuss an issue with the traffic lights in Lovington at the new Pilgrims Inn development. Many drivers were not aware that there were now four way traffic lights and often jumped the lights. There was also an issue with the camber of the road.

Action: It was agreed that there may be an issue with lack of signage for the new layout and timings of the light, which would be discussed with Andrew Barron, SC Traffic Engineer, during the Lovington site visit, date TBC.

A MoP wished to discuss the poor state of the road edges on the Lovington to North Barrow Road.

Action: The MoP agreed to email Cllr Henry Hobhouse directly at his request.

A MoP asked for an update on the request for a reduced speed limit through Lovington and was advised that this was amongst other matters to be discussed with Andrew Barron during the Lovington site visit.

The Clerk read out an email from a MoP regarding flooding issues affecting the road leading out of North Barrow towards Galhampton. This may have been caused by heavy vehicles riding the banks to pass other vehicles flattening the high verges adjacent to the deep ditches, reducing the capacity of the ditches to fill with water. The road grips have also been squashed by vehicles and blocked by vegetation making it difficult for rain to drain freely into the ditches from the road surface. Other ditches have reduced capacity due to excessive sludge, fly tipping and sucker growth from the hedges which are now taking root.

Action: Clerk to email Tracy Harris, SC Assistant Highways Service Manager, requesting a site visit.

A MoP wished to discuss the excessive speed of some contractor agricultural vehicles, which also caused building vibration. The Clerk suggested that in such instances the licence plate and/or colour of the vehicle should be noted and direct message the farmer who would then be able to take the appropriate action.

5. Somerset Councillors Henry Hobhouse and Kevin Messenger reported as follows:

“The government had a white paper out up until the 23rd of April to allow objectors to object to the new format for planning. The PC and the local councillors will no longer be able to take planning applications to committee. This change will stop the PC from being able to act as a trip wire for the local communities to get things to be democratically dealt with and the whole of this change removes democracy from planning.

In 2024 I [Henry] sent out a letter to all the parishes advising them not to allow dogs or children to play in the River Cam. The situation with the sewage farms at North Cadbury and Sparkford have not improved and a dog in Taunton died this month from after swimming in the River Tone. I'm repeating my warning about the state of the River Cam and the problem with sewage pollution and the chance of those dogs and children becoming very ill from playing in the river.

Sarah Dyke MP put forward a motion to cut tax on red diesel by 10% to assist farmers during the war with Iran. We believe that this has now been done and credit must given to her for pushing it forward. After the second world war Churchill said that we must never be in the position that we were in 1939 when we were importing the majority of our food. Sadly, we are now in that position, and we need to ensure that more of our food is produced in this country and less is imported.

Our three local MPs, Adam Dance, Sarah Dyke and Tessa Munt, have been working extremely hard to ensure employment and health opportunities are dealt with in Yeovil. They have won the contract at Leonardo's for 24 medium helicopters, they have reopened the maternity ward at the Yeovil hospital and Adam Dance is looking for more assistance in the funding of special needs children. In Chilton Cantelo there is a special school that charges 100,000 pounds a year per child for special educational needs.

Queen Camel community group, who purchased the school in Queen Camel after it moved to a new site, had an open day where I attended with Kevin to see what was happening on the side. I was extremely impressed by what I saw and talking to Rosemary, the Chairman of the community group, was impressed with their plans.

The work has started on the sinkhole on Station Road, Castle Cary. They are now down to 15 feet and have found major problems with the sewer, which caused the sinkhole. The closure has now been extended to 31st July from 1st July to deal with the sewer. The contractor to carry out the work on the A371 at Ansford Hill will be appointed in July. The road closure will commence in either September or October and run for between three to six months while they pile 180 metres of the bank raising the edge of the bank to 4 metres high and increasing the width of the pavement.

The Agratas battery plant at Woolington has now finished stage one and the building is being fitted out. It will eventually employ 4,000 people, which is the same as employed at RNAS Yeovilton. There is the opportunity for local contractors to supply services for stage two and three but they need to get in contact with Agratas.

The financial position of the council is a lot better than it was four years ago the amount of money outstanding on an annual basis is reduced leaving us in a much better position regarding a Section 114 notice, which would effectively be the Council declaring bankruptcy. This still makes this challenging for Henry and myself to find funding in our division for things we are trying to improve.

Castle Cary station it's now servicing 370,000 passengers a year due to the new car park facilitated by the Newt in Somerset. There are now four permanent staff looking after the passengers. The ticket hall and waiting room are being upgraded. A new ramped bridge over the railway is due to be fitted in 2027 after the Glastonbury Festival.”

Cllr Henry Hobhouse also reported that the Environment Agency were removing Enforcement Officers, which meant that issues with riparian ownership and sewage spills were not being dealt with.

SC would launch a new bus service linking Glastonbury and Street with Castle Cary railway station in June 2026. The new bus route, via Keinton Mandeville and along the B3153, would connect specifically with trains to and from London, Exeter, Plymouth, Paignton, Salisbury, Weymouth and Gloucester.

Cllr Kevin Messenger wished to thank Cary Moor Parish Council for all its work on behalf of its parishioners and thanked Cllr Roberts for his excellent planning presentations.

6. **Reports from Local Groups and Organisations**

a. The Six Pilgrim Churches. Buff Powell, Reader for The Six Pilgrims read out the report on behalf of Father Pip as follows: “On behalf of the Six Pilgrims’ Benefice (comprising the parishes of South Barrow, North Barrow, Alford, Hornblotton, Lovington and Babcary) I offer sincere thanks for the Council’s support of our Churches and Churchyards. Our volunteers who have responsibility for the upkeep of churchyards are so grateful for your provision and encouragement. We truly value this partnership in providing each community with a vital place to commemorate the deceased and give comfort to the bereaved, as well as an oasis of peace and sanctuary for people and for wildlife.

I have been Priest for the Benefice for nearly a year and have been touched and heartened by the warmth and welcome I have received from all in the community. Each of the Churches is in good heart and in addition to Sunday services we conduct Morning or Evening Prayer on two or three other midweek days also. These are usually attended by a small number of locals. Ringing the bell before each such occasion perhaps helps

remind all around that prayers are being said for the whole community. The doors of each Church building are open every day, providing a refuge for peace and prayer to everyone.

The Parish Magazine, distributed free of charge to every home, seeks to be an asset for all and in addition to Church information published there most of the articles and adverts are, we hope, of very general interest and usefulness.

Next year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the inception of our Benefice in 1977 and I hope that will be marked in various ways. Most rural parishes are inevitably organised in group Benefices these days. Sometimes such groupings can be marked by tension and reluctance among some of the participating villages. The Six Pilgrims is however a happy and supportive family of Churches and communities and I think we have much to celebrate.

Thank you for your support and for all the work you do on behalf of all who live in these communities.”

b. Little Steps Toddler Group, North Barrow. The Clerk read out the report on behalf of Heather Trott (Appendix 2).

There being no further representation, the meeting closed at 8.10pm and was followed by the Annual Parish Council meeting.

Signed:

Dated:Chairman