



## Queen Camel Parish Council

**Clerk:** Elaine Owen, Innes House, Kingsdon, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7LL

**email:** [clerk@queencamelpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@queencamelpc.org.uk) **Tel:** 07726 245 101 [www.queencamelpc.org.uk](http://www.queencamelpc.org.uk)

# DRAFT Minutes of Queen Camel Parish Annual Village Meeting held on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7pm

Doors opened at 6pm to allow people to meet and to view information provided by village organisations and clubs. These included the Playing Field Committee, Cricket Club, The Old School, The 200 Club, Tennis Club, Bumps, Tots and Toddlers, QC Quilters and the Camel Club.

Approximately 80 electors, residents and friends of Queen Camel came to the meeting.

**Present:** Chairperson Councillor Sue Gettings, David Warburton MP, District and County Councillor Mike Lewis, Dr Simon Huins, David Gordon and Rosemary Heath-Coleman.

**Also Present:** Parish Councillors Michael Baker, John Brendon, Kathy Grainger, Brian Hewlett, Phil Jones, Rachael Malton and Bryan Norman and Parish Clerk Elaine Owen

### 1. Welcome

Sue Gettings opened the meeting by welcoming the Member of Parliament, David Warburton, District and County Councillor, Mike Lewis, Dr Simon Huins from the Queen Camel Medical Centre and David Gordon, the newly appointed Headteacher at Countess Gytha Primary School. Cllrs. Rachael Malton and Bryan Norman and the Memorial Hall Committee were thanked for organising the event. Parish councillors were also introduced.

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Copies were available and the minutes were approved.

### 3. Chairpersons Report

Cllr Gettings summarised the Parish Council's activity over the last 18 months. Switching to virtual meetings during the pandemic was achieved quickly, but was not without its challenges. Business continued as normally as possible and the Neighbourhood Plan referendum went ahead and was 'made' which provides a strict framework for planning, particularly on housing.

Another achievement has been the implementation of an Experimental Traffic order that allows trained and accredited residents to close roads from the A303 at weekends. A significant decrease in traffic flow now allows pedestrians and animals to walk safely. Meanwhile, the Wales Bridge has been refurbished and footpaths too have been improved with new gates and stiles. The parish council has purchased tools for volunteers to use to tackle overgrown vegetation.

Funding from the Abercomyn Solar Farm at Sutton Montis Road has created a Fund that stands at £34,911. A further one-off grant of £15,000 is expected from a second solar farm at Bindwell Lane. A Community Benefit Fund Panel with two Councillors and five village members has been set up to manage grant applications. Local organisations, or clubs, are encouraged to submit applications to the Parish Clerk by the 31 October 2021 to assist the parish council with budgeting.

Looking forward, the land at Queen Camel Playing Field will revert to parish council management in the New Year and there will be an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting on 30th September as part of ensuring that there will be seamless continuity. Dualling of the A303 will take two years and a meeting will shortly be held with the contractors to discuss some specific concerns. Finally, the implementation of a new unitary authority will impact both how and what parish councils are expected to do and there will continue to be challenges ahead.

#### **4. David Warburton MP**

Somerton and Frome is approx. 900 square miles dotted with many villages and David Warburton explained some reasons why that he thought the Boundary Review would better balance the electorate and will be beneficial to the area.

David also expressed confidence in the concept and delivery of the unitary authority that has many potential advantages although there will be some short term reorganisation pain. Similarly the A303 dualling will also feel like a disadvantage while the work is being done. But in both cases there is a long term and sustained benefit to look forward to. David Warburton concluded by encouraging constituents to feel welcome to approach him, either after the meeting or at any time in the future.

David later volunteered to attend an upcoming meeting between the A303 contractors and the parish council.

#### **5. Mike Lewis County and District Councillor**

Mike Lewis began by paying tribute to Dr Huins and team at the medical centre who had served the community so well during the pandemic. He then went on to talk about the new unitary authority and the fact that, hopefully, there will be a focus on working with parish councils so that local people are not excluded from decision making. There will be a local election next year. He then introduced the new clerk for Queen Camel parish council and thanked her for her work.

Moving on to traffic issues Mike Lewis said he expected that a 20 mile per hour speed limits for outside the school, medical centre will be introduced before the end of the year. He also explained that Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) have been found to be more effective than a speed-watch service. SIDs can be shared between parishes and he would encourage for QC to introduce one when the opportunity arises.

An apology was given to residents for waste and recycling problems and Mike encouraged them to complain when the service falls short. He concluded with thanks to the parish councillors who are volunteers, to the many residents who volunteer in all sorts of ways and keep the facilities in good order and thanks also to the shop which is so essential to the community.

#### **6. Dr Simon Huins, Queen Camel Medical Centre**

Dr Huins said they had been overwhelmed by the support offered to the surgery during the pandemic. Everything from home-sewn PPE to volunteer help with clinics, cakes and flowers.

The practice now has 6000 patients and provides 41 GP sessions per week. Additional staff include Advanced Nurse Practitioners, health coaches, physios, an eye clinic, and a Complex Care Team. The new building was a tremendous asset and patient feedback stands at almost the highest score in the county. These factors have helped the practice to attract new doctors. Although some patients consider that the App Ask My GP is a barrier Dr Huins encouraged everyone to try it as patients usually get on well with it, including older users. He stressed that everyone who asks for one will get a face to face appointment and of course they do home visits when necessary.

With respect to Covid he explained that it will not be possible to do flu and covid boosters at the same time this year. He recommended joining the Zoe Covid app <https://covid.joinzoe.com/> because daily data logging is a real help for research into the virus. People should be aware that a runny nose, sneezing, headache, sore throat and loss of smell are now the top symptoms.

#### **7. David Gordon, Headteacher, Countess Gytha Primary School**

Mr Gordon said how delighted he was to have all the children back in school. They are really enjoying the social contact with their friends and learning in the classroom. Society should not underestimate impact of Covid on the young children and the school has plans in place to address gaps in skills from the pandemic and to give the children every opportunity to catch up.

As the new Headteacher Mr Gordon is seeking to broaden the curriculum and to ensure that they celebrate the achievements of the school, for example its green credentials. Mr Gordon is keen to rekindle links with the village and for the children to engage with the locality and community creating a rhythm of regular events that will help the school to be a part of the village. For example, they are thinking of lantern parade, engaging with the church and giving the community the chance to see nativity plays.

### **8 Rosemary Heath-Coleman, Chair of Community Land Trust (Old School)**

Rosemary Heath-Coleman said that the Old School would welcome visits from the Headteacher and children at the new school. The Community Land Trust bought the school in May 2019 and has exceeded the occupancy target in the business plan and they are now almost full. Facilities include therapy, art, a day centre and a hairdresser. Plans for the coming year include provision of electric car charging points and the transformation of the rear garden with its riverside walk and views and continuing refurbishments. Rosemary gave a special thanks to the numerous volunteers who have been helping to continually improve The Old School. The Old School will be celebrating the Queen's Jubilee next year and look forward to working with the parish council for that event.

Rosemary introduced Ewelina Wiesner who runs the newly opened Day Centre. Ewelina explained that the day centre can offer bespoke social activities, exercise, services and meal, including to clients with dementia, in a safe and friendly environment.

### **9. Andrew Hoddinott Cricket Club**

2021 was 150<sup>th</sup> year for the club which was founded in 1871. This milestone was celebrated with a Cricket Week which was a great success.

Youth Cricket is very active with 35 members between 6 and 14 years. This year the U8 team made it through to the Mid Wessex plate final in their age group going on to win the plate in the final. Andrew congratulated the players involved. The Saturday senior side has 57 players from 13 to 62 years of age. The team were awarded the 2021 Don Crouch trophy for Fair Play by the Mid Somerset League. The Sunday seniors play in the Mid Wessex league also playing in the T20 league.

Andrew thanked the parish council for donation of the mobile practice net, which is very useful indeed. He also thanked the cricket club sponsors for their support. The field is kept in good order by volunteers who mow on a rota and make a big contribution to the club. Everyone is welcome to watch the matches.

### **9. Question and Answers:**

#### **9.1 There is a sink Hole on the bridge. What actions are in hand to repair it?**

QCPC will be approaching Highways next week

#### **9.2 Has anyone check the Queen Camel bridge prior to traffic being diverted?**

This will be addressed at meeting next week with contractors Galliford Try.

#### **9.3 There is concern that Camel Hill is vulnerable to fly tipping and other illegal practices. A barrier above Higher Mead would stop people gathering for such purposes. Can this be done?**

Yes, it should be possible. David Warburton and Mike Lewis will assist in taking forward with Galliford Try.

### **The meeting closed at 2005**

Following the meeting socialising continued with live acoustic music by Theya.

**Elaine Owen**  
**Parish Clerk**