



# QUEEN CAMEL PARISH

**MINUTES of THE QUEEN CAMEL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
(also known as the **ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING**)  
held in **The Memorial Hall** on **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017**, at **7.00pm**.

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**Present:** 153 electors, residents and friends of Queen Camel including representatives and members of the following organisations:

<b>AFC Camel</b>	<b>Queen Camel Guides</b>
<b>The Camel Club</b>	<b>Queen Cam. Parochial Church Council</b>
<b>The Environment Group</b>	<b>Queen Camel Playing Field Committee</b>
<b>Queen Camel &amp; Dist. Horticultural Soc.</b>	<b>Queen Camel Quilters</b>
<b>Queen Camel Bowls Club</b>	<b>Queen Camel Tennis Club</b>
<b>Queen Camel Community Land Trust</b>	<b>Sparkford Copse Trust</b>
<b>Queen Camel Cricket Club</b>	<b>Sparkford Scouts</b>

**In attendance:** **Emily Alden**, Carers Champion, Insanity Trainer  
**Sarah Bailey**, Cartoonist  
**Mark Blackburn**, Parliamentary candidate  
**Sean Dromgoole**, Parliamentary candidate  
**Richard Hadwin**, Parliamentary candidate  
**Cath Holloway**, Village Agent  
**Mike Lewis**, District and County Councillor  
**The Mildmay Arms**  
**Queen Camel Parish Councillors** (9 in number)  
**Queen Camel Parish Council Clerk**  
**Theo Simon**, Parliamentary candidate  
**David Warburton**, Parliamentary candidate

- 1. Welcome:** John Brendon, Chairman of the meeting and Chairman of Queen Camel Parish Council, opened proceedings by welcoming the residents and visitors who had come.
- 2. Minutes:**
  - **The minutes of the Annual Village Meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016** were approved as correct by the meeting, *nem.con.*, and subsequently signed.
  - **The minutes of the Parish Meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017** were approved as correct by the meeting, *nem.con.*, and subsequently signed.
- 3. Sue English:** John Brendon spoke of the sense of shock and sadness felt by so many at the passing of Sue English, Head of Countess Gytha School. On behalf of the Parish he expressed condolences to the school staff, to the school children and their parents and most of all to Sue's family and friends for their loss.

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4. **District and County Councillor Mike Lewis** addressed the meeting. He listed some of the many features which made Queen Camel so attractive to residents including the Medical Centre, Post Office and Shop, Church, Pub, New School, Playing Field, Tennis Club and the many other clubs, groups and organisations. He noted current concerns about road traffic and applauded the 12-hour Audit of Traffic passing along the High Street which was conducted by a group of residents earlier in the month. In relation to the upgrading of the A303 he noted West Camel's strong wish that the existing road be retained in its entirety for local traffic, whichever of the two routes was eventually chosen, and he explained why he himself was unable to declare support for either of the two options without more technical detail.
5. **Parish Council Chairman John Brendon** opened his short report by giving thanks for something that had *not* happened this winter, namely **flooding** in the parish. Then, with members of **AFC Camel** sitting on the platform beside him with their trophies, he celebrated their remarkable achievements in the First Division of the Yeovil and District Football League. Sponsored by the **Mildmay Arms** (who were very kindly running the bar at the Village Meeting) they won the **Charity Cup, The John Hayward Cup** and promotion to the **Premiership**, and on the final day of the season they beat Pen Mill and became **Champions of the First Division**. As for the summer game, **Queen Camel Cricket Club** is the oldest club in the parish (at 150 years plus) and one of the most vigorous: thanks to an active recruiting programme in local schools it had three youth teams as well as the adult team and over seventy players on the books last season.

On the A303 the Parish Council has adopted a neutral position since there is no consensus in the parish about which route would be most beneficial but the traffic Audit will make it easier to gauge the impact of the road and any other developments on the flow of traffic through the parish. In the meantime the Parish Council will continue to press for the construction of the footpath from the school to the Glebe and for the clearing of blocked drains as well as appealing to residents not to obstruct pavements by inconsiderate parking.

Earlier in the year the Queen Camel Community Land Trust (CLT) lodged an expression of interest in acquiring the Old School site from Somerset County Council via a Community Asset Transfer. The County Council is still considering this alongside a plan to retain the site for educational use by the County itself and in the meantime the CLT is continuing to work on its plans to turn the site into a Community Enterprise and Education Centre.

A steering group of the Parish Council has engaged a planning consultant to help revise the draft Neighbourhood Plan. In particular it wishes to ensure that any future development - which might include housing development - enhances rather than compromises the character of the village and does not duplicate existing facilities.

The Parish Council itself is in good health with a full complement of nine councillors and a permanent parish clerk. It has reserves of almost £50,000 of which c.£15,000 is earmarked for the development of Youth facilities and

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c.£20,000 (from the Sutton Bridge solar farm) for community benefit. Serious thought is needed as to how these funds can best be used in the interests of local people.

Finally the Parish Council is looking for a volunteer to take on the running of the Parish Council website.

6. The Chairman then invited questions from the floor: none came but residents submitted a number of questions in writing. These are listed below.
7. The Chairman brought the formal Parish Meeting to a close by expressing his appreciation to the parliamentary candidates for making themselves available and to the parish groups, clubs, societies and other organisations for all they had done during the year. He thanked residents for coming, hoped they would enjoy the informal village meeting which was starting as soon as the formal session ended and thanked the Mildmay Arms for providing the bar. And in conclusion he urged residents to make the most of the opportunity to talk to the parliamentary candidates, to our county and district councillor, to parish councillors and to members of the many parish organisations present.

The meeting concluded at 7.28pm

**Afterword:** The following questions were submitted by residents via the Suggestion Box at the meeting. They will be put before the Parish Council at its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> June and, where appropriate, passed on to other organisations concerned:

- Could exercise equipment available to all be installed on the Playing Field?
- Could there be some cycle paths around the parish?
- Could householders be asked to tidy up the fronts of their houses, removing weeds and rubbish?
- What is happening about the large housing development which is rumoured to be for the West Camel road?
- What is happening about parking outside the school?
- What is happening to the old school?
- When is the pavilion going to be replaced or refurbished?
- When will the path to the school from the Glebe be completed?
- Should a limit be introduced to a Councillor's length of service so as to encourage others to volunteer?