

**Minutes of the Mudford Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 30th April 2026 at
18:00, Mudford Village Hall, BA21 5TE**

Present –Jo Dalton-Leggett (Chair of Mudford Parish Council).

In attendance: Petra Galloway – Parish Clerk/RFO, C. Dennett and 9 members of the public.

18:00 – Meeting started.

01. To receive apologies for absence.
Cllrs Brown and Blackwood sent their apologies that they were away.
02. To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th April 2025.
RESOLVED: The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.
03. To receive a report from the Chair of Mudford Parish Council.
The chair presented an annual report (Appendix 1).
04. To receive reports from Somerset Councillors.
Somerset Councillors were not present.
05. To receive the report and results of the Community Assembly held on 21st March 2026.
C. Dennett (Clout Ltd) presented the report and results of the assembly (available on the website).
06. To receive reports from village groups.

Reports were received from:

Village Hall Committee (Appendix 2)

Three Villages Food Group (3VFG) (Appendix 3)

FOMAG (Appendix 4)

Speed Watch:

The Speed Watch representative explained that a restructuring had taken place, with the previous contact at Somerset Council being replaced by a new contact who covers a wider area. The quarterly meeting scheduled for February was cancelled, and it is unclear whether quarterly meetings will continue.

It was reported that there have been incidents of aggressive behaviour from motorists towards Speed Watch volunteers. It was also noted that Speed Watch experiences changes in motorist behaviour when wearing high-visibility vests, which can skew the recorded data. Despite the difficulties experienced over the past year, Speed Watch will continue its activities.

St Mary's Church (Appendix 5)

07. Public open session.
No comments were received.

19:05 - Meeting ended.

Appendix 1

Report by the Chair of the Parish Council to the APM April 2026

This has been a year of consolidation and continuing progress for Mudford Parish Council, but I intend to keep this report as brief as possible, to allow sufficient time of a report on one of the big initiatives of 2025-6, our plans for a village survey, so that we can better understand what really matters to a broad range of people who live in our village. This will enable us to set priorities for future actions and longer-term planning that will truly benefit the community. Preparations for the survey are already well under way, having been launched at the Village Assembly, the outcome of which we shall hear about today.

Obviously, the other big development is the legal challenge (Judicial Review) to the Primrose Lane Outline Planning decision, which was heard in court two days ago, the outcome of which we should learn quite soon. The large number of members of the public who attended the extra-ordinary meeting at which the council agreed to take the matter to this final stage, assured us that we had strong support and a clear mandate to do so. Over the course of the year, our relations, and communication, with FOMAG have improved. We are grateful for their contributions towards the legal costs. We also look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with them in pursuing the interests of our residents in relation to the other development, to the south of Mudford Road, which is now in the hands of Bloor Homes, with whom we have already had a couple of useful meetings.

We are delighted that we enjoy very positive connections with village groups, such as the Village Hall, Three Villages Flood Group and the Church, supporting them with expertise and practical help, as well as grants. We shall hear more of these groups' admirable achievements from their representatives. Although there is considerable overlap in personnel among such groups, it is also true to say that there has been a clear growth in the number of people volunteering and supporting community endeavours.

The Parish Council has continued to meet regularly and to conduct our business in an atmosphere of mutual respect, with due regard to our Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct, always operating within the regulatory framework and in a manner that honours the democratic process. This is possible thanks to the dedication and hard work of councillors and, especially, our excellent clerk, who has ensured that we have in place, and observe, all the necessary policies and procedures. To this end, we have recently replaced our Human Resources Committee with the Governance and Resources Committee. It is to the clerk's great credit that we got a perfectly clean bill of health in the recent Internal Audit.

We also appreciate the contribution of our Somerset Councillors and SC officers, who we know to be operating in very difficult circumstances. However, we are often frustrated by slow response time and lack of progress on actions that have been agreed.

I end with a vote of thanks to the clerk, the cemetery caretaker and to my councillor colleagues for their hard work and support throughout the year. I wish, also, to extend my appreciation to the members of the village groups, whose activities sit at the very heart of our community. Finally, my thanks go to those of you who attend our council meetings, contribute valuable ideas and give us support and encouragement, as we seek to serve the interests of our residents. It is by working together that we get things done. Thank you.

Appendix 2

Mudford Village Hall

Report for Annual Parish Meeting – 30th April 2026

The Village Hall continues to be a base for the community. Weekly cafés continue to be well supported in general. There is a happy atmosphere whilst people enjoy a variety of refreshments.

Most months there is a community event which is again, well supported. Our next event is a Strawberry & Cream Tea, on Thursday 21st May, at 2pm until 4pm. There will be no café that morning.

In July, we have the Annual Flower Show, so look out for the programmes.

Hall bookings are consistently increasing from local and surrounding areas. All these activities help to keep Hall funds in healthy position.

Weekly Craft Club continues to be enjoyed by those attending. People bring a craft of their choice, enjoy a cuppa and biscuits, whilst catching up on news and sharing ideas. Sometimes, they will 'demonstrate' their skills, and everyone can participate and learn new techniques. We look forward to welcoming new members.

Appendix 3
Report Annual Parish Meeting 2026

3VFG - a Community led group-to recap:

This group emerged from a Village meeting held in August 2024. The Parish Clerk (Petra Galloway) had done a great deal of groundwork regarding options available. They were a Community led group, separate from the Parish Council with its own Constitution; a committee of Mudford Parish Council (MPC); a working group of volunteers supported by MPC. A discussion ensued and the meeting voted for the formation of an independent group and the rest as we say “is history.”

I would like to thank and acknowledge all the work that Petra did to help to establish the 3VFG (named to reflect the neighbouring villages of Chilton Cantelo and Ashington) as an Unincorporated Association. She did a great deal of research on our Constitution along with drafting various policies such as Data Protection. Petra continued to support the group at its’ first formal meeting on October 7th 2024 where the group’s Constitution’s Aims and Objectives were agreed and a Committee formed. Chelsea Wood was voted in as Secretary but later had to relinquish this position due to family and work commitments and Duncan Woodward agreed to take on the role. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chelsea for the work she undertook for 3VFG and formally thank Duncan for taking the role on.

Getting started and connections with the wider flooding community.

It is only when we started on this journey of tackling flood risks within the three villages that we became aware of the support and expertise available. Somerset Rivers Authority, a partnership organisation formed after the devastating flooding on the Somerset levels, has been key to enabling us meet our key aim “to minimise and mitigate the impact of flooding on our villages and ensure our community is prepared to respond effectively.” It was through a grant from the SRA that we have been able to fund equipment for flood wardens. and it allowed us to gain access to the expertise of other key organisations and be offered further opportunities. I cannot praise enough the help and encouragement we have had from Bel Deering and Paul Elliston, SRA Community Engagement Officers. It was through them that we have accessed training for flood wardens, met with other local flood groups and were given the opportunity to host Flood Mary and her Flood-Pod during Autumn last year.

Highlights of the year:

It is hard to choose but I would like to mention April 5th 2025 Launch which was opened by Councillor Mike Stanton (Chair of SRA) and addressed by Sarah Dyke our local MP. Various organisations were represented such as The EnvironmentAgency, Yeovil Rivers Community Trust ,The Farming and Wildlife

Advisory Group. I think this was a crucial meeting because we made a series of important contacts, were able to do a great deal of networking and established our credentials as a serious Flood Group.

Acknowledgements:

Whilst our local community made the decision to be a community group separate from the Parish Council our links with MPC are close. We report monthly to them and they have made two generous financial grants to us -the first was to help with information and publicity for our April 5th launch and the second to support the visit of Flood Mary. They have also been very proactive in establishing Mudford Village Hall as a place of safety. I would also like to put on record the help given to the 3VFG from the Mudford Village Hall Committee. Their help has been invaluable and taken the form of practical help like storing our equipment and running the catering at the April 5th Launch. Without their goodwill things would be very difficult for us.

I would like to thank the Officers and Committee Members of the 3vfg. As our publicity states our group includes members from diverse backgrounds who've come together with a shared goal of minimising the impact of flooding. We have worked well together.

Thank you to Pete Lawrence who is not only a very able Treasurer but also developed and maintains our website which I have on very good authority is the envy of many flood groups; to Jan Sugg, Duncan Woodruff, Charlie Wilson and Robin Bowring for the work they did on the flood plan, the emphasis they place on the fact that it is an “ open, working document” and always being on the look-out for ways to add to it to make it even better; Dawn Woodruff on the way she has developed a network of interested journalists and significant others, she also ensures that we have a vibrant social media presence; Lyd Gane for her organisational skills, extensive knowledge of the locality and her patience as Chair of the Village Hall ; Stephen Bartlett for his generosity - the way he readily shares his expertise regarding the history and geography of the three villages and his wealth of local and historical knowledge. These acknowledgements are not exhaustive however I do want everyone to know that our work is appreciated not by just me but the wider community. Earlier this year Lyd stepped down from the Committee and two new members have joined us, so once again our thanks go to Lyd Gane and our warm welcome goes to Naomi Blackmore and Susannah Fernandez.

Future Initiatives:

■ There has been some frustration regarding work promised but not yet completed, however in recent weeks there has been some important developments.

■ Maintenance of drains/drainage is still on our agenda and one which we intend to raise with our Local Community Network. I am pleased to be able to report a successful meeting between several members of 3vfg and Tracy Harris of Highways (Issues with West Mudford Road).

■ Continue discussions with The Environment Agency with regard to Mudford Bridge.

■ Further Training of flood wardens, including basic First Aid.

■ Recruitment of Drain wardens.

■ Involvement in Flood Mitigation through Nature Based Solutions Project with YRCT, FWAG, Wessex Water, SRA.

■ Public presence and involvement with the community regarding flooding issues.

■ Workshop on Riparian Responsibility, programme of further relevant Workshops, April 2026.

■ Continued relationship with FOMAG.

Many thanks,

Kay Mackenzie, Chair 3VFG.

Appendix 4

FOMAG Parish Meeting Speech

Good evening everyone,

For those who may not know me, I'm speaking tonight on behalf of FOMAG — the Friends of Mudford Action Group.

I'd like to give a brief overview of some of the work FOMAG has been involved in over the last twelve months, because a huge amount has taken place behind the scenes and many local residents have contributed time, expertise and determination throughout that process.

The last year has been one of the most significant periods our parish has faced in relation to large-scale development proposals, flooding concerns and the future of Mudford and the surrounding villages.

FOMAG was originally formed in response to the Primrose Lane development proposals, but our work has expanded far beyond simply objecting to housing numbers. Enshrined within our constitution is a commitment to examine developments of all sizes affecting the Mudford area and their wider impact on the parish.

Over the past year we have focused on planning scrutiny, flooding and drainage concerns, environmental investigations, public engagement and ensuring that local voices are properly represented.

Flooding has been one of the biggest areas of work.

Following serious flooding events affecting Mudford, Ashington and surrounding areas, FOMAG has worked closely alongside the Three Villages Flood Group — an independent community group carrying out important flood and drainage work across the area.

3VFG has gathered evidence, photographs, rainfall data and resident testimony to help build a clearer picture of the risks already facing our villages. Their work, including the commissioning of independent hydrologist reports and technical analysis, has been extremely valuable in helping inform wider community concerns and planning scrutiny.

Together, these efforts have helped raise important questions regarding drainage assumptions, rainfall modelling and the potential downstream impact of proposed developments on local communities.

Another major strand of work has been the investigation into historic anthrax contamination concerns connected to land at Upper Mudford.

Over many months, FOMAG members have examined historical records, environmental reports, Public Health correspondence and Environmental Information Regulation responses. Despite repeated requests, Somerset Council still has not fully answered several important questions surrounding this issue, but the work

continues because residents deserve transparency and confidence that environmental concerns have been properly examined.

FOMAG has also reviewed planning documents, legal agreements and technical reports connected to development proposals within the parish and has sought engagement with developers, consultants and Somerset Council in order to challenge and question aspects of proposed schemes.

This has included continued engagement regarding the Bloor Homes proposals and associated applications affecting the wider area, particularly where concerns exist regarding drainage, infrastructure pressure and cumulative impact.

Importantly, we have not worked in isolation.

Over the past year FOMAG has linked with neighbouring parish councils and community groups facing similar concerns, recognising that issues such as flooding and infrastructure pressure do not stop at parish boundaries.

We have also joined SCRAPP — the Somerset-wide group bringing together communities concerned about poor planning and unsustainable development across the county. Working alongside other groups gives us greater opportunity to share knowledge and expertise.

Public engagement has remained a key part of our work. We have organised and supported public meetings and information sharing events to help residents better understand what are often highly complex planning and legal processes.

FOMAG has also worked to ensure that local concerns received wider public attention through press and media engagement. Members have met with journalists, including the Local Democracy Reporting Service, which helped contribute to BBC coverage, local radio interviews and wider regional reporting on flooding and planning concerns affecting our area.

Fundraising has also played an important role over the past year.

Through community fundraising efforts, including the GoFundMe campaign, residents have helped support the considerable legal and professional costs involved in scrutinising major development proposals. FOMAG itself contributed £5,000 towards the Judicial Review process — almost all the funds we held at the time — demonstrating the seriousness with which these concerns are viewed locally and why continued fundraising remains important.

These funds have helped support legal action, independent expert reports and technical advice.

Of course, one of the most significant developments this year has been the Judicial Review brought by Mudford Parish Council against Somerset Council regarding the Primrose Lane planning decision.

Earlier this week representatives attended the hearing in Bristol where arguments were presented concerning planning policy and whether important facilities and benefits associated with the development were genuinely secured and deliverable.

The Judge has reserved judgement and we now await the Court's decision.

Regardless of the outcome, I think it is important to recognise the enormous effort made by local residents, volunteers and Parish Councillors over a prolonged period of time. These processes are demanding and often exhausting, but many people have continued because they genuinely care about protecting the future of our villages.

I also want to make clear that FOMAG's work has never been about opposing change for the sake of it.

Most people accept that housing is needed. However, residents also expect developments to be lawful, properly evidenced, environmentally responsible and supported by infrastructure that genuinely works.

So finally, I would simply like to thank everyone who has contributed in any way — whether through attending meetings, helping with research, documenting flooding events, sharing information or simply continuing to engage with what is happening in our parish.

The work continues, and there will undoubtedly be further challenges ahead, but the level of community spirit and determination shown over the last year has been remarkable.

If anyone would like to learn more or become involved, please do come along to the public meeting on Thursday 21st May at 7pm.

Thank you.

Appendix 5

St Mary's Church, Mudford Report for Annual Parish Meeting 30/04/2026

St Mary's Church, Mudford, is now a part of the Ark Group of Churches, with Ashington, Chilton Cantelo, Marston Magna and Rimpton. We no longer use the term, Benefice. Our Rector, Rev Richard Horner has settled in and was joined last summer by his lovely wife, Debbie. They have thrown themselves into village life and can often be seen at the Thursday Café, with Debbie sometimes doing an energetic shift in the kitchen, particularly at special events. Richard's sense of humour is infectious.

He has introduced a regular pattern of services, at the same time, rotating around the five churches, although there are occasional variations, and there have been some innovations. For example, the Remembrance Sunday service was in Rimpton, but on Armistice Day we had a short service for laying wreaths on the Mudford memorial and the war grave. Also, on Ascension Day, the rector addressed us from the top of the tower through a megaphone, before we all repaired to the Village Café for refreshments. Mudford did not have a Harvest Festival this year, but our All Souls Service was as beautiful as ever, and the church was packed for a joyous Christmas Eve Christingle and Crib service. People from all five villages attend our services, and so our congregation is larger than it has been for years, as was evident at the Mothering Sunday Café Church, when we had to bring in extra chairs, although thankfully there was enough food. The rector keeps the services short and allows plenty of time for coffee and chat after every service. We feel revitalised, and more people are joining us.

However, it is still a small group of rather elderly PCC members and faithful helpers who do most of the work, organising services, cleaning and maintenance, looking after correspondence, communications and finances, doing flower arrangements and decorations for special occasions, providing music, keeping the grass cut, etc.

A group meets regularly in Milton House Lounge for bible study and there was an interesting four-week Lent Study in Mudford Village Hall, which made good use of the data projector. Church members can be found participating in most village activities and organisations. The church sees itself as very much a part of the community. It is hoped that this will be reinforced by the publication of the new monthly Ark magazine, with local news and articles, which will be distributed to every household in the five parishes. The Ark group is very grateful to Mudford, Marston and Rimpton Parish Councils for their generous financial support.

While there is much good news, the church continues to struggle to maintain the fabric of our Grade 1 listed building. Our annual income falls well short of our expenditure, and the flooding that has plagued the village has taken its toll, with mould on the flagstones, the organ and the woodwork. (Ark is an ironically appropriate Name!) We recently agreed to start applying for grants to repair the chancel roof, at an estimated cost of nearly half a million pounds, but then we

discovered that the supporting timbers beneath the organ vestry floor had rotted away. We will likely need to dismantle the organ to repair the floor, which is going to be very costly, and so the chancel roof project has had to go on hold.

If the church is to remain open in the longer term, we absolutely need more interest and support from our village community.