
Access to land

1 message

Roger Consultant <Roger.Consultant@wellerslawgroup.com>

1 December 2025 at 12:44

To: "clerk@croscombeparishcouncil.co.uk" <clerk@croscombeparishcouncil.co.uk>Cc: Advice <advice@slcc.co.uk>, Asma Shamim <Asma.Shamim@wellerslawgroup.com>

Dear Linda,

Your query has been referred to me.

I would anticipate that it will be necessary for the Council to enter into a formal Deed with regard to access and future maintenance, even if they have general rights to do so. The completion of such a Deed would not automatically require the title to the land to be registered but registration ensures that the Deed is registered and cannot be overlooked.

Unless there is an existing Deed which gives unrestricted rights to do what the Council now wishes to carry our the landowner can impose a condition that the Council pay for registration and the Council has the power to pay such sum.

Regards

Roger Taylor
Consultant
Wellers : Solicitors

Roger Consultant

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E: Roger.Consultant@wellerslawgroup.com
www.wellerslawgroup.com



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Accounts Statement & New Invoices

Prepared by L Roslyn, Parish Clerk/RFO

Approved by Minute Ref 134⁽²⁵⁾c at Parish Council Meeting held on **16 December 2025**

Unity Trust CURRENT T1 A/C			
	Opening Balance as at 1 April 2025	19,145.14	
	Less Payments	18,926.69	
	Plus Receipts	18,160.43	
	Less Transfers to Instant Access A/c	4,534.00	
	CURRENT T1 A/C Balance	14,724.60	
Unity Trust INSTANT ACCESS A/C			
	Opening Balance as at 1 April 2025	-	
	Less Payments	-	
	Plus Receipts	4,534.00	
	INSTANT ACCESS Balance	4,534.00	
	TOTAL BANK BALANCE	19,258.60	
Ref 25-	Payment Type	Receipts (since last meeting)	Budget Section ⁽²⁵⁻²⁶⁾
52	BACS	7 x Allotment Rents	Allotment
Ref 25-	Payment Type	Payments to be Ratified (made between meetings - examined, verified and certified by the RFO)	Budget Section ⁽²⁵⁻²⁶⁾
53	Fee	Unity Trust Bank	6.00
		Payments for Ratification Total	6.00
Ref 25-	Payment Type	New Invoices For Approval (examined, verified and certified by the RFO)	
54	FPD	SLCC - Membership for Clerk 2025-206	76.00
55	D/D	Ionos - Wel	10.20
56	FPD	L Roslyn - McAfee Anti Virus Software (2yrs)	49.99
57	FPD	Somerset Assoc Local Councils - Ann Gvnce Trng (LR)	25.00
58	FPD	L Roslyn - Travel	7.20
59	FPD	L Roslyn - Salary & HWA Month 09 - December	546.33
		Total New Invoices	879.72
Reconciled Bank Balance			
18,378.88			

Signed _____
 (Chair of the Meeting)

Date 16 December 2025

Croscombe Parish Council - Budget Statement 2025-2026

Statement Prepared By: Linda Roslyn, RFO and Approved by Minute Ref. 134⁽²⁵⁾ c) at the Parish Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025

Ref	Approved Budget 2025/26	Actual Receipts to Date	Forecast Receipts to 31/3/26	Forecast Totals to 31/3/26	Diff +/-	Notes
RECEIPTS						
R1	Precept	13,915.00	13,915.00	-	13,915.00	-
R2	Cemetery	1,600.00	-	-	-	1,600.00
R3	Allotment / Field Rental	300.00	235.00	-	235.00	65.00 6 x Allotment Plots (BR to confirm)
R4	VAT Reclaim		587.13	1,287.89	1,875.02	
R5	Play Area Funds Raised	-	-	-	-	
R6	Grants - Flood Group (Barriers)	-	3,348.00	-	3,348.00	Moved to EM General Reserves
R7	Orchard Income/Funds Raised	-	75.30	-	75.30	
Total Receipts		15,815.00	18,160.43	1,287.89	19,448.32	
Ref	Approved Budget 2025/26	Actual Spend to Date	Forecast Spend to 31/3/26	Forecast Totals to 31/3/26	Diff +/-	Notes
PAYMENTS						
P1	Salary	5,104.00	5,125.20	2,061.48	7,186.68	- 2,082.68 Incl. extra hours, NICs & HWA
P2	Insurance	550.00	437.00	-	437.00	113.00
P3	Mem'ship Fees / Subscriptions	500.00	524.45	75.00	599.45	- 99.45 Parish Online Jan-26
P4	Audit Fees	190.00	190.00	-	190.00	-
P5	Meeting Costs	96.00	205.22	181.60	386.82	- 290.82 Incl. Clerk's travel
P6	Bank Charges	72.00	48.00	18.00	66.00	6.00
P7	Office Costs	250.00	285.27	84.00	369.27	- 119.27 MS Office Dec-2025
P8	Website Hosting	122.00	76.50	50.00	126.50	- 4.50
P9	Training	300.00	75.00	50.00	125.00	175.00
P10	Assets	200.00	-	200.00	200.00	- *new* Signs for Play Area/Cemetery & Defib?
P11	Cemetery Maintenance	2,685.00	2,034.96	-	2,034.96	650.04 (Incl 50% playing field costs)
P12	Play Area Inspection / Maintenance	400.00	96.00	-	96.00	304.00
P13	Play Area - B/F**	834.00	-	-	-	Moved to EM Play Park Reserves
P14	Play Area Phase 2 - Current	-	-	-	-	-
P15	Orchard - B/F	1,409.00	14.00	100.00	114.00	1,295.00 Spray for Trees & Wassail Event
P16	Orchard - Current	-	-	-	-	-
P17	Projects	100.00	-	100.00	100.00	- Water level gauges - app'd 120 ⁽²⁵⁾
P18	Play Area Reserves**	2,000.00	-	-	-	2,000.00 Moved to EM Play Park Reserves
P19	General Reserves / Contingency	1,600.00	32.10	1,000.00	1,032.10	567.90 Culvert solicitor fees - app'd 11ia) ^{17-Jun-25}
Total Running Costs		16,412.00	9,143.70	3,920.08	13,063.78	3,348.22
New Items Approved from 1-Apr-2025 and Moved from Payments by the Clerk						
Ear Marked General Reserves (EMGR)						
P20	11ia) ^{17-Jun-25} £700 grant added to £3,348 for flood barriers	4,048.00	4,185.00	-	4,185.00	-
P21	7iv ^{17-Jun-25} - VH Windows Grant	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	3,000.00	-
P22	13iii ^{15-Jul-25} - 3x Notice Boards	2,610.00	1,305.00	1,305.00	2,610.00	-
P23	4c) ^{5-Aug-25} - Solicitor fees - land owner legal agreement (culvert)	750.00	-	750.00	1,620.00	-
	134 ⁽²⁵⁾ a) - Additional Solicitor fees	TBC	-	-	-	Additional £870 requested
			10,408.00	8,490.00	2,055.00	11,415.00
Ear Marked Play Park Reserves (EMPPR)						
P24	11iii ^{17-Jun-25} - Play park extra funds**	2,534.00	-	-	4,534.00	£1.7k added to £834.00 and £2,000
Opening Balance 1-Apr-2025						
	Plus Actual Receipts 2025-2026	18,160.43				
	Less Actual Payments 2025-2026	18,926.69				
	(Reconciled Bank Balance)	18,378.88				
	Plus Forecast Receipts to 31-Mar-2026	1,287.89				
	Less Projected Spend to 31-Mar-2026	5,975.08				
	Less General Reserves/Contingency	567.90				
	Less EM Play Park Reserves	4,534.00				
	Balance Expected at 31-Mar-2026	8,589.79				

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND ANNUAL REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

- 1) Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, imposes a duty on local councils to ensure “the financial control systems determined by that officer are observed and that the accounting records of the authority are kept up to date.”
- 2) Local councils are required, at least once a year, to conduct, in accordance with proper practices, a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control. The council is required to sign the annual governance statement (on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) submitted to the external auditor) to evidence that this review has been undertaken.
- 3) In order for the Parish Council to review the effectiveness of the internal control system there needs to be clarity on the internal controls in place.
- 4) Some internal controls are listed in the Financial Regulations document, but the system of controls goes beyond this. A Statement of Internal Controls has therefore been prepared and this is included following this report.

Prepared by: Linda Roslyn
Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer RFO

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Cash Book/Bank reconciliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The accounts are kept electronically (in Excel spreadsheet format), maintained up to date from original documents (cash received, invoices, payments made and cheques as they are prepared).• The cash book is reconciled to the bank statement at least monthly.• Reconciled accounts are presented in advance of each Parish Council meeting for reference.• The payments and receipts, and bank reconciliation are reviewed and approved by the members of the Parish Council nominated as internal control, with reference to the underlying records (bank statements and minutes plus copies of accounts, papers, etc.) at least biannually.• The monthly accounts statements includes the bank reconciliation and is reported to the full Parish Council and minuted as such.• The latest financial position and movements on the Parish Council's cash balances are reported at each council meeting and can be traced back to the expenditure approved in previous meetings via the minutes and budget statements.
Financial Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Parish Council has adopted financial regulations, based on the model version prepared by NALC/SLCC. The regulations are reviewed for continued relevance and amended where necessary by the Responsible Financial Officer with any proposed amendments subject to approval by the Parish Council

Crocombe Parish Council

Order/Tender controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Financial Regulations list the number of estimates, quotes or full tenders that must be invited depending on the value and nature of the work. Official orders/letters are sent to suppliers, by the RFO, for services which are not regular in nature.
Payment controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on the nature of the supply, the RFO checks that the supply has been received, that the supply has not previously been paid and that the invoice calculations are correct. Purchase orders/emails/letters ordering the work are matched to purchase invoices where applicable. All invoices for payment are listed on the monthly accounts statement where the expenditure is to be authorised for payment. Original invoices are available to the Councillors signing the cheques or authorising BACS payments. All payments will be made Online, via the Unity Trust Bank Account, will be set-up by the RFO and authorised by two signatories. Direct Debit mandates will be signed by two signatories. The RFO is authorised to transfer funds from one bank account to another (to be authorised by two signatories), but not to make third party payments outside of the bank accounts in any form. Every payment is identified by a sequential unique number (format YY/##). This number is used to identify the transaction in the payments cashbook, on the invoice and the bank statements to provide an audit trail of the payment being made.
Payments made under section 137 of the 1972 LGA (“The Free Resource”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A record of Section 137 expenditure is recorded in the accounts. The RFO calculates the maximum amount of s137 expenditure able to be made each year and ensures that it is not exceeded, confirmed to the Parish Council when expenditure is considered either by reference to a specific budget for that payment or to the amount of unspent s137 money available. Where requests for expenditure from s137 are made this is made clear on the meeting agendas where the payment is to be approved. The proper minute authorising expenditure from s137 is prepared on each occasion.
VAT repayment claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFO ensures that all invoices are addressed to the Parish Council. RFO ensures that proper VAT invoices are received where VAT is payable. RFO maintains a VAT account to show that the correct amount of VAT is reclaimed in the year.
Income controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFO ensures that the amount of precept received is correct and in accordance with the precept request sent to Somerset Council. RFO ensures that the precept instalments are received when due. RFO ensures that other receipts (deposit interest, allotment rent and burials, etc.) are received when due and correctly calculated. Receipts are issued for cash received and a copy kept. Cash and Cheques are promptly deposited at the Post Office.

Crocombe Parish Council

Financial reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Budget Statement, comparing actual receipts and payments to the budget is prepared for every meeting, presented to the Parish Council within the Monthly Accounts Statement in advance of the meeting and minuted as such.
Budgetary controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budget is prepared in consultation with the Parish Council, as evidenced by reports and minutes in advance of the start of the year. The precept is set on the basis of the budget by the deadline set by Somerset Council.
Payroll controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Clerk is paid under PAYE as an employee and the necessary system for HMRC RTI is in place. The Clerk's salary is set by the Council and a minute is prepared to show the agreed salary. The salary is paid by a bank Standing Order. The RFO will ensure that all the necessary payroll returns are made to HMRC and will retain evidence that this has been done.
Office and clerk's expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The clerk receives a home working allowance towards the cost of maintaining an office at home, any out-of-pocket expenses and motoring expenses. Expenses are paid via online banking and the expense sheet treated as an invoice for accounting purposes.
Asset control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RFO maintains a full asset register. The existence and condition of assets is checked on a six-monthly basis by a member of the Parish Council. The adequacy of insurance of the Parish Council's assets is considered annually in advance of the insurance renewal.

Completed by	Linda Roslyn, Parish Clerk/RFO			Dated	9 December 2025
Adopted On		Version		Min.Ref	
Reviewed On		Version		Min.Ref	



Somerset Planning – East Team
Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT
Web: www.somerset.gov.uk
Email: Planningeast@somerset.gov.uk
Tel: 0300 123 2224

Croscombe Parish Council

2nd December 2025

Dear Parish Clerk

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Proposal: Single Storey Rear extension
Location: 8 Coombe Cottages Croscombe Shepton Mallet Somerset BA5 3QU
Applicant: Reverend Andrew Piper
Application Type: Householder Application
Application Number: 2025/2164/HSE

The Council has received the above application and the documents are available on the website:
<https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Comments are welcome by 23rd December 2025. If you need more time to consider this application, please contact the Planning Officer as early as possible to agree an extension.

The application is being dealt with by , email telephone .

You can comment, support or object to the proposal but material planning reasons must be provided. Any comments will be taken into account in any Officer recommendation.

Your response should be submitted via Consultee Access. **Please do not include signatures or any other personal information that may need redacting.** If you need assistance with using Consultee Access, please email consultationeast@somerset.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Planning - East Team
Somerset Council



Croscombe Parish Clerk <croscombe2@gmail.com>

Croscombe Camping

1 message

Louise Tully <cllr.tully@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk>

6 December 2025 at 15:46

To: "cllr.hargraves@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk" <cllr.hargraves@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk>, "cllr.gudzelak@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk" <cllr.gudzelak@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk>, "cllr.hodge@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk" <cllr.hodge@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk>, "cllr.ford@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk" <cllr.ford@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk>, "clerk@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk" <clerk@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk>, "cllr.baker@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk" <cllr.baker@croscobeparishcouncil.co.uk>

Afternoon Everyone

It has been brought to my attention during a chat with someone this week that there appear to be people living on a permanent basis at Croscombe Camping and this has been the case for quite a few years.

Some time ago two barns were built there for agricultural purposes for livestock but apparently there are loos and the like within the buildings (an unusual provision for animals) which are attached to an, apparently illegally installed, septic tank.

Croscombe Camping was started after the 'agricultural barns' were built and I am told there are currently about 7 'camping vehicles' there on a permanent basis. There is no apparent provision for collection of waste from the site either.

Does anyone know the current status of Croscombe Camping and how long these 'caravans' (sic) need to be there before an application for permanent dwelling becomes permitted.

Regards
Louise

Councillor LOUISE TULLY

Croscombe Parish Council

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Breach of planning

Before you begin

Breach

Your details

Type of complaint *

A caravan has been brought on to the land

Is the caravan being used as a place of residence? *

Yes

When was the caravan bought onto the land? *

Approximate date is fine

Day Month Year

01 12 2025

Location of the breach you want to report

How would you like to provide the location? *

Map

Pinpoint the location on the map below *

Use search control at top right of the map or drag and drop to move to a different map area. Note that you will only be able to select a location within the Somerset Council area



what3words

what3words is a mapping tool which has created unique combinations of three words to pinpoint any location on a map.

Use [what3words](#) (opens in new window) to enter the location of the breach you want to report.

Enter the what3words address *

<https://www.what3words.com> (opens in new window)

Alleged planning breach *

Please give as much detail as possible on the alleged breach

We have received a report that two mobile butchers and 6 containers (that are allegedly being used to operate a butchers business) have been installed on farm land off West Lane, Crosscombe. The Parish Council are not aware of any planning application for this development.

How does the breach affect you? *

There are concerns in terms of amenity and traffic impact related with this unauthorised development. The nature of the landscape has been adversely affected for neighbours, those using Footpath SM642 and the East Mendip Way and the wider village. The increase in traffic could pose a significant increase in risk on West Lane and Threap Lane, neither of which has pavements, if this business is allowed to become established.

Do you know who is responsible for these works? *

No

Do you know who the land/site owner is? *

No

Upload any supporting photos

Not mandatory

[West Lane \(1\).JPG](#)

[West Lane \(2\).JPG](#)

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Croscombe Flood Group Report 8th December 2025

Chairmans Report to Croscombe Parish Council

The Group will next meet in January as there is little activity to report.

1. Barriers

Storm rain gauge to be secured as approved by CPC

Culvert Access Chamber

The legal agreement to allow access to the chamber is back in progress for 2026. A request is to be made to the Council to meet increased legal fees

2. Culvert Responsibility

The Environment Agency have advised that a second survey is to be undertaken to determine the route of the culvert and so identifying the riparian owners. No progress.

River Survey

We plan to advise Riparian all owners of their responsibilities in January. Letter prepared by the Clerk to each riparian owner on behalf of Croscombe Parish Council reminding them of their responsibilities to maintain the river walls and channel and when the route of the culvert is determined the riparian owners of the culvert.

3. Attenuation Ponds

PH & PJ Meeting with SCC and SRA and visited possible sites of attenuation ponds. SCC very supportive and will take action to secure ponds upstream of the Old Mill Pond on the A371

4. Removal of boulders from the river and removal of undergrowth from walls

No further action to report

Chair of Croscombe Flood Group

8th December 2025

Riparian Ownership: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a watercourse?

A watercourse is...

every river, stream, brook, ditch, drain, culvert, pipe and any other passage through which water may flow. A watercourse can be either natural or man-made. Watercourses drain the land, prevent flooding and assist in supporting flora and fauna. Historically, watercourses have taken water runoff from buildings and roads, as well as fields and parks. In the process of development many have been culverted (piped) or changed in other ways.

In normal conditions a watercourse may be a dry channel in the ground; in heavy storm conditions it may become a raging torrent. Watercourses do not include public sewers but it could be in a pipe under the ground.

A Main River is...

usually a larger stream or river. However, locally important smaller watercourses can be designated as Main Rivers. The Environment Agency has authority, powers, rights and responsibilities for managing Main Rivers in England and Wales; a 'Flood Map' detailing their locations can be found on the Environment Agency website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk.

An Ordinary Watercourse is...

any other river, stream, ditch and culvert not defined as Main River. The responsibility for maintenance of ordinary watercourses lies with anyone who owns land or property adjacent to a watercourse. This is known as Riparian Ownership



It may not always be possible to see a clear physical difference between watercourses designated as either Main River or Ordinary Watercourse.

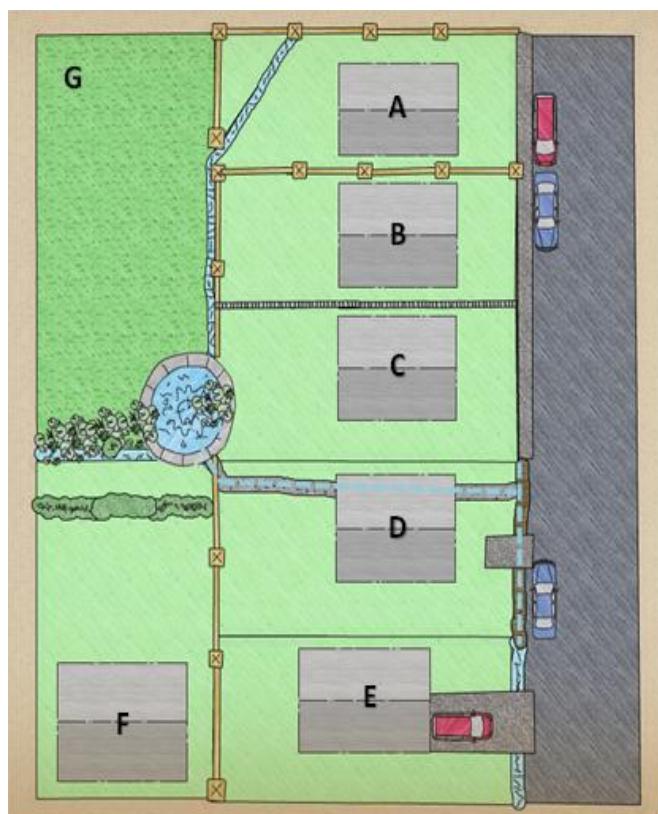
This picture shows an ordinary watercourse joining a main river.

What is a Riparian Owner?

A riparian owner is the person, or people, with watercourses on, next to or under their property. Riparian owners have the responsibility for maintenance of these watercourses. Riparian responsibilities usually lie with the person who owns the land or property but may be the tenant depending upon the agreement in place.

How do I know if I am a riparian owner?

Unless otherwise shown on the Title Deeds, all of the land owners in this picture would normally be riparian owners up to the middle of the watercourse:



House A is responsible for the all of the watercourse running through their garden.

House B is responsible for the watercourse behind the fence at the bottom of their garden.

House C is responsible for the watercourse behind the fence AND the pond.

House D is responsible for the culverted (piped) watercourse buried in the ditch in front of their land AND the underground pipe which runs beneath their property to the pond.

House E is responsible for the open ditch in front of their house AND the piped section under their access bridge.

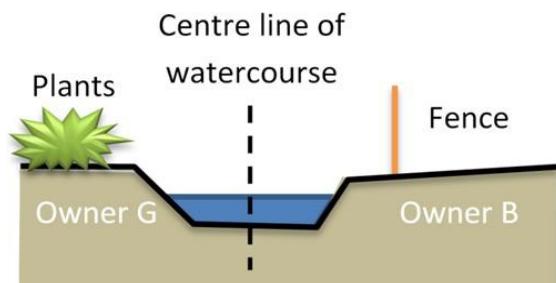
House F is responsible for the watercourse at the end of their garden behind their hedge.

Landowner G is responsible for both the watercourses running along the edges of their land AND the pond.

How much of the watercourse am I responsible for?

If both banks of a watercourse runs through (or under) your land, you are fully responsible for its maintenance. If it runs adjacent to your land (even does not fall within your property boundary as set out by your Title Deeds e.g. if it is the other side of a boundary fence) then you are likely to be responsible for the maintenance of the watercourse bank on your side, to halfway across the bottom of the watercourse.

Using the example properties above, Owners G and B would each have responsibility for the maintenance of their side up to the middle of the watercourse. So unless the landowners' Title Deeds show otherwise, it is presumed that each party owns to the centre line of the watercourse.



Depending upon the specific situation regarding land ownership, the responsibilities may vary and local advice should be sought if in doubt.

What are my responsibilities as a riparian owner?

The riparian responsibilities under law are:

- To pass on water flow without obstruction, pollution or diversion that would affect the rights of others.
- To maintain the banks and bed of the watercourse (including any trees and shrubs growing on the banks) and any flood defences that exist on it.
- To maintain any approved structures on their stretch of the watercourse and keep them free of debris. These may include trash screens, culverts, weirs and mill gates.
- Riparian Owners must not build new structures (for example a culvert, bridge or board walk) that encroach upon the watercourse, or alter the flow of water or prevent the free passage of fish without first obtaining permission from the Lead Local Flood Authority (Somerset Council) or Environment Agency.

Do I have any rights as a riparian landowner?

Yes! Riparian Owner rights are:

- To receive a flow of water in its natural state, without undue interference in its quantity or quality
- To protect their property against flooding from the watercourse and to prevent erosion of the watercourse banks or any nearby structures
- A Riparian Owner usually has the right to fish in the watercourse, provided legal methods are used. A rod licence will usually be required from the Environment Agency.
- A Riparian Owner can abstract a maximum of 20 cubic metres of water per day for the domestic purposes of their own household or for agricultural use (excluding spray irrigation) without a license. Most other types of abstraction will require a license from the Environment Agency. If the water is to be used for drinking the abstraction must be registered with the Unitary Council (Somerset).

I'm not sure which land I own. How can I find out?

If you are not sure where exactly the border of your land is there are various ways you can find out; from having a chat with your neighbours and checking your property deeds or contacting the Land Registry. Be aware the title deeds for the property may not show the watercourse within your property boundary.

What if I am a tenant?

Riparian responsibilities generally sit with owner of the land but you still will have a responsibility not to block the free flow of water. It is worth checking your tenancy agreement and talking to your landlord. Even so, you should be careful not to allow things like rubbish or grass cuttings to get into the watercourse as this may cause a blockage.

There is a ditch running outside my property – surely that's not my responsibility?

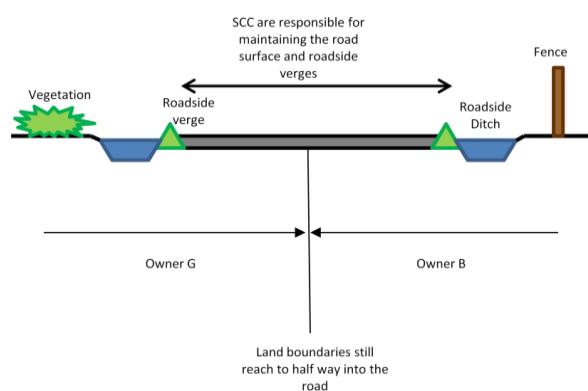
If it runs adjacent to your land and even if does not fall inside your property boundary as set out by your Title Deeds (e.g. if it's the other side of a fence, wall or

hedge), then you are likely to be responsible for the maintenance of the watercourse bank on your side, to halfway across the bottom of the watercourse. So unless the Title Deeds show otherwise, or the land is clearly owned by someone else, it is presumed that each party owns to the middle of the watercourse.

The ditch by my property runs alongside a road – is it the responsibility of Somerset Council's Highways Team to manage it?

The riparian owner of any ditches alongside roads is normally the adjoining landowner, as the highway boundary invariably lies along the top of the bank closest to the road. Adjacent owners should not carry out any work on the ditch which would restrict road surface water draining into it. Although the County Council and Highways Agency in their role as the Highway Authority has the right to discharge rainwater from the highway into these ditches, the landowner is responsible for maintaining it.

However, if the Highway Authority has created or piped the ditch specifically under their highway powers, they became responsible for its maintenance. Likewise, most pipes or culverts beneath the highway and of the bridges over watercourses are the responsibility of the County Council.



What about if a stream runs underneath my property?

If a watercourse runs underneath your property or land in a culvert or pipe it is still your responsibility to keep it clear of debris and running freely. Underground culverted watercourses are more likely to occur in urban areas where historic development has taken place. It is important that you carry out regular maintenance, as if a culvert blocks it can cause flooding upstream for which you may be liable. There are many drainage companies that can inspect and clear culverts and offer you specialist advice on management.

If a culvert runs along the boundary of two landowner's land, they are jointly responsible for the culvert. Somerset Council may be able to tell you if you have an underground watercourse on your land.

Can I just fill in the ditch if it is on my property?

No. These watercourses generally fulfil an important role in preventing local flooding. Plans for any works on ordinary watercourses, other than general cleaning and routine maintenance such as the removal of weeds or debris, must be approved by Somerset Council. Consent for the work must be secured before starting. This applies to any changes which might affect the flow or capacity and include installation of dams, weirs, mills, channel diversions and in particular, culverting or piping.

How do I maintain the watercourse?

The guide called "**Good Practice for Watercourse Maintenance**" tells you in detail all you need to know, but in summary maintenance should include; keeping

vegetation under control (especially preventing large trees from blocking the watercourse), removing any obstructions to the flow of watercourse such as grass cuttings, litter and other debris and regularly removing silt to prevent it blocking the ditch, channel or pipe.

Other things to think about are:

- Your own health and safety; working near water can be dangerous.
- The watercourse may contain invasive species or protected wildlife which may require particular maintenance techniques or specialist advice.
- Consent from the Environment Agency or the County Council may be required for any works other than general cleaning and routine maintenance, such as any change to the size or shape of the watercourse.

More information on these aspects is contained within the good practice guide.

What about the vegetation and wildlife in the watercourse?

Ditches can form very important habitats and may contain important species of flora and fauna that are protected or invasive species which are controlled under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The 'Good Practice for Watercourse Maintenance' document contains lots more information and links to advice.

Why is all this important?

Watercourses are designed to drain surface water away, this helps prevent flooding that puts property, roads, land and infrastructure at risk. If the system of ditches and culverts are maintained to a good standard, any flooding is likely to only affect areas in the floodplain. Not all watercourses transport water, as some act as storage areas, but maintenance of these is important too, as they prevent water collecting elsewhere.

The cost of maintaining a watercourse is minor compared to the cost from flood damage, not to mention the distress and inconvenience caused.

Where can I find out more?

Find out more about riparian ownership on GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/riverside-ownership-rights-and-responsibilities>

Notes on an Orchard Working Group Meeting
6.00pm, Tuesday, 25 November, 2025

Present

Mick Rogers
Nic and Louisa McElhatton
Gill Pettit
Louise Tully

Apologies

Helen Lawson
Claire Watson

1 Next Event - 'Amended' Wassail

- Potential date, 3.00pm on Sunday, 11 January. Please can everyone confirm that this works for all. **(All)**
- Food - sausages (hot dogs), pre-cooked but kept warm at the event, sauce. **(Mick)**
-
- Warmed cider and apply juice **(Nic)** Mick has burners to keep these warm
-
- Donations decorated bucket - **Louise**
-
- Expected cost £60.00. Request approval from PC **(LT)**
-
- Nicola Jenkins has agreed to lead the singing. **LT to confirm date**
-
- Andrew Piper to be approached to lead the prayers **(Nic)**
-
- Wassail hymn sheet to include prayers - **(LT/Mick)**
-
- Small speaker to have music for wassail hymn - **(LT)**
- Poster (including holly and ivy) (Come decorated if you wish) No unaccompanied children - **(Gill)**
- Wassail ceremonial 'blessing' - **(Mick)**
- Candles and matches - adults only - **(LT)**
- Lanterns for children - **(Nic and Louisa)**

- Publicity in Roundabout once approved by PC (very tight deadline) (**Louise**)
- Gazebos - LT, Mick and Jim.

2 Potential Tree Sponsors

Boots
McElhatton
Pearson

3 Wildflower Area in Trees

It was agreed that the OWG should seek permission to have a wildflower area in the planted area of the field adjacent to the burial area. We would seek advice from <https://reimaginingthelevels.org.uk/> (whose work is not restricted to the Levels). They support the whole of Somerset in terms of conservation and re-wilding. They are also potentially a source of free wildflower seeds and advice.

We would also like to look at bug hotels which would encourage pollinators (these could be sponsored).

4 Items from PC meeting

No action required by the Parish Council.

5 Water supply for new trees

Sophie Arnold has agreed to supply via a water bowser. She has a bowser we can use and can tow it to the location. LT has asked Sophie if there is anything she needs to be put in place ahead of providing a bowser of water which could be needed as early as next summer. No response as yet.

6 Maintenance

Mulching and stake work is complete, there was no cost for this work. There remains the spraying which needs still, dry conditions between November and February ... so it hasn't happened yet. It is anticipated that three bottles of this will be required. Agreement for this expenditure was approved at the last PC meeting. This is included for information only.

~ Nic +44 7770 963617



Winter Tree Wash for Organic Gardening, Insect Debris and Egg Removal, 500ml Concentrate Ma...

Transform your garden's health with this concentrated Winter Tree Wash. This powerful formula helps remove insect debris and eggs from trees during the dormant winter period, setting the stage for health...

amazon.co.uk a

Hi Louise,

Heres a copy of the email I sent you on the 20th of September stating the need to apply winter tree wash at the orchard. Three of these products should be enough for the trees. <https://>

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Winter-Organic-Gardening-Removal-Concentrate/dp/B0DZF1J9HF/ref=asc_df_B0DZF1J9HF?mcid=91b5ad780fca31a489b7c2dfda497c68&hvocijid=3220098081777828618-B0DZF1J9HF-&hvexpin=74&tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=696285193871&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrand=3220098081777828618&hvptone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=m&hvdvcndl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9194976&hytargid=pla-2281435176938&psc=1&gad_source=1

Somerset Council Report to Croscombe Parish Council meeting Tuesday 16th December 2025

Electoral Boundaries

Somerset residents now have another opportunity to provide their input on new electoral boundaries for Somerset Council, as the Local Government Boundary Commission has reopened its consultation on draft recommendations. The consultation will run from now to January 14, 2026. The decision to reopen the consultation follows the Commission's misunderstanding of Somerset Council's preference for predominantly single-councillor divisions, which was incorrectly interpreted as a formal request for a uniform pattern. This led to concerns that multi-councillor divisions may not receive adequate consideration, prompting the Commission to ensure a fair and transparent review process.

Residents are encouraged to participate by sharing their views, including support for multi-member divisions, as the Commission aims to consider all perspectives. Final recommendations are expected to be published in March 2026, with new arrangements set to take effect in May 2027, pending parliamentary approval.

For further details on the boundaries proposals, visit the Commission's website at www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/somerset. Feedback can also be submitted via email at reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by post to the Review Officer (Somerset), LGBCE, 7th Floor, 3 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8YZ.

Close Circuit Television (CCTV)

Somerset Council's CCTV team has reported nearly 700 incidents to police in the last three months, playing a crucial role in community safety. On November 12, the team alerted police to a fire under a climbing frame in a children's play area in Bridgwater, allowing firefighters to prevent the incident from escalating.

In total, the CCTV team has recorded 690 incidents, processed 391 footage requests from police, and proactively detected 408 incidents during this period. Their prompt actions have led to the apprehension of offenders, including one case where an operator guided police to a handbag thief. The CCTV service, funded by city, town, and parish councils, has recently upgraded systems in Burnham-on-Sea and Street to high-definition cameras, with ongoing upgrades in Taunton, Wellington, and Shepton Mallet.

Multi-User Path

A new 1.3-kilometre traffic-free path connecting Hamwood Viaduct to Thrupe Lane has officially opened, completing a vital section of the Somerset Circle. This scenic route promotes active travel and offers a safe passage for walkers and cyclists to explore the beautiful Mendip area.

The path provides a direct connection and features signposted cycling routes through minor roads, leading riders over the Mendip Hills to Gurney Slade and Chilcompton.

A partnership between local councils and community organisations, this project exemplifies a commitment to increasing connectivity, reducing car reliance, and promoting sustainable travel within Somerset. Under the guidance of the current Lib Dem Somerset Council administration, active travel has gained notable emphasis in recent years, highlighting the dedication to enhancing public health and accessibility.

The overarching vision for a 76-mile traffic-free circuit linking Bristol, Bath, and the Mendip Hills is steadily being realized, creating new opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the stunning landscapes of Somerset. The collaboration includes contributions from local landowners, the Strawberry Line Society, and volunteers, showcasing a unified effort towards accessible and environmentally friendly travel options.

The project has been coordinated by charitable organisation [Greenways and Cycleroutes](#), working in partnership with local councils, the [Strawberry Line Society](#), local landowners and voluntary groups. Invited guests for the opening included former HM Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset, Annie Maw, representatives from [Shepton Mallet Town Council](#), contractors [MP and KM Golding Ltd](#) and volunteers from The Strawberry Line Society, [Shepton Mallet Community Woodland](#), and [Friends of Windsor Hill Tunnels](#).

The route was officially opened by West Mendip [Councillor Ros Wyke](#), and Christopher Somerville, representative of Dinder Estate

Health

Somerset Council urges eligible residents to get their flu vaccination, as cases are already rising this season. Vaccination is crucial to prevent serious health complications, especially for those with underlying conditions.

Eligible groups include pregnant individuals, children aged 2-3, school-aged children, those aged 65 and over, and frontline health workers.

To learn more and book your appointment, residents are encouraged to visit the [NHS Flu Vaccine page](#) or contact their GP practice. Somerset Council has approved new contracts for the Discharge to Assess (D2A) service, enhancing support for residents returning home from hospital. This service offers up to six weeks of tailored assistance, promoting independence and reducing long-term care needs.

Currently assisting about 3,000 people annually, the D2A service helps lower hospital bed occupancy and speeds up recovery at home. The new contracts ensure continuity of care after May 2026.

Full details can be found via the Executive's [Decision Report \(PDF\)](#)

Care

Somerset Council invites public feedback to shape a new three-year Domestic Abuse Strategy focused on prevention, protection, and recovery. The consultation seeks input from residents, organisations, and professionals on how to effectively support those affected by domestic abuse.

The strategy will build on existing work by the Somerset Domestic Abuse Service and partner agencies, ensuring accessibility and responsiveness to community needs. It aims to outline priorities including preventing abuse, protecting at-risk individuals, strengthening professional responses, and supporting recovery.

The consultation is open until January 26. Feedback will inform the final strategy, which will be published later next year.

To participate, visit the Domestic Abuse Strategy Public Consultation page.

For support, contact the Somerset Domestic Abuse Service at 0800 69 49 999, or visit somersetdomesticabuse.org.uk. In emergencies, call 999.

Somerset's Stepping Stones team recently attended a parliamentary reception in Westminster to launch the inaugural National Supported Lodgings Week (NSLW), held from November 9 to 16, 2025. The event, titled "Host the Future," attracted over 150 attendees, including hosts and care workers from the Stepping Stones program, along with the young people they support.

The Supported Lodgings scheme allows individuals or families to offer a room and supportive environment to young people aged 18 to 21 who are leaving care. The initiative aims to help these young individuals build essential life skills necessary for independent living, including cooking, cleaning, and financial management.

The NSLW highlights the positive impact of programs like Stepping Stones and encourages more people to consider becoming hosts by sharing inspirational stories from the hosts and young people involved.

In support of National Care Leavers Month, Somerset Council illuminated County Hall in blue alongside other organizations and landmarks nationwide. For those interested in becoming Stepping Stones hosts, more information is available at fosteringinsomerset.org.uk or by calling 0800 587 9900.

Somerset Council is using the national Accelerating Reform Fund to enhance local care networks, securing £616,000 for community projects that benefit aging residents and those with disabilities.

Ten community groups and one Town Council have formed the 'Somerset Cares Alliance,' receiving grants to strengthen local support systems. The fund promotes sustainable infrastructure and access to essential services close to home.

Somerset Council is partnering with organisations across the county to observe the 16 Days of Action Against Gender-Based Violence, focusing on digital domestic abuse, which involves using technology to monitor, threaten, or isolate victims.

Running from November 25 (International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women) to December 10 (Human Rights Day), the campaign encourages community action to prevent abuse and support recovery for affected individuals. Events, drop-ins, and awareness activities will take place throughout Somerset to highlight online and digital abuse.

The Somerset Domestic Abuse Service, facilitated by the YOU Trust, offers confidential support for those affected by domestic abuse, including digital abuse. For assistance, individuals can call 0800 69 49 999, visit somersetdomesticabuse.org.uk, or email domesticabuseservice@somerset.gov.uk

Highways

In just four months, AI cameras installed on the A361 Frome Bypass have recorded over 4,500 driving offences, raising safety concerns. The offences include 4,407 instances of not wearing seat belts, 119 cases of mobile phone use, and 74 speeding violations exceeding 80 mph.

Currently, the speed limit on the road is 60 mph, but discussions are underway to potentially reduce it to 50 mph. This road has witnessed six fatalities between 2019 and 2024, including four in the past year.

Somerset Council and Avon and Somerset Police are collaborating on a road safety initiative, which includes continued use of AI cameras and a forthcoming engineering scheme aimed at enhancing road safety. Implementation of additional safety measures could begin in late 2026.

Local Community Network (LCN)

I will aim to update on Shepton Local Community Network (LCN) in my next report.

Links

Visit - Report a Problem on the Road: - A list of all reporting pages to do with roads, pavements, lighting:

[Report a problem on the road](#)

Potholes and road damage - Somerset Council repair potholes and other road defects, and maintain our roads, for the safe access of all road users:

[Potholes, road damage and edge loss](#)

Report a problem with a street light - We maintain and repair street lights to national standards to provide safe access to all road users:

[Report a problem with a street light](#)

Roads, travel and parking, road signs, markings and lighting - Includes information about non-illuminated bollards, pedestrian crossings, requesting a village nameplate or a new road sign:

[Road signs, bollards and road markings](#)

Speed limits - Request information about new or existing traffic calming measures:

[Speed limits](#)

Traffic lights -We maintain over 200 traffic light locations throughout the County:

[Traffic lights](#)

Street and roadworks - We maintain the roads and pavements that are managed at public expense in Somerset:

[Street and roadworks problems](#)

Traffic - updates and roadworks follow:

[Travel Somerset on X](#) and [Travel Somerset on Facebook](#).

All ongoing roadworks - available on the Somerset Council website interactive map

Roadworks and travel information

Somerset Waste - collection days, replacement bins or recycling bags and missed collection reporting:

Bins, recycling and waste

Travel and Tourist Information

Travel Somerset - Art, Culture, Events, History & More

Sign-up for the latest climate news from across Somerset:

Climate newsletter sign-up

Open Somerset Council Consultations - which anyone can complete and take part in shaping the future of Somerset

Somerset Council - Citizen Space - Consultations

SOMERSET COUNCIL TELEPHONE NO - 0300 123 2224

Martin Lovell 10/12/2025