

The Charltons Annual Parish Assembly

Held on Friday 8th May 2025 at 7pm

At: The Community Centre, Charlton Adam, TA11 7BE

There were 41 members of the public present, four members of the Parish Council and the Parish Clerk.

1. Welcome.

The Chairman of the Parish Council Councillor Joe Wooltorton opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Councillors Susie Crang, Karen Rowland and Kim Williams introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of The Charltons Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th May 2025 were received and approved as a true record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

3. The annual report of the Council Chairman was given to the meeting.

The Parish Council is working on speed management in the parish. We are investigating the possibility of a 20mph speed limit, and other traffic calming measures. A speed survey is now open until 30th May and resident responses are really welcomed.

A new dog bin has been fitted in Broadway Road. This has been temporarily out of action but will be available again soon. A new grit bin has been installed outside the Community Centre. Footpath posts have been repaired, with more work being planned. The council has funded a new youth leader for the next year. Wessex Internet are looking to install fibre optic broadband in the village.

There are four parish councillor vacancies, and we would like people to come and get involved.

The council has a Community Infrastructure Levy Working Group. We hold a large amount of CIL funds, and the group is looking for ideas on how to spend the money.

Applications will open for the affordable houses at the new housing development. Initially, applicants must have a local connection. Please keep an eye on the Homefinder website.

4. Report from Parish Clerk Tony Jay

At the start of the 2025-26 financial year the parish council held £41,437 in its bank accounts. At the end of this year this figure had risen to £58,989. This increase was mainly because the parish received £7,198 in CIL funding from the new housing development in The Grove during the year and because the parish council had budgeted expenditure during the year of £30,082 but actual expenditure was £22,912.

The parish currently holds £15,464 in CIL funding. An extra £21,594 is due to be received from the Grove development in 2027 meaning that there is a large amount of funds available to be spent on new projects in the parish. The parish councillors have the ultimate decision on how this money is spent, but parishioners must be consulted before decisions are made. The parish council has a CIL working group who advise the council on potential expenditure projects. This is comprised of councillors and parishioners. If any parishioner would like to join this working group, then please contact me.

The parish council precept for 2025-26 was £32,000 which means that every Band D council tax paying household pays £72.50 a year towards the running of the parish council. The parish councillors decided that this figure should remain the same for 2026-27.

In 2025-26 the parish council made grants of £3,000 to the Memorial Hall Trust and £1,575 to the Youth Club. In 2026-27 the parish council has made grants to the following organisations:

Youth Club	£7,000 (towards the provision of a youth club leader)
Memorial Trust	£3,000
Royal British Legion	£800
Somerton Library	£300
Citizens Advice Bureau	£200

There are currently four vacancies for volunteer parish councillors. If any parishioner would like to become a parish councillor, then please contact me for further details.

A discussion took place regarding s106 and CIL funding.

5. Reports from Local Groups and Organisations. These are summaries of the reports.

Church Warden

The church has priest who has been in post for nearly two years, so there is a service twice a month in one of the churches. Notices giving details of the services are on the notice boards. Five yearly reports on the electrics and fabric of the building have to be carried out by qualified inspectors. Both have come in the last 12 months. Apart from the professional fees, identified work must be done. A small centre of plaster had fallen onto the alter, so a temporary alter has needed to be set up. Both churches belong to the civil council, and we are grateful to the parish council for services the church clock. The Parochial Church Council is fortunate to have the help of volunteers who help in many ways and without them it would be difficult to keep going. Thanks to them, coffee mornings and winter warmings take place and repair work is done. If anyone could help for a couple of hours a month that would be very welcome.

Youth Club with youth club members.

The Youth Club runs lots of activities and sports, and we run theatre trips. We are grateful to the Parish Council for funding and to the hall for providing facilities.

There were 18 members at the last session. The Youth leaders are safeguarding trained and there are support structures in place.

Reading Room.

There are winter warmers events and quizzes are held. The Reading Room continues to provide a useful facility for villagers to use.

CHADS.

We run a pantomime along with another show each year. We perform in the Reading Room and all the money we make goes to village organisations.

Horticultural Society.

We have 25 members and we organise visits to local gardens and hold an annual bar-b-que. New members are always welcome.

Pickleball.

Our group was formed in 2018 and has 140 members. We enter local and national competitions.

Charltons Village Choir.

We meet in the Reading Room on Monday evenings. No experience is needed, we just come along and sing! We hold one concert a year. If anyone would like to join us they would be made very welcome.

Garden Club.

This is run in the summer and has a membership of 20 people. New members are always welcome. We visit other gardens, travelling by car, and all money raised goes to worthwhile causes. We work alongside the Horticultural Society.

Community Centre,

There have been two phases of development in the building. New fire doors have been fitted. We have disposed of the gas boiler, and have a completely new roof, with solar panels to reduce energy costs, and we have new soundproofing on the roof. Phase three is the refurbishment of the kitchen. We hope to have a new storeroom and a café area. The car park needs resurfacing. Our intention is to refurbish the changing rooms and provide an accessible toilet. A lot of time and effort has been put in by the centre volunteers to get to where we are. The finances of this work were explained, with a lot of fund raising by local people.

The Village Day will be held on 4th July this year. Volunteers are sought to help with the event., for stewarding and programme distribution. There will be a revitalised dog show this year, along with a football skills event. There will be a whole range of stalls.

Christmas Tree volunteers.

We put up the village Christmas tree each year. A coffee morning will be held in June to raise funds for the tree, and there will be a stall at the Village Day.

The Halr Wood report was read.

Hallr Wood is used most days, offering forest school to various groups and schools and a wide range of other community use, including hosting the ecotherapy element of Sweet Track's counselling courses. The Primary School and Preschool continue to have their own site 'Squirrel Camp' at the top of the woods which they use twice a week.

Wednesday Work Days and Care of the Woods: We are open on Wednesdays in term time to general volunteers and some of the young adults with additional needs who we support. We have an active 'Men's Shed' and we also support NHS referrals. We provide a cooked lunch, mostly from vegetables grown in the garden and coffee break. Anyone is welcome to visit us on Wednesdays in term time. It helps to know if you are coming, especially if it is at coffee and cake time or lunch break so we can make enough for everyone.

Community Volunteer Days; We have run various weekend volunteer days, one in December, one in March and we had an overnight camp to do our bat, moth and bird surveys in April.

Spring Open Day March 29th: We had a very busy Open Day with over 200 adults and children attending, having a go at Green Wood working and other rural crafts. Many thanks to everyone who supported and made cakes for our 'café'. It was fabulous to see such interest from village families.

Glastonbury Festival Stewarding Team donation: Once again a stewarding team have chosen to support our work at Hallr Wood. Many thanks to them for this support for the Wild Music Project which currently supports students from Avalon School but is due to work with teenage referrals from CAMHS in the Autumn.

Finances: We are non-profit making and provide any services at cost and often free. No one is turned away because of low income. We do have regular schools and clients who pay for our educational services, so we are mostly financially self reliant. Independent users of the wood, including the Charlton's Preschool and School, make nominal donations which help us buy materials and resources and help cover costs of maintenance etc. We also have a team of fabulous volunteers.

Our well-being work is mostly unfunded, and we may apply for a grant to help cover costs of these days.

Help from the Community: We are always grateful for support from villagers who respond to requests for spare wellies, cups etc. We welcome vegetable plants and spare ingredients for all the meals we cook on the camp fire. We are currently seeking cake makers to help fuel our Wednesday work days.

Charlton Open Gardens

We have an event on the 6th of June between 11am and 5pm. You can register at Charlton House. Cream teas will be served and the cost is £5.

Historical Society

We are a working society and hold the village archives, which are mostly digital but there are paper documents some of which are held at the archives in Taunton. . We are working with Charton House and their 300th anniversary of the opening of the gardens. We also help the churches and provide information for guide books. If anyone has any memories or documents about the village then can you please share them.

6. Open Public Parish Forum.

There were no questions. The Chairman invited people to talk to the councillors after the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm when refreshments were served.

Signed: Dated:Chairman