



OLD CLEEVE PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

www.oldcleeveparishcouncil.gov.uk

Our final Parish Council meeting of 2024 took place in Washford, shortly after the local devastation brought by storm Darragh. Many trees blew down and large areas within our Parish were left without electricity, broadband and telephone services. In view of the severity of the storm it may take a while for full services to be restored, with Somerset Council and utility services fully stretched. As winter brings further storms that may include heavy rain and flooding, I would like to remind everyone that we have Parish flood stores located in Washford and Roadwater. These contain equipment and sandbags for the use of our residents when there is the risk of flooding. Contact details for flood wardens are contained on our flood page on the Parish web site.

Regarding the speeding traffic through Old Cleeve, there have been further developments. I attended the Highways Subgroup of the Local Community Network [LCN] where Highways officers were in attendance. It was acknowledged that the outstanding points I raised are still to be addressed, but no timescales were given. A group of Old Cleeve residents met with the local MP to highlight the traffic problems and seek support for improvements. Highways are aware of this contact, and we must wait to see if there is any action as a result. It was reported to the LCN Subgroup that Highways employees are currently re-applying for their jobs, and many staff positions are at risk. It was also stated that service levels will not be maintained as Somerset Council focusses only on their statutory responsibilities. It is likely that Somerset Council will seek to pass some non-statutory responsibilities for Highways and Public Rights of Way to Parish Councils. We await any detailed proposals.

An email response was received by me from the Police regarding the Old Cleeve traffic. Their reply was far from satisfactory, so I am corresponding further with them. Feedback from other Parish Councils, who suffer the same traffic problems, is that the use of a Speed Indicator Device [SID] does reduce speeding. I am pleased to confirm that Cllr. Eggar has now completed his training, and we are arranging for the Parish SID to be installed in Old Cleeve. It is hoped that I will be able to report on its effectiveness in my next newsletter.

The Parish Council may consider purchasing further SIDS if they will help to improve road safety. Once the existing SID is operational we will be able to assess its effectiveness as part of evaluating whether to invest in further units. With more units to manage we will likely need more volunteers to help install and move them.

Our planned improvements to the play equipment at Washford recreation ground are slowly evolving and we are awaiting quotations and costings before we can progress the project. In the meantime, we will be replacing the broken portable football goal with a pair of new posts and nets. The main entrance to the recreation ground has been reported to Somerset Council Rights of Way as the surface has eroded, causing water to pond across the whole track whenever it rains. The initial response from Somerset Council stated that it does not cause a hazard to anybody using the track and they will not make any improvements. The Parish Council feels that the surface should be improved. The ownership of the track cannot currently be established so we have sought guidance from Somerset Council on how improvements can be achieved to benefit everybody who use this popular public path.

2025 looks as though it will provide us with many challenges, and we hope that the New Year will see us filling the remaining vacancies for Parish Councillors in our Old Cleeve and Roadwater wards.



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Anybody interested in joining the Council is welcome to contact our Clerk for more information and application forms. Comprehensive details of Parish Business may be viewed on our website and our Facebook page.

Next Parish Council meetings:

Monday 20th January at Roadwater Village Hall & Monday 17th February at the Church Rooms, Old Cleeve, both at 7.00pm.

Our meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend.

See our website for further and useful information: www.oldcleeveparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Contact for all Parish Council issues is via: clerk@oldcleeveparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Geoff Williams

Chair, Old Cleeve Parish Council