Monkton Combe Parish Council Newsletter

Annual Report 2025-2026

(This document and a comprehensive range of Monkton Combe Parish Council documents can be found on our website:- monktoncombe-pc.gov.uk)

There were no Parish Council elections this year and Councillors Lyn Alvis, James Bradby, Adelle Brenner, Penny Tranter, Mike Wareham, Des Wighton and Mark Womersley, all continued. Cllr. Des Wighton was elected as Chair, and Cllr. Mike Wareham was elected as Vice Chair at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 14th May 2024.
Very sadly, Cllr. Lyn Alvis passed away in August 2025, and his many years of service to the Parish Council and Village will be greatly missed.
The vacancy was advertised in due course and Oli Treasure was co-opted as Councillor at the meeting on the 6th January 2026.
The Clerk has indicated his intention to retire and a replacement Clerk is being sought. Geoff Davis the present Clerk will continue in post until a replacement has been found and a handover is complete. It is hoped to achieve this well before July 2027, the latest Geoff wishes to finish.

Parish Councillors and their individual responsibilities (these were reviewed, simplified and agreed at the Parish Council meeting on 10th March).

James Bradby	Church liaison, Village Hall liaison
Adelle Brenner	School Liaison, Police Liaison, Somerset Coal Canal Society Liaison
Penny Tranter	Footpaths and Bridleways, Bath Preservation Trust Representative,
Oli Treasure	Village Playground and Garden
Mark Womersley	Roads and Highways, Bath Preservation Trust
Mike Wareham – Vice Chair	Bus Shelter, Village Bus Services, B&NES Parishes liaison
Des Wighton - Chair	Planning policy and consultation, Village Hall liaison, Village Hall Car Park, Village Lock-up, Mill Lane Phone Box
Geoff Davis – Clerk	Responsible Financial Officer, Parish Notice Boards and Communication

Meetings

The Parish Council met on 6 occasions during the period 2025-2026 which were 6 meetings of the Full Council. The meeting on the 27th May 2025 was the Annual Parish Council Meeting. All meetings were held in the Village Hall, fully open to the public to attend.
The Annual Parish Meeting or Meeting of Electors took place on 28th April 2025 in the Village Hall.
Councillors also attended occasional other meetings with other Parish Councils and B&NES at joint forums and with related organisations such as The Bath Preservation Trust.

Planning

During the year we have considered a number of different planning applications for works in or near the Parish. We only comment on purely 'Planning' grounds, using Local and National planning policies for guidance which still support the purposes of Green Belts and AONBs. Comments have usually been agreed via e-mail, with as much consultation with residents as possible.
The only major development in the parish in the year had been the construction of the houses in the old quarry at Mt Pleasant, which has been named 'Pipistrelle Close' (at the PC's suggestion) as a reminder of the local bat population that were the previous residents.
B&NES Council Planning Policy have commenced development of the next LOCAL PLAN. We have participated in the various stages of Consultation for this New Local Plan, including the Housing Development Boundary Review, and in particular the Options Consultation on which we responded in detail to Sulis Club proposed Option for student accommodation, and the Somerset Coal Canal Society Options for protecting a route for re-opening the Canal as a Waterway.

Village Cleaning

The Parish Council employs Elise Rowley as the Village Sweeper to keep our public footpaths maintained and the village clean and clear of litter. This is her second year, and she is performing an excellent service to the Parish and we are very pleased with her diligent and hard work, and a huge vote of thanks is extended to her.

Footpaths and Open Spaces Maintenance

The Parish Council employs Jeff Avis Garden Services to keep the village car park area, Miss Davies's Garden, and the playground mown and maintained. Again, this is essential work and makes a very noticeable difference to the village and this fine job throughout the Parish also deserves a huge vote of thanks.
The council has also worked with B&NES Council, Landowners, and Cotswold Volunteer Wardens to resolve problems, maintain and improve footpaths and open spaces, we extend our thanks to them for this important work.
Temporary Closure of Public Footpaths BA16/2 & BA22/18, Tucking Mill Reservoir, remains in place whilst Wessex Water upgrade their water treatment facilities at the site. We requested repairs to diversion route path BA16/1, but as yet these have not been carried out.

Highways Maintenance

Shaft Road 'hump' – re-profiling of the road outside the Tithe Barn was finally completed and has resulted in a smoother and safer passage.

Tucking Mill Toads (TMT) - Tucking Mill Lane – It is understood that this took place again this year, and we await feedback from the group about the success this year.

Parish Works – Repairs and Improvements

Village Hall and Village Car Park – No works this year.

Village Playpark – The annual Playground Inspection by RoSPA Inspectors required minor works which have been completed. The Parish Council investigated the provision of a slide following last years Annual Parish Meeting. However, to comply with current legislation, existing items would need to be removed, and the cost does not therefore represent any benefit. The Parish Council will therefore look at the possibility of a new Play Park in the Paddock, behind the Village Hall.

Miss Davis Garden – Only the usual general maintenance by Jeff Avis this year.

Lockup Repairs and Maintenance – No works this year, and the Designation Listing has been amended to a Listed Building (Grade II) from Ancient Monument.

Village Interpretation Board and replacement Village Notice Board – Following repairs to the Churchyard Wall, the previous wooden Village Notice board could not be replaced as it was too damaged and rotten. A replacement board is being provided by re-using the Parish Council board from the garage which was deemed redundant. With funding from the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) the Parish Council, working with David LeTall, is also commissioning and installing a Village Interpretation Board which will give details of the buildings, points of interest and details of local wildlife around the Village. Both boards will have weatherproof doors.

Proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Projects. The Parish Council is seeking your comments and feedback on the following proposed projects on which CIL Funds would be spent. It is very unlikely that all of them could be achieved with the available £16,703 of funds. Each would require funding from other sources to be feasible. So indeed probably only one of the major projects is possible.

- New Village Playground
- Virtual Pavement – Church Lane (Between Mill Lane and Governors Field)
- Virtual Pavement – Shaft Road (Between Mount Pleasant and St. Winifreds Drive)
- Additional bench at the 'viewing' point on Shaft Road

Parish Council Finances

The Parish Council has now received £10,873 in respect of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for the Mount Pleasant Quarry development, and a further receipt of £1308.53 in respect of 22/03708/FUL 3 Tucking Mill Cottages. With a further £4,521 expected in the first half of 2026), there are expected funds totalling £16,703 available for CIL projects.

The Parish Council resolved to set the Precept at £13,485.which gives a Balanced Budget with Payments equalling Receipts for the year. This Precept figure of £13,485 is a decrease of 1.3% from the current year value of £13,661. It does, nonetheless, represent a small increase of 1.76% in the Average Household Contribution, because the Tax Base has decreased from 190.24 to 184.54 (i.e. there are fewer Council Tax payers this coming year).

Consequently Parish Council Reserves at the end of 2026-27, in the absence of any expenditure on Parish Works, CIL and otherwise would be £48,799, with £19,764 free Reserve, and the ring-fenced reserves for Miss Davis Garden of £12,332 and £16,703 of CIL,

Full details of all the Councils Finances can be found on the website at https://monktoncombe-pc.gov.uk/core-business/finance/ where the Audit is currently in progress.

B&NES Ward Councillor support - Finally, we thank Fiona Gourley and Matt McCabe, our Ward Councillors for their ongoing help and support throughout the year. Fiona Gourley has provided support from the Ward Councillors Empowerment Fund towards the costs of our Playground Improvements. She has also helped to make contact with B&NES Highways regarding the Virtual Pavement projects and continued to champion the funding of the local bus service.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held in the VILLAGE HALL at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 7th April.

The Parish Council is required to hold such a meeting, in person and in public between 1st March and 1st June each year.



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