

West Coker Parish Meeting/Chairman's Report 2026

Good evening, everyone and thank you for attending this 2026 Annual Parish Meeting.

As the current Chairperson of West Coker Parish Council, I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their support and hard work over the past year.

Following the resumption of planning matters, following the phosphate issue, there has been a steady stream of applications put before the Parish Council. Those that particularly affect the parish are the development of 9 dwellings at land off Ruddock Way, 2 further housing developments down over Bunford Hollow and the commencement of the business park, also at the bottom of Bunford.

As you can see Somerset Council is responsible for a great deal of things, whereas, we have limited influence. We do have a precept and use this on projects and maintenance throughout the Parish. We continue to benefit from the amazing hard work our Parish Ranger and his team put in to keep the Parish tidy, unblocking drains and carrying out other maintenance work as required. Thank you Tim. When the District Council was abolished and replaced by the Unitary authority, the county was divided into local community networks. These bodies were set up to be the link between the parishes and Somerset Council. We are LCN 9, which includes Yeovil. We meet quarterly and although we were sceptical about this arrangement it has brought to our attention some very interesting work carried out by various organisations and has enabled a transport working group to be meet and discuss any particular issues parishes may have directly with the local highways team.

We have been working with FWAG, the farming and wildlife advisory group, and the relevant landowners, to address flooding issues, mainly in the village. A scheme of work for sleights lane, Dibbles Lane and land above Manor Farm, Gooseacre Lane is being drawn up. This will be carried out by Somerset Council Highways Dept and the Parish Ranger.

Moving onto the Recreation Ground. Now that the ground conditions are improving, we are in the process of obtaining quotes for a footpath to be installed from the pedestrian gate to the tennis courts. Safety nets have been purchased and will be installed ahead of the upcoming cricket

season, in an attempt to prevent balls from reaching the children's play area. The football goals are being refurbished, and a new storage area is to be installed below the play area to house village games for the fete and other equipment.

Frustratingly some specific PC projects have yet to go ahead. However, the transfer of the Woodland at Sampsons Wood, and the transfer of the allotments behind Lakefieds and Font Lane are now with Somerset Council's legal department.

We continue to chase those involved in respect of the transfer of the Bunford Heights play area. With regard to this project we consulted with the residents which provided useful views on the type of play equipment they would like.

As has been published recently, some of the members of the Parish Council have indicated that they will be stepping down either in the coming months or when the election is held next year.

One of our Councillors who has served for over 25 years, including being Chairman and overseeing the new pavilion project, has already stepped down. Angus – Thank you for all you have done, whilst serving on the Parish Council and other community committees. For your help, support and guidance too.

Anita Perry

Chair of West Coker Parish Council