

Coberley Parish Council Annual Assembly 13 May 2026

Chair's Report

A review of Coberley Parish Council's (CPC) key activities from 22 May 2025 to 13 May 2026.

CPC has held 5 meetings in that period, including the meeting which immediately preceded this Assembly.

Personnel

In March, CPC co-opted **Cllr David Steele**, thereby filling the vacancy left by the resignation of Cllr **Louise Lowe** in January 2025. As a result, CPC has now returned to its full complement of five.

Sadly, CPC's Clerk and RFO, **Belinda Holder**, who had held the post since February 2022, left the Council at the end of March, but the Council is delighted to have engaged a new Clerk and RFO, **Helen Ward**, on 1 April, who brings a broad range of experience to the role.

The Council was deeply saddened by the death in February of former Councillor and Parish Clerk, **David Carlton**. It expresses its condolences to his wife, Penny and family, with thanks for the many years of valuable service which David gave to the community in both capacities.

Finance

- **Parish Council finances remain in a healthy state**
- **2025-2026 expenditure exceeded budget due to increases in employment costs and asset maintenance costs** (bus shelter repair and village green mowing)
- **Precept for 2026-27 increased to £14,000 (from £10,250)** to reflect required budget for increasing staff costs, insurance, assets and maintenance costs.
- **Significant financial activity in 2024-2025:** Salary of Clerk to the Council and related costs (principal expenditure), insurance, maintenance of assets including repair of bus shelter and mowing village green, website.
- **Full set of Accounts and Transparency Code documentation** will, upon completion of end-of-year accounting, be available on the PC's website, or by request to Clerk at info@coberleyparish.co.uk.

Planning & Environmental issues

CPC monitors all planning applications and environmental matters relevant to the Parish with a balanced approach, taking account of the criteria upon which CDC Planning Department will assess applications. Comments are submitted as appropriate.

There are several issues in the Parish which CPC has requested CDC to investigate, which potentially require **planning or environmental enforcement attention**. Of particular concern is the state of the parcel of land known as The Salad Bowl on Leckhampton Hill Road and the activities there.

Highways & Road Safety issues

The Parish Council continually monitors parish roads (maintenance & safety aspects) and works with GCC Highways to achieve solutions. CPC also maintains close communication with National Highways and its contractor, Kier Transportation, regarding the **A417 Missing Link project**.

- Key areas of attention in the past year have been the **A436 and the Ullenwood/Cowley crossroads** - design and engineering safety solutions and speed limit reduction being pursued. There continues to be a number of crashes on this stretch of road, which emphasise the urgent need for implementation of major safety measures. CPC has noted that average speed cameras have been installed on the A436 between Seven Springs and the Frogmill and considers this to be a precedent for cameras to be installed on the equally hazardous section from Seven Springs to Air Balloon roundabout, but it is thought that this is unlikely to be considered until the Missing Link work is complete. GCC has carried out work to mitigate flooding near Oxford Cottages, but has not yet resolved the problem; **Coberley village** - Surface water drainage: GCC has not yet succeeded in finding a solution to collect and channel surface water running off the fields to the north of the village to avoid impact on properties beside the

school and around the village green. CPC continues to press for a solution. CPC also continues to press GCC PROW to work with the landowner to mitigate the flow of water off the fields which is the main cause of the problem; Speeds through village: CPC has pressed for a 20mph zone to be imposed and is advised that this will now be implemented. The TPO is progressing; Large volume of traffic cutting through the village when A436 closed/congested: Causes congestion in the village and damages verges. CPC lobbies GCC and Kier to mitigate the problems through available measures, including appropriate signage; **Leckhampton Hill Road** - Poor surface and unsuitability for current and predicted traffic volumes. Flooding caused by surface water draining from new Ullenwood Court development: CPC and County Councillor pressing for mitigating solutions; Surface water drainage from fields to south of Ullenwood Court is flooding Leckhampton Hill Road and damaging new footpath through National Star College (NSC); **Ullenwood Manor Road** – CPC urging GCC attention to poor surface caused by greatly increased traffic volumes from rat-running.

- Attention to **various signage, road repairs, road-marking, pavement, gating, trees and overgrown vegetation/sightline** issues across Parish has been pursued by CPC.
- CPC remains engaged with the **A417 Missing Link** scheme progress to keep the issues it has raised to the fore, in particular, the impacts on peripheral roads in our Parish. Cllrs Piggott and McGaw represent CPC at the various communication and working groups. During the construction phase CPC is making every effort to ensure that parishioners have advance warning of road closures, diversions, highway modifications etc via the parish email network, community WhatsApp groups and the CPC web site. CPC has a **Statement of Common Ground** in place with National Highways to monitor progress specific to Coberley Parish and regular update meetings are held with National Highways, Kier and County Highways. **Key areas of concern raised: New Ullenwood junction roundabout; Leckhampton Hill Road; A436; Ullenwood/Cowley crossroads; Ullenwood Manor Road; Hartley Lane; Noise and air pollution** during construction and when in operation; **Surface water drainage** at Ullenwood roundabout; **Controlled pedestrian crossing** necessary on Leckhampton Hill Road near Crickley Hill Country Park.

GCC Highways now carries out regular monitoring of traffic speeds and volume on the minor roads, peripheral to the Missing Link work. Data is reviewed with CPC.

CPC and GCC Highways have been pressing to make a joint bid for **Designated Funding** from National Highways since mid-2022 to improve safety at Ullenwood/Cowley A436 crossroads. CPC and GCC continue to press for information on what future funding may become available, in what form, and when, in order to position themselves to submit a bid. Whatever the outcome, CPC will continue to work for the necessary improvements at this crossroads. CPC will continue to meet with National Highways, Kier (contractor), GCC and other local PCs on regular basis to closely monitor progress and address Parish concerns.

- **NO CRASH Road Safety group.** Cllr Piggott continues to represent CPC on this group which is chaired by Cllr Hodgkinson and focuses on the A436 and adjoining roads.
- CPC continues to engage with GCC Highways on issues caused by the “rat-running” on **Ullenwood Manor Road and Hartley Lane**. This practice became prominent during the closure of the A435 Charlton Hill for several months in 2024, together with the disruption caused by the A417 Missing Link work. There has been considerable damage to the surfaces of both roads and to the verges on Hartley Lane and CPC is still pursuing repair to this. Unfortunately, it is clear that since the A435 work was completed, a significant proportion of traffic has continued to use Hartley Lane. Similarly with Ullenwood Manor Road, which has become even more popular as a cut-through for traffic heading west to avoid the tail-backs on the A436 towards the Air Balloon roundabout. CPC is also pressing GCC Public Rights of Way to install prominent vehicle-facing signage to make drivers aware that both roads also host the Cotswold Way National Trail.
- Parishioners and Councillors are asked by GCC to report all matters of highway and PROW maintenance via the online system <https://fixmystreet.gloucestershire.gov.uk>
- **PROW issues** – CPC liaising with GCC Highways and PROW to monitor and implement appropriate mitigation solutions for the anti-social use by motorised vehicles of the Cotswold Way track to the east of Salterley Grange (ref AC07) and the consequent safety concerns for NSC students, walkers, horse-riders and cyclists. CPC is also urging mitigation of the surface water drainage from fields to the south of Ullenwood Court which is washing away the new footpath running through the NSC, beside Leckhampton Hill Road.

Winter Provisioning

- CPC works with GCC to ensure that **salt & grit bins** are refilled in Autumn and that small back-up stocks are held in the Parish. Cllr Beynon has led CPC's liaison with GCC to seek their agreement to the grit bin locations around the Parish and ensure that all bins are on GCC's schedule for refilling. He also secured the loan of a snow plough attachment from GCC which will be deployed by local contractor, Rod Noble, in the event of minor parish roads requiring snow clearance. This resource was called upon in January. CPC has approved expenditure for a more versatile snow plough attachment which would be jointly funded by GCC Highways.
- CPC has undertaken replacement of various damaged **salt/grit bins** around the Parish. Further work is required.

Assets

CPC continues to employ a **grass-cutting service** for the village green.

CPC undertook refurbishment of the **bus shelter** at the A435/Coberley Road junction. The major structural work (roof) was carried out by professional contractors. Councillors volunteered to carry out minor works and refurbishment which is ongoing.

CPC is in the process of refurbishing/replacing the parish noticeboards. Having been donated a noticeboard by Birdlip, Cllr Bullock kindly restored it to replace the existing dilapidated notice board in Coberley village. In the coming year, it is planned that the board at Ullenwood (adjacent to Barbers Wood) will be restored. Failing that, it will be replaced. A larger board is required at Salterley Grange.

CPC is investigating ownership of the common land between Ham Mead and Coberley Court. Documentation has been obtained from the Gloucestershire Records Office to indicate that ownership rests with CPC, but it is understood that another party has attempted to claim it via Land Registry. Cllr Beynon is leading this investigation.

Other Issues

CPC is required to nominate a representative to the board of trustees of the **Arthur Connelly Trust**, a charity set up to relieve elderly persons resident in the Parish of Coberley who are in conditions of need, hardship, or distress. This role is fulfilled by Cllr Chris Bullock.

CPC encourages parishioners to visit the **Parish web site (www.coberleyparish.co.uk)** for information on the Council and its activities and to submit enquiries and comments.

CPC is most grateful to Coberley School for allowing use of its Hall to conduct meetings throughout the year

Cllr Duncan McGaw
Chair – Coberley Parish Council
13 May 2026