

## **Chairman's Report**

I am pleased to present the Chairman's Report for the past twelve months, during which the Parish Council has continued to carry out its duties on behalf of the residents of South Cadbury and Sutton Montis with diligence, impartiality, and a commitment to preserving the character of our two villages.

### **Council Administration**

During the year, the Council received the resignation of our Clerk and Financial/Proper Officer, Mrs Cherry Toop, who stepped down from her position. The Vice Chairman, Mr Mike Toop, also resigned during this period. The position of Vice Chairman is currently vacant and will be filled at the next meeting of the Council, once a candidate has been identified and duly proposed and seconded.

At an Extraordinary Meeting held on 19 March 2026, the Council unanimously agreed to appoint Isobel Ronson as the Clerk and Financial/Proper Officer. Her appointment was subsequently confirmed at the full Council meeting on 26 March 2026. The Council looks forward to working with Isobel and supporting her as she assumes her responsibilities.

There remains one Casual Vacancy for a parish councillor, which the Council hopes to fill by co-option. We warmly welcome applications from anyone who may be interested. If you would like to find out more or wish to join the Council, please speak to the Clerk or any of the councillors for further information.

### **Highways and Transport**

The Clerk has continued to report to Somerset Council a range of highway disrepair issues, including potholes, roadside verge erosion, worn lines and signs, and blocked storm drains and gullies. There is growing concern that road conditions are deteriorating in both villages. Unfortunately, owing to the significant financial challenges faced by Somerset Council, repair work is prioritised strictly according to urgency, with no known timescales for when many of these issues will be addressed.

We are grateful for the continued support of our Somerset Councillors, Nicola Clark and Henry Hobhouse, both of whom have worked hard on our behalf to raise local concerns at county level.

The most pressing highways concern for the Parish Council and the wider community remains the excessive volume of HGV traffic using the very rural road between Sutton Montis and Queen Camel. This ongoing issue has adversely affected residents not only in our parish but also in Queen Camel, Sparkford, and Corton Denham. The working party formed by the four parish councils has worked tirelessly—through meetings, correspondence, and engagement with relevant authorities—to reduce or prevent this

movement of HGVs. Regrettably, despite these sustained efforts, no effective solution has yet been secured.

### **Planning Matters**

Planning has continued to form a significant part of the Council's work. The most substantial application considered during the year was:

**Planning Application 26/00272/FUL – Meadow View, Sutton Montis Road** *Demolition of existing dwellings and outbuildings; erection of four new bungalows; conversion of existing barn to garage and store; ancillary works.*

The Council undertook a detailed examination of the proposal, informed by representations from neighbouring residents. After careful consideration, the Council resolved that it was unable to support the application on several concerns. These objections were formally submitted to Somerset Council for consideration.

### **Community Engagement**

The Council continues to welcome the participation of residents at meetings, and the contributions made by members of the public have been constructive and valued. Their involvement ensures that the Council's decisions remain grounded in the lived experience and priorities of the community.

### **Grants Considered During the Year**

The Council considered several grant applications during the year, and the following decisions were made:

1. Yeovil Town Council – Application towards the refurbishment of the Octagon Theatre: **deferred** for future reconsideration.
2. St Thomas à Becket Church – **£250** approved for vegetation maintenance of the churchyard.
3. Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Montis – **£250** approved for vegetation maintenance of the churchyard.
4. South Cadbury Village Hall – **£850** approved for vegetation maintenance of the playing field.
5. Sutton Montis Village Hall – **£100** approved towards hall maintenance costs.
6. South Cadbury Village Hall – **£100** approved towards hall maintenance costs.
7. Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance – **£100** approved.
8. Citizens Advice Somerset – **£100** approved.
9. South Somerset Community Access Transport – **£100** approved.

## **Meetings and Governance**

The Council has met regularly throughout the year, with additional extraordinary meetings convened when required. All meetings have been conducted in accordance with statutory requirements, with agendas and minutes published to ensure transparency and public accessibility.

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to record my thanks to my fellow councillors—John Griffiths, Peter Cook, Liz Tabor, and Mike Semmons—for their continued commitment and thoughtful contributions to parish business. I also extend thanks to the residents who attend meetings, raise concerns, and support the work of the Council.

## **Conclusion**

The Council remains committed to safeguarding the rural character of South Cadbury and Sutton Montis, supporting the wellbeing of residents, and ensuring that parish governance is conducted with integrity and accountability. We look forward to the year ahead and to continuing our work on behalf of the community.