

Local Community Network

Dowsborough LCN meeting notes Tuesday 31st March 2026 Stogursey Village Hall

Attendees:

Chris Morgan,	Chair / Stogursey PC
Cllr Mike Caswell	Vice chair
Sue Goss	Stogursey PC
Fodo Higginson	SALC
John Vassalli	Durleigh PC
Richard Hubbard	Wembdon PC
Karen Scott	Kilve & Holford PC
Connie Sanders	Otterhampton PC
Tina Gardner	Otterhampton PC & Fiddington PC
PCSO Daryl Screech	Avon & Somerset Police
Steve Dury	SC Nature Recovery & Partnerships Manager
Anne Shilton	SC LCN Link Officer for Dowsborough
Sam Murrell	SC Link Officer

Virtual attendees:

Debbie Harris	Village agent
Cllr Hugh Davies	
Paul King	Wembdon PC

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Apologies received from:

Cllr Gill Slocombe

Simon Street, Spaxton PC

Over Stowey PC

Mark Weston, Rep for MP

Serena Serjeant, Charmaine Dyne, Jason Routley – Avon & Somerset Police

Sam Tyson, Tara Maxamed – Forestry England

Joanna Whitehead, SC

John Roberts, SALC

Bryony Carner, Stockland Bristol parish meeting.

2. Local Policing update

PCSO Daryl Screech presented an update on local policing matters and the slides are attached to these notes. The area covers not only Dowsborough but also part of Bridgwater and it is difficult to differentiate the statistics for Dowsborough from those of Bridgwater. C Morgan and M Caswell enquired about anti social behaviour (ASB) in Bridgwater in particular. PCSO Screech explained that they were waiting appointment of a new officer to enhance their presence in the town centre in particular, whilst balancing it with a presence in rural areas, back office work and other demands on their time.

3. Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy – Steve Dury, Nature Recovery & Partnerships Manager

S Dury presented a number of slides regarding the Somerset Nature Recovery Strategy, published the previous week. This strategy will play a part in actions and planning across the Council and is hoped that will also be taken into account across the wider audience. Somerset's Nature Recovery Strategy has 8 Habitat themes, with 42 priority outcomes plus 153 Actions to support 150 priority species. Although the strategy is not enforceable, it will be used to colour decisions within planning, highways and other departments. It is hoped that town and parish councils will also use the document when considering plans and future works. The full strategy document can be found at www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/somersets-local-nature-recovery-strategy/.

F Higginson reminded the PC's that a small amount of funding is still available for smaller PC's if they wish to undertake a project as part of the strategy if it linked with health and well being.

J Vassalli asked if this would be a statutory consultation document as part of the planning process. S Dury replied that it is not a statutory consultee but that the strategy has to be taken into account and the evidence contained should be considered.

4. Agree notes from last meeting, December 2025

Notes were agreed. A Shilton gave an update on her actions:

- The Slinky contact had been given to F Higginson & C Conlon.
- Highways working group in January 2025 was moved online at short notice with only one officer attending as everyone else was redeployed to assist with the Storm Chandra flooding for which a major incident had been called. The next highways meeting is planned for Thursday 16th April 2026, 10 am – 12 noon at the youth club building the Stogursey's Victory Hall.
- The Emergency Planning workshop on 23rd March 2026 had been cancelled due to lack of bookings. If people are still interested, please contact A Shilton who will collate numbers for another session,

Meantime the Somerset Prepared Day will take place on 21st October 2026, at Milfield School in Street.

- A written response had been requested from CDS and SC but no response had been received.

5. Actions arising not covered elsewhere

No actions arising – all new actions are in a table below.

6. Transport meeting report from 24th March 2026

An online meeting had taken place to explore who might be interested in taking forward the issue of rural transport across the LCN and to explore the topic further. There is a lot of anecdotal evidence regarding transport but not so easy to find evidence or statistics. From those that attended, it was considered useful to gather evidence from local residents and a simple survey would be produced. The PC's were asked if they would help with its distribution across the LCN. The next online Teams meeting for this would be on 15th April 2026, 10.30 am; please contact the Link Officer for a Teams invite.

After further discussion, it was decided to make Rural Transport the topic for the June meeting. Link Officer to contact various speakers including the Bus Users group, First Bus, SC's head of transport. Further suggestions are welcome.

7. Any other business

Connectivity. Cllr M Rigby had been contacted by email regarding continuing poor connectivity in Dowsborough but no reply had been received. Cllr M Caswell expressed his disappointment, and another request would be made to Cllr Rigby for an update on the situation which remained unacceptable.

8. Next Meeting: 17th June 2026, Spaxton Village Hall (Pavilion Room)

AGM, including voting for chair and vice chair. Currently one of these should be an elected member. Core members of the LCN have votes and are particularly invited to this meeting. Theme – rural transport.

9. Next years proposed dates agreed but subject to change:

8th September & 8th December 2026 &
9th March & 7th June 2027

Date	Action	Completed by/date
31/03/26	Slides from LNCS to be circulated with meeting notes	Link officer. 14/4/26
	Contact SALC for remaining possible funding for parish councils for health and well being projects	PCs.
	Request for people with rural transport concerns / issues or any particular interest, to come forward for Teams meeting on 15 th April 2026 – contact link officer for online invite	all
	Investigate including Bridgwater & Taunton colleges in transport discussions.	F Higginson & C Conlon
	Cllr M Rigby to be contacted regarding connectivity and apparent lack of support and his response requested.	Link Officer / Cllr M Caswell
	The next highways meeting is planned for Thursday 16 th April 2026, 10 am – 12 noon at the youth club building the Stogursey's Victory Hall.	Link Officer
	Link Officer to contact various speakers for rural transport theme meeting in June, including the Bus Users group, First Bus, SC's head of transport. Further suggestions are welcome.	Link Officer
	Further suggestions are welcome on theme of Rural Transport. Please pass to link officer.	All / Link officer