Walton Parish Council
Financial Report
For year ending 31st March 2025

Balance brought forward:	*68,795.24*
Plus	
Annual Precept received:	*38,909.88*
Total other receipts:	*1,638.03*
Less	
Staff Costs:	*15,914.60*
All other payments:	*31,522.38*
Equals	
Balance to carry forward:	*61,906.17*

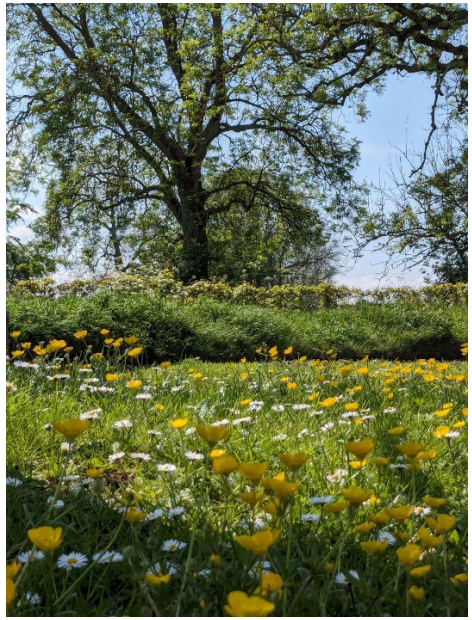
Total of all bank accounts =	*61,906.17*
Total of fixed assets owned =	*81,009.06*
Total borrowings =	*6,212.11*

Financial reports for the year can be found on the Parish Council Website - www.waltonsomerset-pc.gov.uk

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Walton Parish Council

Annual Report April 2025



[Spring - Mildred Road verge]

Report from the Chairman –

Since April last year, many of the council's plans have come to fruition, thanks to very energetic and skilled contributions from many of the Councillors. I will call out a few of them below. Unfortunately, this year one of our members has had to step down due to work pressures and another will shortly step down, so we now have a vacancy and would welcome applications. If you feel you can support your community by giving your thoughts and some of your time to the Council, we would be glad to hear from you.

We, as a community, supported a number of good causes through grants. We invited them to present their activities at the Annual Meeting of the Parish so that the parishioners can see what services they provide the community. Some accepted and had stalls in the hall on the day.

To review this past year…councillors have held the normal monthly council meetings, as well as several interim planning meetings. We had a stall at the Walton Fun Day to promote participation and had some good feedback on planning. The displays on Walton history was also of interest to many people there. Councillors erected the pergola and benches in the East Mead field, painted and stocked the book exchange, kept the Speed Indicator Device powered and working, maintained the play park, put up the signs about dog waste, interviewed people and created content for the newsletter and many other tasks to improve our village.

We review all planning applications in the parish. There were many domestic planning applications most of which were accepted, but there were two worrying planning matters to report. Whilst the application for the Solar Park to the west of the parish has not proceeded, the development of a housing estate on South Street, which was objected to by residents, Parish and Mendip council alike, has been approved on appeal. The same development company has issued a request for comment on a plan to develop a further 70+ houses on land behind the pub. While this is not yet a planning application, it is a potentially significant development that would alter the character of the village significantly. Please do comment to the developer on the matter if you want your thoughts taken into consideration.

The neighbourhood plan is an ongoing long-term project. In the light of the changes to government planning guidelines, it is more important than ever that we have some local plans in place. We have commissioned professionals to assess Walton's housing needs and to help create some development guidelines. These will contain instructions as to what developments should look like, the materials used, the environmental aspects associated with them. Both these reports were entirely funded through government initiatives.

The rebranded and enhanced newsletter was well received. Its cost has not increased: the changes have been funded by including local advertising. We have started adding articles on local people and introducing things for the younger readers to do. Any further suggestions or contributions would be welcome.

Our ranger Matt, who does a great job helping the council maintain the village, has been hard at work this year and the village is now very well maintained and attractive. The East Mead field recreation area has been improved, with a pergola and more seating, as well as wildflower areas. Bob and Lewis Collins along with Richard Vowles and Simon Loader have been great contributors there. Please note that the area is for the enjoyment of parishioners young and old. Therefore, please do keep your dogs on leads and make use of the dog bin.

Another initiative that has come into operation is the book exchange in the old telephone box. It is well used and has been a great success. My thanks particularly to Lewis, Lian and Rachel for their work on this.

The Unitary Authority – Somerset Council, is under severe financial pressure. They have reduced some services and transferred the cost of some, such as bin emptying, onto the Parish councils. We have managed to keep our costs at much the same level as last year for the like-for-like items but, unfortunately, we have had to increase the precept to fund these additional costs. We do, however, continue to have a lower rate than the majority of the parishes in our region.

In closing, I would like to thank all the councillors, clerk, ranger and members of outside groups such as Speedwatch for their assistance and efforts in making the year successful and progressing the work of the council. There is much still to do and many challenges to face in the coming year, but your council will endeavour to make the best choices and take the appropriate actions on your behalf.

John Harvey