

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Trull formed part of Taunton Deane manor until enfranchisement. After 1832 the civil parish, identical to the ecclesiastical parish, was in the Western Somerset constituency and from 1836 in Taunton's poor-law union. In 1874 it became part of Taunton's rural sanitary district and from 1894 until 1974 was in Taunton Rural District. In 1921 the north-east area from Hovelands farm to Batts Park and Queen's College became part of Taunton Borough. Further borough extension was resisted in 1964 and in 1969 part of Pitminster was added to Trull. From 1974 the whole ancient parish lay in Taunton Deane borough district, from 2019 until 2023 Somerset West and Taunton District.¹ In 1986 a new Comeytrove civil parish included the northern built-up area of Trull parish between the Trull and Wellington roads. It was abolished in 2023 and for civil purposes, with Orchard Grove, was absorbed into the new Taunton parish.²

MANORIAL ADMINISTRATION and TITHINGS

There were three tithings: Woodland in the south in Holway manorial hundred, Dipford in the centre and west and North Trendle in the east in Hull hundred, although boundaries were fluid. Tenants owed duty as tithingman, bedel, reeve and receiver, although some were reluctant to serve in the 17th century.³ Regular manorial courts were held despite problems finding jurors. Except for the 1640s, 1680s and 1690s, records are complete from the mid 16th century until enfranchisement.⁴ Quasi-manorial court rolls survive for 1509-28 for Cerney covering tenancies, ditching and illegal tree cutting, Later Cerney was administered as a freehold of Taunton Deane manor.⁵

¹ Youngs, *Local Admin Units*, 440, 673, 675; SHC, D/D/ord/24/3; D/P/stapg/7/1.

² Ibid. PAM 2637.

³ SHC, DD/SP/10, 71; D/P/tru/23/14-16, 23, 41; Q/REI/35/28.

⁴ Hants. RO, M11/59/C1/19/1-3; SHC, DD/DP/SP/1-63.

⁵ TNA, SC 2/169/8.

PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATION

By the 18th century the churchwardens paid for church maintenance, the poor, vagrants, taking people to gaol, repairing bridges, perhaps in church paths and stoning Dipford water, presumably the ford. There were waywardens by 1702.⁶ In 1822 a select vestry of 12 men was appointed to assist the overseers.⁷ Four overseers were appointed in 1895 but three in 1912. In 1910 an assistant overseer was paid £10 a year and the Board of Guardians appointed a rate collector.⁸

In 1831 the parish bought 40 staffs for constables, although there were only three, and handcuffs in 1844. There were two resident magistrates c.1836. Offenders were reputedly from Taunton leading 43 men in 1840 to petition against establishing county police.⁹ The churchyard stocks were used to punish disorder and drunkenness as late as 1855.¹⁰

From 1840 or earlier the minister chaired vestry meetings.¹¹ On 15 December 1894 Trull parish council held its first meeting and appointed officers. Six councillors were elected in 1896 and met six times a year dealing with charities, footpaths, services and housing. Twenty-eight women were among 42 occupiers and one lodger who could vote in county and parish elections but not parliamentary ones. There were traffic and litter problems but as late as 1953 requests for a village 30 mph limit were refused.¹² In 2026 nine parish councillors met monthly.¹³

⁶ SHC, D/P/tru/4/1/2 (1701-10), 4/1/3, 4/1/4 (1745).

⁷ SHC, D/P/tru/9/1/1, 13/2/6.

⁸ SHC, D/PC/tru/7/1/1-2.

⁹ SHC, D/P/tru/4/1/5 (1831, 1844); Q/AP/1/1/3, 1/84; TNA, HO 73/4.

¹⁰ SHC, D/P/tru/4/1/B (1798), 28/2; Hallam, *Trull*, 47: *Taunton Courier* 4 Jan. 1855: BNA accessed 24 Apr. 2026.

¹¹ SHC, D/D/va/1/12, 2/12, 12/12, 21/12.

¹² SHC, D/PC/tru/1/1/1 (1895-6. 1906, 1914), 1/2/1 (1895, 1906, 1914, 1923, 1928), 2/4/2.

¹³ trullparishcouncil.org.uk: accessed 9 June 2026.

In 1873 many cottages were insanitary, village drainage was bad and new houses had privies over a watercourse. There were some highway drains by the 1880s and sewage tanks by the 1900s.¹⁴ In 1932 a special meeting authorised a rate for a mains water supply and c.1933 it was laid on at Comeytrowe.¹⁵ In the 1940s electricity and gas were supplied from Taunton, the former since 1931, and a public telephone was provided.¹⁶ In 1942 monthly rubbish collections began but attempts to get sewers, better bus services, bus shelters and street lighting failed, partly due to fear of higher rates. Village sewerage was not provided until 1962, by which date new estates at Comeytrowe had sewers.¹⁷ The Sherford stream remained too polluted for fish in 1965.¹⁸ Limited tipping of motorway waste was allowed near the service station in 1980.¹⁹

Trull village and adjoining area were designated a conservation area in 1999 and the parish council wished to limit further development, extensive street lighting and parking changes that would increase traffic speed.²⁰

¹⁴ Green, *Trull and Staplehay*, 14; SHC, A/EPF/250/4/1 (1873), 8-9; D/R/ta/32/3/35; DD/CT/53.

¹⁵ SHC, D/PC/tru/1/1/1 (1932), 1/2/1 (1933).

¹⁶ SHC, A/BRP/1/3; A/AGH/1/343

¹⁷ SHC, D/PC/tru/1/1/1 (1942, 1945, 1951, 1954, 1956-7, 1959); D/R/ta/24/1/756; Green, *Trull and Staplehay*, 14.

¹⁸ SHC, DD/WI/152/10/1.

¹⁹ SHC, C/SIAD/5/19.

²⁰ SHC, D/PC/tru/2/1/1 (2001).