

**Parish of Ducklington
Annual Parish Meeting
Ducklington Village Hall, Main Room
Thursday 28 May 2026 – 7.00 pm**

Minutes

1. Welcome by Parish Council Chairman

Cllr Duthie opened the meeting at 7.00 pm and welcomed five members of the public to the Annual Parish Meeting. He noted that this was a welcome improvement on the previous year.

2. Present (and apologies for absence)

Parish Councillors: David Duthie (Chairman)
 Matthew Barker (Vice-Chairman)
 Jo George
 John Dunsdon
 John Smyth
 Sarah Varnom
 Peter Almgill

Also Present: Cllr Thomas Ashby (Oxfordshire County Councillor)
 Cllr Liam Mackenzie (West Oxfordshire District Councillor)

Parish Clerk: Thom Rhodes, Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer [Covered in lieu by
Miranda Rhodes]

Apologies were received from the following Parish Councillors:

Paul Lishman
Angela Dowley

3. Consideration of minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 24 April 2025

The Chairman noted that the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting were brief. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24 April 2025 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Cllr Thomas Ashby – Oxfordshire County Councillor Report

Cllr Ashby provided the following update:

Fire Stations: The Council successfully prevented the proposed closure of three Oxfordshire fire stations at Henley, Woodstock, and Bampton.

Dix Pit Booking System: The County Council introduced a new booking system for Dix Pit to address usage by out-of-county residents. Cllr Ashby noted that while it functions adequately, it is not ideal and will be subject to evaluation.

Local Authority Restructuring: The government is expected to confirm the structure of local authorities next month. Elections to a shadow authority are planned for next year, with a view to establishing the new council in time for May 2028.

Parish Signage: A request from a local parish council to explore improved signage across the area was noted. The County Council has been reluctant to introduce further street furniture; Cllr Ashby undertook to raise the matter with the new leader of the County Council.

Witney Library: The library has reopened following an extensive refurbishment programme.

Potholes: A previously reported pothole has been repaired. The Council continues to monitor highway maintenance issues.

5. Cllr Liam Mackenzie – District Councillor Report

Cllr Mackenzie provided the following update:

Local Plan and Housing Allocations: The West Oxfordshire District Local Plan is at an advanced stage. Significant housing development is anticipated in the area, including approximately 1,200 to 1,800 dwellings between Ducklington and Curbridge, a further 2,000 on the east side of Brize Norton, and 1,000 north of Carterton. Cllr Mackenzie acknowledged that while the scale of development is unavoidable given national planning policy, the focus must be on working constructively with developers and partner



authorities to secure maximum community benefit, including leisure facilities, NHS capacity, and school provision.

The Moors (Application No: 24/02878/RES): The application remains at the same stage. Cllr Mackenzie confirmed he has been engaging with the Planning Officer and has drafted a proposal to progress the matter. Flood risk remains a material consideration; outline approval was given in 2023 and a reserved matters application is not typically refused without significant grounds.

Sewage Infrastructure: The existing sewage treatment plant will require expansion and upgrading before additional housing can be accommodated. Cllr Mackenzie confirmed this will be a primary concern in forthcoming planning consultations.

Transport: Proposals are under consideration for a new rail link between Oxford and Carterton. Housing proposals within walking distance of proposed transit corridors will receive planning priority. Cllr Mackenzie noted this could have significant implications for the local area.

Agricultural Development: A planning application for an additional storage barn at a site on the Aston road has been submitted and approved.

Faded Street Signs: Cllr Mackenzie confirmed that replacement of faded street signs across Ducklington is expected to be progressed by the end of summer.

6. Parish Council Report – Chairman of the Parish Council

Cllr Duthie presented his annual report on behalf of the Parish Council, highlighting the following:

Personnel: The Council thanked Jenny Greenway for taking over the management of the parish website from Sarah Power; Emma Buckard for her continued work editing the Village Newsletter; and Julie Paget for her outstanding contribution to keeping the village streets clear of litter.

New Councillors: John Smyth was co-opted before Christmas, and Angela Dowley has since also been co-opted to the Council.

Clerk Transition: Steve Smith retired as Parish Clerk following a distinguished period of service. Cllr Duthie paid tribute to his contribution in modernising the Council's working practices. Thom Rhodes has taken up the role of Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

Arts Trail: The Arts Trail project has been completed, fulfilling the objectives of the S106 funding secured from the Travelodge development.

Village Events Committee: A new Events Committee has been established and has driven a range of successful community events including VE Day, VJ Day, Apple Pressing, and the Christmas Fair.

Road Safety: The Council is actively pursuing a 20 mph speed limit on the A415 and is seeking to secure the installation of a speed radar device.

EV Charging: New electric vehicle charging points to be installed at Ducklington.

Grants: The Council has awarded grants to the Sports Club, Witney Town Council, and Citizens Advice.

7. Annual Accounts of Ducklington Parish Council

The Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Thom Rhodes, presented the unaudited Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the financial year ending 31 March 2026 via written statement. Copies of the Statement of Accounts were made available to those present.

The full financial statement, including the accounts summary and compliance notes, is appended to these minutes at Appendix A.

There were no questions from the public on the accounts.

8. Matters raised by Members of the Parish

Five members of the public were present. No matters were formally raised by members of the parish.

9. Close of meeting by Chairman of the Parish Council

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.26 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairman, Ducklington Parish Council

APPENDIX A

Clerk and RFO Financial Statement

Annual Parish Meeting – 28 May 2026

Year Ending 31 March 2026

I am pleased to present the unaudited Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (the AGAR) for the financial year ending 31 March 2026.

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, in accordance with the Practitioners' Guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance.

For the year ending 31 March 2026, the Council received a precept of £43,320.99 from West Oxfordshire District Council. Total receipts for the year amounted to £66,261.24, with total payments of £89,274.98. The Council's closing bank balance at 31 March 2026 stands at £44,590.74. The Council carries no borrowings whatsoever.

The higher payments figure this year reflects significant activity on parish project work of £27,274.42, alongside routine expenditure on grounds maintenance, utilities, insurance, and staffing. This investment is a direct reflection of the Council's commitment to improving and maintaining the village and its assets on behalf of residents.

The AGAR has been prepared and will be submitted to our external auditor, Moore, by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2026. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the accounts and AGAR will be made available for public inspection and published on the parish council website in due course.

Copies of the Statement of Accounts are available on request by emailing clerk@ducklingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Thom Rhodes

Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

Ducklington Parish Council

28 May 2026