

**MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2026
in the Lilac Room, Village Hall commencing at 7.30 pm**

29.26 Parish Councillors Present: David Duthie (Chairman)
Matthew Barker
John Dunsdon
Jo George
Paul Lishman
John Smyth
Peter Almgill
Richard Border

In Attendance: Cllr Thomas Ashby (OCC)
Liam MacKenzie (Prospective District Councillor)
Ben Morrel Allen (Prospective District Councillor)

30.26 Parish Councillors' Apologies: Sarah Varnom

31.26 Public Participation

The opportunity was provided for public participation; however, no members of the public requested to speak, and no comments were received.

32.26 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 4 February 2026:

Cllr Duthie requested removal of part of item 27.26 (c) **RESOLVED** all in agreement and Cllr Duthie to Action further.

Cllr George noted that 23.26 (9b) failed to mention "Village Hall website is generating bookings, but, it is still early days for the new website"

Minutes to be signed at the April Meeting following amendment.

33.26 County Council (OCC) / District Council (WODC) Matters:

Cllr Thomas Ashby (OCC) reported:

1. Highways and Infrastructure

- **Pothole Remediation:** Significant defects along Witney Road and Standlake Road have been formally reported. Repair orders have been issued with a 28-day completion mandate. Should these works remain outstanding beyond this timeframe, the matter will be escalated directly to the Director of Highways.

- **Lane Rental Scheme:** A new initiative is set to commence whereby utility companies will be charged up to **£2,500 per day** for highway occupations. This financial lever is designed to mandate better coordination between utility providers and reduce consecutive road disruptions.
- **Witney Road Parking:** Thames Valley Police (TVP) have been briefed on local parking concerns and will provide enforcement support subject to resource availability. Ongoing discussions are held with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) regarding structural solutions, including the potential for village-funded white lining.

2. Planning and Development

Continued dialogue is being maintained with the Planning Director regarding the Local Plan and spatial options.

- **Site Designations:** It is confirmed that The Moors is currently excluded from spatial options. However, development remains slated for Standlake Road, alongside a proposed 1,200-dwelling development between Ducklington and Curbridge.
- **Strategic Protections:** Advocacy continues to ensure the Ducklington Lane/Lidl/Hotel corridor is protected from over-development and that the Sewage Treatment Plant remains accessible and is not landlocked by new builds.

3. Emergency Services and Public Assets

- **Fire Service Consultation:** Oxfordshire County Council is currently reviewing feedback regarding the proposed closure of three fire stations, specifically Woodstock and Eynsham. Further updates will follow once the review is finalised.
- **Public Conveniences:** As part of West Oxfordshire District Council's (WODC) estate rationalisation ahead of Local Government Reorganisation, the facilities at **The Leys** are scheduled for closure. The toilets located near the former Blockbuster car park will remain operational.
- **EV Infrastructure:** The EV Team is scheduled to begin the installation of charging points at the Parish Council Car Park, providing essential infrastructure for visitors and residents without private off-street parking.

4. Education and Community Safety

- **Secondary School Allocations:** 85% of applicants were successfully allocated to their first-choice school. The appeals process remains open until 31st March. Residents requiring guidance on the appeals procedure are encouraged to make contact for referral to the relevant department.
- **Police Presence:** Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) are conducting targeted outreach in the village. This initiative focuses on supporting vulnerable residents by providing education on doorstep rights and handling unannounced callers.

Cllr Adrian Walsh (WODC) was not present and had not sent a written report

34.26 Parish Councillors - Disclosure of interests on agenda items

Cllr Smyth declared an Other Registrable Interest in item 10 f) on the agenda as a Trustee of the Ducklington Sports Club.

35.26 PLANNING

- a) Application No: **24/02878/RES** - Land East of Witney Rd, Ducklington (the Moors) - Reserved Matters Application for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale together with associated works for 105 dwellings.

Applicant: Mr John Brooks

Town and Country Planning Act

- The Clerk has been chasing for: The modelling data.
- Cllr Barker reported that more Aerial Photographs have been received recording recent Flooding of The Moors.

Ongoing Actions and Council Strategy: To ensure WODC reaches a decision based on robust, independent evidence, the following actions are underway:

- GWP Review: Full analysis will commence as soon as WODC releases the requested modelling data.
- Technical Liaison: GWP's final findings will be shared with both the EA and WODC to ensure independent data informs the official statutory commentary.
- Empirical Evidence: The Council continues to collate photography of the site during active flood events to provide the EA with "real-world" visual evidence of the site's behaviour.

RESOLVED: To note the proactive steps taken to scrutinise the flood risks via independent experts and to continue pressing WODC for the release of the necessary modelling data.

b) Stonesfield Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Lishman offered to review and send comments to all via email

c) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Lishman reported that timeline running to schedule and thanked those that had forwarded pieces on Village content

36.26 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Hotel

In Cllr Varnoms absence nothing further to report.

b) **Village Hall**

Cllr George provided a verbal report.

Maintenance and Facilities:

- Boilers: The Boilers have now been replaced.
- Gigaclear renewal information has been forwarded to Gigaclear
- Defibrillator location and Azure quote for wiring, etc discussed.

c) **CCTV Camera Log**

Broadsword had attended to a non working camera. A credit had been received from Broadsword as this was attending to a recent repair.

Report Log to be completed.

RESOLVED: Clerk to update Repair Log.

d) **Village Newsletter**

Councillors are reminded to submit articles for publication in the April / May Village Newsletter (Issue 237) to Emma Buckard: newsletter@ducklingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Please note the deadline for entries is 13 March 2026.

Newsletter Printing Quotes: Carried forward to April Meeting when Cllr Lishman will bring samples along.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the draft text for the website promotional notice in the next newsletter.
2. To defer the selection of a preferred printer pending further investigation into the Council's ability to facilitate online transactions.
3. That the Clerk investigates the acquisition of a Council purchase card (with associated spending limits and oversight) and reviews the Financial Regulations to ensure compliance with audit requirements.
4. To verify if the credit terms mentioned by online suppliers (specifically Mixam) are compatible with the Council's existing financial procedures.

e) **Projects Committee**

Sensory Garden Project:

Cllr Barker informed the meeting that a Work Party was planned for the coming Saturday. Further works to the Hedge were planned along with installing the Posts and Armillary and spreading of Topsoil. Updated quotes for plants are coming in and should be available for April Meeting.

Section 106 and Art Trail Update

Cllr Barker reported that Christopher Townsend hoped to have the 2 pieces ready by 28th March 2026.

f) Nature Plan / Wild Ducks

The Council received a verbal report from Cllr George regarding upcoming community engagement and strategic plans for the village's natural environment.

A meeting has been set up with WODC Nature Recovery on 11th March 2026.

g) Village Pond Restoration:

Pollarding is due. Cllr Duthie mentioned that Dick Rudd, who has previously done the work, has offered to meet and discuss what is needed. Once pollarded dredging of the bottom of the pond will be needed. Smiths undertook this last time with Paul Hutchinson providing the grounds for the arisings

RESOLVED ; To contact Max Everett regarding pollarding

h) Village Events Committee

A Vote was held on the distribution of Raised income from the Events Groups Christmas Events and Calendar Sales as Clerks Briefing Pack.

Proposed by Councillor Border Seconded Councillor Dundsdon

RESOLVED Passed Nem Con

Cllr Barker advised that updates will be available next month for the Big Lunch Live.

i) Training on Storing and Sharing files in Google Drive

Item deferred to after Parish Elections.

j) EV Microhubs

Following the meeting on 24th February 2026 costs are now being sought for Legal Advice costs. Awaiting update.

k) Replacement Speed Indicator Sign

The Clerk has placed the order and awaiting installation dates. Thanks go to Cllr T Ashby for his Cllr Funded donation.

i) Parking Concerns - Witney Road and Curbridge Road

The Clerks notes in the Briefing Pack were noted. Awaiting feedback.

37.26 New Business

a) PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Cllr Duthie handed out Prospective Candidate Forms

b) ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

This will be Wednesday 13th May 2026, following the Elections on Thursday 7th May 2026.

c) ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting is proposed as Thursday 28th May 2026 at 6pm as the Clerks Briefing Notes;

RESOLUTION; carried Nem Con

d) UNITY TRUST BANK PURCHASE CARD APPLICATION

Carried over to April when Application Forms can be available

e) GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

Cllr Duthie presented a Proposed Tender letter for Grass Cutting through the Village and Cemetery. General Agreement and Enquiries to be sent out.

f) SYCAMORE TREE AT PEEL CLOSE

The Clerks Report in the Briefing Pack were noted and discussions held., With pending nesting season, Cllr Smyth would talk with Max Everett to see if he could undertake the works whilst he can see that there is no nesting in the tree (ie. no leaves on the tree). If positive, then an order to be placed with Max Everett for the Pollarding Work and TPO Application.

g) ANNUAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Following last year's updated Assessment. No amendment needed

h) ANNUAL REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

All satisfactory

i) ANNUAL INSPECTION OF EXTERNAL ASSETS

DD to check and confirm conditions next meeting

j) ANNUAL INVESTMENT POLICY REVIEW

To add Clerks proposed movement of monies between accounts to maximise interests

38.26 Playgrounds, Cemetery, Litter, Open Spaces, Sports Pavilion, Sports Field, Allotments

a) **Playgrounds - Inspection Reports**

No new inspection reports. Clerks Briefing Pack Notes noted.

b) **CEMETERY MANAGEMENT**

Carried forward to next month.

c) **LITTER PICKERS REPORT**

Circulated via email prior to meeting and noted.

d) **VILLAGE / SCHOOL CAR PARK - DRAINAGE ISSUES**

Awaiting confirmation from G Hill as to start date.

e) **VILLAGE GREEN - REPAIRS TO VILLAGE GREEN TARMAC**

Works completed.

f) **DUCKLINGTON SPORTS CLUB BEER FESTIVAL**

A request has been received from DSC for a Beer Festival on Friday 15th and Saturday 16th May 2026. All required Forms and Documentation has been received.

RESOLVED:

1. To formally grant permission for the Ducklington Sports Club to have a Beer Festival on 15th and 16th May 2026.
2. To waive the standard hire fee, charging only the £25.00 administration fee.

Proposed: Cllr Almgill **Seconded:** Cllr Lishman **Vote:** Carried Nem Con.

g) **ALLOTMENTS - CCTV TRAIL CAMERAS**

Clerks Briefing Notes advised Cameras have been received and are awaiting installation. Posts have been erected.

39.26 FINANCE

a) **Account Balances, Debts due to Council and Bank Reconciliation**

Account Balances

Advised members that the sum currently held in the Unity Trust Bank Current T1 account is £1,415.88 (as at 1 March 2026) and in the Unity Trust Bank Instant Access account is £44,997.38 (as at 1 March 2026).

Debts due to Council

The Council received a payment of £217.00 from the Treasurer of Creditor 1 on 26th February 2026 to reduce the outstanding balance to £1,519.00

Bank Reconciliation

The Bank Reconciliation would need to be held over to next month when the Clerk is back.

b) **Invoices due for payment**

Councillors considered the schedule of proposed payments set out in the Briefing Pack and **RESOLVED** that all be paid. Cllr Duthie, Cllr Barker or Cllr Almgill to authorise the payments.

40.26 Other comments/Matters for next Agenda

a) Various members questioned a recent email received from the Clerk. Reassurance was requested that we are acting professionally? Chairman to action.

b) Cllr Lishman reported he was now unable to attend the MAP meeting but assured he would log in and view the Recording

41.26 Date of Next Meeting: Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday, 1 April 2026 - 7.30 pm, Lilac Room, Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.12 pm.

Signeddated.....2026
Chairman