

Wherwell Parish Council



Minutes

**Of the Annual Meeting of Wherwell Parish Council
held on Tuesday 13th May 2025, beginning at 7.15pm following the 6.30pm Parish Assembly
at the Colonel Jenkins Memorial Hall.**

1. **Present: Cllrs:** Lizzie Broadbent, Peter Bryant, Sean Hutton, Diane Newell, Ali Young, plus Philip Warner (clerk) and HCC David Drew.
2. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Sue Blazdell
3. **Public participation:** Two members of the public attended.
4. **To receive the annual report of the Parish Council:** Cllr Hutton presented a report on the PC's main work and achievements during the last year.
This focussed on
 - Planning
 - Neighbourhood plan
 - Wherwell Playing Fields
 - War Memorial
 - Speed Indicator DevicesThe full report is attached as Appendix 1
5. **To elect a Chair:** the clerk confirmed Cllr Hutton's willingness to stand for re-election. The nomination was proposed and seconded and Cllr. Hutton was duly elected and signed the Chair's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to observe the code of conduct.
6. **To elect a Vice Chair:** the chair confirmed Cllr. Blazdell's willingness to stand for election. The nomination was proposed and seconded and Cllr Blazdell was duly elected in her absence. She will need to sign a declaration of acceptance of office before the next meeting.
7. **Registration of pecuniary interest:** It was confirmed that there are no changes to any Cllrs pecuniary interests, and so no new forms needed to be completed.
8. **To declare any declarations of interests in this meeting:** there were none.
9. **Approval of minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 14th May 2024:** The minutes of last year's meeting were agreed and signed as accurate and there were no Matters Arising.
10. **Casual Vacancy**
The Casual Vacancy that has arisen on the resignation Cllr Oliver has been advertised locally since the notice period for the request for an election has expired. Cllr Hutton reported that no applicants have come forward. Cllrs therefore agreed to confidentially approach a couple of names they thought might be interested.

11. Planning Matters

Permissions granted by TVBC

White Lion	25/00551/VARN	Variation of condition 09 of 24/02704/FULLN (Refurbishment and extensions to Public House and barn buildings with landscaping and altered access to car park) to add opening hours for Friday and Saturday
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Cllr Hutton noted that with the delay in TVBC agreeing to the planning applications, restoration works have been delayed. Although they have now started the main works to remove and renew the roof can not now start until after bird nesting season.

Applications received since the last PC meeting were discussed and supported

28 Church Street	25/00904/TREEN	T1 - Ash - Fell
Old Malt House	25/00950/FULLN	Increase height of the ridge stack and install a flue liner
Old Malt House,	25/00899/LBWN	Clean internally exposed timbers to remove their modern finishes and return to original natural oak finish, and remove the heavy smoke-blackening to 2 fireplaces

12. Finance & Risk

To receive a statement of the Parish Councils Accounts for the year ended March 31st 2025,

and observations on its finances for the current year: The Clerk/RFO gave a brief summary of the key points, notably that there was once again a considerable underspend again due to the War Memorial restoration being delayed, and these funds were carried forward to the 25/26 budget.

The Chair & Clerk signed the financial statement for the year end.

13. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

- (i) **Certificate of Exemption – AGAR Form 2:** the PC agreed that the criteria for exemption from a limited assurance review under S9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 were met & the certificate of exemption was signed by the Chair & clerk/RFO.
- (ii) **Annual Internal Audit Report:** Michael Payne kindly undertook at short notice the internal audit review and signed the Audit Report to say that appropriate accounting records have been kept, and suitable financial and governance controls are in place. He expressed his wish that his fee be donated to Wherwell PCC, which was agreed. Having indicated his willingness to continue, he was reappointed as internal auditor for next year.
- (iii) **AGAR Section 1:** - the Annual Governance Statement was approved by resolution and signed by the chair and clerk/RFO .
- (iv) **AGAR Section 2:** - the Accounting Statements were approved by resolution and signed by the chair and clerk/RFO.
- (v) **Public Rights:** - It was agreed that the period for the Exercise of Public Rights this year will be 3rd June – 12th July 2025. The AGARs and a Notice of the Public Rights will be published on the website & notice board.

14. To receive the report from County & Borough Cllr David Drew

Cllr Drew presented his report which focussed on

- HCC spending £50m on a new recycling centre
- 98% of primary school pupils gaining their 1st preference school place for the coming year
- Community Asset Fund is now open for applications.
- The full report is attached as Appendix 2

15. Other Matters

- (i) Cllr Hutton stated that he will arrange for a rail to be installed on the stairs up to the old railway track from New Barn Lane.
- (ii) Cllr Young noted that the PC website domain needs to be changed to PC ownership as it appears to be still linked to ex-Cllr Hasselmann. The Clerk agreed to pursue this issue.

16. Date of next meetings:

- (i) **Parish Council** - Tuesday 8th July 2025.
- (ii) **Next Annual Meetings** Tuesday 12th May, 2026

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:15 pm

These minutes are a true representation of the Meeting.

Signed.....

Date:.....

Appendix 1

Chairman's Report

It has been a very busy year for the parish council.

Planning

As always despite being a relatively small parish, there have been many planning applications the most significant being Wherwell Solar Farm. This was the biggest planning application the community has ever had to deal with, as a result we held a public meeting to understand the views of the community. Unanimously, you opposed the application but as we said at the time your voices would carry more weight than that of the PC in the final analysis, so all were urged to write in.

We prepared a robust written submission opposing the planning application having sought advice from an eminent planning QC who we are fortunate to have living in our community. Once the recommendation came from planning that the application should be allowed, we further supported the legal arguments that the planning process had been too heavily influenced by repeated communications between the applicant and planning officer. As a result, a new planning officer was given the task of reviewing the planning application but again came back with the same result TVBC should allow the planning application.

Despite further challenges from members of our community with significant legal experience the application eventually came before the Northern Planning Committee. At this meeting Councillor Newell spoke eloquently on behalf of Wherwell Parish Council using sound planning and environmental reasons why the application should not be allowed. Regardless the application was approved.

As there were no realistic ways of now stopping the development going forward Wherwell Parish Council signed the community benefits fund agreement on the 24th of February 2025...this was our ONLY contact with Wherwell Solar Farms or their agents.

Neighbourhood plan

Wherwell parish council have engaged the services of Liz Bourne and Becky Hopkinson from the consultancy firm Plan-et to help us prepare a neighbourhood plan. Obtaining a grant to help us with this process and a steering committee of members of the community is being formed to help drive the process forward. Once completed and approved by TVBC, the neighbourhood plan will be a reference document used as part of the planning process so it is an important document.

It will require a huge amount of work from the steering group, parish council and all members of the community to become involved in completing surveys to help us understand what we want this community to look like over the coming years.

Wherwell Playing Fields

Wherwell Playing Fields came about when members of the sports community asked Mrs Anna Jenkins, the predominant landowner in the village if she would give them a field to play cricket and football.

She generously agreed and even helped with the supply of the original sports pavilion. As a result, Wherwell Playing Fields Association was formed and has developed and run the facility ever since. Made up wholly of volunteers who give their time both to maintain the field and raise the necessary funds to keep it all going. Any land acquired or purchased over the years including the pavilion, implement building, multi sports area woodland and children's play area have been transferred by WPPFA to the parish council to ensure it always remains a community asset.

On top of the pavilion being used by sports people, it hosts weddings and parties and is the centre for all WPPFA fund raising events... it now also hosts a weekly yoga class. It has also become the emergency hub for the community in the event of loss of amenities within the community or displacement of villagers.

It was felt by the parish council that we should do more to support the efforts of WPPFA and at the same time understand what the community want to see in the future, hence the recent survey. We are in the process of submitting grant applications to put solar panels on the south roof of the implement building with a battery storage system and are investigating converting the heating system in the pavilion to an electric boiler. Other plans will include charging points for electric cars. **Thanks to Councillor Newell**

War Memorial

Our efforts to restore the War Memorial have been thwarted by the views of the conservation officer from TVBC. She did not like the initial plans put forward by the stone mason we selected which included replacing crumbling stone and re-carving the names. A subsequent application for standalone stones with the names of those who fought was also rejected.

Councillor Bryant has been brilliant throughout and has now obtained detailed quotation and methodology statement which we hope will be supported by TVBC.

Speed Indicator Devices

We're purchasing 2 speed indicator devices which we can move round the village, these will come from a company called Elan City. We will need to meet with Highways to discuss suitable sites for their installation. Thanks to **Councillor Blazdell**

Appendix 2

Update from Hampshire County Council – May 2025

Green light to boosting recycling rates in Hampshire



Based in Eastleigh, the new Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) is expected to be up and running by the end of 2027, and will support all households across the Hampshire region to recycle:

- a much wider range of plastics, including pots, tubs, trays, cartons, and soft plastic film
- glass
- metal
- paper and cardboard

The proposal to build a new £50.5 million Materials Recovery Facility has been developed in conjunction with Hampshire's neighbouring waste disposal partners, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council, who will jointly fund the project ensuring a consistent service across the region.

Residents are keen to do more, and I receive regular questions about when and how a greater variety of materials will be able to be recycled more easily from home. To help people recycle well and recycle better, we need the right processing facilities in place to make that happen. We also need to be better able to adapt to changes in consumer trends and what types of materials may need to be recycled in the future. Investing in this new facility represents a major milestone in what and how we recycle across Hampshire.

The new approach being taken in Hampshire, aligns with Government's [Simpler Recycling](#) guidance on residential kerbside recycling – separating dry materials from other waste to reduce contamination – which occurs when dry recyclable material, such as card, is unable to be recycled if it gets wet or stained with food residue or mixed with glass. Managing waste in this way will minimise the cost of sorting 'contaminated' materials (currently around £2 million every year) and ensure the recyclable materials, carefully sorted by Hampshire residents, can be put to best possible use.

As a reminder, food waste recycling will begin across Test Valley on the 13th October. Residents and parishes will receive the latest information and further details as we get closer to that date.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20250429MRF>

Hampshire celebrates and remembers on 80th anniversary of VE Day



This year, 80 years of peace and our collective resilience and unity will be celebrated by communities across Hampshire as we also pay tribute to those who fought for the freedom we all enjoy today.

To mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day, Hampshire Archives has organised a free exhibition, running until 25 June, which explores the role of [The King's Royal Rifle Corps and The Rifle Brigade](#), both historically based in Winchester, in the lead up to VE Day, highlighting soldiers' experiences during the final days of World War II in Europe.

On Saturday 3 May and Sunday 11 May, a free guided tour of the Netley Military Cemetery, Royal Victoria Country Park will mark [VE Day](#) and [War Graves Week](#).

More information and links to [VE Day events](#) in Hampshire, as well as guidance for community celebrations such as street parties, can be found on the County Council's webpages.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20250417VEday>

Primary school place offers confirmed by Hampshire County Council

The County Council has processed more than 20,000 applications for children to start school in reception year (Year R) and to move from infant to their first year of junior education (Year 3).

More than 98 per cent (98.67 per cent) of parents have been offered a reception year place for their child in one of their three preferred schools, with over 92 per cent (92.27 per cent) allocated a place at their first preference school.

Of pupils transferring from infant school to junior school (Year 3), more than 99 per cent (99.73 per cent) received a place at one of their three preferences, and over 99 per cent (99.02 per cent) obtained a place at their first preference school.

Parents who applied online have been notified of their offers by email. They can also view their offer by logging into the secure, online portal using the same log-in details provided when making their online application. Those small numbers of parents who applied in writing without providing an email address should receive letters by post in two to three days.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20250416NationalPrimaryOfferDay25>

[David Drew](#)

[Test Valley Central Division, HCC](#)