Full Parish Council Meeting Minutes
Monday 2nd November 2026, 7.30pm

Present: Alison Sercombe (Chair), Toby Newman (Vice Chair), Councillors Richard Barrett, Fay Fox, Paul Gregory, Lucy Thomas, John Wolstenholme, Paul Wilmott, Ashley Buttress, Richard Street, Anthony Shepherd and Helen Smith.

In attendance: Locum Clerk, County Councillor Tim Bearder. Two members of the public were present.

The Chair made everyone aware that Steve Halstead, Wheatley Parish Council's (WPC) former groundsperson, passed away over the weekend. WPC expresses its deepest condolences to his family.

#109/26-27 Apologies for absence: WPC accepted apologies from Cllr/District Councillor Ramsdale and Cllr Cooper.

#110/26-27 To co-opt to fill two vacancies: WPC resolved to co-opt Helen Smith as Parish Councillor. Cllr Smith signed the Declaration of Acceptance.

#111/26-27 Declarations of interest/Dispensations:

- Cllr Newman – The Merry Bells; Wheatley Park School
- Cllr Thomas - Wheatley Park School
- Cllr Barratt – The Merry Bells
- Cllr Fox – The Merry Bells
- Cllr Wilmott – Wheatley Rugby Club; Wheatley Playing Fields Trust
- Cllr Sercombe -- Wheatley Windmill

#112/26-27 WPC agreed and signed the minutes of the WPC meeting of 05.10.2026.

#113/26-27 Public participation & questions (maximum of 30 minutes in total 5 minutes per person): None.

#114/26-27 To receive a report from the County Councillor: Cllr Bearder reported the following:

- Kellham Hall Drive – OCC will begin work in December.
- Local Government Reorganisation will proceed, and the government is minded for Wheatley to be in the Ridgeway.

- Cllr Bearder provided a brief update on devolution.
- Cllr Bearder will look at the Thames Water works at Old Road. Cllr Newman reported the state of the road is poor and the reparation of the verges has not been carried out but rather been tarmacked.
- There was a query as to whether there are HMOs in the village.

#115/26-27 Report from the District Councillor: The District Councillor sent a report. See Attachment 1.

#116/26-27 Committees

i. **WPC received the minutes from the following Committee meetings which can be found on the Parish Council website:**
   - Planning Committee meeting of 14.10.2026
   - Staffing Committee meeting of 14.10.2026
   - Finance Committee meeting of 19.10.2026
   - Open Spaces Committee meeting of 21.09.2026

#117/26-27 Clerk Report:

i. Newsletter deadline – 05.11.2026
ii. Wheatley Christmas Fair – 27.11.2026, 2pm – 8pm
iii. Kelham Hall pipework: Cllr Bearder provided an update in minute reference 114/26-27.
iv. Use of Memorial Grounds for Sunday 8th November: A 2-minute silence and wreath laying will take place at the Memorial Grounds at approximately 3.45 pm following the service at St Mary's Church. At 11.00am on Wednesday 11th November there will be a short service and a 2-minute silence.
v. Tree works update: The removal of the ash tree at Farm Close Alley is being scheduled. The alley will close while this happens. Tree works are being planned at Church Road Rec.
vi. Update on Storage Container planning application: The planning application has been validated. WPC waits for comments from the District Council by 14.12.2026.
vii. Update on weeding in the village: One of the groundsmen has done an outstanding job weeding the Merry Bells car park.
viii. Police: Have your say: The next Have Your Say event will be on the 19th December from 5-7pm. The PCSOs are working to schedule dates in the new year.
ix. Closure of office from 25th December 2026 – 3rd January 2027: The Locum Clerk will look to record voice message to say the office closed and how to reach someone in case of an emergency.

#118/26-27: Donation to The Howe Trust: WPC resolved to donate £500 to The Howe Trust. The Locum Clerk will ask for requests for donations to take place at

the September Finance Committee meeting next year. WPC would like to understand a bit more about their criteria.

It was noted that WPC may look at a different direction for donations at Christmas in the following financial year.

#119/26-27: 2027-2028 Budget

i. WPC resolved a 2027-2028 Budget of £336,964.
ii. Based on the 2027/2028 budget, WPC resolved a precept for 2027-2028 of £ 183,814.

#120/26-27: Reserves Policy: WPC resolved to adopt the Reserves Policy.

#121/26-27 Reports from working groups and village organisations: WPC noted the following:

i. Communications Working Group: The Chair will circulate notes, and another meeting date will be scheduled.
ii. Cadet Hut Working Group: The Chair and Vice Chair are meeting with OCC to discuss the purchase of the Cadet Hut.
iii. Community Events Working Group: The Chair noted the Assistant Clerk is doing very well with the community events.
iv. Wheatley Pavilion Maintenance Working Group: The Chair asked the Locum Clerk to set up a meeting.
v. Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Working Group: Cllr Newman will look to set up a meeting.
vi. Littleworth Road Field Working Group: The lease is in progress.
vii. Traffic Working Group: There is no update.
viii. Youth Council Working Group: This is dependent on the Cadet Hut.
ix. Thames Valley Police Working Group: There has been a meeting and will be another in the new year.
x. Flood Advisory Working Group: There is no update.
xi. Sports and Leisure Working Group: Cllr Willmott noted there has not been enough returns on their survey, so they are relaunching it in local schools . They are considering the possibility of padel in the village.

WPC will review the status of the working groups and their projects' end dates at the Development Day.

#122/26-27 Reports from community groups: WPC noted the following reports:

i. Howe Trust (Wheatley): See minute reference 118/26-27.

ii. Good Neighbourhood Scheme: Their Christmas lunch will be held on the 6th December at St Mary's Church.
iii. Maple Tree: There was no report.
iv. The Merry Bells: Cllr Barratt reported they will be trialling new chairs.
v. Wheatley Playing Field Trust (WPFT): See Attachment 2.
vi. Wheatley Charities: See Attachment 3.
vii. Wheatley Windmill Preservation Society: See Attachment 4. It was noted the Vice Chair will write to the society's secretary to offer planning advice. The Chair asked for the Windmill to be put on WPC's Risk Register temporarily, due recent resignations of officers and shortage of volunteers.
viii. Sustainable Wheatley: Sustainable Wheatley's screening of The People's Emergency will be held in St Marys on 30.11.26. It is being organised by Sustainable Wheatley and The Howe Trust.

#123/26-27 Carols on the Rec: WPC resolved to allow the request of Wheatley Community Church to hold Carols on the Rec on 06.12.2026 at 4pm.

#124/26-27 Items of information without decision

a. **Correspondence:** WPC noted the correspondence received.

#125/26-27 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 7th December 2026, 19:30, The Merry Bells Hall. **The deadline for agenda items for the meeting is the 27th November.**

The meeting closed at 20:45.

Attachment 1

District Councillor Update
Peter Ramsdale
November 2026

Apologies

First of all, my apologies for not being at this meeting due to a long-standing plan to tour Sicily by motorcycle. I expect to be at future meetings.

Flooding Update

Alleviation Ponds

I believe the funds have now been secured, and the next step is to get planning permission and tender for quotes to do the work. Currently work is planned to start in the spring.

I have been pulling parties together from OCC and SODC and am pleased to report progress on some other flooding matters.

Flooding at the junction of Keydale and Old Road.

OCC attended the junction and have cleaned out all the drains and checked they are working properly. They have also checked that water can flow into the stream that runs behind the junction and Littleworth Field.

They have also investigated the drains some way up Old Road and cleaned out some of the gully's that run into the field.

The PC should now monitor the situation and see if there is an improvement.

Holloway Road / High Street

During heavy rainfall a significant amount of water runs along the surface of Holloway Road, from the top of the road all the way down to the High Street. This is a significant contributor to the flooding that occurs at the junction of Holloway Road and the High Street. OCC has investigated this and a number of issues have been identified.

First, water is flowing into one drain and out of another beside the lock-up and recreation ground on Church Road. It should drain into a soakaway beneath the playground. The soakaway may have collapsed, and repairing it is unlikely to be practical. **OCC has confirmed that access beneath the playground will not be required**.

Second, there does not appear to be a drain in the lower part of Holloway Road. The OCC team has agreed to investigate whether a drain could be installed in the bottom stretch of Holloway Road, discharging into the culvert on the High Street. It could also take the water escaping in Church Road. This work would involve significant cost and Carl Stallwood from Highways has received his manager's approval to apply for the work to be carried out during 2026–28. It would also cause significant traffic disruption.

The work on the culvert is considered less urgent as the culvert is clear but there are plans to improve access at the 'New Club' end of the High Street,

Kimber Close / Kelmhall Drive

Oxfordshire County Council has accepted responsibility for clearing the drains on Kelmhall Drive and Kimber Close, including those running from the footpath into the cul-de-sac on Kelmhall Drive.

WPC will also investigate the drain that runs down into Farm Close Road and I met Carl Stallwood from OCC Highways onsite while he was tracing the drains' position and flow. He can

now raise a works order to get the drains cleared and hopefully, the work will be carried out in the next few months.

Littleworth Business Park

No change here.
The Parish Council is struggling to get peoples commitment to holding regular multi-agency meetings involving South Oxfordshire District Council Environmental Health and Planning Oxfordshire County Council Highways, Trading Standards, and Thames Valley Police.
SODC now has powers to take action against untaxed vehicles. The first notices have been issued on vehicles in Littleworth. However, some cars are just being moved onto the apron and Parish Council land, which is now full of damaged and untaxed cars again. I now have confirmation that SODC will not remove cars from private land.

Planning Decisions

Major national changes to the way planning applications are decided came into force on 31 October 2026 through the National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions. These changes will mean more applications are determined by planning officers and will significantly reduce the circumstances in which ward councillors or Town and Parish Councils can secure consideration by Planning Committee.
I would strongly encourage the Parish Planning Committee to make me aware of any objections the committee has to a planning application so I can feed this into the SODC planning application process.
If officers approve a planning application against the opinion of Parish and District councillors, SODC councillors have the option of making a 'Gateway Request' to have the application heard by the planning committee. This will only be agreed if the following criteria can be met:
Gateway Criteria
A request for referral will only be considered where the application raises:
Criterion A
An economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area
Criterion B
A significant planning matter having regard to the Development Plan and any other material planning considerations
I will circulate an email that explains how the gateway request process works.

£270,000 Councillor Community Grant Fund Opens

The latest round of South Oxfordshire's Councillor Community Grant is now open, with £270,000 available across the district to support projects that benefit residents and help create healthy, thriving communities. This is a useful opportunity for local voluntary and community organisations to secure funding for practical projects in their area.
The deadline for applications is midday on 4 December. If you know of a local organisation or project that could benefit, please encourage them to look at the criteria and apply. I am also happy to hear from groups in the ward that are considering an application.
Read more: South Oxfordshire grants

Attachment 2

Wheatley Playing Field Trust
Report to Wheatley Parish Council
28th October 2026

This week, the plumber is changing the tanks in the top pavilion (built by Wheatley Parish Council in 1973). One of the old tanks had rotted through and was leaking. Also in the top pavilion the original galvanised pipework has been found to be badly corroded inside. This may need replacing in the summer.

The Trust is still suffering ongoing damage to the gutters and broken windows from footballs despite many requests to not kick footballs against the buildings.

The grass on the pitches is still in poor condition with numerous bare patches remaining from the drought this summer.

There is good community use of the playing field by football and rugby training.

The new boiler in the lower pavilion is now connected to internet for remote monitoring.

Paul Willmott
Chairman, Wheatley Playing Field Trust

Attachment 3

WHEATLEY CHARITIES: Minutes of the Trustees' Meeting held at St. Mary's at 10.30 am on 5 October, 2026

Present: Meg Barbour, Graham Colverson (Chairman), Clare Joyce, Mike Lancashire,
Nick Rees (Treasurer), Ralf Eller (Secretary) - Full attendance
Circulation: All members plus the Parish Council

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March, 2026 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2. Matters arising: None

3. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer submitted the Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 December, 2025, which was approved by the Trustees and signed by the Chairman.
Income exceeded expenditure by £2,097 and the accumulated surplus looks healthy!

4. Education and Training Grants
(13 applications received)

All 13 applications were approved at an increased level of £230 each.
RE to notify the applicants accordingly, and remind them of their obligation to acknowledge in writing the receipt of funds. Payment is scheduled for on or after 20 October and for the first time by bank transfer.

5. AOB

(a) Funding: There have been no other recent funding requests.
(b) Town Meadow Update: The Charity Commission Deed dated June 1968 confirms that the land was in occupation of R Greaves as the sitting tenant. It remains to be checked with the Commission on how to proceed with a sale at this point.

6. Date of next meeting: The next meeting was arranged for Monday 15 March, 2027, at 10.30 am at St. Mary's.

The Meeting closed at 11.30 am

Attachment 4

Report for Wheatley Parish Council

Wheatley Windmill Preservation Society has had another successful year of showing visitors the mill and the other attractions in the paddock, which now include a mobile mill and some restored pieces of farm machinery. Local musical groups and dancers have come once again to add interest to the open afternoons, which happen every second Sunday in the month from May until October. We are working towards becoming less dependent on the inhabitants of Windmill Cottage for serving teas and cake, which is the top earner of our activities, since we don't charge for entering the mill. To this end, we have agreed with a local firm to put up a small prefabricated kitchenette on an existing concrete plinth. We will be able to serve refreshments from it next year.

The society is looking for a new treasurer. Anyone one interested should email me at carolinedalton@gmail.com. Our present treasurer has written an explanation of what you would need to be able to do to undertake this interesting role. Caroline Dalton, secretary.