



Parish Council Meeting

Monday, 6th July 2026, 7.30pm

Minutes

Present: Alison Sercombe (Chair), Toby Newman (Vice Chair), Councillors Richard Barrett, Andrew Cooper, Fay Fox, Paul Gregory, Peter Ramsdale, Lucy Thomas, John Wolstenholme, Richard Street, Paul Wilmott

In attendance: Locum Clerk, Assistant Clerk, District Councillor Peter Ramsdale, two members of the public were present.

#45/26-27 Apologies for absence: The Council accepted apologies from Councillors Anthony Shepherd and Aaron Brooks and County Councillor Tim Bearder.

#46/26-27 To co-opt to fill two vacancies: No applications were received.

#47/26-27 Declarations of interest/Dispensations: Declarations of interest were raised by:

- Vice Chair – Merry Bells; Wheatley Park School
- Cllr Thomas - Wheatley Park School
- Cllr Barratt – Merry Bells
- Cllr Ramsdale – Rugby Club; Wheatley Playing Fields Trust
- Cllr Fay Fox – Merry Bells
- Cllr Wilmott - Rugby Club; Playing Fields Trust

#48/26-27 The minutes of the meeting of 01.06.2026 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#49/26-27 Public participation & questions (maximum of 30 minutes in total 5 minutes per person)

- i. The Assistant Clerk has emailed the Diocese in a resident capacity about concerns with tree health and safety at the primary school.

#50/26-27 To receive a report from the County Councillor: The County Councillor was not in attendance and did not send a report.

#51/26-27 To receive a report from the District Councillor: The District Councillor reported the following:

- Culvert work is being scheduled.
- The drains at Church Road and Friday Lane are a priority to get unclogged. There is no schedule as of yet.
- Littleworth Business Park: A meeting has taken place with environmental health and the South Oxfordshire District Council's (SODC) planning enforcement team. Trading standards will start visiting the site to put pressure on them.
- SODC will take on removing untaxed vehicles when their policy is in place.
- There should be an update on the Local Government Reorganisation in a few weeks.

- Planning legislation will be changing.
- SODC have secured funding for attenuation ponds.

#52/26-27 Committees

- The minutes of the Finance Committee 15.06.2026 were received.
- The Council confirmed Councillor Paul Wilmott as a member of the Finance Committee.
- The Council confirmed the removal of the former Clerk, Michelle Legg from all bank mandates.

#53/26-27 Scheme of Delegation: The Council noted the following decision made under delegated power:

- To conduct tree surveys by Arbour Tree Specialist Ltd at a cost of £2400
 - Ambrose rise ditch/alley
 - Church road recreation ground (including cliff)
 - Memorial gardens
 - St Mary's Close (sycamore and horse chestnut)
 - Farm Close Road Recreation Ground
 - Farm Close Road Alley (including robinia)
 - High Street Village Green
 - Kelly's Road/Acremead
 - Littleworth allotments
 - Littleworth Road Playing Field

#54/26-27 Emergency Plan: The Council agreed the plan is still valid. The Council would like to investigate with the insurers whether residents who have chainsaws can assist in the event of fallen trees.

#55/26-27 Quotations:

The Chairman decided to move the following to a confidential portion of the agenda.

- Bus shelter & St Mary's Alley repair quotes**
- Plumbing work at the Pavilions**

#56/26-27 Regular suppliers through 31/3/27: The Council noted the regular suppliers through 31/3/27.

<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Approximate Duration</u>	<u>Approximate amount</u>
Balancing Business	Bookkeeping	Monthly through 31/3/27	£30/hour
Parchment UK	Printing of the newsletter	Every 2 months	£1395 per newsletter
Clear View for You	Window cleaning	Every 6 weeks	£13 per visit
Wheatley Cleaners	Office cleaning	Every month	£96
Sheild Maintenance	Dog bin emptying	Monthly	£140.40

Councillor Barratt noted there are more regular suppliers. The Locum Clerk will investigate this and put on a future agenda.

#57/26-27 Clerk Report: The following updates were provided:

- i. Play areas inspection reports: The Assistant Clerk has received the operational inspection reports from Oxford Direct Servies (ODS). The Chair reported that Homefront has carried out a Post Installation safety inspection of Church Road Recreation Ground, but ODS's reports have raised some issues, noncritical. She noted that the Council is waiting for RoSPA to carry out their annual inspection and confirm any issues.
- ii. Saturday surgery reminder: The Council would like the Locum Clerk and Assistant Clerk to look at future of Saturday surgeries.
- iii. Kelham Hall Drive alley blocked pipework: The work has started but other equipment and time is needed by the contractor, so they have sent a report to Oxfordshire County Council.
- iv. VAS installation: The new VAS installation has taken place. There is currently not the facility for obtaining data, but this can be added should the Council wish to. The Council would like to delegate the consideration of having the facility to obtain data from the VAS to the Traffic Working Group. It was noted that the bushes by the VAS on Ladder Hill need cutting back.
- v. Cadet Hut consultation: There are 32 responses thus far and consultation ends on 10.07.2026. The current response is in favour of a youth service provision.
- vi. Sport and Leisure consultation: The consultation is live. Councillor Willmott asked councillors to respond.
- vii. Newsletter deadline for August/September: 16.07.2026
- viii. Play and Activity Day took place on 04.07.26. The Assistant Clerk noted it was not as well attended as in previous years. The car parking provision needs to be better organised for future events.
- ix. Wheatley Artisan Market – 19.09.2026, 9am -1pm
- x. Wheatley Christmas Fair – 27.11.2026, 2pm - 8pm
- xi. Councillor Development Day - 26.09.2026, 9am -1:30pm: Councillor Ramsdale would like to see communication around Facebook on the agenda.
- xii. The Assistant Clerk reported that there has been a recent article in the Oxford Mail regarding Oxfordshire's e-bike & e-scooter initiative which states a significant expansion of Oxfordshire's e-bike and e-scooter initiative is being planned and Wheatley has been named as one of the locations to be included in the expanded initiative. The Council noted they would like to be informed of any initiatives/articles such as this by the County Councillor.
- xiii. There is a funeral of a resident who was a long-standing volunteer. The Parish Council has sent a card to the family.

#58/26-27 Policies: The Council resolved to adopt the following policy:

- i. Complaints Policy

#59/26-27 Quiet Lanes: The Council resolved to delegate the review of the Quiet Lanes programme to the Traffic Working Group. Recommendations to be brought to Full Council.

#60/26-27 Oxfordshire's rural A and B class road network - Stakeholder consultation: The Council resolved for Councillor Ramsdale to review document of the review of speed limits being carried out by Oxfordshire County Council.

#61/26-27 Reports from working groups: The following are working groups some of which sent reports. It was noted that some of these groups will resume in the September timeframe.

- i. Communications Working Group: There has been no meeting recently; more will be discussed at the Development Day.
- ii. Cadet Hut Working Group: The Group hasn't met. A discussion about the potential Cadet Hut project was had at minute reference 65/26-27.
- iii. Community Events Working Group: There has not been a meeting.
- iv. Wheatley Pavilion Maintenance Working Group: This is under way. The plumbing quotes are on the agenda. There is a concern about obtaining quotes for the column repair and drainage works.
- v. Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Working Group: They are organising a date.
- vi. Littleworth Field Working Group: A discussion was held about the new design for the Attenuation Pond on the field. Concerns were raised relating to the size of the scheme and the safety aspects i.e. depth of the water considering there is a primary school next door. . All but two councillors (who requested to abstain) spoke against the plans. The Chair will share the Council's concerns at her next meeting with the Flood Attenuation Scheme (FAS) Group at SODC. A comment was raised as to why SODC has not made a formal approach to the Parish Council. The Locum Clerk will circulate the images presented to councillors.
- vii. Traffic Working Group: They are striving to set up a meeting July/August.
- viii. Youth Council Working Group: They have not met yet.
- ix. Thames Valley Police Working Group: A meeting is being arranged.
- x. Flood Advisory Working Group: A meeting with residents has been had, but the attenuation ponds need further consultation and input before the scheme can be progressed. .
- xi. Sports and Leisure Working Group: See Attachment 1.

#62/26-27 Reports from community groups: The following are working groups and community groups some of which sent reports:

- i. Howe Trust (Wheatley): See Attachment 2.
- ii. Good Neighbourhood Scheme: See Attachment 3.
- iii. Maple Tree: See Attachment 4.
- iv. The Merry Bells: They had a management committee meeting and have agreed to allow the Parish Council to house a storage container in the car park with some caveats. The Merry Bells will be putting up no smoking/vaping signs in the forecourt. The Merry Bells is working to ensure chairs and tables are not blocking entrances and the defibrillator.
- v. Wheatley Playing Field Trust: See Attachment 5.
- vi. Wheatley Charities

#63/26-27 Items of information without decision

- a. **Correspondence:** The Council noted the correspondence received.

#64/26-27: Confidential session: The Council resolved to remove members of the public from the following agenda items due to their confidential nature

55/26-27 Quotations:

The Chairman decided to move this to a confidential portion of the agenda.

- i. **Bus shelter & St Mary's Alley roof repair quotes:** The Council resolved to proceed with Halford at a cost of £2550 + VAT for the Church Road, King and Queen bus shelter roof. The Council resolved not to repair the shelter at St Mary's Alley due to ownership and will contact Highways.
- ii. **Plumbing work at the Pavilions:** The Council resolved to proceed with F Church to carry out the plumbing works at a cost of £18717. The Council would like to upgrade the boiler. The Council asked the Clerk to investigate the warranty.
- iii. The Council noted that a quote for the repair of 2 columns had been received and is under £5000. The Council would like to delegate this to the Locum Clerk and Chair.
- iv. The Locum Clerk, PR and PW will meet to review the position with drainage quotes.

#65/26-27 Cadet Hut Lease Update: The Council considered the three terms of the lease presented and does not accept the terms. The Chair will feed this back to the legal team.

#66/26-27 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 7th September 2026, 19:30, The Merry Bells Hall

The deadline for agenda item for the July meeting to be sent to the Clerk is Wednesday the 26th August 2026.

The meeting closed 21:05.

Attachment 1

Sport and Leisure Working Group Report to Wheatley Parish Council, 30th June 2026

1. Stakeholders and other contacts the group has met/contacted:

Wheatley Parish Council
Holton Parish Council
South Oxfordshire District Council
Wheatley Playing Field Trust
Wheatley Park School
Wheatley Primary School
Wheatley Churches
Wheatley FC
Wheatley Rugby Club
Oxfordshire FA
Oxfordshire RFU

Oxfordshire Cricket
Oxford City Council

Other identified stakeholders still to meet:

Wheatley Oaks FC
Wheatley Scouts
Jon Glenn – Swimming Facilities
Park Sports Centre
John Watson School
Potential paddleball/pickleball providers
Oxfordshire Mind
Age UK

2. Other parties met with/contacted:

- a) Sue Street had volunteered her services to the working group. A meeting was agreed with her and held on Tuesday 16th June.
- b)** Paul Willmott had contacted Loughborough University and held an online meeting with Martin Foster, Head of Applied Sport Management, and Kully Bassi who is the students' placement officer. Wheatley Park School has been contacted regarding a possible student placement

3. Surveys

The survey has been finalised and added to the WPC website. A separate survey has been issued to the Primary School suitable for their pupils. Please encourage as many people as possible to complete the survey.

4. The final report is now in draft form and will be completed when the results of the survey are known.

Paul Willmott
Chairman Sport and Leisure Working Group

Attachment 2



UPDATE FOR WHEATLEY PARISH COUNCIL

29th June 2026

1. Grassland and Ponds

Ragwort has been assessed – and it has been found that its prevalence has declined vs previous years, especially in Cripps due to resting this space followed by reduced grazing intensity with sheep. Where small ragwort clumps exist, it is supporting a population of cinnabar moth caterpillars. Creeping thistle patches have now been mown in Shepherds, Sheldon and Tombs as well as an area in the memorial area. Likewise, this annual control appears to be working, and the amount of thistle is much reduced via 3 or 4 years ago. Some thistle has been retained for nectar for bees and butterflies etc and it will later provide seeds for finches.

2. Trees and hedges

Weeding (removing sticky willy and bindweed) continues in the newly laid Windmill Lane hedges. Likewise, our volunteers are removing tree guards from more mature trees who no longer require protection from deer. A diseased willow was partially felled in Shepherds by contractor Tim O'Connor.

3. Grant Applications

Work on the new steps and handrail path is expected to be completed by the end of the summer. Meanwhile the trust is looking at options for grant funding of future visitor experience enhancements such as a pond dipping platform to help school and nursery children use the ponds as a learning resource.

4. Benefaction/Gifts

A request for funding has been received from the local NHS social prescriber and £350 agreed to support the villager in need.

5. Outreach, Communications and Information Gathering

Guided walks have been held in April and June and further one is in the diary for September. Work on our guide to the Howe continues and additional informative boards which will be available digitally via QR codes in a printed form by end of 2026.

6. Trustees

There remain 2 nominative vacancies. An email was sent to WPC on 20th January regarding the suggestion of considering appointing a 'Young Trustee' who could be supported by an additional councillor as a trustee.

7. Other

Basic seating has been made using waste pallets to enable volunteers to rest during sessions and the trust has secured additional hardwood to enable us to make resting benches to be placed around the Howe for visitors.

Surveying of the wide variety of grasses, wildflowers, insects etc as well as amphibian life in Tombs is planned for the coming months with the support of a number of our volunteers. We are also hoping to get input and involve the Shotover Preservation Society in this work.

Maggie Fyffe, Chair - The Howe Trust : June 29th 2026

Attachment 3

Wheatley Good Neighbours Scheme: Co-ordinator's Report

We have 10 clients that we befriend. 15 clients that we transport to events. Plus odd jobs such as putting a curtain rail.

Last summer we had an indoor/outdoor tea party in Holton which was well attended and a very happy event for clients and volunteers.

This year we have continued to support Lunch Club at the URC providing servers and washers and cake making for pudding – and it's such a rewarding experience. Everyone has a really good time. It's a great partnership with the URC.

Just recently the NSYC finished at the URC and has migrated to Wellford Gardens as a Bingo club so nothing has changed for us in terms of transport. The move has been well received and Wellford are always happy to share events with the community – it's part of their raison d'être.

We now have only 25 clients and about half of them are occasional lifts or one-off help. We haven't had a new referral for some time.

We started the year with £756.63 in the bank. We spent £141.91 on the Christmas party which left us with £614.72 plus a cash donation of £10.

Attachment 4



Summary report to Wheatley Parish Council: June 2026

Maple Tree update

- Our full programme of groups and activities has continued. We have no plans to change our main timetable at present, as all of our groups focus on a different element of early years learning and are well-attended, however a slightly amended timetable will be in place over the summer to accommodate older siblings as well and 0-5 year olds and we plan to run some sessions in local villages, as we have in previous years.
- We have recently recruited a marketing member of staff, initially for a 6 month period, to improve our marketing strategy and to assist with networking and possible corporate sponsorship opportunities. We were pleased to receive funding for this role from SODC via Cllr Peter Ramsdale.
- We urgently need to recruit a treasurer, as we have been without anyone in this role for several months. To ensure the sustainability of the Maple Tree, we also

need to expand the trustee board, as we currently only have 3 trustees. As we do all of our own fundraising instead of employing a fundraiser, this places a significant burden on voluntary trustees.

Finance and fundraising

- We managed to meet our budget target for 2025-26, thanks in part to some local donors and two successful fundraising events at the end of the financial year (our Silent Auction and Daffodil Day).
- Our fundraising target remains at almost £100k for this financial year, which will be a challenge to meet.

The Maple Tree – 29 June 2026. If you would like any further information, please contact Jane Lightfoot at jane@mapletree.org.uk

Attachment 5

Wheatley Playing Field Trust: Report to Wheatley Parish Council, 30th June 2026

1. Recently, two trustees opened the gate to the field and both pavilions to allow three companies to inspect the facilities. This was to enable them to quote for plumbing and heating works, repairs to the lower pavilion framework and external drainage.

The locum clerk, Allison Leigh, also was in attendance.

The above works are needed to be carried out during this summer's school holidays for safeguarding reasons and when the pavilions will be needed.

2. Paul Willmott, one of three Parish Council nominated trustees, has come to the end of 4 years since his last nomination and needs to be renominated for a further 4 years at the next meeting of the Parish Council on 6th July 2026.

Paul Willmott

Chairman, Wheatley Playing Field Trust

Attachment 6

Report for Wheatley Parish Council about the activities of Wheatley Windmill Preservation Society.

The society, formerly the restoration society, exists to preserve the fabric of our local windmill and show it to the public. We open to the general public on the second Sundays in the months of May until October and also offer group visits by appointment on Saturdays. We have maintained this programme every year now since the 1990's, while the attractions we can offer now include a milling demonstration using the mobile mill and viewing other bits of agricultural machinery related to milling, like for instance the newly restored winnowing machine.

The most recent piece of restoration work was that volunteers put in a huge number of hours over 18 months to remove cement mortar from the lowest three metres of the windmill tower and

replace it with lime mortar. This saved the society the enormous sum of money professionals would have charged for the work but more importantly it allowed water, which condensed on the inner sides of the tower walls in the winter, to drain out of the building and evaporate, rather than rotting the structure from the inside.

We have upgraded our chairs and tables, so that visitors have a safe environment to enjoy their refreshments. The motley collection of old card tables and odd chairs from all different places was not only unsafe to stand cups of hot tea on but made the tea experience look as if it was taking place at a jumble sale, rather than at the well-maintained windmill.

The main activity of the first half of 2026 was that we decided to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the project to restore the windmill with an exhibition in Wheatley Church and an art competition for local school children, backed up by displays in Wheatley Library and the Centre of English Studies. After a lot of planning, all this happened during the first two weeks of June, followed by prize giving at the windmill on 14th June. All the pictures and collages that were entered for the competition were judged by one of our committee, who is an art teacher. They were then all displayed in the church, where they received many compliments. Twenty two pupils won prizes and most of them collected their winnings at the mill. The others had personal deliveries during the following week, when all the art was returned to the artists. Wheatley Parish Council generously gave us the prize money and the competition brought new visitors to the mill.

We do have an exciting plan to use a legacy that the society was recently given in the will of a former committee member. As however this is still in the very early stages, I am not going to mention it here. Perhaps next year I will be able to tell you what it is. Meanwhile, my lips are sealed. We are now looking forward to our 75th anniversary in 2051, when we will make another grant application to the parish council for another celebration.