



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Vanessa Oliveri

Email: clerk@minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07712 705865

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for Minster Lovell held on 20th April 2026 at 7pm

1. Welcome/Members present and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.

In attendance were:

- Cllr. David Haley
- Cllr. Christine Eaglestone
- Cllr. Andrew Cooper
- Cllr. Laura Sednaoui
- Cllr. Wendy Usherwood
- Cllr. Nick Field-Johnson (OCC)
- Cllr Liam Walker, (WODC)
- Cllr. Paul Marsh, (WODC)
- Vanessa Oliveri, Parish Clerk
- 14 members of the public.

There were no apologies as all Parish Councillors were present at the meeting.

2. Declaration of interest in agenda items

Cllr. Haley declared an interest in Community Accounts.
Cllr. Usherwood declared an interest in Coffee and Chat.

3. Chairman's report - Cllr Haley

Cllr. Haley reported that it had been another busy year with the Parish Council and thanks were extended to all Councillors for their commitment and hard work. Thanks were also extended to Cllr's Paul Marsh, Liam Walker and Nick Field-Johnson for their attendance at meetings, the information provided and taking up Village issues with WODC and OCC officers on the Parish Council's behalf.

During the year the Parish Council welcomed Laura Sednoui and Andrew Cooper as new co-opted Councillors. There are two co-opted Councillor vacancies which will be considered at the next Parish Council meeting.

Thanks were given to everyone who helps to keep the Village well maintained and cared for: Daniel and Richard Hubber (War Memorial), Mr. Warner (flowers at the War Memorial), John Linquist (cleaning and clearing in the Village), Dot Holloway (dog warden), Mr. Woodley the fishing bailiff, The Landlord of the White Hart (bus shelter cleaning), Mr. King for inspection and maintenance of Ripley Avenue Play Park and the litter pickers.

The Council has focused on the development and delivery of the Minster Lovell Neighbourhood Plan. The work is led by the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group with representatives from the Parish Council, the Society for the Protection of Minster Lovell and Parishioners with support from Community First Oxfordshire. A successful launch and consultation event was held in March last year which gathered 126 comments from sixty-two residents. From this the survey results were published, the Village character assessment and design code has been prepared and policies have been drafted. We have presented to the April Parish Council Meeting later the draft of the Neighbourhood Development Strategy 2026 to 2043 and the proposed green space buffer zones. This will form the basis of the formal consultation with residents at the public consultation event on 30th May 2026. Thanks to Cllr. Usherwood and Cllr. Eaglestone for leading the Neighbourhood Plan project on behalf of the Council.

The Council has continued to meet with OCC's Highways Engagement Officer and as a result we have an agreed schedule of OCC Highways work for the Village. This includes maintaining and clearing pavements and roads and cutting back the laurels at the Bridge in Old Minster. The Council has carefully reviewed the grass cutting schedule and contract for the Village and Ripley Avenue and awarded the contract for the forthcoming year to UBICO.

With the financial support from a cream tea afternoon organised by Mr. Kew at the Mill and Conference Centre, the island in the river Windrush was cleared. This has had an influence on the flow and



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Vanessa Oliveri

Email: clerk@minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07712 705865

appearance of the river. The Council has worked hard with the Environment Agency and landowners to get trees removed from the river Windrush because of the impact on the flow of the river and the erosion of the riverbank. This has achieved limited success and the Council continues to pursue it. The Parish Council received £9,357.80 S106 funding towards the urgent installation of the septic tank in Wash Meadow to re-pay the grant that the Council made to the Trustees of Wash Meadow.

It is unfortunate that limited progress has been made with the Village Hall Project this year despite much work from Minster Lovell Playing Field Trust and the Parochial Church Council to try and progress it, including a public consultation. Minster Lovell Playing Field Trust is working through land ownership details with legal advice prior to any decision on the future sale or use of the Village Hall. The S106 application to fund the purchase and refurbishment of the Village Hall is being drafted by the Parish Council with support of WODC S106 officers in readiness. Work is taking place to determine an art project for the Village using the S106 allocation of £16,594.49 to community art projects and we expect to decide on the project for the Village this financial year.

The Parish Council has provided feedback to WODC on twenty-six planning applications that affect the Village and has made comments that reflect the Minster Lovell Policy Statement. We have been consistent in our approach to planning applications to protect the character, rural setting and unique history of Minster Lovell. This included comments on the detailed proposals for the development of the land to the West of Dovecote Park, WODC's consultation on the Local Plan Strategic Spatial Strategy to 2043 in December and the development of land to the North of the A40 at Curbridge Downs Farm.

The Council requested a meeting with WODC Senior Planning Officers and representatives of Redrow to express our views and concerns on the housing scheme for the site. This took place in September 2025. The Council also requested a meeting with WODC Planning Officers regarding the significant and detrimental impact of the Local Plan proposals on Minster Lovell. This took place in March 2026 and agreed to the principle of providing a green buffer to Minster Lovell so that Witney and Minster Lovell do not join-up. The A40 provides a barrier to join-up with Carterton and Brize Norton and we know that there are plans in place to extend Carterton right up to the A40. Cllr. Haley convened a meeting with the Chairs and Clerks from neighbouring Parish Councils. It was agreed to work together on common issues regarding proposals in the draft Local Plan and establish a Working Group ready to provide a collective response to the next phase of consultation in the Summer.

We have seen the introduction of the 30-mph speed limit on the B4047 this year and continue to take action on the campaign to improve water supply and reduce sewage and effluent runoff into local water courses.

In addition to the larger projects, the Council has maintained the Village allotments, organised a successful Remembrance Sunday Service, made an application to the War Memorial Trust for repairs to the War Memorial, undertaken an annual 'Spring Clean' Litter Pick, worked to get new bus signs installed near Dovecote Park, maintained Ripley Avenue and managed the grass cutting contract in the Village.

The Council received positive feedback on the statement of accounts for 24/25 and the small number of recommendations for improvement have been implemented. In 2025/26 the Council's income was £73,545.19 including £61,001.00 from the Parish Precept. In 2025/26 the Council spent £63,275.37, including £9,450.00 in grant funding to seven Village organisations. The balance at the end of the financial year was £38,510.02 and the precept for 26/27 was set at £80,000.00.

4. To hear presentations and reports of community interest:

County Cllr Nicholas Field-Johnson

Report received

I would like to thank all the residents in Minster Lovell for their continuing support. I will continue to campaign on several key issues: to stop the dumping of raw sewage into our rivers; improve our roads, which are in a dire condition, by reducing the number of potholes with better, lasting repairs and continue to work on a Countywide plan to limit HGV's using our villages and market towns as cut-throughs.



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Vanessa Oliveri

Email: clerk@minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07712 705865

The main issue and message over the last few months is the awful condition of the roads in Oxfordshire and the multiple reoccurring potholes.

THAMES WATER CONTINUES TO POLLUTE OUR RIVERS

I am sure all the residents who watched the TV programme Dirty Business were appalled by Thames Water continuing to pollute the Windrush. I have worked over the last few years with WASP to bring Thames Water accountable for their actions and have provided WASP with £10,000 for testing equipment which is placed in the Windrush to monitor Thames Water's continued release of sewerage into the Windrush. Thames Water remains in financial difficulty and has shown to be consistently poorly managed. There is strong opinion that Thames Water should be put into administration or returned to public ownership.

SURFACE DRESSING PROGRAMME TO BEGIN THIS MONTH

Some roads across Oxfordshire will be improved as part of a highway maintenance programme beginning this Spring. Surface dressing involves applying bituminous emulsion onto the road as a binder.

BURFORD BRIDGE PAVEMENT

Burford Town Council has approved for OCC to install and provide a better pedestrian walkway across Burford bridge as well as install bollards on either side of Burford bridge. The work on the walkway is planned for early summer.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND DEVOLUTION

Oxfordshire has responded to a government request for proposals on the shape of local government reorganisation in the county – with OCC outlining its preferred option for a single county unitary council.

District Councillor Liam Walker

Housing – The Government had set a target of building 905 houses per year in the District. Larger scale developments were being discussed within the District.

Woodford Way Car Park – Cllr. Walker has requested a full report on the Woodford Way Car Park.

Re-cycling Centres – A booking system had been implemented to the re-cycling centres in Oxfordshire where you have to book one week in advance. Cllr. Walker was trying to get the District Council to change this system as fly tipping was on the increase in the district.

District Council Local Plan 2042 – Request to take out the farm land as future development as there is enough brown field sites and we don't need to use green field sites. Cllr. Walker recommended to keep saying the same response when it comes to consultation on future development.

District Councillor Paul Marsh

Woodford Way Car Park – WODC were proposing to develop Woodford Way car park and build social housing on it.

Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr. Marsh indicated that it was a good idea that the Parish Council were undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan.

Meeting with Developers – Cllr. Marsh and Cllr. Walker recommended the Parish Council meet with developers to discuss future developments.

Hive Funding – WODC's Hive funding project was working well.

Redbridge Re-cycling Centre – It was reported that the re-cycling centre booking system had been introduced whilst the closure of Redbridge Re-cycling Centre to assist the smooth running of the re-cycling centre. Once Redbridge Re-cycling Centre is re-opened then the District Council planned to stop the booking system.

Trustees of Wash Meadow

Jonathan Stowell

Jonathan Stowell was not present at the meeting. A report was to follow.

Minster Lovell Playing Field Trust

John King and report provided at the meeting

During the year, November 2024 to October 2025, the Trust have been active in ensuring the maintenance of the play area behind the village hall. Dangerous trees have been removed from the north side of the car park while overgrown vegetation, which had been detrimental to a neighbouring fence, has been removed and maintained a such. The grass has been kept well with cutting multiple times throughout the growing season while the massive hedge to the south of the car park has been kept in a tidy state. Unfortunately, the tennis court has, over time, been showing its age and the surface is continually being treated for weeds coming up through the tarmac at each corner area. The court surface itself is showing much wear and loose gravel and



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Vanessa Oliveri

Email: clerk@minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07712 705865

muddy patched in slight hollows is making play difficult due to the danger of slipping. We have had to place warning signs at the entrance to the court to alert users of the problem with this facility. We had considered closing the tennis court but this would not have been an easy task due to the open entrances and the gaps in the fencing which has deteriorated and would cost a lot to repair. It had been estimated to replace the court and renew the fencing would be approximately £48k, which was considered as not viable. We have been grateful to receive the Parish Council grant of £2,000 per year in the previous two years which allowed us to pay the Public Liability Insurance, Accounts Audit and to employ a groundwork contractor to maintain the area in a better condition. The Playing Field Trust committee are involved with solicitors and the Charity Commission regarding the transfer of the land under various hall extensions. This is in preparation for the proposed purchase of the Village Hall from The Parochial Parish Council by the Parish Council. On advice of the solicitor, we have undertaken a poll of residents which produced 50 votes supporting the transfer as opposed to one against. The solicitor has also asked to have the land used 'unofficially' to be valued and advertise it for sale to determine the market value.

Community Counts

Dawn Haley and report provided at the meeting

Dawn Haley thanked the Parish Council for the financial support and those Councillors who support by coming to the events throughout the year. The financial support helps towards the overall running costs including the rent. Weekly there is a Saturday café from 10.00 -12.00 with a selection of homemade cakes, pavlova or scones with cream and jam, also cold or hot drinks including percolated coffee. During the last 12 months we have seen between 40 and 50 people which includes two Saturdays given over to fund raising – MacMillan coffee morning – and supporting a Marathon Runner to raise money for the Royal British Legion. Our regulars are pleased to help and support the fund-raising events. There are between 30 and 40 regulars who come about once a month and between 15 to 20 who are there most weeks. We close for one week in July when everyone is invited to attend Brian Mills Garden Party for his charity 'Room to Learn.' We advertise in the Village News and on the Notice Board and all those who come along are made to feel welcome. Other events: During the past year we have organised lunches out to the Maybush and had a very good time. A Ploughman's lunch in July, a light lunch in September and a light lunch in December with entertainment by St. Kenelm's school children.

Library and Coffee and chat group

Brian Layt and report sent

Many thanks to the Parish Council for our grant this year. Coffee and Chat was founded by Wendy Atkinson, Brian Layt and Ann Williams several years ago at the end of COVID and it has gone from strength to strength with the weekly sessions attended by an increasing number of villagers. In addition to a range of drinks we provide toasted goods, cakes and biscuits, and copies of the local newspaper. Donation tins are placed on all the tables and the resulting amount received generally covers the basic running costs of our Wednesday mornings. Our aim remains to make everyone who walks through the door feel special and valued. The majority of people attending our events are single, and it is particularly gratifying that we continue to attract recently widowed men and women who then become regulars thanks to the warm welcome and friendship they receive from everybody. Also pleasing this year is the growing number of men that attend. Our dedicated team of volunteers has also increased in number and they work very hard to make every event a success. We very much appreciate their support and now could not manage the increase in numbers of visitors without them. We have regular visits from Trading Standards and Age UK who offer all sorts of advice and recommendations, which is highly valued. We continue to host Film Afternoons which are provided by Age UK. They bring the equipment and we provide the dvd, popcorn and home-made cakes for the interval. We give Age UK £2 per person for this event, and these have also been attended by people who do not come to our coffee mornings, so we are reaching a wider audience from the village in this way. The Parish Council grant money is very much appreciated. It is used mainly towards covering the cost of special events for our regulars, usually around 50 people, at no cost to themselves. Special events include the highly popular fish and chips lunches, freshly cooked in the village hall car park by an outside caterer and delivered to the tables on china plates by our team of volunteers! We also host an Afternoon Tea and Christmas Lunch catered for by Butty Box and this year we are planning a Strawberry and Pimm's afternoon in June. Without the Parish Council, most of these very much enjoyed and praised special times simply could not happen. Thank you.



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Vanessa Oliveri

Email: clerk@minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07712 705865

St Kenelm's Primary School

Mrs Ayris thanked the Parish Council for the grant funding which had helped the school purchase a fire pit, tarpaulin, trees and outdoor storage for the Forest School activities.

Mrs Ayris – Forest School

Rivers

Paul Woodley – Fishing Bailiff

The fishing bailiff had submitted a report as follows: - I have issued 6 new membership cards in the year 25/26 to residents of Minster Lovell and I have attached the spreadsheet for you.

I have been down checking the river on a regular basis and to date there has been no one fishing on the river without a permit that I have seen or been told about. I have again reported the tree that had fallen in the river to the environment agency earlier last year and to date again I have still had no reply. The tree's from the far bank have still not been removed plus 2 more have gone in near the car park end. My main concern about this is the build-up of various pieces of rubbish and scum is not allowing the river to flow through properly. It is also an eyesore. The lower part of the river Wash Meadow side is getting very weedy and needs dragging back to the bank to allow the river to flow better. I am still an active member of WASP and I report any findings to Ashley Smith from Widford who does regular water testing along the river from Burford to the other side of Witney and will liaise with me if there was a major problem. A video of mine from 1998 was shown on Channel 4 in episode 1 Dirty Business. It shows how clear the river Windrush was and plenty of fish at that time.

The river has now receded since the recent floods and is looking in very good condition. But it is now the closed season for fishing on rivers.

WI

Apologies and report sent

Minster Lovell WI thanked the Parish Council for funding towards the 100th anniversary of the W.I.

History Group

Graham Kew and report received

The History Club have held 6 meetings with speakers ranging from mountaineer to Sealed Knot Re-enactor, and this month, WW1 Chaplains who went to war armed only with a bible, but still saved others. We have had a trip this April to Wantage Museum with conducted tour and cream tea. We have purchased a new seat for the Beach area and renewed the shingle. We plan to build two flower containers and we have a group of volunteers who want to become English Heritage Volunteers and Friends to the Mill and Old Swan. We had a successful fundraising event last year to help pay for the removal of trees on Wash Meadow Island. Thank you for your grants and support for the Village Museum and Magazine. We have now installed a heater to keep the humidity down in the Museum.

Minster Lovell Village Trust

Christine Donohue – report received

The Trust was formed to sell the Village guide books, the profit from which is used to help fund Village voluntary organisations. The current trustees are Christine Donohue, Lorraine Haire, Anne Ford and Sharon Palmer. We meet twice a year but can use email to discuss issues if necessary. St. Kenelm's church remains our most reliable site for selling the booklets but we do have a few books in the Post Office and in the Mad Hatter book shop in Burford High Street. At the end of 2025, we had £4,692.44 in our deposit account and £738.82 in our current account. We've been told that we will have to pay bank charges this year on our current account. As we haven't had requests recently, we've not asked for a grant from the Parish Council. However, we have just received an application from the Mother and Toddler group, for a contribution towards toys for the children. We've been pleased to agree to this. We welcome hearing of any need as we would rather make use of our money for the good of the Village.

Flower Show

Jane Holloway – report received

A brief report: we had an incredibly successful 2025 Show with a record number of both entrants and entries, 313 entries - up 33.8% from 2024's 234 which didn't look like that at the start of that week! So many people came and supported and we had a number of very generous raffle prizes from local businesses as well. A big learning curve for me as it was my first time as Chair but thanks to the fantastic committee of eight other people and some wonderful volunteers on the day it all went very smoothly.

We are now in the process of putting together the Schedule for this year's show and our team of wonderful judges are standing by. As we now have a Children's Ambassador we are looking at creative ways of engaging with the school in the term time which will feed into the show.



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Vanessa Oliveri

Email: clerk@minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07712 705865

We are so thankful for the long-standing support of this annual event from so many in the Village. Especially we want to thank the Parish Council for the grant just awarded, to David Haley for his personal support and for managing our auction, to Mick Ford who designs the Schedule, Minster Lovell Storage and for Village News who profile regular articles and organise for the distribution of the schedule in July. We do hope to see you on Saturday 15th August for this year's show – and we are just starting to plan for our 50th in 2028!

Village News

Graham Kew thanked the Parish Council for it's grant funding.

Closing remarks

Cllr Haley noted the excellent range of services happening in the village with so many people giving their time to be involved.

A litter picking event had been arranged for 9st May 2025 commencing at 9.00am from the Methodist Hall, Minster Lovell.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm