

# WESTON ON THE GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

For the meeting of Parish Council, held in Village Hall on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Meeting Number 26.433

*Note for information: Cherwell District Council – CDC, Oxfordshire County Council - OCC*

### Public Participation

There was nothing to note.

#### **26.433.1 For Discussion and Resolution To Approve:** Co-option of a Parish Councillor to fill casual vacancy (DB)

Resident David Williams was in attendance as a potential candidate for co-option as a Councillor onto the Parish Council. The candidate provided an introduction to himself and explained his interest on biodiversity and the Councillors had the opportunity to ask questions.

There are currently three vacancies for Councillors which have previously been advertised.

The resolution to approve the co-option of David Williams as a Councillor on Weston on the Green Parish Council was proposed by SD and seconded by MA. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

Clerk provided the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form for David Williams to sign. The form was completed and the Council welcomed David as a Councillor.

**Action:** Clerk to provide Register of Members' Interests form for David Williams to complete and return.

#### **26.433.2 To Receive:** Apologies for non-attendance

Councillors Bohm (DB), Davies (SD), Rowan (TR), Miller (JM), Aldridge (MA) and Williams (DW) were in attendance.

Neither Councillor Coton (Cherwell District Council) or Councillor Gordon (Oxfordshire County Council) were in attendance.

2 members of the public were in attendance.

#### **26.433.3 To Receive:** Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bohm declared an interest in agenda item 20, regarding a donation request from St Mary's Church, due to being related to the applicant and so outlined that she would abstain from the vote.

#### **26.433.4 To Receive & Approve:** Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026 (DB)

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were discussed with no changes required.

The resolution to approve the minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026 was proposed by DB and seconded by TR. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

**Action:** Clerk to present minutes to Chair to sign, then file and upload to the web.

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**26.433.5 For Information:** Chair report (DB)

DB welcomed Councillor David Williams as the newest member of the Parish Council and encouraged him to ask questions as he moves through the induction process.

Issues raised at the previous meeting have been worked on during the month; some have been resolved while others remain ongoing.

The Food Bank Collection continues to be successful, thanks to the support of residents and assistance from Toddy. It is also an opportunity to chat with villagers and get their views on matters and hear some concerns. The next collection will take place on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The Village News has appointed a new editor, David Buchanan, who will shadow Alex Reid for the next edition before undertaking a trial period over the summer. Councillors were asked to support the transition, particularly as the new advertising cycle begins.

DB and JM confirmed that concerns raised by villagers about activity at Saint Hill Copse and adjacent land have been addressed with help from John Miller, and the situation now appears to have improved.

**26.433.6 For Information:** Clerk report (Clerk)

The clerks report to the Council was noted which confirmed payments from the Parish Council bank account including payments relating to the monthly clerk salary.

CDC has sent confirmation that the council tax and precepts for the upcoming fiscal year (2026/27) were successfully approved. The scheduled dates for the instalment payments are 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026 and 9<sup>th</sup> September 2026.

The following dates were noted:

May Parish Council meeting date change: Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Annual Parish meeting: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Annual Village Litter Pick Date: Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2026, 9.30am

The Akeman Benefice – Weston on the Green Lent Labour Day: Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2026 (10.30am-12.30pm)

**26.433.7 To Note:** Playing field update and playground inspection report (Clerk)

The playground inspection report undertaken by the clerk was noted, no new major defects to the equipment were identified, apart from those items mentioned in the annual RoSPA report and previous monthly reports.

The clerk mentioned that matting could be placed at the playground entrances to avoid the wearing away of the soil into a U shaped trench. The Council will investigate the requirement further.

The clerk met a football coach interested in using the playing field at the weekend; he mentioned that if the mole/rabbits could be more controlled he could look to invest and help maintain the site. The clerk will feedback any further developments, alongside Ardley FC feedback.

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**26.433.8 For Discussion:** Discuss recommendations from the Planning Group on planning applications (SD)

Key planning applications on the planning report were discussed by the Council.

### **Building Applications**

#### **Decisions Received – Permitted**

#### **Decisions Received – Refused; Withdrawn**

None

#### **Appeals**

**25/00041/REF – Reynards Lodge, North Lane - refused**

#### **Awaiting Decision**

**25/00418/F and 25/00486/LB – The Manor Hotel, Northampton Road**

Restoration and extension of Rupert's Cottage to provide additional guest accommodation and leisure facilities; re-instatement of the former outdoor swimming pool; construction of a new events pavilion; restaurant extension within the Manor's west courtyard; relocation of guest car parking away from the Manor's principal elevation; screening of the existing plant and biomass boiler area; restoration of wider landscape features including the historic moat and bridge.

OCC Transport – objection – reliance on car transport

Archaeology – need more information re excavation for Wedding Barn and Rupert's Cottage.

**Commented**

**25/01418/F - Family Farm House Part Of A34**

Driver rest stop facility including the formation of a new entry and exit slip road adjoining the A34, parking area for cars and HGVs, erection of an amenity building (including toilets and catering area), EV charging station, solar PV array, battery storage facility, other ancillary structures/buildings and landscaped amenity area.

2037 earliest connection to National Grid for solar.

**Commented**

### **New Planning Applications**

**26/00408/DISC (ref 24/00497/F and 24/00498/LB) – Cruck Cottage, Northampton Road**

Thatch roof method statement; stone floor tile sample

#### **Tree Applications**

**26/00407/TCA – Southfield Farm, North Lane - New**

T1 - Willow pollard; T2 – Scots pine fell; T3 – Hazel pollard

All trees adjoin the North Lane boundary to the front of the property

**26/00174/TCA – 3 Blacksmiths Close**

Silver birch crown reduction and minor pruning to width

**Permitted**

**26/00056/TCA – Barn House, Knowle Lane**

Lime tree on main driveway – fell and repair stone wall. Replant with native.

**Permitted**

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**25/03295/TCA – Newby Cottage, Northampton Road**

2 pine trees, 1 silver birch – remove.

Pending

**25/03246/TCA – Stonehouse, Northampton Road**

1 willow – pollard; horse chestnut – reduce & reshape; apple – fell; laurel & yew – reduce and reshape. Permitted

**Action: SD/Clerk to send appropriate planning replies to Cherwell District Council.**

DB confirmed an email had been sent to David Peckford, Assistant Director – Planning at CDC regarding queries and incorrect information relating to the approved planning application 25/00139/F – Land North of Normandy, North Lane. The email has been forward to Paul Ihringer in the CDC planning team for consideration and the Parish Council are waiting for a response.

**26.433.9 Resolution To Approve:** Parish Council response to Local Government Reorganisation Consultation (DB)

The Council discussed the three options currently proposed for local government reorganisation. It was noted that the Greater Oxford option had been dismissed as a preferred option by the Council at a previous meeting.

It was considered whether services such as social care and SEND would be more effectively delivered under a single authority or through multiple authorities. Concerns were raised that reorganisation could reduce the local voice in planning decisions.

The two-council model comprising Cherwell District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council was considered sensible but it was further noted that no budget projections have yet been provided for any of the proposed models, making it difficult to assess the potential financial implications and form a valid opinion.

It was agreed that the link to the consultation and proposals would be resent to councillors for consideration.

**Action: Clerk to circulate the information on Local Government Reorganisation.**

DB noted that the discussion was intended as a means of gathering views rather than constituting a formal vote and the views will be added to the Parish Council’s response to the consultation. Individual responses were also welcomed by Councillors to the consultation.

**Action: DB to provide Parish Council response to the Local Government Reorganisation consultation.**

**26.433.10 For Discussion:** Update on Neighbourhood Plan review (SD/DB)

SD presented a review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

SD highlighted that work on developing the original plan began in 2015 and the current Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in May 2021. The Council is now approaching the five-year period at which a review of the plan is considered appropriate in order to ensure that policies remain current and can continue to be legitimately applied in planning decisions at district level.

Over the past five years the village has experienced a number of changes, including new housing development, an increase in new residents, population turnover and some demographic shifts. These factors were considered relevant when reviewing whether existing policies remain appropriate.

It was explained that the current review has been intentionally conservative. This approach reflects the fact that the CDC Local Plan is currently under review with the examiner and has not yet been adopted. As Neighbourhood Plan policies must align with the adopted Local Plan, Councillors considered it prudent not to introduce significant policy changes at this stage, as substantial amendments would require approval through a referendum. Uncertainty regarding local government reorganisation was also noted.

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SD noted that a more comprehensive review of the Neighbourhood Plan could take place in the following plan period (2031–2036). It was considered that the existing plan remains broadly relevant to the village, including the design code, guidance on the scale and location of housing development, the protection of green spaces and providing the Parish Council with a stronger voice in planning applications, including securing contributions from larger developments.

The Council reviewed the proposed settlement boundary. This defines the area of the village within which housing development may be supported in principle. The existing Neighbourhood Plan refers to this as the “village confines”. It was noted that no major changes are proposed to the boundary in the review, other than the inclusion of the North Lane development (North of Normandy) on the western side of the village. Members reiterated that development would only be supported in principle within the defined settlement boundary and that proposals outside it would require strong justification to overcome a Parish Council objection.

The Council was advised that developers have approached the Parish Council regarding potential future developments and that further housing proposals may be forthcoming. It was also noted that national planning policy changes may increase pressure for additional housing provision.

It had been discussed whether sites should be allocated in the revised Neighbourhood Plan or whether it would be preferable to wait until the CDC Local Plan is adopted, as this will determine the village’s category and any associated housing requirement.

The issue of Green Belt land was also considered. Approximately half of the village lies within the Green Belt while the northern half does not, which has resulted in a disproportionate amount of development occurring in the north of the village. Members noted that proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework introduce the concept of “Grey Belt” land, referring to areas within the Green Belt that may have limited Green Belt value and could potentially be considered for development.

In this context, SD noted that potential sites have been identified which could accommodate approximately 12 new dwellings, including 4 affordable homes. The advantages of these sites include their location to the south of the village centre, their proximity within walking distance of village facilities and their position within the proposed settlement boundary. One of the sites had previously been identified as a possible rural exception site but could not be allocated due to its Green Belt designation; changes to national policy may now allow it to be considered.

The continuing need for affordable housing within the village, particularly for people with local connections was also noted.

The Council discussed the importance of bringing forward modest and sustainable development proposals rather than leaving the village open to larger speculative schemes. There would also be other sites which would come up for development within the village. SD referred to the large field to the east of the B430 opposite Milestone Lane and North Lane, which could potentially accommodate a significantly larger development if brought forward by developers.

It was noted that CDC has previously undertaken a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) call for sites within villages and holds information on potential development sites. Councillors also discussed the historic pattern of the village, noting that the older settlement is primarily located to the west of the B430, although maintaining development solely on that side may become increasingly difficult over time.

SD noted that the revised Neighbourhood Plan will simplify and clarify several existing policies. While the core policies remain largely unchanged, the revised document provides more detailed explanation of how they should be interpreted and applied when determining planning applications.

It was agreed that the proposed revisions would be presented and explained at the annual village meeting to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026. Copies of the revised policies will be circulated to the Council in advance of that meeting.

**Action:** SD/DB to circulate revised policies from the review of the Neighbourhood Plan to the Council.

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**26.433.11 For Discussion:** Update on village works (JM)

Moles: quote for a contractor willing to come and do a years contract to be provided, alongside their methods of operation.

Dog bin: a request has been made to locate a new dog litter bin towards The Chequers end of the village. As the spend would be below approval threshold the Council agreed to proceed and purchase a new bin.

**Action:** Clerk to purchase a dog litter bin to locate towards The Chequers end of the village and highlight to CDC its location for clearance when installed.

Litter bin: the bin has fallen off by the Oxford Court bus stop. Resident suggested it could be removed as it is used for dog litter and is not pleasant for users of the bus stop.

**Action:** JM to investigate litter bin removal or relocation at Oxford Court bus stop.

Salt bin at Milestone Lane has been filled.

**26.433.12 For Information:** Update on Heyford Park proposed new town application and potential flooding implications on parish (DB/JM)

JM confirmed that a variety of work has been undertaken on the waterways through the village and, apart from a couple of blockages to be resolved, water was flowing through the village more freely.

JM is also continuing to work with the landowner at Weston Fen to get permission to work on the area as it is a SSSI site.

**26.433.13 For Discussion:** Update on bus shelters at bus stops on B430 (DB)

DB confirmed that the Council would need agreement from the CDC conservation team regarding what must be considered to adhere to the design code for conservation areas prior to any erection of bus shelters on B430.

**Action:** DB to feedback regarding the advice of the CDC conservation team regarding bus shelters on B430.

**26.433.14 Resolution: To Approve** the appointment of a contractor from submitted quotes to undertake monthly playing field maintenance during 2026, at the specified rate quoted and agreed (JM)

The resolution to approve the appointment of contractor, Oxford Edens, to undertake monthly playing field maintenance during 2026, at the specified rate quoted and agreed was proposed by JM and seconded by SD. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

**Action:** Clerk to contact contractors to confirm the Parish Council's decision on playing field maintenance contractor for 2026.

**Resolution: To Approve** the appointment of a contractor from submitted quotes to undertake repair to playing field hedge fronting Church Lane, at the specified rate quoted and agreed (JM)

DW highlighted that he has hedging plants from The Wildlife Trust that he would be happy to plant along the hedge fronting Church Lane if the ground was prepared. A new quote will be sought for just ground preparation from the contractor but approval requested at this Council meeting for the full quoted amount to ensure work can be scheduled.

The resolution to approve the appointment of a contractor, Oxford Edens, to undertake works to the playing field hedge fronting Church Lane, at the specified rate quoted of £984 incl VAT was proposed by JM and seconded by TR. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

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**Action:** Clerk to contact contractors to confirm the Parish Council's decision on hedge repairs at the playing field and obtain a revised quote for preparation only.

**26.433.15 For Information:** Update from Traffic Calming Action Group: costs of first and potential second stage of traffic mitigation proposals for use in Tritax request for some funding (MA)

The Speedwatch team have been active in the village with concern still held over excess speeds on Church Lane.

MA confirmed that quotes have been received back from companies regarding speed indicator devices. The moveable devices would be solar powered and would record a variety of data which would be easy to collect and download. The quotes will be discussed at a Traffic Calming Action Group meeting in order to provide a report and resolution to spend request to the next Parish Council meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

**Action:** MA to hold a Traffic Calming Action Group meeting to discuss speed indicator sign quotes to provide a report back to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 Parish Council meeting.

**26.433.16 Resolution: To Approve** the following invoices for payment (TR)

TR requested approval of the invoices detailed in the table below.

PC Ref	Payee	Purpose	Total (incl VAT)	Budget Line	Amount Remaining in 2025-26 Budget Line
558*	Howden UK Brokers Limited	Community van insurance 2026-27	£1,581.87	Village Works/Community Bus	£3,360.17
559*	Stephen Gray - Gray Contractors	Hedge trimming within village boundaries	£780.00	Village Works/General Village Maintenance	£785.17
560	WotG Memorial Village Hall	Village Hall hire for PC meetings (Apr-June 26)	£45.00	Meeting Costs/Hire of Village Hall	£135.00
561	Parish Online	Mapping Software Package per year	£86.40	Contingency	£2,533.10
562	Graham Barnett	Fuel for community van (Tesco)	£81.54	Village Works/Community Bus	£1,778.30

It was confirmed that invoices 558 and 559 had already been paid to ensure continuation of the insurance provision and to avoid late payment.

The resolution to approve the invoices detailed in the table was proposed by TR and seconded by MA. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

**Action:** Clerk to update invoice log with approvals.

**Action:** Clerk to initiative request for payments from Councillors and ensure payments authorised.

**26.433.17 For Information:** Oxfordshire County & Cherwell District Councillors updates (OCC & CDC Councillors)

Councillor Gordon had provided a written update report covering various issues in the county which had been circulated to the Council and placed on the Parish Council website.

There was no update from Councillor Coton.

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**26.433.18 Resolution: To Approve** the appointment of a new website and email provider, Parish Online, at a total annual cost of £392+VAT on the recommendation of the Data & Systems Group (DB/MA)

DB highlighted the requirement for the Council to be compliant with website accessibility and national policy. A Parish Online website would allow compliance and provide Councillors with portfolio specific email addresses.

The resolution to approve the appointment of a new website and email provider, Parish Online, at a total annual cost of £392+VAT on the recommendation of the Data & Systems Group was proposed by DB and seconded by MA. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

**Action:** Clerk to accept quote from Parish Online for a new website and email service for the Parish Council.

**Action:** Clerk to contact existing website provider, 123Connect, and inform them the Parish Council would cease to require their services.

**26.433.19 For Discussion:** replacement of trees lost in recent years in the village e.g. Jubilee Anniversary tree (DB)

DB and DW had discussed the idea of replacing trees which have been lost in the village in recent years to create a memorial group of trees on the opposite side to the Sycamore Gap sapling planted at the rear of the playing field.

DW has purchased five Acer Rubrum (maple) bare root trees for £18.99 (incl VAT) which he has potted and will grow on before planting on the field, with appropriate tree guards.

**26.433.20 Resolution: To Approve** a donation request of £200.00 from St Mary's Church regarding a community fund (TR/DB)

The Council discussed the donation request of £200.00 from St Mary's Church to help develop a community emergency fund to support families in need in the parish. The Church had been approached by Chesterton Primary School to see if they could help support one family with school meals from January-July 2026.

Following a declaration of interest DB abstained from the vote.

The resolution to approve a donation request from a donation request of £200.00 from St Mary's Church regarding a community fund was proposed by TR and seconded by DW. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

The request is in line with the Weston on the Green Parish Council Donations Policy and the Council has used the powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act in order to grant this donation.

**Action:** Clerk to confirm approval of the donation to St Mary's Church and arrange payment as part of the March invoice payment run via the Councillors.

**26.433.21.** Update on community van (Graham Barnett/JM)

Discussions at the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026 Parish Council meeting confirmed that the Parish Council would continue to support the community transport initiative and investigate a replacement for the existing van.

JM has kindly sourced a replacement vehicle which is all serviced and ready to go – a 4 seater Fiat Fiorino – the new vehicle has been supported by the volunteer drivers.

The clerk will investigate insurance for the new vehicle, along with paying for road tax and organising an Oxford congestion charge permit.

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The Parish Council would then need to look to try and sell the existing vehicle.

**Action:** Clerk to investigate a change to the insurance policy for the new community vehicle.

**Action:** Clerk to pay for road tax and apply for new Oxford congestion charge permit for the community van.

**26.433.22**      **Next Parish Council Meeting Date:** Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026, 7.30pm (DB)

**Meeting closed:** 21.52

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