

BRIGHTWALTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting held on
Monday 11th May 2026 at 7.30pm
at Brightwalton Village Hall

Present: Cllr Annie Agnew, Cllr Mike Cooper, Cllr Christine Delahunty, Cllr Damien Goatley, Cllr Sue Sayers and Cllr Tim Wyatt

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Parish Clerk)
 Councillor Clive Hooker (West Berkshire District Councillor)
 Katherine Moore (Community Coordinator)
 Steve Wapshott (Chair, Village Hall Committee)
 Richard Wilson (Editor, Brickleton News)

05/2026/01 RESOLVED **ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN AND APPOINTMENT OF A VICE CHAIRMAN**
 to elect Cllr Tim Wyatt as Chairman of the Parish Council, and Cllr Annie Agnew as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council, for the municipal year 2026/27.

05/2026/02 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
 No apologies for absence were received, all Councillors present.

05/2026/03 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
 There were no declarations of interest.

05/2026/04 RESOLVED **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
 to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th March 2026 as a true and accurate record.

05/2026/05 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2025/26**
 The Chairman read the annual report 2025/26, as appended to these Minutes.

05/2026/06 **OPEN FORUM**
 There were no questions or comments from those present.

05/2026/07 **WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR CLIVE HOOKER**
 Cllr Hooker congratulated Cllrs Wyatt and Agnew on their re-election as Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively.
 At the forthcoming annual meeting of the District Council, the current Chairman Cllr Tony Vickers would be standing down, with the current Vice Chairman, Cllr Stephanie Steevenson, expected to take over the role.
 There would be an extraordinary meeting afterwards to discuss pedestrianisation of Northbrook Street, Newbury.

Councillors thanked Cllr Hooker for the update.

05/2026/08 **COMMUNITY COORDINATOR**
 a) Katherine Moore (Community Coordinator) updated as follows:

Youth Club had seen low attendance since January, but it was hoped that the better weather and the ability to utilise the outside space would increase attendance after the May half term. There would also be an increase in publicity with the programme of activities being published.

A cost was being obtained to provide a 'Bikeability' session in the summer holidays, and plans for a family day at Northcroft Lido and a West Downland Music Event were being assessed.

Councillors thanked Katherine for the update.

05/2026/09 ALL SAINTS PCC

The following update was noted:

Building work on the vestry was nearly complete. There was a cleaning party on Friday to remove a significant volume of dust so that a service could be held on Sunday. Ironwork on the top floor was still to be installed, and the church would remain locked until this was in place. The churchyard was looking good thanks to the hard work of Stirling Moss and the village working party in April.

05/2026/10 VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Village Hall Committee advised that the hall was in use most days and continued to have regular hirers and party bookings. The village fete on Sunday 3rd May was a great success, with over £8,000 profit generated, £3,000 of which was from bar takings. Suggestions for next year were welcomed. The hall boiler needs replacing and grants were being explored.

Katherine Moore left the meeting

05/2026/11 PLANNING

a) The following planning application was considered:
26/00902/HOUSE – Killybegs – New 1st floor window.

RESOLVED no objection.

b) The following planning updates were noted:

Application	Address	Proposal	BPC response	WBC decision
26/00019/LBC	Elm Cottage	Creation of new bathroom in existing room (currently used as a study)	No Objection	Approved
26/00223/COND	Brightwalton Stud	Approval of details reserved by Condition 7 Tree Protection & 11 CEMP	Not consulted	Approved
26/00414/TPC	Hope Cottage	S1 Sycamore with a deep cavity in the base within 5m of building and immediately next to oil tank. Remove to ground level	Not consulted	No objection raised
26/00417/TPC	Hope Cottage	Oak trees current height approx. 22m, reduce by 20%, crown raise to 3m	Not consulted	No objection raised
26/00418/TPC	The Lawns	Conifer hedge reduction, current height of hedge approx. 9m	Not consulted	No objection raised
26/00508/TPC	The Old Rectory	Eucalyptus Gunnii (Cider Gum) felling	Not consulted	No objection raised
26/00721/COND	Brightwalton Stud	Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions 9, 14 & 17	Not consulted	Awaiting decision
26/00867/NONMAT	Brightwalton Stud	Application for a non-material amendment of condition 4	Not consulted	Awaiting decision
26/00919/COND	Elm Cottage	Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 3	Not consulted	Awaiting decision

05/2026/12 SECTION 106 HOUSING

Cllr Goatley reported that it was understood that a local house, that is subject to a Section 106 local connection agreement, was to be offered to a non-local connection applicant, despite there being qualifying interested parties.

RESOLVED to email District Councillor Hooker requesting that this be pursued with Housing Officers, and to pursue a joint meeting with Housing Officers, Cllr Hooker and representatives of Brightwalton, Chaddleworth and Leckhampstead Parish Councils.

05/2026/13 HIGHWAYS

It was noted that Long Lane was scheduled to be closed on 18th May 2026, 8am-5pm for carriageway repairs.

The grass verge at the end of Common Road required cutting back as it was impacting sight lines.

Action: Parish Clerk to report to West Berkshire Council

05/2026/14 FINANCE**a) Financial Report**

A financial report for the year 2025/26 (1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026) was noted.

b) Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26

Council reviewed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year 2025/26.

RESOLVED to confirm that Brightwalton Parish Council meets the qualifying criteria for exemption and wishes to certify itself as exempt from a limited assurance review for financial year 2025/26.

RESOLVED to adopt the Internal Auditor's Report for the financial year 2025/26.

RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year 2025/26.

RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statements for the financial year 2025/26.

RESOLVED to approve the dates for the exercise of public rights as Wednesday 3rd June 2026 to Tuesday 14th July 2026.

c) Payments

RESOLVED to approve the following payment:

Payee	Amount	Invoice number & date	Due Date	Description
Playsafety	£104.40 (£87.00+VAT)	97027 05.05.2026	04.06.2026	Annual safety inspection of play area

d) BALC/NALC membership

RESOLVED to renew membership of BALC (Berkshire Association of Local Councils) and NALC (National Association of Local Councils) for the year 2026/27 at a cost of £91.69.

e) Insurance Renewal

Renewal of the Parish Council's insurance for the year 2026/27 is due on 1st July 2026. A renewal quote of £403.00 had been received from the current insurer, Zurich.

RESOLVED to obtain comparison quotes and to delegate authority to the Chairman and Vice Chairman to approval an insurance provider effective from 1st July 2026.

f) West Berkshire Council Members' Bid

It was noted that West Berkshire Council Members' Bids were open for applications until 25th May 2026. It was agreed that the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee would liaise with the Parish Clerk if they wished to pursue an application for funding for the village hall.

Cllr Hooker left the meeting

05/2026/15

PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS AND REPAIRS

- i. There were no matters arising from play park inspections carried out by Cllr Cooper (March) and Cllr Goatley (April) that required discussion.
- ii. The annual ROSPA safety inspection report had been circulated and two matters had been highlighted for prompt attention; topping up of the safety surface beneath the large climbing unit and the desire line creating a gap in the western boundary hedging.
**Action: Parish Clerk to obtain quotes to (i) top up the current safety surfacing and (ii) to replace with alternative surfacing options.
Cllr Goatley to obtain a cost for a tipper load of the current surfacing.**
- iii. The Parish Clerk advised that she had been trying to obtain a quote to repair the junior swing frame but had not been successful.
Action: Cllr Goatley to follow up with contractor.
- iv. The Parish Clerk advised that she had been trying to obtain a quote to repair the gap in the western boundary hedging but had not been successful.
Action: Cllr Goatley to follow up with contractor.
- v. Cllr Goatley advised that he had not had an opportunity to progress installation of anti-slip grips on the large climbing unit.
- vi. The Parish Clerk advised that a replacement football goal net had been passed on to the Parish Council's usual contractor and was awaiting installation.

05/2026/16

ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS FOR 2026/27

The Parish Clerk presented a draft programme of activities and projects for the year ahead and preparedness for grant funding opportunities. It was agreed to support the programme as set out in an appendix to these minutes.

05/2026/17

STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, RISK ASSESSMENT & ASSET REGISTER 2026/27

Council reviewed Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment and the asset register for the year 2026/27. It was noted that Standing Orders and Financial Regulations had been updated to the latest model documents provided by NALC, no changes to the Risk Assessment and the Asset Register was updated.

RESOLVED

to update Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment and Asset Register in line with discussion and to adopt for the year 2026/27.

05/2026/18

VILLAGE MATTERS

- i. It was agreed to hold a working group on Sunday 14th June, 10am – 12pm, to help tidy the Old Churchyard.
- ii. There were no matters arising from the Spring Tidy on Sunday 19th April that required discussion.
- iii. There were no matters arising from the Village Fete on Sunday 3rd May that required discussion.
- iv. It was noted work was ongoing to connect with volunteers to undertake maintenance / improvement works at the War Memorial.

05/2026/19

GENERAL COUNCIL MATTERS & UPDATES

- i. There were no updates from Councillors.
- ii. **Articles for Brickleton News**
Working group to tidy the Old Churchyard on Sunday 14th June, 10am – 12pm.
The Chairman's Annual Report.
- iii. **Items for the next agenda**
War Memorial – Cllr Wyatt.

05/2026/20

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 13th July 2026, 7.30pm at Brightwalton Village Hall, followed by:
Mondays 14th September 2026, 9th November 2026, 11th January 2027, 8th March 2027 and 10th May 2027.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.53pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____

BRIGHTWALTON PARISH COUNCIL - CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

It has been another steady year for Brightwalton Parish Council, during which we have continued to focus on maintaining and improving our village environment, supporting community activities and managing increasing financial pressures.

Key Highlights and Challenges

This year has not been without its challenges. We experienced more instances of vandalism within the village. Most prominent being one of the memorial benches outside the village hall being damaged beyond repair. There was also damage to the hedge in the playpark.

On a brighter note the efforts of villagers to keep the village looking tidy has not gone unnoticed. It is heartening to see the results of people quietly going about maintenance work voluntarily.

Investment in the Village

Despite these challenges, there have been several positive developments. Notably, funding secured through a West Berkshire Council Members' Bid enabled the refurbishment of the village phone box, which has now been restored to an excellent standard and is a feature the community can be proud of.

Significant attention has also been given to the upkeep of the recreation ground and play area. A programme of repairs has been carried out, including fencing, equipment maintenance and safety improvements, alongside the adoption of a longer-term maintenance plan to ensure these facilities remain safe and enjoyable for all.

Tree safety has also been addressed through necessary works, including the removal of unsafe trees in the Old Churchyard and arrangements are in hand to carry out a wider tree survey.

Community and Events

The Parish Council continues to support a range of community initiatives. The Youth Club has remained incredibly popular, with regular attendance and a variety of activities and events throughout the year, including a trip to the climbing wall.

Community events such as Open Gardens, seasonal celebrations and social gatherings have been well supported and contribute greatly to village life.

We are also grateful for the success of the village fete and other fundraising activities, which play an important role in supporting the Village Hall.

The Council has also continued to work with partners on wider matters, including local housing, ensuring that homes intended for those with local connections are allocated appropriately, and engaging with West Berkshire Council on planning and policy matters.

Finance and Precept

Like many councils, we are facing increasing financial pressures due to rising costs beyond our control. Historically, Brightwalton's precept has been relatively low compared to similar parishes, however, to maintain the standard of services and assets within the village, it has been necessary to increase the precept and carefully manage reserves.

The Council has continued to monitor budgets closely, approve necessary expenditure and plan for future commitments, including maintenance contracts and asset replacement.

Governance and Administration

This year has seen continued improvements in governance, including the transition towards a .gov.uk email domain in line with audit requirements, and review and adoption of key policies to ensure that appropriate systems are in place for financial management, compliance and risk assessment.

Looking Ahead

Looking forward, the Council will continue to prioritise:

- Maintenance of village assets and infrastructure
- Responsible financial planning and rebuilding reserves
- Supporting community initiatives and engagement
- Addressing local housing concerns

Thanks

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all Parish Councillors for their commitment and hard work throughout the year. Their role is entirely voluntary and often goes unseen yet is vital to the smooth running of the Parish Council. In particular I would like to thank Councillor Goatley for his hard work and persistence with West Berkshire Council on ensuring our social housing is used for the benefit of people with close ties to the village, as per its original planning consent.

My thanks also go to our former Parish Clerk, Faye, who left us in August, and to our current Parish Clerk, Mel, for their professionalism and support, and to our Community Coordinator, Katherine, for her continued efforts in delivering valuable activities for residents.

Finally, I would like to thank the many volunteers within the village. Whether helping at events, maintaining local areas, or contributing quietly behind the scenes, your efforts make a significant difference and are greatly appreciated.

Cllr Tim Wyatt
Chairman, Brightwalton Parish Council

Brightwalton Parish Council - Activities & Projects 2026/27

1. ACTIVITIES

Date	Activity	Details	Resources	Estimated Cost & Funding source
Sunday 14 th June 2026 10am-12pm	Old Churchyard	Clear loose branches Strim stinging nettles	Volunteers	Minimal 2026/27 Budget if required
August 2026	School Holiday Activities	A program of activities on the playing field	Community Coordinator pay plus activities	WBC Members' Bid + Community Coordinators Account Participant charges
8 th September	Dunmore Pond	See 'Projects'		
September / October 2026	Old Churchyard	Wildflower seeds	Volunteers	Minimal 2026/27 Budget
1 st November 2026 (before Remembrance Sunday)	Autumn Tidy	Tidy around War Memorial	Volunteers Litter Pickers, Black Sacks, Hi Vis, Gloves	Minimal 2026/27 Budget if required
December 2026	Christmas Tree			£150 for tree provided in 2026/27 Budget
April 2027	Spring Tidy	Litter Pick	Volunteers Litter Pickers, Black Sacks, Hi Vis, Gloves	Minimal 2026/27 or 2027/28 Budget if required

2. PROJECTS

Where	Proposal	Details	Resources	Estimated Cost & Funding source
Dunmore Pond	Bench, Boardwalk & Boxes	West Berkshire Countryside Society has allocated Tuesday 8 th September to clear excess bullrush from the pond, fell dead ash trees, clear bramble and construct a boardwalk to provide access around the pond all year. Local volunteers will be encouraged to join in and also to make boxes for wildlife habitat	Funding to purchase and install a vandal resistant bench at an elevated area of the site	Quote requested for boardwalk WBC Members' Bid
War Memorial	Maintenance and improvement		Seek voluntary support	
S106 Housing	Correct allocation of S106 properties	Work with partners to establish proper processes for allocation of properties that are subject to S106 agreements for local connection	Cllr Damien Goatley leading	n/a