

**Minutes of the High Wych Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 12th March 2025
8pm in Allen's Green Village Hall**

Cllr Tom Payne (TP) Chairman* Cllr Carrie Payne (CP)*
Cllr John Andreotti (JA)* Cllr Liz Faulkner*
Cllr Jacqueline Jackson* * **Denotes present**
Cllr Keith Jordan (KJ)

Present: Two members of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8pm.

ACTION

25.015 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: Keith Jordan (away) **ACCEPTED**
2. Others: Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Cllr Ian Devonshire, PC Shelly Marshall

25.016 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations

1. **Interests declared:** Cllr Liz Faulkner – company invoice payments for approval
2. **Dispensation requests:** None received

25.017 Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 13th January 2025. The Chairman signed the Minutes.

Clerk

The meeting was not suspended for public comments

25.018 Casual Vacancy

The Clerk reported that no one has applied to be co-opted. Cllr Jacqueline Jackson said she would follow up someone who might be interested.

**Clerk
JJ**

25.019 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman had no announcements.

TP

25.020 East Herts Rural Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)

1. Crime report

PC Shelly Marshall provided a written report as follows:

Apologies we are unable to attend in person.

Crime remains low in High Wych, work towards the new policing priority of reducing reports of retail crime continues. Proactive patrols and prevention work has been conducted across retail premises with the aim to reduce retail crime and deter any would be offenders, while also providing support and reassurances to store staff and customers. Since December four people have been charged with theft from shop.

We have successfully applied for a grant of £500 from Sawbridgeworth Town Council, this will help us fund exciting and interactive equipment and supplies for our next round of Mini Police sessions at primary schools in both Sawbridgeworth and High Wych.

We had a great coffee with a cop event on Thursday 6th March at The Coffee Lounge, it was well attended and a great engagement opportunity to engage with the local community. If the events continue to be well attended, we are more than happy to make these a regular engagement.

The next event is planned for 27th March 2025, 12:30-1:30 at The Coffee Lounge.

PC Shelly Marshall

The Parish Council noted that the coffee lounge event provides a useful networking

opportunity, but felt alternative venues and time should be considered. Also that the event should be combined with walking around the parish in order to meet more people. The play area at around 3.30pm (ie after school time) would be worth considering. Cllr Liz Faulkner agreed to follow this up with PC Shelly Marshall.

LF

2. Cross border meeting 19th February Report

Minutes of the meeting were submitted to the Parish Council. Cllr Jacqueline Jackson said it was good for HWPC to be represented since High Wych is not Sawbridgeworth and all parish points of view must be considered. A village-wide plan is proposed for all parishes to have an AED that would be administered by the first responder group. The start up cost would be around £3,000 (£500 per council) and £300 per year thereafter. Figures to be confirmed. It was considered that this would be a worthwhile project to be involved in.

JJ

25.021 Reports by County and District Councillors

County Cllr Eric Buckmaster's written March report is included in the Minutes as Appendix B.

District Cllr Ian Devonshire: No report received.

25.022 Planning

1. New Applications:

3/24/2326/HH	8 Mansfield RECONSULTATION: Erect rear extensions RESOLVED: <i>No objections</i>
3/25/0256/HH	Crumps Farm: Erect garden room and implement shed. RETROSPECTIVE RESOLVED: <i>No objections</i>

Clerk

Clerk

2. Decision Notices. As detailed in Appendix A below – for information only

3. Other planning matters, including items received too late for the agenda:

1. Gilston development: Noted that the Gilston Information Hub can be found at www.gilston.info
2. Call for Sites: The report published by EHC identifying sites in the parish was noted.

25.023 Finance

1. Report of the Council's Accounts 28th February 2025

Opening cashbook balance 31 st December 2024	22,509.69
Plus income to 28 th February	1,246.60
Minus expenditure to 28 th February	1,105.01
Balance available to Council at 28th February (cashbook balance)	22,509.69
Plus unrepresented payments	0.00
Reconciled Bank statement/cashbook balance 28th February	22,651.28

RESOLVED: *That the Accounts Statement to 28th February be approved.*

Clerk

2. Accounts Reconciliation at 28th February 2025

Cashbook balance 28 th February	£22,651.28
Bank balance 28 th February	£22,651.28

RESOLVED: *To agree the bank reconciliation as presented.*

3. Performance against 2024/25 budget at 28th February 2025

	Budget	Actual to 28 th Feb
Income total	95,925	71,586
Section 106	49,950	49,950
PWLB Loan	25,000	0
Income balance without S106 or PWLB	20,975	21,636
	Budget	Actual to 28 th Feb
Expenditure Net of VAT	98,862	67,891
Play Area redevelopment	75,000	49,500
PWLB Loan servicing	3,000	0
Expenditure balance without S106 or PWLB	20,862	18,391

Budget surplus/deficit -2,937
Forecast surplus/deficit -585
Opening bank balance 1 April 2024 17,963
Forecast closing bank balance 31st March 2025 17,378

RESOLVED: To agree the performance against budget as presented.

4. Payments for approval: All expenditure to be made under The General Power of Competence As at 6th March

		Value	VAT incl
Everflow Water	Water 14/3 – 13/4	99.18	
Unity Bank	Monthly service charge	6.00	
Color-Board Ltd	Litter and poo bins February	120.00	20.00
High Wych Mem Hall	Parish Council meeting 13/01/25	12.00	
Clerk	Salary February	498.04	
HMRC	PAYE February	124.40	
EHDC	Election 2023 recharge	54.15	
TEEC	Hosting etc annual charge 2024	194.39	32.40
Color-Board Ltd	Litter and poo bins March	120.00	20.00
Clerk	Clerk's expenses February/March	21.80	
Everflow Water	Water 14/4 – 13/5	33.11	
High Wych Mem Hall	Electricity car park lights TBC	120.00	
BB&C Fencing	Replacement field gates, play area	1,479.60	246.60
Clerk	Salary March	497.84	
HMRC	PAYE March	124.60	
Unity Bank	Monthly service charge	6.00	
Color-Board Ltd	Litter and poo bins April	120.00	20.00
** Grass cutting KGV Field High Wych and Allen's Green village green			
VAT included To be reclaimed under VAT Act 1994 (1), (3)			339.00

Clerk

RESOLVED: to approve all payments as per the Clerk's report

25.024

1. Highways

- Overgrown hedges: impeding footways: None noted.
- TRO86880 Redricks Lane closure: Noted
 - TRO27080 A414 closure/restrictions notice: Noted
 - TRO27108 Aerodrome Road notice: Noted
- High Wych Lane patching notice: Noted
- Allen's Green: Speeding, restrictions and possible Speed & Volume checks: Noted
- Other issues: None raised

2. Footpaths and other Public Rights of Way (PROW)

- No issues raise.

3. Other Parish Matters

1. High Wych Memorial Hall and car park

- Issues raised: None
- Car park faulty lights: Cllr John Andreotti to liaise with Chris Poole to resolve.
- Other matter: Installation of a ramp and door adjustment to the Green Room were discussed. It was agreed that Cllr Tom Payne would liaise with HWMH. It was suggested that HWMH pay for work to the Hall and HWPC pay for the hedge and car park, although that will need to be considered. The Clerk will advise as the proposal progresses.

JA

TP/JJ

Clerk

- Notice Boards:** No action. Delete from future agendas

	4. Coffee Shop: Concerns noted. Delete from future agendas	
	5. High Wych Christmas tree: Proposals not being pursued	
	6. Parishioner offer of clerical and litter picking services: Noted	
	7. List of topics presented by Cllr Jacqueline Jackson: Noted	
	8. FOI and SAR requests: Receipt of requests noted; deadlines 1 st and 4 th April	Clerk
25.025	1. Playing Fields and buildings	
	1. Harlow Theatre Company	
	1. Noted: Outstanding invoices have now been paid.	
	2. Play area	
	1. Update: Two new gates into the field have been installed. It was agreed to approve the additional payment of £75 to have them painted black.	Clerk/KJ
	2. Insurance: Insurance requirements for mitigating risk, including signage, to be taken up by Cllr Keith Jordan.	KJ
	2. Allotments report	
	1. No issues reported.	CP
	2. The Clerk to follow up with Everflow Water a replacement water meter (at Everflow's expense).	Clerk
25.026	Correspondence: The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCC: TRO86880 Redricks Lane closure notice • HCC: TRO27080 A414 closure/restriction notice • HCC: TRO27108 Aerodrome Road notice • HCC: High Wych Lane patching notice • Parishioner: VE celebrations enquiry • Sawbridgeworth TC: Cross border meeting agenda for 19th Feb • E Buckmaster and parishioner: Speed concerns and SID possibility for Allen's Green • EHC: Call for Sites report • EHC: Local Government Reform report • Parishioner: offer of clerical and litter pick services (25.024.3.5) • Parishioner: FOI and SAR requests (25.024.3.7) • Scarecrow Festival organiser : Scarecrow festival request (25.027) 	
25.027	Late items and items for future agendas	
	1. Late items:	
	In response to the Scarecrow Festival's questions, the following was agreed:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the KGV Playing Field could be used for the event. • That insurance will be a matter for the organisers. • That the Parish Council will order and pay for the portaloos as it did last year – this was included in the 2025/26 budget and will enable HWPC to reclaim the VAT. 	Clerk
	2. Items for future agendas and other matters: None raised.	
25.028	Date and venue of next meeting	
	Noted: That High Wych Memorial Hall Committee Room is again available on Wednesdays and Has therefore been booked for alternate meetings for the remainder of 2025	
	1. Annual Parish Electorate Meeting , 7.15pm Wednesday 14 th May at High Wych Memorial Hall, <i>followed immediately by:</i>	Clerk
	2. Annual Parish Council Meeting , 7.30pm approx. Wednesday 14 th May at High Wych Memorial Hall, <i>followed immediately by:</i>	Clerk
	3. Ordinary Parish Council Meeting , 8pm approx. Wednesday 14 th May at High Wych Memorial Hall	Clerk

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.02pm.

Signed.....

APPENDIX A

25.022.2 25.022.2 PLANNING DECISION NOTICES for information only as at 6th March

3/24/2183/LBC	The Old Church, Slough Rd: Convert into 2-bed dwelling.	GRANTED
3/25/0077/HH	Leaky Cauldron Corner: Two storey rear extension	GRANTED
3/24/2326/HH	8 Mansfield: Erect rear extensions	Reconsulted
3/24/0291/FUL	Field off Blounts Lane: Create access for farm machinery.	GRANTED
3/25/0017/HH	Surrounded, Coveys Lane: Erect pool and pool house	WITHDRAWN
3/24/1957/FUL	Crumps Farm: Change of land use, agricultural to residential retrospective	REFUSED

APPENDIX B

E Buckmaster County Councillor Report March 2025

The following roadworks will be approved at cabinet on 17th March

Eastwick Hall Lane Local Carriageway Reconstruction 24 Eastwick 3U875/10 Eastwick Hall Lane A414 Eastwick Road To Eastwick Hall Farm NCM250245-1 CRC Apr25 - Mar26 - -

Pye Corner Local Carriageway Reconstruction 24 Gilston C161/8 Pye Corner 30mph Signs To Derstriction Signs CWY250189-1 CRC Apr25 - Mar26 - -

A414 Eastwick Road Carriageway Surface Dressing 24 Stanstead Abbots A414/836 Eastwick Road C15 Church Lane to start of Roydon Road Slip ARP240002-2 ASD Qtr-1 - -

A414 Eastwick Road Carriageway Surface Dressing 24 Eastwick A414/846 Eastwick Road U875 Eastwick Hall Lane to C15 Church Lane ARP240002-2 ASD Qtr-1 - -

A414 Eastwick Road Carriageway Surface Dressing 24 Eastwick A414/856 Eastwick Road Eastwick Lodge roundabout westwards to Eastwick Hall Lane ARP240002-2 ASD Qtr-1 - -

£5,814,232 of additional funding to support active travel initiatives across Hertfordshire has been allocated by government and Active Travel England (ATE). The funding will enable the development and delivery of local walking, wheeling, and cycling schemes, alongside community engagement initiatives. This supports the objectives in our Corporate Plan and a number of key policy areas including transport the environment, public health and the economy. Making it easier and safer to walk, wheel and cycle can help to improve health, improve air quality, support the local economy and manage traffic congestion on the road network. The funding comes as part of a nearly £300 million national initiative to enhance walking, wheeling, and cycling infrastructure across England.

Secondary school places announced for 2025

94 per cent of children have been allocated a place at one of their preferred secondary or upper schools by Hertfordshire County Council. Of the 14,703 Hertfordshire children who applied this year, 76 per cent gained a place at their first preference school.

My Locality Grant applications for past year totalled £5,974

Council tax to increase 4.99 per cent as over £1bn to be spent on public services

At a full meeting of Hertfordshire County Council on Tuesday 25 February 2025 councillors have agreed a budget for 2025/26 of just over £1bn. The agreed Integrated Plan will see Council Tax increase by 4.99 per cent in April, which equates to a £1.62 increase per week for a typical Band D property. The difficult decision to increase Council Tax was taken as the council's costs will rise over the next twelve months if inflation continues its upward trend and the imposition of higher employer National Insurance contributions.

Agreed as part of the 2025/26 budget, investment in services includes:

- Nearly half a billion pounds will be spent supporting 30,000 adults to live well for longer, including £30 million investment to support those providing care, ensuring that caring staff receive a living wage and to offset the increased National Insurance costs.
- £26m of additional investment will be spent to ensure that the council can meet the expected increase in demand from older adults requiring care.
- Just over quarter of a billion pounds will be spent on children's services, including £28m of additional investment to ensure we can continue to support Children Looked After and

children with disabilities. A further £2.8m of funding on top of the previous £7m investment will be made towards our SEND improvement programme 'Making SEND Everyone's Business'.

- £100m will be spent on highways maintenance, allowing the council to repair and improve our roads and keep the county moving.
- Funding will be made available to improve flood protection and investigations.

Mindful of the need to keep the burden on taxpayers to a minimum, the council will continue to drive down internal costs by £42m next year with £16m of savings delivered by the ongoing Organisational Resourcing programme.

Help for families to have fun in Hertfordshire

Families whose children are eligible for free school meals are now able to claim discounts in shops, sports clubs and children's activities with a new Herts Card. They can also book their free school holiday activity HAPpy camps, from 13 March, when bookings open.

The Herts Card is designed to give discounts to children and young people, for lots of activities and days out that they might not be able to access otherwise. Local wildlife parks, football clubs and holiday activity camps are already part of the scheme, offering discounts to Hertfordshire's families who might benefit from additional support.

The idea for the card builds on the success of the HAND card, which was used by young people and families of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to gain exclusive access and discount prices to events and activities in Hertfordshire.

Now families who are eligible for free school meals can also take advantage of pre-negotiated discounts with local businesses and activity providers. Families of children and young people with SEND who have an existing HAND card can download the new version of the Herts Card and continue to enjoy all of the discounts they previously accessed, and more.

It's easy for eligible families to get their new Herts Card; those already in receipt of free school meals will be contacted by the council with a link to sign up to the card. Anyone newly signing up for free school meals will also be sent a link to get their card.

The council has made it easy for local businesses and organisations to register their discounts and help make sure children do not miss out due to financial stress. Local businesses can email: hertscard@hertfordshire.gov.uk and include details of what they're able to offer.

HAPpy camps

HAPpy activity camps are returning this Easter, providing eligible children and young people with the chance to meet friends, learn new skills and enjoy nutritious food during the Easter break.

The HAPpy programme is funded by Hertfordshire County Council and the Department of Education (DfE) via the government's Holiday Activity and Food programme and coordinated by Herts Sport and Activity Partnership and the Hertfordshire Community Foundation.

Children and young people who are in school years Reception to Year 11, who attend a Hertfordshire school and are in receipt of benefits related free school meals can attend the HAPpy Easter camps. Eligible families should already have been given their booking code from their school. Parents/carers who have not received the code should contact their school office.

Every camp is inclusive and able to meet the needs of most children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), provided the right information is supplied with their booking. There are also SEND-specific camps which are better for children with higher support needs. Bookings open at 12pm on Thursday 13 March. For further details of the programme, the camps available and to book places visit: [HAPpy Activity Camps](#)

Families eligible for free school meals will also be given supermarket vouchers for during the Easter holiday by their school.

Hertfordshire County Council approves project to create 820 new supported living homes:

Plans to create 820 ensuite bedrooms for working age adults with care and support needs were approved by Hertfordshire County Council's Cabinet on 24 February, following discussion at the Adult Care, Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Panel on 29 January and Resources & Performance Cabinet Panel on 14 February.

Over the next five years the county council will work with registered housing providers to deliver new homes and redevelop existing supported living units for people with a learning disability. The programme will create 820 homes in the form of ensuite bedrooms in self-contained flats or shared living for individuals currently in supported living and those who could move into supported living.

The proposal will increase the supply and quality of affordable supported living homes in Hertfordshire, and in doing so will improve the health and wellbeing of those impacted by the scheme, as well as deliver savings for the county council.

The programme is estimated to cost over £400m, including a contribution of £47.7m from the county council's existing adult care capital budget, as well as investment from Homes England and registered housing providers.

The Environment

New 2024 Air Quality Status Report reveals lower pollution levels in Stortford and Sawbridgeworth

As reported by [Bishops Stortford Independent](#), air quality in Bishop's Stortford and the rest of East Herts has improved, according to a new report. Pollution at trouble spots in Sawbridgeworth, Hertford and in the town decreased with just one recorded nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) breach in London Road. The newly published 2024 Air Quality Status Report is based on the most up-to-date, full-year validated statistics from 2023 and attributes improvements to factors including greener vehicles, more flexible working patterns and targeted local policies.

At Ware recycling centre we have been routinely assisting a multi-agency operation called

Agrarian. Police, EA and other authorised parties have used the upper shunt area of the recycling centre to carry out checks on vehicles travelling along Westmill Road.

24/02/2025 115 Cars stopped. 1 x Arrest for drug driving. Traffic papers issued for No Seatbelt and use of a mobile phone. Male dealt with for possession of cannabis. Vehicle seized for No Insurance.

10/12/2024 100 Cars stopped. Vehicle seized for No Insurance. Traffic papers issued for a bald tyre, expired MOT. Words of advice given regarding correct waste licencing. Words of advice given regarding safe loads.

19/07/2024 80 Cars stopped. 2 x Vehicles were seized for No Insurance. 8 x Traffic papers issued for various offences. 3 x Vehicle Defect Rectification Scheme notices were issued. 36 x Vehicles were checked for red diesel.

The electric bus journey starts here

(5 March), local bus company Uno, owned by the University of Hertfordshire, officially launched the first five of its zero-emission electric buses on its newly branded Electric Shuttle. The five buses, which will run on the route between campuses at the University of Hertfordshire and the site's park and ride, are the first of 27 being delivered over the next 12 months. A special launch event was held at the University to mark the start of a journey that is set to transform public transport across the region. The investment, being delivered under the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) funding scheme, is a collaboration between Hertfordshire County Council, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Uno. The joint effort is dedicated to improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions across the county. While the primary benefit of electric power is the delivery of cleaner air, it also enhances the passenger experience with a smoother, more comfortable ride. Additionally, the buses are quieter, which not only improves the journey for customers but also reduces noise pollution in the communities they serve.

Cllr Eric Buckmaster, March 2025

COUNCILLOR ACTIONS ARISING

Cllr Tom Payne

- Allotments (with Cllr Carrie Payne)
- Gilston development
- HWMH – liaison on ramp to Green Room

Cllr John Andreotti

- HTC liaison
- Car park lights

Cllr Keith Jordan

- Liaise with Zurich re play area insurance

Cllr Carrie Payne

- Monitor Highways issues, including parking
- Allotments (with Cllr Tom Payne)

Cllr Jacqueline Jackson

- Footpaths, Public Rights of Way and accessibility matters
- Liaise with HWMH on ramp to Green Room
- Attend the next Police Cross Border meeting and report back to Council
- Follow up co-option prospects

Cllr Liz Faulkner

- Liaise with police on parish event meetings
- Cross border police meetings

Clerk

- Set up agreed bank payments
- Planning comments
- Hall booking for next meeting
- Everflow Water re replacement water meter
- FOI and SAR
- AGAR Internal and External audits