



Minutes of the Hanborough Annual Parish Meeting

At the Hanborough Annual Parish Meeting held at 8:00pm on Tuesday 14th May 2025, the following were present: Richard Devereux-Cooke (chair), Rod Fraser, Michael Franklin, Steve Nicholls, Steve Page (vice chair).

In attendance: Jon Gammage (Clerk), Adrian Edwards, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), and County Councillor Liam Walker, District Councillors Lidia Arciszewska and Roger Faulkner.

Apologies for absence: Rich Fuller, Lucy Tritton, Jack Thorne.

Members of the public attending: 6 members of the public were present.

The Chair opened and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th April 2024.

Minutes of the meeting of 16th April 2024 were approved and signed as a correct record.

2. Matters arising from the minutes: None

3. Chairmans report: The chair thanked all councillors and officers, those involved in working groups and our County and District Councillors.

He went on to summarise the broad range of activities council is involved in which includes highways working with County to improve and maintain, roadside speed devices and data analysis, administration of the cemetery and allotments, key working groups looking at a Neighbourhood Plan and developing Pinsley Meadow, management of open spaces such as Hurdeswell and most notably trees, playground, skatepark, tennis court and MUGA inspections and maintenance.

Council responds to planning applications where we can influence but WODC are the decision makers. We apply for s106 funds to support projects such as the skatepark and the hub project. The solar project is regarded with mixed views in the parish and council maintains a neutral stance but is and continues to challenge where we can.

Council is keen to engage with youngsters in the parish and is formulating an initiative around this.
Richard Devereux-Cooke (Chair of Hanborough Parish Council)

4. Report from District & County Councillors.

4.1. County Councillor Liam Walker

As your County Councillor, I'm pleased to take this opportunity to reflect on the work undertaken over the past year to support our community and deliver improvements for residents across the parish.

One of my ongoing priorities has been tackling the state of our local roads. As a SuperUser for Oxfordshire County Council, I've continued to actively report potholes and other highway issues to ensure they are addressed as quickly as possible. While there's still more to do, this direct action helps ensure our rural roads receive the attention they need. I'm especially pleased to have secured the resurfacing of Churchill Way, a long-overdue improvement that has made a real difference to those living nearby. I am now turning my attention to other key roads in the parish and will be making a strong case for Church Road and Roosevelt Road to be included in future resurfacing programmes.

Alongside roads, surface water flooding has been another key issue this year. After repeated complaints and site visits, I was successful in getting the County Council to resolve the recurring flood issue on the A4095 near Bladon. I then followed up with West Oxfordshire District Council to ensure the adjacent footpath was swept, improving safety and access for pedestrians and cyclists.

Improving local transport links also remains a priority. I've continued working with Great Western Railway and County Council officers to push for long-overdue improvements to Hanborough Station and the Cotswold Line, which I know are vital lifelines for many residents. This remains a key focus going forward and I was pleased to host a 'Meet the Manager' session with GWR giving residents the opportunity to raise issues with them directly.

I've continued to support the campaign against the Botley West Solar Farm proposal. While renewable energy is important, this project as it currently stands poses a significant threat to our local landscape, heritage, and impact on the local community. I will continue to stand with residents and local groups in opposing it.

Finally, I was honoured to be re-elected as your County Councillor just a few weeks ago. I remain deeply committed to serving our parish and will continue to work closely with residents, the Parish Council, and local organisations to ensure our village remains a fantastic place to live.

Thank you for your continued support.
Cllr Liam Walker
County Councillor for Hanborough & Hailey Division

4.2. District Councillor Lidia Arciszewska

Local Plan

When the current WODC administration was established three years ago, one of its first tasks was to review the Local Plan. The Plan 2031 had overly ambitious housing numbers based on aspirational economic growth assessments. It promoted approximately 40% growth over 20 years (2011-2031), which outpaced national growth in that period, which was predicted to be 9.5%. Moreover, despite being adopted as recently as 2018, the plan did not adequately address issues stemming from climate and environmental emergencies.

The review of the plan also allowed the Council to reduce housing numbers to a standard methodology level, giving us a bit more control over where the houses were built. Sadly, in December last year, the government released new housing targets, and thus, the current target for West Oxfordshire has doubled.

In the last year, we have been working as fast as we could to ensure the new Local Plan delivers the sustainable development and the infrastructure that West Oxfordshire needs. We hope the plan will meet the long-term needs of our communities and our young people, and at the same time protect the natural and historical environment. One of our key priorities is ensuring that new developments come with the necessary infrastructure in place, helping create better-connected and more sustainable communities. To achieve this, we are developing new approaches to unlock additional funding from these new developments.

The first draft of the Local Plan is now close to completion. The policy part, the so-called 'Preferred Options', which provides a framework for the plan, has already been presented to the Council. The other part on spatial development and housing sites' allocation is still in preparation. The whole document will be published and put out for 8 weeks of consultation in June.

Salt Cross Garden Village.

Exceptional design and the highest environmental standards were two key elements guiding the development of the Salt Cross project. In line with the council's Climate Change Strategy (published in February 2021) the ambitious policies, including targets for biodiversity net gain (25%) and net-zero-carbon standards, were included as a requirement in the Area Action Plan (AAP) for Salt Cross Garden Village. Both policies got overwhelming support from our local communities. Unfortunately, the Government inspectors removed the net-zero carbon policy from the AAP. You may remember that the public Consultation that we put out on the matter showed again a strong support for the net-zero policy at Salt Cross.

Rights Community Action group has taken the government's inspectors to High Court and the Judge ruled against the inspectors, but in December 2023 the Written Ministerial Statement suggested that policies that go beyond the current building control standards should be rejected at the examinations [thus preventing the Local Authorities rights to exercise their statutory powers and duties]. This Ministerial Statement is still in power today.

Nevertheless, we chose to update our net-zero energy policy for Salt Cross. Our evidence demonstrates that the net zero option not only has a number of clear advantages over an alternative low-carbon approach, but it is also financially viable and technically deliverable. The updated policy was resubmitted to the Planning Inspectorate in April. Once the Net Zero policy is approved, West Oxfordshire District Council will be able to consider the Salt Cross Area Action Plan for formal adoption. Then, planning applications can be submitted in line with the AAP, with building on site to follow. Independently, the Council and our MP, Calum Miller, have been lobbying the government to allow local authorities to apply net-zero standards.

We also focused on several parallel tasks, such as:

- Reengaging with the Developer, Grosvenor Property UK
- Discussing A40 improvements and access to A40 with OCC team
- Considering options for Business and Innovation Park

Sewerage infrastructure and Thames Water

Our agreement with Thames Water to request a Grampian Condition to a major planning application in West Oxfordshire, where there is no capacity for sewage treatment, has been working well. We now have [] Grampian conditions in our planning system. So far, only one has been discharged (by human error). Over the last year, we have been working on increasing our capability to deal with discharging these Grampian conditions. We have forged a relationship with the Environment Agency, and the officers have been in contact with OFWAT. We also managed to secure additional internal resources to do this work. We have a good knowledge of the TW sewerage network in West Oxfordshire, which the

company has shared with us over the years, and we continue to be very generously supported by Windrush Against Sewage Pollution.

Despite internal chaos within Thames Water, we are still able to negotiate small wins, working towards reducing sewage spills at various hot spots in the district, most recently in Brize Norton.

Moreover, the Council and some Councillors have been campaigning heavily along with Charlie Maynard, the MP for Witney, to place Thames Water under the Special Administration Regime.

Botley West Solar Farm

Right from the beginning, when the BWSF proposal was presented in late 2022, the council's administration position was to support the residents of the communities affected. The Councillors in wards within the BWSF area opposed the proposal; they engaged with the residents and worked hard to provide an interface between the communities and the Council. However, as the local authority, we have chosen not to be political or emotional about it, but instead to remain pragmatic and formulate an educated, evidence-based response. As this is a nationally strategic application, the Council has no say over it, but we are a key consultee.

Throughout last year, the officers and the consultants whom the Council commissioned were gathering the necessary evidence to assess the impact this power station would have on our landscape, local natural environment and wildlife, our heritage and our communities. Preparation of the final report on the local impact assessment is at its final stages. The report will be discussed at the Development Control Committee meeting on June 2nd.

In parallel, the Council supported the communities by providing a platform for all 15 parishes to discuss and negotiate with the developer PVDP a so-called community benefit. We have commissioned the consultants, Local Partnership, who are experts in this field and recruited help from Oxfordshire County Council. The negotiations are currently taking place.

At the same time, we have been providing high-standard essential services. Our Waste and Recycling has been making great progress modernising these services, making them more efficient and making savings. This work has been done in collaboration with our partner districts and Ubico. For this work, we have been shortlisted for 2 national awards for Waste and Environmental services.

Finally, I would like to give credit to our fantastic and dedicated officers who work so tirelessly on such a variety of challenging projects.

Dr Lidia Arciszewska, District Councillor
Freeland and Hanborough Ward
Cabinet member for Environment

4.2. District Councillor Roger Faulkner.

Cllr Faulkner summarised his activities helping residents with local matters, involvement on the WODC Uplands Planning Committee and regular meetings with the Blenheim Community Lead. He also updated the meeting on moves towards a Unitary Authority.

5. Finance report

Adrian Edwards, Responsible Financial Officer reported that during the year the Parish Council publishes financial updates and that the recent internal audit has shown that our financial process are sound. Full accounts are available on the website along with auditor reports.

6. Reports and statements from Community Groups & Organisations

6.1. Blenheim Community Lead

Merilyn noted that she represents the communities around Blenheim. There are a number of improvement projects underway in the area including Bladon Heath and flood mitigation works for example. Locally there are plans to improve Coffin Path and the path into the estate from Hurdeswell. The timing of these is being discussed. A new bin has been funded near the station and councillors recorded thanks for this, the mini libraries and the refurbished finger sign in Millwood End.

There was also discussion around the planned work in Pinsley Wood which attracts different views on what's best. There will be an impact on the woods in the short to medium term but Blenheim experts expect an improvement longer term. Merilyn Davies, Blenheim Community Lead

6.2. Hanborough Welfare Trust

Hanborough Welfare Trust (HWT) is part of Eynsham Medical Trust and works within, yet separately within it. HWT has helped a few people in the last year with full grants. We are aware that few people are taking us up despite all appropriate means of advertising (especially in The Herald, in the Churches, at shops and by word of mouth). We are therefore considering selling the pieces of land that we own (which anyway produce little rent) and amalgamating more obviously with Eynsham Medical Trust so that we can help more Hanborough individuals in different ways than just donations for specific items. This is ongoing and will take time as it involves our Solicitors working pro bono (so bottom of the agenda) and agreement with the Charities Commission.

Rev Nigel Knights Johnson, Secretary, Hanborough Welfare Trust

6.3. HPFA

The following is a report to the HPFA AGM in September 2024 on year 2023/24

2023/2024 has developed into a more stable year for the HPFA!

I'm pleased to say that through special measures and careful management, hall hire from regular users has been on the up and has become our backbone through 2023/24. We still don't get as many single bookings for adult parties but we have become popular for children's parties, possibly because our hall can accommodate bouncy castles etc. More on this issue later.

Previously support given by the PC for the roof, had allowed us to re allocate the funds we had ring fenced for the roof, to be used for pitch maintenance to help improve the quality of our playing surfaces. Through 2023 it became very apparent that our grounds maintenance equipment was very much at the end of it's life, and keeping the pitches to the required standard was becoming increasingly more challenging.

In discussion with our now well established groundsman John Ostojak, he was able to point us towards some suitable replacement equipment. Through tenacious work from Richard Brookes we were able to secure some grant funding to pay for a large percentage of the equipment. However the HPFA did have to spend it's ring fenced monies to compliment the funding and buy the equipment.

The good news here is that the feedback from all users is the vast improvement in the playing surfaces. Special praise has come from the cricket team who have appreciated the improvements the most, and worth noting they became league champions and gained promotion this year! No pressure for next season John?

We continue to have some ongoing maintenance challenges (drains and décor) which we will need to carefully manage. That said I'm delighted to say that 2023 saw Mike Joyner join the team as our maintenance man. Since Mike's arrival we have been able to keep on top of the issues and as of today the interior is looking as good as new! We had to undertake some urgent repair work to the ceiling of the main hall. Over many years of abuse from the likes of bouncy castles the ceiling tiles had become very loose and risked falling down. The team rallied at the end of December and the entire ceiling was reworked and secured such that it offers no risk to our users, the added benefit being that it now looks better than when first installed!

On another positive note I'm delighted to say that the HPFA membership has stayed strong, although we have lost Nicky Busby, and James Carter due to other personal commitments, and Lynda Leach who was our long standing bookings clerk. I'd like to thank Nicky, James and Lynda for their contributions whilst with us. I must call out a special thanks to Lynda who was not only our booking clerk but also one of our longest standing members. Her input and passion will be missed at the meetings. Replacing Lynda as our booking clerk has been Maria Lovick and we've welcomed Maria commitment into this vital role. Everyone as ever has shown their commitment to the HPFA, and for that I'm truly grateful! It's was great to return to well attended meetings during 2023 and 2024, which is by far our preferred method of contact.

At the beginning of September the hugely successful and popular "Party at the Pav", returned! A free to enter event for the whole village, hosted by the HPFA. We had excellent weather (considering the forecast) and a great turnout of both stalls and visitors. The event was a huge success and once again underlines the intent of the HPFA to do positive engaging things for the village.

With this success spurring us on we are putting down the plans for September 2025. We do need to work on a plan to ensure that we can turn the event into a profitable day, so any ideas/volunteers are more than welcome! I'm sure a working group will be formed shortly and everyone is encouraged to contribute in any way they can? I will commit to discuss getting support from the PC in the form of under writing the costs.

It is a pleasure to say that the Sport clubs are as supportive as ever and their help managing our facilities is invaluable. It's great to see the success they are having and in particular the cricket has done very well indeed and is back to two teams. They both excelled and have gone on to championships and promotions Let's hope 2025 is a good year for the teams? We also had the very exciting news that we have two youth teams, an under 11's and under 12's team now formed and playing out of Hanborough. This has happened and is going from strength to strength and is being very well supported. The HPFA have offered to support this activity and have supplied some funds to support them as required.

The buoyant club scene has also helped improve the situation with the social club. The club is now used far more frequently, and this has helped the situation of the sports and social club

The HPFA has benefited from continued financial support from WODC in the form of 100% rate relief on the building. Please see our finances report for the current status of the HPFA accounts.

It appears that the long awaiting transfer of the CALA field into the hands of the Parish is now within touching distance. The HPFA will have input to this as clearly it boundaries our land and could offer space for practice nets etc? The, "Community Hub" project has really started gain momentum and during 2023/24 an architect was contracted to help the working group take the project to RIBA stage 5/6. We can expect planning permission to be granted very soon indeed..

We now have to work on the building concept befitting our needs, so the real detail starts from now. The majority of the budget will come from the S106 monies, however the working group is exploring ways to close the funding gap. As a charity it is expected the HPFA will need to be applying for any funding opportunities that arise. Therefore we will need to work out as a committee how we support this important work.
So, in short this project is getting serious!

As you will be aware the North field site has been approved for further house building. The PC have been able to negotiate that most, if not all of the associated S106 monies has been allocated to Hanborough. This means that funding for the Hub project will be further bolstered.

Now because of this potential development of the Pavilion and Social club to create the “Community Hub” it is almost certain that the HPFA is going to see the most significant changes to its constitution since its creation in 1951! The present committee recognise that the way that the world operates today compared with 60 years ago is very different! Therefore, we are looking very closely at how the trustees and members roles will work within a new framework. We now have Richard Devereux-Cooke a lawyer sitting as the Parish Council Chairman, acting on our behalf to establish what the HPFA constitution should look like? He has offered his skills, and his experience in this field is vast so we welcome his valuable support. It is our goal to remove the burden of such things as infrastructure maintenance and allow the committee to focus of community events and activities and keep a watching eye on how the facilities are best used for recreation.

Finally I would like to thank the committee for all of its support over the year. The remainder of 2024 and 2025 is going to continue to be as much of a challenge as 2023/24 but hopefully not as bad as 2020! I’m honoured to be working with such a vibrant committee, and I know you’ll all rise to the challenges, so a big thank you to you all!
Mr Stephen Nicholls,, Chairman, Hanborough Playing Fields Association

6.4. Recreation Hall No report received.

6.5. Elderberries-Hanborough Day Centre

Gill Grahame reported that the group has been active since 1987 and the 22 members meet on Wednesdays. It continues to support the local area. Costs are rising and it would not be able to function without the support of PC, OPCC and Blenheim.

Gill Grahame, Manager of Elderberries

6.6. Hanborough Herald No report received.

6.7. 1st Hanborough Freeland Scout Group

Membership

The scout group has increased its membership back to pre-covid levels with
Beavers (6-8 Year olds) – 18 children
Cubs (8-10.5) – 27 children
Scouts (10.5-14) – 27 young people
Explorers (14-18) – 17 young people

Membership is split relatively evenly with the two parishes, and we have several girls in each section, and especially Explorers.

We also support Duke of Edinburgh scheme with volunteering and currently have 5 young people in the lower three sections.

We have a healthy waiting list for our lower sections. Most of these are not yet old enough, but we do have 2 children who would like to join cubs when there is a place. As the age demographic in the new estates age this could rise.

Adult volunteers are ok now, but we did have to temporarily suspend our beaver section earlier this year due to only having one leader. Fortunately, parents rallied round, and we have the leader numbers up to 7 for that section. Due to the nature of children and parents going up through the sections as they age, we are always in need of new volunteers.

Activities

In the past 12 months all our sections have managed to get away on camps, and new camps for this year are already planned.

Children all work through an active and diverse programme earning chief scouts awards with an annual presentation ceremony at Youlbury.

Highlight activity has been our scouts gliding again at Weston on the green!

Funding

We have maintained the same subs fee of £45 since 2023 but this year have dropped below the break-even point so will need to increase fees.

During the year we have purchased new tents, griddle and Trangia's costing £1900. Fortunately this has been offset by a grant of £500 from HPC and £220 from FPC

Looking Ahead

We are currently storing our heavy camping equipment and minibus at the Blenheim owned farm on lower road. Due to the Solar Farm plans the farm could at any time be repurposed by Blenheim. We are incredibly grateful to HPC for allocating a small plot of the Cala field for storage facilities. We are now in the process of drawing up a planning application and will then be fund raising to build the facility. The scout group does have some funds reserved (for minibus replacement) but will need to add more.

Steve Page, Group Lead Volunteer

6.8. Hanborough Nature Recovery Group No report received.

6.9. First and Last Mile

The year 2024/25 saw continued growth for FLM to the point where over 100 passengers a day use the service during school terms.

The 411 service through Long Hanborough to Eynsham continues to grow in popularity. This service includes a request facility from Church Hanborough available on all journeys.

Service 411S was introduced to provide a school service from Hanborough to Bartholomew School. This service regularly carries several passengers and is slowly growing in popularity.

FLM will definitely continue to run until August and discussions are continuing to see if we will continue beyond then. The 411 and 418 were due to be put out to competitive tender, a process which is beyond the capacity of a small organisation such as ours. The 418S Standlake school run will now be provided commercially by the Pulhams however and an alternative solution found for the 411, 411S and 418. This could still involve FLM but it is too early to say.

FLM may face an uncertain future but whatever this may hold it has been an honour to serve the community the last few years.

David Miles, First and Last Mile

6.10. Police (Police Community Support Officer)

Helen Duffield (PCSO) attended and presented an update on local activities. These included updates on a moped removal, antisocial behaviour, low level drug dealing, some fraud and theft from vehicles.

Councillors and the HPFA recorded thanks for the regular visits to the Pavilion carpark and playground area.

6.11. Hanborough speed data

Church Hanborough - average speed 32 mph - speeding % 76 - top speed 78mph

Church Road - average speed 28 mph - speeding % 5 - top speed 61 mph

Main Road - average speed- 31 mph - speeding % 18 - top speed 73 mph

Roads update, line painting bus stop and coop roundabout in schedule, Church Road approaching coop patch repair scheduled unknown date.

Cllr Jack Thorne

7. Any Other Business: None.

Meeting closed at 9:00pm

The Chairman. 14th April 2026