



Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held at Shaw-cum-Donnington Village Hall on Wednesday 19 November 2025 at 7.30pm

Present

Councillors Margo Payne (MP), Richard Almond (RA), Paul Bryant (PB), Mary Carter (MC), Ian Miller (Vice Chair) (IM), Glyn Thomas (GT), Colin Yates (CY) and new councillors following item 71, Liam Anderson (LI) and Stephanie Bovell (SB), also Gillian Durrant (GD) Parish Clerk and Martha Vickers (MV) West Berkshire Councillor, plus two members of the public.

Note: P – proposed, S = seconded (All decisions unanimous unless otherwise indicated)

68 **Apologies** There were none. MP announced that Councillor Anni Gruner had tendered her resignation.

69 **Declarations of interest** There were none

70 Approval of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2025, were approved, subject to one amendment to item 65. (P – GT, S – PB).

71 Co-option of a new Councillor

Following a vote Liam Anderson and Stephanie Bovell were duly elected as parish councillors and both signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

72 Clerk's Report including matters arising

- The litter pick on 1 November was attended by approximately 20 people
- The new sign has been erected in the small children's play area at Donnington Recreation Ground
- We succeeded in obtaining the members bid grant for the Table Tennis Table. Our funding target has been reached, with thanks to Kelly Rice for promoting the fundraiser amongst residents who raised more than £1,000 towards the total. GD has ordered the new table tennis table for Owen Road Field, but due to the restricted access is working with the installers and Kelly to overcome the issue of raising the table from the lorry to the ground. GD has met with the contractor and Kelly has hopefully found a local farmer who can help.
- The Frost Stat heater in the pavilion has been replaced. The Newbury Women Football Club have mentioned one of the toilets is not flushing properly and have complained that the Cricket Club left a large quantity of items in the Umpires room. The Cricket Club have now removed their equipment.
- The Football Club have not yet signed the new lease. GD suggested we wait a few months to see how much the new electricity provider is charging before deciding to keep the new requirement that the club contributes to the electricity bill.
- There has been no update from DW re English Heritage and the storage of our beacon. MP confirmed to DW the dimensions of the beacon: 2.1m squared fully erected, and 2.7 metres

high, but could be disassembled. DW is trying to find out who he needs to speak to at English Heritage.

- GD has written to WBC requesting a copy of the Ardent report on WBC Clay Hill Newbury flood alleviation scheme study report June 2025, but has not had a reply despite a reminder being sent.
- GD has emailed ARK to ask them to work with the council on a scheme for our stretch of the River Lambourn, that is beneficial to wildlife, but would also help alleviate flooding, for example, removing non-native plants that hinder the flow of the river. No reply to date.
- GD has ordered the Automatic Speed Watch Camera.
- GD has paid the £200 donation for the Over 80s Parcel Fund.
- The new litter picker has been employed and things are going well.
- The Winter edition of the newsletter has been completed and sent for printing.
- Earl Rivers Regiment has contacted us about holding an event around Donnington Castle. GD and MP will arrange to meet up with them in the New Year.

73 **Questions from members of the public** There were none.

74 **Finance**

The following payments were approved for October (P – RGTS – CY), IM and GT will authorise the payments.

Outgoing Litter Picker	Litter picking October	40.20
New Litter Picker	Litter picking October	50.40
Clerk	Salary for October	1,184.07
	Refuse sacks	2.15
	Gift for retiring staff	60.00
	Donation to Over 80s Parcel Fund	200.00
	Newsletter Printing	210.00
Cleaner	October	28.60
Royal British Legion	Donation for poppy wreath	50.00
Crescent Signs	New sign for children's play area	232.80
Gallagher	Insurance for mower	240.16
TWK Electrical	Installation of replacement frost stat heater in pavilion	264.00
TFM	emptying bins	278.50
TFM	grass cutting at Owen Road	78.50
HMRC	PAYE/NIC for October	217.35
SSE	Electricity for streetlights August to October	492.62*
British Gas	Pavilion electricity	28.37*
Castle Water	Water for pavilion	29.04*
NEST (DD)	Pension for clerk October	<u>183.35*</u>
		<u>£3,870.47</u>

Total payments authorised for October (excluding Direct Debits*)

£3,136.73

- Review of the council's investments: CCLA interest rate today was 3.87% for the Public Sector Deposit Fund.
- The bank reconciliation for October 2025 was approved (P - IM, S - RS).
- Ideas for next year's budget suggestions included GT's idea of capital contributions towards a safer crossing by the Castle Pub, and the repair to the bank of the Spout Ditch, possibly from reserves, and GD suggested money for Parish Council noticeboards at the new estates, funding for a tree survey and any necessary tree surgery and a grant to ARK for work on the River Lambourn in the parish to assist wildlife and help prevent flooding. MP suggested putting money in the budget for the Shaw House and Donnington Castle bat boxes made by the Men's Shed at

Fair Close. LA suggested holding a bulb planting session, possibly at Donnington Recreation Ground and CY suggested monkey bars at the Recreation Ground. It was agreed to incorporate estimates for these into the budget.

75 Planning

Applications

- a. 25/02302/MDOPO DWH Land at Hilltop. To remove condition to provide land & money for primary school. PB proposes to speak at the forthcoming planning meeting. MV said reports from Education and Planning officers are going to WBC's Corporate Board for strategic guidance, which will go to the Western Area Planning Committee on 26 January at the earliest. Objection (P - PB, S - GT).
- b. 25/02448/TPC Tree work at Riverside Park Shaw on damaged willow tree. No objection (P - PB, S - GT).
- c. 25/02406/HOUSE 101 Kingsley Close. Erection of summer room. No objection (P - PB, S - GT)

Decisions

- a. 25/02008/NONMA Castle School new classroom. Cladding replaces brick. Approved
- b. 25/01788/NONMA DWH – removal of condition to build footpath. Refused

Feedback from PB on NALC training session on 'Navigating the new Planning Framework'.

PB reported there are rapid changes happening, but not yet any detail. The Government is keen to build more houses so they are planning to change planning regulations to make this possible. Parish Councils will have less access to planning authorities going forward (under the new arrangements for Unitary Authorities). Government wants more applications to be dealt with by officers, not councillors as they are considered to be NIMBYs delaying developments.

The trainers said development of Neighbourhood Plans are important and popular. Developments within half a mile from a railway station will have deemed planning consent. CPRE deplore the quality of housing design, but offered no suggestions as to how to improve them. The planning system is increasingly difficult to navigate. Pre-planning discussions can be subject to FOI requests.

76 District Councillors Report

The convenience store – MV has been in contact with Mrs Mather and her agent. They appear to be supportive. A potential store operator was present at the meeting, he is also a resident of Donnington Heights and recognises that the estates need a meeting place/shop. He reported that he had put in an offer to buy and develop the site into a community centre with shop and café area, but that he had been put off since June by the land agent, who said they were waiting for other offers. He is still waiting to hear back from them and hopes to hear by the end of the month. MV has asked the WBC economic development officer to drum up more support for the store. MV suggested a petition might encourage more interest.

Crossing update – road markings are in but signage is still awaited. WBC highways have stated that recent accidents at the junction have not involved injury to pedestrians since 2019. It would be advantageous to have a site visit with the highways officer to show how busy it can be, especially at peak hours, and the parish council could show them alternative ideas for crossings nearby. MV to speak to WBC Highways.

MV had also forwarded an email from the WBC officer Paul Bacchus about the Spout Ditch. Jon Winstanley had previously told GT the repair would be costed, but the latest email suggests WBC have no intention of repairing the broken bank. WBC Councillor Stuart Gourley has asked for information from Paul Bacchus on the repair.

77 Assets – RoSPA inspection report for playground

The latest report is very good, just some minor points. GT to chase Discovery Timber Play for their advice on removing a small broken part that we have the replacement for.

78 To consider funding a Pop-up or Community Library in the parish

St Mary's Church Hall is probably the best venue for now for a Pop-up or Community Library, until the Village Hall is renovated and holds its own café. David Willetts explained that the PCC still had some questions regarding the two schemes, and would like a meeting between the WBC library service and St Mary's PCC to help decide which of the two options would suite them best. GD will help co-ordinate a meeting. Councillors agreed to go along with the scheme in principle for the current year using this year's budget, but to agree the specifics at a later date. It is hoped that St Mary's Church PCC will have made a decision in time for the budget for the coming financial year to be agreed. (P - MP, S – IM).

79 Road Safety in the Parish

The wet weather has prevented CSW sessions from taking place recently. IM has been reporting pot holes to WBC, and recently had a report that a pothole had been repaired when it hadn't.

IM expressed frustration that the Speed Limit Reviews had still not been finalised, since consultation was agreed in February 2024. MV reported that the decision on whether to go ahead with both requested changes will be taken on 5 December.

MC reported that disappointingly the recent statistics from the Speed Indicator Devices on Oxford Road and Love Lane show they have very little effect in making drivers reduce their speed.

80 To consider officially asking West Berkshire Council to increase our number of parish councillors

It was Agreed that GD will make an official request to WBC to increase the number of parish councillors.

80 Set date for summer fete and initiate working group

Date was agreed as Sunday 28 June (to avoid a clash with Fathers Day). GD to send out an email to volunteers with suggested dates to meet up in January to start planning the fete. MC to send through dates when the village hall is free.

81 Members Reports and Questions

RA has been told that the Donnington Heights allotments have been handed over to Remus to manage. DWH hope to finish at the estate in February 2025, and the subway under the A339 will be opening this Friday.

The street light opposite Trinity by the footbridge has not worked for several months, despite MC reporting it to WBC.

MC advertised the Village Hall table top sale on 29 November. More stalls are needed.

Chairperson

The meeting closed at 21.53 pm