

WOOLHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o Juniper House, Aldermaston, RG7 4LJ
Email: woolhamptonclerk@gmail.com
Tel: 07877 122 127

Minutes
17th November 2025
7.45pm, Woolhampton Village Hall

This meeting will be conducted strictly in accordance with Standing Orders as adopted by Council in July 2017. All Councillors are reminded to acquaint themselves with these Standing Orders.

District Councillor: Chris Read

Councillors: Ben Holden-Crowther, Malcolm Large, Laurence Harwood, Cheryl Springer

Members of Public: 4

1. To receive apologies

Jack Lovell

Sean Garden

Terence Webster

2. To receive declarations of interest

There were none

3. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council

The minutes were agreed and signed for records

4. Matters arising from previous meeting

Lorry parking in Woolhampton

Cllr Read reported that lorries are currently staying out of the laybys. He advised that evidence is being collated in relation to a parcel of land west of Hill Place, where three shipping containers are currently present and additional containers have recently appeared. The police have raised concerns regarding the presence of containers on land without planning permission, noting that where planning permission is granted, conditions and stipulations can be imposed to control use.

It was noted that matters relating to Cods Hill will be referred to Eastern Area Planning. Concerns were expressed that the hardstanding at the site is unlikely to be acceptable.

Significant concern was raised regarding the ongoing development at Hill Place. Works include the construction of a gated entrance and the paving of the access area, with councillors noting that these changes may not be reversible. Cllr Read confirmed that he will be lobbying for the situation to be properly investigated.

WOOLHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o Juniper House, Aldermaston, RG7 4LJ
Email: woolhamptonclerk@gmail.com
Tel: 07877 122 127

5. District Councillor's Report

District Cllr Read gave his report which will be uploaded to the parish council website.

6. Bank Reconciliation

<u>Woolhampton Clerk's Report - 17/11/2025</u>		
Balance on 30 September 2025	£116,903.84	
	Payments	Receipts
Income		
Allotments		-
Payments		
Service Charges	£6.75	
Bibby (Bins)	£29.80	
Laurence (Defibs replacement parts)	£289.56	
Brabazons (July)	£727.99	
Brabazons (August)	£727.99	
PKF Littlejohn (Audit)	£252.00	
	£2,034.09	£0.00
Balance on 20 October 2025	£114,869.75	

7. Any Other Business

Neighbourhood Design Statement

District Cllr Read suggested that the preparation of a Neighbourhood Design Statement could be explored. He advised that this may be a worthwhile exercise for the Parish Council to consider, as it could help guide future development and strengthen the Council's position when responding to planning matters.

Village Hall Land

A member of the public stated that, at the previous meeting, it had been reported that the copse was satisfactory and did not require further attention; however, they disagreed with this assessment. It was felt that children need a safe area to play and that funds previously agreed could potentially be utilised for this purpose. Concerns were raised

WOOLHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o Juniper House, Aldermaston, RG7 4LJ
Email: woolhamptonclerk@gmail.com
Tel: 07877 122 127

that Brabazons, the current contractor, is no longer cutting the area back as far as in previous years, resulting in the space becoming progressively smaller due to encroaching brambles. It was noted that this is the only piece of land owned by the Parish Council.

It was further suggested that approximately £1,500 had been allocated for copse maintenance in the 2023/24 budget. Comparisons were made with playground provision in neighbouring villages, with the view expressed that the current facilities are inadequate. Cllr Harwood disagreed with the assessment of the copse, stating that it should remain partly wild to support insects and wildlife. He suggested that initial brush cutting may be required to reinstate the area to its former extent. It was noted that funding had previously been used to clear pathways that families enjoyed, but these were lost following the felling of the ash trees.

The Chair agreed to inspect the site but Cllr Harwood reiterated his objection to the area being overly manicured. Councillors discussed whether the project could be scoped, costed, and potentially included in the precept for the next financial year. It was noted that the Parish falls within the Veolia grant area for environmental and rewilding projects, and that the Good Exchange may provide opportunities for matched funding.

The possibility of delivering the work as a community volunteer project was discussed; however, councillors noted that insurance requirements could present difficulties. Reference was made to the Stanford Dingley dredge gang, and it was suggested that contact could be made to understand how their volunteer arrangements operate.

ACTION – Chair to speak with Brabazons regarding bramble management and extent of cutting, and to meet with Cathy Vallis on site.

Thames Water

With reference to the football pitch, it was noted that Thames Water required access to the recreation field and have been provided with the gate code. Councillors expressed concern that, as works will involve the removal of a facility from the village for a period of time, and as rent is paid for use of the field, the Parish should be appropriately recompensed for the inconvenience caused.

It was further noted that access by heavy plant may result in damage to the field, particularly given wet ground conditions, and that the area could become heavily churned. Councillors agreed that Thames Water must be required to make good any damage, ensuring the field is reinstated to an appropriate standard and remains a suitable facility for public use. It was also agreed that there should be formal

WOOLHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o Juniper House, Aldermaston, RG7 4LJ
Email: woolhamptonclerk@gmail.com
Tel: 07877 122 127

acknowledgement from Thames Water that an amenity will be temporarily removed from the parish as a result of the works.

ACTION – Chair to follow up.

Tony Renouf

Councillors discussed how best to commemorate Tony Renouf. It was noted that the Village Hall trustees have arranged for a commemorative plaque, and suggestions were made that a tree or bench could also be considered. Reference was made to Margaret's tree, which was noted as a positive example, and it was felt that a similar tribute would be appropriate.

The Parish Council agreed in principle to fund an additional memorial, subject to the Parish Hall confirming what is required. It was also noted that the family have expressed a wish to scatter the ashes.

ACTION – Clerk to follow up with Village Hall trustees

Reed Gardens

District Cllr Reed gave updates about ongoing issues with the site's maintenance contractor. It was reported that the gabion bench has missing stones, which are believed to be being removed by children. In addition, the ground around the play area is not being adequately maintained. Councillors also noted that several recently planted trees have died and should be replaced in accordance with the maintenance arrangements. It was suggested that, if the contractor is unwilling to maintain replacement trees, volunteers may need to be sought to assist with watering.

Further mention was given to the lack of hedge and tree maintenance across the site. It was noted that there had previously been uncertainty as to whether the maintenance company had gone into liquidation; however, Cllr Read confirmed that he has now received a response from the company.

Smiley Speed Cameras

A resident asked whether there was an update on the installation of the smiley face speed indicator signs. The Chair advised that progress is ongoing but slow, due to the administrative requirements involved. It was noted that Duncan Small and West Berkshire Council have provided the necessary licence agreement.

WOOLHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o Juniper House, Aldermaston, RG7 4LJ
Email: woolhamptonclerk@gmail.com
Tel: 07877 122 127

Councillors discussed the use of a temporary Speed Indicator Device (SID), noting that these can encourage drivers to slow down and also collect data which helps build an evidence base on vehicle speeds. Reference was made to data from Bucklebury, where very high speeds have been recorded. It was noted that some speeds may feel excessive to residents but are only marginally above the limit, and the data helps to provide clarity on actual conditions. The information gathered can also support a case for investment in a permanent Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) device, which was noted to cost in the region of £6,000–£8,000 over a five-year period.

Concerns were raised regarding the number of accidents and damage to walls in the village. It was agreed that a petition is the most effective way of drawing the Council's attention to the issue; it was noted that 50 signatures would be required for this to be taken forward by Cllr Read. The Chair agreed to clarify the requirements.

It was further noted that Duncan Small requires additional volunteer support, which could include assistance with storing and moving the equipment. Councillors also noted that while some villages have purchased their own equipment, devices can be borrowed from West Berkshire Council.

ACTION – Chair to bring the relevant agreement to the next meeting for signature.

CIL money

It was noted that Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds have been allocated towards projects at the school, the Douai Pavilion, and the church; however, no CIL funding has been spent on traffic-related measures. Cllr Harwood advised that he was part of the subcommittee which made recommendations on the use of CIL funds, and that traffic calming measures were identified as the strongest proposal at that time. He added that the subcommittee considered the funds to have already been utilised across the other approved projects.

ACTION – Clerk to check the current CIL balance.

Parking Outside the Village Shop

A member of the public raised concerns regarding difficulty accessing the bus stop due to parked vehicles. It was noted that two residents in the area hold Blue Badges, and that Cllr Read has discussed the matter with Gareth. It was confirmed that the land in question is not included within the deeds of either the nearby properties or the shop.

WOOLHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o Juniper House, Aldermaston, RG7 4LJ
Email: woolhamptonclerk@gmail.com
Tel: 07877 122 127

Cllr Read advised that he will follow up with the landlords of the public house. Councillors noted the importance of retaining some parking provision for disabled residents and discussed whether a compromise, such as a 30-minute waiting restriction, could be considered, while ensuring that parking for the nearby cottages is not restricted.

Concerns were also raised by the shop landlord regarding the impact of parking issues on the viability of the business, with the risk that the premises could be lost to residential use if adequate support is not maintained. It was noted that there is currently no signage or road markings in place, and that enforcement of pavement parking therefore rests with the police. Councillors further noted that the manner in which some vehicles are parked forces pedestrians into the carriageway, creating a safety concern.

Payroll issue

Chair proposed to instruct Autela to payroll, councillors agreed.

8. To record meeting closed

20:55