

RAMSBURY & AXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council Alice Charlwood c/o Council Office, Memorial Hall, High Street, Ramsbury, Wilts SN8 2PB
Telephone: 01672 520045 (ansaphone) e-mail parishcouncil@ramsbury.org

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 15th January 2024 at 7.45pm in Ramsbury Memorial Hall

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Present:

S Glass – Chair (SG)

D Barnett - Vice Chair (DB)

D Edwards (DE)

R Greasley (RG)

L Jauncey (LJ)

B Murray (BM)

H Lloyd (HL)

G Hawes

D Gill (DG)

E Hodgson (EH)

M Tester (MT)

A Charlwood (AC) – Clerk

Three members of the public were also present

- 1. APOLOGIES** – were received from Chris Morgan and Maggie Waugh. **Approved**
- 2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST** - None
- 3. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**
The minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2023 were approved and signed as a true record. **Proposed LJ; Seconded GH. Approved.**
- 4. MATTERS ARISING** –
Approval of the 2024-25 precept request to Wilts C.C. **See the item minuted under 6(ii)**

5. NEW CORRESPONDENCE – Items for discussion*

Ref. No	Date Received	Dec 2023 – Jan 2024 Correspondence	Subject *Highlighted for Discussion
*A7572	07 Dec	Caroline Thomas, Cllr. For Marlborough East	Invitation to meeting to create a Marlborough Youth Network (to be held on 10 th Jan at 4pm). Fwd. to Cllrs. SG circulated to Cllrs.
*A7574	13 Dec	Benjamin Huggins, Wilts. Police	Invitation to attend meeting between police and parish councils on 8 th Jan. at 1830. Fwd to Cllrs. SG attended and is liaising with them about other ways to resolve current problems which preclude speed checks in the village
*A7576	13 Dec	Resident	Parking problems caused by building contractors' vehicles clogging up Back Lane and Lawrence Mead. SG wrote to building owner and the problem has been resolved.
*A7580	14 Dec	Andrew Jack, Wilts C.C.	Invitation to attend Marlborough Area Board meeting on 9 th Jan. at 6.30. Fwd. to Cllrs. SG and AF attended. See Item 9
*A7584	18 Dec	Practice Manager, Ramsbury Surgery	Information re. the number of missed appointments. SG is liaising with the practice to make the high number of no-shows each month more widely known amongst residents/patients. See item 23.
*A7588	21 Dec	Melissa Camilleri, Police Community Support Officer	Force Priorities Survey for consideration. Fwd. to Cllrs. See Item 19
*A7594	30 Dec	Resident	Verge road repairs needed on Newtown Road. SG will contact her for more details.
*A7595	01 Jan	Resident	Concern about rising water levels at the back of the village and request to open sluices. For info.
*A7600	04 Jan	Resident	Reporting a fallen fence at Whittonditch park. SG will inspect the damage and arrange to have it re-erected.
*A7601	04 Jan	Resident	Having an exhibition of work at Golden Lion Gallery 17-31 March. For info.
*A7604	05 Jan	Jake Hartley, Wilts CC Traffic & Network Management Team	Urgent closure of Whittonditch Road w.e.f. 5 th January. Fwd. to Cllrs. SG reported that this work has been concluded by Thames Water.
*A7605	05 Jan	NALC	New-model contract of employment. Fwd. to Cllrs. SG said this has not yet been received but will be sent to EH when it comes in.

*The full list of incoming correspondence from 5th December to 5th January can be viewed on the parish council website

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There were three items which were received too late for inclusion in the agenda, but which are pertinent to this month:

- A7606 : Mary Holdsworth (Clerk to Ramsbury Parish Charities) reported that Maureen Palmer had resigned as the Parish Council representative on the Trustees and asked if we could appoint a successor. SG had spoken to EH and she has agreed to take over as the PC representative.
- A7611 : Karen Rees sent a letter of thanks to the PC for the Christmas lights, work on refurbishment of the loos and action during the recent adverse weather. This was forwarded to all Councillors.
- A7613 : Mrs Hughes (6 Isles Road) wrote to ask for a meeting with the Council re the recent flooding of her house in Isles Road.

6. Committee Reports:

6 (i) Planning

Diann Barnett

PLANNING REPORT RAMSBURY AND AXFORD PARISH COUNCIL – January 2024

Planning Applications Processed since December 2023 Report

New applications-

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--|
| • PL/2023/10297 | Coach House, Preston | Cert' of Lawfulness, existing/historic residence |
| • PL/2023/10903 | Rose Cottage, Back Lane | Treework in conservation area. |
| • PL/2023/10914 | 2 Ashley Piece, Ramsbury | Rear single storey kitchen, patio/decking |
| • PL/2024/00004 | Syon House, 3 High St | Treework in conservation area. |
| • PL/2024/10423 | Park Farm, Ramsbury | Maintenance yd, veg garden & driveway + listed. |

Still awaiting-

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|---|
| • PL/2023/10028 | North of Newtown Road | Preliminary 9 houses OBJECT |
| • PL/2023/06108 | Land NE Lamplands | Siting of mobile home OBJ |
| • PL/2023/07297 | Hop House, Tankard Lane | Resubmission of 18/00532/FUL N/O |
| • PL/2023/07437 | Land south of Back Lane | Single storey eco house, access, boundary wall work |

Decisions-

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| • PL/2023/05245
APPROVED | Crown and Anchor | REVISED - bungalow, drive, parking, garden. |
| • PL/2022/08705
REFUSED | Coombe Farm, Axford | New house, dwelling, Est yard and ancillary. |
| • PL/2023/06332
WITHDRAWN | 14/15 Union St | Side and rear ext, 3 dormer windows N/O |
| • PL/2023/07436 | Meadow Fm Stud SN8 2PP | Varying of conditions. N/O. APPROVED |
| • PL/2023/09317 | Holy Cross Church | Treework – Lime. APPROVED |
| • PL/2023/09473 | The Rectory, Back Lane | Treework. APPROVED |
| • PL/2023/09631 | Brushfield, Swans Bottom | Fell tree with TPO – ash. APPROVED |
| • PL/2023/09316 | Holy Cross Church | Treework – Black Pine. APPROVED |
| • | Red Lion, Axford | Planning contravention notice will be served imminently |

DB reported that there had been no recent changes to the above report apart from –

1. An application to carry out treework at the Rectory
2. A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) has been placed on all the trees at Whiteways in Axford

6(ii) Finance

Erica Hodgson

- Precept Request - EH reported that Wilts CC tax base for 2024-25 was eventually set at 944.02 and will have the effect of increasing Band D properties' annual precept cost by only £6.59 p.a. (i.e. less than previously anticipated). With that in mind, she sought approval for next year's precept in the sum of 76,380.

APPROVED. Prop. RG. Sec. DE.

ACTION-Clerk/SG

- The Q3 report was circulated and approved by the Council.
- Charity Shop Tenancy Agreement – EH proposes that the PC should utilise a standard form of rental contract for the tenancy of the Ramsbury Community Charity Shop, which will fall outside the Landlord & Tenant Act, to commence on 1st February. No questions were raised in this regard.

ACTION – EH

6(iii) Rights of Way

Lynn Jauncey

LJ reported that the Rights of Way Committee held a meeting on 14th January and discussed :-

- 2024 Boundary Walk – will start from Crooked Soley and finish in the village. Organisation of this year's walk is going well. Sheila and Clive Glass do a sterling job every year to ensure the smooth-running of the day, but LJ feels it is time that the workload was shared more widely and requested more volunteers to help. Please contact LJ or SG if you'd like to help out.
- Footpath Diversion Order – Park Farm have re-applied to divert two paths in our parish – RAM5 and RAM6 – and the PC has no objection to this as they are offering reasonable alternative paths. We previously objected to their diversion further up RAM5 but this does not form part of their current application.
- Walking our footpaths – the Committee have drawn up a pro-forma (freely available to residents and the wider public upon email application to alison.foale@ramsbury.org) and see this project as a useful way of creating a record of footpath locations, accessibility and signage. The reintroduction of monthly circular walks will commence on the first Sunday in June – probably with the "Littlecote Loop" but this is TBC - and follow other routes on the first Sunday of the month thereafter.

6(iv) Play Areas and Seats

Denise Edwards

DE said she'd been unable to carry out her usual inspection since last month's meeting but there have been no reports received of anything amiss.

Further research has been done into what would be entailed in the possible construction of a bike jump track near Whittonditch football pitch and a site meeting is to be arranged with the parents involved in the project to go into the practicalities of the idea more thoroughly.

ACTION – SG/DE

6(v) Emergency Committee

Alison Foale

Emergency Plan - AF reported that the updated Emergency Plan (EP) had been sent to Wiltshire Council and circulated to the parish councillors for their comments (excluding contact details). She had also enquired about first aid training for some of our wardens and learnt that St John's Ambulance could run a day course for 8 people for approx. £1400.

AF has registered the parish council's interest in being a Community Hub. This will involve someone from the Wiltshire and Swindon resilience team visiting the venue we would use in the event of an emergency - the Memorial Hall.

Storm Henk – AF summarised the Emergency Committee debriefing meeting held on on Friday 12 January following Storm Henk as follows :-

On 01/01/24 Aquasacs were offered to residents on the High Street between the fire station and Mill Lane and the availability of aquasacs from the PC was also posted on Facebook and the PC website.

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The residents of Lamplands, Rachel's Cottage, the west end of the High Street, and Hatches House in Axford collected Aquasacs on 02/01/24 (not at home when distribution was made the previous day.)

In the event, flooding affected Lamplands, High Street, and Mill Lane – all locations where flooding has occurred previously.

- **Lamplands** – No. 1 was significantly affected, and the owners moved out. There was some water ingress at Nos 2 and 3. On 05/01/24 the PC suggested that the residents temporarily move to alternative accommodation due to a further flood warning from the Environment Agency – *'...flooding of low-lying land, roads and property is expected to continue this evening, 05/01/2024, especially in areas closest to the river south of Ramsbury including the Mill Lane and Lamplands areas.'*
- **High Street** – the high water-table affected only one property. Aquasacs were used and put in place by many residents.
- **Mill Lane** – flood water extended back as far as Millbrook House. Justyn Waterworth cleared storm drains on Mill Lane and Hilldrop Lane and reported them to Wiltshire Council. Significant amounts of debris remain and clearing these could be added to the parish steward's tasks when they next visit in early February.
ACTION - CLERK
- **Swans Close** – there is standing water in the extended car parking area.
- **Isles Road** - Run-off from the agricultural land north of Swans Bottom affected properties and water entered a number of garages and one property. The community response with help and support for those affected was excellent through the street warden for Isles Road (Lisa Eden). The owners of 6 Isles Road have provided the PC with a summary of how their property came to be flooded on 4/5 January 2024.

All residents who were affected by flooding have been informed about grants available from the Property Fund Resilience Repair Grants scheme.

A number of trees were brought down but only one of significance between Lamplands and The Knapp which was partially removed to enable vehicles to pass.

Actions following Storm Henk:

- Replenish our stock of Aquasacs when they become available again.
- A letter drop was carried out on 06/01/24 to residents who received Aquasacs requesting that they are not disposed of as they are reusable. Any unused Aquasacs should either be kept by residents or returned to the PC or to No. 7 Ashley Piece.
- Use Storm Henk as an example of why the resident's database is so important e.g. include on PC website, in Whitton Ways etc.
- Encourage street wardens to engage with their residents about providing their contact details – an example of how useful this would be in another emergency is the flooding event on Isles Road. Street wardens to consider creating street WhatsApp groups e.g. as Burdett Street, and Axford have already done.
ACTION - SG
- Stress the importance of everyone keeping gullies and drains clear or reporting them to MyWilts or to the Parish Council when they become blocked. **ACTION - SG**
- At a later date, contact Marlborough Town Council for feedback on their response to the flooding in Marlborough. **ACTION - AF**
- Email Thames Water regarding works carried out on Swans Bottom that may have adversely affected drainage ditches – 15/1/2024. **ACTION - AF**
- Email to PROW officer at Wiltshire Council to understand who has responsibility for drainage along Swans Bottom (RAMS36) – 15/1/2024. **ACTION - AF**
- Email to Adam Flett (Ramsbury Manor Estate Manager) relating to the management of the lake at the Manor and the bridge/weir – 16/1/2024. **ACTION - AF**
- Email to Ramsbury Manor Trustees regarding responsibility for maintenance, inspection and monitoring of the bridge/weir – post PC meeting 15 January. **ACTION - AF**

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- Undertake a review of flooding events in the light of recent experience in our EP risk assessment – post PC meeting 15 January. **ACTION - AF**
- Email to Aster regarding standing water on Swans Close – post PC meeting 15 January. **ACTION – AF**

SG expressed her thanks to Alison Foale, Justyn Waterworth, Paul and Clare Court and Denise Edwards for all the help they provided before, during and after the floods. Thanks also go to the two farmers who turned out to help move fallen trees to keep the roads open. She added that the PC are still following up on post-flood actions wherever we can, and she extended thanks also to Di Barnett who has begun creating a road-by-road spreadsheet with the information for the PC's Emergency Wardens' database

250 Aquasacs were given out to residents and she believes a lot were used at the height of the storm. DE reiterated the request that used Aquasacs should not be thrown away as they can be dried and reused.

MT asked whether there was any sort of role for ARK in the management of the Kennet and its water meadows during floods. AF explained that this is purely a matter for the Environment Agency and that ARK only try to maintain the water quality of the river and its wildlife alongside their role in education.

There was a wider discussion about digging out a lost culvert between The Knapp and Lamplands, and the need to regularly dig out the grips opposite the entrance to Lamplands. DE pointed out the usefulness of having the WhatThreeWords app on your phone as it makes it so quick and easy to accurately pin-point the location of wherever such works need to be carried out.

6(vi) Environment Committee

Bernard Murray

BM said he had nothing new to report. DE asked him to provide her with some nice pictures to add to the visual appeal of the sub-Committee's policy document which she will soon be posting on the website. **ACTION – BM/DE**

Public Forum - Parish Council Standing Orders were temporarily suspended for this item

Three members of the public attended the meeting.

One person had just come along to observe.

The others were present to ask if there was any more news about the outline application to build nine houses on Newtown Road. DB said that there has been no further information as yet.

7. AXFORD

Diann Barnett

DB reported that one house had had flooding in its cellar. This was fortunate as the whole area is still severely flooded, and Stitchcombe has also been badly affected.

8. LOCAL HIGHWAYS & FOOTWAYS IMPROVEMENT GROUP

Sheila Glass

The next meeting will be held in on 25th January 2024.

9. MARLBOROUGH AREA BOARD

Sheila Glass

SG and AF attended the meeting held on 09/01/24 in the hope that there might be some useful feedback about the recent flooding in the town. As this was not forthcoming, they left before the end of the meeting. There was however a discussion about the ways volunteer organisations in Marlborough and the surrounding areas might communicate more fully. This is going to be an ongoing discussion. SG mentioned that the possibility of arranging occasional fora on Zoom to enable parish council chairmen to exchange views and experiences is currently under discussion.

10. ALLOTMENTS*Denise Edwards*

DE reported that she is currently chasing up late payers. Any resident of Ramsbury and Axford who would like to join the waiting list for an allotment can contact allotments@ramsbury.org.uk or phone Dee Edwards on 07867 921878.

11. WEBSITE

DE will be getting on to posting the parish policy document produced by the Environment Committee soon. See also item 6(vi).

ACTION - DE**12. VILLAGE MAINTENANCE**

- (i) **Christmas uplighters for the tree** – SG said that there had been no adverse feedback about the Christmas lights, but she would like to try to improve the power of the uplighters next year. There was some discussion about the size of the single Christmas tree which was thought to be rather too small. SG said she would hope for a bigger one next time.
- (ii) **Hills Stores sign refurbishment** – the new owners of No. 1 High Street have offered to carry out this work and have asked what colours they should use. It was agreed that SG should respond and request they stay as close to the original colours of the sign as possible. **ACTION – SG**
- (iii) **What should be the PC's next project?** – A number of suggestions were tabled including the repair/repainting of the Back Lane walkway road markings, repair to the pavements, and seeking to adjust the level of overhead street lighting up until midnight (which is currently set at only 25% we believe) to shed more light over dark areas of pavement which are becoming hazardous in places. **ACTION - Clerk**
HL also suggested that a new project idea might present itself in the aftermath of Storm Henk so we should keep that under review over the coming months.
- (iv) **Correction to Diary Dates** – Please note that the Volunteers' evening will be held after the Freshers' Event on 20th April; i.e. not on 22nd June as listed in the December meeting minutes.

13. MEMORIAL GARDEN

SG reported that Jane Handford had kindly offered to revamp the two flower beds at the front of the garden this year. SG will liaise with her about this, and the PC will cover the cost of the planting.

14. PARISH STEWARD'S ROTA

Their next visit will be on 6th February. Please notify the PC by 26th January at the latest if you are aware of blocked drains, or gullies, or potholes needing attention anywhere, so that task can be added to the rota.

DG asked whether it was worth asking the stewards to paint white lines to deter people from parking too close to the junctions at the top and bottom of Union Street. A number of people voiced frustration and concern about the potential danger of such inconsiderate/illegal parking – an accident waiting to happen - and a wider discussion ensued about the same sort of risk presented by cars being parked around the Square and near the school at pick-up and drop-off times. SG outlined the practical problem of trying to enforce any sanctions to prevent this sort of unsafe parking but she will raise it with the police Community Support Officer, and the Clerk was asked to write to the school to request they bring the PC's concerns to the attention of parents.

ACTION – Clerk/SG

15. LIBRARY

Nothing to report.

16. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

EH thanked RG and Ron Young for their work on various aspects of this project. We expect another invoice from Carty's in the near future – **See also Item 24.**

Henceforward the building is to be known as the Ramsbury Community Charity Shop and there will be a Grand Opening ceremony on Saturday 20th January which will be attended by a mystery guest. The charity shop stock has now been transferred to its new premises and SG expressed her thanks to Clive Glass, Lawrence Park, and to Maggie Waugh and Matthew Tester for the help they gave with this.

17. MEMORIAL HALL

Sheila Glass

The next Trustees meeting will be held in February.

18. NATURE RESERVE

Chris Morgan

No report. MT asked if something could be done about cutting back the vegetation which is overhanging the access footpath to the Nature Reserve from the neighbouring house.

ACTION - CM

19. POLICE SURGERY

Melissa Camilleri had sent a request (forwarded to Councillors) for the Council to consider priorities for action in the coming months. SG asked for suggestions about our three priorities for the police to focus on. After some discussion of the various issues we could ask them to tackle, it was agreed that we would feedback to them -

- (i) Concentrating on rural crime
- (ii) Thefts from vehicles
- (iii) Speeding

as these are the issues we are contacted about most often by residents.

ACTION - SG

20. RECREATION CENTRE

George Hawes

GH said there had been no meeting.

21. RAMSBURY SCHOOL

Roger Greasley

RG reported that the lower school roll is full but there are 16 spaces in upper school. 194 in total. There was a discussion about the problems and potential danger of inconsiderate parking around the times of school drop-off and pick-up, especially when people leave cars parked far too close to junctions and generally obstruct other traffic. The PC were particularly concerned about the delays being caused to the bus at pick-up time, and similarly the potential delays to the emergency services trying to get through at such times. SG was asked to write again to the school headmistress with these concerns.

ACTION - SG

22. VANDALISM

None reported.

23. PATIENTS REP

George Hawes

GH said there had been no meeting with the Practice Manager, but he was aware that there had been 99 no-shows again in December.

24. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT IN JANUARY

Inv. No	Payments to Suppliers – January 2024	Amount	Net	VAT	Paid By	S137
I3957	Robert Copp – 2023 grass-cutting. Paid in Dec.	3049.00	3049.00	0.00	BACS	No
I3958	Alice Charlwood – Christmas PC meeting refreshments. Paid in Dec.	36.04	34.01	2.03	BACS	No
I3959	Robert Copp – Hedge trimming on Isles Road in Oct	170.00	170.00	0.00	BACS	No
I3960	M J Baker Accountancy – payroll in December	11.25	11.25	0.00	DD	No
I3961	Ramsbury Memorial Hall – room rent for police surgery	12.75	12.75	0.00	BACS	No
I3962	Idverde Ltd. – bin emptying in December	15.00	12.50	2.50	BACS	No
I3963	Ramsbury Estates – Christmas trees	1450.97	1209.14	241.83	BACS	No
I3964	Coral Westall – Loo cleaning in January	180.00	180.00	0.00	BACS	No
I3965	Carer Support Wiltshire	100.00	100.00	0.00	BACS	No
I3966	HP Instant Ink – 28 th Dec – 27 th Jan	9.99	8.32	1.67	VisaDebit	No
	TOTAL TO PAY (excluding Clerk's salary I3967)	£5,035.00	£4,786.97	£248.03		
	TOTAL AMOUNT ON DEPOSIT*	£101,068.17				
	Including gross bank interest earned to 31st Dec 2023	£2,068.17				
	MONIES RECEIVED					
	Amazon refund	14.67				
	TOTAL INCOME IN DECEMBER	£14.67				
	CURRENT A/C BALANCE at 31st December 2023	£17,343.41				

*This includes monies held in reserve for parish initiatives such as the Ramsbury Flyer, refurbishment of the former public loos, defibrillators, provision of play equipment, pavement and road repairs, etc.

The Accounts were accepted and were unanimously approved. (Prop. DE; Sec. EH)

In addition to the payments scheduled above, SG also sought councillors' permission to settle Carty's invoice promptly when it arrives. We expect this to be in the region of £25,000 incl. VAT.

Prop. LJ; Sec. HL. APPROVED.

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY 19th FEBRUARY 2024 AT RAMSBURY MEMORIAL HALL AT 7.45 pm

ALL ARE WELCOME