

RAMSBURY & AXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 19th January 2026 at 7.45pm in Ramsbury Memorial Hall

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Present:

S Glass – Chair (SG)	M Waugh (MW)
D Barnett – Vice Chair (DB)	A Foale (AF)
H Lloyd (HL)	M Tester (MT)
R Greasley (RG)	D Greenway (DGr)
C Morgan (CM)	B Murray (BM)
E Hodgson (EH)	A Charlwood (AC) – Clerk

One member of the public was present

1. APOLOGIES – were received from Denise Edwards and Dawn Gill. **Approved.**
2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST – None.

Item 13 was discussed at this point in the meeting so the member of the public present could provide valuable background information, explain the issues and the risks and put forward suggestions about ways the PC and residents might resist the imminent risk of closure of Ramsbury Fire Station :-

A member of the Fire Brigade Union, Alex Davidson, came to the meeting to report on the likelihood of Ramsbury Fire Station being listed for closure in the latest round of cuts due to financial pressures, following on from fourteen years of year-on-year cuts in funding and staffing already. Now eight more stations are in line for closure across Dorset and Wiltshire, although this Fire Authority already has a worse response time (more than a minute slower compared to the national target of 10 minutes) for call-outs to primary fires.

The closure of Ramsbury Fire Station is likely to mean an even worse response time and increases the risk of death, injury and loss of property in the event of fires in future, not just in our immediate neighbourhood but across the wider area which will be served in future only by Swindon and Newbury. Marlborough, like Ramsbury, is now only an “on-call” fire station but it is to be hoped it will be retained as a key station.

For a fire engine to be available to respond to a call-out a minimum of four fire fighters are needed to crew it. The current crew in Ramsbury is six but they are only fully available and on-call between the hours of 1800-0500 – albeit night-time being the most dangerous when it comes to a fire - (less so during the day).

Mr. Davidson advised the PC on whom to write to resist this closure and on other ways of pushing back against these proposals. The Fire Authority will be voting on the proposals on 10th February and a public consultation will follow until 15th May.

UPDATE Ramsbury Fire Station is on the list of proposed closures and the PC will write to the various authorities to ask that the proposal be reconsidered.

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3. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th December were approved and signed as a true record.

Proposed EH; Seconded DB. Approved.

4. MATTERS ARISING – None

5. NEW CORRESPONDENCE – Items for discussion

Ref. No	Date Received	December 2025 – January 2026 From :	Subject *Highlighted for Discussion
A8456	05 Dec	WCC Traffic Order Team	Experimental Union Street one-day traffic order implementation w.e.f. 20 Jan. Fwd to Cllrs. SG has publicised and invited “constructive comments” from residents once the trial is underway.
A8457	05 Dec	Steve Oakey	CCTV demo postponed till New Year. Fwd to Cllrs. See item 11
A8458	05 Dec	Richard Holman, Ridgway Barns Events Manager	Ramsbury quiz teams invited to charity quiz night on 19 th March 2026. Fwd to Cllrs. For information
A8464	11 Dec	Resident	Frequent problems when large vehicles are unable to get through at the pinch point around 18 High Street caused by parked cars. Discussed at the November meeting. SG has responded.
A8466	15 Dec	Emma Chaplin, Dickins Hopgood Chidley (ii)	Formalities re. completion of new lease on allotments. SG drew Ms. Chaplin’s attention to the error in the term of the Allotment Association’s lease mentioned in the agreement with the Allotment Association, i.e. it should be 5 years not 15. This was quickly corrected.
A8469	19 Dec	Wiltshire CC News	Future waste and recycling plans, etc. Fwd. to Cllrs. See item 11
A8471	22 Dec	Lee Smitten, Firefighter with Dorset & Wilts Fire & Rescue Service	Planned fire station closures may include Ramsbury Fire Station. Fwd. to Cllrs. See item 13
A8473	23 Dec	Emma Morton, Wilts PCC	Policing facing untenable pressures due to lack of detail in funding settlement. Fwd. to Cllrs. It was agreed that the PC would take no action as a body, but SG encouraged individual residents and councillors to take part in the consultation – see A8484 - if they wished.
A8474	29 Dec	Kieran Elliott, Wilts CC Democratic Services	Community Governance Review 2025/26 – proposals sought from councils, individuals and residents. Fwd. to Cllrs. See item 12
A8477	01 Jan	Resident	Convoy of giant tractors going down the High Street today. SG has replied.
A8478	02 Jan	Alistair Ewing, Ramsbury Estates	Confirming tractors on High Street not theirs but may have been to do with a fund-raising charity rally in Aldbourne.
A8483	09 Jan	Resident	Saxon Forge wheelie bins. See item 11

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A8484	09 Jan	Wiltshire Police & Crime Commissioner	Public consultation about proposed £15p.a. increase to the police precept in 2026. Fwd to Cllrs.
A8485	10-12 Jan	Various residents	Requests for a salt/grit bin for Chapel Lane. Fwd. to Cllrs. After discussion, SG's proposal that a new grit bin should be purchased by the PC and sited near the bench at the top of Chapel Lane was unanimously approved. APPROVED. SG will also brief local residents about where they can collect the bags to fill it. ACTION - SG
	11 Jan	Danny Austin, CPRE Wiltshire	Invitation to enter centenary Best Kept Village Competition. Fwd to Cllrs. See item 11
A8487	12 Jan	Colin McMillan, SSE	Confirming payment of grant for hall generators. Fwd to Cllrs. See item 10

*The full list of incoming correspondence from 5th Dec-12th Jan can be viewed on the parish council website

SG also drew councillors' attention to an email she had received as Chair of Ramsbury LINK on 16 January from Harry Tipple of Community First about the *"deeply concerning news regarding a potential decision currently under consideration by Wiltshire Council that both our funding agreement and the direct operational funding provided to Community Transport groups are being reviewed at the Full Cabinet meeting scheduled for the end of February. We have been advised that funding is expected to cease at the end of the current financial year (31 March 2026). Crucially this decision has been taken without consultation, and we have been explicitly advised that*

- *No replacement support service will be provided by Wiltshire Council, and*
- *No alternative funding will be available to enable another organisation to support the sector"*

If this funding cut goes ahead it will seriously jeopardise the services provided by Ramsbury Flyer and Ramsbury LINK. SG expressed her astonishment that this withdrawal of funding should be implemented at such short notice and without consultation, and her concern that the loss of support and advice will impact all LINK schemes, particularly in rural areas. No account seems to have been taken of how much is saved by the NHS and other organisations by volunteer-run transport, and the lifeline they represent for those who need them. CM and RG also expressed concern on the likely impact on the future of the Flyer (whose financial support from WC has already been dwindling for years). It was agreed that SG will write to relevant Wiltshire Councillors advising them of our opposition to the proposal.

ACTION - SG

6 FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Erica Hodgson

- As no questions were raised about the Q3 financial report (circulated) EH sought its approval **Prop. EH; Sec. MT. APPROVED**
- The Clerk has submitted the 2026-27 precept request form to Wiltshire CC.
- EH is still seeking quotes for fencing the Ashley Piece play area, to keep out dog walkers as many seem oblivious to the NO DOGS signs. So far it seems that metal fencing for such a large area would come to about £20K although wooden fencing may be a cheaper option. She will report further at the next meeting. **ACTION - EH**
- EH will review the PC Standing Orders, Asset Register and Financial Risk Analysis before the next meeting. **ACTION - EH**
- Robert Copp's quote for grass-cutting in 2026 was discussed and approved. **Prop. MT; Sec. CM. APPROVED**

ACTION - SG TO NOTIFY Mr Copp

7 PLAY AREAS REPORT

Denise Edwards

DE was not at the meeting so there was no report, but SG summarised the remedy she has proposed in order to level up the uneven ground around some of the fixings of the climbing pyramid at Whittonditch.

8 ALLOTMENTS*Denise Edwards*

DE submitted a written report as follows: This Saturday the team met for a second day of working onsite to redevelop the area. Massive amounts of work have been completed and we hope to be able to get the waiting list allocated in the near future. A meeting of the new committee will be arranged very soon. Anyone wishing to view the site can do so by emailing allotments@ramsbury.org or via text 07867921878.

SG added that the working party clear-up had reduced the number of plots that will be available and many are already rented this year. However, she believes 4 or 5 will be available once the tidy-up has been completed and a waiting list will be compiled once these are allocated.

9 RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE REPORT*Doug Greenway*

- DGr reported that the next monthly circular walk will be on Sunday 1st February. The Feb-Aug 2026 walk dates and route maps will be publicised on the website soon. **ACTION – DGr**
- SG said that she had written to Stephen Leonard today, seeking an update on when we can expect Lofts Bridge repairs to be carried out. We await his response.
- DGr will check on the state of the overgrown hedges on bridleway 28 before the next meeting and contact the landowner again if nothing appears to have been done. **ACTION – DGr**
- Preparations are underway for this year's Boundary Walk on Sunday 3rd May and the Committee will be meeting next week to progress things further.

10 EMERGENCY COMMITTEE REPORT*Alison Foale*

- AF is to arrange a committee meeting in early February to discuss (amongst other matters) the acquisition of two new generators for our village hubs. EH suggested we might ask if the new supplier would also take away the old ones which, it was agreed, was a good idea. **ACTION - AF**
- DB has reviewed the information we currently hold on the Emergency Database and reported that, of the 707 houses in the parish, we only have contact information for 191 (27%). In many streets/localities we have none at all. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the upcoming Committee meeting to see if a way can be found to improve on this. **ACTION – AF**
- MT reported on his research into new walkie-talkies and described the sort that we will need that have both a long battery life and a long range. He has identified a suitable brand that will cost less than £200 for a pack of six. It was unanimously agreed that the PC should go ahead and buy these. **ACTION - AF**
- The question of whether the Emergency Wardens should be asked to do a regular monthly check of the drains/gullies in their “patch” and quickly report any apparent blockages to the Clerk will be on the agenda of the upcoming Committee meeting. **ACTION – SG/AF**
- The PC now hold a supply of face masks.

Public Forum – See Item 13**11 VILLAGE MAINTENANCE***Sheila Glass*

- SG will make an appointment for a redeployable CCTV demo for councillors w/c 26th Jan. **ACTION – SG/DB**
- SG drew councillors' attention to Wilts CC's proposal to make refuse collections three-weekly in 2027 along with the provision of a third wheelie bin to all households. (See Item 5:A8469)
- SG summarised the background to her correspondence with Aster about the lack of on-site storage for wheelie bins at Saxon Forge, resulting in a significant number being left out on the High Street more or less permanently. (Ref. Item 5: A8483). This is unsightly and will only get worse if everyone is issued with three bins in 2027. The suggestion that a communal recycling bin for Saxon Forge might be an option seems impractical but SG will arrange a site meeting with Aster to try to explore other solutions. **ACTION – SG/DE**
- The PC will enter the village in the 2026 Best Kept Village Competition and advertise it in the Spring. Notes in WW and the Village Diary will seek volunteers willing to help. **ACTION – SG**
- An abandoned car (an Audi Reg YE59ZHG) on Whittonditch recycling area has been reported.

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12 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Sheila Glass

SG will respond to confirm the PC's view that we need no change to our current governance arrangements.

ACTION - SG

13 POTENTIAL CLOSURE OF RAMSBURY FIRE STATION -

Sheila Glass

See Page 2041

14 AXFORD

Diann Barnett

DB reported the theft of a light bar from a vehicle in the car park, and the dumping of a burnt-out car by the pumping station. She will report these matters. Otherwise, all is well.

15 PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Diann Barnett

PLANNING REPORT RAMSBURY AND AXFORD PARISH COUNCIL – Jan 2026

Planning Applications Processed since December 2025 report

New applications-

• PL/2025/09823	1 High St, Ramsbury	Change of use, remodel and conservatory
• PL/2025/09620	19 Isles Road	Treework

Still awaiting-

• PL/2025/06883	Coombe Farm, Axford	Self-build house, garaging, tennis court with landscaping, demolishing modern farm buildings.
• PL/2025/01559	Upcott Field, Whittonditch Rd	9 houses and associated works. This application layout has been amended.
• PL/2025/08376	Crown and Anchor	De-liscence, change of use.
• PL/2025/08684	Land at rear of 36 Oxford St	Detached 3-bed bungalow.
• PL/2025/09209	9 Union Street	Create off-street parking
• PL/2025/09169	West House, Ramsbury	Internal alterations, window change
• PL/2025/09011	West House, Ramsbury	Swimming pool and garden shed
• PL/2025/09502	The Old Tannery, High St	Treework
PL/2025/09376	42/43 Oxford Street	Proposed garage.

Decisions-

• PL/2025/08514	Windsor House, Square	Treework. APPROVED
• PL/2025/08591	Richmond Cottage	Treework. APPROVED
• PL/2025/08738	Westfield Farmhouse	Treework. APPROVED
• PL/2025/08861	Stone House, Axford	Treework. APPROVED
• PI/2025/08332	Chandlers Barn, Hilldrop centre	Change of use to 8-bedroomed, conference/event APPROVED
• 3357357	Red Lion enforcement appeal NC	
• 3362810	Red Lion planning appeal NC	

DB also reported on three new applications received since her report was issued:-

Reference:	PL/2026/00104 - Householder planning permission and PL/2026/00274 - Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
Site Location:	Knypersley, 79 High Street, Ramsbury, Marlborough, SN8 2QN

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Proposal:	The proposal is to demolish the existing incongruous winged rear extensions and replace them with more appropriate additions creating an architecturally consistent design which is sympathetic to its historic host structure and context.
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Reference:	PL/2026/00103 - Full planning permission
Site Location:	7 The Square, Ramsbury, Wiltshire, SN8 2PE
Proposal:	Change of use from Class E to a single dwellinghouse and insertion of dormer window, replacement of shop front joinery, replacement of asbestos slates with natural slate and creation of a new door opening from the High Street

Also, the approval with conditions of [PL/2025/06883](#) and the approval of [PL/2025/09502](#).

She will also be writing to the Planning Inspectorate about their inaction in the case of the enforcement notice on the Red Lion, which was issued a year ago and no action has been taken since.

ACTION - DB

DB read out the email she had received from the Wilts CC Enforcement about the continuing illegal occupation of the mobile home at Lamplands, saying the landowner has told them that his son is in the process of moving out of the caravan and then all the paraphernalia which indicates the land is being used as residential will be removed.

16 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Maggie Waugh

MW reported that three more apple trees have been planted in the community orchard now.

17 RAMSBURY MEMORIAL HALL

Helen Lloyd

The next meeting of the Memorial Hall Committee will be held on 18th February. In the meantime, HL continues to do a lot of work on putting together material for the hall's centenary exhibition on 14th March.

18 LOCAL HIGHWAYS & FOOTWAYS IMPROVEMENT GROUP

Sheila Glass

- The trial of a northbound one-way traffic system on Union Street will come into force tomorrow (20th January).
- The next meeting will be held on 5th February.

19 MARLBOROUGH AREA BOARD

Sheila Glass

The next meeting will be held on 10th February. SG will attend.

20 TOWN & PARISH CLERKS MEETING

Sheila Glass

SG attended the meeting on 18th December and summarised two matters which were discussed :

- A new bus shelter review programme (budget £8m over 5 years)
- The "Us Girls" initiative to encourage girls to take part in more sporting activities.

21 PARISH STEWARD'S ROTA

Next scheduled visit will be on 4th February, gritting permitting. **UPDATE - This visit was cancelled as all stewards are being diverted on to repairing potholes exclusively.**

21 NATURE RESERVE

Chris Morgan

CM confirmed that a meeting with residents to discuss flood risk to properties on the High Street will be arranged in the near future.

ACTION-CM

22 SCHOOL REPORT

Roger Greasley

RG briefed the meeting that the latest school roll stands at 186, which is 24 short of the school being full. Half-term will commence 13th February.

23 VANDALISM/CRIME

Sheila Glass

SG summarised the latest Crime report (circulated) and drew councillors' attention to some of the successes of police efforts in targeting rural crime in the past three months.

24 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT IN JANUARY

Inv. No	Payments to Suppliers – January 2026	Amount	Net	VAT	Paid By	S137
I4410	JRB Enterprises Ltd – dog poo bags. Paid in Dec.	100.74	83.95	16.79	VisaDebit	No
I4411	M J Baker Accountancy – payroll fee for December	11.25	11.25	0.00	DD	No
I4412	Idverde Ltd - Bin emptying in December	22.20	18.50	3.70	BACS	No
I4413	Coral Westall – public loo cleaning in January	200.00	200.00	0.00	BACS	No
I4414	Paul New – pansies and violas for the Memorial Garden	96.00	96.00	0.00	BACS	No
I4415	Janet Talmage – annual rent for allotments	700.00	700.00	0.00	BACS	No
I4416	Ramsbury Memorial Hall – Electricity supply to PC office, public loo and charity shop 1 st Oct – 31 st Dec. 2025	235.54	235.54	0.00	BACS	No
I4417	Ramsbury Shop – 2026 desk diary for clerk	3.99	3.32	0.67	VisaDebit	No
I4418	Value Products Ltd. – 500 medical face masks	17.76	14.80	2.96	VisaDebit	No
I4419	Lloyds Business Banking – Bank Charges in Jan	4.25	4.25	0.00	DD	No
I4420	Castle Water – water charges for public loo in Dec	34.40	34.40	0.00	BACS	No
I4421	HP Instant Ink 28 th Dec – 27 th Jan	13.49	11.24	2.25	VisaDebit	No
I4422	Robert Copp – planting new apple trees in orchard?	150.00	150.00	0.00	BACS	No
I4423	Galleon Supplies Ltd. – Bulk pack of toilet rolls for public loo	30.00	25.00	5.00	VisaDebit	No
	TOTAL TO PAY (excluding Clerk's salary I4424)	£1,619.62	£1,588.25	£31.37		
	TOTAL AMOUNT ON DEPOSIT on 31st December 2025*	£102,362.45				
	incl. gross interest earned Dec 2022 to 31 st Dec 2025	£6,362.45				
	INCOME					
	Charity shop rent	£320.00				
	December SO for Memorial Hall broadband	9.60				
	TOTAL INCOME	£329.60				
	Current A/c balance at 31st December 2025	£5,300.03				

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

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NB. In addition to the £1,619.62 due for payment as set out in the meeting agenda (as above), SG sought councillors' approval for three further payments to be settled this month:-

I4425	Community Heartbeat Trust – new defibrillator electrodes	61.14	50.95	10.19	BACS	No
I4426	HGS UK Trading Ltd. – replacement battery for PC office doorbell	3.93	3.27	0.66	VisaDebit	No
I4427	Ramsbury Post Office – postage to Mrs J. Talmage	0.87	0.87	0.00	VisaDebit	No

Increasing the total expenditure for approval to £1,685.56

The Accounts were accepted and were unanimously approved. Prop. HL; Sec. MW

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

**DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY 16th FEBRUARY 2026 at 7.45pm at RAMSBURY MEMORIAL HALL**

ALL ARE WELCOME