



Downton Parish Council

**Minutes of the DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING held on
MONDAY 08 SEPTEMBER 2025 7:00pm
THE DOWNTON MEMORIAL CENTRE (BONVALOT ROOM)**

Councillors summoned and present: Jane Brentor (Chair) (JB), Gareth Watts (GW), Matt Randall (MR), Stuart Carter (SC), Gary Hawke (GH), and Judith Snares (JS)

Officers Present: Melanie Camilleri (Clerk/RFO) (MC)

Plus: PC Marc Evans and one member of the public

MINUTES

196/25 Public Question Time

Speeding: concerns expressed regarding speeding especially through The Borough, as witnessed from his office window and recent accident involving two cars and a bus on a blind corner. Suggested that road conditions would be safer if DPC introduced a 20mph speed limit. Also expressed concerns regarding the safety of the informal crossing outside of the Wooden Spoon.

197/25 To receive a report from PC Marc Evans

- Fire outside of The Bull

Fire deemed it not necessary to conduct a fire investigation due to their being no forensic opportunities at scene. The fire has started next to the Nunton Milk shed which has caught fire and been fully engulfed by flames, it has begun to catch to the roof of the pub however fire have managed to stop it prior to causing too much damage. They have had to remove the remainder of the shed to check the structural damage caused to the Pub. The police case has been submitted for closure. There is no evidence, no witness, 1 CCTV camera which shows nothing. No lines of enquires.

- Crimes

You may have seen a raised police activity in the village over the weekend. Our team working with Hampshire and Dorset carried out an operation targeting burglaries in around the Downton and surrounding villages.

This was Saturday and Sunday night. While on this operation we also targeted speeding cars on the Borough and anything else that we came across throughout the night.

- Burglaries

Unfortunately, we have had more burglaries, Downton, Redlynch, Woodfalls and in Nomansland. Thankfully, our team caught two males in Nomansland and almost all property was recovered. These two males have been remanded and are likely to receive lengthy sentences. A home under renovation close to the village was targeted by individuals. a small amount of tools were taken. Please be extra vigilant, unfortunately while one burglary was ongoing in Redlynch in August, officers were in Downton on

patrol. The call wasn't made to 999 until sometime later. Please call 999 in the first instance if you suspect burglaries.

Garages seem to be the targets, tools, and motor bikes

Any Suspicious vehicles please email me directly. It literally takes me 30 seconds to run a plate though the data base. I welcome local support in highlighting vehicles that are acting in a suspicious manner.

- Farmland

2 males were arrested locally Hare coursing; our rural crime team are investigating this. Please call 999/101 of any sightings. Local intelligence has stated that Hare numbers are at a record high, and this will likely increase the numbers for Coursing.

- Speeding

Speed Enforcement caught 8 vehicles speeding on 2 September 2024 in Redlynch on The Ridge. This stretch of road has a clearly displayed speed limit of 30mph. The fastest vehicle was captured travelling at 42mph. On the day in question, it was overcast, and roads were still damp from previous rain. Depending on previous convictions and history:

8 drivers will be offered a speed awareness course.

Proceedings will now be undertaken to ensure the most appropriate outcome for the offenders takes place.

- Catapults

I've had a few reports of catapults; one car was damaged and a window. If anyone is sighted with a catapult or has any information, please let me know.

198/25 To receive a report from Cllr Richard Clewer (Wiltshire Council): Apologies sent

199/25 Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Dave Mace (DM), Paul Roberts (PR), and Stephanie Jalland (SJ). Reasons noted and accepted. Apologies also received from Susan Parsons (Admin Officer) (SP) and Cllr Richard Clewer (Wiltshire Council).

200/25 Declarations of Interest

- i) To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda
GW: Public Toilets invoice for cleaning services (August) (211/25 i)),
- ii) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any):
None
- iii) To consider and grant requests for dispensation in accordance with relevant circumstances under Standing Order 13(h), as appropriate: None

201/25 Minutes

- i) To resolve to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on **14 August 2025**.
Deferred to the 13 October meeting (inquorate no. of Cllrs to pass a resolution following abstentions from Cllrs Carter, Randall, and Snares)

202/25 Business raised during Public Question Time

To resolve to refer any business raised by the public or items of information from councillors either to the appropriate committee or for any other action.

Speeding

Introducing a 20mph limit: was previously discussed with Wiltshire Council Highways who responded that they're not in a financial position to support such a scheme as cost prohibitively high. If DPC wishes to pursue, such a scheme will have a material impact upon setting the Precept.

PC Marc Evans was invited to offer opinion: Principles of reducing speed limits on Highways relate to injury to persons and not property. Evidence shows that people breaking a 30mph speed limit are likely to break a 20mph speed limit.

Unanimously agreed that JB will produce a comms piece for social media on the subject.

Parking: PC Marc Evans has been tackling parking issues on Barford Lane and he'll continue to monitor.

Informal crossing outside of the Wooden Spoon: funding for a scheme to improve safety has just been approved (see Agenda 204/25 i)).

203/25 Village Matters

- i) Parish Steward: jobs for visit on 13 & 14 October 2025 to be emailed to SP
- ii) Litter and graffiti at Green Lane: has become a littering hot spot. One of DPC's Litter Pickers to be diverted to tackle. Graffiti washed away in the rain.
- iii) Winter Preparation: JB, MC, and SP to check lock-up for status on supplies before SP returns the completed Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme requirements to WC (deadline 12 Sept)

204/25 Highways

- i) LHFIG: on 04 Sept SWAB approved LHFIG's recommendation on the enhancement to the Pedestrian Crossing outside the Wooden Spoon. Full details on timescales to follow.
- ii) SID: agreed to use the existing pole on The Borough to mount the shared SID. The existing playground warning pole installed at Moot Lane to be checked for registration of SID and used for the new SID+Solar panel if appropriate. If not suitable, to revert to use of pole near Saxon Hurst. A potential new location on the High Street was discussed, subject to suitability of location for a pole (as deemed by Highways), cost implications through LHFIG application, and completion of works to the Pedestrian Crossing outside the Wooden Spoon.

205/25 Planning & Housing

- i) The applications received were considered and recommendations made to Wiltshire Council Planning Authority (see Planning Schedule)
- ii) Planning decisions were noted (see Planning Schedule)

206/25 Cemetery

- i) Noted that Idverde will be onsite to carry out hedge cutting and level-up sunken graves during October. Exact date yet to be set.
- ii) Clearance of ornaments from the graves will take place throughout September. MC to agree a date with SP.

207/25 Public Toilets

- i) Noted that since the men's toilets have been closed due to essential repairs, males have been observed accessing and using the women's toilets
- ii) To consider and resolve to approve a quote for essential repairs to the men's toilets: Quotes not yet received.
- iii) To consider and resolve to approve temporarily making the women's toilet into a unisex toilet (pending completion of essential repairs to the men's toilets) and agree actions required: after checking legal requirements, it's been established that as the cubicles are not fully enclosed floor to ceiling, it's not possible to use them as a unisex toilet. Escalate repairs to men's toilets.

208/25 HM Land Registry

- i) **RESOLVED**: Bonallack & Bishop's quote to register two separate pieces of Downton Parish Council land with HM Land Registry (first registration) was approved.
- ii) **RESOLVED**: to make payment to cover Bonallack & Bishop's initial fees and disbursements in respect of i)

209/25 Downton Remembrance Sunday Service & Parade 2025

- i) **RESOLVED**: to make an application to WC Highways to close the B3080 (from the Memorial Gardens (in The Borough) to Church Hatch) from 10-11am on Sunday 09 November 2025 for the Remembrance Day Sunday Service and Parade

- ii) **RESOLVED:** to approve a donation of up to £30 to the Royal British Legion for a better-quality Poppy Wreath
- iii) **RESOLVED:** Cllr Brentor will lay the Wreath on behalf of the Parish at the Service

210/25 Downton Parish Council Annual Christmas Tree 2025

- i) **RESOLVED:** DPC will buy and instal a Christmas Tree and hold a ‘Switching on the Lights’ event on Maypole Green
- ii) The ‘Switching on the Lights’ event will be held on either 1) Friday 05 December OR 2) Friday 28 November dependent upon events taking place at the school and availability of the choir. Final date and time to be confirmed at the 13 October meeting.
- iii) The sum allocated in the 2025/26 budget for this event was noted
- iv) Noted that the results of the EICR carried out July 2025 demonstrates that the installation meets safety standards and therefore no further action is required.

211/25 Finance

- i) **RESOLVED:** the Cash Flow Report and payments were approved.
GW abstained from voting on the invoice from Downton Cleaning Services, forfeiting his vote.

Payee	Detail	Amount £ (incl vat)	Method
Staff, HMRC, Wiltshire Pensions	Salaries, Back pay, Tax & NI, Pensions (Aug)	9,555.24	BACS
EE	Mobile SIM (Admin Officer)	12.00	DD
Lloyds	Service Charge	8.50	PAY
IONOS	Premium Package	12.08	DD
Idverde	Bin emptying (Aug)	312.74	BACS
West Mercia Energy	Public Toilets Electricity (July)	36.69	BACS
Downton Cleaning Services	Public Toilets Cleaning (Aug)	985.00	BACS
Downton Memorial Centre	Room Hire (July)	25.88	BACS
SGS	Repair Pipework Cover outside Public Toilets	264.00	BACS
Longford Estate	Rent Village Green (26/03/2025-25/03/2026)	0.05	BACS
Longford Estate	Rent Land CAS Play Area (29/09/2025-28/09/2026)	10.00	BACS
Longford Estate	Rent Allotments (29/09/2025-28/09/2026)	100.00	BACS
Susan Parsons	Reimbursement: Graffiti remover, EE mobile SIM (pre DD set-up)	38.99	BACS
M Camilleri	Expenses: fuel	26.46	BACS

- ii) **RESOLVED** the Bank Reconciliation prepared by the RFO was approved and signed-off as correct by Members of the Council

Account Balances

Lloyds Business Account 29 Aug 2025: £12,031.20

Lloyds Commercial Instant Access Account: 29 Aug 2025: £98,674.81

Lloyds 95-Day Saver: 29 Aug 2025: £83,923.05

212/25 Insurance Renewal

- i) **RESOLVED:** the quote to renew the Council’s insurance w.e.f 01 October 2025 was approved
- ii) MC delivered a report on her face-to-face meeting with the insurance broker and specific points the broker raised on Policy cover: -
 - a. fidelity insurance cover: after taking into consideration risks and mitigations expressed in the Council’s Risk Management Strategy adopted on 12 May 2025, it was unanimously agreed that no change to the level of cover is necessary.
 - b. **RESOLVED:** the quotes supplied through the broker to carry out valuations on the two insured buildings were approved in consideration of Policy conditions.

213/25 Committees, Working Groups, Outside Bodies

- i) Chalk Pit Management Committee: GW, MR, and MC delivered a report on the Management Committee meeting held on 26 August. The Deed of Transfer of Land from WC to RPC, Scouts Lease and permitted use of land, and an asbestos Management Plan was discussed. MC has drafted an updated Chalk Pit Management Committee Terms of Ref detailing delineation of responsibilities between RPC and DPC. Both Councils will consider and adopt at the October meetings.
- ii) 3-year Strategy Working Group: JB delivered a report on the Working Group meeting held on 27 August. MC will circulate the updated document and publish on the website.
- iii) Wiltshire Towns Programme Working Group: to identify which Cllrs and Officers will work with Paul & Rosemary Leo for a follow-up meeting to progress next steps. *Deferred to the 13 October meeting*
- iv) To receive any other reports in relation to Committees, Working Groups, and Outside Bodies: None

214/25 Councillors' Reports

- i) To receive reports from Councillors
GW his appointment by DPC on The Carver Trust Cottages Charity has exceeded the required three years. Requested that this matter is discussed at the 13 October meeting.
JB: has been approached by residents asking for speeding restrictions. JB will be issuing comms (Agenda 202/25)

215/25 Correspondence, AOB, urgent matters

- i) Downton Christmas Tree Festival 06 & 07 Dec: **RESOLVED**: that DPC will apply for a table at this event and agree arrangements for the table display/manning the table. MR will lead on the arrangements.
- ii) WALC Conference 10 Sept: noted that MC and SP will be attending this free conference for WALC members. The conference break-out sessions which would most benefit the Council were discussed and agreed.

216/25 RESOLVED: that Agenda item 217/25 would be closed to members of the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2) by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

217/25 Staff Matters

- i) **RESOLVED**: by mutual agreement, to extend the Litter Picker's contract for a further 6-months (01 October 2025-31 March 2026) working 10 hours per calendar month.

218/25 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next Meeting for **Downton Parish Council** will be held on **Monday 13 October 2025** at **7:00pm** in **The Downton Memorial Centre (Bonvalot Room)**.

Being no further business, JB closed the meeting at 21:35pm.

DRAFT MINUTES TO BE SIGNED AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING