



Downton Parish Council

**Minutes of the DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING held on
MONDAY 09 MARCH 2026 6:30pm
THE DOWNTON MEMORIAL CENTRE (BONVALOT ROOM)**

Councillors summoned and present: Jane Brentor (Chair) (JB), Gareth Watts (GW), Matt Randall (MR), Stuart Carter (SC), Paul Roberts (PR), Stephanie Jalland (SJ), Dave Mace (DM), Gary Hawke (GH), and Judith Snares (JS)

Officers present: Melanie Camilleri (Clerk/RFO) (MC) and Susan Parsons (Administrative Officer) (SP)

WC Councillor present: Cllr Richard Clewer

Police present: PC Marc Evans did not attend this meeting

Members of the public present: Eleven

MINUTES

362/26 Public Question Time

The Chair will invite members of the public to make representations in respect of the business on the Agenda, ask their questions, or make their statements. The period of time designated for public participation shall not exceed fifteen minutes unless otherwise directed by the Chair. A member of the public shall not speak for more than five minutes.

- Planning Applications PL/2026/00891 & PL/2026/00954 for Radnor House: He wishes to raise his objection with reasons.

363/26 To receive a report from PC Marc Evans: Did not attend this meeting.

364/26 To receive a report from Cllr Richard Clewer (Wiltshire Council)

- Potholes: are proving challenging at this time of year. Repairs underway (including temporary patching which isn't holding in many places). He's aware of problematic roads across Downton and urged Council and members of the public to continue to report via MyWilts. Major resurfacing should be carried out through The Borough.
- Wiltshire Council Budget: 3-weekly bin collections from 2027, additional Highways work budgeted through borrowing, changes to Parish Steward Scheme resulting in a less responsive service, possibly last year of funding PEAS supplies (not guaranteed from them on), Household Recycling Centres can now only be accessed by making an appointment.
- Local Plan: Inspector has rejected the plan on the basis of Housing Targets.

365/26 Apologies for Absence: None

366/26 Declarations of Interest

- i) To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda: GW: Public Toilets a) invoice for cleaning services (377/26 i) and b) payment during refurb (375/26 vii). DM: Room Hire invoices (Feb) 377/26 i), MR: Quote 375/26 vi)
- 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

367/26 Minutes

- i) **RESOLVED**: the Minutes of the
 - Ordinary Meeting held on **09 February 2026** were approved
 - Extraordinary General Meeting held on **23 February 2026** were approved. SJ abstained from voting as she did not attend the meeting.

368/26 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.

- Planning Applications PL/2026/00891 & PL/2026/00954 for Radnor House: will be dealt with under Agenda item 374/26

369/26 Downton Primary School

- i) Children representing Downton Primary School presented to full council their selected project 'Family Park Run'. Selection made by all pupils casting a vote on shortlist of three options (Mural, Family Fun Run, Nature Trail).
- ii) Budget to be developed in consideration of resources involved.
- iii) Next steps: identify resources and costs involved, and present to full council at the April meeting.
- iv) Primary School's tree planting initiative: Trees supplied through a Woodland Trust application. Planting date 19 March with 3-4 volunteers.

370/26 Highways

- i) To receive a report on the various Highways initiatives
 - a. Road safety improvements to the informal crossing outside of the Wooden Spoon – bollards installed. SP to establish dates for remaining elements of the scheme.
 - b. Potholes across the parish and timetable of repair by WC Highways: reported and temp repairs underway.
 - c. Gully and drain clearance: reported and clearance underway.
 - d. 20mph speed limit proposition: Pedestrian Surveys to be conducted on 17 March using mix of Councillors, Officers, and team of volunteers. SP co-ordinating briefing.
 - e. To resolve to approve DPC's request to LHFIG to instal 'No Access' signage at Gravel Close: deferred to April meeting
- ii) To receive an update on the Parish Steward's return to work: He will return as from April for light duties.

371/26 Wiltshire Council's approved Budget 2026/27

- i) Wiltshire Council's approved Budget 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2028/29 noted
- ii) Noted, with disappointment, budget provision in relation to valued services for Downton Parish Council (the Parish Steward Scheme and the Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme (PEAS)). It was agreed that DPC will closely monitor and, if deemed necessary, write to WC to lobby restoration of service to previous levels.

372/26 Wiltshire Towns Programme

- i) To receive a report on Downton's Visit Wiltshire entry and Wiltshire Towns Programme proposition using Grant funds: Paul and Rosemary Leo, members of the WTP Working Group, delivered an update on work with Visit Wiltshire and research on options for use of Grant monies.
Next steps: JB and MC to hold a meeting with Paul and Rosemary Leo to progress project plan including Brown Tourism Signs application.
- ii) To consider and resolve to approve the application for Brown Tourism Signs: further action required before can submit an application.

373/26 Downton Cuckoo Fair 2026

- i) Two Directors from Downton Cuckoo Fair Ltd attending the meeting delivered the following report:
 - Confirmed Downton Cuckoo Fair Ltd approve the License to Occupy
 - Insurance cover not yet secured – pending their imminent go/no-go decision on holding the event based upon their assessment of the state of the grounds following wet weather.
 - Assuming a 'go' decision, copy insurance certificate and Risk Assessment will be sent to MC, and the License to Occupy will be signed at the meeting of full council on 13 April.
- ii) To note that DPC has:
 - a. contacted SSEN requesting remediation works to the dip on The Borough Greens following electricity upgrade works carried out Summer 2025. Once they have completed the work, DPC will instal temporary orange mesh fencing to protect the grounds until the event.
 - b. expressed its willingness to work collaboratively with DCF and consider reasonable and proportionate mitigation measures, where practicable. The two Directors from Downton Cuckoo Fair Ltd expressed their thanks to DPC.
- iii) GW will attend a joint site visit with a DCF representative on Thursday 23 April 6pm to record the pre-event condition of the grounds.
- iv) IF the event does not proceed, and IF DPC deem it necessary, MC will produce a public communication which will be agreed by Councillors (majority decision) via email.

After this Agenda item was concluded, GW left the meeting (7:55pm) to attend to family matters. Reason noted and accepted.

374/26 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)
- iii) PL/2025/00852 – Lawful Development Certificate (enclose a shipping container with timber boarding and addition of tin roof): noted WC Planning's response following Minute 339/26 iii) as follows:

The orange container may remain in situ pending outcome of the appeal.

If the appeal is dismissed, owners will have two months to remove the orange container. Failure to comply would constitute an offence, and the Council can consider prosecution proceedings by way of summary conviction.

In the meantime, the owners have obtained a certificate under PL/2025/00852 to clad the container. This provides an alternative option available to them should their appeal be dismissed. It is important to note, however, that there is no requirement for the owners to implement PL/2025/00852. This is entirely at their discretion, provided the matter is satisfactorily resolved within two months of the Notice taking effect.

If the appeal is upheld, the container may remain, and the owners may choose to implement PL/2025/00852 if they wish.

In respect to matters regarding apparent delivery and open storage on site. This is a new allegation; there is no investigation on this matter. We have not received any complaints of regular coming and goings of material deliveries to indicate potential change of use to the property. However, we can indicate that there are materials on site they have been there for a number of years and relate to stalled plans to build a garage and internal refurbishments, we have no evidence of “comings and goings”. Having said that, if we obtain a registered complaint supported by quantifiable evidence of regular deliveries [and more importantly, distributing from the site also] to suggest a business operation we would review the matter and investigate accordingly.

JB reported that the planning application for the garage was approved in 2018 (therefore consent expired 2021). It was agreed to capture photographic evidence of material deliveries for WC.

375/26 Public Toilets Refurbishment

- i) **RESOLVED:** CAD drawings for the gents (option 3 urinal layout and one urinal at a lower height suitable for children), ladies, and DDA toilets were approved
- ii) To consider and select a cubicle colour scheme for the three toilets: delegated to MC and SP
- iii) To consider and select a hygienic wall cladding colour scheme for the three toilets: delegated to MC and SP
- iv) To consider and select a flooring colour scheme for the three toilets: delegated to MC and SP
- v) To note the proposed project timescales and project management oversight: commencement date likely to be after Easter for a 3-week duration. Completion before the Cuckoo Fair, however, Downton Cuckoo Fair Ltd has already stated that they do not require access to the public toilets (which will therefore remain closed).
- vi) **RESOLVED:** the quote to replace the exterior doors for the three toilets was approved. MR abstained from voting; forfeiting his vote. To be sourced: 1) internal lever for DDA door to be lockable from the inside and 2) exterior door signage
- vii) **RESOLVED** Downton Cleaning Services will continue to receive contractual payments during the period of refurbishment
- viii) Additional actions: ivy on wall will be cleared, SP to seek quotes to clear moss on the roof, bins to be introduced in the gents to support baby changing facilities.

376/26 Governance

- i) Noted that DPC’s Title absolute for Moot Lane Recreation Ground has been registered with HM Land Registry.

377/26 Finance

- i) **RESOLVED:** the Cash Flow Report and payments were approved
DM abstained from voting, forfeiting his vote on the Downton Memorial invoices.

Payee	Detail	Amount £ (incl vat)	Method
Staff, HMRC, Wiltshire Pensions	Salaries, Tax & NI, Pensions (Feb)	8,478.66	BACS
IONOS	Email Microsoft 2019	9.60	DD
IONOS	Email Microsoft 2019	9.60	DD
EE	Mobile SIM (Admin Officer)	12.00	DD
Lloyds	Service Charge	8.50	PAY
IONOS	Premium Package	12.08	DD
Idverde	Bin emptying (Feb)	312.74	BACS
Idverde	Grounds Maintenance (Feb)	1,091.35	BACS
West Mercia Energy	Public Toilets Electricity (Jan)	45.42	BACS
BWP Creative Ltd	Website Hosting 01/03/2026-31/03/2026	30.00	BACS
Downton Cleaning Services	Public Toilets Cleaning (Feb)	985.00	BACS
Downton Memorial Centre	Room Hire (Feb)	53.75	BACS
Susan Parsons	Reimbursement Oak Tree	173.27	BACS
M Camilleri	Expenses: fuel	44.10	BACS

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

Account Balances

Lloyds Business Account 04 March 2026: £28,555.65

Lloyds Commercial Instant Access Account: 04 March 2026: £87,410.03

Lloyds 95-Day Saver: 27 Feb 2026: £85,251.31

378/26 Accounts 2025-2026

- i) Noted MC will drop-off papers to the internal auditor on 13 April. It's therefore anticipated that the AGAR will be presented to full council for consideration and approval at the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 11 May, before submission to the external auditor.

379/26 Trustee Appointments, Outside Bodies, Committees, Working Groups

- i) To receive any other reports in relation to Trustee Appointments, Outside Bodies, Committees, Working Groups

Downton Link

GH reported his attendance at the monthly meeting. 1,400 trips completed, 288 clients, 41 drivers. They're seeking additional drivers - SP to place advert on social media.

3-year strategy

JB has updated the plan following the progress review meeting. Updated plan to be presented to full council at the April meeting.

Neighbourhood Watch

SC and PR attended the latest meeting. Crime in the area currently lower. Hare coursing in the region is on the rise – drones being deployed. Members of the public can report by calling 101.

380/26 Councillors' Reports

- i) To receive reports from Councillors

JS: attended WC's EV charging consultation. WC hope to appoint a contractor by the end of this year and expect them to start delivering up to 2,000 chargers from March 2027. Discussed possible location for installing up to 10 EV chargers across Downton. The contractor will contact DPC directly.

SC: has been liaising with WC Highways regarding drain and gully clearance in Charlton All Saints.

381/26 Downton Annual Parish Meeting 2026

- i) Agreed to hold the Downton Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 27 April 7pm, subject to speaker availability
- ii) In addition to the usual Chair's Report, suggestion made to invite Rhiann Surgenor (WC Highways Senior Engineer) to cover the various Highways Road Safety initiatives being implemented across Downton. These initiatives are jointly funded by WC and DPC Precept, and form part of DPC's 3-year strategy. Other suggestions: mural project, RBL speaker. Arrangements to be finalised at the April meeting.

382/26 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next Meeting for **Downton Parish Council** will be held on **Monday 13 April 2026 at 7:00pm in The Downton Memorial Centre (Bonvalot Room)**.

Being no further business, JB closed the meeting at 9:30pm.

DRAFT MINUTES TO BE SIGNED AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING