



Minutes of a Meeting of Aldworth Parish Council

Tuesday 4th November 2025, 7pm at Aldworth Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Kate Walters (Chairman), Cllr. Bill Bennetts, Cllr. Ilona Herbent and Cllr. Graham Rutter

In attendance: Mel Taylor – Parish Clerk
2 members of public

2025/11/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence, all Councillors present.

2025/11/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2025/11/03 OPEN FORUM

a. Questions or comments from members of the public regarding items on the agenda

It was reported that a cat had been killed and a road traffic accident had occurred within the last two weeks, both incidents attributed to speeding vehicles.

b. Update from West Berkshire Council - Councillor Coyle

It was agreed to defer this item to later in the meeting, pending the arrival of Councillor Coyle (deferred to Minute reference 2025/11/08).

2025/11/04 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2025 as a true and accurate record.

2025/11/05 UPDATES ON ONGOING MATTERS

i. Contribution towards aldworthvillage.org domain

Cllr Bennetts advised that communication was ongoing with the current owner of the domain and it had been established that they had paid for hosting the original combined Parish Council and village website, and they had continued to pay for the hosting of the village website when the Parish Council established its own website. It was agreed that recognition should be given for the costs covered as a goodwill gesture. Cllr Bennetts to obtain details of costs incurred along with clarification on management of the two village domains: '.info' (out-of-date) and '.org'.

Action: Cllr Bennetts to obtain costs and clarification

2025/11/05 UPDATES ON ONGOING MATTERS continued**ii. Members' Bid for replacement Millennium Bench**

West Berkshire District Councillor Laura Coyle had advised that the Members' Bid application for a replacement Millennium Bench was successful with an award of £252.58 towards the total cost of the new bench of £360.83.

It was agreed to obtain a quote for preparing and treating the remaining benches at the recreation ground.

RESOLVED to proceed with ordering the replacement Millennium Bench and to fund the balance of £108.25 from Community Infrastructure Levy funds held.

iii. The Village Well Ownership

Parish Clerk to pursue discussion with West Berkshire Council to establish ownership.

iv. Replacement Bench for Village Green

As per item 11/2025/5ii above.

v. Aldworth Footpath Leaflet

Cllr Rutter to obtain cost for printing 100 copies of the Aldworth Footpath leaflet to be available in local venues; pub, church, village hall and for display on the noticeboard(s).

2025/11/06 PLANNING**i. 25/02355/TPC – Aldworth Village Hall**

Crown reduction and crown lift 'Tree 5 – Beech Tree' to alleviate impact on playground and solar panels.

RESOLVED No objection.

ii. 25/02332/TPC – Glebe Cottage

Fell 2 x sycamore trees.

RESOLVED No objection in principle, but application warrants further information on the reason for felling.

iii. 25/01624/HOUSE - Old Barn

The erection of ground floor single storey additions & related alterations including the provision of additional habitable accommodation within the roof space.

It was noted that permission had been granted by West Berkshire Council.

iv. 25/01743/HOUSE - Rookery Cottage

Proposed rear single-storey extension and associated external works. It was noted that permission had been granted by West Berkshire Council.

2025/11/07 WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL SERVICE DELIVERY OFFERS
Councillor Coyle joined the meeting during this item

At the District Parish Conference in October, West Berkshire Council launched an updated programme of service delivery offers available to Parish and Town Councils, which now includes: additional library opening hours, pop-up libraries, community bookshelf, bus shelter maintenance and installation, gully cleansing, ditch clearance, converting street lights to LED, street lighting adoption and maintenance, sign cleaning, road sign replacement, footway improvements, playground and open space transfer, dog bin transfer, visual tree surveys and report and rural verges management.

Action: Parish Clerk to invite West Berkshire Council Officers to the next meeting to discuss options and to obtain costs for potentially introducing a Pop-Up Library to Aldworth Saturday market.

Action: Parish Clerk to liaise with the Village Hall Committee on the principle of the proposal.

2025/11/08 OPEN FORUM
Updates from West Berkshire District Councillor Laura Coyle

Planning Application – Tomb Farm, Ashampstead (Ref: 25/01733/FULMAJ)
 An application for a change of use to provide space for events had raised concerns regarding increased traffic. Cllr Coyle had submitted a 'called-in' request for formal consideration of the application at Committee.

West Berkshire Council had commenced consultations on the introduction of 20mph zones across the district, with Aldworth identified in the first wave. The initial stages involve Council Officers working with Cllr Coyle and Parish Councils to discuss options and scope, along with opportunities to assess wider traffic matters. Public consultations would be held in due course. It was confirmed that the Parish Council wished to pursue the initiative and Cllr Coyle would report back on the next steps following discussions with Highways Officers. In light of this, and noting two recent incidents attributed to speeding vehicles (as per Minute reference 2025/11/03a), it was agreed to work with Cllr Coyle on potential measures to address speeding issues.

2025/11/09 MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

One suggestion card had been received via the suggestion box "Co-ordination between villages/parishes via Parish Councils, to organise Neighbourhood Watch groups. Involve Police, Local Councillors etc. Great concern about recent rural crime."

Action: Parish Clerk to liaise with surrounding Parish Council Clerks (Ashampstead, Yattendon, Hampstead Norreys, Compton) on the proposal.

Cllr Rutter raised the question of ownership and maintenance of the gully between the church and the highway. The Parish Council had previously provided grants to the church in 2022 (£250) and 2023 (£350) for clearing.
Action: Cllr Coyle to pursue the matter with West Berkshire Council to identify responsibility.

2025/11/09 MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Cllr Rutter suggested providing a decorating activity at the Christmas Market at the village hall, instead of sweets from Santa.

RESOLVED to support the proposal and agree expenditure of up to £40.

Action: Cllr Rutter to purchase decorating activity

Action: Cllr Walters to liaise with the organisers of the Village Christmas Party to determine whether any funding was required

It was noted that a Remembrance Wreath from the village had been arranged with the Royal British Legion.

2025/11/10 FINANCE

i. The following payments since the last meeting were noted, and the second installment of the precept at £6,750 was received on 30th September 2025:

Date	Payee	Detail	Amount
05/09/2025	M.Buckle	Path clearing	£62.50
05/09/2025	Heads Farm Contracting	Install new noticeboard and village gate	£961.92
19/09/2025	F.Bates	Expenses for daffodil bulbs	£192.99
26/09/2025	F.Bates	Wages Quarter 2	£901.30
30/09/2025	Unity Trust	Bank Charges	£6.00
02/10/2025	Tactical FM	Waste collection and disposal - September	£10.96
23/10/2025	HMRC	PAYE	£215.40
27/10/2025	Public Works Loan Board	Loan repayment	£595.00

ii. Finance Reports for September and October 2025 were noted and signed by the Chairman.

iii. Payment of £10.96 (£9.13+VAT) to Tactical Facilities Management Ltd for waste services for the month of October 2025 was approved.

iv. It was approved to add the new Parish Clerk, Mel Taylor, to the online banking system as an Administrator.

2025/11/11 CLERK'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

2025/11/12 DRAFT BUDGET 2026/27

Councillors were invited to put forward suggestions for the draft 2026/27 budget, prior to its adoption at the next meeting in January 2026.

Action: Parish Clerk to circulate the current budget for reference.

It was agreed that improving accessibility of the footpath adjacent to the highway to the Village Hall / Recreation Ground was a priority project. Cllr Rutter reported that Access for All grants were available from the Chilterns National Landscape for accessibility projects, with awards of up to £20,000, which would be sufficient to fund the scheme.

Proposed plans for the footpath would be consulted on at a future Saturday Market in due course.

Action: Parish Clerk to pursue the footpath accessibility project

2025/11/13 FURTHER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF PUBLIC

There were no further questions or comments from members of public.

2025/11/14 MEETING DATES

At the last meeting, it was agreed to change the meeting day to Monday due to hall availability, and dates were set for the first Monday of January, March, May, July, September, and November. However, since then, there had been a change of Parish Clerk, who was unable to attend meetings on the first Monday and had requested that the Council consider rescheduling to the third Monday.

RESOLVED that meetings be held on the third Monday of every-other month, with the next meeting scheduled for Monday 19th January 2026, followed by 16th March 2026, commencing at 7.00pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____