

MINUTES FOR ETCHILHAMPTON ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2025 AT 6.30pm IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present Mr. P. Hanson (Chairman), Mrs. L. Clark (Vice-Chairman), Mr. M. Harris (RFO), and Mrs. C. Wimble (Clerk)

In attendance: Miss A. Clark

- 1 Declarations of Interests and Dispensations: none.
- 2 Apologies for Absence: no apologies.
- 3 The Minutes of the last meeting on 24 September, 2025 were approved.
- 4 Matters Arising
 - a) Parish Steward: PH confirmed he had received the dates for 2026. CW reported that a note had just been received from Wilts that the Parish Steward would not be working till after New Year allowing him to deal with county potholes. PH stated he had done a very good job keeping the middle path cleared. LC confirmed that the council owned the bank and trees on one side of the path near their farm. If any trees needed attention, she has an email and person to contact.
 - b) Precept: PH reported that the village gates could cost about £2,000. Currently there was not sufficient to cover those costs together with defib items etc. MH confirmed that at the end of the year the EPC would have £800 in reserve. LC reported that the defib was old and would possibly need replacing. PH confirmed that the EPC pay for the maintenance only not the purchase of a new defib. Philip Whitehead had remarked at the last meeting that Etchilhampton had a very low precept. The councillors discussed how much to increase the precept and decided on 15%. It was noted that going forwards it would be better to increase in small increments. This new precept will provide a bigger margin to cover any unforeseen expenditure in the future. It was also noted that the Wilts had charged £250 for the annual EPC elections despite this not being contested. LC proposed the increase to 15% and PH seconded.
 - c) Update of EPC email address: CW commented that by end of 2026 all council email address should be .gov and that the Etchilhampton one would therefore need to change. MH offered to speak to his contact at Wilts Council.
 - d) Village Gates: PH reported that LFHIG had recently had a meeting and he was waiting to hear the outcome from Philip Whitehead. If approved the EPC can look for quotes and the council will have to approve location. He confirmed that the Council would need to provide 3 new Etchilhampton signs.
 - e) Monument damage: PH confirmed he had written to the reporter.
 - f) VE Day Celebration Supper: this event had gone very well and the village hall had been at full capacity. All had agreed it had been great fun and was worth repeating.
 - g) Gift: PH had a conversation with WALC and the EPC is unable to fund a gift for Jon Nash from our precept.
- 5 Questions/Points from the Public: None

6 Treasurer's Report

- a) The EPC noted the bank balance stood at £1763.79 and ratified the following payments totalling £842.24:

		£
02.10.25	Community Heartbeat – Defib Items	113.94
02.10.25	Mark Goddard – grass cutting (as quoted)	441.00
15.10.25	Ionos Cloud Ltd (monthly)	14.40
20.10.25	Bank Charges Lloyds (monthly)	4.25
05.11.25	Wilts Council Election Charges	250.00
12.11.25	Ionos Cloud Ltd (monthly)	14.40
18.11.25	Bank Charges Lloyds (monthly)	4.25
TOTAL		842.24

7 Correspondence and consultations: none.

8 Planning Applications: one application by John Hare for work to trees in his garden. The councillors had no objections.

9 Reports of Meetings: PH confirmed he had attended the Neighbourhood Watch Meeting on zoom. He had been very impressed by Catherine Roper and that Wiltshire Police had been in special measures before she took up her post. The police had been spending more time on rural crime like Hare Coursing.

10 Any Other Business

- a) Cattle Escape: LC confirmed that several villagers had reported cattle damage in their gardens. Approximately 20 cattle were caught on CCTV around midnight at the eastern end of the village where they caused damage to the gardens of Kate Freeman, Shirley Sanders, and Manor Farm Cottage before continuing to the other end of the village and damaging Brenda Smith's garden. The cattle went down an extremely narrow fenced footpath on to the road and down to Stert where more damage occurred. It was very fortunate that no one driving was affected by this incident. Mr. Curnick was contacted at 10.00 pm regarding the cattle and eventually collected them the next morning. Kate Freeman has a crime number from the police. PH to send a letter to Curnick with a copy to Stert PC and Philip Whitehead. EPC to let those affected know of any action taken.
- b) MH reported that on the Wilts website the old names of councillors were still showing. He has kindly offered to get this changed.

There was no further business and the meeting ended at 19.25 hrs.

C Wimble, Clerk