

MINUTES FOR ETCHILHAMPTON ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 07 JULY 2026 AT 6.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

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

In attendance: Mrs. E. Bridewell, Mrs. R. Chadwick, Miss. A. Clark, Mrs. K. Freeman and Mrs. K. Hatton Pocklington

Mr. Hanson opened the meeting by noting the loss of Councillor Mick Harris who died very unexpectedly in May. Mick was a well-liked member of the community and a very good Responsible Finance Officer and he will be much missed.

- 1 Appointments of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer/Responsible Financial Officer, Internal Auditor and Clerk
 - Mr. P. Hanson was elected Chairman (proposer Mrs. C. Wimble and seconder Mrs. L. Clark)
 - Mrs. L. Clark was elected Vice-Chairman (proposer Mr. P. Hanson and seconder Mrs. C. Wimble)
 - Mrs. C. Wimble was elected as Clerk (proposer Mr. Hanson and seconder Mrs. L. Clark)
 - As there was a vacancy Mr. P. Hanson proposed to co-opt Mr. A. Wimble as Councillor & Treasurer/Responsible Financial Officer (seconder Mrs. L. Clark)
 - Mr. J. Nash had confirmed he would continue as Internal Auditor.
- 2 All Officers declared their Acceptance of Office and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- 3 All Councillors declared their acceptance of the Code of Conduct and signed the relevant form.
- 4 Register of Councillors' Interests – To confirm up-to-date and notify Wiltshire Council and the Clerk of any changes. Mr. A. Wimble was given a form to complete and return to Wiltshire Council.
- 5 Declarations of Interests and Dispensations Requests – none.
- 6 There were no apologies for absence
- 7 Treasurer's Report
 - A It was reported that the bank balance at 1 April, 2026 stood at £756.79.

Balance brought forward at 1 April, 2025	613.12
Total Receipts	4004.05
Total of opening balance plus receipts	4617.17
Less total payments	3860.38
Closing balance at 31 March, 2026	756.79
 - B **AGAR** - all items below were considered, approved by resolution where necessary and signed by the Chairman:
 - i List of expenditure over £100, including invoices.
 - ii Register of Assets – signed by Chairman.
 - iii Safety report of playground equipment had been carried out by ROSPA.
 - iv The Internal Auditor's Report had been completed by J. Nash.

- v Accounts, variances, and bank reconciliation. Proposed Mr. P. Hanson and seconded Mrs. L. Clark.
- vi Consideration and approval of annual governance statement by Council Resolution. Proposed by Mr. P. Hanson and seconded by Mr. A. Wimble.
- vii Consideration and approval of the annual accounting statements from the RFO/Treasurer by Council Resolution. Proposed Mrs. L. Clark and seconded Mr P. Hanson.
- viii Consideration and approval of dates for public inspection of accounts to be published by the RFO.
- ix Approval by Resolution of the Exemption Certificate for Councils with accounts under £25,000 for Clerk to send to external auditors. Proposed Mr. P. Hanson and seconded by Mr. A. Wimble.

8 The Minutes of the last meeting held on 05 March, 2026 were approved.

9 Matters Arising

- a) Defibrillator: Mr. Hanson reminded those attending that at the last meeting the decision had been taken that the Parish Council would not buy a new defibrillator largely due to cost as our precept was very low. Mrs. Clark reminded all present that the cost of a new defibrillator if replaced in September would be £1400 + VAT, a replacement battery would be approximately £360 + VAT every five years plus £200 + VAT for replacement pads every two years. The ongoing maintenance every week plus reporting to NHS/Ambulance that the defib was in working order. Quite a responsibility. When Mr. Woods was Chairman Mrs. Clark took over the register and Mrs. Hopgood was responsible for maintenance for many years until latterly when Mrs. Wood-Woolley took it over. The defib needs to be registered with Community Heartbeat and also with The Circuit (used by NHS ambulances). Mrs. Clark commented she would do this up and until September and no longer. The Village Hall Committee sub group The Social Committee had raised funds for the defib amongst other items. The Village Hall Committee is a charity and Mrs. Chadwick commented that the monies received from rent of the School House were used to maintain both the School House and the Village Hall. If the village raised the funds for a defib it was possible they could contribute a small donation. The last Village Hall Committee meetings discussed the defib but they could not fund outright or maintain with consumables required. Mrs. Chadwick had enquired with British Heart Foundation regarding a grant but they were not taking any further applications. She felt the best option if another defib were to be acquired would probably be to rent one or and to make sure it could be accessed without a code. Mrs. Freeman felt it might be worth contacting local Devizes businesses who may be interested in helping small rural villages that are not able to access a grant. The Parish Council were not responsible for the defib but had taken it on when the Social Committee disbanded. It was noted that not everyone in the village felt a defib was necessary. Mrs. Clark had been talking to a paramedic recently who told her that learning to administer CPR ourselves was key to keeping a patient alive, especially as sometimes the defib could not help and would notify the user to start CPR. The reality is that no one in the village wants to take this on. After much discussion it was felt that it would be more useful to get someone to teach villagers how to do CPR once a year in the village hall. A date would be organised in October. Mrs. Clark commented that in September she would deregister the defib and find out what needs to be done.
- b) Precept: this had been completed and it was agreed to increase very slightly every year to keep in line with increasing costs.
- c) Village gates: Mr. Hanson still waiting for Andy Cadwallader and Philip Whitehead to confirm.

- d) Churchyard maintenance. £350 is paid to Bishops Cannings for churchyard maintenance each year. This is ringfenced for Etchilhampton church and the meeting agreed the churchyard looked very tidy.
- e) Parish Steward: Mr. Hanson reported the Steward had just been. He comes for half a day a month although up till June he had been on pothole duty throughout the county. Kevin is going and our new Steward is Rob. He has Mr. Hanson's number and will contact him before arriving to confirm what duties need doing. Next visit 3 September.
- f) Gateway Dezives: Mrs. Clark brought a Gazette & Herald article which suggests Wiltshire Council are backing this plan. It is likely Corsham will go ahead.

10. Questions/Points from the Public:

- a) Telephone box: Mrs. Freeman reported her daughter had an emergency and with no signal on her phone had had to use the telephone and dial 111 for an ambulance. It was a life saver and very important that we keep the phone box in the village. Mr. Hanson had reported that although BT had wanted to remove it the village had resisted.
- b) Sewage smells Coate junction: Mrs. Bridewell noted this problem had not been getting better. Mr. Hanson reported that he had contacted the Care Home Manager and had also written to the Environment Agency. When it rains polluted water from the septic tank collects in puddles and drains into the ditch. The care home confirmed they had hired professionals to deal with installing a new septic tank which was regularly checked. Environment Agency did not appear to want to be involved. Wilts Highways could not clean out the flooded manhole as it was polluted water and therefore a hazard – which as the meeting agreed is therefore a hazard to the inhabitants of Etchilhampton. The septic tank overflow runs into the main storm drain which is illegal. Mr. Hanson would write to the Environment Agency once more and also get in contact with our local MP Brian Mathews.
- c) Hedges: Mrs. Bridewell expressed concerns about the hedge around Etchilhampton House which had overgrown so extensively she felt it was a danger to motorists, and she had seen several vehicles nearly collide. Mr. Hanson commented that villages should report any issues like hedges, potholes etc online to My Wilts. The more reports the council received the more likely they were to deal with the problem. However, Mr. Hanson reported the street light on the corner had been out for two years. The council had eventually come to fix it but refused as a tree had grown up beside the street light.
- d) Traffic speed: Mrs. Freeman noted that the speed restriction on the C60 was 60 MPH whilst the main road to Andover was 50MPH and that it should be possible to restrict the traffic speed past the village. The level of traffic is increasing with more houses being built, school runs and diversions and she felt it was a matter of time before someone had a serious accident. People don't understand how to drive in country lanes. Mr. Hanson reported he has submitted plans for village gates which Wilts Cllr. Philip Whitehead felt would help the situation. Mr. Hanson to write to local MP Brian Mathews on the issue with a copy to the cabinet member for highways. Mrs. Freeman felt that with more housing being built the roads should also be maintained with passing places on small lanes and speed limits in place.
- e) Coate sign: Mrs. Freeman noted that the fingerpost had been gone with a temporary sign in place for the last three years. On the finger post was a sign for the national cycle route reminding drivers to drive carefully. Mr. Hanson remarked that the council had been asked to replace this and it was most likely due to lack of funding. It was noted there was an accident at the Coate Hill junction. The give way signs had worn out and it was on the list for the council to do. It was noted that villagers should go online and report via My Wilts. Mrs. Freeman to post this on the Etchilhampton WhatsApp group.

11. Correspondence and Consultations: many emails were received but Etchilhampton was too small a parish to benefit from most of the offers.

12. Planning Applications

All Applications received since the last meeting have been approved – mostly to do with trees.

13. Other Business

- Agenda for Parish Meeting on 07 July 2026 at 7.30 pm approved.
- The hedges round Mr. Woods property had been dealt with.
- Mr. Wimble noted that there were 2 bus shelters in Etchilhampton and not 3.
- Mr. Wimble noted he had seen the article on bus shelters using QR codes and reminded councillors of the Bobby Van stay safe talk at the village hall which mentioned that these could be dangerous as they are an easy target for scammers. However, Etchilhampton does not have a timed service and those wishing to use the bus have to call and book in advance.

C. Wimble, Clerk

www.etchilhampton.uk