



**MINUTES OF SHERSTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY  
14<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 18.30PM, The North Building, Sherston**

Present

- Ms T Burgess (TB) – Chair & Clerk, Mr Nigel Freeth (NF), Mr B Smee (BS), Mr M Tarrant (MT), Mr M Smith (MS), Mr Keith Savage (KS), Mr Andrew Tremellen (AT), Mr M Wolfenden-England (MWF)

01.12.23	<p><b><u>Apologies for abs</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Robin Turner</li> <li>• Donna Ford (Clerk)</li> </ul>
02.12.23	<p><b><u>Declarations of interest</u></b></p> <p>Members to declare any interest they may have in agenda items in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Nothing declared</p>
03.12.23	<p><b><u>Exclusion of the Press and Public</u></b></p> <p>Resolved to agree any items to be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) has been excluded under Standing Order 3.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> N/A</p>
04.12.23	<p><b><u>Minutes</u></b></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of Sherston Parish Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023.</p>
05.12.23	<p><b><u>Chairman's Announcements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended Wiltshire Highways Event held in Malmesbury – MS/MT/TB</li> <li>• Conducted Clerks annual review</li> <li>• Councillor Robin Turner submitted resignation reducing headcount down to 8 Councillors, 1 of which is the chair and one who has a dual role as Wiltshire Councillor (full compliment should be 13)</li> <li>• Attended Liberal Democrat Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, Dr Roz Savage MBE event</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended 2 x meetings with GP's and Integrated Careboard to agree set of actions to move forward with the new Doctors Surgery.</li> <li>• Chased GP's/Integrated Careboard for update following meetings – GP's confirmed they have submitted details to support size/patient support requirements. Awaiting ICB to arrange follow up meeting – have chased again.</li> <li>• Covering for Clerk in her absence</li> <li>• Christmas Meal arranged for 14<sup>th</sup> December at the Rattlebone</li> <li>• Resident kindly volunteered to clear leaves/pathway outside Church – completed on 25<sup>th</sup> November</li> <li>• Emailed Hirers of North Building to advise that invoices would be late due to absence of Clerk</li> <li>• Road Closure notices for Tetbury Road and Sopworth Lane posted on Facebook and Parish Council Website</li> <li>• Wiltshire Policing Survey details posted on Facebook and Parish Council Website</li> <li>• Emailed hirers of North Building to advise that invoicing will be late due to absence of Clerk subsequently invoices issued (12<sup>th</sup> December)</li> <li>• Booked Village Hall for January meeting on basis North Building booked out</li> </ul>
06.12.23	<p><b><u>Clerks Report</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerks report - No report submitted due to Clerks absence</li> </ul>
07.12.23	<p><b><u>Working Group / Outside Bodies Reports</u></b></p> <p>Members received reports from the chairs of the working groups and any Outside Body Representatives.</p> <p><b>Working Groups</b></p> <p><b>Climate &amp; Biodiversity Group – BS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific updates</li> </ul> <p><b>Allotments Group – BS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>See item 14</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Communications Group – MWE/KS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on action to issue statement regarding the fact that the PC had not approved the recent Communications Survey prior to issue. <b>Resolved:-</b> to close on the basis that a recent meeting minute explanation covered this requirement off</li> <li>• Communications Survey - Had some surveys back need to collect from other locations. Lots of nice, useful comments, respondents keen to see short snappy update for example.</li> <li>• Email archive - solution identified to ensure all old councillor emails accessible and history available – driver to save costs and not pay for individual old mailboxes.</li> <li>• Cliffhanger – KS met with key stakeholders. Keen to get Keith on board to help with Advertising. Sharing of proofs and feedback is working well.</li> </ul>

- Visited Park Lane Press (printers of Cliffhanger) to understand costs and possible costs for producing a coloured edition – initial view that cost prohibitive
- In order to maintain costs, agreement reached that the Cliffhanger is restricted to 24 pages unless an exceptional communication event needs to be publicised.

#### **Operations Group – AT/ MT/BS**

- Met 3 contractors to get prices for re-vamping main entrance to recreation ground – should have for presentation at January meeting - BS
- Resident raised concerns about tree branches brushing top house - Maintenance team will address - BS

#### **Neighbourhood Plan – MS**

- Councillors who expressed interest in joining the NBP working group were MS, BS, NF, TB, MWE
- MS attended meeting with Aidan Clarke, Wiltshire Council officer supporting NBPs
- MS booked first meeting of the working group for 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7pm on Teams

#### **Ways of working – TB**

- Attended meeting of Kemble Parish Council 12<sup>th</sup> December to observe ways of working. Plans to attend other local meetings.
- Currently a challenge due to low numbers of Councillors, coupled with issues attracting replacements. Needs to be a focus in the new year to ensure Council working effectively.

#### **Finance – Clerk/**

- Replacement for Councillor Ed Durrell who has vacated position required to support Clerk.

#### **Outside Bodies**

##### **School - MS / AT**

- MS reported that the school is going very well – the new Headteacher is doing a great job – the entrance hall has been revamped and the EYFS class will be renewed for the start of the next academic year. Students represented the school at the Remembrance Day service for the first time.
- Sustainable Sherston have organised a thermal efficiency audit for the school building to identify improvements that could be made to reduce energy bills

##### **Village Hall – BS**

- No update this month

##### **Emergency Services/Planning – NF**

- MS supplied Word version of Emergency Plan to NF and MT – document has been reviewed will be passing round to wider councillors for comment.
- Emergency planning working example being removal of recent tree blocking carriage way near Norton.

##### **Area Board – MS / TB**

- See next item

### **LHFIG (Local Highways and Footpath) – MS/TB /NF**

- Nov - Wiltshire Highways are working on a plan to enable a report to be completed over recommendations for 20mph zones. The report will cost the PC £966.  
**Resolved:-** MS to write an article for the Cliffhanger to advise residents.
- Nov - Members considered correspondence received in regard to safety concerns outside the school and the request for a formal crossing.  
**Resolved:** MS to liaise with Highways officers at Wiltshire Council to review the crossing area
- Attended Highways Matters Event in Malmesbury on 21<sup>st</sup> November. Highlighted Sherston's issues with Potholes & state of roads generally, time it takes to resolve issues, frustrations with the MyWilts reporting site I.e. issues being closed without being addressed. Useful networking event
- Article published on Facebook to raise awareness of the siting of Sheep around the Public Rights of Way on Manor Farm and the introduction of electric fencing. Article drafted for January Cliffhanger.
- Third Phase of the coppicing of Grove Wood to be scheduled for a suitable weekend in January 2024.  
**Resolved:** - TB to write article asking for help from volunteers/residents help via Facebook and Cliffhanger once date confirmed – aiming for Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January 09:00a.m. start
- All feedback received from volunteers who walked the 10 walks in the 'Sherston Walks Booklet', feedback needs collating and will be forwarded onto Paul Ormiston to refresh booklet with a request to complete another print run (Paul briefed), other priorities causing a delay in concluding
- Several MyWilts tickets raised related to potholes, street lighting and damaged footpaths

### **SOSCIC – MS / TB / BS**

- Chair missed annual meeting – was published in Cliffhanger (seen after event), not sure how Parish Council missed it.
- MS attended and thanked the Directors of SOSCIC for all the hard work they do
- Focus on filling vacated space in the building

### **Scouts / Brownies – BS**

- Nothing of note

### **Church – NF**

- Adam Beaumont sadly left the Parish in his guise as Vicar, to take up a new opportunity in Bristol as an Arch Deacon. Short term Curate stepping up.

### **Blooming Sherston – TB**

- Awaiting confirmation of speeding gate installation in order to engage Blooming Sherston to plan planting. Understand this to be in before the end of the year.

### **Sports Clubs – MWE / AT**

- Nothing of note

	<p><b>Gardening Club – MS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MS attended a very interesting talk on 7<sup>th</sup> November by a landscape gardener.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recreational Ground Trust – RT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting required to discuss and agree location of new kit on the Recreation Ground – see action <b>12.12.22</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resolved:-</b> TB to convene a meeting of the Trust in the absence of RT</p>
<p><b>08.12.23</b></p>	<p><b><u>Planning</u></b></p> <p>Considered and commented on all planning applications received up to and including the date of the meeting.</p> <p>Application Ref PL/2023/09527 - Householder Application Address: THE DOVECOTE, LOWER FARM, EASTON TOWN, SHERSTON, MALMESBURY, SN16 0PS Proposal: Proposed replacement septic tank with a Tricel Novo UK6Gravity electrically powered, sewage treatment plant</p> <p><b>Resolved:-</b> No objection</p> <p>Application Ref PL/2023/10243 - Householder Application Address: New Barn Stables, Easton Grey, Malmesbury. SN16 OPW Proposal: Amendment to hip roof to create gables, addition of windows, chimney stack and associated works.</p> <p><b>Resolved to:-</b> express concerns about the extent of the works set out in the application, which it is considered would result in the total loss of character from what is currently a simple barn conversion, but in the absence of any identifiable appropriate design guidance that would preclude such work raises no fundamental objection to this proposal.</p>
<p><b>09.12.23</b></p>	<p><b><u>Accounts for Payment – December 2023</u></b></p> <p>Members reviewed the Schedule(s) of Accounts for Payment and authorised the payments for November 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Costs</li> <li>Park Lane Press - £785.00 Cliffhanger 24 pages</li> <li>Patrick Cooper – £72.00 12<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Nov, 3<sup>rd</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> December Litter Picking</li> <li>Jill Woodward - £14.22 for Tulip bulbs</li> <li>Compass Graphic - £200 to upgrade website from Concrete cms to Wordpress cms (required security upgrade)</li> <li>Octopus Energy (North Building) monthly DD - £60.32</li> </ul>
<p><b>10.12.23</b></p>	<p><b>Parish Maintenance- BS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on work completed and work planned</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proposal - to add the maintenance spreadsheet (locked) to the Sherston Parish Council website and Facebook for residents to reference – <b>Resolved.</b></li> </ul> <p>Activities last month:- Swept up leaves on the pavement outside the Church for Remembrance Sunday.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emptied Sports Field bins several times</li> <li>• Swept leaves in the Rec around the walnut tree</li> <li>• Swept around Angel bus stop</li> <li>• Inspected Easton Town timber bus stop and trialled timber treatment</li> <li>• Swept up and de-mossed the Nobel Street to The Tartars footpath</li> <li>• Removed vegetation near the grit bin / island between Tanners Hill and Grove Street</li> <li>• Swept up leaves and removed vegetation along the Church Street pavement.</li> <li>• Swept up leaves on Rec main entrance and Knockdown Road pavement adjacent to the allotments</li> <li>• Cleared several road gullies of leaves</li> <li>• Cut back the Ivy bush growing in Rec and obstructing sight along Court Street</li> <li>• Cut back some of the bramble bush on the Rec</li> <li>• Cleaned finger post and weight limit signs on the triangle near the jubilee tree</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Steward did the following when he was here on 21 / 22 November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleared blocked drains leading to flooding on Sopworth Road near river bridge</li> <li>• Filled numerous potholes (6+) on the Fosseyway near Sherston Autos</li> <li>• Pothole on Knockdown Road near Knockdown Quarry</li> <li>• Pothole on Sandpits Lane, near junction with Knockdown Road</li> <li>• Pothole on Sandpits Lane, near Holmfield</li> <li>• Pothole on Green Lane, near junction with Knockdown Road</li> <li>• Pothole on junction near Forlorn Bridge</li> <li>• Pothole on road to Foxley towards New Barn Farm</li> </ul> <p><b>NB. Parish maintenance contractor off in January</b></p>
11.12.23	<p><b>Budget Requirements</b></p> <p>Members to consider the draft budget proposal – delayed due to absence of Clerk <b>Resolved:-</b> due to requirement to submit to Wiltshire Council by 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024, all agreed to draft TB/BS to drive and Council to approve in January meeting (11<sup>th</sup> January 2024)</p>
12.12.23	<p><b><u>Email Retention policy</u></b></p> <p>Members to consider, draft and agree policy to ensure we can support any future requests for information <b>Resolved:- MWE</b> to draft, circulate to all Parish Councillors for comment and approval in January meeting.</p>
13.12.23	<p><b><u>Allotments Resolution</u></b></p>

	<p>Proposal: - SPC agrees to continue to pay its own legal fees in respect of the land transfer of the allotments and also the advertising costs required by this process in the local press</p> <p><b>Resolved:-</b> all councillors approved cost of up £650.00 for advertising in the Wiltshire and Glos Standard. Legal costs TBC</p>
14.12.23	<p><b><u>Financial Regulations Resolution Proposal</u></b></p> <p>This council resolves to make the following changes to its Financial Regulations:</p> <p>1.14 In addition the council must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;</li> <li>• approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £1,000; and</li> <li>• in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the personnel working party.</li> </ul> <p>4.1 - Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the council for all items over £1,000;</li> <li>○ the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Vice Chairman, for any items below £1,000</li> </ul> <p>Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorization slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman or Vice Chairman.</p> <p>Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.</p> <p>11.1 (j) - When it is to enter into a contract of £3,000 or more, but less than £25,000, for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk/RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply). Where the value is below £3,000 and above £1000 the Clerk / RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.</p> <p><b>Resolved:-</b> to approve and make suggested amendments - <b>Clerk</b></p>
15.12.23	<p><b><u>Dispensation to Chair for future non-attendance</u></b></p> <p>Proposed Resolution: As allowed by the council's standing orders, this council accepts Cllr Tanya Burgess' reasons for non-attendance at Council meetings between January - 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024.</p> <p><b>Resolved:-</b> all agreed</p>
16.12.23	<p><b><u>Pyramid Climber</u></b></p> <p>We made a decision in November's PC meeting to recommend a new 5m high Pirate's Lair climber from Wicksteed to the Pennymead Trust, at a cost to the PC of £20,460.</p>

	<p>BS proposes that we should reconsider this decision and <b>recommend</b> a 4m high Pirate's Lair climber instead, for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BS met with Tom Keay and measured the biggest log swing we have at the play park, which is quite towering and is 3.6m high. They agreed 4m would be quite high and that 5m is unnecessary. (see below photo of Tom standing near the 3.6m high swing).</li> <li>2. The free fall height (FFH) of the 5m high one is 2.75m onto a rubber surface of 50mm thick, which I have queried and which Wicksteed have confirmed meets the guidance / regs. The free fall height (FFH) is the height a child can fall without having their fall interrupted by a rope or net. The 4m high one has a free fall height of 1.5m. For comparison the FFH of a spiders web / pyramid climber is 0.85m.</li> <li>3. The recommended minimum age of a user of either pirate's lair is 7 years. We do not have signs indicating suggested ages or unlike some parks, cordoned off areas with different suggested ages.</li> <li>4. BS thinks 2.75m is a long way to fall for a young child. If we were to get several <b>complaints</b> from parents, we might be in the position we had temporarily close it and consider the equipment's safety, so it's as well we do this now.</li> <li>5. The 4m high pirates lair is still an exciting bit of play equipment and it costs £4k less at £16,364.</li> </ol> <p><b>Resolved:-</b> to proceed pending Recreational Trust support.</p>
<p><b>17.12.23</b></p>	<p><b><u>Confidential</u></b></p> <p>Clerks Salary and Pay award</p> <p><b>Resolved:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TB</b> to circulate details to Councillors – NALC (as per contract) standard pay increase back-dated to April 2023 on basis the scales have only just been made available.</li> <li>• Budget and salary amendments to be undertaken - <b>Clerk</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>18.12.23</b></p>	<p>To resolve to approve spend up to the value of £100 for the purchase of a 'Council' printer (to be sited at Chairs home). PC becoming too reliant on personal printers and local residents/business to undertake ad-hoc print requirements.</p> <p><b>Resolved:-</b> All Agreed.</p>

### **Outstanding Actions**

08.01.23 – **MS** – Approved to purchase 7 gates to be sited 2x Easton Town, 1 Brook Hill, 2x Tetbury Road and 2x Knockdown Road. Parish to own and maintain, Wilts Council to install.



(Previous updates archived)

**Update 14/12:-** Latest update from Wiltshire Highways is that the gates are due to be installed by the end of the year

21.12.21 – BS - Following a meeting at the allotment of Ben Smee and Victoria Purton (Assistant Estates Manager, Wiltshire Council) to discuss a replacement gate, Wiltshire Council (WC) offer a Community Asset Transfer of the allotments to the Parish Council.

(Previous updates archived)

09.02.2022. Following discussion at the council, BS confirmed to WC that the PC are interested in an asset transfer of the allotments.

Update 09/11:- Draft transfer received from Wiltshire Council, currently being reviewed by the solicitors.

**Update 14/12:-** decision needed as to whether the PC accepts the cost of the required advert in the local paper before any further progress is possible. Proposed and approved in item above. Legal costs TBC.,

16.02.23 – NF/AT - Grove Wood Lease Renewal - NF and AT to investigate the details of the lease.

(Previous updates archived)

Update 14/09:- Extension to existing lease drafted to include requested amendments and a £200 per annum rental charge, document awaiting signature.

Update 09/11:- Ongoing

**Update 14/12:-** Ongoing

16.07.23 - Terms of Reference – Working Groups – TB - Members agreed the completion of the terms of reference for working groups to be approved at the September PC meeting.

(Previous updates archived)

Update 14/09:- Awaiting drafts.

Update 12/10:- Allotments TOR received others outstanding

Update 09/11:- Ongoing

**Update 14/12:-** Ongoing, members yet to complete

07.09.23 – TB - Sherston Walks Booklet update – requests for help to walk the 10 circular routes and help identify changes placed on Website, Facebook, Sherston What's Occurring and drafted for Cliffhanger.

Update 12/10:- Great response received from residents with a number offering to walk the routes and provide feedback. Majority of feedback received, next steps to consolidate, amend master documents and arrange print run.

**Update:- 14/12** Ongoing

13.09.23 – NF/MT – Flood resilience plans - NF/MT to review in line with existing emergency plan and report back.

Update 12/10:- Ongoing

Update 09/11:- Ongoing

**Update 14/12:-** updates provided in Emergency Services Planning section - **CLOSE**

20.09.23 – TB – Recruitment of a Tree Warden - TB to write an article requesting volunteers for a tree warden.

Update 12/10:- Article drafted for November Cliffhanger

Update 09/11:- Ongoing

**Update 14/12:-** Article not forwarded for publishing – place action on hold pending other priorities

05.09.23 – BS - Interest registered to support Council with the planting of trees. Council to pursue- TB to forward details to BS to progress.

Update 12/10:- BS made contact with resident to progress

Update 09/11:- Draft letter prepared to be sent to the residents.

**Update 14/12:-** BS has sent letters to residents

05.09.23 – MS - Broken up pavement on the Jubilee Triangle- PC concerned the pavement is a hazard, ticket raised with WC and closed on the basis that no action was being taken – Escalated to MS who would look into the action.

Update 12/10:- Wiltshire Council did not support request as did not meet their criteria. Council requested visibility of criteria. MS to obtain

Update 09/11:- MS advised that the criteria had been obtained and sent to TB 13/10/23.

**Update 14/12:-** TB read criteria, not sure the criteria fit the damage or address the potential risk of the broken pavement. TB re-raised ticket and escalated closure of previous to Martin Smith and Wiltshire Council

New 12.10.23 - Members agreed to nominate an individual for the Wiltshire Life Awards – TB to action

Update 09/11:- Ongoing.

**Update 14/12:- Unable to progress due to other priorities, close.**

12.10.23 - Community Support/Wildlife Officer to attend November meeting to share purpose of role, priorities and specifically what areas of focus she has for Sherston – TB to arrange

Update 09/11:- Ongoing.

**Update 14/12:- Unable to progress due to other priorities. TB to pick up in January**

12.10.23 - Members agreed that Council needed to form a Recreation Strategy to ensure future planning, maintenance and changes to the offerings on the Recreation Ground. What are we keeping and maintaining, what will we naturally let deteriorate and remove, what new kit would we like to introduce and when. **AT/BS** to take forward

Update 09/11:- Agreed not to replace the wooden adventure trail when it gets to end of life and purchase of new pyramid climber will be installed.

**Update 14/12:-** Status update on development of Recreation Strategy update pending

12.10.23 Neighbourhood Plan Review – MWF to arrange initial kick off meeting

Update 09/11:- MS to set up a steering group.

**Update 14/12:- MS** booked first meeting of the working group for 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7pm on Teams

12.10.23 - Any response the council wish to make to the proposal for Sherston to take a further 30 new builds needs to be submitted to the council before the 22<sup>nd</sup> November – MWS to co-ordinate

Update 09/11:- **MWE** to draft a response and circulate to members.

**Update 14/12:-** Close action as consultation period has ended

12.10.23 - MS to update residents on outcome of speedwatch exercise using data discussed in meeting.

Update 09/11:- MS and KS to prepare an article for the Cliffhanger.

**Update 14/12:-** MS/KS submitted article for December Cliffhanger - CLOSE

14.12.23 - **MS** to write update on key outputs from Wiltshire Highways Event

14.12.23 - Further concerns raised about the MyWilts site. Councillors have a need to see all tickets raised for the Sherston Parish as does the Parish Steward in order to manage. **MS** to approach Wiltshire Highways to see if on roadmap and if so, timescales to complete.

14.12.23 - Budget query – **MWE** to provide update on the North Building rate reduction for 24/25 financial year – is anticipating 75%.

14.12.23 - EV Signage – **MS** to take a look at the signage. Concerns raised relating to usage times – if incorrect sign to be removed.

14.12.23 - EV status – **MS** to provide update on next steps, timescales for fully activating and subsequently how the use of them will be managed

14.12.23 - agreed to merge Operations and Parish Maintenance sections into Operations moving forward – **Clerk**

14.12.23 - **TB** to circulate Clerks pay details