

# WILCOT, HUISH and OARE PARISH COUNCIL

## Local Government Act 1972

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Oare Village Hall  
on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023 at 7.00 pm

**Present:** Councillors Dee Nix, Dawn Wilson, Richard Fleet, Nicky Fleet, Prue Smith, Richard Lewis, Neil Ridgway and Kathryn Richardson.

Unitary Councillor Paul Oatway

Clerk Ruth Kinderman

Residents and other members of the public: Mark Brodie (Wilcot Cricket Club), Crispin Mahony (Savills, agent to Sir Henry Keswick), Stephanie Politis (Savills), Becky Rayner (Savills), Robert Hiscox, Phil Coles and Martin Fetherston-Godley.

23/62	<b>To receive apologies for absence</b> Cllr Jamie Ede.	
23/63	<b>To receive declarations of interest</b> Cllr RF – item 69.14 Cllr NF – item 69.14 Cllr PS – item 69.14 Cllr NR – items 69.11 and 69.14	
23/64	<b>To agree the minutes of the meeting of the parish council held on 13<sup>th</sup> September</b> Cllr DW proposed these be accepted as an accurate record. Seconded by Cllr NF with all in favour; signed accordingly by Cllr DN.	
23/65	<b>Public question time</b> Cllr DN said that item-specific questions would be addressed as appropriate during the course of the agenda. There were no general questions.	
23/66	<b>Update from Wiltshire Council – Unitary Councillor Paul Oatway</b> With reference to recent media reports about some local authorities facing severe financial difficulties, even to the point of bankruptcy, Cllr PO reported that Wiltshire Council is financially stable, with credit for this strong position due to officers rather than the Cabinet. Further to previous predictions of a Wiltshire Council precept increase of 3.99% for 2024/2025, Cllr PO said that the increase may be as low as 2.99% due to the quantity of housebuilding in the county and subsequent increased tax base. Cllr PO drew attention to the Local Plan consultation and noted that the document relating to small villages had been hidden within the main document and consequently missed by many, and hard to find even if aware of its existence. Cllr PO said that the new Connect bus service continues to be well used, with accurately timed door-to-door provision at £2 per journey, and many elderly passengers travelling free of charge. The bus is a Pewsey Vale service which links to Devizes and Marlborough and other bus and train routes, but does not provide an in-town service for those larger settlements. Cllr PO had met Samantha Howell, Director of Wiltshire Highways, yesterday to view the poor roads in the Pewsey Vale, including the C52 at Hare Street; she had expressed surprise at the volume of traffic using that stretch of road, with the timely appearance of an HGV demonstrating Cllr PO's explanation to her of the long-term problems. Cllr PO noted that progress has been made with improvements to major roads such as the A345 and A342 but that minor roads continue to be neglected. Cllr PO referred again to the near doubling of the Highways budget this year (item 23/55) and is determined to ensure some of this additional money is dedicated to maintaining smaller roads in the Vale. All these matters will be raised at the Pewsey Highways Matters event at the Area Board meeting next Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> November.	

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	<p>Cllr DN reported that she has submitted a question to the Area Board about the flooding at the top of Oare Hill, outside Dog House, where a car bumper on the verge at present is testament to the deceptive and dangerous nature of the huge puddle. This has been reported over many years and is now scheduled for works in late spring/early summer 2024. Cllr DN remains concerned that a major hazard on a main road has been unaddressed for such a long time and has submitted a Freedom of Information request for all papers and communications relating to this matter, in an attempt to understand the process by which Highways has finally made its decision. Wiltshire Council has declined the FOI request and has advised that the parish council, as a corporate body, is disallowed from making a formal complaint about the matter. Cllr PO considers this advice to be inaccurate and will make enquiries.</p>	
23/67	<p><b>To Receive the Budget and monitoring report</b></p> <p>67.1 To note invoices paid since the meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> September approved in accordance with Fin Regs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clerk's salary September £212.25 and October £212.45, plus tax to HMRC £87.20</li> <li>- Charlton Baker direct debit September and October 2 x £15.50</li> <li>- defibrillator electrode pads £327.54</li> </ul> <p>67.2 To approve invoices due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bawden – Greensward pond dredging – postponed to summer 2024</li> <li>- Oare Village Hall – hire for 2023/2024</li> </ul> <p>The Village Hall Committee has issued an invoice for all bookings this year, including the for the annual meetings in May 2024. Further to discussion about the desirability or otherwise of paying for a 2024/2025 meeting during 2023/2024, it was noted that the amount involved is relatively low and that the annual total for hall hire will self-correct the following year. Cllr NR proposed that the whole invoice be paid; seconded by Cllr RL with no objections.</p> <p>Further to item 23/56, Cllr NF has opened a savings account with £20,000 in reserves transferred from the current treasurer's account.</p>	NF
23/68	<p><b>To consider draft budget for 2024/2025</b></p> <p>Cllr NF had circulated a draft budget to all councillors prior to the meeting. No amendments were proposed. Taking into account the forecast expenditure and level of reserves, it was agreed in principle to retain the precept at £9660.00 for a further year.</p>	
23/69	<p><b>Planning Applications and Enforcement</b></p> <p><b>To note progress of planning applications previously considered:</b></p> <p>69.1 Application PL/2022/08562 and PL/2022/08887 (Listed Building Consent) 11 Wilcot Green, SN9 5NN – replacement conservatory and garage Approved by Wiltshire Council.</p> <p>69.2 Application PL/2022/09122 (Listed Building Consent) 16 &amp; 17 Wilcot Green, SN9 5NN – replacement windows Wiltshire Council is yet to make a decision.</p> <p>69.3 Application PL/2023/04879 &amp; PL/2023/05177 (Listed Building) Manor Farm, Yard Cottage, Wilcot – single storey extension Approved by Wiltshire Council.</p> <p>69.4 Application PL/2023/04911 (Listed building consent) 18, Wilcot, SN9 5NN - Replacement and repair of windows and doors Wiltshire Council is yet to make a decision.</p> <p>It was agreed to follow up items 69.2 and 69.4 with Wiltshire Planning Department on behalf of residents who are being impeded from making necessary improvements to their</p>	RK

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properties. It was noted that applicants are required to submit 1:10 scale drawings of each proposed replacement window.

### 69.5 Application PL/2023/04728 (Listed Building Consent)

The Manor, Wilcot - Installation of an electric vehicle charger  
Approved by Wiltshire Council; the applicant has been informed that if no longer needed, the charger must be removed and the wall restored to its original state.

### 69.6 Application PL/2023/06721

Pound House, Pound Lane, Oare - Construction of garden machinery store and folly.  
The application has been withdrawn by the applicant.

### 69.7 Application PL/2023/06789 (treeworks)

Wilcot Village Hall – works to Hawthorn, Cherry, Apple and Sycamore trees.  
Approved by Wiltshire Council.

### 69.8 Applications PL/2023/04706 & PL/2023/04214 (Listed Building Consent)

Oare House - proposed replacement wall.  
Wiltshire Council is due to publish a decision on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

#### **To note planning applications considered since the last meeting:**

### 69.9 Application PL/2023/07717 (treeworks) - The Stables, Pound Lane, Oare, SN8 4JA

Proposal – Sycamore – reduce crown of one tree by 40 - 50% to approx 10m above ground level; action requires due to danger of damage to buildings as proximity is less than 5m to buildings. Small lower branches are already trimmed as they were growing into buildings. Risk is that branches higher up or whole tree fall on buildings in increasingly frequent high winds.

No objection had been submitted and the application has since been approved by Wiltshire Council.

### 69.10 Application PL/2023/07723 - Home Farm Cottage, Oare, Marlborough, SN8 4JA

Proposal - Demolition of single storey extension. New single storey extension and new 2 storey extension. General refurbishment of interior.

No objection had been submitted by the parish council; Wiltshire Council is due to publish a decision on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

Robert Hiscox expressed his disappointment with the parish council's objection to the previous application to demolish and replace the cottage, and questioned the definition of the vernacular of Oare, due to the variety of building styles throughout the village. He suggested that the Conservation Area Statement published in 2005 should be revisited; current residents should be invited to discuss and decide what they want.

Robert Hiscox disputed the validity of the Conservation Officer's comments in the absence of her making any site visit. Cllr PO noted that the Conservation Officer has been particularly stringent in applying policy for this application, with the proximity of the listed barn the main point of concern. It was noted that the barn and the Home Farm Cottage are both situated within the site of the old Home Farm farmyard.

Cllr DN agreed that the Village Design Statement could be reviewed but noted that as the draft Wiltshire Local Plan has no reference or policy for small villages, decision-making may be influenced by more powerful factors in future, with the possibility of a more relaxed approach more alarming than the current caution exercised by the parish council and Conservation Officers.

With general agreement to the principle of consultation over what villagers would like to happen in the parish, Cllr RF noted that it is much easier to say what is not wanted, than what is. Cllr RF noted that Conservation Areas and the rules restricting development within them exist for a good reason, observing that during a recent visit to Ireland he had seen first-hand the results of a complete lack of caution.

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## **To review and provide feedback on new planning applications from Wiltshire Council (Town and Country Planning Act 1980, schedule 1, para 8)**

69.11 Application PL/2023/07933 - Oare House, Oare Estate, Oare, SN8 4JQ

Proposal - Relocation of existing shade tunnel, erection of glass house and horticultural building to provide a maintenance store, estate office and greenhouse with associated ground works and landscaping. Partial change of use of paddock to accommodate the proposed use.

Comments by 29<sup>th</sup> November.

Prior to inviting comments from the floor, Cllr DN noted that the parish council had agreed by email, and submitted, a mixed response to the first consultation, subsequent to which additional information about the proposal had been uploaded to the planning portal and the consultation extended.

Crispin Mahony, on behalf of the applicant, referred to the spectacular gardens of Oare House, and the horticultural collection, including many plants of national importance, housed in the existing glasshouse provision. The primary aim of this application is to provide satisfactory welfare facilities for the gardening team, who currently have access to lockers in the old stable block but nowhere to eat lunch, and change clothes when necessary; in addition, the proposal will provide an office for the head gardener, who currently works from her kitchen table. The secondary aim of the application is to provide secure accommodation for the ever larger and increasingly expensive garden machinery, currently stored in various open barns and sheds around the estate. Finally, the proposed structure incorporates needed additional glasshouse space. Crispin explained that the Oare Estate hoped that addressing all three needs in one proposal would be more acceptable to the parish council than three separate projects to be considered individually over a much longer timeframe.

In response to questions, Crispin said that there are currently eight full-time employees on the payroll, three of whom live on site, with four part-time gardeners in attendance weekly, besides other contractors who supply their services less frequently.

Stephanie Politis, architect, advised that the parish council's comments about visibility from the road, church and footpath had been addressed by additional planting for screening, including cherry trees along the northern edge of the site. With reference to the parish council's concerns about the appearance of the proposed structure, Stephanie advised that building materials had been chosen to match the old potting shed situated on the opposite side of Rudge Lane. The new glasshouse would be protected from the north by the bulk of the structure, whilst being exposed to the south for maximum sunshine.

Stephanie hoped that concerns about development creep had been ameliorated by the additional plans showing that only 4% of the field was proposed for change of use, and by the proposed structure facing away from the field, inwards to the yard, thus 'book-ending' the site, creating a contained working yard. Cllr RF noted that these concerns could be further allayed by a condition stipulating no further change of use from agricultural and horticultural; the agents in attendance confirmed that such a condition would be acceptable.

Cllr KR proposed that the parish council submit no objection subject to the condition restricting any future change of use; seconded by Cllr DW with no objections.

In response to questions about public access to the greenhouses and gardens, Crispin Mahony said that Oare House takes part in the Open Gardens scheme twice a year, and that they would be willing to arrange separate visits or talks for any local gardening clubs. Stephanie Politis noted there are currently no DDA-compliant toilets on site and that the proposed welfare facilities for staff will rectify this.

69.12 Application PL/2023/08636 - Home Farm Cottage, Oare, Marlborough, SN8 4JA

Proposal - Change of use of area of land from Agricultural Use to Residential Amenity for Home Farm Cottage and erection of a greenhouse.

RK

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	<p>Comments by 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Robert Hiscox deplored the fact that he was obliged to prove to the authorities, at his own expense, that land used as a garden for forty years is still a garden. Cllr NR proposed that the parish council submit no objection to the application for change of use, and no objection to the greenhouse; seconded by Cllr NF with all in favour.</p> <p>69.13 Application PL/2023/08968 - Hatfield Farm, Oare, Wilts, SN8 4JE Proposal - Replacement of Units 1 and 2 with new buildings with altered footprint. Comments by 1<sup>st</sup> December. It was noted that replacing the old Nissan hut will be an improvement to the site, with a tidier view from the public footpath. Cllr RL proposed that no objection be submitted; seconded by Cllr KR with all in favour.</p> <p>69.14 Application PL/2023/09284 - Wilcot Cricket Club, School Meadow, Wilcot, SN9 5NN Proposal - Provision of bowling and batting nets for coaching junior cricketers. Comments by 4<sup>th</sup> December. Cllr DN noted that this application supercedes that previously approved (PL/2023/00464 – item 23/14.8) with different nets which are to be located elsewhere than originally agreed. Cllrs DN and RF had each received verbal complaints prior to the meeting that the proposed location is too close to residential dwellings; no formal communication had been sent to the clerk and no comments were made from the floor. Cllr DW proposed that no objection be submitted; seconded by Cllr KR with all in favour.</p>	<p>RK</p> <p>RK</p> <p>RK</p>
23/70	<p><b>Project updates</b></p> <p>70.1 A345 – receive update from LHFIG meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October &amp; 70.2 Bus stop at Sunnyhill Lane – Reds, LHFIG Cllr KR reported that she had attended the meeting but lost connection before the two items for this parish council were discussed. Mark Stansby, Senior Highways Engineer, has deferred the two items to the next LHFIG meeting in January. Cllr DN had applied to Salisbury Reds for a £500 grant towards the bus shelter. If unsuccessful, a fresh application will be made when the next round opens in April. Clerk has enquired with the Hills Group as to the possibility of grant funding towards bus shelters; no response received to date.</p> <p>70.3 Benches Clerk had submitted a full application to the North Wessex Landscape Trust for funding towards replacement benches in Oare and Huish.</p> <p>70.4 Defibrillator at Hillview Park Clerk had applied for a fully-funded defibrillator and cabinet through the central government scheme. If unsuccessful, it is hoped that this parish qualifies for one of the match-funded machines, at a cost of £750.00.</p> <p>70.5 Communal skips It was agreed to advertise the possibility of communal skips in the forthcoming newsletter, to ascertain the extent of demand. Clerk has made several enquiries with Hills in order to obtain a comparable quote to Grist, with no response as yet.</p> <p>70.6 Greensward update As Bawden had not dredged the pond in September as arranged, the task will be postponed to next August once the frogs have left but before the pond fills up again.</p> <p>70.7 Footpath audit Clerk had written to Hatfield House regarding WILC7; the householder had subsequently discussed the path maintenance with Cllr NR, who had fixed the stile on his behalf.</p> <p>Community Speedwatch – Cllr DN reported that three new volunteers for the Oare team have been fully trained and it is hoped that the camera will be returned by the Pewsey</p>	<p>DN</p> <p>RK</p> <p>RK</p> <p>RK</p> <p>RK</p>

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	<p>team in time for a session to be held during the first week of December. Cllr DN said that Pewsey Parish Council is purchasing two SIDS as their CSW team now consists of only two members; as a result, Oare will have more frequent access to the speed camera. It was noted that a Wilcot team will only be able to re-establish if a fresh metro-count (speed survey) shows that the statistical speed thresholds are still being exceeded. It was noted that the considerable flood water sitting on the roads in Wilcot are contributing to slower speeds.</p>	
23/71	<p><b>Clerk's Report</b></p> <p><b>71.1 Canal side parking and verge project including correspondence</b>  Clerk read correspondence received from a former clerk to the parish council, querying the legitimacy and desirability of the building up of the verges. It had become apparent that prior to the transfer of authority from British Waterways to the Canal and River Trust, there had not been any parking problems, with lengths-men employed to care for their own stretches of canal and move boats on when necessary.  Cllr NR said that drainage gullies have now been cut into the new verges to prevent erosion by rainwater. It was agreed that seeding is now necessary, to assist further.  It was noted that several parking spaces have been left; Clerk has chased Highways again for delivery of spare scalplings or road planings to prevent the spaces getting too rutted and muddy.  It was noted that a primary aim of the project was to protect the roots of the trees from parked vehicles.  Comment from the floor was that the parking has greatly improved since the verges have been built up.  It was noted that Clerk had accompanied the Local Highways Engineer to the site during the summer; he was content with the works.</p> <p><b>71.2 Parish Steward</b>  Cllr NR said that the verges are not yet ready for the steward to install the bendy reflectors.  Other tasks for the steward on 28<sup>th</sup> November are sweeping the pavement in Oare, between the White Hart and Huish Lane; cutting back the overgrowth around the signpost to West Stowell on the Alton Road; clearing out the passing place on the left-hand side of the wooded hollow at the eastern approach to Huish, and clearing the drain on the right-hand side.</p> <p><b>71.3 Highways correspondence</b>  Clerk had escalated all necessary matters as advised by the steward who had provided holiday cover for this parish at the end of October. These included: mosquito sweeper for the Oare pavement; road sweeper for Huish Lane/A345 junction; cones and barriers for the sinkhole in the northbound A345; tanker for the gullies near Hatfield Farm. Clerk had chased all matters twice with no success.</p> <p><b>71.4 Canal &amp; Rivers Trust removal of dog waste bins</b>  Clerk had chased a response to the question raised with CRT as to lack of communication regarding this matter.</p> <p><b>71.5 Hedge cutting at Huish Corner</b>  Ivy Cottage and Home Farm had both requested assistance from the Clerk in obtaining costings from Highways for cutting back their hedges at the Huish Lane junction, and arranging traffic control. Clerk had chased Highways for a response and noted that Matt Perrott has now left the role of Local Highways Engineer, with all ongoing discussions having to be started afresh with his replacement.</p> <p><b>71.6 Police matters</b>  Under a fresh police initiative, the first parish-specific quarterly report has been received, attached as an appendix to these minutes. Clerk has arranged contact between the police and Wilcot and Oare Village Hall Committees with a view to hosting future police community engagement sessions in those venues.</p> <p><b>71.7 Polling place review</b></p>	<p>RK</p> <p>RK</p> <p>RK</p> <p>RK</p> <p>RK</p>

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	<p>A response had been submitted to the consultation, requesting further discussion and more understanding of the costs involved to the parish if both village halls are to be operated as polling stations in future. Alternatively, the parish council has requested that use of the village halls is alternated between polls to share the burden of travel equally between parishioners. The parish council has suggested to Wiltshire Council that the benefits of running two stations could be offset against the monetary costs. Benefits to the parish and to Wiltshire would include increased participation by those unable or unwilling to travel, and environmental gains, with reduced car use for polling purposes. Cllr PO noted that it could be suggested to Wiltshire Council that the cost-saving due to Hilcott Village Hall being unavailable as a polling station in 2025 could justify the use of both village halls in this parish.</p>	
23/72	<p><b>Exchange of information</b></p> <p>72.1 Pewsey Area Board - Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November – Highways Matters event            For the parish council, Clerk has submitted questions relating to the lack of white lines and signage at the Draycott crossroads; the missing ‘WILCOT’ sign near Kennet House; scalplings for the parking places by the canal in Wilcot canal; the C52 at Hare Street between Cross Hayes and Seven Wells; the failure to run a proactive road maintenance program; and flooding on the Wilcot-Pewsey road near the rugby ground. In addition, Cllr DN has submitted a question about the flooding at the top of Oare Hill near Dog House, and Cllr DW has submitted questions relating to poor water management on the highways.</p> <p>Cllr NR noted that the Stowell Estate no longer has large tankers on the roads.</p> <p>72.2 Feedback - Wiltshire Towns Programme – online - 26th September            Cllr KR reported that the programme is intended to regenerate high streets, with efforts to make more ‘green’ areas and floral competitions to make them more appealing; Pewsey has just received its first instalment of money, which has been spent on improved Christmas lights. The programme also aims to increase the number of markets. In discussion, it was noted that higher parking charges run counter to these efforts.</p> <p>Cllr DN noted correspondence received relating to apparent ongoing use of metaldehyde in the parish, despite the recent ban on sales and use. Cllr NR noted that deliveries of new slug pellets had been made in old sacks. It was agreed to draw attention to the new legislation in the forthcoming newsletter, with advice as to the safe disposal of old stock. Cllr NR advised that large quantities should be removed by licenced/specialist waste contractors, or placed in hazardous waste bins at HRC’s.</p> <p>Cllr NF noted that rail passengers are getting very cold, with neither the waiting room nor toilets open at Pewsey Station due to lack of staff. Cllr DW said that the situation should improve now that the stationmaster is able to work two days a week, provided he is accompanied by another member of staff.</p>	RK

Planning Committee meetings will be held as required. All meetings will start at **1900**hrs unless otherwise advertised.

**Provisional dates and times of next meetings 2023/2024**

Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 - precept	Wilcot
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Oare
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 – annual meetings	Oare

Meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Wilcot, Huish and Oare Parish Report**

### **Crimes and incidents**

Wiltshire Police record crimes and incidents in accordance with the National Crime and incident recording standards. Not all incidents that one would consider a crime are necessarily classified as a crime for recording purposes.

NB- The below statistics do not account for incidents that police respond to but do not need any follow up or are recorded as non-crime incidents. (Road traffic incidents, minor incidents of Anti-social behaviour)

### **From 1st July 2023- 30th Sept 2023**

0 Crimes have been recorded in the **Wilcot, Huish and Oare** area.

0 Dwelling burglaries

0 Vehicle offences

Having reviewed the crime data for the area – There are no apparent trends that are presented or a series of crimes that are linked.

### **Speed enforcement**

Both the local Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Speed Watch Enforcement Team have conducted several pro-active checks in the local area, including other parishes surrounding the Pewsey area. Speed checks have been carried out on 8 occasions in Oare between July and September. During this period, 7 drivers have been requested to attend Speed Awareness Courses and 4 drivers have been issued with fines/points for excess speed.

### **Community consultations**

Although we have not had a specific drop-in surgery in **Wilcot, Huish and Oare** there have been 13 community engagements throughout the wider Pewsey area during this time.

Over the course of the next three months, we will be in the following locations.

**19<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at The Royal Oak, Wootton Rivers**

**23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 The Royal Oak, Wootton Rivers**

**28<sup>th</sup> November 2023, Pewsey Market, Bouverie Hall**

**30<sup>th</sup> November 2023, The Royal Oak, Wootton Rivers**

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2023, Woodborough, Parish Rooms**

The specific times of these surgeries will be advertised via community messaging and via our Community Policing social media pages. Any residents are free to sign up for community messaging at [www.wiltsmessaging.co.uk](http://www.wiltsmessaging.co.uk)