Gretton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 28 May 2026
held at Gretton Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Hanson (Chair), Cllr Oliver, Cllr Green, Cllr Butcher, Cllr Hawkins
In Attendance: Parish Clerk and 25 members of the public, Borough Cllr Mason, The Revd Penny and Sgt Emma Francis (Gloucestershire Constabulary).

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

1. **Welcome and Introduction**
The Chair welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting and thanked residents and representatives of local organisations for attending.

2. **Chairman's Report**
The Chairman presented a review of the Parish Council's activities and achievements during 2025–26 (Appendix A).
During discussion:
   - Cllr Hawkins provided an update on grass-cutting activities within the parish.
   - A resident highlighted concerns regarding overgrown hedging along a village footpath.
   - Cllr Oliver outlined the work being undertaken with Gretton Primary School and partner organisations to address traffic congestion and improve road safety around the school.

3. **Summary of Parish Council Accounts**
The Parish Clerk provided an overview of the Parish Council's finances for the year ended 31 March 2026, including income, expenditure, reserves and key projects funded during the year.

4. **Gloucestershire County Council Report**
Written report from Cllr Agg (Appendix B).

5. **Tewkesbury Borough Council Report**
Written report from Cllr Madle, Cllr Mason and Cllr Gray (Appendix C).

6. **Reports from Village Organisations and Community Groups**
Gretton Village Association (GVA)
The Chair of the Gretton Village Association provided an update on the Association's activities and projects.
Key points included:
   - Continued focus on sustainability and reducing the environmental impact of Village Hall operations.
   - Delivery of solar panels and energy-efficient heating improvements at the Village Hall.
   - Development of proposals for a new community activity space and sports storage facility.
   - Future aspirations including LED lighting upgrades, refurbishment of the meeting room and the creation of a perimeter path around the playing field.
   - Ongoing provision of social events, including Apple Rock and the Summer Fete.
   - Continued operation of the Community Hub, supporting residents through partnerships with local organisations.
   - Exploration of a potential Men's Shed initiative to support wellbeing and reduce social isolation.
   - Plans to install a new time capsule in the tower to mark 25 years since the Millennium celebrations.
   - Submission of an entry to the Gloucestershire Village of the Year competition.

St Michael's Church
Revd Penny provided an update on the work of the church.
The church continues to act as a spiritual and community hub within the village and is seeking to better understand how it can support residents. A community questionnaire has been produced, with both paper and

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online versions available, to gather feedback on how the church can best engage with and serve the community.

Gloucestershire Constabulary

Neighbourhood Sergeant Emma Francis provided an update on local policing matters.

Key points included:

- Since January 2026, there had been 19 reported incidents within the parish area, including one dwelling burglary, several road traffic incidents and criminal damage reports had been recorded, together with one vehicle theft.
- Residents were encouraged to remain vigilant and ensure homes and vehicles are kept secure.
- Rural Crime Officers continue to tackle the illegal use of electric bikes and scooters, which may be seized where appropriate.
- One reported incident of anti-social behaviour had been dealt with.
- The local PCSO is scheduled to visit Gretton Primary School in June and will also attend Community Hub sessions where possible.
- Residents were encouraged to report incidents via 101 or the Gloucestershire Constabulary website, as police resources and priorities are heavily influenced by reported data.
- Information will be provided regarding local neighbourhood policing drop-in sessions and community alert schemes.

During discussion:

- A resident asked whether Community Speedwatch had been disbanded. The Parish Council confirmed that, at the time of the meeting, it was not aware of any plans to discontinue the scheme.
  Post-meeting note: *The Council has subsequently been advised that Gloucestershire County Council may be withdrawing support for Community Speedwatch to focus on the Community 20 initiative. Further clarification is being sought.*
- Residents expressed support for local police drop-in sessions within the village.
- Questions were raised regarding road safety, drug-driving enforcement and police visibility in rural communities.
- It was noted that both marked and unmarked police vehicles regularly operate within rural areas.
- A resident also highlighted the existence of two active Neighbourhood Watch groups within the village and encouraged residents to sign up to community alert services.

Gretton Heritage

- Opportunities to promote local history, knowledge-sharing and community walks around the parish.

7. Community Discussion and Questions

Residents were invited to raise matters of local interest and discuss village priorities.

Topics discussed included:

- The condition of local roads and the ongoing issue of potholes. Residents were encouraged to report defects via FixMyStreet, as repair priorities are influenced by reported incidents.
- An update from the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens regarding replacement of the Three-Way Bridge, with works scheduled to commence on 3 June and temporary footpath closures expected during construction.
- The Gloucestershire Community 20mph and Safer Roads Initiative. It was noted that Gloucestershire County Council has identified priority areas for the first phase of the programme and that Gretton Parish Council has registered its interest. Delivery is expected to be evidence-led and may take several years.
- The Parish Council's ongoing support for Community Speedwatch and plans to introduce a Community Speedwatch camera.

8. Any Other Business

Wildflower management on the Village Green.

- It was noted that historically previous village surveys had indicated support for enhancing biodiversity within selected areas of the village, whilst keeping the village green well maintained. Existing wildflower areas include the church and on the highways triangle at the eastern side of the village were highlighted as examples of locations where reduced mowing has successfully encouraged native wildflowers.

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- The parish council are open to the possibility of identifying additional suitable areas for biodiversity enhancement.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Appendix A - Gretton Parish Council Report from the Chair – 2025-26

This is my 4th report as Chair (11 years with the Council). It's been another good year, the Council has successfully managed its 'village-business' obligations, whilst enabling various new initiatives, some facilitated directly by the Council, others supported by the Council.
This report reviews the Team, our Finances and the various Village themes that we work on throughout the year.

The Team

We are lucky to be able to keep the same Cllrs; Mark Oliver, Dick Green, David Butcher, and are pleased to welcome Steve Hawkins to the team. With our Clerk Cathie Bridges and me as Chair.
I personally, and the village, would like to thank them for their continued support through-out the last year.
Gretton is represented within Tewkesbury Borough Council by 3-members, these are:- Cllr Gemma Madle, Cllr Jim Mason, and Cllr David Gray. Also, Cllr Cheryl Agg represents us on the Glos County Council. We are grateful for their support and attendance at Gretton PC meetings.
A good working relationship with both Borough and County councils is important to ensure that Gretton's concerns are listened to, whether in matters of Highways, Policing, or of course Planning.
We continue to stay engaged with TBC, which is particularly important as plans for local government reform (LGR) are scoped and implemented. Possibly delegating additional responsibilities to parish councils.
We were also pleased to welcome our local MP – Cameron Mcintosh to Gretton in Aug.

Finances

An important role of the Council is to collect that proportion of Council Tax available to village parish councils – the *precept*. This money is then available to support the cost of Village initiatives, social activities (through the GVA), the Newsletter and our maintenance obligations.
The precept in 25-26 rose in-line with Tewkesbury Borough Council Tax, and was £12,058

Full, audited accounts are available upon request and on the website. But are also summarised in simplified break-down below. Spend was approx. £260 over the precept, the difference recovered from reserves carried forward from 24/25.

Non-discretionary spend

Clerk's salary (p/time)	)	" "
Memberships; Insurances	)	" "
Hall hire, Audit costs	)	_____
		£5,730
Village Hall loan repayment		£2,300
Grass-cutting (Hall field)		£670

Discretionary spend

Newsletters / comms	£850
GVA support - Summer Fayre & Apple Rock	£1,000
Gretton Hub	£550
Alderton Approach Gateway	£3,500 (100% recovered)

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Tower Trust	£150	
Miscellaneous	£300	
'Greening' (crocuses & war memorial)	£200	
Hornbeam tree maintenance	£570	
	£12,320	
Transfer from reserves for 25/26 spend		£260

Additional financial notes.

1. Following a financial review in 24/25, it was decided to allocate £11,000 (from excess reserves) to the GVA, to support improvements to facilities at the rear of the Hall. This allocation was not used in 25/26, but is expected to be used in 26/27.
2. In addition, CIL funds have been released to GPC, from The Croft development (by Centaur Homes). This funding - totalling £20,638, comprised 2-payments received in 25/26 - £11,351, the 3rd payment was released in Apr 26. This is being held in a separate account, subject to allocation for appropriate village projects.
3. The Council closed the financial year with spend marginally over-budget and we continue to maintain a reasonable reserve, for the future.

Improving the Village appearance

We are grateful to the many volunteers who play their part in keeping Gretton a great place to live, whether as individuals or working parties.

'Greening-up' initiatives continue, with more planting, in particular daffodils and crocuses on verges. We are also grateful for those who maintain and plant the war memorial.

Grass-cutting. The grass at Barn Close was a problem this year, with TBC and GCC failing between them, to get it cut until late in the year. Following representations from GPC it was eventually cut, but it was clear that a better arrangement is needed for 26/27. This is now in hand, and an agreement has been reached, where GPC manages the cutting of village grass, and Highways continues the verge cutting programme.

The Green. As scheduled, GPC managed a major cutback of the Hornbeam tree on the Green

Litter. Thank you to those residents who voluntarily occasionally litter-pick, such that we do not have to organise a separate activity this year.

Tower Trust. The Tower is an important village asset and whilst the Trust functions well, it has little reserves or income. GPC has continued to support the Tower Trust with help towards their annual insurance costs.

War memorial. An important village landmark, the memorial needs some restoration, to clean the stone, and especially repair the lettering. We have registered with necessary authorities and have been applying for funding and getting necessary quotes. Hopefully this project can be concluded in 26/27.

Highway safety

Speeding traffic remains a concern. We maintain two speed-activated active road signs (by the Oak and in Gretton Fields). We also have successful 'Speed-watch' teams, who - working with the Police, provide a visible deterrent, reducing speeding and reporting offenders to the police. Thanks to everyone who has helped with this.

A new village gateway has now been installed on the Alderton approach. This was funded by two 50% grants.

Parking and traffic safety outside the School, particularly at drop-off and pick-up times remains a concern. The Council continues to work with the Glos CC Highways, the Police and School to seek improvements. An initiative is planned to raise awareness in 26/27.

Fast traffic on the Gotherington Rd approach, is another concern; both for residents, walkers, and equestrian users. GPC has formally requested that the 30mph zone be moved, supported by our C Cllr and whilst all parties agree with this request, it is effectively on hold, whilst GCC Highways focus is the higher priority areas

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identifies in the Community 20s and Safer Roads Initiative, (for which GPC is formally registered). This campaign will continue in 26/27.
GPC has also been liaising with Prescott and Gotherington parishes regarding the impact of large vehicles: both road safety and verge damage.

Building a Vibrant & Engaged community – Supporting the GVA
A viable, useful Village Hall & Field is important for the community and the Council has continued to support the GVA in its role at the heart of the community, as both custodian of the Hall & Field and driving the Village social and welfare agenda.
It is great to see the many social events and the hall usage this year, inspired and driven by the GVA. On behalf of the Council, and I am sure all of the Village, we'd like to express our thanks to the GVA for the great work they do.
The two outstanding successful events this year were the Summer Fayre and Apple Rock celebrations in the Hall & Field.
In addition to these events, other social activities and classes in the hall etc, the GVA has continued to run the Gretton Hub. This remains very popular and is open to everyone in the Village and was particularly helpful as a 'Warm Space' over the winter.
The Council has been pleased to provide financial support for this, the Summer Fete and Apple Rock. It continues to re-pay the 'works loan' (from the original hall refurbishment) and contributes towards field maintenance.
Gretton PC recommended Mark Oliver for the High Sheriff's Special Award, for 'Volunteer of the Year' (part of the GRCC Village of the Year competition). This was in recognition for all the work that Mark has done, tirelessly promoting community activities & spirit in Gretton, both in his Parish Council role, but more so as Chair of the Gretton Village Association. We're proud that Mark was shortlisted. This is well deserved recognition and also reflects well on the rest of Gretton

Building a Vibrant & Engaged community – Community engagement
Good communication is essential for improving community cohesion and engagement, the Council continues to improve its website and encourage the use of 'Gretton Village Notices' Facebook page for Council and other village notices, working with the GVA.
Newsletters: The Council has published 4-newsletters this year, (June, Sept, Dec and Mar) all of which have been well-received and are also available on-line.
Defibrillators.. Whilst it's been decided to procure a 2nd defib for the village, to serve the 'Church end' of the village. We have struggled to agree a suitable location, that has a power-supply. This will be sorted in 26/27.

Planning activities
.GPC supported a TBC commissioned Housing Needs Survey, which was conducted by GRCC. The report is available on the GPC website. Although a poor response rate, it was clear that Gretton has limited special housing needs, but the report will be useful supporting future planning considerations.

The Council continues to take a pro-active role in addressing all planning issues, communicating with impacted residents, and engaging with TBC Planning. (i) Ensuring that we and the village are informed about, and understand, the impact of the increased pressure to build homes; (ii) Providing a voice to influence; either representing concerns or encouraging improvements to plans.
The Council continues to maintain a planning application database on its website. This lists all the many planning applications that we are asked to comment on by TBC; from trees to conservatories and more significant developments.
With increased pressure on housing, from Government and TBC, it is likely we will see an increase in planning activity.

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Next year '26 - '27

For next year, our key themes remain fundamentally unchanged, basically ensuring that Gretton remains a great place to live. Continuing to improve communications and engagement across the community; supporting the GVA (in particular, its hall & field improvement projects), addressing traffic and parking concerns and improving the Gretton environment – keeping it rural, greener and safe.

On next year's agenda, in addition to our key themes and our statutory obligations:-

- Support the next stage of Village Hall facility improvements (field access & activity area at the rear of the hall)
- Refurbishment of the War memorial
- Manage the first year of a new grass-cutting contract, working alongside GCC Highways, as part of a village-wide campaign, to improve how the village looks.
- A second defibrillator –near the church
- Continue financial support of GVA village events, and the Hub.
- Signage on gateways
- Work with School & police on parking campaign and safety initiatives.
- Continue 'Speed-watch' initiatives, including new APNR speed-sign
- Campaign for the 30mph zone extension, on the Gotherington Rd approach

We'll be holding our Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 28th May. This is in addition to the normal 2-monthly Parish Council meetings – these follow a defined format, but the APM is informal and an opportunity for all residents to see what the council does and have a say in helping to inform what we should be doing in the next few years.

Geoff Hanson (Chair)

Appendix B – Gloucestershire County Council – Winchcombe and Woodmancote Division

Introduction

I was elected as County Councillor for Winchcombe & Woodmancote in 2025. This short report summarises key work, achievements, and ongoing priorities during my first year in office, and is intended to support engagement with parish councils and local representatives.

Representing Parish Concerns

Over the past year I have worked closely with parish councils, residents, and County Council officers to ensure local issues are raised promptly and followed through. This has included attending meetings, site visits, and maintaining regular contact with clerks and chairs to resolve concerns efficiently.

Highways, Transport & Safety

Key areas of focus have included:

- Reporting and following up on highways defects such as potholes, drainage, signage and verge issues.
- Supporting community concerns around speeding and road safety.
- Working with officers on traffic management, including speed awareness initiatives and local safety improvements.

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Communities & Services

I have supported residents and community groups with issues relating to:

- Access to County Council services.
- Adult social care and support services.
- Public transport and mobility challenges, particularly in rural areas.

Where concerns have arisen, I have acted as an advocate between residents and County Council departments.

Environment, Climate & Infrastructure

This year I have contributed to County-level discussions on:

- Climate and environmental priorities.
- Sustainable transport and active travel.
- Managing development impacts on infrastructure.

I have continued to raise the importance of rural perspectives in county decision-making.

Partnership Working

I have worked constructively with parish and town councils, Borough and district councillors, and County Council officers. This partnership approach has helped ensure that local knowledge informs County-level decisions.

Looking Ahead

In the coming year my priorities will continue to include:

- Road safety and highways maintenance.
- Supporting vulnerable residents.
- Ensuring parish councils are kept informed and listened to.
- Championing practical climate and infrastructure solutions that work for rural communities.
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Staying in Touch

Parish councils and residents are always welcome to contact me regarding local issues, new concerns, or to invite me to meetings.

Email: cheryl.agg@gloucestershire.gov.uk **Phone:** 07903 880402

County Cllr Cheryl Agg

Appendix C - Tewkesbury Borough Councillors' Report – Winchcombe Ward

As your Borough Councillors we are pleased to be able to share our annual report with you for 2025–2026. Despite significant pressures throughout the year, Tewkesbury Borough Council has successfully maintained services, stable finances and begun preparing for significant structural reform. Looking ahead, the Council faces a period of increased uncertainty, particularly in relation to local government reorganisation and national funding changes.

During the year, as a Council we have continued to focus on delivering key priorities affecting residents and parish councils across the Borough, including flooding resilience and emergency planning, housing and homelessness pressures, environmental and waste services, economic development and financial sustainability. Work also continued on digital improvements to council services, performance monitoring and strengthening transparency and accountability through regular scrutiny, audit and governance processes. Alongside overseeing budgets, risk management and service delivery, we also continue to plan for the longer-term impact of Local Government Reorganisation and infrastructure pressures linked to growth, while continuing to support effective frontline services and partnership working across the Borough.

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The borough continues to experience significant housing and population growth and as your Ward Councillors we are available to help support you with any planning or development concerns that you may experience. We recognise the valuable work that goes on within our communities, largely by volunteers. As well as directly supporting local initiatives we work closely with Tewkesbury Borough Council's Communities Team and we have been involved in several of their initiatives this year. We have regular dialogue with Anj Patel, our area's Community and Place Development Worker about local needs and opportunities. Please do get in touch with us if we can support any community projects you are involved in, we are keen to help where we can.

A major strategic focus for the Council this year has been preparation for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). This is likely to result in the creation of one or more unitary authorities, replacing the current two-tier system. Staff at the Council have been working closely with other district and county colleagues to prepare for this change and we have seen significant impacts on Senior roles and their capacities in recent months. As a county we are due to hear from Government in July regarding the decision on what unitary model they want us to implement and the expected timeline. Until then we are sitting with significant uncertainty, Council Officers obviously more so.

Financially we are in a stable position for the short term; we have a balanced budget for the year ahead and are managing finances carefully. It's worth remembering that the Borough Council receives less than 7% of the total Council Tax bill, and while it is anticipated that the Council will cease to exist beyond April 2028 this has not yet been formally confirmed, therefore the Council must plan its medium term financial future as if it were to continue as an independent organisation. This will also help the new unitary authority in planning for the early years of its own financial challenges. The Council has an established reserves strategy, helping to manage financial risks and maintain stability.

The Council has continued to strengthen its work on climate and environmental policy through its commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and supporting a borough-wide Climate and Ecological Emergency framework. During the year, the Council has focused on biodiversity and nature recovery through new peat-free and pesticide-free commitments, and partnership work linked to Gloucestershire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Additional work has included improving sustainability within procurement and planning policy, promoting carbon literacy training for councillors and staff, and working with residents, businesses and parish councils to strengthen environmental resilience across the Borough.

It's been a privilege to serve again as your Ward Councillors this year and we look forward to another year representing you, thank you for giving us the opportunity. You can get in touch with any of us via the email addresses below.

Cllrs Gemma Madle, Jim Mason, David Gray
councillor.madle@tewkesbury.gov.uk
councillor.mason@tewkesbury.gov.uk
councillor.gray@tewkesbury.gov.uk

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