

STANTON ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held on Monday 23 February 2026 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Andrew Clark (Chair), Cllr Dina Cooper (Vice-Chair), Cllr David Polgreen, Cllr Justin Worrall, Cllr David Elliott, Cllr Greta Shepherd, and three members of the public. **Clerk:** Anita James

33/26 Apologies for Absence: all Councillors were present.

34/26 Declarations of Interest, Dispensations, or Use of Delegated Powers: none declared.

35/26 Public Forum (7:30pm–7:50pm)

A resident informed the Council of the severe pothole problems in the village, which were causing dangerous driving conditions and potential damage to vehicles. There was a particularly dangerous pothole in Mill Street.

The same resident also raised concerns about the broken pavement in Pound Lane and the erosion of the verge in Cox Lane. In addition, the skip outside Chequers Close had been there for 3–4 months, looked unsightly, and debris was falling from it onto the road.

A resident spoke about the flooding opposite Silver Birches and the possible causes.

Another resident also spoke about the dangerous pothole outside Mill Cottage.

The same resident, who is also the nominated transport representative for the village, asked if the Parish Council could mention his transport report in the Four Parishes Newsletter. The Clerk said she would reply to him in writing on this matter.

The same resident wished to discuss personal and non-Council business; however, the Chair and the Clerk explained that this was not the appropriate forum to do so.

36/26 Report from County and District Councillor Tim Bearder

Tim Bearder explained why the roads in Oxfordshire were currently in such a poor state of repair, referring to the many dangerous potholes that are now a daily hazard for motorists. He referred to the **2014 Highways Management Strategy**, which addresses the management of the County's roads and, more specifically, managing the inevitable decline due to insufficient funding.

Tim explained that it costs the County £46 million per year to keep the roads at a reasonable and safe standard, but only £30 million had been provided by central government.

The severity of the pothole problem had been exacerbated by the continuous rain for most of January and February this year, making it difficult to repair even the most severe defects.

Residents were encouraged to continue reporting road problems via **Fix My Street**, which can also be accessed via the Stanton St John Parish Council website under News and Updates.

In the past, people with a “super user” account tended to receive higher priority and issues were addressed more quickly. However, due to the very high number of reports, this system no longer significantly speeds up the process.

37/26 Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on **19 January 2026** were approved by Council and signed by the Chair.

38/26 Updates on Previous Actions

Notice of Landowner Deposit: Land at Wadley Hill Farm, Beckley, OX3 9SR.

Action: Clerk to send out a statement via Stanton St John News.

Loft space in the Village Hall: Julian Money will board half of the loft when he has time, as this is not currently a Council or Village priority.

Essential Maintenance: The Clerk will forward photos of debris, including mud and leaves that need clearing from the lay-by by the bus stops to the clear up maintenance team in OCC.

39/26 Clerk's Report

Format of the Annual Parish Meeting in April: Council agreed that more time should be allocated for residents to speak after the Chair's report and before the various other village reports.

Election of Officers and Representatives at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May:

The Clerk advised that Councillors may wish to reflect on the level of commitment they can offer in the coming year and which areas of responsibility they may wish to take on. Examples include roads, verges, bridleways, the Village Hall, and community engagement.

Cllr Justin Worrall volunteered to take responsibility for roads; he is particularly interested in resolving the flooding issue in Mill Street, opposite Silver Birches, which has been a problem for some time.

Digital & Data Compliance (Assertion 10 AGAR): The Clerk explained that Councillors should not use personal email accounts or the old Gmail account for Council business.

SSJ Parish Council logo: It was suggested that it would be beneficial for SSJ Parish Council to have its own logo.

St John Ambulance Defibrillator Course: 27 March 2026. Seven places remain available, and the Clerk will continue to advertise via SSJ News and the Parish Council website.

40/26 Approval of Statutory Documents

- Updated Standing Orders
- Updated Financial Regulations
- Updated Risk Assessment
- IT Policy
- Biodiversity Policy
- Internal Financial Control Policy

Council **RESOLVED** to adopt all the above statutory policies.

41/26 Annual Inspection of Assets Completed and Register Up to Date

Council **RESOLVED** that the asset register was up to date.

42/26 Approval of the Effectiveness of Internal Control

Council **RESOLVED** that its systems of Internal Control had been reviewed and were suitable for managing public funds responsibly.

43/26 Planning

43.1/26 New Applications

P25/S3380/FUL – Amendment (No. 2 & 3) for development at:
Breach Farm, Wheatley Road, Stanton St John (reinstating a hedge).

The Parish Council had commented on this application.

P26/S0162/PDS – Stowford, Bayswater Road, Headington, Oxford.
Application for construction of a first-floor upward extension above the existing main building, including associated internal reconfiguration.

The Parish Council **does not object**.

43.2/26 Planning Decisions

P25/S3045/LB – The Holford Centre, The Old School Nursery, Wheatley Road, Stanton St John OX33 1ET.

Removal of a glazed curtain wall and replacement with an insulated stud wall with vertically boarded timber cladding; removal of non-load-bearing internal walls; and installation of five cycle stands. **Granted with conditions.**

43.3/26 Pending Applications

P25/S3488/LDE – Bassetts House, Middle Road, Stanton St John OX33 1EX
Lawful Development Certificate relating to P97/N0403 and P97/N0404/LB (residential extensions and alterations), confirming that a material commencement of works has been undertaken and that consent remains extant.

P25/S3380/FUL – Breach Farm, Wheatley Road, Stanton St John OX33 1FG
Conversion of agricultural buildings into three dwellings with associated works.

43.4/26 Applications Withdrawn None.

44/26 Financial Matters

44.1/26 Donations Update for the 25/26 Budget

Action: Clerk to write to the Howe Trust and the Maple Centre as they had not submitted a request for a donation this year.

44.2/26 Payments for Approval

- Clerk salary / HMRC / pension
- Microshade IT – £107.64 (January 2026)
- TFM (dog bin) – £55.85 (January 2026)
- Citizens Advice – £700 (agreed in 25/26 budget, S137)
- Andrew Clark – reimbursement for lights £231.29 (within footlight budget)
- Clerk reimbursement for defibrillator pads £81.59 (within budget)
- OALC Data Protection online course (Clerk and Councillor) £108.00 (within budget)
- OALC Website Compliance online course (Clerk) £42.00 (within budget)
- St John Ambulance defibrillator course £1,044.00 (OCC grant)

Council **RESOLVED** to approve all payments.

45.3/26 Disposition of Council Funds as of 31 January 2026

Unity Current Account: £2,381.75
Unity Savings Account: £37,492.80

Total: £39,874.55

Council noted the balances.

45.4/26 Councillors to Authorise Online Payments Following the Meeting

Cllr Dina Cooper and Cllr David Polgreen to authorise the online payments following the meeting.

46/26 Update on Shop Steering Group

The Community Shop Steering Group has been dismantled and there are currently no individuals pursuing a Village/Community shop to replace the one that closed in August 2025.

47/26 Shepherds Pit Lane

The Clerk had followed up with Oxfordshire County Council and is awaiting a response.

48/26 Strategic Session

Councillors broadly agreed that each Councillor should consider which area of responsibility they can take on and report back to Council monthly.

Cllr Justin Worrall stated he would take responsibility for **communications (with the Clerk)** and **roads**.

Cllr Andrew Clark stated he would be responsible for **planning**.

Other areas of responsibility include:

- Village Hall
- Verges
- Community engagement and wellbeing
- Grass cutting

Action: The Clerk will send out suggestions for areas of responsibility.

49/26 Urgent Business (no decisions will be made) None.

50/26 Date of Next Meeting: Monday **16 March 2026**.

Agenda items to be submitted to the Clerk by **10 March 2026**

The meeting ended at **9:30pm**.