



Upavon Parish Council Meeting

On Wednesday 14th January 2026 at 7pm

Village Hall, Andover Road, Upavon

MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm.

26/1	Absence apologies and Declaration of Interests Present: Chairman Anthony Gallagher (AG), Vice-Chairman Andrew Flack (AF), Cllr Elaine Pepper (EP), Cllr Phil Garside (PG), Cllr Rebecca Lamb (RL), Cllr Tom Bradshaw (TB), Bee Barff Clerk (BB), Paul Oatway WCC (PO), Lt Col Jeffrey Williams (JW), Anna Morton Avon Valley Practice (AM), Richard Williams First Responder South Western Ambulance Service Trust (RW) and 14 members of the public. Apologies: apologies were received from Cllr Rosalind Ayling (RA).	
26/2	Minutes of previous meeting The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 10 th December 2025 were approved and signed as a true copy by the Chairman (AG).	
26/3	Updates, questions and queries from the public I. Anna Morton from Avon Valley Practice – Anna reported that NHS Dorset has clustered with NHS Somerset and NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire (BSW); while the specific impact of this change is currently unknown, updates will be provided as they emerge. A new 24/7 telephone service is set to launch in early February, representing a significant service improvement for residents who cannot access online systems. RA raised ongoing concerns regarding parking issues; AM responded that while she has spoken to her team, she lacks the formal authority to restrict parking in the area. Following a report from a member of the public identifying two specific staff members who regularly park in front of the practice, Anna requested the vehicle registration numbers so she could address the matter directly with the individuals involved. AG requested an update on the pruning of the beech trees; AM confirmed that this work is scheduled for March and committed to providing further updates closer to the time. II. Updates from PO – No major updates, as the last meeting was held fairly recently. Council tax will be increased across Wiltshire, which will affect car park charges, including Sunday charges. Recycling centres in Wiltshire (Purton and Lower Compton) will close in late summer 2026 due to high operating costs, causing public concern. AG requested an update regarding the bridge support; PO noted the query and committed to reporting back with further information once available.	

	<p>III. Trenchard Lines – JW reported that ongoing training on the airfield will not affect the village. There will be some changes to the types of units based in Upavon, including a new headquarters. The sports pitch in the camp is open to the community and enquiries are welcome. Two new accommodation buildings will be completed by the end of this year. Richard explained that during a previous 999 call involving a choking child, first responders experienced delays entering the camp due to the time taken for gate security checks. JW confirmed that he is happy to discuss sensible solutions, including registering first responders for quicker access to the camp.</p> <p>IV. Village Hall Updates – Lesley informed the meeting that the new committee is almost in place. The current committee will hold an AGM on Tuesday 17 February 2026 at 6.00 pm to officially hand over and encouraged everyone to attend. Lesley expressed thanks to the Parish Council and the PO for their support. Lesley also enquired whether responsibility for maintaining the two defibrillators would rest with the Parish Council, and UPC agreed to take on this responsibility.</p> <p>V. Members of the Public – none.</p>	
26/4	<p>Recruitment of Councillors AG encouraged anyone interested in joining the Council to contact the Clerk.</p>	
26/5	<p>Finance</p> <p>I. Bank reconciliation 7th January 2026 was shared and approved. The main council account currently shows a balance of £36,767.79. The Savings Account balance stands at £50,720.34 and continues to perform well, generating approximately £25 in interest each month. The Charities Account remains unchanged since the December meeting, with a balance of £2,768.25.</p> <p>II. No cheques to sign.</p>	
26/6	<p>Councillor updates of work undertaken since last meeting:</p> <p>I. A345 Riverside Park pavement update – AF reported that the Substantive Highways Scheme Funding application has been submitted. He also emphasised that if the application is not successful this year, it will be carried forward to the next year. PO expressed strong support for the project.</p> <p>II. SIDs police reporting – no updates.</p> <p>III. Rights of Way & Landmarc update – AG reported a significant improvement in the functionality of the MyWilts app and strongly recommended its use for reporting any future issues related to footpaths.</p> <p>IV. A342 Road condition and safety concerns – RL declared her role as a resident representative for the Whistledown estate and reported on a meeting held last week with Wiltshire Council Highway engineers and PO regarding the A342 safety matters. RL thanked PO for attending in support, though she expressed disappointment that WC suggested using the MyWilts app to address these specific issues. RL also raised concerns regarding the unfairness of footpath maintenance responsibilities for Whistledown residents; she</p>	

	<p>has submitted several formal letters to Wiltshire Council on this matter and will provide further updates as the situation progresses.</p> <p>V. Fairfield Parking issues – This item was covered earlier with Anna. AG suggested that residents who note the registration numbers of vehicles parked inappropriately in the area should report them directly to Anna for action.</p> <p>VI. Responsibility for the wall from Whistledown to the surgery – AG reported that he had a conversation with Bill Coker. The wall belongs to the church, as it forms part of the cemetery, and funding will be sought to carry out the necessary repairs.</p>	
26/7	<p>Issues for discussion</p> <p>I. Farrier's field refurbishment – AG and BB confirmed that UPC have held several discussions regarding the refurbishment of the playground as a toddler area. BB has contacted contractors to explore further design options and costs, and on-site meetings will be held during the last week of January to progress the project.</p> <p>II. Village Coffee morning – AF suggested holding a monthly coffee morning as a drop-in session for residents to discuss village issues with the Parish Council. The owner of The Ship is supportive of hosting the meetings at the venue. This initiative will provide an open and accessible way for residents to engage with the Parish Council, ask questions, and discuss issues promptly. Members of the public also supported the idea, and UPC will plan to implement it in the near future.</p> <p>III. SWAST appeal – donation of £300 – Richard Williams gave a short presentation explaining the role of Community First Responders. The responders are volunteers, fully trained by the South Western Ambulance Service, who provide care during the crucial first minutes of an emergency. Their aim is to arrive quickly before a paramedic, whose arrival typically takes 20–40 minutes. The team has strong local knowledge, access to immediate treatments, and effective communication with paramedics, all of which can make a significant difference to survival outcomes. SWAST is currently seeking to purchase a second community vehicle and requested a donation of £300. UPC agreed to make the donation. RW also brought a responder kit, which was displayed at the back of the hall, and offered to explain its contents to anyone interested. AG expressed that he had recently witnessed the first responders in action when assisting his neighbour and described their response as exceptional, expressing his gratitude for their work.</p>	SWAST letter
26/8	<p>Clerk's Report & Correspondence</p> <p>BB provided a brief update on the recent councillors' meeting, which focused on setting the 2026/2027 budget. To meet rising costs and fund new village projects—such as the coffee mornings and the village gate—the Council proposes a precept of £38,300. This represents a 4.48% increase, equating to an extra £3.15 per year for a Band D property. The proposal was proposed and seconded, and BB confirmed she will submit it to Wiltshire Council. Several infrastructure</p>	

	items were also raised, including a new street light, the village gate, and the Riverside Park pedestrian crossing. These will be escalated to the next LHFIG meeting for action.	
26/9	<p>Reports from other bodies –</p> <p>I. Local Highway and Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG) – The next meeting will be held in February, and AF will raise the issues mentioned earlier.</p> <p>II. Pewsey Area Board – The next meeting will be held in March. BB reported that the Blue Bus funding application has been submitted and will be discussed at the meeting.</p>	
26/10	<p>Future agenda items – AG mentioned that he will attend the PCAP meeting on Thursday 15 January to raise the Sunday bus service and will report the outcomes at the next meeting. AG also added that, as the Upavon Allotments now belong to the Parish Council, he suggested inviting Malcolm from the Allotment Society to the next meeting to provide a brief report on the allotments and discuss any updates from the Society. BB will send the invitation shortly.</p> <p>A member of the public asked about the junction sign mentioned in previous meetings (September 2025, 25/50, IV). PO responded that he will meet with the highway engineers and provide an update in due course.</p> <p>AG noted that the owner of the house near the lower playground requested access to the field to carry out wall repairs; this request was approved without objection.</p>	
26/11	Close – The meeting closed at 8.13pm.	

Bee Barff
Clerk to Upavon Parish Council

19/01/2026

Dates of future meetings all at 7pm

Wednesday, 18th March
Wednesday, 13th May (including the Annual Meeting)
Wednesday, 15th July
Wednesday, 16th September
Wednesday, 18th November