

Butlers Marston Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Thursday 26th March 2026** at **7pm** at St Peter's & St Paul's Church, Church Lane, CV35 0NA

Present: Cllr Corpe, Cllr Bloomfield, Cllr Carton, Cllr Mitchell-Hilton, Clerk.

In attendance: 6 members of the public, District and County Cllr Mills, and District Cllr Scorer.

66. Apologies for absence – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Weaver.

67. Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda – Cllr Carton declared an interest in item 79.

2 members of the public joined the meeting at 7:12pm.

68. Public participation session – A resident stated that the storm gullies on Kennel Hill need clearing (going out of the village on the Kinton side) and Town Ground near the dog bin. It was agreed that the **Clerk will put a link on Facebook advising residents how they can report issues such as these directly to Highways. Cllr Corpe will also raise this directly with Highways.** A resident asked what the outcome was of the presentation that a potential developer gave in January. The details of the letter the Parish Council (PC) agreed to send are included in the January minutes. The next step will be for the developer to decide whether to submit a formal planning application to Stratford District Council (SDC) and, if they do, the PC will consider the content of the application and decide on a response at a PC meeting.

69. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 22nd January 2026 - The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.

70. County/District Councillor reports - The County and District Cllrs provided written reports which can be found on the PC website.

Cllr Mills left the meeting at 7:10pm.

71. Outstanding matters/actions from previous minutes

71.1 Butlers Marston Church Restoration and Reorder Group – They have looked into ownership of boundaries and walls, A tree survey has been completed and they are now reviewing this and actioning appropriate works. They are applying for a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. They are also looking into other grant funding. They have had a heating survey and they continue to look into a proposal to build a gallery from the Church tower. The PCC is now a registered charity.

71.2 Update re discussions with Highways re width of footpaths - Memorial Cross Footpath: While the pavement next to the new Orbit wall (No. 29 Bonneville Cottages) has been resurfaced, the work now needs addressing as weeds are growing through the new footpath. Cllr Corpe continues to chase Highways for an update on this site, though no new information was available at the time of the meeting. Additionally, the planned resurfacing outside the phonebox and bus shelter is currently on hold; it is expected to proceed once a local developer completes the wall around the phonebox, likely in late 2026 or early 2027. **Cllr Corpe to continue to follow up.**

Townground/Bank View Road Hedge: Contractors previously cleared the vegetation back to the kerb, and though some has returned, the PC has since cleared the adjacent hedge. This allows the area to be maintained via the standard Warwickshire County Council (WCC) mowing schedule. With the hedge removed, a request has been sent to Highways to provide a date for the patch resurfacing of the road in this section. **Cllr Corpe to action.**

Old School Hedge & Townground/Bank View Corners: The clearing of the Old School Path by the Community Payback team has not yet been completed. This work is currently subject to a planning application, and the PC expects to know by May 2026 if the land has been sold and how development may affect the path. The Community Payback team has successfully cleared the grass from the footpath on the corner of Bank View/Bank Close, though a schedule for its resurfacing is still needed.

New Noticeboard: Cllr Corpe has chased Orbit to see if a fence can be installed behind the bus shelter to the corner of the property behind to stop vegetation growing over from the property. **Cllr Corpe to continue to follow up.**

- 71.3 Update re ensuring the parish council has complete records for any easements/wayleaves for owners of property around the Village Greens - **WCC Highways & Easements** – The Clerk has now raised multiple complaints regarding the lack of response following the 2024 site visit; however, no reply has been received from WCC Highways. Cllr Chris Mills has been asked to investigate the matter to resolve the deadlock. **Clerk to continue escalation of WCC Highways complaints and support Cllr Chris Mills' investigation. Clerk to write to the leader of WCC and the local MP to escalate further.**

Village Green Maintenance & Parking - Cllr Corpe is still chasing Historic England for their guidance on installing signage and identifying specific protection measures to deter driving and parking on the Green. **Cllr Corpe to follow up with Historic England regarding signage and physical protection measures, and to contact utility companies (Severn Trent, BT, SDC, WCC) regarding existing easements. Clerk to resend the info re what you can do on Scheduled monuments to all councillors. Cllr Weaver to speak with WCC regarding Village Green rules and seek independent legal advice. Clerk and Cllr Bloomfield to populate the contact list for easements/wayleaves on the shared drive.**

72. **Update re Butlers Marston Defibrillator door** - Following a recent emergency in Verney Close, it was discovered that accessing the village defibrillator under pressure, compounded by poor lighting and technical hurdles, can cause critical delays. While paramedics arrived in time to treat the individual, the incident highlighted that the current locking system is a significant barrier. Consequently, with the backing of the West Midlands Ambulance Service and the Church Warden, it is proposed that the cabinet remain unlocked to ensure immediate access during future emergencies. The Clerk has received information that the age of the defibrillator may cause issues with insurance. After some discussion it was agreed that the **Clerk should apply for grant funding for a new defibrillator and unlocked cabinet.** The possibility of relocating the defibrillator was discussed and will be considered when it is known if grant funding is available.

73. **Tree Survey Action Plan** - Based on the arboricultural report dated January 2026, the overall condition of the trees on the village green is good, as they have previously received minor pruning as advised. However, specific management actions and a long-term schedule are recommended to maintain their health and ensure public safety.

The following schedule is proposed for ongoing maintenance:

- Year 1 (Immediate): Complete the specific pruning, felling, and coppicing tasks for T11, T12, S13, and G15 as detailed above.
- Annual Maintenance: Conduct a recorded "walk-by" inspection by a competent person every year.
- 15-Month Cycle: Ideally, these informal inspections should occur every 15 months to ensure trees are observed during different seasons.
- 5-Year Cycle: A formal inspection by a qualified arboriculturist should be performed every five years.

Cllr Corpe to speak to owner of neighbouring property where their overhanging trees have been raised as an issue. Cllr Bloomfield to obtain quotes for the work required in year 1.

The PC believes Highways have a higher status of authority over the Green and therefore is responsible for its long term maintenance. The PC ad-hoc work is not an acknowledgement of the trees being PC responsibility but as joint owners the PC is working to maintain the area as best as possible.

74. Finance

- 74.1 Confirmation of the bank balances as at 19.03.26 of £76.07 and £6,590.79 – Cllr Weaver has confirmed by e-mail that the balances stated are correct.
- 74.2 To approve the following payments made using delegated powers: Proposed and agreed.

28.11.25	ICO	Data Protection fee	£47.00
31.10.25	Unity Bank	Account fee	£6.00
16.02.26	Military Grave Restorers	50% deposit for War Memorial Refurb	£597.00
28.02.26	Unity Bank	Account fee	£6.00
03.03.26	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and reimbursement Feb	£258.44

03.03.26	HMRC	Tax Feb	£42.00
18.03.26	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Mar	£193.84
18.03.26	HMRC	Tax Mar	£41.80
31.01.26	Unity Bank	Account fee	£6.00

74.3 To note the following receipts: Noted.

22.01.26	National Grid	Wayleave	£20.20
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74.4 To agree the following regular payments list for 2026/27 delegating authority to the clerk to make payments to relevant suppliers up to the budget total. All payments will need to be authorised online by a councillor in order for the payment to go out – Proposed and agreed.

Clerks salary	£2,920.52
Insurance	£540.00
WALC (Parish Council legal advice)	£145.00
Website	£260.00
Room hire	£90.00
War Memorial flowers	£35.00
Village info/events	£225.00
Office allowance	£312.00
Office stationery	£160.00
Training	£200.00
Parish Online	£32.00
Data Protection	£47.00
Tree survey/tree work	£300.00
Defib pads	£270.00
Bank fees	£84.00
War Memorial Refurb	£1,000.00

75. Planning applications received - None

76. Planning decisions received

25/02796/FUL and 25/02797/LBC – The Tithe Barn, Butlers Marston. Replacement of existing outbuilding to the rear of The Tithe Barn, to form a residential Annexe and Garden Room. **Approved.**

77. Information exchange - The professional cleaning of the Grade II listed War Memorial is now complete. The names of the fallen have been fully repainted by the Oxfordshire Military Grave Restorers. High-durability materials were used for the lettering to ensure the memorial remains legible and well-preserved for a significantly longer period than previous treatments. To ensure the memorial remains in its current restored condition and to protect the recent investment, a small amount of annual maintenance will be required moving forward. This proactive approach will prevent the need for large-scale restorative work in the future. **Clerk to set reminder to order the relevant spray in March 2027.**

The HR committee hasn't met yet but will need to organise a meeting asap.

Bus stop works were due to be completed in March 2025. **Cllr Corpe** has chased this and found the person who was dealing with it no longer works for WCC so he is now **trying to get an update from the new contact and County Cllr Mills re funding.**

Cllr Scorer joined the meeting at 7:52pm.

Bus Shelter/Phone Box Refurb: the Old School developer has offered to build a retaining wall around the phone box with modern sleepers if he gets planning permission.

Cllr Bloomfield has chased up SDC about grass cutting in the parish and they were meant to come today but didn't. They now say there will be six cuts per year starting from next month (missing May - No Mow May).

78. To agree plans for the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) – The meeting will start at 7:45pm on 20th May, after the ordinary meeting. Subject items will be Speedwatch feedback, church restoration, climate & biodiversity schemes, litter pick event, information re money spent and grants received, and recognition of volunteers. It was also suggested that residents could be asked what they think the PC should work towards in 2026/27.

79. Concerns raised by some residents about issues created in the village by a local business - The PC has recently received a number of formal complaints regarding a horse and carriage business operating within the village. Some councillors have also been approached directly by concerned residents. The core of these concerns relates to the fact that the village is a residential, non-commercial setting that is currently being used as a base for heavy commercial activity. Specific issues raised include the parking of large lorries which obstruct local access and highway safety, alongside persistent noise and unpleasant odours generated by the business's daily operations.

As a first step in any community matter, the PC encourages residents to speak directly with the business owner.

While the PC acknowledges the frustration these activities cause to some, it is essential to clarify that the PC has no statutory power to regulate or halt these operations. These matters fall under the authority of specific external bodies. Residents should be informed that their concerns can be taken up with the following organisations:

- Stratford-on-Avon District Council (Planning Enforcement): For investigations into unauthorised "Change of Use" and any unpermitted structures.
- Stratford-on-Avon District Council (Environmental Health): Regarding statutory nuisances such as noise at unsociable hours and odours from waste accumulation.
- Warwickshire County Council (Highways): Concerning the obstruction of pavements and roads, and damage to the highway or verges by heavy vehicles.

Meeting closed @ 8:18pm.

Date of next meeting – 20th May 2026

Signed..... Date.....