

Minutes of Haresfield Parish Council Meeting

Held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 3rd March 2026

Present: Councillors John Hunt, Tina Holbrook, Charlotte Tilsley

Clerk: Madeleine King e-mail: haresfieldpc@gmail.com

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Appoint Chair: Councillor Holbrook took the chair

Public Participation: 34 residents attended

Apologies: Cllrs Alan White, Nicky Ford, County Councillor John Patient.

Declaration of Interests /Dispensations: none

County Councillor Report: Cllr Patient reported via email:

- Gloucestershire County Council has approved the £698.4 million budget for 2026/27.
- **Gloucestershire's landmark Local Nature Recovery Strategy goes live** Gloucestershire County Council has published its first Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and interactive map.
- **Government Consultation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**
- More information on the proposals can be found on the Future Gloucestershire website. To take part in the consultation, visit local government reorganisation in Gloucestershire website.
- **‘Warm and Well’ energy support** Gloucestershire residents can get free support through the Warm & Well service, run by energy charity Severn Wye. You can get help with switching your energy tariff or supplier, advise on renewables and check if you are eligible for any grants or funding schemes. ☎0800 500 3076 energyadvice@severnwyre.org.uk Website

Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the previous meetings dated January 27th 2026 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

Lease of hall land: The decision to sign the lease was put on hold following a robust discussion. Several new clauses have been added by Mark Hayward, the lessor. In light of this, cllrs decided to refer the lease to a solicitor with the intention of clarifying the implications before signing it. Noted that this required signing before the end of March. Cllr Holbrook suggested that copies of the old and new lease will be available on the Village Website for transparency.

Proposal to hold a community consultation: A lengthy and lively discussion took place, with a decision made to invite GRCC to the forthcoming Annual Parish Village meeting on March 31st to present their option without prejudice or any commitment to their engagement. Discussions regarding development and the local plan included the following:

- Cllr Holbrook stated that no parish councillors support the development suggested around the Merryfield.
- David Keyte who is a Haresfield resident and runs his own planning Consultancy in the County has agreed to advise on this and any future planning development proposals.
- David Keyte noted the following points:
 - Planning Context – Haresfield is in Stroud District.
 - According to the Local Plan, Haresfield is Tier 5 with very limited facilities and infrastructure and therefore unable to support sustainable development.
 - The current plan states that a very limited number of houses within the existing settlement boundary would be accepted.
 - The Merryfields is a protected outdoor space.
 - Land north of the road from the school to the Beacon Inn is within the Cotswolds AONB. National planning policy gives “great weight” to conservation and protection of this designation.
 - A replacement local plan is close to completion. Haresfield is to be designated in the same way as in the current local plan. To be clear the village will remain a tier 5 settlement for the new plan period which is circa 2040.
 - Some major new housing sites are proposed within Stroud district. However, traffic issues concerning the capacity of J12/14 are currently presenting significant obstacles.
- Discussions regarding a consultation included the following:
 - Public Participation. Why do a consultation? Why should the village raise fund now when we have agreed that Haresfield is not earmarked for any development?
Response: It gives parishioners an opportunity to express their views on their vision for the village and that could include providing limited housing development for local people outside of the area of the AONB.
- Assets – Pubs, school, and village hall are considered key assets.

- Q: How will the consultation help if the lease ends and the hall is lost?

Response: It will gather village views and help us create a plan, possibly obtain grants and highlight other options that may be available.

Village maintenance: Haresfield is signed up to the GB spring clean, which is running 13th – 29th March. Clerk to link with Harescombe to arrange a litter pick along Brookthorpe Road.

Repair/renewal of the fence around the School/Christmas tree had been referred to Martin Hartley who has kindly offered to lead a working party, should the school require the fence to be renewed, several offers of assistance were received. It was noted that the gate and matting at the entrance to the Merryfield require attention and this will be pursued by the Merryfields trustees. Paul Barton noted that this needed to be done by a professional company as its an ongoing issue and could easily become a safety issue. PC supported this and will look to raise the funds for such works.

Fly Tipping is again on the increase, this is reported via the SDC website. Concerns were raised about the Dug-out culverts at the bottom of Beacon Lane. Dave Baldwin, on behalf of Steve Coates carried out work but the area is now in need of tidying up

A working party of volunteers is required to clear the verge; a skip will be needed and it was agreed, funded by the parish council. The area will be replanted with snowdrops / wild flowers. Steve Coates has kindly agreed to assist with the rotavating of the verge once the area has dried out. Date for this to be decided.

Village Hall/village activities: Both the distribution list and Haresfield Herald are now requiring people to administer them. Several offers were received, including from Chris Andrews, Paul Wain and Dee Gibson-Wain. Thanks are offered to those volunteers and clerk to liaise with them.

Discussions re the Village Hall included the fact that a piece of land with a 25+ year lease would enable applications for grants to be made.

Various options discussed included: Replacing the hall and potentially using other village facilities to hold meetings and events should the hall be lost, future discussions will take place with the intention of finding a long term solution.

Energy from Waste & CLG: Clerk in attendance at the recent meeting which reported no issues with the EFW plant. A question was raised regarding the now redundant, non-functioning monitoring equipment at the Village Hall. Clerk reported that a new monitoring station was to be sited in Hardwicke and to enquire if Haresfield could have the equipment in the village replaced.

Highways, traffic and parking: Thanks to Fiona Berridge who regularly reports issues to Highways. As a result of this reporting, potholes have been filled in and white lines repainted on Mount Lane! It was noted that the trigger for Highways to fill potholes is a depth of 46cm. Cllr Hunt to contact Highways. Cllr Hunt has agreed to look at the general

parking and traffic issues within the village with the support of the parish councillors. As numerous issues of parking have and are still being raised due to the school parking it was agreed to request a meeting with the school to see what can be done to ease this situation.

The issue of signage in the village was raised by several villagers. It was suggested to discuss this with the residents concerned to see if we could come to a mutual arrangement that would work for all concerned.

Emergency Plan: Cllr Tilsley asked for specific roles and general offers to populate the emergency plan which she is currently drawing up. Volunteers are required who are first aid trained, have search and rescue skills, chainsaws, 4x4s or have generators. Clerk to forward offers/collate responses.

Cllr resignation: The Council noted the resignation of Councillor Ursula Jeakins effective from February 24th. Clerk to notify monitoring office and display the statutory casual vacancy notice. Website updated. The Parish Council warmly thank Cllr Jeakins on behalf of all of the villagers and the Parish Council for her service during her time as a Parish councillor.

Biodiversity: Four Owl boxes have been delivered and are awaiting erection. Clerk and Rich Gibbs to attend a biodiversity event on Saturday March 7th hosted by Standish PC.

Merryfield trustees: Trustee Paul Barton clarified the position of the Trustees and the Merryfield:

The cricket club has an informal arrangement with M Heywood; trustees have the lease (at a peppercorn rent) and can use space for storage.

Steve Coates has grazing rights in the orchard.

The cricket club pays £500 to M. Heywood for use of the small car park area in the orchard. PC asked if Merryfields Trustees would like the lease to be looked at by the solicitor who is looking at the Village Hall lease at the same time for clarification, it was felt that this was not required at this moment in time.

Road closures: The PC received no specific notification of the closure of Mount Lane which caused disruption last week.

Website: Requires updating to be compliant with the new Assertion 10 training – to be attended by clerk. The website will be looked at with a view to include more information regarding local business advertisement and events.

Correspondence: Ivor Duarte: Question referred to Cllr Patient Re The traffic lights at the five way junction on the bypass into Hunts Grove. Cllr Patient replied that these will be full time, as there are pedestrian crossings at the roundabout.

Finance & Clerks Report: Internal auditor D Mason appointed for year-end audit.

Transactions/payments agreed:

Cheque payments were agreed and authorised by councillors:

M King	Administration to the council Oct/Dec	£1,965.79 (cheque no.400662)
HMRC	PAYE	£672.07 (cheque no.400663)
Harescombe PC	First aid training (X4)	£180.00 (cheque no.400664)
Wildcare	Owl boxes	£630.48 (cheque no.400665)
TEEC	annual fee	£194.39 (cheque no.400666)
Hampshire Flags	Union flag	£136.97 (cheque no.400667)

Any other business:

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm

Date of next meeting: Annual Parish Meeting Tuesday 31st March 2026 7pm