

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Heytesbury, Knook & Tytherington

Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 7.00pm

Hospital of St John, Heytesbury

Present Cllrs: D Bond (Chair), K Riggs (Vice-Chair), J Dando, A Moore,
S Buttenshaw, A Kennedy, L Morris, S Smith,
S Vesey-Thompson (Parish Clerk)

Public Attendance: 7 members of the public attended the meeting.

1. Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He said that he would give a report on the activities of the Parish Council over the last 12 months.

Apologies were received from Cllr S King.

2. Minutes to approve

Minutes of the Meeting on 11th March 2025 were proposed as a true and correct record by Cllr Morris, approved and signed by Chairman.

3. Chairman's Report – Cllr D Bond

A year has passed since we were all elected and what an eventful year it has been, I was particularly pleased to be elected Chairman and have really enjoyed the role but it has been a lot more time consuming than I ever imagined and I have relished the challenge. The job has its rewards, especially being in a position to help villagers with their many and varied problems; be it with practical help or just giving advice on what they can do. One of the most frustrating jobs was getting the changeover of details done with Lloyds, Rathbones and the Charity Commission which dragged on for months, also retrieving Parish Council property and document from former councillor's. Following last year's elections when the new Council was elected, joining previous Councillor's Sue and Louise. We had a good mixture of completely new Councillor's and experienced former Councillor's who had come together as there was clearly a need for change. I am particularly pleased at how everyone has stepped up to the mark and contributed to the harmonious team spirit that exists. Hopefully, this will bring stability and continuity after years of division which resulted in over 20 resignations in recent years. We inherited a very challenging start having to deal with the aftermath of the ex-clerk, which Louise and the Staffing Committee dealt with very professionally and deserve a vote of thanks. We are still using the services of HR Specialists we had to engage them to help us through the minefield of employment law; this was very

expensive and will be coming to an end later this year. Their next task was to recruit a new clerk when our locum clerk Karungi decided it was time for her to leave and concentrate on Codford Parish Council and her ongoing training. The result of the recruitment was to employ Sarah, who is fitting into the role well and we fully appreciate that there is a lot to learn and take on-board, well-done Sarah. Moving on, I was determined to hold the councils precept budget to last years figure so that there would be no increase this year following several years of increases in the budget.

In no particular order, the other routine jobs that your Council has to perform are as follows:-

Planning Applications

The majority of applications we receive are very straightforward and non-contentious; however we had to deal with the Old Vicarage one, which was subsequently withdrawn after a lot of opposition from local residents and the Parish Council. We are currently dealing with the application to build 9 houses on the field south of Park Street, the Parish Council has submitted a robust objection and would remind everyone that the deadline for commenting is this Friday 15th May. As we all know the park land north of Park Street has been sold to A.D.E. who divided it up into various size plots for auction through Barney Estates.

The Parish Council successfully applied for an ACV to be put on the land that had not been sold at that time. A golden opportunity was missed when the previous council did not follow-up their attempt in 2023 to put an ACV on all of the land which only failed on a technicality and would have been successful if they had resubmitted their application. The Parish Council/Raymond Trust attempted to buy part of the land for the village which has been well documented but were not successful. The whole episode was extremely time consuming, frustrating and stressful for all involved. All the land has now been sold and no doubt there will be planning applications in the future, but the ACV prevents building on parts of the land for 5 years.

Grass Cutting & Footpath Maintenance

The Parish Council has just agreed another 3-year contract with Idverde to cut the grass around the village and the Knook Allotments to keep it looking neat and tidy. Talking of which, Martin of "Neat and Tidy" does a fantastic job keeping our footpaths accessible and for us all to enjoy. The ladies at The Mill Caro and Liz have installed a gate to give access to footpath 7A from the Millpond to Park Lane across Slaters/Park Farm.

Playground

We have an annual inspection carried out by ROSPA to make sure the play area and equipment are safe to use, on top of that Sue has got a ROSPA qualification to do the monthly inspections and her and Roly share the weekly inspections. I think that the playground could be our biggest area of expenditure, going forward as the equipment gets older and needs to be replaced, we will need to investigate if there are any grants available for this.

Parish Steward

Karen does a great job in getting things done around the villages, that is when he is not taken away filling potholes. Karen also organises the village clean up which was a successful day with free refreshments laid on in the church.

We will also be entering the Best Kept Village Competition, and we might have a better chance now the burnt out house has been demolished.

Wiltshire Council

We have developed an excellent working relationship with the Highways Team at Wiltshire Council and because of that we receive a first-class service from them. Cutting back trees, drain clearing and gully emptying, regular visit of the Road Sweeper, pothole, and other road surface repairs. I was particularly pleased to get the flooding issue between the shop and the pub resolved. They did a fantastic job replacing the railings on both sides of the bridge on Tytherington Road and also cooperated in refills of the grit bins.

Through the LHFIFG the new road marking at the bus stop outside the school should stop parents from parking there. We are still awaiting the engineers report/pricing on the white lines around certain corners to improve visibility for drivers exiting side roads.

Knook Allotments

We have had the dead elm trees removed before they fell down and we are assisting with the installation of a water supply. We are also looking into installing some fencing along the bank where the dead trees were removed, along the roadside boundary. I have also discussed a site for a shed to store all the Parish Council equipment.

Other Business

The Blind House and War Memorial are the responsibility of the Parish Council, and we arrange for periodic inspections of both. Andrew Kennedy and I are planning to do some restoration work on the War Memorial, which has recently benefited from new roses and a tidy up paid for by the Parish Council.

Finally, speeding in the village remains a problem, many of the culprits are local residents. The Parish Council has organised for some metro counts to be done to see if the results warrant a reduced speed limit or SID device

4. Open Forum

Potholes around the village require work, just off the High Street and St John's Corner. Also a manhole cover has sunk by the bus stop at The Angel and needs repair. Noted for repair by Cllr Riggs.

The Angel, are the PC aware of the state of neglect, no signs of progress to the site. Can the parish council do anything to help. Cllr Bond has already contacted the Enforcement Office to inform them of our concerns and will follow this up.

Road Closure & Traffic Signs Thank you to Cllr Dando for facilitating the road closures and ensuring good signage is in place.

Promotion of the Annual Parish Meeting – future meetings were discussed, including how best to promote next year's meeting.

Raymond Trust, can this money be used for other projects – The Charity Commission has been informed of the change in circumstances regarding the use of charity funds. As the Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission, we would need to notify them of any proposed amendment and await their decision.

Community Policing Update – Cllr Dando recently met with the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), Lukasz Kolaskinski. An advice/drop-in session will be set up and advertised within the local community.

Community village event, would this be viable for the village and could the PC sponsor this event – Cllr Bond reiterated that this kind of event falls outside the Parish Council's remit but noted that it is a good initiative for the village. Several Councilor's lent their support.

Piscatorial Society, the recent planning application PL/2026/02266 for 9 houses – Cllr Bond to expect an email from the Chair of the Piscatorial Society with comments regarding the proposed planning application.

Proposed planning application PL/2026/02266 for 9 Houses – Cllr Bond reminded the meeting that the deadline for comments is Friday 15th May 2026.

The Parish Council – the Parish Council was commended for its positive work for the village, including constructive debate and sound decision-making; all present agreed.

The meeting ended at: 7.45pm

