

MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Marcham Parish Council held on Monday 10th November, 2025 commencing at 7.30 p.m. and held in the village hall, Barrow Close Marcham

Present:

Sheena Bigden, Keely Ewart-Brookes, Michel Hoath, Ruth Mander, Andrew Mason, Tanya Rosenfeld, Joe Withers
Clerk: Mrs. L. Martin

Cllr. Robert Clegg (District Councillor)
Cllr. James Plumb (County Councillor)
5 Members of the public

- 2025/225 In the absence of the Chairman, Michael Hoath was appointed Chairman for the duration of the meeting.
- 2025/226 Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence had been received from the Chairman, Mark Harvie owing to work commitments.
- 2025/227 Declarations of Interest
Michael Hoath and Ruth Mander both declared an interest in the agenda item relating to drainage at Marcham Centre and the agenda item relating to all grant applications. They were Trustees of Marcham Community Group which ran the Centre, and the Group itself had lodged a grant application. In addition, participating in determining grant applications lodged by other organisations, could impact the total funds available for Marcham Community Group.
- 2025/228 Minutes of the meeting held on 13th October, 2025
The minutes of the meeting held on 13th October, 2025 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.
- 2025/229 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 13th October, 2025
Odours from pigs – Mill Road
An acknowledgement of Council's comments to the Vale of White Horse District Council had been received. Residents who had contacted that Council directly, had been advised to keep diaries of incidents that caused them concern.
- Davies Edge – Biodiversity
Council noted that correspondence had been sent to Pye Homes and Pinnacle Property Management Ltd.

2025/230

Public Participation

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

The Abingdon Bridge - Grant application

Holly Freeland, Head of Wellbeing and Innovation at The Abingdon Bridge, made a statement about the organisation's grant application and the type of support given to youngsters from Marcham.

Sheepstead Road/Faringdon Road – Speed reduction

A resident advised that there had been a further road traffic accident near Buildings Farm on the Faringdon Road, a few days ago, which involved a motorbike.

Thames Water – SESRO reservoir

A resident expressed concern regarding the increased size of the reservoir, the risk of flooding, and the direct issue for Marcham being construction traffic.

She asked was there anyone on the Council who was leading the representation. She offered her services to assist. She also asked whether the Council had thought of resurrecting the bypass campaign. The Chairman advised that Thames Water had just commenced the statutory consultation period until mid January 2026, and would be holding public events/exhibitions around the area. The local one in Marcham was Thursday 20th November. The Council could not pre-determine its comments on the latest documents, and would be considering the documentation at the December or January meeting. The Chairman encouraged residents to attend the exhibition.

Davies Edge - Biodiversity

A resident requested copies of the correspondence that the Council had sent to Pye Homes and to Pinnacle Property Management.

2025/231

District Councillor's report – Cllr. Robert Clegg

Cllr. Clegg had produced a written report on District Council matters which had been circulated to members. He spoke about some of the issues within the report.

Pig Odours – Mill Road

No follow on correspondence to Cllr. Clegg's emails to Environmental Health department at the Vale of White Horse District Council had been received. He had, however, been copied into correspondence from a resident to the planning enforcement department at the District Council who had raised queries in regards to the planning position.

Davies Edge – Biodiversity

It was understood that Pye Homes had given a sum of money to Pinnacle Property Management for the future management of the site. It was not clear whether the total sum was sufficient for all the works that were required.

Hyde Copse – tree felling

Various investigations had been undertaken. It had been established that consent from the Forestry Commission for felling had been obtained, but the position as to whether any pre-felling surveys had been undertaken was unclear. The trees were not protected by statute and no planning consent for felling was required.

Kings Avenue (in vicinity of no. 23) – trees on Howard Cornish Rd verge

The parks team at the Vale of White Horse District Council had been building up its capacity to carry out work in house, and would remove a Cupressus tree before the next nesting season.

Joint Local Plan

Cllr. Clegg had requested a briefing from officers as to latest position owing to the fact that the Planning Inspectorate had requested the Local Plan be withdrawn, and the Chief Executive of the District Council had corresponded with the Secretary of State regarding the need for flexibility in regards to the duty to co-operate. The South Oxfordshire District Council and the Vale of White Horse District Council had written to the Planning Inspectors again.

Local Government Reorganisation

The ‘Two Councils’ model had been considered at the Vale’s special full council meeting on 5th November, ahead of a Cabinet decision on the topic on Friday 14th and final submission to the Secretary of State by 29th November.

Reservoir

Statutory Consultation had been launched. Various public events were taking place. Costs for construction of the reservoir had increased from £2.2 billion to £6.5 billion $\pm 15\%$. The Vale of White Horse District Council had unanimously passed a motion to instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State requesting that: (i) Thames Water be directed to prepare a new Water Resource Management Plan in the light of updated cost estimates, (ii) the Regulators’ Alliance for Progressing Infrastructure Development (RAPID) decisions for the Thames Water reservoir and the Severn-Trent Transfer be aligned, (iii) that any Development Consent Order process consider the cost effectiveness of it and (iv) that proceeding the Severn Trent transfer instead of the reservoir be considered as a valid outcome of the DCO and RAPID Gate 3 funding processes.

Howard Cornish Road – trees near to Longfields Bus Stop

A member asked Cllr. Clegg whether the trees near to the Longfields Bus Stop, on land owned by Vale of White Horse District Council, could be trimmed. He would make enquiries.

2025/232 Hyde Copse Trees - felling
Council again noted that this land was private, the trees did not have statutory protection, and a felling licence had been obtained. There were conditions within the Licence for restocking. Residents had continued to express their concern and had asked the Council to support bat boxes, bird nesting boxes, bumblebee habitats to replace the lost trees. There was no clear indication that a breach of legislation existed.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that no further action be taken
- (ii) that the residents be advised that the land was private, and the Parish Council could not impose conditions on the site.
- (iii) that the landowner be asked, if he intended to carry out work on the site such as stump grinding or use noisy machinery, that the Parish Council be informed, so that local residents could be advised to expect some disruption

2025//233 Kings Avenue – Trees adjacent to, and at rear of 23 Kings Avenue
The report from Cllr Clegg regarding the felling of the cupressus tree be noted.

2025/234 County Councillor's report – Cllr. James Plumb
Cllr. Plumb had previously submitted a written report on County Council matters, which had been circulated. The report was taken as read. There were no questions for Cllr. Plumb.

Congestion Charge Update

This came into effect on Wednesday 29th October. There was to be a six week initial grace period, where drivers going through the charging areas for the first time without a permit would receive a letter rather than a fine.

Government re-organisation

The County Council was proposing a single county wide unitary authority. This was to be considered by Cabinet on 12th November, and then, if agreed, would be submitted to central government by the deadline of 28th November.

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service

Consultation, open until 20th January, 2026, had commenced on proposals to change how the Fire and Rescue Service operated. This included, improvements to response times, and adjusting resources to better match demand. The proposals could be viewed via the Let's Talk Oxfordshire website.

Junction Protection Markings

New markings had been installed on both the Mill Road and North Street sides of the A415, in an attempt to prevent parking, and keep the junction clear.

A415 Road Safety

Cllr. Plumb along with some parish councillors, met with Andrew Gant, the cabinet member for transport. The meeting covered existing and potential increases in traffic volume, HGVs and the impact of future development in the area.

A415 and 20 mph signage and vehicle activate sign at eastern side of Marcham village

Officers had confirmed that both these items had been added to the snagging list, and would be considered, but no time frame for implementation had been given.

2025/235

Sheepstead Road /Faringdon Road – Speed reductions

Following agreement in principle by Oxfordshire County Council, Council noted that the Vale of White Horse District Council had confirmed the spending of Community Infrastructure on speed reduction measures, and suggested consulting with local residents as much as possible. Bloor Homes had also raised no objection in regards to the use of the funds that they had provided to be used in connection with speed reduction in Sheepstead Road and Faringdon Road. Council considered the “concealed entrance” sign to be included within the design.

Cllr. Clegg would undertake enquiries as to how other parishes had achieved such consultation.

The Chairman called for a show of hands of those in favour of spending up to £15,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy funds, subject to consultation and agreement by residents of the parish, on speed reduction measures including concealed entrance signage, if agreed by the County Council, on the Sheepstead Road and Faringdon Road.

In favour

7

Against

0

Abstention

0

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Council spends up to £15,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy, subject to consultation and agreement by residents, on speed reduction measures for Sheepstead Road and Faringdon Road

- (ii) that the concealed entrance sign be included in the design if possible.

2025/236

Community Led Housing

Council noted the draft housing needs survey as produced by Community First Oxfordshire. It was considered that the ease of completing this be assessed.

RESOLVED:

that Andrew Mason assess the difficulties in completing the form and report to the next meeting.

2025/237

Salvation Army Textile Bank

Council noted an update from the Salvation Army that there were unfortunately unable to provide a second textile bank as they had an over supply of textiles and did not have the markets for all that they collected. Council noted correspondence from Marcham Pre-School that suggested they could take on the space for a textile bank to raise funds within the community for use within the Pre-School, and that as staff lived nearby, any issues could be dealt with promptly. Council noted too, that there were other providers of textile banks if a second bin was needed.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Ruth Mander speak to the manager at Marcham Pre-School to see exactly what they could do.
- (ii) that Joe Withers contact the fire fighters charity to seek information regarding the provision of a second textile bank.

2025/238

Harding Way – trees/hedge

Council noted that a survey was carried out in November 2020. As 5 years had passed it was thought prudent to carry out a repeat survey.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Clerk seek quotations in regards to a survey of the trees in Harding Way
- (ii) that authority to be given to the Clerk to spend up to £2000 on a survey.
- (iii) that if there are any trees elsewhere in the parish that have not been surveyed recently, then these two be considered for inclusion.

2025/239

Planning Applications

a) Decisions on previous applications

P25/V1745/HH Proposed alterations to first floor windows on north elevation
Marcham Park (formerly Denman College) New Road Marcham
Permitted 14th October, 2025

b) Applications dealt with prior to the meeting

P25/V1928/HH Two single storey extension, one at the rear to the ground floor, the second at first floor level over the existing side extension
8 Packhorse Lane
Comments: Council had no objections, but did query the access arrangements for construction, given the location on the A415. It asked for assurance that there was adequate rear access.

c) Applications considered at the meeting

None were received

2025/240

Grant Applications

As Michael Hoath had declared an interest, Joe Withers was appointed Chairman for this agenda item. He and Ruth Mander remained in the room but did not take part in debate, and abstained during voting.

The Clerk had advised on the relevant criteria for spending under s. 137 Local Government Act 1972 and other legislation.

Council considered the application for £1600 from The Abingdon Bridge towards running costs. The Abingdon Bridge assisted 30 people from Marcham (25 youngsters and 5 parents).

In favour	Against	Abstention
5	0	2

RESOLVED: that under s. 137 Local Government Act 1972 a grant of £1600 be awarded to The Abingdon Bridge towards running costs.

Council considered a grant application in the sum of £1200 from Oxfordshire Citizens Advice Bureau towards running costs. 50 clients from Marcham had been supported during the previous financial year, with a total of 192 visits.

In favour	Against	Abstention
5	0	2

RESOLVED:

that under s. 142 Local Government Act 1972 a grant of £1200 be awarded to Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice Bureau

Council considered the grant application from Marcham Community Group in the sum of £2000 out of total anticipated spending for grounds maintenance of £4500 for 2026.

In favour	Against	Abstention
4	1	2

RESOLVED:

that under s. 19 Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976, the sum of £2000 be awarded to Marcham Community Group towards grounds maintenance costs for the 2026 season.

Council considered the application from Marcham and Garford Parochial Church Council, for £650 which was the cost of coach hire to take children from Friday Club to a pantomime.

It was proposed that a grant of £325 be awarded.

In favour	Against	Abstention
5	0	2

RESOLVED:

- (i) that under s. 137 Local Government Act 1972 a grant of £325 be awarded to the PCC towards running costs of Friday Club.
- (ii) that Marcham and Garford Parochial Church Council be advised that as some children attending Friday Club were from outside of Marcham that consideration be given by the PCC to grant applications to other parish councils.

Council considered correspondence from Marcham Society that

indicated that that organisation was intending to act as co-ordinator for the parish welcome pack which historically had been given to newcomers to the parish. Previously it had been purely a hard copy, whereas it could possibly now go on the internet. The request was for the Parish Council to set aside funds in readiness for the new website. The details of the costings and how it would operate still had to be determined. The Clerk had advised the Council that as the Council had a limited life before the next elections, that it could not commit to grant funding annually for an indefinite period.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that no grant be awarded at this stage
- (ii) that Marcham Society be advised to contact the Council again once detailed information as to exact costings, and the particulars had been clarified.

2025/241 Michael Hoath resumed as Chairman for the beginning of the next item.

2025/242 Community Facilities

Art projects

These items were nearing completion and the bases for the bench seats were about to be installed. It was hoped that this project could be finished before the end of the year.

Joe Withers resumed as Chairman, as Michael Hoath had declared an interest in the following item.

Shared Facilities with adjacent residents

Council noted that a detailed reply from the residents was still awaited. It was over 8 weeks since they had been sent correspondence from the Parish Council. It was generally thought that a final reminder be sent, and then invoices would be submitted. Discussion took place on whether it would be the Parish Council or Marcham Community Group who would send out the invoices. Council noted that an advertisement for the Council's nominated Trustee had been placed in Marcham and District News.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that a final reminder, to the Barrow Close residents to reply to the letter regarding the invoicing and their contributions towards shared drainage, be sent.
- (ii) that Marcham Community Group continue to manage the shared drainage system and issue the invoices.

- (iii) that enquiries be made as to an agency agreement for MCG to act on behalf of the Parish Council.
- (iv) that an advertisement continue to be placed in Marcham and District News for a nominee Trustee for MCG.

2025/242 Michael Hoath resumed as Chairman

2025/243 Footpaths – Church to Cemetery – s. 106 funding
Council received an update report. The Vale of White Horse District Council had requested up to date quotation from the preferred contractor. This was being obtained.

2025/244 Cemetery Records
Council received a report on digitising cemetery records.

RESOLVED:

that the Clerk be authorised to spend up to £1000 with Oxford Duplication to have the cemetery records scanned and put into digital format.

2025/245 Howard Cornish Road – Duffield Place Bus Stop – Request for bench seat
Council noted that a request had been received for a bench seat at the eastbound bus stop at Duffield Place. The land was owned by the Vale of White Horse District Council. It was noted that there had been previous discussion about a bus shelter, which could have a perch seat within it. The site too was close to the textile recycling bank.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the site be checked for a suitable location
- (ii) that Cllr. Clegg make enquiries of the Vale of White Horse District Council as to permissions.

2025/246 Allotments
It was noted that a tenant of an allotment plot who had passed away had a glass greenhouse on his plot that his widow did not want. The policy for the allotments was to permit only polycarbonate windows, and not glass. The tenant of the adjacent plot had requested permission to move and keep the glass greenhouse. As it was an existing greenhouse it was

RESOLVED:

- (i) That permission be given to relocate the glass greenhouse
- (ii) That consideration be given to replacing any broken windows with polycarbonate.

Council also noted that the licensee of Cow Lane paddock had removed the horses at the end of the agreement term, as it had been a hot dry Summer had grass had not grown very much. He had expressed an interest in continuing with a new grazing Licence. This had been prepared and issued to him, but it had not been signed and returned to the Clerk. A comment was made by a member that the horses had been put back into the paddock. The Clerk would contact the Licensee again.

2025/247

Christmas Lights

Council considered arrangements for Christmas lights. Previously these had been on the village green.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the arrangements for Christmas lights continue as in previous years.
- (ii) that the sum of up to £100 be set aside for Christmas lighting.

2025/248

Finance / Accounts

The list of payments had been circulated to Members. Council noted the cheques numbered 3936 to 3947 and cemetery account 437 and authorised payments in the sum of £21010.22 in respect of administration costs, grass cutting, play area safety checks, litter bin emptying, expenses for Marcham Uncovered display event, allotment water bill, and second and third stage payments for fees due to artist for Noticeboard and bench seating. These last 2 payments would be held back until the relevant works had been completed.

Council noted the accounts as at 30th September, and budget monitoring to date. Council considered the Community Infrastructure Levy Return for the Vale of White Horse District Council for the financial year 2024/2025.

Council considered the stages of projects previously referred to in the budget. It was noted that the war memorial project was outstanding, and some quotations had been received.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the CIL return showing spending of £55654.66 on the play area out of CIL receipts of £56393.66 in the financial year 2024/25 be approved. This left a balance of £739.
- (ii) that the quotations for the war memorial be reviewed

2025/249 Staff Committee
The Staff Committee to manage staff had had 4 members. Owing to 2 councillors leaving the Council, 2 replacements were required.

RESOLVED:

That Keely Ewart-Brookes and Andrew Mason be appointed to serve on the staff committee.

2025/250 Matters Raised by Members for information

Autumn leaves

Fallen leaves could be slippery during Autumn weather. A note would be placed in Marcham and District Council advising residents to take care.

Oxfordshire Fire Service

Consultation had commenced on improvements to the Service. On line presentations and events were taking place.

Oxfordshire County Council – Highways Asset Response Team

This new team for minor road works and clearance had been introduced by the County Council. It was suggested that they be asked to clear the cycle track/footway to the A34.

Remembrance Sunday

It was suggested that Dalton Barracks, and the Police be invited to send a representative.

North Stret – building works

It was reported that 3 properties at the southern end of North Street were undergoing building works. Queries were raised as to whether they had been granted planning consent.

2025/250 Items for Marcham and District News – December edition
The Clerk would prepare an article for the December edition of Marcham and District News.

2025/251 Suspension of Standing Orders
The duration of the meeting had been 2 hours, and Council

RESOLVED:

That standing order 3z be suspended to allow business to continue.

2025/252 The Chairman moved that in accordance with s. 1(2) Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public's interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

RESOLVED:

that the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following item which related to exempt information

Item discussed

Rights of access over Parish Council land and installation of footpath by Pye Homes.

RESOLVED:

That a site visit be arranged

2025/252 Date of Next Meeting
The next meeting would be held on Monday 10th November, 2025 at 7.30 p.m. in the village hall.

The meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.

Signed Date