Sherborne Parish PC – Monthly Meeting Minutes

Held at Sherborne Social Club, 18th May 2026

Councillors in attendance: Y Blankley (YB), C Humphries (CH), T Whiffen (TW), A Woolley (AW), H Greyson-Gaito (HGG), E Richardson (ER)

Apologies: S Challis (SC)

1. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**
   - The minutes of the April 2026 meeting were read and discussed. Two corrections were noted.

   PC Actions Post Meeting:
   - HGG to correct and April minutes to be published.

2. **Actions / Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**
   - **TW's correspondence with NT:** COMPLETE. TW confirmed the chain of correspondence has concluded.

     PC Actions Post Meeting:
     - NA

   - **AW to draft a summary of the Solar Farm scheme for the PC website:** IN PROGRESS. AW has prepared a briefing note, highlighting potential advantages for the village. The note has been shared with TW.

     PC Actions Post Meeting:
     - **AW to publish the solar farm briefing note on the PC website.**

   - **TW to arrange meeting with NT Renewable Energy Team to raise local issues re Solar Farm:** OUTSTANDING – YB has spoken with a NT renewable energy coordinator in advance of this. See Solar Farm section below.

     PC Actions Post Meeting:
     - NA

   - **YB to write letter to Thames Water with neighbouring parishes:** OUTSTANDING.

     PC Actions Post Meeting:
     - YB to progress the Thames Water letter with neighbouring parishes.

   - **HGG to identify funding sources for war memorial repairs:** IN PROGRESS – see War Memorial section in AOB below.

     PC Actions Post Meeting:
     - NA

   - **ER to engage with the school and PTA:** IN PROGRESS - ER to meet with the school and PTA on Friday 5th June.

     PC Actions Post Meeting:
     - ER to report back to the PC following the school and PTA meeting.

3. **Stakeholder Engagement**

- **<u>The Gardens Trust:</u>** The visit by The Gardens Trust took place on 28th April as planned. AW and Roger Davies facilitated the meeting. The session began at the Social Club with presentations by Roger Davies and AW before continuing with a walk through the village to view the Broadwaters. The walk did not go onto National Trust land. Feedback from all attendees was very positive. Several grateful emails have since been received by the PC, which YB will circulate to all councillors. The Gardens Trust has offered a donation to the PC as a thank-you for the hospitality, to be directed towards the war memorial restoration fund.

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - YB to circulate emails received from the Gardens Trust to all councillors.

- **Gloucestershire Highways Engagement:** No update at this meeting.

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - NA

4. National Trust

- **NT Internal Board Meeting – Broadwaters:** AW, CH and TW met with Andrew Danson, Simon Nicholas and Laura Nichols from the NT the week following the NT board meeting on 5th May. The key outcomes reported were:
  - There will be no further application for a wetland scheme on the Broadwaters.
  - "Doing nothing" was stated by NT as not an option.
  - NT discussed the possibility of some vegetation removal on the Broadwaters but categorically ruled out any dredging.
  - No funding is currently in place for any works.

  The PC noted that vegetation removal alone would only provide a temporary improvement and would need to be repeated. The NT acknowledged this. The PC will continue to monitor.

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - NA

- **Community Liaison Group:** NT provided example terms of reference for Community Liaison Groups used elsewhere (at meeting with AW, CH and TW). However, NT indicated there is currently no topic to discuss given that Lady Sherborne's Walk has no funding and no plans to proceed. The PC proposed the Broadwaters as the subject for a liaison group, but this was declined. It was suggested broader access and nature topics as a possible focus, but NT indicated that establishing a liaison group within the next three months was not feasible. The PC agreed to park the Community Liaison Group in the short term given the NT's current financial constraints. The PC will revisit this when NT projects resume.

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - NA

- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):** At the NT meeting, NT raised a concern about communications relating to BNG, referencing a post by a local resident about the Gloucestershire Nature Partnership local BNG brokerage. NT questioned whether there was value in communicating with the PC if information was not being absorbed by the wider community.

  The PC clarified that local residents act independently and the PC is not responsible for their communications.

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - NA

- **Conservation Management Plan (CMP):** NT confirmed the CMP is with their regional conservator for final sign-off and should be published in May 2026. The PC noted that the NT has set numerous deadlines for publication over the past couple of years, and each time publication is put back

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - **AW/CH/TW to monitor CMP publication and report back at the next meeting.**

- **Solar Farm:** AW has prepared a briefing note on the solar farm scheme with a positive tone, highlighting the potential benefits to the village. This has been shared with TW.

  YB has spoken with the NT's renewable energy coordinator and raised the PC's concerns regarding energy tariffs, the reliance on overnight storage heaters by many villagers, and low mobile signal levels affecting smart meter uptake. The NT team are to discuss this internally and come back to the PC.

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - AW to publish the solar farm briefing note on the PC website.

5. Annual Parish Meeting (APM)

- The PC discussed arrangements for the upcoming Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that the APM should provide brief updates on key topics including: the Broadwaters and National Trust, the Solar Farm, the Emergency Plan, community engagement etc. A concise one-page summary for each topic covering: what the issue is, why it matters to the community, what the PC has done, and what is still to come was proposed. It was agreed that the updates should be brief, accessible and aimed at parishioners who may not be closely following developments. The format should invite questions and discussion from the floor.

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - All PC members to prepare brief topic summaries for the APM covering: NT/Broadwaters, Solar Farm, Emergency Plan, community engagement etc.

6. General Communication with Parishioners

It was proposed that the PC should communicate more proactively about its work throughout the year. Suggestions included:

- Reinstating the anonymous question and answer system for NT meetings, which had previously been in use and well-received before activity reduced.
- Sending automated reminders to the community ahead of NT meetings (bimonthly), via the village WhatsApp and the PC website newsletter.
- Further developing the Frequently Asked Questions section on the PC website, drawing on questions previously submitted and answered through the anonymous Q&A system.
  TW confirmed the anonymous Q&A system had worked well previously and the PC agreed it should be reinstated. The PC also agreed that reminder messages should be sent in advance of each NT meeting going forward.

  PC Actions Post Meeting:
  - TW to reinstate the anonymous Q&A system and to arrange for reminders to be sent to the village via WhatsApp and the PC website in advance of each NT meeting.

7. AOB

- **War Memorial:** HGG has researched funding sources and identified the War Memorial Trust as the primary funding option. Roger has prepared a proposal covering the history of the war memorial and outlining restoration options. YB will circulate this proposal to all councillors.

It was agreed to arrange a site meeting at the war memorial with Roger to review the proposal and discuss next steps.

The PC also noted that a donation has been received from the Gardens Trust following their visit, to be directed towards the war memorial restoration fund.

PC Actions Post Meeting:

- YB to circulate Roger's war memorial proposal to all councillors and arrange a site visit.

- **Community Engagement:**

  - **Village Cricket Match**: ER advised that a village cricket match has been organised for Sunday 29th June by residents of Sherborne House. Approximately 8-9 participants have confirmed to date. A cricket pitch is being prepared. ER encouraged councillors and parishioners to take part.

    PC Actions Post Meeting:

    - Continue to promote the match!

  - **School and PTA:** ER is meeting with the school, PTA, and PC representatives next Friday. The school has requested the meeting. ER is not yet aware of the full agenda but will report back to the PC with any outcomes or requests.

    PC Actions Post Meeting:

    - ER to report back to the PC following the school and PTA meeting.