



25 Years
2000 - 2025

Holybrook Parish Council

Proudly serving the residents of Holybrook Parish since 2000

Full Council Meeting of Holybrook Parish Council

This meeting was open to the press and public (subject to room capacity) (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960)

Date of Meeting Monday 9th March 2026

Location Beansheaf Room, Beansheaf Centre, Charrington Road, Calcot, Reading, RG31 7AW

Present
Chairman: Cllr Tull

Also Present: Cllrs Albanese, Bedwell, Croal, Littlewood, Moore, Sharma, Somner and Veerati

Officers: Pam Kirkpatrick (Clerk)

Circulation All Council members

Open forum for members of the public

Two members of the public were present. Resident 1, to observe the meeting with a view to becoming a Parish Councillor, and Resident 2, to thank Cllr Somner, in his capacity as District Councillor, for a recent enquiry response regarding the A4 Bath Road. The resident also requested that councillors add speeding on the A4, between the Fords Farm entrance and the 30mph section of the A4 heading towards Reading, on its next agenda for discussion.

Cllr Tull, in her capacity as Chairman, agreed to the request.

19:40 EXIT Resident 2

Cllr Somner provided a District Councillor report on issues of interest to Holybrook Parish. This included detail of the response that had been provided to Resident 2 about the on-going police investigation following the sad fatality which occurred on the A4 Bath Road in November 2025.

Also included: an Executive Meeting was held on 12th February 2026 in advance of the budget setting. This was a 'testy' meeting. A full budget meeting was held on 26th February 2026. West Berkshire Council has been successful in obtaining a loan from Government. This is a loan.

The Ridgeway consultation is now open. Depending on the outcome which is now expected in early summer, the elections planned for May 2027 may be pushed back by one year.

Cllr Littlewood raised the issue of potholes at the bus gate and Pollards Way. Cllr Somner responded that the pothole at the bus gate should have received a temporary repair.

Council Meeting Minutes – Monday 9th March 2026

Announcement of Public Session and Evacuation Process

No.	Notes	Action
147/25/26	<p>Apologies received for absence</p> <p>Cllrs Salau and Mistry were not present.</p>	
148/25/26	<p>Declarations of interest relevant to the agenda</p> <p>Cllr Tull, non-pecuniary: Community Spirit Award Nominations – winner selection</p> <p>Cllr Moore, non-pecuniary: Community Spirit Award Nominations – winner selection and Planning (26/00100/HOUSE). Pecuniary, Photography Competition – winner selection.</p> <p>Cllr Croal, non-pecuniary: Friends of Linear Park Management Plan and Community Spirit Award Nominations – winner selection</p> <p>Cllr Albanese, pecuniary: Community Spirit Awards Nominations – winner selection</p> <p>Cllr Somner, non-pecuniary: Planning</p>	
149/25/26	<p>Approval and adoption of Minutes</p> <p>Full Council Meeting - Monday 12th January 2026 Proposed by Cllr Somner, seconded by Cllr Littlewood. APPROVED.</p>	

Council Decisions/Ratification of Committee Recommendations

No.	Notes	Action
150/25/26	<p>Financial Decisions</p> <p>a) Payments as listed on payment sheet 12-2025/26 were APPROVED.</p> <p>b) Annual Management Risk Assessment was RATIFIED. It was acknowledged and ACCEPTED that the insurance values would be updated once the insurance renewal had been approved.</p> <p>c) Members NOTED that no VAT claims have been submitted to HMRC due to de minimis calculations.</p> <p>It was AGREED that a VAT claim will be prepared and submitted as part of the year-end process in accordance with Financial Regulations (9.8).</p>	Clerk
151/25/26	<p>Insurance</p> <p>Members reviewed the insurance quotations provided with the agenda acknowledging that two quotations had been received (one from a broker who had provided the best value quote they had received).</p> <p>a) AGREED: Zurich Municipal to continue as the insurance provider for Holybrook Parish Council.</p> <p>b) AGREED: a 3-year term is to be accepted.</p>	

153/25/26	<p>Policies and Procedures</p> <p>The following new policies and procedures were APPROVED following recommendations in the recent Fire and General Risk Assessments of the Beansheaf Centre, which were completed by independent companies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Fire Safety Policy ii) Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) iii) Emergency Light Testing Procedure 										
154/25/26	<p>Co-option of Prospective New Councillor</p> <p>AGREED: that, due to the commitment, dedication and clear interest displayed by the prospective new councillor, item 3.6 (interview) of the Co-option Policy and Procedure is dispensed with and the process is moved straight to item 3.7 (presentation) which will be completed at the next full council meeting in April.</p>										
155/25/26	<p>Planning: New Applications</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="256 770 1549 1104"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="256 770 512 801">Application no</th> <th data-bbox="512 770 927 801">Address</th> <th data-bbox="927 770 1549 801">Proposal</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="256 801 512 976">26/00100/HOUSE</td> <td data-bbox="512 801 927 976">23 Corsham Road, Calcot, Reading, RG31 7ZH</td> <td data-bbox="927 801 1549 976">Install a garden office of less than 2.5 metres high in the back garden. The office will be built and installed by a professional company. Dimensions will be 4.2 metres wide, 2.1 metres deep and 2.466 metres high.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="256 976 512 1104">26/00300/HOUSE</td> <td data-bbox="512 976 927 1104">11 Balfour Drive, Calcot, Reading, RG31 7BN</td> <td data-bbox="927 976 1549 1104">Two storey side extension and first floor rear extension over existing ground floor and new side boundary fence.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Members OBJECTED to these applications (Cllr Somner did not vote due to his declared interest).</p>		Application no	Address	Proposal	26/00100/HOUSE	23 Corsham Road, Calcot, Reading, RG31 7ZH	Install a garden office of less than 2.5 metres high in the back garden. The office will be built and installed by a professional company. Dimensions will be 4.2 metres wide, 2.1 metres deep and 2.466 metres high.	26/00300/HOUSE	11 Balfour Drive, Calcot, Reading, RG31 7BN	Two storey side extension and first floor rear extension over existing ground floor and new side boundary fence.
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26/00300/HOUSE	11 Balfour Drive, Calcot, Reading, RG31 7BN	Two storey side extension and first floor rear extension over existing ground floor and new side boundary fence.									
156/25/26	<p>Beansheaf Centre – disability access</p> <p>APPROVED: That the Council commission an assessment of the entrance door at the Beansheaf Centre, specifically in relation to opening force and manoeuvrability, and explore reasonable adjustments, including adjustment or replacement of the door closer or installation of an assisted opening mechanism, considering cost, fire safety compliance and safeguarding requirements.</p>										
157/25/26	<p>Bin Locations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Subject to approval from West Berkshire Council, Members APPROVED a ground-lock dual bin be installed at the suggested location in Honey Bee street (approximately: 51.440414, -1.062075). b) Subject to approval from West Berkshire Council, Members APPROVED a ballast based dual bin be installed at the suggested location on Dorking Way (approximately: 51.439475, -1.058083). 										

158/25/26	<p>Linear Park Bench and Resident Memorials</p> <p>Members APPROVED the request from West Berkshire Council that memorial plaques can be attached to the new bench which is due to be installed in Linear Park (along the new link footpath) following a formal request being made to West Berkshire Council by residents before any plaque is installed. However, members RATIFIED that this is based on their being no costs borne by the Parish Council and that it is ensured that plaques are flat and comfortable for anyone using the bench. Members would also like confirmation on the size of each plaque.</p>	
159/25/26	<p>The Garage – Additional works</p> <p>AGREED: To install stable-style doors at The Garage to improve light, safety and visibility, at a maximum cost of £8,000. Members NOTED that the door material would be wood.</p> <p>a) AGREED: that Community Infrastructure Levy Monies is used to fund this work as it is a continued part of the building works. It was further AGREED that the doors would be wooden and the glass section of the door is to be plain glass.</p> <p>Members further acknowledged and ACCEPTED that, to date, only one quotation had been received for the doors due to the specialist nature of the door design.</p>	
160/25/26	<p>Local Government Reorganisation – public consultation details</p> <p>AGREED a maximum budget of £50 is spent on a targeted social media post advising residents of the consultation; funded from the 'events' earmarked reserves. The information is also to be posted on the Council website and in the Council noticeboards.</p> <p>The information is to be kept simple and only advise residents that the consultation is open.</p>	
161/25/26	<p>Vision and Mission Statement, and Core Values</p> <p>The proposed Mission and Vision Statements and Core Values were ADOPTED by councillors.</p> <p>These will be launched at the Annual Parish Assembly and will be featured on the Council's website.</p>	
162/25/26	<p>Electric Vehicle Charge Points at the Holybrook Centre Car Park</p> <p>AGREED: That the decision, regarding EV charge points, be delegated to the Kennet Valley Community Association.</p> <p>Members NOTED that the Clerk has raised concern with West Berkshire Council regarding a possible planning breach if the car parking spaces are altered.</p>	
163/25/26	<p>Overgrown Foliage Quotation Approval</p> <p>APPROVED: quotation to the sum £1,355+ VAT to have the foliage (brambles, ivy, nettles and trees) cut back from 10 homes surrounding the David Prior 'Diddy' Park.</p> <p>Members APPROVED that only one quotation was sought due to the complexity of arranging access to affected properties.</p>	

Information Items/Reports

<p>164/25/26</p>	<p>Clerk's Report</p> <p>A written report was circulated with the agenda. APPENDIX 1.</p> <p>In response to points within the report, Members AGREED that a 'polite notice' be issued to Calcot Schools in relation to parental parking on side-streets in Beansheaf.</p> <p>It was further AGREED that the lack of clubs and activities for older people in the Parish be added to the next full council agenda for further consideration.</p>	
<p>165/25/26</p>	<p>Delegated Task Register</p> <p>A written report was NOTED.</p>	
<p>166/25/26</p>	<p>Community Litter Picks Report</p> <p>Cllr Croal provided a verbal report following the community litter pick which took place in Fords Farm on Saturday 7th March. It was stated that the event was a success with 10 people attending and 15 bags of litter collected.</p> <p>It was suggested that Councillor Tull's garage could be used as a meeting point for future events in Fords Farm but the logistics of this need investigation.</p> <p>The next litter pick will take place from the Beansheaf Centre in May.</p>	
<p>167/25/26</p>	<p>West Berkshire Council Community Climate Forum (WBCCCF) Meeting report</p> <p>Cllr Croal provided a brief verbal report from the WBCCCF meeting which took place on Wednesday 4th March 2026.</p> <p>The Forum is now open to all residents which has seen an increase in attendees.</p> <p>A talk was given from the West Berkshire Countryside Association.</p> <p>Annual Assemblies were discussed and, resultantly, Cllr Croal has been asked to speak at a District Parish Conference on the matter alongside a councillor from Cold Ash.</p>	
<p>168/25/26</p>	<p>Community Speed Watch Report</p> <p>Cllrs Tull and Veerati, and the Clerk provided a short verbal report on the recent activity of the Community Speed Watch team which included dates speed watch has occurred, an increase in the number of team members, the number of cars observed during each watch.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that the speed watch team being out certainly raises awareness and an obvious decrease in speed is observed. Of greater concern is driver behaviour.</p> <p>It was NOTED at this point that there had been an increase in the number of incidents on the A4 Bath Road at the Sainsbury's/Dorking Way junction. It was considered that it may be worth the Council recontacting West Berkshire Council Highways about this matter.</p>	

169/25/26	<p>Friends of Linear Park (FoLP) Management Plan</p> <p>Members commented that the FoLP's Plan was ambitious and it was good to have sight of it.</p> <p>It was further commented that what FoLP achieves is 'fantastic' and that the Council is keen to support the work of the group where it can.</p> <p>Members NOTED the plan. No further action was agreed.</p>	
170/25/26	<p>Chairman's Remarks</p> <p>Cllr Tull commented on the event which was held in honour of Cllr Lenaghan which was a well-attended memorial event.</p> <p>Cllr Tull invited Cllrs, Bedwell, Croal, Somner and Mistry to present awards at the Annual Assembly. Each member accepted the responsibility (bar Cllr Mistry who was not present).</p>	
171/25/26	<p>Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it was RESOLVED that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press leave the meeting during consideration of items: 172/25/26, 173/25/26, 174/25/26 and 175/25/26.</p> <p>21:25 EXIT resident 1.</p> <p>For reasons of expedience, item Hire – Decision Reconsideration was brought forward on the agenda.</p>	
172/25/26	<p>The Garage</p> <p>a) RATIFIED: that incremental rent increases, over the next three years, be applied to The Garage commencing each April. The level of rent was set for the next three years. However, Members stressed that the priority for the Council is to ensure that The Garage remains as a viable Community Asset and this should be considered when financial decisions are made.</p> <p>b) RATIFIED: that the Clerk and Cllr Tull meet with the owner of The Garage to discuss the proposed rental agreement.</p>	
173/25/26	<p>Hirer – Decision Reconsideration</p> <p>AGREED: that a hirer, who had been precluded from future hire by the Clerk is reinstated with specific, additional conditions in place.</p> <p>Members acknowledged that this decision is only for use of the Beansheaf Centre and any future use of the Linear Park would be determined by West Berkshire Council.</p>	
174/25/26	<p>Community Spirit Award Nominations – winner selection</p> <p>Due to declared interests, Cllrs who had made a declaration left the room during discussion under their particular interest and had no vote on that category.</p> <p>Under two categories: June Scott Award and Young Person(s) of the year award joint winners were selected. Therefore, Members AGREED that each winner would be awarded a joint trophy and a £25.00 voucher each.</p>	

175/25/26	<p>Photography Competition – Winner Selection</p> <p>Cllr Moore exited the room due to his declared interest.</p> <p>Members acknowledged and praised the very high quality of the photography entries. As such, it was AGREED that two winners in the adult category 'Hidden gems of Our Parish' would be selected with one winner under a title of 'landscape' and another under the title 'nature'. Both will receive the previously agreed prize of a £50 voucher.</p>	
<p>There being no further business, the meeting closed at 22:00</p>		

Signed: Dated:

Minutes prepared by:	Pam Kirkpatrick, Clerk
Minutes dated:	15 th January 2026

Appendix 1

Clerk's Written Report:

Monday 9th March 2026

Beansheaf Centre/Parish Office:

General:

- 14/01/2026** Water leak detection survey was completed with no identifiable leaks found in the Beansheaf Centre (copy of report enclosed). However, the water meter did have a + symbol which does, reportedly, mean some water flow. More information and next steps will be on the Council's April agenda for discussion.
- 28/01/2026** Complaints received stating that the Centre alarm had been sounding in the evenings. On investigation no obvious cause was determined and an engineer was called. An over-the-phone investigation was completed. Update expected but no further reports from residents.
- 02/02/2026** Dead-leg in ladies' toilet removed and secondary pump replaced. Both items were highlighted in the recent legionella Risk Assessment.
- 09/02/2026:** Fire Risk Assessment completed. Several items of low-level, medium level and high risk were identified. Quick actions have been undertaken, whilst others remain outstanding. This work remains ongoing with some items on the March agenda for approval.
- 23/01/2026** The Police have identified all persons involved in the destruction of the outside toilets in Linear Park.
- 30/01/2026:** Legionella Risk Assessment was completed with several actions points raised. Many have been completed and some require full council approval.
- 26/02/2026** Emergency light testing completed. Several lights failed the drain down test and must be replaced. Cost £700.00 +VAT.
- 03/02/2026** The Council received several compliments following the February edition of the newsletter. Particular praise was for it being 'informative'.
- 27/02/2026:** Defibrillator may not be functioning correctly due to low temperature. Electrician coming to assess.

Maintenance:

Centre:

- 17/02/2026** New Heat detector was required in the Centre kitchen. Replacement cost £204.36 inc VAT
- 25/02/2026:** Linear Hall, left-hand, front shutter curtain replaced (cost £1,240 + VAT) following shutting fault. This shutter has now had a new motor and new curtain so is, essentially, a new shutter.
- 05/03/2026** Lower Keep wall is being repainted. Mirrors in ladies' and Men's toilets being replaced along with the sink sealant.

Office:

- 28/01/2026** All office staff completed and passed the Emergency 1st Aid at Work course. We were accompanied by three Holybrook residents. Everyone found the course interesting and informative. One resident has produced a newsletter article.

03/03/2026 The originally selected company for IOSH training is no longer providing the course. The next best price, for an on-line course is £549 + VAT. This is within the Council's budget and has, therefore, been booked.

24/03/2026 Clerk attending an Emergency Planning training session at Shaw House.

Parish:

Playgrounds:

19/01/2026: Rope replaced on the jungle climber in the Dave Prior 'diddy' Park (cost: £545.75 ex VAT).

29/01/2026: Multi-play unit, that had been subjected to arson, on the Holymead playground was replaced.

12/02/2026: WW1 Memorial bench was installed on the Holymead Playground.

24/02/2026: Parish contractor attended David Prior 'diddy' Park to address to outstanding grounds maintenance works which the Clerk highlighted in November 2025.

General:

08/01/2026: Fly-tipping reported to and removed by West Berkshire Council (found by the Community Payback team).

28/01/2026 Following a request from Friends of Linear Park (Via Cllr Veerati) West Berkshire Council's Countryside Department was contacted for clarification on what work and exact location its contractor was responsible for on the Fairfields estate. A response was immediately forthcoming.

03/02/2026 West Berkshire Council has approved a location for the requested bench in Linear Park:



17/02/2026 Moving forward, the Community Payback Team will be working in the Parish one Tuesday per month. Their next visit, scheduled for 3rd March, has been postponed to 24th March.

18/02/2026 Several bins through the Parish were not emptied during a week in February due to staff illness. The work was caught up with on 18th February 2026.

20/02/2026 Two residents (separately) attended the Parish Office to raise issues for Council consideration. Resident 1 raised the following:

- 1) inconsiderate car parking issues on Latimer Drive during the school run periods of the day.
- 2) The amount of litter on Latimer Drive
- 3) lack of clubs/activities for older people in the Parish.

Resident 2 raised the following:

- 1) Lack of clubs/activities for older people in the Parish.

26/02/2026 Pothole on Pollards Way - due for repair on 4th March 2026.

Finance:

- The Valuation Office Agency has confirmed the revaluation of the Beansheaf Centre, making The Garage a separate entity. Previous rating of £11,750 has been revised to £11,000 for the Beansheaf Centre and £4,600 for The Garage. Likewise, Non-Domestic Rates Demands for 1st April to 4th August 2025 is £0.00 and from 5th August 2025 to 31st March 2026 is £0 (with the small business relief applied).
- The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has advised of an increase in the Section 137 expenditure limit for parish and town councils in England for the 2026/27 financial year. The new limit is £11.60 per elector, up from £11.10 in 2025/26. The increase reflects the percentage rise in the retail price index between September 2024 and September 2025, in accordance with Schedule 12B of the Local Government Act 1972. Section 137 of the Act allows parish and town councils to incur expenditures for purposes that benefit their communities when no specific statutory power is available.
- Unity is reducing the Council's interest rate from 2.10% gross to 1.95% gross.
- Nationwide is reducing the Council's interest rate from 1.55% gross to 1.50% gross.
- The Council's electricity provider has given a £100.00 credit to the Council due to misinformation being provided on the re-selling of the power generated by the solar panels. Due to this, the Council is not currently selling back any excess power generation.

West Berkshire Council Planning Decisions:

Application Number	Location	Application Proposal	Decision
25/02825/CERTP	Woodstock Mill Lane Calcot Reading	Double garage and carport.	Refused
25/02398/FUL	101 Underwood Road, Calcot, Reading, RG30 3PA	Change of Use from Residential (C3) to Children's Home (C2)	Refused