

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SHERFIELD ENGLISH PARISH COUNCIL
held on Wednesday 7th January 2026 at 7.30pm
at the Pavilion, Sherfield English Recreation Ground

Present: Councillor David Griffiths (Chairman)
 Councillors Sheila Cook, Stephen Dovey, Donnamarie Lewis and Rod Noble

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Parish Clerk)
 Councillor Nick Adams-King (Test Valley Borough Councillor and Hampshire County Councillor)
 Applicant (x3) & Agent for planning application 25/02875/FULLS
 4 members of public

26/208 APOLOGIES
 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jerome Hoffman and Graham Noble.

26/209 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RELATING TO AGENDA ITEMS
 There were no declarations of interest.

26/210 OPEN FORUM
 The Agent and applicant for planning application 25/02875/FULLS East Croft, being considered later in the meeting, explained the proposal to convert an agricultural barn into a micro wedding venue, to provide small, low cost, simple wedding ceremonies, with potential overnight accommodation. There had been some confusion during the pre-application process regarding classification of the land, whether agricultural or residential. The Agent and applicant answered questions from Councillors.

A resident offered to apply, on behalf of the Parish Council, to Hampshire County Council for funding through the Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Plan 2025/26 Bus Grant, to refurbish 3 shelters in the parish.

A resident commented on planning application 25/02934/FULLS Sandhill Game Farm, being considered later in the meeting, expressing concern that the site was expanding. Also commenting on application 25/02899/FULLS Bryher House, that proposed the removal of a copse planted to provide screening.

A resident advised that they had reported flooding on the A27 and the end of Newtown Road to Hampshire County Council Highways.

A resident reported, on behalf of a resident unable to attend, concern that there were no footpaths to/from Dunwood Court and there appeared to be an opportunity to create a footpath on Newtown Lane to Branches Lane if vegetation was reduced.

26/211 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2025 as a true and accurate record.

Chairman signature:

Date:

26/212 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

26/213 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Nick Adams-King (Hampshire County Councillor) reported as follows:

Responding to the resident's report in Open Forum regarding creation of a footpath on Newtown Lane, Councillor Adams-King advised that, due to a number of restrictions, creation of a footpath here was not possible. This had been considered previously. Councillor Adams-King invited the resident to raise the matter directly with him.

The A27 at Shootash, between Embley Lane and Dunwood Hill, will be closing from 2nd February to 28th April 2026, for Southern Water to carry out water main replacement. A consultation event will be held at Awbridge Village Hall on 14th January. Also, the B3084 Dunbridge Lane, between Kimbridge Lane and Romsey Road, will close from 12th January to 13th March 2026 for water main replacement.

A more collaborative approach to road closures was being developed within Hampshire County Council.

Hampshire County Council adopted a Recovery Strategy on 1st December 2025, providing biodiversity protection to large areas of the county.

Full Council on 12th January 2026 will consider the government's request to delay local elections. Councillor Adams-King expressed a preference that elections are not delayed.

The County Council's financial position showed savings of £94m, with a forecast underspend of £40m against the 2025/26 budget. Despite this, council tax will still increase due to rising costs associated with social care, special educational needs and other statutory services.

Land around Weyhill has been withdrawn from the Local Plan by the landowner, resulting in housing allocations falling below the required level. The Local Plan is expected to be adopted by Test Valley Borough Council in summer 2026.

Planning Officers are assessing whether a new application is needed in regard to development at Hill Farm Caravan Park. Planning enforcement attended in mid-December and potential breaches were identified.

Councillors thanked Councillor Adams-King for his updates and he left the meeting

26/214 Local Government Reorganisation

Government is consulting on 4 proposals for changes to the local government structure in the area, under Local Government Reorganisation. Full details at:

<https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/hampshire-isle-of-wight-portsmouth-southampton/>

It was agreed that Sherfield English Parish Council's preferred option was Option 1 – Mid Hampshire – incorporating East Hampshire, New Forest, Test Valley and Winchester, as these areas have similar characteristics to the current Test Valley.

Chairman signature:

Date:

26/215

The Hatchet Inn

With The Hatchet Inn closing for business some time ago, the Chairman had spoken to the owner, Star Pubs, who had advised that the options available were: (i) a 1-year tenancy with no contractual payment; or (ii) payment of a deposit, which would cover 3 months' rent and include a complete refurbishment; or (iii) the property could be sold. With Sherfield English having no community space, except the village hall, and with limited local services, the pub had previously provided a valuable social space. Council considered the opportunity to register the property as an Asset of Community Value. Registering a property as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) offers several benefits:

- If the owner decides to sell, the community has a legally protected window of up to 6 months to prepare a bid to buy the asset, giving the community time to raise funds and form a viable purchase plan.
- It helps prevent valued local buildings from being sold or redeveloped without community awareness.
- ACV status formally recognises the property's social, cultural or recreational importance.
- While not blocking development, ACV listing can be a material consideration in planning applications.
- Owners may be more likely to engage with the community knowing ACV protection is in place.

Overall, ACV registration empowers communities to safeguard and potentially retain assets that are central to local life.

RESOLVED to register The Hatchet Inn as an Asset of Community Value with Test Valley Borough Council.

Action: Parish Clerk to pursue registration of The Hatchett Inn as an ACV

26/216

PLANNING

i. Council considered the following planning application:

| Ref No. | Address | Proposal | Resolved |
|----------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 25/02875/FULLS | East Croft, Branches Lane | Change of Use of an agricultural barn for micro-wedding use and the use of existing 2 bedroom annex as a bed and breakfast <i>The applicants and agent left the meeting</i> | NO OBJECTION subject to conditions regarding parking and access, appropriate to the rural location |
| 25/02899/FULLS | Bryher House, Doctors Hill | Change of use of land to extend residential garden and construction of detached outbuilding consisting of garage and carport | NO COMMENT |
| 25/02934/FULLS | Sandhill Game Farm | Construction of dwelling and provision of package treatment plant | OBJECT – inline with the objections submitted by S.Williamson & Dr Crossfield |

Chairman signature:

Date:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 25/02947/FULLS | Ash Lodge, Danes Road, Awbridge | Erection of an ancillary annexe | NO COMMENT |
| 25/02993/LBWS 25/02992/FULLS | March End, Doctors Hill | Regularisation of repairs carried out to chimney stack and alterations to raise height from 1200mm above existing ridge line to 1900mm above existing ridge | NO OBJECTION |

ii. Due to technical errors with the planning portal, there were no updates to planning applications since the last meeting to report.

26/217 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

In the absence of Councillors Hoffman and G Noble, there was no update on development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

26/218 COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMERGENCY PLAN

Councillor Griffiths advised that he was attending an event on community resilience in North Baddesley the following day and would update further at the next meeting.

26/219 LENGTHSMAN SCHEME to include footpaths and village maintenance

Councillor Dovey reported that overhanging vegetation work had been completed, Grips on Branches Lane had been dug out, and a ditch near the bus shelter on Newtown Road had been dug out. The Lengthsman had been requested to assess repair work to a bus shelter.

A resident reported that an oak tree had fallen on Doctors Hill, blocking the footpath, and enquired whether this could be addressed by the Lengthsman but was advised that this would be a matter for the landowner.

26/220 HIGHWAYS

i.Speeding on the A27

Following agreement at a previous meeting to pursue the purchase of a speed indicator device for the A27, the Parish Clerk advised that there had been issues registering on the Test Valley Borough Council grant portal to apply for a Councillor grant towards the purchase, but work with Test Valley Officers to resolve the issue was ongoing and as soon as the Clerk was able to access the portal an application would be uploaded.

Action: Parish Clerk to pursue funding for the purchase of a speed indicator device.

Following agreement at the last meeting to submit a request to Hampshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for the installation of a fixed speed camera on the A27, and expansion of the 40mph section of the A27, the Parish Clerk advised that she had been in communication with the PCC's office, who had in turn been liaising with the local policing team, who had requested that the Clerk make contact directly.

Action: Parish Clerk to continue to pursue the requests for a fixed speed camera and expansion of the 40mph section on the A27

Chairman signature:

Date:

ii. Other highways matters

Following the offer from a resident during Open Forum to submit an application to Hampshire County Council for bus shelter refurbishment, it was agreed that the Parish Council would apply for funding to replace/refurbish 3 shelters owned by the Parish Council.

Action: Parish Council to apply for funding from the Bus Service Improvement Plan 2025/26 to replace/refurbish Parish Council owned bus shelters

26/221

VILLAGE HALL

The Chair of the Village Hall Trust [UFG] reported that the solar installation was now complete and the village hall was carbon neutral, and able to act as a resilience hub for the village in case of power outage, although more formal resilience planning was needed for the village hall to become a formal resilience hub.

In response to an enquiry regarding asbestos in the hall, UFG confirmed that low-grade asbestos is present in the hall and is managed, however, this may restrict certain types of bookings, such as ball games.

26/222

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:

The following reports were noted:

Sherfield English & District Community Association (SEDCA)

Councillor Lewis advised that the next edition was under preparation and an email had been sent to all contributors with a content deadline of 18th January. Adverts were being organised. A new feature would be a monthly report on milestone birthdays, local achievements etc, to celebrate the local community. Councillor Griffiths advised that he had requested funding in the Parish Council's 2026/27 budget for the cost of newsletter printing, 260 copies of each publication were printed.

Defibrillator

Councillor Griffiths reported that all defibrillators had been checked and were working. A replacement set of pads was required at the Pavilion at an estimated cost of £200.

St Leonard's Parish Church

Councillor Noble reported that scaffolding had been removed following guttering work as remaining work was at lower level, although currently awaiting parts.

26/223

FINANCE

i. Bank Balance

It was noted that the bank balance at TSB as at 31st December 2025 was £11,179.88.

ii. Payments for approval

RESOLVED

to approve the following payment:

M Taylor – Parish Clerk's Salary December 2025 - £186.00

Chairman signature:

Date:

iii. Online Banking

Councillor Griffiths reported that TSB's online banking service had been below expectations with recent issues making payments online. It was agreed to research alternative online banking arrangements.

Action: Parish Clerk to research other banks and report back to the next meeting

iv. Budget 2026/27

RESOLVED to adopt a budget for 2026/27 as set out in appendix I to these minutes and to submit a precept request for £15,000 to Test Valley Borough Council.

26/224

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18th February 2026, 7.30pm at The Pavilion, Sherfield English Recreation Ground.

Future meetings: 22nd April 2026 and 20th May 2026.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm.

Chairman signature:

Date: