

To be completed only by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other smaller authorities* where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, that meet the qualifying criteria, and that wish to CERTIFY themselves as EXEMPT from a limited assurance review

Guidance notes on completing Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21

1. Every smaller authority in England where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less must, following the end of each financial year, complete Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices*, unless the authority:

- a) does not meet the qualifying criteria for exemption; or
- b) does not wish to certify itself as exempt

2. Smaller authorities where the higher of all gross annual income or gross annual expenditure does not exceed £25,000 and that meet the qualifying criteria as set out in the Certificate of Exemption are able to declare themselves exempt from sending the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor for a limited assurance review provided the authority completes:

- a) The Certificate of Exemption, page 3 and returns a copy of it to the external auditor either by email or by post (not both) no later than 30 June 2021. Failure to do so will result in reminder letter(s) for which the Authority will be charged £40 +VAT for each letter; and
- b) The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Part 2) which is made up of:

- Annual Internal Audit Report (page 4) must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement (page 5) must be completed and approved by the authority.
 - Section 2 – Accounting Statements (page 6) must be completed and approved by the authority.
- NOTE: Authorities certifying themselves as exempt SHOULD NOT send the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor.**

3. The authority must approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement before approving Section 2 Accounting Statements and both must be approved and published on the authority website/webpage before 1 July 2021.

Publication Requirements

Smaller authorities must publish various documents on a publicly available website as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. These include:

- Certificate of Exemption, page 3
- Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21, page 4
- Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21, page 5
- Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21, page 6
- Analysis of variances
- Bank reconciliation
- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and other information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Limited Assurance Review

Any smaller authority may request a limited assurance review. If so, the authority should not certify itself as exempt or complete the Certificate of Exemption. Instead it should complete Part 3 of the AGAR 2020/21 and return it to the external auditor together with the supporting documentation requested by the external auditor. The cost to the authority for the review will be **£200 + VAT**.

Provided that the authority certifies itself as exempt, and completes and publishes the documents listed under 'Publication Requirements', there is no requirement for the authority to have a review. If it decides to certify itself as exempt, the authority must complete and return the Certificate of Exemption on Page 3 to the external auditor to confirm that it has certified itself exempt.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*For a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21, Sections 1 and 2

- An authority that wishes to declare itself exempt from the requirement for a limited assurance review must do so at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2021. It should not submit its Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor. However, as part of a more proportionate regime, the authority must comply with the requirements of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.
- The Certificate of Exemption must be returned to the external auditor no later than **30 June 2021**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 + VAT for each letter.
- The authority must comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR and the Certificate of Exemption. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide* which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end.
- The authority should receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Avoid making amendments to the completed annual return. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness at the meeting at which it is signed off.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- The authority must publish numerical and narrative explanations for significant variances in the accounting statements on page 6. Guidance is provided in the *Practitioners' Guide* which may assist.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2020) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2021).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, must set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which must include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority must publish, on the authority website/webpage, the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor before **1 July 2021**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes been completed?	✓	
	Have the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights been published?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', is an explanation available for publication?	✓	
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been published?	✓	
	Is an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 available, should a question be raised by a local elector and/or an interested party?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? (Local Councils only)	✓	

* *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2020/21 Part 2

To be completed by smaller authorities where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31 March 2021, and that wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015

There is no requirement to have a limited assurance review or to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor, provided that the authority has certified itself as exempt at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2021 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than 30 June 2021 notifying the external auditor.

Shipton Gorge Parish Council

certifies that during the financial year 2020/21, the higher of the authority's total gross income for the year or total gross annual expenditure, for the year did not exceed **£25,000**

Total annual gross income for the authority 2020/21: **£9,479**

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2020/21: **£7,241**

There are certain circumstances in which an authority will be unable to certify itself as exempt, so that a limited assurance review will still be required. If an authority is unable to confirm the statements below then it cannot certify itself as exempt and it must submit the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return Part 3 to the external auditor to undertake a limited assurance review for which a fee of **£200 + VAT** will be payable.

By signing this Certificate of Exemption you are confirming that:

- The authority was in existence on 1st April 2017
 - In relation to the preceding financial year (2019/20), the external auditor has not:
 - issued a public interest report in respect of the authority or any entity connected with it
 - made a statutory recommendation to the authority, relating to the authority or any entity connected with it
 - issued an advisory notice under paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 8 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act"), and has not withdrawn the notice
 - commenced judicial review proceedings under section 31(1) of the Act
 - made an application under section 28(1) of the Act for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, and the application has not been withdrawn nor has the court refused to make the declaration
 - The court has not declared an item of account unlawful after a person made an appeal under section 28(3) of the Act.
- If you are able to confirm that the above statements apply and that the authority neither received gross income, nor incurred gross expenditure, exceeding £25,000, then the Certificate of Exemption can be signed and a copy submitted to the external auditor either by email or by post (not both).
- The Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements, an analysis of variances and the bank reconciliation plus the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 including the period for the exercise of public rights still need to be fully completed and, along with a copy of this certificate, published on the authority website/webpage* before 1 July 2021.
- By signing this certificate you are also confirming that you are aware of this requirement.

I confirm that this Certificate of Exemption was approved by this authority on this date: **19/05/2021**

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer Date **25/05/2021**

Signed by Chairman Date **25/05/2021**

as recorded in minute reference: **20.92**

Generic email address of Authority **clerk@shiptongorge.org.uk**

Telephone number **01308 898189**

*Published web address **shiptongorge.org.uk**

ONLY this Certificate of Exemption should be returned EITHER by email OR by post (not both) as soon as possible after certification to your external auditor, but no later than 30 June 2021. Reminder letters incur a charge of £40 + VAT

Shipton Gorge Parish Council

During the financial year ended 31 March 2021, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2020/21 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			N/A
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2019/20, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2019/20 AGAR tick "not covered")	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
L. The authority publishes information on a website/webpage, up to date at the time of the internal audit, in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
M. The authority, during the previous year (2019-20) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken: 21/05/2021
 Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: [Signature]
 Name of person who carried out the internal audit: Brian Arthur (HGLWD)
 Date: 21/05/2021

* If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).
 **Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

We acknowledge as the members of:

Shipton Gorge Parish Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, that:

Agreed	
Yes	No

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable, in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	✓	Yes	has met all of its responsibilities where as a body corporate it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation must be published

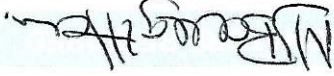
This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

19/05/2021

and recorded as minute reference:

20.92

Chairman



Clerk

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Other information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)	
Yes	No

The authority website/webpage is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.

shiptongorge.org.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

Shipton Gorge Parish Council

Notes and guidance	Year ending	
	31 March 2021	31 March 2020
Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.	£	£
Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.	10,742	9,427
Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.	8,963	8,723
Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.	543	305
Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.	2,830	2,000
Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).	0	0
Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).	4,411	5,713
Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).	13,007	10,742
1. Balances brought forward		
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies		
3. (+) Total other receipts		
4. (-) Staff costs		
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments		
6. (-) All other payments		
7. (=) Balances carried forward		
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	10,742	10,742
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	46,827	46,827
10. Total borrowings	0	0
The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.	13,007	
The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.	46,827	
The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PwLB).	0	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No
The Council as a body corporate acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.		
N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.		

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2021 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority. Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

M.A.O.
Date 19/05/2021

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date: 19/05/2021

as recorded in minute reference: 20.92

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

M.A.O.

**BANK RECONCILIATION
SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 01/04/20-31/03/21**

Balances brought forward

Plus receipts

Precept

BT Wayleave

Western Power Wayleave

Bank interest

Donations

VAT recovered

Total

£ 8,963.00
£ 8.82
£ 7.61
£ 28.24
£ 499.55
£ 9,507.22

Less expenditure

£ 7,241.22

Total

£ 2,266.00

Balance in accounts at 31/03/21

Current

Instant access

Playing field

Total

£ 3,406.92
£ 4,102.55
£ 5,497.96

Less unrepresented cheques

Total

£ 13,007.43

Bank Reconciliation Financial year ending 31 March 2021
End of Year
Shipton Gorge Parish Council

Prepared by Christine Huxtable (RFO)
 15/05/2021

Approved by Mary Boughton (Chairman)
 16/05/2021

Balance per bank statements as at 31 March 2021			£
Current account	3,406.92		
Instant access	4,102.55		
Playing field	5,497.96		
Total		13,007.43	
Less unrepresented cheques		none	
Cheque number			
Total		13,007.43	
Net bank balances as at 31 March 2021		13,007.43	
The net balances reconcile with the receipts and payments as follows			
Opening Balance	10741.43		
Receipts in the year	9507.22		
Payments in the year	-7241.22		
Total		13,007.43	

Current account breakdown 2021

	£2,534.88	
	-£865.72	
	£1,669.16	
	£8,963.00	
	£10,632.16	
	£4,411.22	
	£2,830.00	
	£500.00	
	£7,741.22	
	£7,741.22	
	£8.82	
	£7.61	
	£499.55	
	£515.98	
	£3,406.92	
	£0.00	
Balance 31/03/20		3406.92
less unrepresented cheque		515.98
Total		-7741.22
Precept		
Grants/donations		
Total		
Expenditure		
Wages HMRC		
Transferred to playing field acc.		
Total		
Extras into account		
BT Wayleave		
Western Power Wayleave		
VAT reclaim		
Total		
Balance 31/03/21		3406.92
Less unrepresented cheques		515.98

Name of smaller authority: **Shilton Gorge Parish Council**
 County area (local councils and parish meetings only):
 Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all **Blue highlighted boxes**

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- New from 2020/21: variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year;
- a breakdown of approved reserves on the next tab if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept/rates & levies value (Box 2).

	2019/20	2020/21	Variance	Variance	Explanation	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
	£	£	£	%	Required?	
1 Balances Brought Forward	9,427	10,742				Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input. DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	8,723	9,993	240	2.75%	NO	Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward does not agree, query this
3 Total Other Receipts	305	543	238	78.03%	YES	no donations
4 Staff Costs	2,000	2,830	830	41.50%	YES	(increase) for last 2 years
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO	
6 All Other Payments			0	0.00%	NO	
7 Balances Carried Forward	16,455	17,418			NO	VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	10,742	13,007				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	46,827	46,827	0	0.00%	NO	
10 Total Borrowings			0	0.00%	NO	

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable

Variances of £200 or less are tolerable

BOX 10 VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED IF CHANGE CAN BE EXPLAINED BY BOX 5 (CAPITAL PLUS INTEREST PAYMENT)

Shipton Gorge PC internal audit for the year ended 31st March 2021

The following checks have been undertaken for the year ended 31st March 2021:

1. Cheques were reconciled to invoices, bank statements and PC meeting approval. Approval for cheque no. 000984 dated 2/12/20 payable to P Biss for £75 is outstanding and should be confirmed at the next meeting.

2. Accounts spreadsheet was checked against expenditure (cheques issued) and found accurate.

3. Accounts spreadsheet was checked against income and found accurate.

4. Summary income and expenditure report was checked against accounts spreadsheet and bank statements and found accurate

Brian Medland

SGPC Internal Auditor

21st May 2021