

SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

**The Annual Meeting of the Shipton Gorge Parish Council was held
6.00pm on 23rd June 2025 at Shipton Gorge Village Hall**

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

1. To Receive apologies for absence

No apologies received.

2. Election of Chairman

The Clerk took nominations for the Chairman. Cllr Paul Thimont was nominated by Cllr Crafter and Cllr Simmonds seconded the nomination. The new Chairman took over the running of the meeting from the Clerk.

3. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr. Simmonds nominated Cllr Simon Crafter for the role of Vice Chairman, seconded by Cllr Thimont. All agreed unanimously.

4. To Receive Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations

No declarations of interests received or dispensation requests.

5. Democratic Time

Mr Richard Hall and one other Lodgers resident, were in attendance, and the Chairman asked Richard to talk about Item 16 within Democratic Time to enable all to have a full discussion.

Mr Richard Hall reminded councillors that he had sent off a letter to the Chairman of Dorset Council, Cllr Nick Ireland, with a request to try to reverse the boundary change between Lodgers and Shipton Gorge that took place after the previous Community Governance Review (CGR). The councillors raised several queries and Mr Hall responded with further information. The large map of the village within the hall was used to help ensure that councillors were aware of which properties would be affected by any reversal of the recent changes.

For the application to change the boundary to move forward, there may need to be a vote amongst Lodgers and Shipton Gorge villagers to ensure that the majority of the parishioners are happy with the change. Shipton Gorge Parish Council confirmed that it would be prepared to help facilitate this if required.

Another way to initiate a change to the parish council boundaries may be for the unitary Ward boundary to be changed. Dorset Council will then have to change the parish boundary.

Dorset Councillor Sally Holland, who was in attendance, advised that she is being kept informed of the progress of the boundary request change through her fellow Dorset Councillor for Lodgers, Cllr Neil Eysenck.

Shipton Gorge Parish Councillors are in support of the reversal of the CGR boundary as long as those three households within the village that do not want to be moved back into the Loder Parish are not greatly affected or unduly worried.

Cllr Thimont proposed to support the petition for the boundary change, and all councillors agreed.

6. Approval of minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 13th March 2025

Cllr Crafter proposed that the minutes were an accurate record, apart from the spelling of Crochet when it should read Croquet. Cllr Thimont seconded, and Cllr Simmonds also approved.

7. Approval of minutes of Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on 4th April 2025

Cllr Simmonds proposed that the minutes were an accurate record. Cllr Crafter seconded, and Cllr Thimont also approved.

8. Acceptance of notes from Annual Parish Meeting held on 10th April 2025

Following the amendment of one small typing error, all councillors accepted the notes from the meeting as an accurate record.

9. Matters arising since the previous meeting not part of this Agenda.

No matters arising.

10. Dorset Council Overview: Ward Councillor for Chesil Bank: Cllr Sally Holland

Ward Councillor for Chesil Bank Cllr Sally Holland provided a comprehensive update through her report. The Clerk agreed to share three links from her report via the parish council social media Facebook Page and via the parish council website. These links provide information on Wild Camping at Abbotsbury and West Bexington, Shaping the Future of Housing Allocations in Dorset and also the proposed changes for booking access times at Household Recycling Centres across the county. **Action: Clerk to add links to Parish Council Social Media including Facebook and website.**

Following a query regarding the Portland Port incinerator application process, Cllr Holland confirmed that at the moment it appears to be still moving forward, although the public opposition group will be appealing against the decision. Both South Dorset MPs are also against the completion of the processor.

11. Chairman's Report

11.1 Update on Annual Inspection of King George V Playing Field by ROSPA.

The report has highlighted a number of items that require small amounts of work. Cllr Simmonds recommended that we call in the original manufacturers of the playground equipment, Wicksteed, and two others, for quotes to find the best price to bring the equipment up to scratch and well-maintained.

Cllr Thimont and Cllr Crafter also agreed with this request. The Clerk will now go ahead and pull together some quotes. Cllr Simon Crafter may be able to help meet with Play companies during the day. **Action: Clerk to obtain 3 quotes for maintenance work of playground equipment that has been recommended to be repaired in the Annual Inspection report.**

The other item that also needs quite a lot of work is the playpark gates. There is a company in Bridport called Townsends that will be able to sandblast and repaint the gates. Townsend's may also be the company to help with the fixtures of the portable goal posts to enable them to stay erect, and also to resolve the issue with the basketball hoop. **Action: The Clerk was requested to obtain figures for the sandblasting of the gates from Townsend's in Bridport and also find other quotes if possible.**

The Clerk also requested that the groundsman find the sign in the hedge on the way up to the playpark and cut around the sign so that it can be more visible. **Action: Cllr Thimont will request that this be done by the contractor.**

11.2 Update on meeting between Shipton Gorge Parish Council and Loders Parish Council regarding recent amendments by the parish to their existing Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Thimont confirmed that he and Cllr Crafter have recently met with two councillors from Loders Parish Council who took them through some changes that they wish to make to their current Neighbourhood Plan document and to find out where, if any, of the changes impact Shipton Gorge. Cllr Thimont stated that the Neighbourhood Plan was very comprehensive with a great deal of information in the plan on development and even line of sight views. We will be invited to attend further meetings if any other changes are required.

Cllr Forte arrived at the meeting at 7pm.

12. Clerk's Report including correspondence

The Clerk confirmed that we have now received the annual inspection of the equipment on the playing field. Following the discussion under item 11.1, the clerk will follow up on the inspection and endeavour to obtain three quotes from play companies to resolve any outstanding issues as flagged by the report.

The Clerk distributed up-to-date budget monitoring (cash flow) figures for councillors to look at. The Clerk also confirmed that the three old bank accounts had now been closed and that the parish council has just one Unity Trust Bank Account at the moment.

The councillors were happy to receive this information going forward; they agreed that it was clearer than the information previously supplied.

Cllr Simmonds has agreed to take a look at the Accounts Spreadsheet that the clerk uses, and they will work together to refine the format for councillors to receive and clearly understand each quarter. **Action: The Clerk and Cllr Simmonds to work together to refine the format of financial information presented to councillors.**

13. RFO's Report

13.1 Approval of invoices for payment.

Proposed and seconded by Cllr Thimont and Cllr Forte and agreed unanimously by the other councillors.

13.2 To note and approve the Schedule of Regular Payments (inc Salary payments) - to be confirmed prior to meeting.

Proposed and seconded by Cllr Thimont and Cllr Forte and agreed unanimously by the other councillors.

14. Consider an annual donation of £100 to Bride Valley News magazine. Report provided.

Following a very short discussion, it was proposed and seconded by Cllr Thimont and Cllr Forte and agreed unanimously by the other councillors, that the sum of £100 be the parish council's annual donation to Bride Valley News Magazine for the year 2025/2026.

15. Consider annual Donation to Bridport CAB. Report provided.

Following a very short discussion, it was proposed and seconded by Cllr Thimont and Cllr Forte and agreed unanimously by the other councillors, that the sum of £100 be the parish council's annual donation to Bridport CAB for the year 2025/2026.

16. To Consider adding the parish council's support to the petition for a new Community Governance Review (CGR) by Dorset Council on the boundary between Loders Parish Council and Shipton Gorge Parish Council administrative areas. See correspondence provided by Richard Hall.

Following the discussion of this topic within the Democratic Time of this meeting, support has been agreed. See details under Item 5.

17. Councillors' Portfolios:

17.1 Planning: Cllr Crafter

17.1.1 Planning Application P/FUL/2025/02611 Proposal: Erect covered yards over 2 buildings in existing yard area Location: Lynch Farm, Icen Lane, Shipton Gorge.

Cllr Crafter explained the proposed changes to the other councillors. Following a short discussion, Cllr Thimont proposed to support the application, and Cllr Simmonds seconded this proposal; all councillors unanimously agreed.

17.1.2 Planning Application P/HOU/2025/02595 Proposal: Erect single storey side replacement extension and single storey rear replacement extension; remove chimney; insert roof light Location: Greenways, Shipton Road, Shipton Gorge.

Cllr Crafter explained the proposed changes to the other councillors. The deadline for the response from the parish council is 9th July 2025. **Action: Cllrs to decide on whether or not to support this application and advise the Clerk in good time to ensure that the decision and any comments can be added to the Dorset Council Planning Portal by the deadline of 9th July 2025.**

17.2 Defibrillator: Clerk

17.2.1 Update on Defibrillator Training to be held in the village

The Clerk confirmed to councillors that she had been unable to find anybody to run this training in the village. She has reached out to other local Clerks for further information and will advise when there is any positive news.

17.3 Highways/Transport: Cllr Forte

Cllr Forte confirmed that she had nothing further to report since the previous meeting.

Cllr Simmonds reported that the parish council had been recently advised of a camera being set up to help with an annual traffic survey. Each year, on one particular day, 12,000 roads are monitored for traffic as part of a national survey. Brook Street has been chosen in Shipton Gorge. This survey has been done in the village for a number of previous years.

17.4 Playground/ Playing Field: Cllr Thimont

17.4.1 Update on replacement bin for playing field.

Cllr Simmonds has requested that we try to find a lid to the existing bin. She has been on an on-line chat with bin suppliers Glasdon, and they may be able to provide just a lid.

Following the discussion between councillors on possible options, the clerk has been requested to find out if we can get a new replacement bin and also, can the cost of emptying the bin be obtained. **Action: The clerk to contact Dorset Council Waste Services for information on emptying bins and possibly obtaining a bin via Dorset Council.**

17.4.2 Update on replacement signage for playing field.

The Clerk had sourced two new 'No Dogs, except assistance dogs' signs for the playpark gates from the Dorset Council Dog Warden. It was discussed that the existing signs on the gates were rusted onto them. Any changes to the signs will need to be resolved after the gates have been repaired and painted.

17.4.3 Update on the issue of moles in the playing field.

Cllr Thimont confirmed that he had now engaged the services of Phil Hall to remove the issue of moles from the playing field. **Action: The invoice for the service was passed to the Clerk for payment.**

17.5 Countryside Matters/Footpaths/Rights of Way: Cllr Forte

Cllr Forte confirmed that she had nothing further to report since the previous meeting.

17.6 Climate and resilience: Cllr Simmonds

17.6.1 Update on Emergency Resilience Planning.

Following on from the previous meeting, Cllr Simmonds has received further submissions of numerous photographs and video evidence of flooding issues. She has also been photographing flooded fields. She has contacted Alastair Maxwell. Cllr Simmonds now wants to put all the evidence together in a format that will be accessible and easy to view.

On the Resilience Planning, there has been no further action, or no further offers of help.

Adopt a Drain needs to be further discussed and should be an agenda item at the next parish council meeting. Several ideas were discussed briefly, including getting another flyer out to people via the Bride Valley News. If some people can be recruited to help with the issue of blocked drains within the village, it would be very useful to have a team.

Action: The clerk to investigate how other local councils, possibly Litton Cheney Parish Council, have managed an Adopt a Drain project before the next meeting.

Cllr Crafter stated that he had seen that the drains were being cleaned in Burton Bradstock a few days previously and wondered when Shipton Gorge would be on the list for drain clearance.

Action: The Clerk will attempt to find out from Dorset Council with help from Burton Bradstock Clerk.

17.7 IT/Website: Cllr Crafter

The Clerk confirmed that she had nothing further to report since the previous meeting.

17.8 Phone Box/Bookstore/Seed Swap: Cllr Forte

Cllr Forte confirmed that she had nothing further to report since the previous meeting.

18 Councillor's Portfolios

The Council recognises the breadth of work and that without a full council, it can be difficult to cover all the portfolios effectively.

At the suggestion from Cllr Thimont, all councillors agreed to continue to work on their current Portfolios.

19. Date of next meeting: Extraordinary Meeting – set date prior to 30th June 2025. The next scheduled parish council meeting will be 7pm Thursday 10th July 2025.

20. Meeting close.

The meeting closed at 7.48pm.

Debbie Hollings
Clerk/RFO
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