

TACKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th February 2026 at Tackley Primary School

Councillors Present: Councillors Liz Marshall (LM) (Chair), Andrew Lines (AL) (Vice-Chair), Richard Holland-Oakes (RHO), Angus Paxton (AP), Sue Lygo (SL), John Gibbins (JG),

In Attendance: Cherie Carruthers (Clerk)
Genny Early DCllr (WODC)
Tim Sumner DCllr (WODC)

Members of the Public: 2

25/095 Public Participation:

Anne Gwinnett reported that over the past few weeks the condition of potholes within the village has deteriorated significantly. Concern was raised regarding Church Hill and the far end of the Green.

She advised that there are two serious potholes located on Church Hill, just past the church as vehicles exit the village. The positioning of these defects presents a safety hazard, as drivers attempting to avoid them are required to swerve onto the opposite side of the road. It was noted that this creates a heightened risk of collision with oncoming traffic. It was further highlighted that if a motorcyclist were to strike one of these potholes, the consequences could be extremely serious.

In addition to the potholes, she highlighted concerns about blocked and poorly maintained drains. It was noted that drainage clearance falls under the responsibility of OCC. During periods of heavy rainfall, surface water fails to drain adequately, resulting in standing water that obscures potholes and increases the risk to motorists. She referred to the Highways Act 1980, which requires highways authorities to maintain roads in a safe condition and ensure that drainage systems remain functional.

Mrs Gwinnett queried whether OCC operates dedicated maintenance teams for drainage and road repairs and requested clarification on the current maintenance programme, including when Tackley is scheduled for works.

Concerns were also raised regarding OCC's budget allocations. It was noted that the forthcoming budget includes:

- £38.5 million for Zero Bus Emissions initiatives
- £4.5 million for the East Oxford project
- £6 million for Active Travel Phase 2

She expressed the view that significant funds are being directed towards lower-priority health and safety or environmental initiatives, while insufficient funding is allocated to core road safety and maintenance.

RHO commented that, based on travel across the country, Oxfordshire has some of the worst pothole conditions observed.

GE advised that formal complaints should be submitted to Andy Graham, with Liz Leffman copied into correspondence, and that the highways maintenance contract should be reviewed and potentially renegotiated.

TS noted that revenue from vehicle car tax does not go directly to local road maintenance. He added that £500 million has been budgeted nationally for councils to spend on road repairs; however, it was stated that approximately £17 billion is required to bring roads up to an acceptable standard.

Action Points:

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1. Submit formal complaints to AG, copying in Liz Leffman.
2. Request details from OCC regarding dedicated maintenance teams and the scheduled programme for Tackley.
3. Seek clarification on the highways maintenance contract and explore options for review or renegotiation.

25/096 Apologies of Absence: Cllr's Andrew Lines and Andy Graham (OCC) were accepted.

25/097 Declaration of Interest: LM in item 9.i – a family member is a recipient of a payment.

25/098 Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 12 January 2026, were deferred until March's meeting as AL was the only other Cllr at the January meeting to approve the minutes.

25/099 Clerks Report / Actions Register.

- **Sandbag Store:** Martin Harris has confirmed he is able to build. CC to order and arrange delivery.
- **Path Corner:** awaiting costs from Martin Harris.
- **PC Website and gov.uk emails:** First draft has been circulated to Cllr's. Awaiting dates for training for populating the statutory documents on the site.
- **Readvertise Casual Vacancy:** No applications have been received to date, republished.
- **"The Green" road sign** – raised by a resident and CC to be raised directly with OCC, request to see the design, as it is in the conservation area. AP requested that we are made aware before OCC replace the sign.
- **Network Rail Letter:** CC drafted a letter to NR regarding more information on the operations of the replacement bridge, Richard Macroary added key points and provided contact details. This was sent on the 6 February 2026. To date no response had been received.
- **PC rep on Village Hall Committee:** RHO has become a Trustee of the Village Hall, the PC agreed to leave him as the PC rep, but he acknowledged he will have to declare an interest and leave PC discussion re the VH as and when they arise.

25/100 To consider District Council matters:

GE provided the below written update and took questions:

- **Public Toilets in West Oxfordshire.**
West Oxfordshire District Council's Executive will be considering investing over half a million pounds to modernise and improve public toilet facilities in the district, focusing on the most used and valued locations to ensure a better experience for residents and visitors. The Council currently operates 13 public toilets but, following a detailed review and consultation with Town and Parish Councils, six underused sites will close by the end of March 2026. Two of these sites are operated from leased premises and will be handed back to the property owners. This will enable further investment to be focused on the more heavily used facilities, ensuring they are modern, practical and accessible.

Among the planned improvements are full refurbishments at four locations, including Langdale Gate in Witney and Guildenford Car Park in Burford. These upgraded facilities will feature a modern, gender-neutral layout with individual cubicles, improved access for people with disabilities, and better lighting and ventilation.

Contactless card readers would also be introduced at refurbished sites, giving customers the choice of paying with coins or by card payment. This reflects the growing demand for digital payment options and is expected to make the facilities more convenient and accessible to all.

In total, the Council would invest £532,140 into the retained facilities, a move that would also reduce the annual running costs of the service by around £100,000 and avoid nearly £88,000 in repair costs at the sites that are closing.

Facilities that will remain open and benefit from the investment include:

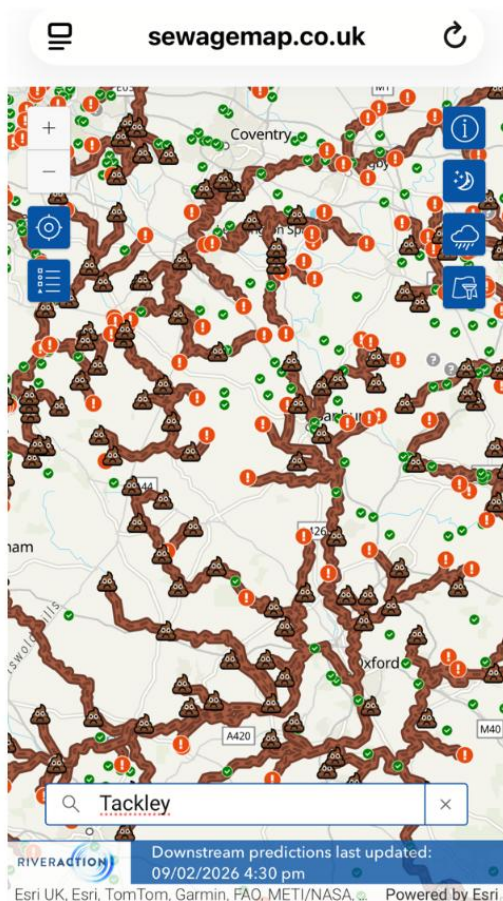
- Langdale Gate, Witney
- Guildenford Car Park and High Street, Burford

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- Hensington Road, Woodstock
- New Street, Chipping Norton
- Bampton Town Hall
- Kilkenny Country Park, Carterton

Toilets set to close include those at The Leys in Witney, Spendlove in Charlbury, the Town Hall in Chipping Norton, Back Lane in Eynsham, Black Bourton Road in Carterton, and Browns Lane in Woodstock. These sites either have low usage or alternative public facilities nearby.

- **Sewage Map:** Thames Water sewage discharge, currently ongoing (9 February)



LM raised concerns regarding the sewage and flooding issues:

There are ongoing issues in Harborne Road, where residents report hearing “glugging” noises from downstairs toilets and consequently avoid using them, as this is understood to indicate sewage backing up into the system. Also some houses near The Green with similar issues.

LM stated that these ongoing drainage and sewage capacity issues reinforce concerns that further development within the village cannot be supported. She noted that OCC flood team had previously said they had regular meetings with Thames Water and asked whether WODC or OCC continue to do so regarding infrastructure capacity and related concerns.

GE and TS confirmed that such meetings do take place; however, they commented that raising issues often feels unproductive and likened the process to “hitting your head against a wall.”

TS updated that:

Developers are looking at private cess pits as a sewage solution in newer applications, as Thames water have openly advised that cannot get water to these developments.

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Anne Gwinette asked if WODC can refuse planning applications unless they have the infrastructure in place before it is approved. GE confirmed yes, they can, they have Grampian rights, where infrastructure must be proven before anyone can move into the dwelling.

He advised about Changing Spaces, who support facilities who wish to provide public toilets. He also reminded the meeting of Community First Oxfordshire's <https://communityfirstoxon.org/> grant availability and Pub is the Hub Scheme <https://www.pubisthehub.org.uk/community-services-fund/>

25/101 To consider County Council matters: None.

25/102 Parish amenities:

- i. **New Trees in Churchyard:** The PCC requested permission to plant two new trees in the churchyard: a cherry and a yew tree. SL confirmed that faculties have been applied for and that Andrew Peakes, land agent, has completed a survey indicating that the planting will not affect any graves. It was agreed that the Parish Council supports the proposal.
Proposed: AP, Seconded: RHO, Decision: All in favour
- ii. **Salt Bins:** SL provided an update on salt bins. All existing salt have solidified. WODC has confirmed that OCC is responsible for providing the bins, while the PC is responsible for filling them. SL will advise the Council whether the bins can be emptied internally or if external assistance will be required.
- iii. **Heath Pond Restoration:** LM updated the meeting regarding the Heath Pond restoration project. Adam Bows from OxEcology inspected the pond in August 2025. The pond was originally surveyed in 2008, and proposals were put forward at that time. A new proposal has been received, and TOE has expressed willingness to fund the project in full. LM will submit a grant application for up to £25,000.
The project will be completed in two stages:
 1. Coppicing trees around the edge of the pond and removing trees from within the pond.
 2. Desilting the pond and restoring the original bank

It was noted that one rare sedge will be carefully protected during the work. The pond will initially look untidy, but it is expected to flourish within a year and be restored to its former state. AP suggested that the village should be informed about the interim appearance of the pond. LM said she would be putting the information into the next newsletter.
- iv. **Potholes:** This item was addressed earlier in the meeting under minute ref 25/095.
- v. **Football Pitch Usage:** LM advised that Yarnton Blues football team contacted the Village Hall regarding usage. There was an implication that outside teams are dictating pitch usage when others ask to use it. The S106 officer confirmed that grants are available for pitch improvements. An inspection to assess drainage and other improvements is required, SL agreed to look into the Football Foundation's guidance on grants and see how feasible they are for Tackley.
AP requested that a letter be sent to Yarnton Men's team reaffirming that while we appreciate any work they do on the pitch, it is Parish Council land and that usage is determined by the Council. CC will check registration at the Land Registry.
- vi. **Stone Stile on Footpath 379/6/10 (off Medcroft Road):** A complaint was received regarding the stone stile preventing access to the footpath. SL reported that the stile has historical and geological significance, being part of the Jurassic seabed. The Council agreed the stile is a heritage feature and should remain. Repairs will be looked into to reinstating steps on either side. SL will report the work on the Public Rights of Way website. The landowner is WODC.
- vii. **Playground Roundabout Replacement:** The Council agreed to fund the replacement of the playground roundabout using S106 funds.
Proposed: AP, Seconded: JG – All in favour.
Action: CC to implement

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- viii. **Inlet to Bund:** Simon Somerscales has agreed to clear vegetation from the inlet to the bund. Work will proceed as agreed. The Council thanks him for his efforts.

25/103 To consider matters of Finance and Policies:

- i. It was approved that the following payments were ratified and the impact the payment would have on the budget and reserves. Proposed: AP, seconded: RHO: **APPROVED**

Gross (£)	VAT (£)	Payee	Details
754.30		Adam Bows OxEcology	Delivery of Heath pond restoration plan
472.60		David Morris	Heath pond restoration plan
£916.07		Clerks Pay	Jan Salary
£50.00		B Marshall	Jan bin emptying
937.69	156.28	Green Scythe Ltd	Jan green space maintenance

25/104 Next Meeting Agenda Items:

- Dog Poo Bins: CC to investigate cost of a second collection per week.
- Parking under the oak tree Rousham road. Request residents stop parking.
- Litter – SL to contact Village Hall to remind their hirers to use main black bins.

Next Meeting: Monday 9 March 2026 @ 7pm.

Meeting Finished: 20:42pm

Signed as a true record of the Tackley Parish Council Meeting held on 9 February 2026.

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Date.....