

**Minutes of the Appleshaw Parish Council Meeting held on
Wednesday the 9th of September 2026 in Appleshaw Village Hall at 7.00pm**

Present: Cllr Jenny Hopkins – Chairman
Cllr Barry Hodgson – Vice Chairman
Cllr Carole Wootton
Borough Councillor Mr P Lashbrook
Richard Waterman – Parish Clerk
Emma Moss, HR Manager Pilgrim's UK
Members of the Public - 10

Apologies: Cllr Denise Hodgson and County Councillor Mr C Donnelly.

WELCOME.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PARISH COUNCIL VACANCY.

The Parish Council has 4 vacancies.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman signed the minutes of the July meeting as a true record.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR MR P LASHBROOK.

Cllr Mr Lashbrook reported that following the Government's announcement to drop the Hampshire devolution plans for the time being, Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council will need to discuss the way forward. If the Government decide in the future to re-visit devolution the recent proposals agreed for the break-up of Hampshire may not be the same. TVBC will stay as it is and the staff will now have job security.

TVBC have set aside £2 Million for the rural communities to improve facilities and have a very good community engagement with the rural parishes. The Draft Borough Plan will now need to be reviewed. The Government still plan to take away planning decisions away from committees – details have yet to be confirmed. The future of the County Council Mayor has not yet been confirmed.

There will now be Borough Elections in May 2027 and the possibility of a Government Snap Election.

Cllr Mr P Lashbrook reported that the Thruxton Air Show has been cancelled. The organisers have gone into liquidation. Those who have bought tickets should be able to get a refund – details will be available on the internet.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

Devolution

The Chairman thanked Cllr Phil Lashbrook for his update on the central government's decision to drop the Hampshire devolution plans for the time being.

<https://www.futurehampshire.gov.uk/> was set up by Hampshire's County, City and Borough Councils to keep us up to date with the devolution timelines – it is worth

checking every now and again to see how or if matters are developing from the chaos created by central government. We will keep you as informed as we can.

The Red Chestnut Tree on the Green had to be felled in late July when a huge part of the trunk fell over the small track, thankfully missing people and cars. Owing to its public position, we had a professional report done on it last year when it was looking its age and it was thought to date from 1896, making it around 130 years old. We originally thought to replace it with another Red Chestnut at a suitable time, but it has started to sprout from the bottom so we will see if more growth occurs and if so, think about another, quicker growing, tree on the patch of land. Jean's bench will be returned.

A Walnut tree by Bridge Cottage similarly looks in bad condition. Andy Burgess is investigating.

After this long dry summer, it is worth reiterating here that anyone with trees in public places, overhanging paths and roads, should please get them checked for dead or dying branches. Ivy can kill trees too and could be stripped off.

The parish's new outside store is in place – the dark green shipping container was delivered over the summer and is a welcome, secure replacement for the old tin shed. Thanks to Owen Mills and Tim Seymour and of course Barry for their help with this.

The A342 Working Group of local parishes has been working hard to finalise draft reports covering issues ranging from village feeder roads and rat runs to an assessment of the potential to reopen a rail link between Ludgershall and Andover – an idea unlikely to be taken up in the financial climate. A final document will be produced towards the end of this month and sent to relevant contacts in TVBC and HCC. Local parishes can use the information when responding to their own planning applications. The final document will be published on the village website.

Play area – Barry has repaired the small slide and the steps up to the big one are in the pipeline.

The next Parish Update will be a Christmas edition, out with luck in mid-November. If you would like your community event mentioned, please get in touch with me by 1st November.

Village website: our apologies that the July Agenda is still showing on the village website. We do not control when our documents are published on it but are grateful that it is provided to us free of charge.

Once again, thank you to my fellow councillors for amazing support and to all who put on community events.

VICE CHAIRMANS REPORT.

Cllr B Hodgson reported that after the very dry and hot summer, the grass is growing again, and grass cutting continues.

The allotments are going well with no issues to report.

FINANCE.

Financial Statement 9th September 2026

INCOME.

2nd half of precept	= £9,500.00
Lengthsman Money	= £1,000.00
VAT Refund	=£ 2,251.47
Allotment Rents	= £20.00
	= <u>£12,771.47</u>

EXPENDITURE.

R. N Waterman Admin – Aug and Sept	= £ 600.00
SBPC Storage	= £ 20.00
Lloyds Bank Charge	= £ 14.50
Mr L Johnson – Grass Cutting	= £ 375.00
Tree Technique – Fell Tree	= £ 3,000.00
Speed Sign Management Ltd – FSS	= £ 331.19
R.N. Waterman – ½ Year Expenses	= £ 120.00
SOS – ISO Container	= £ 2,580.00
HCC – Street Lighting	= £ 178.28
	<u>£ 7,218.97</u>

Summary of Accounts 2025/2026

Opening Balance 1 st April 2026	= £6,486.11
Plus Income – April and May	£9,571.80
June and July	£ 20.00
August and September	£12,771.47
	= <u>£28,849.38</u>

Less Expenditure

April and May	= £4,136.52
June and July	= £4,312.92
August and September	= £7,218.97
	= <u>£15,668.41</u>

Total = £13,180.97**FUNDS AVAILABLE**

Allotments	= £ 330.00
Parish Council	= £12,250.97
Play Area	= £ 600.00
	= <u>£13,180.97</u>

PLANNING.

Cllr Mrs C Wootton reported:

26/01516/DDCA – Fell dangerous Red Horse Chestnut located North West of the Walnut Tree Inn within the Appleshaw Conservation Area (Decision taken).

26/01489/FULLN – Two storey rear extension, creation of front porch, alteration to utility roof, loft conversion with dormer, and alterations to fenestration – 22 Greensey, Ragged Appleshaw.

26/01876/FULLN – Creation of raised rear patio area with associated retaining structure, steps and planters – 42 Greensey, Ragged Appleshaw.

Local Plan.

Following central government's decision to drop the Hampshire local government review, as reported by Cllr Lashbrook earlier we now wait to see what TVBC will do about the update of its Local Plan.

SOUTHERN WATER

Sealing work is still going well. The night time work in Eastville went off without a hitch, and the current work in Ragged Appleshaw is going similarly, with the cooperation of residents and parents of children at the school now that the road is closed in working hours.

Reinstatement of the grass verges has been agreed with Southern Water and their contractors but has yet to start. The cursory work done by Lanes earlier will be supplemented by another contractor, Clancy, who will be reinstating the banks of the road. Timetable TBA.

DEFIBRILLATOR AND CABINET.

The Clerk reported that the Defibrillator at the Walnut Tree Inn has a fault and the repair costs are half the price of a new unit. The cabinet has also come to the end of its life and needs replacing; The Parish Council have subsequently decided to purchase a new Defibrillator and Cabinet.

Cllr Mr P Lashbrook will see if he can give a grant towards the purchase of the new Defibrillator and Cabinet and asked the Clerk to send him details of the cost involved.

It was suggested that with the approaching sale of the Walnut Tree it may be prudent to find another site for the Defibrillator – the telephone box was suggested and will be investigated.

Landowners' Riparian Responsibilities

This term covers the responsibility of parishioners who have a ditch between their property and the road. The riparian responsibility is to keep the undergrowth in the ditch down so that water can flow freely, not to improve the watercourse by digging it out. The forecast for this winter is for very wet conditions with a lot of surface water, leave alone possibly high groundwater again, following torrential downpours. The ground has dried out considerably and so we are raising this subject again as we do need all the help we can get to ensure any water does not lie on the roads but is carried away easily. Many of the tasks Hampshire CC used to do for us are now down to us, owing to budgetary cuts and general lack of funding. We are trying to contact the EA to help us with this.

Blocked road drains in Ragged Appleshaw were reported in mid-May with Action Scheduled marked on the HCC report app. We also reported the state of the low wall at the ditch opposite Rowan Cottages – that has now been closed because it is not enough of a hazard. We are questioning that and the loss of the sweeper lorry which is the main cause of all the undergrowth on the side of the road from Rowan to the bottom of White House Hill.

Wildflower beds

The Parish Council will try and manage the wildflower beds on public land.

Good ideas and initiatives: the Parish Council is more than happy to support these. However, owing to lack of resource we would ask the initiators to take ownership and arrange the management of the project themselves.

VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS REPORTS.

VILLAGE HALL.

Dr Graham Legg reported that he is stepping aside from the Village Hall Management Committee at the end of September 2026. The Village Hall need help and he urged volunteers to contact him or the Management Committee.

The Chairman thanked Dr Graham Legg for all that he has done during his time on the Village Hall Management Committee.

EVENTS COMMITTEE.

Mr Sean Caddy reported:

We have had some wonderful events since we were last here to report!

Our monthly quizzes are going from strength to strength, we have been pleased to not only host our regular quizzing teams but so pleased to see so many new faces come along for a wonderful evening of puzzling Dingbats, questions from general knowledge to connections and of course our monthly meat raffles! A massive thank you to The Lion at Clanville for letting us 'take over' the last Sunday of every month, without you we may not have been able to continue this monthly event. (The pub is open for drinks on the last Sunday of the month for drinkers not just for quizzing.)

August bank holiday saw something a little different for the committee. Working alongside Marc and Lisa, we presented the first Big Ride Out which saw over 30 motorbike riders join us for tea, coffee and bacon sandwiches before embarking on a 50-mile ride. It was amazing to see the number of different bikes ride out into a lovely sunny afternoon. While the riders enjoyed the scenery, a lot was happening behind the scenes to turn around for a wonderful afternoon of live music, BBQ and pulled pork, cakes, refreshments and crafts. The riders returned, as well as lots of the local community for a fun filled afternoon, thoroughly enjoyed by all. A huge heartfelt thanks goes to Peter and Sheila of Chute Club for letting us bombard them for the day, wonderful hosts! As always our thanks goes to Emma and Pilgrim's Europe; events like these help us raise so much money by the wonderful kind donations that they provide us. This raised £2,001.99p.

We are not stopping there though!

- September - monthly quiz
- October - monthly quiz and the return of the spooky scarecrow trail, information regarding hosting or creating a scarecrow will be with you all very shortly, and we are pleased to confirm that there will be a prize giving/community event happening on the 31st of October here in the village hall. Please look out for more information coming, it will be spook- tacular!
- November - monthly quiz
- December - Christmas quiz, Christmas light switch on, the 10th (and final) Santa Dash.

All of this is only possible because of our wonderful volunteers, amazing sponsors, the local communities and businesses and everyone's continued support of our events.

PILGRIM'S EUROPE.

Emma Moss confirmed that Pilgrim's Europe are happy to continue supporting the Village Events. The Christmas Order Book is now open at the Tilley Down Butchers shop.

Emma Moss thanked the Parish Council for their input and support during the Southern Water work on the sewers.

CHURCH.

Mr Peter Poole reported that there are a few things going on with the Church at the present time:

- You will remember that when we installed the loo and the kitchen facilities in the vestry, we recognised that this was the start of a long journey to upgrade the building and avoid further decay and hopefully make it available and attractive as another village asset for all sorts of events – much more than church services.
- As you can all see the church tower is in a poor state, historic use of the wrong materials has led to a multitude of issues, some of them hidden behind the existing rendering. The church will reach its 200th anniversary in 2030 and our aim is to reach “200K for 200 years”. Achieving this will enable us to make the structure fir for many more years, upgrading the heating and lighting to make them fit for purpose and the building fit for more activities. Fundraising has started and we have already had some success with a £15K grant to add to the money that has been slowly accumulating for the refurbishment. We are also applying to several other Trusts and Foundations. The cost of putting the tower right is £125K.
- It is “Ride and Stride” on Saturday in aid of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Churches Trust. For those who feel like exercise the perfect opportunity to get sponsors and check in at all the local churches where restorative food and drink will be found.
- A small grant has allowed us to repaint/refurbish all the smaller windows in the church.
- In terms of grants, it is important that we are seen to be making efforts to raise money ourselves. Future events include Monday 14th September at 2.15pm Christine Skelmersdale is to give a talk about Daffodils and the part Rev George Herbert Englehart, who lived in the village and bred a huge number of daffodil varieties played in the development of the flower. Spring 2027 – The Appleshaw Daffodil Festival and Garden Stall. Friday 2nd October Harvest Supper. We will also be entering the Scarecrow Trail again this year.
- On a different track we will be having all the services that you would expect over the next few months: 11th October – Harvest Thanksgiving. 8th November Remembrance – After the wonderful initiative by the PC to put poppies on the lamp posts in the weeks leading up to Armistice Day, Sue Smith has taken on the task of creating a “Field of Remembrance” in the churchyard and hopes to secure some 90 small wooden crosses on which villagers will be able to write names of loved ones lost in strife. Sue also hopes to raise sufficient money to purchase a “tommy” silhouette from Royal British Veterans Enterprises (RBVE) used to be RBIL.
- Dates of Christingle Service and Carol Service are yet to be decided.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

There were no issues raised by the Members of the Public.

CLOSE OF THE MEETING.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

Wednesday the 11th of November 2026 at 7pm in the Appleshaw Village Hall.