

MINUTES OF THE SHERIFFHALES ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THE 10th MARCH 2026 AT SHERIFFHALES VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM

Present: Councillors: Mrs P Hodgetts (Chairman), Mrs S Whittam; Mr G Hodgetts, Mrs L Edwards , Mr P Bradburn, Mr A Edwards, Unitary Cllr Miss E Barker, PC Steve Breeze, T Clayton and 19 members of the public present

Apologies: Cllr Mr J Horne (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs A Sutcliffe, Cllr Mr Neil Pulker and

1. Chairman's welcome and announcements

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public and the Council to the meeting. He introduced the members of the Council to the public.

The Chairman Cllr Mrs P Hodgetts reported that the Annual Parish Meeting was held 11th March 2025 and was well attended. We had some wonderful reports on the groups and bodies of the Parish and what the Parish has to offer.

Chief inspector Damien Kelly has updated us on the police activity within the local community. There are various formats the Neighbourhood Police team can be contacted which is proving to be very useful.

2025 saw the new play equipment installed on the playing field. It was officially opened in July by Gordon Tonkinson who was thanked for his service to the community. My thanks goes to my fellow councillors for working so hard to ensure the equipment was installed efficiently and the community open event went well with many parishioners attending.

A new defibrillator has been installed in the old post box on the A4379. The old one unfortunately has been condemned so we were not able to donate it to the Village Hall. Defibrillator training was offered and well attended as part of the service.

At the annual meeting in May, I was voted in as Chair, with John Horne vice chair. I convey my thanks to all councillors and the clerk for their continued support.

The footpaths and bridleways definitive map has been updated with a few paths diverted and one no longer used updated.

Tree works have been undertaken with a few issues, the community are encouraged to fill out the Fix My Street system for anything within the Parish that may need attention from trees to potholes.

The relationship with our unitary councillor continues to grow which is a great benefit to the Parish. Elizabeth is on the community WhatsApp group and is very proactive in sorting out issues the community comes up against. Drains have been cleared and potholes have been mended. Resurfacing of Church Lane has also been undertaken. A new maintenance team have been employed to keep the verges and hedges maintained round the danger and low visibility spots throughout the Parish.

As Shropshire cuts keep increasing, the precept was increased this year to enable the Parish to carry out the maintenance itself.

No Mow May will be observed again this year.

The flagpole has been left up, and a permanent one is being investigated.

Speed Indicator Devices are being funded via the Police Inspector funding and will be sighted over the next few months.

Speed Watch continue to be a good deterrent to speeders through the parish and my thanks to the volunteers for sustaining this project.

We welcome George Hodgetts to the council to fill the vacancy. His youth and outlook will add to the councils' dynamics for the benefit of the Parish.

2. Community presentations 2026

Sheriffhales Women's Institute 2026

2025 has been as busy as ever for the WI. Our programme started with line dancing in January and Tibetan dancing in February so an active start to banish the winter blues and to burn off the season's calories. As usual we held our AGM, birthday party and harvest supper meetings throughout the year and interspersed we had entertainment from a singing ukulele player, a talk from a hypnotherapist and a demonstration on fencing, the sporting kind. We also had a baking demonstration from our member Jenny and a jewellery demonstration from our president Karen.

As well as our scheduled meetings we held some social events including a boat trip on the canal, an afternoon tea and a fused glass workshop.

Members also enjoyed a visit from a local scout group who came to tell us about their international camp so all in all a varied programme across the year.

We have raised funds for charity in our aim to support the community and in December we were able to make a donation to the Lily Foundation which supports families who are affected by mitochondrial disease.

We are pleased to say that we have had new members joining our WI this year and more enquiries are coming in on a regular basis. New faces are always welcome so please come and give us a try.

So across the year we have learned new skills, been enlightened by speakers and joined in fun activities together united by friendship and support, which is actually what the WI is all about so onward and upwards for our group into 2026.

Village Hall Committee – 2025/26 overview

The village hall continues to provide an important facility for the Parish and the wider community. It continues to be popular with hirers for children's parties and we are pleased that our regular community users make effective use of the facility. In addition to the W.I, Bowling Club, Sewing Bee, Community Café, Flower Club and yoga sessions, there has been the recent introduction of Curling Capers, an indoor curling group which meets once a month. The school continues to use the hall to provide breakfast and after school clubs for children during the week.

The Committee are mindful that as the building and its fittings age, greater emphasis on maintenance is required to ensure it offers an attractive venue for hirers and a wide variety of user groups. Jobs undertaken in the past year have included: work on the guttering and soak aways to improve the runoff during winter storms, plumbing to replace taps and install an outside tap, work to ensure sockets are safe, cleaning of curtains and replacement of curtain rail and installation of CCTV at the front door. Whilst these may seem small tasks, we are mindful that awareness of small issues adds up to helping to provide a safe and secure venue.

The Village Hall Committee is made up of a small group of volunteers whose aim is to ensure that the hall continues to offer a pleasant venue for a wide range of activities for the benefit of the community. In order to ensure this continues moving forward, we would welcome anyone interested in joining the Committee (or alternatively supporting us with maintenance skills) to let us know, as succession planning is key to ensuring that the hall remains a focal point of the community.

Parish Magazine 2026

The Parish Magazine continues to go from strength to strength. Julia and Pippa have now completed their first year as editors, with some big changes to how the magazine is put together. With more emphasis on the local history and archives, it gives the readers some insight into community life in years gone by.

The magazine continues to be printed and delivered to 70 recipients. The Parish News on WhatsApp reaches 138 people and the email goes out to 182.

The magazine is funded by the advertiser's subscription, but mainly by the support of The Community Energy Fund. We are always looking for local knowledge and interesting items, so please always let us know.

We are very pleased with the positive feedback we have received over the last year.

Our continued support from the community and the delivery ladies is what keeps this magazine going and the reason why we do it.

Bowls Club

The Chairman Tom Leath of the bowling club addressed the Council, he was re-elected at the AGM last week, they have 18 members. They meet every Monday except bank holidays. It's a friendly evening of 4 teams that are different each night. They run various competitions and they have a presentation evening for the prize giving. There are 4 vacancies. £12 a year subscription and £2 per week to play.

Church report

A year ago, the church were facing difficult times, losing £1000 per month. Chris Thorpe thanked Mike Bubb and Peter Bonsall who worked with the church along with the PCC, and the community that have enabled this to be turned round, and they have raised £18,000 over the past 18 months and are now breaking even.

30 years ago there was a report re the bells needing to be fixed. This is the next project, the tower roof, the rain water guttering that needs to be repaired. They know what the jobs are and they are working towards these projects.

There are many people that enjoy bell ringing, and we want to continue with this.

Once a month they have a festival service, all these special Sundays the Community Choir come to sing, Rachel McConnachie has worked wonders on making the choir such a success. 40 – 60 people come to the festival services, they are made relevant to the community. The church is open every day 9 – 4pm. Playgroup runs on a Friday, the Pony Club are coming to use the church. There is a quiz night this Friday, over 60 people are attending. Burns night always sell out, Shropshire Petals evening is always a sell out.

Paul Warander was their lay preacher, he is no longer a regular member of the team as he has moved away from the area. Rev Valarie's came from Wolverhampton and she will be helping in Sheriffhales. Chris Thorpe is retiring after 20 years his final service is the 5th July celebrating Sheriffhales, a final service at Shifnal on the 12th.

On behalf of the Parish, members thanked him for his dedication and service to the Parish.

Norman Jones addressed the council re the film club, it costs £2 per ticket, they try to make it an event night. They movies are chosen by democracy. Prior to Covid there 20 + people attended, but they would like to resurrect this, and will advertise in the Parish Magazine.

Shropshire sews

Sewing club last Saturday of the month, anyone is welcome 10 – 4. She is also the local community seamstress and she can help with anything.

4. To confirm the Minutes of the Sheriffhales Annual Parish Meeting held on 11th March 2025

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2025, having been circulated in advance of the current meeting, were approved and signed as a true record of the proceedings at that meeting.

5. Matters Arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous meetings.

6. Parish Council Reports

Unitary Councillor Miss E Barker address the council on the following and she took questions:-

- She introduced herself to the members
- The work on Church Lane has been undertaken, but other drains like Evergreens and Church need to be cleared, she will ask the contractor to see if they can undertake this as well.
- It appears to be pointless if the road is resurfaced without the drains being addressed.
- Has she a list of priorities that she is working to in the area. She does look after street scene, general queries, but the main issues are pot-holes and drains. She has asked each parish / town she is responsible for , their top 3 priorities and this makes sure she can address the main issues.
- Any issues need to be reported to fix my street, then Elizabeth can then follow this up using the reference.
- The work is checked after it has been completed.
- It was asked if there is any left over material could they fill the holes by the school, on the drive.
- Some potholes are temporary fixed as an emergency repair, however if it's a permanent repair then there is a years warranty.

- When reporting be exact with the location and take a photograph as evidence this helps when looking at the reports.
- A roads are inspected monthly, side roads are inspected every 6 months, back roads are not inspected unless there is a problem.
- Church Yard pathway she is looking into it, re the steps.
- There are a lot of issues with the reporting process, and most services been online, if anyone needs help Thomas and Elizabeth will be happy to support them.

She was asked for updates on the following items when she can look into them.

- An update on the pothole warranty limit.
- Legal services support from Shropshire Council update.
- Enforcement issues
- How will the proposed dissolved services affect the Parish council i.e. road gully cleansing etc.

PCSO Steve Breeze addressed the meeting and took questions:-

- He explained the setup of the Police Officers and they are based at the Shifnal hub.
- Day to day policing, visits for burglaries etc. They work with partner agencies.
- They work in all 12 Parishes, they try to get 3 priorities from each Parish. Speeding, theft and ASB.
- Supplemented by teams based in Telford, emergency response was coming from Bridgnorth but now they come from Telford.
- Road policing units, armed police and dog units based in Shrewsbury.
- 999 only a few calls, 2 x fly tipping's reported, 2 RTC on Crackly Bank, and an assault (dog bite).
- They run operations through the year such as Anti-social driving, Speeding (this includes Community Speed-watch), ASB in general, Late evenings pub visits etc re licensing, rural thefts, hare coursing – wildlife crime, SNAP – dangerous driving.
- Report anything through Crimestoppers as intelligence is needed to catch criminals
- Heath Hill was raised as a major issue for speeding.
- Also an issue of arctic lorries / motorbikes going through in the evenings causing issues.
- He gave out the ways for the public to be contact him and keep him informed of what is happening.
- He will also look at the wall collapsing by the golf club going into Shifnal, but this needs reporting to fix my street.

7. Questions arising from the public relevant to the reports or with regards to the parish.

There were no further questions.

Members of the public thanked the Councillors for all that they do for the Parish.

8. Close

The Chairman thanked the members of the Parish Council and the public for attending the meeting. Meeting closed at 8.45pm.