

Council Actions: The Chair noted that they had been in communication with Paul Oatway, the Unitary Councillor, who had promised to liaise with the Highways Department to address these issues. However, no tangible action had been observed, and the Chair suggested that the council take proactive steps, possibly by raising their own maintenance tickets with Wiltshire Council.

Community Impact: The Chair expressed empathy for residents, who have been directly affected by these drainage problems, potentially facing property damage in the near future. They emphasised the need for immediate, albeit temporary, solutions while working on a more comprehensive strategy.

Request for Updates: The Chair asked for any updates from the council members or the Clerk on any progress made since the last meeting regarding this matter, highlighting the urgency for some form of intervention before the next heavy rainfall.

Potential Strategies: A suggestion was made to consider if the Parish Council could fund or organize some basic maintenance or emergency measures, like clearing vegetation from ditches, to mitigate the short-term impact. This would be explored further in the financial planning for the next year's precept.

Community Engagement: The Chair encouraged continued engagement from the community, requesting that residents share any new observations or evidence of drainage issues so that these could be documented and acted upon swiftly.

FC24/25/080 **PLANNING**

FC24/25/081 **To Consider Planning Applications**

[PL/2022/08202](#) **Proposal:**

Resubmission of Proposed Detached Garage in different position (Resubmission of PL/2023/04011)

Site Address:

6 Priory Cottages, Alton Priors, Marlborough, SN8 4JY2

Application Type:

Householder planning permission

Outcome:

The proposal for moving the garage was discussed. No objections were raised, acknowledging the precedence of similar structures along the road. However, there was a query regarding the consultation with neighbours, which seemed limited.

[PL/2022/08653](#) **Proposal:**

House Refurbishment And New Clock Tower

Site Address:

Clock House, Honeystreet, Pewsey, SN9 5PS

Application Type:

Householder planning permission

Outcome:

The Council expressed unanimous support for the refurbishment and the new clock tower, noting a positive shift from previous, less favourable plans. No objections.

[PL/2022/09913](#) **Proposal:**

1 The Granary, Alton Priors, Marlborough, SN8 4JX

Site Address:

Catalpa Bignonioides tree - crown reduction by 50%

Application Type:

Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area

Outcome:

The Council had no objections.

FC24/25/082 **TO RECEIVE, FOR INFORMATION, THE CLERK'S REPORT:**

Parish Council Election in May 2025:

The Parish Clerk informed the council that an election for all Parish Council positions is scheduled for the 1st of May 2025. The costs for this election are expected to be significant, potentially up to £2000 per parish, based on 2021 quotes. These costs will include polling stations, ballot paper printing, postal votes, staffing, and vote counting. With the change from previous elections under COVID restrictions, all councillors will need to go through the re-election process unless they choose to step down. The Clerk will help to coordinate the registration process for those wishing to run again.

The Clerk suggested not to co-opt new members until after the election to maintain transparency and encourage community participation in the democratic process.

Precept Documentation:

The precept for the next year must be submitted by the 20th of January 2025. The Clerk has circulated draft documentation for the budget. She emphasized the need for Councillors to review this document carefully before the next meeting where the precept will be voted upon.

Different budget models will be presented, potentially including allocations for local maintenance issues like ditch clearing, which have not been addressed adequately by higher authorities. This would mean an increase in the precept but could provide immediate benefits to the community.

The Clerk highlighted the balance between keeping the precept low (and thus council tax contributions) and the need to take on responsibilities usually handled by the County Council, especially with regards to flooding and drainage.

Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme:

The parish participated in this scheme, with Wiltshire Council providing funding. This resulted in the acquisition of flood prevention materials like gel sacks, flood signs, and hivis, which are now stored in the detached barn for community use.

The Clerk encouraged residents needing these items to contact her directly or through the Parish Council.

Pewsey Community Area Partnership:

An email from the Pewsey Community Area Partnership was received, asking why Alton hadn't contributed financially to their cause.

This partnership is one of the few remaining in Wiltshire that operates on donations, and they undertake significant community support initiatives.

The Clerk proposed that the council consider making a donation to support this group's ongoing work, suggesting that she would circulate more detailed information about their activities for review before the January meeting.

Other Items:

A request from Robert Carpenter-Turner for continued funding of the parish website maintenance was noted. The council discussed potentially funding a portion of this with conditions for updates to make the site more user-friendly.

The Clerk mentioned the need to check with insurance providers about liabilities if the Parish Council decides to undertake any work typically under county council jurisdiction, such as drainage maintenance.

FC24/25/083 **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE DRAINAGE WORKS IN ALTON**
Current State of Drainage:

Persistent Issues: The parish has been dealing with recurrent flooding, particularly noted near the willow tree where a manhole has been concreted over, obstructing proper drainage. This has led to water backing up and flooding local properties.

Drainage System Review: There have been instances where the drains were jetted by Wiltshire Council, but the results have been unsatisfactory. A camera survey was conducted following complaints about the efficiency of the drain clearing, but no video evidence was provided to the parish council.

Community Feedback: Residents have reported ongoing problems with water accumulation, suggesting that the drains are still not functioning correctly. There is a general dissatisfaction with the maintenance and response from Council authorities.

Actions Taken by the Parish Council:

Communication with Highways: Paul Oatway, the Unitary Councillor, has been engaged to follow up with the Highways Department. However, there has been a lack of follow-through, with no recent updates or actions reported back to the Council.

Resident Initiative: Some residents have taken matters into their own hands by attempting to manage the vegetation and blockages in local ditches, this requires cooperation from landowners and formal permissions.

Maintenance Tickets: The Council discussed raising their own maintenance tickets via the MyWilts app to ensure quicker response from the council services, following the advice that "the squeaky wheel gets the oil."

Funding Consideration: There was a proposal to potentially allocate part of the next year's precept to fund local drainage maintenance, acknowledging that waiting for county council action might not be feasible. This would involve obtaining a maintenance license from Wiltshire Council.

Specific Concerns and Suggestions:

Willow Tree Roots: A discussion about removing a willow tree whose roots might be interfering with drainage pipes was brought up. The cost quoted was £15,000 but concerns about the effectiveness and legal implications of this action were raised, leading to a decision to seek more evidence before proceeding.

Vegetation in Ditches: The Council noted that vegetation in farm ditches could be contributing to the flooding. There was a suggestion to work with local farmers, like Tim and Josh, to clear these, although this would require negotiation and possibly financial support from the Council.

Long-term Strategy: Members expressed a desire for a comprehensive drainage strategy for the parish, which includes not just clearing existing blockages but also planning for future maintenance and possibly altering the course of water flow to prevent recurring issues.

Emergency Measures: Immediate actions like providing sandbags and exploring temporary solutions to mitigate flooding for the next few months were considered, especially with the upcoming heavy rain forecasts.

Action Points / Next Steps:

Further Investigation: The Clerk was tasked with compiling a list of issues to discuss with Wiltshire Council, including the need for a proper survey and maintenance schedule.

Communication: The Council decided to send an email to Danny Kruger, the MP, to follow up on his promised assistance with drainage issues.

Community Involvement: There was an agreement to keep residents informed and involved, encouraging them to report issues and possibly participate in community-led initiatives for short-term flood prevention.

Budgeting for Maintenance: The Clerk was to model different budget scenarios for the next meeting, which might include funding for local drainage work.

FC24/25/084 **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE COFFEE MORNING VISIT OF CLLR DANNY KRUGER TO ALTON:**

Councilor Kruger had visited and promised to help with the drainage issues, but no feedback had been received on the matter. The Council decided to follow up with an email.

FC24/25/085 **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE CLOCK HOUSE:**

The refurbishment is focused on restoring the building to a better condition while maintaining its historical integrity. This includes repairing or replacing damaged elements to preserve the structure. The latest planning application (PL/2022/08653) for the Clock House involves refurbishment and the addition of a new clock tower. This proposal marks a significant positive shift from earlier plans that involved more extensive development or demolition. Positive feedback on the refurbishment and clock tower project was reiterated, with the community expressing enthusiasm for the development.

FC24/25/086 **FINANCE MATTERS**

FC24/25/087 **To Receive For Information, Disbursements Made Since The Last Meeting**

Information Commissioner's Office Certificate Renewal - £35

Charlton Baker Payroll Fee - £18.50

Hugo Fox Website Maintenance - £11.99

Payroll for August, September, October, and November

Refund of £600 by Elizabeth Martin for an erroneous payment related to the spring cleanup

Play Safety Limited for Playground Report - £108

Community First Insurance - £517.10

Clerk's Allowance for August, September, October, November - £25 per month

Annual Grass Cutting Contract Mr. Ben Owen- £1,025

FC24/25/088 **To Consider And Approve The Schedule Of Forthcoming Payments**
Proposed KT. Seconded EM. Passed

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT The Approval Of The Schedule Of Forthcoming Payments Be Accepted.

FC24/25/089 **To Receive The Bank Reconciliations As Presented**
Bank Reconciliations to be presented in the September 2024 meeting

FC24/25/090 **TO RECEIVE UPDATES FOR THE FOLLOWING GROUPS**

FC24/25/091 **Traffic Initiative Working Group**
Current Status:

Lack of Recent Activity: The Traffic Initiative Working Group has been notably inactive, with no updates provided during the meeting. The absence of Max, a key member, was cited, indicating a possible reason for the group's current stagnation.

Community Concerns: There has been a noted increase in speeding and traffic, particularly with heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) using local roads as shortcuts, leading to safety and noise disturbances within the parish.

Previous Initiatives:

Speed Cameras: The group previously had access to speed guns for monitoring traffic speeds, but this has been discontinued. This loss has left the community with fewer tools to manage traffic speeds directly.

Speed Signage: Discussions have included the use of VAS (Vehicle Activated Signs) or "smiley face" speed signs which are known to encourage drivers to slow down. Alton has a share in two such signs that rotate among several villages, but there's been difficulty in finding suitable locations for these in Alton.

Proposed Actions:

Reactivation: Suzie, a community member, has expressed interest in revitalizing the group's efforts in the new year. This could potentially lead to renewed initiatives aimed at traffic calming and safety.

Cooperation with Other Villages: Alton is part of a cooperative where traffic calming devices, like the speed signs, are shared. There's an opportunity here to enhance this cooperation, perhaps by organizing regular maintenance or by exploring additional signs or methods.

HGV Traffic: An email from Jill Turner, a Kennet Valley Parish Councilor with responsibilities for traffic issues, was mentioned, discussing HGV traffic on the C38 route, which impacts Alton. The Council is considering how to address this, potentially through weight restrictions or diversions to keep heavy traffic on main roads.

Challenges:

Resource Management: The maintenance of traffic calming devices requires effort, which has been a challenge. The signs need to be moved, calibrated, and protected from theft or vandalism.

Highway Cooperation: Engagement with Wiltshire Council's Highways has been less than fruitful, with previous requests for traffic calming measures often facing long delays or being outright ignored.

Legal and Administrative Hurdles: Implementing traffic control measures often involves navigating through bureaucratic processes for permissions, funding, and enforcement.

Future Considerations:

Community Engagement: There was a suggestion that the group should operate independently from the parish council but with its support. This could foster more community involvement in traffic management.

Technology and Data: Utilizing technology for traffic monitoring, like Wi-Fi or Bluetooth connectivity for real-time data on speed sign activations, could be explored to better assess and respond to traffic issues.

Advocacy: Continuing to advocate for better traffic management through local and county representatives, possibly with support from local MPs like Danny Kruger, who had previously engaged with the community on this topic.

FC24/25/092 **LHFIG (Local Highway And Footway Improvement Group)**
No Updates, Next meeting scheduled for 5th February 2025.

FC24/25/093 **Pewsey Area Board.**
Next Meeting 25th November 2024.

FC24/25/094 **TO RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION, CORRESPONDENCE AND CIRCULARS RECEIVED**

Election Information:

Parish Council Election: The Parish Clerk has received and will distribute information regarding the upcoming Parish council election in May 2025. This includes procedural details and cost estimates, which could reach up to £2000 per parish for managing the election process.

Precept Documents:

Budget and Precept: The clerk has circulated precept documentation for review, with a deadline for submission set for the 20th of January 2025. This includes budget forecasts and proposals for the next financial year, considering potential allocations for local issues like drainage maintenance.

HGV Traffic on C38:

Correspondence from Kennet Valley: An email from Jill Turner, a Kennet Valley parish Councilor responsible for traffic issues, was received. It addresses concerns about HGV traffic on the C38 route through Lockridge, impacting Alton. The email requests feedback from Alton Parish Council on this matter, possibly leading to a discussion on implementing weight restrictions or alternative routing for heavy vehicles.

Community Area Partnership:

Pewsey Community Area Partnership: An email was received inquiring why Alton hasn't contributed financially to the Pewsey Community Area Partnership, which operates on donations. The clerk will forward details of their work and financial needs for the council's consideration, potentially for discussion in the January meeting.

Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme:

Update on Funding: Information was shared about Alton's participation in the Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme funded by Wiltshire Council. This included the acquisition of flood prevention equipment like gel sacks, flood signs, and tarts, which are now stored for community use in response to flooding emergencies.

Other Correspondence:

Website Maintenance: Robert Carpenter-Turner has requested continued funding for the maintenance of the parish's website. This sparked a discussion on the website's relevance, usage, and potential updates needed for better user interface and accessibility.

Parish Council Traffic Survey: Correspondence related to traffic surveys and speeding in the area, possibly linked to the initiative by Kennet Valley, was mentioned but not detailed extensively in the meeting.

General Administrative: Routine emails or circulars about council business, including updates from Wiltshire Council or other local bodies, were likely included but not specifically discussed in the meeting.

FC24/25/095 **TO CONSIDER ITEMS OF MAINTENANCE**

Playground Maintenance:

A playground inspection was carried out by Play Safety Limited, costing £108. The inspection report has been received and will be circulated among council members for review. The report likely highlighted areas needing safety improvements or general maintenance.

Quotes for any necessary work are to be prepared for the January meeting, where decisions on funding and implementation will be made.

Drainage and Flood Prevention:

The council discussed the possibility of taking on some maintenance responsibilities due to the lack of action from Wiltshire Council. Should the council decide to fund or undertake drainage work, The Clerk mentioned the need to obtain a maintenance license from Wiltshire Council. This would involve formalizing the parish's role in maintaining certain infrastructure.

General Maintenance:

Complaints about the condition of official footpaths, particularly one across farmland opposite the Coronation Hall, were raised. The path has become nearly impassable due to ploughing and lack of maintenance, leading to conflicts with landowners over public access. The HK will contact the relevant farmer to discuss the maintenance of the footpath across his land, ensuring it remains accessible.

Any additional information of maintenance for the village is requested to be put forward to the Parish Clerk at clerk@altonsandhoneystreet.org.uk or use the <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts-online-reporting> link to make a direct report to the County Council.

FC24/25/096 KEY MESSAGES

- **Inappropriate Use of Car Park:** The Council decided to report this to the police via a dedicated website to address issues of wild camping or overnight parking.
- **Drainage and Flooding:** An overarching theme was the ongoing drainage and flooding problems. The need for immediate action and possibly taking on some maintenance responsibilities was highlighted, with a focus on clearing vegetation from ditches to mitigate flooding.
- **Footpath Accessibility:** Concerns about the condition of footpaths were raised, specifically the path across farmland opposite the Coronation Hall, which has become nearly inaccessible due to lack of maintenance, leading to discussions on how to address this with landowners.

FC24/25/097 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting date will be on the Thursday 16th January 2025 at 7:00pm at the Coronation Hall.

Meeting Closed 21:03

These minutes are accepted as a true and accurate record: -

Signed  _____ Date 24/02/2025

Summary Of Public Participation Section (Part A)

Public Participation Opened 19:02

I. To Receive a report from the Unitary Councillor Paul Oatway.

Highways Follow-Up: Paul Oatway had committed to chasing up with Wiltshire Council's Highways Department regarding Alton's persistent flooding and drainage problems. This was in response to previous complaints about the ineffectiveness of prior maintenance efforts, including the concreting over of a manhole near the willow tree, which has exacerbated local flooding.

Recent Communication: In his recent email, Oatway mentioned that he would ensure that the council's highways team revisits the drainage issues, particularly in areas where water accumulation has been reported.

Brown's Lane: There was a mention of previous commitments to repair Brown's Lane by the end of summer, which hadn't been fulfilled. Paul Oatway had promised to follow up on this, but no updates were provided, indicating a need for further inquiry.

II. Report from Community Police Officer, PCSO

No report was provided as the PCSO was not in attendance. The Clerk noted that there were no major crime issues to report.

III. To receive reports from Village Groups & Organisations

No reports received.

IV. Comments from members of the public to be considered by the Council regarding items on the agenda.

The following summarises the items discussed during the public forum.

Drainage and Flooding Concerns:

Manhole Concreting: Several residents voiced concerns about a manhole near the willow tree being concreted over, which has led to persistent flooding. The manhole's location means it can't be easily accessed for maintenance, causing water to back up during rain.

Community Efforts and Suggestions:

Self-Help Initiatives: Some residents have taken it upon themselves to manage local vegetation or report issues directly to the council, but they emphasized that without broader cooperation, their efforts are limited.

Request for Immediate Action: There was a strong call for immediate, temporary measures to mitigate flooding risks, especially with forecasts of heavy rain. Suggestions included using sandbags, clearing local ditches, and possibly even community-led maintenance with financial support from the parish council.

Long-term Strategy: Residents echoed the council's sentiment for needing a comprehensive drainage plan, with some suggesting a survey to map out the water flow and problem areas. They criticized the apparent lack of a unified strategy from the council, which seems to result in piecemeal, ineffective solutions.

Other Public Concerns:


Footpath Access: There were comments about the state of public footpaths, particularly one across farmland, which has become difficult to navigate due to recent plowing. This has led to confrontations with landowners or their representatives when residents try to use alternative routes around the fields.

Engagement with Local Government:

Lack of Responsiveness: There was a general frustration with the responsiveness of Wiltshire Council. Residents mentioned previous communications that went unanswered, including requests for video footage of drain inspections which were never provided.

Parish Council Role: The public appreciated the parish council's efforts to engage with higher councils and suggested they continue to push for accountability and action, potentially with more community involvement in decision-making processes related to these issues.

SIGNATURE CERTIFICATE

	REFERENCE NUMBER 2299540D-E6E8-41D3-9F2C-F5363737EE4C
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TRANSACTION DETAILS

Reference Number
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Transaction Type
Signature Request

Sent At
24/02/2025 15:20 +00

Executed At
24/02/2025 15:28 +00

Identity Method
email

Distribution Method
email

Signed Checksum
3411d568291a8ad4d5eb2ab37d043684fb7db1a088a3f1a7f763fdd1c57c4477

Signer Sequencing
Disabled

Document Passcode
Disabled

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Document Name
Final Mins 21 November 2024

Filename
Final_Mins_21_November_2024.pdf


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12 pages

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207 KB

Original Checksum
aa43e5da7c547f533124d3438dc1a8f7cbacef1effb3edf377de1208c04f301a

SIGNERS

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Name Mike Spencer	Status signed	Viewed At 24/02/2025 15:20 +00
Email mike.spencer@ebeni.com	Multi-factor Digital Fingerprint Checksum b31a4ed5fc01f0e2ca1be92ec469b3d180d7c4ade909b388c998260715f61cf9	Identity Authenticated At 24/02/2025 15:28 +00
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	Drawn Signature 	
	Signature Reference ID 7702C441	
	Signature Biometric Count 2	

AUDITS

TIMESTAMP	AUDIT
24/02/2025 15:20 +00	Elizabeth Martin (parishclerk@ogbournestgeorge.org.uk) created document 'Final_Mins_21_November_2024.pdf' on Chrome via Mac from 146.90.203.78.
24/02/2025 15:20 +00	Mike Spencer (mike.spencer@ebeni.com) was emailed a link to sign.
24/02/2025 15:20 +00	Mike Spencer (mike.spencer@ebeni.com) viewed the document on Microsoft Edge via Windows from 83.105.3.150.
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