

THORNHACKETT PARISH COUNCIL

BEER HACKETT ANNUAL PARISH VILLAGE MEETING

The Annual Beer Hackett Parish Council meeting was held on Monday 27th April 2026 in St. Michaels Church at 7.00pm.

In Attendance: Cllrs. Stephen Hiller (Chairman), Ben Keene, (Beer Hackett), Ian Robins, and Claire Thompson (Thornford) and 11 members of the public.

1. **Welcome** – The Chairman welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting and apologised for the lack of meetings in recent years.
2. **Apologies** – Belinda Wingfield-Digby, Alice Johnsen, John Daniel (Brotherwood)
3. **Presentation by Wessex Internet** – Vicky Missen Senior Engagement Officer for Wessex Internet was welcomed to the meeting She explained that in 2023 they were awarded a Government contract to bring fibre broadband to hard to reach rural areas in Dorset to ensure that they were not left behind. Their aim is to bring fibre from the green cabinet into a router in your home. There would be no cost for the installation but there would be usage contract costs. The advantage of fibre over copper is that copper does not like water and flooding can be an issue, fibre is not affected and so speeds can be guaranteed depending on how far you are from the green box. Wessex Internet are looking to try and find approximately 60 properties over the area that might be interested. Ms Missen then answered questions from residents. Q1 What is the time scale? – Probably first quarter of 2027. Q2. What are the expected speeds? – This will depend on the package, there are four alternatives. Q3. Is Thornford included? – Not at this time. Q4. How long would you be tied in? The initial contract would be for 18 months. Q5. Would we see prices increase as soon as signed up? Prices have not increased since 2014 Q6. How will the fibre cable reach the property? – It may be possible to use telegraph poles, some areas may have ducting and the cable could be pulled through, in other cases we may have to dig. **The Parish Clerk has Expression of Interest forms available to sign up these are available from 3 The Bungalows Beer Hackett. Phone – 07885371101 clerk@thornhackettpc.org.uk**
4. **Chairman's Report for the year 2025-26** – It has been a busy year, unfortunately we had received the resignations of Bev Taylor-Wade, Nicholas Whitsun-Jones and Jonathan Axten, we thank them for their service to the Council and we welcomed Cllr Andrew Small (representing Thornford Parish). During the year several new policies were adopted, Expenses, Safeguarding, Risk Management and IT Policies. in addition several other policies were reviewed. Dorset Council, on our behalf, carried out a speed survey in Beer Hackett and Highways has been asked to implement a 30mph speed limit through the village at the request of residents, we will chase this up during the coming year. The Clerk had requested that the white lines by the Thornford Clock Tower. The Dorset Draft Local Plan and Draft Transport Plan were discussed and comments submitted. The Transport Plan had little to offer the village, the Draft Local Plan identified two sites a preference (with conditions) for the Longford Road site was offered but neither were really desirable. Development of the Play Area is ongoing with discussions with several different companies being undertaken. The Council has been lobbied with respect to repairs to public benches. Mindful we cannot carry out work on assets that are not in Council ownership the Council is collating information with a view to assessing how they remain fit for public use. The Council authorised work to the clock face and chapter ring which has been repaired and upgraded. Sadly Cyril Taylor who wound the clock for more than 20 year for which we were extremely grateful, passed away.

We are now looking towards get automatic winding mechanism installed. We thank Brotherhood for digging out the ditch at the end of the road, hopefully this will ease the flooding problem. A thank you also to the resident who renovated the Village Noticeboard. The Environment Working Group has been looking at causes of flooding and resilience issues and monitoring sewage discharges from the Beer Hackett pumping station, as well as keeping an over view of the possible Blackberry Solar Farm application. This group has also been looking at the use of certain weedkillers. We are also keen that Beer Hackett get a fair deal from the Parish Council and would welcome any inputs and requests that could be given consideration. Acceptance of the report was seconded by Cllr Keene – **carried unanimously**

5. **Reports from Councillors** – Cllr Thompson reported that there were now regular reports being sent to the Contact magazine. Cllr Robins indicated that the Council was looking to formulate a Village Plan which would include Beer Hackett

6. **Reports from Local Groups and Organisations**

Allotment Association - A difficult growing year but there was still a good show of fruit and vegetables at the Annual Show. A Bar-B-Q was held and the Manor Farm Cider Press was used again. Minor improvements have been made, old tyres removed and a register of assets being compiled.

Gardening Club and Horticultural Society – It has been a good year and the Annual Show attracted over 150 entries. The annual membership has stayed at £10 and there are over 100 members. The club is supported by Castle Gardens. We were able to make a donation to the school towards their gardening club. The Annual Plant Sale is on 2nd May.

Women’s Institute – We have welcomed members for 78 years, we meet on 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm. The evening usually includes a speaker or activity and ends with tea, coffee, a biscuit and a chat! Speakers this year have included Oxford Bakery (involving cakes of course), Somerset & Dorset Air Ambulance, the Police talking on cyber-crime, Hearing Dogs for the Deaf and an open meeting with a speaker talking about his time in the Red Arrows. In addition to monthly meetings here are several other groups including a craft group, a book group, skittle players and a lunch group.

Ellwood’s – Finally we were told that Ellwood Stores would be changing hands on 27th May and Luke and Lizzie would be replaced by Rob and Chrissie. Luke thanked the community for their support and custom over the last few years.

7. **Questions and Comments** –

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

The next Council meeting is on **Wednesday 20th May at 7.00pm**. This is the **Annual Meeting of the Council**, it will be followed by a shortened **Ordinary Council Meeting**