Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 7th September 2026

Present:

Sandra Cosier	(SC)	Chair and Councillor & District Councillor
Keith Hickson	(KH)	Vice-Chair
Joe Deane	(JD)	Councillor
Jim Coleman	(JC)	Councillor
Robin Morley	(RM)	Councillor
Trudi Gasser	(TG)	Parish Clerk

In Attendance:

Steve Cosier	(SCo)	District Councillor
Dan Levy	(DL)	County Councillor
4 Members of the public		

MIN REF	ITEM
26/102	**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Thomas Elliott-Frey
26/103	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** No interests were declared by the councillors present
26/104	**APPROVAL OF THE PC MINUTES** Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of the 6th July 2026 were reviewed, approved by the PC and signed by the chair.
26/105	**MATTERS ARISING** 26/100 – the clock had been purchased and installed in the OGR.
26/107	**COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS** See attached appendix for full report from Steve Cosier & Sandra Cosier, District Councillors and Dan Levy, County Councillor.
26/108	**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC** Children's Home in Sutton It was questioned what was happening with the house that was purchased in Sutton to become a Children's home, as it has not been occupied despite all the work and maintenance DL confirmed it is to house children, but would make enquiries as to when it would be occupied. Airfield Bunker Concern was raised over the safety of children playing on the bunker at the Old Airfield. SCo confirmed that any damage caused was charged to the residents of the Old Airfield development by Ground Solutions, usually at an exorbitant cost!
26/109	**PLANNING** No applications to report.

26/110	**106 ART FUND** The PC are to put a proposal together to purchase a number of 'Standing with Giants' figures for the village with the available S106 Art Fund. SC/KH to progress with Dan Barton.
26/111	**ROADS** Data from the VAS signs in the village is as follows: JULY Of the 40,352 vehicles passing the sign in both directions in Stanton Harcourt 35,563 vehicles were over the 20mph limit .88% Of the 116,931 vehicles passing the sign in both directions in Sutton 84,482 vehicles were over the 20mph limit. 72% AUGUST Of the 29,679 vehicles passing the sign in both directions in Stanton Harcourt 26,157 vehicles were over the 20mph limit. 88.13% Of the 106,907 vehicles passing the sign in both directions in Sutton 77,299 vehicles were over the 20mph limit. 73.3% Pot Holes: A number of pot holes had been marked for repair.
26/112	**MAINTENANCE** • Broken Play Equipment – TG trying to get hold of supplier, unsuccessfully so far, the PC are looking into replacing the spring and repairing • Broken glass at OGR – a quote had been received the replace the glass - £285 plus VAT – all agreed to proceed with the repair. Current Maintenance issues: • Cutting the grass verge is proving difficult due to cars being parked on the verge. The PC are to publish an article in VV asking residents to keep verges clear. • Dog fouling is an increasing issue – a further article to be published in VV • Rubbish is an issue at the cemetery, with people disposing of rubbish in the bins causing them to overflow. SC/RM to visit the cemetery to look into resolving the issue • 'No Dogs ' signs had been erected at the playgrounds apart from The Leys, as it needs to be decided where to put the notice. SC/RM to visit the Leys and decide on the location for the sign. • There is a leaking water pipe on Steadys Lane – TG to report on Fix My Street • SCo confirmed that he is due to meet with Thames Water this coming Friday and any issues should be report prior to the meeting so he could raise.

	Maintenance Assessments: Thanks were expressed to RM and KH for completing the assessments. TG to combine the reports and circulate to all for comment and for the PC to decide on actions.
26/113	**VILLAGE VOICE** The PC contribution to Village Voice was discussed. SC to provide copy for the next issue. The deadline for VV content is the 20th of each month.
26/114	**GUARDROOM** The Royal British Legion have booked the OGR for Remembrance Sunday – JD proposed the room is provided free of charge to the RBL – JC seconded, all were in favour. It was suggested that the OGR could do with a lick of pain to freshen it up – TG to explore paint and the PC will carry out the decorating. TG encourage all to promote bookings at the OGR, as a regular booker had cancelled all future bookings due to the size of the space and needing more. TE is currently exploring options for heating control – more to follow at the next meeting. Solar Panels: It was confirmed that the PC are unable to use 106 funds to fund solar panels – RM currently looking into other funding options.
26/115	**VILLAGE HALL** The Village Hall Committee met recently. It was reported that the play equipment at the village hall is not being used and should be removed. The PC discussed using 106 funds to put toddler equipment in The Leys and installing fencing. TG to look into play equipment suppliers. The village Hall is starting Pickleball. A memorial bench for John Holland had been installed outside the shop at the hall – it was originally John's bench from his garden.
26/116	**FINANCE** The following payments were made in July/August: Bank Charge £7.00 Bank Charges £7.00 Village Voice Delivery £62.26 Castle Water OGR Water £23.17 J Woodward Grass Ctg £290.00 Castle Water OGR Water £18.82 Hugo Fox - Website £11.99

	T Gasser - Clerk £874.96 J Woodward - Maint £677.67 Bank Charges £7.00 Bank Charges £7.00 Bank Mandate: The PC had applied to close the OGR separate bank account, as it was felt that it was not necessary to separate the accounts and pay 2 banks charges every month. The Bank Mandate was update to add RM and TE as signatories and remove the retired Councillors. SC signed the changes, RM signed the mandate at the meeting and TG would arrange for TE to sign the mandate as soon as possible. IT was confirmed that NALC had published the 2026-27 National Salary Award rates – the increase is to be backdated to April 2026 and will be reflected in the Clerks next pay.
26/117	**CORRESPONDENCE** Nothing to report.
26/118	**ANY OTHER BUSINESS** SC confirmed that the installation of the defibrillator at the Methodist Church would happen in the very near future, we are just awaiting an available date rom the electrician.
26/119	**NEXT MEETING** • The next ordinary meeting of the PC: 7.30pm Monday 5th October 2026 at the Old Guardroom.

Signed .....

Date .....

County Councillor report
Stanton Harcourt Parish Council, 7 September 2026

A briefer report this month. Although work carries on all year, August is always quieter than most months.

Budget
Budget pressures will be a continuing theme for the rest of the existence of Oxfordshire County Council. This will be even more pronounced for the new North Oxfordshire Council coming into existence from next May in shadow form and May 28 as the unitary council for the area. A combination of a reduction in government grant of £27m, high inflation and continued increasing demands, plus the work needed to set up the inherently inefficient 3 unitary model, means the focus has to be on cuts. Nobody wants that, and we will do our best to make sure that core services are retained. 70% of budget goes on adult social care and children's services, most of which is for statutory obligations that can't be trimmed.

Road and Bus changes
Botley Road is finally due to reopen to motor vehicles on September 20. Fingers crossed that Network Rail can deliver this time. This has two key consequences.
The bus routes from Eynsham will change. The S1 will revert to going via Botley. The S2 will go down the A40 and Woodstock Road. The X52 express from Eynsham and H2 to Summertown and the hospitals stay as they were. And the WOCT service from Stanton

Harcourt to Eynsham and Hanborough links to these. You can use a MybusOxfordshire ticket so there is one fare regardless of which bus company you are using.
The temporary congestion charge is being superseded by the filter scheme that was originally planned. This means that you can now drive to anywhere in the city, providing you choose a route that doesn't pass a filter. So to get to the Westgate you would choose Botley Road, to Jericho Woodstock Road. Residents get 25 free passes to ignore the filters - if you are registered for the congestion charge you will be automatically enrolled, and if not please do. The objective is to keep the buses moving and encourage more bus use and cycling, to beat Oxford's car congestion. Much more

info here https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/oxford-traffic-filters/about-traffic-filters

Road maintenance
The good weather has meant that the pothole backlog is substantially fixed. Our expectation though is that we can expect significant flood danger in the months to come, because of the parched ground and likely heavy downpours. Hence the work on flushing and then fixing culverts and drains – you may recall we put £4m into drain repair to fix the 20 years of neglect. But even a perfect drain can't cope with the consequences of our changing climate.

Shores Green
As I am sure you will have noticed Shores Green junction is open. Ahead of schedule and on budget, and permitting access to the westbound A40 without going through Witney or Eynsham.

And finally
Finally, there was a by-election in the countryside round Bicester last week, following the former councillor joining his family in Switzerland. It saw an increased majority for

the Lib Dems, and the overall majority at County Hall has been restored.

As ever, please contact me on dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Councillor’s Steve and Sandra Cosier

West Oxfordshire District Councillor’s Report for Northmoor – September 2026

West Oxfordshire Local Plan Consultation – 2043 (Cllr Steve and Sandra Cosier)

West Oxfordshire District Council's Draft Local Plan 2043 is currently out for its final Regulation 19 consultation. The consultation runs from 26 August 2026 until 9 October 2026, after which the Plan will be submitted for independent examination. This is the final opportunity for Stanton Harcourt Parish Council and residents to influence the Plan before it is considered by a Planning Inspector.

Having reviewed the consultation documents and supporting evidence, we believe there are several issues that merit careful consideration by Stanton Harcourt Parish Council. These include whether the Plan is justified by evidence, supported by appropriate infrastructure and capable of being delivered over the Plan period to 2043.

A significant concern remains the impact of Local Government Reorganisation. West Oxfordshire District Council will cease to exist in 2028, yet the Local Plan extends until 2043. The Parish Council may therefore wish to seek assurances about how the Plan will align with the future planning strategy of the new Northern Oxfordshire unitary authority and whether an early review may ultimately be required.

Stanton Harcourt is identified within the proposed settlement hierarchy as a Tier 3 Village. It is my brief that Stanton Harcourt Parish Council should submit a formal objection to the draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2043 on the basis that the inclusion of Stanton Harcourt within Tier 3 (Large Villages) is not adequately justified by evidence and appears inconsistent with the spatial strategy set out in Policies SP1 and SP2. The Local Plan states that settlements are classified according to their size, service provision, accessibility, public transport links and ability to accommodate sustainable growth. It further explains that larger amounts of development should be directed towards locations where residents can access services, facilities and employment opportunities without excessive reliance on private cars. Whilst Stanton Harcourt benefits from a primary school, village hall, church and public house, it lacks many of the facilities that would normally support designation as a significant growth location. The village has no GP surgery, pharmacy, supermarket, secondary school, railway station or substantial employment base. Residents are largely dependent on Eynsham, Witney, Carterton and Oxford for essential day-to-day services. This level of service provision is more typical of a medium-sized rural village than a sustainable growth settlement. The Parish Council should therefore ask the District Council to explain what specific evidence demonstrates that Stanton Harcourt performs more strongly than settlements placed within Tier 4.

A central objective of Policy SP2 is to reduce car dependency and focus growth in locations with good public transport and active travel opportunities. However, Stanton Harcourt's public transport provision remains limited. Existing services consist mainly of community transport and infrequent bus routes linking the village to Eynsham, Standlake and Witney. There is no railway station, no strategic bus interchange, and no direct connection to the A40 Mass Rapid Transit proposals which form a major part of the Plan's sustainability strategy. In practice, many residents require access to a private vehicle for employment, shopping, healthcare and education. As such, directing additional development to Stanton Harcourt appears contrary to the Plan's stated aim of locating growth where sustainable transport choices are greatest. The draft Local Plan identifies the A40 corridor, the A44 corridor, Eynsham, Salt Cross Garden Village, Witney, Carterton and locations served by rail as the principal focus for sustainable growth. Stanton Harcourt sits outside these strategic growth corridors and does not benefit from the transport investments which underpin the Plan's

overall growth strategy. The Parish Council should argue that if sustainability is the basis upon which growth is allocated, then Stanton Harcourt has not been shown to possess the transport, infrastructure or accessibility advantages required to justify a Tier 3 designation.

The village also faces significant physical constraints which distinguish it from more sustainable growth locations. Stanton Harcourt lies within a landscape heavily influenced by the River Thames, River Windrush and associated floodplain areas. In addition, local roads are rural in nature and already accommodate a mixture of commuter, agricultural and commercial traffic. Policy SP3 requires development to be supported by adequate infrastructure and to avoid unacceptable cumulative impacts. The Parish Council should therefore request evidence demonstrating that highways, drainage, utilities, education provision and other essential infrastructure are capable of supporting the additional growth that may arise from a Tier 3 classification.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Plans to be "justified" and "effective". The Parish Council should argue that the current Tier 3 classification appears to fail both of these tests. It is not evident from the published material why Stanton Harcourt has been placed within the same category as a number of villages with stronger transport connections and service provision.

Furthermore, there is no publicly available comparative assessment demonstrating how the settlement hierarchy has been applied. Without such evidence, the classification cannot be shown to be properly justified. Equally, directing growth towards a location where residents remain heavily dependent upon private vehicles raises questions as to whether the policy would be effective in delivering the Plan's sustainability objectives.

The Parish Council should request that the Inspector and West Oxfordshire District Council amend Policy SP1 by reclassifying Stanton Harcourt from Tier 3 Large Village to Tier 4 Medium Village. If the Council is unwilling to do so, it should be required to publish the detailed evidence, scoring methodology and comparative assessment that demonstrates why Stanton Harcourt is considered materially more sustainable than other settlements placed in lower tiers. Until such evidence is provided, the designation cannot be regarded as robustly justified.

Stanton Harcourt Parish Council objects to the classification of Stanton Harcourt as a Tier 3 Large Village within Policy SP1 of the Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2043. The Parish Council considers that the designation is not supported by sufficient evidence relating to service provision, public transport accessibility, infrastructure capacity or sustainability. The village lacks the range of services, strategic transport connections and infrastructure capacity that underpin the spatial strategy elsewhere in the Plan. Consequently, the Parish Council requests that Stanton Harcourt be reclassified as a Tier 4 Medium Village or that West Oxfordshire District Council provides clear and comprehensive evidence demonstrating why a Tier 3 designation is justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy.

We would encourage both the Parish Council and residents to review the consultation documents and submit comments before the consultation closes on 9 October 2026, ensuring that Northmoor's priorities are properly represented throughout the examination process

Community flood warden (Cllr Steve Cosier)

Since the last parish meeting, I have become a Flood Warden for Stanton Harcourt, Sutton and Northmoor. This now means that all parishes in the ward; Standlake, Aston, Stanton Harcourt, Sutton, and Northmoor are now covered by volunteer Community Flood Warden. In this role I will be supported by Oxfordshire County Council Flood Risk Management Team, Joint Oxfordshire Resilience Team (JORT), Highways Team and Volunteer Coordination Team, in partnership with the

Environment Agency.

The role is designed to help local communities to understand their flood risks and that they all have a responsibility to look after themselves, their family and property before, during and after a flood. As a Flood warden I can monitor blocked drains and culverts, ditches in need of repair, tree branches or obstructions in rivers/watercourses, and anything else that may cause a flood risk and report them to the appropriate land, property owners or local authority. Please let Steve know if you have issues to share relating to the above.

Mobile Connectivity and Digital Infrastructure (Cllr Sandra and Steve Cosier)
We are pleased to report that, following representations we made to Government regarding poor mobile coverage across the ward, we have now received a detailed response from the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology.

The Government acknowledges that residents and businesses across rural areas continue to experience significant mobile connectivity challenges. It has reaffirmed its ambition for all populated areas to have access to high-quality standalone 5G services by 2030, supported by substantial investment from mobile network operators. Vodafone Three has committed £11 billion to network upgrades, while EE and Virgin Media O2 are also investing heavily in expanding next-generation mobile coverage.

The Government has also confirmed that it is reviewing the mobile market and considering further planning reforms to remove barriers to the deployment of new telecommunications infrastructure. Alongside this, the Shared Rural Network programme continues to improve rural coverage, with 4G coverage from at least one operator now reaching 96% of the UK landmass and further improvements expected through to 2027.

While these national commitments are welcome, they do not provide specific assurances for villages within our parish. We have therefore made it clear that residents continue to experience unreliable mobile reception, poor indoor coverage and areas with little or no usable signal.

We intend to continue pressing mobile network operators directly to identify whether upgrades are planned locally and to ensure that Northmoor and surrounding villages in the ward are not overlooked. We will also be encouraging residents to use Ofcom's "Map Your Mobile" service to report coverage issues and identify the strongest available networks.

The Government's response addressed ‘some’ concerns regarding the migration from traditional analogue landlines to digital telephone services. Ministers have confirmed that additional protections are now in place for vulnerable residents, including free battery backup units for eligible customers and enhanced support during the transition to digital services.

Given the continued reliance on landlines in areas with poor mobile reception, we will continue to monitor this issue closely and push for assurances that the needs of rural communities remain fully protected as the national telecoms network is modernised.

We will keep the Parish Council and residents informed of any further developments and continue to advocate for improved connectivity across our communities by the Government, and mobile operators.

Thank you

Cllr Steve Cosier & Cllr Sandra Cosier
West Oxfordshire District Councillors - SASH Ward

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