

**Withington Parish Council
Annual Meeting
Wednesday 6th May 2025 in the Parish Room at 7.30pm
Minutes**

01/2026: Present: Councillors Phil Heath (Chair), Joe Ford, Lesley Stone, Martin Timmis Alan Williams, Denise Roscoe (Clerk) and 8 members of the public

02/2026: Welcome: Councillor Heath welcomed everyone

03/2026: Apologies: Helen & Wayne Thomas, Bernie Jones, Steve & Yvonne Walton, Aaron Manley

04/2026: Declaration of Interests: None reported

05/2026: Election of Chair: Councillor Heath was elected Chairman unopposed. He signed the Chairmans declaration of acceptance of office

06/2026: Election of Vice Chair: Councillor Martin Timmis was elected unopposed.

07/2026: Approval of the Minutes of the 4th March 202: Minutes were accepted as correct and signed by the Chair.

Adoption of a Revised Village Green Constitution: Error on Agenda

082026: Responsible Finance Officer's Report

**WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
06 May 2026**

Brought Forward from	03/03/2026	£1,829.85
Receipts since	03/03/2026	£7,534.00
	Shropshire Council (Precept)	£7,534.00
Payments Approved -	04/03/2026	£657.84
	Hire of Hall (Mar 26)	£12.00
	Clerk Salary (Mar 26)	£516.64
	HMRC PAYE (Mar 26)	£129.20
Payments made since	03/03/2026 for approval	£3,108.68
	SALC (Training)	£45.00
	HugoFox (Website)	£143.88
	D Malley (Annual Payroll)	£124.80
	Shropshire Council (Loan)	£2,735.00
	Internal Audit	£60.00
Balance Carried Forward to 05/05/26		£5,597.33
Payments for approval -	06/05/2026	
	Hire of Hall (May 26)	£12.00
	SALC (Membership)	£187.37
	Zurich Insurance	£241.00
	Clerk & HMRC (Salary Quarter 1)	£680.50
Authorisation to pay the following if within budget amount:		

Payments Approved at the Meeting

All payments made since 03/03/2026

£45.00	SALC – training
£143.88	HugoFox – website
£124.80	D Malley – annual payroll
£2,735.00	Shropshire Council – loan
£60.00	Internal Audit

Payments to be made

£12.00	Room Hire (May 26)
£187.37	SALC – membership
£241.00	Zurich Insurance
£680.50	Clerk/HMRC – salary quarter 1

Minutes confirmed as correct _____ 1 July 2026 _____

Chairman

Internal Audit Annual Accounts

Internal Auditor Report: The Accounts have been completed to an excellent standard and that all appropriate aspects of the Annual Governance & Accountability Report covered within the internal Audit report have been fully met.

Approval of Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Council approved the 2025/2026 AGAR which was signed by the Chair and Clerk

09/2026: Reports on Parish Plan

Church

The benefice is still struggling to find a permanent replacement for the role of Team Rector and that has put pressure on the Haughmond & Wrekin team of clergy & lay readers, supported by retired clergy living locally.

Weekly services continue to happen and major celebrations like Remembrance Sunday, Carol Service & Easter attracting larger than normal congregations, we are extremely grateful for everyone that attends services and social events or supports St John's church in any way.

Jon Scutt

Parish Room

Regular lettings for Tai Chi, Yoga, Pilates WI (& associated sewing & quilting) continue as well as hosting monthly coffee mornings as well as Parish Council & Parochial Church Council meetings.

There have been a few one-off rentals. The rental income from all these activities have covered regular expenses with the 100 club providing income to cover Maintenance to the roof & guttering.

We thank everyone that supports the parish room in any way through the year.

Jon Scutt

Hare & Hounds

Firstly, thank you to everyone in the parish for your continued support over the past year. It's been a really positive period for the pub, and we're pleased with the progress that has been made.

Over the last 12 months, our focus has been on stabilising the business and building consistent trade. I'm pleased to say that we have maintained strong business levels and continue to see good regular support from both locals and visitors.

A major milestone for us this year has been the completion of the Airbnb accommodation above the pub. This has been a significant investment, and we are now welcoming guests, which is helping to bring additional visitors into the village.

The kitchen is now fully operational and running well, allowing us to introduce a new weekend food offering. We've launched a simple, consistent menu which is settling in nicely, alongside regular food nights which are growing in popularity. We have however just ripped out the rear prep kitchen and that should be a week or two away from completion.

We've also hosted a range of events over the year, including wakes, private parties, and social gatherings, all of which have helped re-establish the pub as a hub for the community.

Behind the scenes, we've made some changes to ensure the pub continues to run smoothly. Caroline has now taken on the role of Pub Manager, providing a consistent day-to-day presence. AJ continues to support the business but also has increasing commitments with his estate agency.

Looking ahead, we have a number of plans to continue improving the pub and its offering. These include renovating the back kitchen (which we are now doing) to improve efficiency and converting the rear shed into an outdoor bar and grill area to enhance the garden space.

AJ Manley

Footpaths

People continue to use and enjoy our local footpaths with some being much better used than others.

During the winter months much of our footpath network becomes very waterlogged but in recent weeks

they have all dried up so I would encourage you to use them, especially with the recent issues of lorries driving too fast on our narrow lanes.

At the time of writing, the line of the footpath from the stile to the far corner of the field behind Sunnyfields has not been marked but I have contacted Mr Griffiths about this and he assures me it will be done soon.

There are still issues with the field by Drury Lane, at the far side of the parish, with rotten stiles and blocked access out of the field. However, we cannot trace who owns this field to ask permission to carry out remedial work.

I have cut back some brambles and branches over several stiles with help from Wayne and there are a couple more places that we need to revisit with the secateurs.

It is disappointing to see there are still some thoughtless dog owners who spoil the countryside for the rest of us by not picking up dog mess or by picking it up but abandoning the plastic poo bags. It is not just unpleasant and a health hazard for other walkers but dog mess is also toxic to wildlife and farm animals.

Apart from dog mess, which I can't prevent, if anyone notices any other footpath issues such as rotten stiles, blocked paths or overgrown brambles and branches on stiles please let me know and I will do my best to resolve them.

Helen Thomas

Canal

The last 12 months has seen the biggest step forward in the 25 years since the Shrewsbury & Newport Canals Trust formed. This was the opening of the café at Wappenshall Wharf. The café has surpassed all expectations and has been extremely well supported since opening on 14th December 2025. Work now continues to restore the other Grade II listed warehouse, which will open as a Visitor Centre to pay homage to Thomas Telford. Working with our partners at Blists Hill (now under national Trust management) we will exhibit their "Telford Collection" that was gathered in 2007 from all around the world. This will show the incredible work this man did to build, roads, bridges, churches, canals and much more. We hope to have this building opened to the public by 2028.

Those of you who have driven eastwards out of Rodington recently, will have seen some timbers starting to rise up just at the edge of the village. This is the reconstruction of the lift bridge that once stood there. We plan to have this completed later this year. Supported by Rodington Parish Council, this structure will be the first step in restoring this section of the canal.

At Uffington a great deal of work has been done next to the Electrical sub-station to clear the watered section of canal here of fallen trees and other debris and to open up the towpath right up to the A5. Also, at Berwick Wharf the towpath has been re-surfaced up to the south portal of the Berwick Tunnel and Widows Bridge on this section has been completely re-pointed and had its coping stones replaced.

Our two heritage narrowboats are being restored at Norbury Junction. A working pair consisting of a motor-powered boat (Bainton) and a motorless "butty" (Berkhampstead) built in 1936 are being brought back to their original build standard and painted in their original livery. Berkhampstead will be transported by road to Wappenshall in the summer and craned into the Eat Basin as an added attraction. This will enable visitors to experience just what life was like for the folk that lived and worked on the canals 200 years ago. Bainton will follow in the spring of 2027.

It would be good to gauge support of the parish for the restoration of the canal through Withington.

Bernie Jones

10/2026: Dates of the Parish Council Meetings and Annual Meetings for 2026/27

Wednesday 1 July 2026
Wednesday 2 September 2026
Wednesday 4 November 2026

Wednesday 6 January 2027
Wednesday 3 March 2027
Wednesday 12 May 2027:
Annual Village Meeting
Annual Parish Council Meeting
Annual Village Green Trustees Meeting

Minutes confirmed as correct _____ 1 July 2026 _____

Chairman

DRAFT

Minutes confirmed as correct _____ 1 July 2026 _____

Chairman