



WEST MEON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk's Report for April 2026

HR

- Annual Leave: Clerk took one day's annual leave (Monday 27th April) approved by the Chair.
- Additional hours worked – 7 hours.

Governance

- Winchester City Council: Electoral Services notified of the resignations from Cllr Gedye and Cllr Humphreys.
- Public Notice: Vacancies for Councilors published on the noticeboard and website 13th April 2026.
- Election Notice for South Downs National Park Authority – Parish Member Appointment: - The Clerk has reviewed the eligibility criteria to nominate a council member and has confirmed with HALC that the Council does not meet the criteria to put forward a nominee (members Co-opted and not elected). Email circulated.

Insurance – Flint Wall Cover

The Clerk has received confirmation from Gallagher of the additional premium required to include the flint wall on the Council's insurance cover. Gates & Fences sections from £14,500 to £59,500 would cost an additional **£221.66**. Premium paid in January 2026 £2,155.43 and the budget set aside for 2026-27 **£2500.00**. The information was received after the agenda was issued, so no decision is requested at this meeting. The matter will be placed on the next agenda for consideration and approval.

IT / Website & Email

- Following Hugo Fox's migration to a new server, the Parish Council website temporarily displayed as "not secure", and some uploaded files were not displaying correctly. A support ticket was raised with CloudNext, and the DNS settings were updated to point to the new server. A further incident occurred, and a support ticket raised with Hugo Fox, this has been addressed. Clerk to monitor.
- The email accounts for Cllr Gedye and Cllr Humphreys have been disabled by the Clerk, and details of both councillors removed from the Parish Council website.

Finance:

- Winchester City Council: to note that the invoice for £130.00, approved in April's payments, was omitted in the payments but picked up during reconciliation. The payment has been processed and will be reported as part of May's payments.

- **HALC:** Invoice **INV-8463** has been received. A query has been raised with HALC regarding the amount, as two invoices have been issued covering HR Service membership (£216.00 inclusive of VAT) and HALC/NALC membership (£395.00 inclusive of VAT). Council to resolve whether to renew the HR Service membership. Details of the service circulated.
- **Precept:** the first half of the precept has been received for the full amount requested. Action from previous meeting to leave a running balance of around £10,000 (agreed working practice). Considering payments scheduled for May, £12,000.00 has been transferred from the current account to the deposit account to maximise interest.
- **Unity Bank:** request to remove Cllr Gedye as an authorised signatory has been submitted to Unity Bank, along with triple authorisation, one to raise payments two to process. Cllr Davies, Cllr Burke and Cllr Fowler are required to sign the form to initiate the bank mandate changes.
- **Reserves:** Hydrology reserves balance has been transferred to the General Fund.
- **2025/2026 Accounts** closed in Scribe accounting software.

Communication

- A request has been received to include the surgery in future events, such as the Annual Parish Meeting. The surgery has a Communications Working Group, formed to keep residents updated. I have included the surgery as part of the Working Groups review, in our May meeting.
- **Tree Works:** An email was received noting that, on a previous occasion when trees were felled, the timber was collected and a payment was made to the Parish Council. The Clerk has responded to confirm that this will be brought to Council's attention for consideration when agreeing arrangements for future tree works.
- **Winchester City Council:** access granted to a sub-contractor working on behalf of WCC to allow access for remedial work to fencing to one of the properties. Area was checked by the Clerk and noted the area was left clean and tidy.

Recreation Ground/Community

- **Bus Shelter – West Meon High Street:** The bench at the bus shelter has been repaired by Cllr Hickmore. The plinth at the bus shelter heading towards Vinalls Lane has also been fixed.
- **Ash Tree (Tree Assist):** The scheduled works were completed two days early and the area was cleared of debris. The only item left on site is a large hollow trunk in the top right corner of the Recreation Ground, which contains a bees' nest. Tree Assist have advised that they are happy to return and remove the trunk once the bees have been safely relocated. The Clerk assessed the work with the site manager, during which a leaning tree was identified, also pointed out by Cllr Main. This had previously been partly obscured by the large hollow ash that has now been removed. A dead ash in the play den area was also noted, along with a third tree of concern. A quotation has been requested for these additional works. Tree Assist recommend a health survey of the remaining trees is carried out, after addressing the three identified. They suggested this should be undertaken by an independent contractor, rather than Tree Assist, to avoid any potential conflict of interest.
- **Woodlands Entrance signs:** J K Engineering have been instructed to install the third and final entrance sign. The owner is currently on holiday but will contact the Clerk on their return.
- **Goal Post Pegs:** pegs ordered and paid for by the Clerk. Order has been received.
- **Meonwara Fencing:** approved contractor Dean Tutt notified, and the unsuccessful applicants also notified. Payment terms to undertake the work state that 50% to

be paid upfront. Included in May payments.

- **Grounds Maintenance (Recreation Ground):** approved contractor M Edwards notified, along with the unsuccessful applicants.
- **Strimming:** Will Hillier has been contacted with the work to be carried out, scope of works to include picnic area, in front of tennis courts, public footpaths. Banks to be left clear. Practical issues with the cricket season looming request that the bank by the village hall is strimmed. To be discussed with the Biodiversity team regarding the plan for these locations and proposed timelines.

Planning:

- **Neighbourhood Plan / Village Design Statement:** The Clerk has responded to SDNPA confirming that West Meon Parish Council resolved at the April meeting not to pursue a Village Design Statement. **SDNPA** have also confirmed that, while Winchester City Council would not be the Local Planning Authority responsible for designating, advising, organising or making the Neighbourhood Development Plan, they would still be consulted at the relevant regulatory consultation stages. This may include advice on matters such as environmental health and local needs.
- **HCC Road Closures May** – details of road closures between 8th and 11th May impacting the M27 and A32 posted on Facebook and WM Parish Council website, alerting residents.

Bernice Gibson-Ost
Clerk – West Meon Parish Council

| Ref | Area | Task / Topic | RAG Status Green 0-3 months Amber 3-6 Red + 6 months | Progress Status | Updates / Action Needed | Meeting Agenda |
|-----|---------------------|---|---|-----------------|---|----------------|
| 12 | Village Maintenance | Tree On The Cross: Survey and options appraisal | Amber | In Progress | <p>Apr 26: 'no comment' submitted to application due to a conflict of interest.</p> <p>Mar 26: Planning Application received for consideration.</p> <p>Mar 26: Notice of Intent confirmed as 26th January. SDNP Planning confirmed the application was sent to the wrong department. The application has now been given priority, however as the tree has a TPO the application is being sent to Winchester for further investigation.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p> | |
| 14 | Legal | Land Registry: application Status | Red | In Progress | <p>22/10/25: email sent to Bramsdon & Child: Application had stalled pending solicitor action. This has been confirmed as resolved by Bramsdon & Child. Email sent requesting Land Registry reference, confirmation all information is now submitted, and an updated completion timescale. Awaiting response.</p> <p>3/10/25: Bramsdon & Child confirmed that Land Registry do have the application. Land Registry advised Bramsdon & Child (by letter) to say it could not be expedited through the portal. Bramsdon & Child advise they have not seen the letter. Furthermore Bramsdon & Child claim they have expedited this over the phone (27th August 2025)</p> <p>27/08/25: Email sent asking for a progress update, reference to the Title Deeds on Land Registry and access to original deeds.</p> <p>19/8/25: Bramsdon & Child have confirmed they have located the original deeds in their South Sea office.</p> <p>5/8/25: email sent to all members of Bramsdon & Childs, escalated due to lack of response.</p> <p>28/7/25: Email sent as no response since previous call. Have asked for the issue to be escalated.</p> <p>June 25: Chaser email sent as application status unclear, so issue remains unresolved (Bramsdon & Childs Solicitors). No response as 5/07/25.</p> | |

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| 17 | Working Groups | Flood Action: Weir, Culverts, Drains, Bridges - Reporting Issues | Red | In Progress | <p>April - SDNP Infrastructure Grant submitted by Cllr Davies, on potential funding to address the revetments.</p> <p>Mar 26: Following summary from the Environment Agency on works to address the revetments, three quotes have been requested from Eco-Librium, Earlcoate and Cabin BioEngineering. Cabin BioEngineering have declined due to current commitments and SDNP deadline for the funding application.</p> <p>Feb 26: A meeting is scheduled for 27 February with Cllr Bolton, a representative from the Environment Agency and the Chair to scope the required works and obtain contractor recommendations. The information gathered will support a CIL funding application to SDNP.</p> <p>Jan 26: Received from Cllr Bolton information received regarding weir revetments and potential CIL funding. Cllr Davies to lease with Cllr Bolton on the application.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p> | |
| 18 | Legal/Property | Legal Advice: Sports Club & Village Hall | Amber | In Progress | <p>Mar 26: Advice letter received from HALC Legal Services setting out their recommendations. To be circulated with Council members and discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>Jan 26: see issue 29 for update.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p> | Apr |
| 22 | Projects | Woodlands Entry Signs: Confirmation of location | Red | In Progress | <p>April 26: JK Engineering instructed to install 3rd location.</p> <p>Feb 26: There have been no objections received regarding the third location.</p> <p>Jan 26: received from Clerk that Bramdean Parish Council have approved the location and will formally note it in their minutes at the next meeting. Cllr Davies included the 3rd location in the Parish News, as part of the consultation period.</p> <p>Dec 25: a third location for the Woodlands sign has been submitted to the Clerk of Bramdean. This was checked during the Xmas break, and the site looks acceptable, with sufficient space and no obstructions. My only concern is that the location is some distance inside the Bramdean boundary, https://w3w.co/turkey.passively.crystals but will wait to hear back from Bramdean Parish Council, their views.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p> | Apr |
| 23 | Projects | Woodlands Fingerpost Signs | Red | In Progress | <p>22/08/25: HH confirmed they are still waiting for a date from contractor who has been assigned the work.</p> <p>18/08/25: Update requested from Hampshire Highways</p> | |

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| | | | | | <p>June 25: Awaiting update from the contractor about timescales. Delayed due to the restructure at HCC. HCC Traffic Dept. will be in touch when more information is available (last response 6th June).</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p> |
| 26 | Working Groups | Car Park: Resurfacing and Space Optimisation - 3 quotes | Red | In Progress | <p>Feb 26: meeting was held between Chair of the Village Hall, Cllr Burke, Cllr Fowler and the Clerk to review the proposed changes to the car park. There were no objections received from the Chair. A decision by members is proposed at the meeting to move forward with securing quotes.</p> <p>Nov 25: proposal for works to the car park have been submitted by the Car Park Working Group and circulated for discussion in December meeting.</p> <p>22.08/25: I have sought quotes for resurfacing the car park and received one quotation with a price to do the initial survey at £6941.00 ex VATt . However, it at this stage may be more appropriate to obtain estimates so that the Council has an indication of likely costs before considering whether to proceed further. Two estimates have been received for discussion in September meeting.</p> <p>28/7/25: initial enquiry sent out to Nidagraveluk.co.uk, info@slatterestatesurfaces.com, info@randcgroundworks.com and Ed Bagshaw Ltd.</p> |
| 27 | Finance | Quote/Tender process: public spaces | Amber | Complete | <p>April 26: Contract awarded to M Edwards. All parties informed of result.</p> <p>Mar 26: three quotes have been received for the contract to maintain the pitches and hedgerows.</p> <p>Feb 26: Specification for maintaining the pitches and hedges has been reviewed and approved by the current contractor, noting that WM & Warnford Sports Club did not respond. The Clerk is now obtaining quotations for the work and will be shared with Members when three quotes have been received, for resolution at the next meeting (April).</p> <p>Jan26: the mowing and hedge trimming specification has been sent to W&WM Sports Hall for review and feedback before sending out for quotes.</p> <p>Dec 25: Draft specification for ground maintenance has been prepared and circulated, for consideration and feedback my council members.</p> <p>27/10/25: meeting to be held with Chair Sports Pavillion to review next year's schedule.</p> <p>11/8/25: Work confirmed by Hillier Garden Services and Mac Edwards. Worksheet sent to Biodiversity Working Group for input into any additional requirements. I also received an email from Chair Sports, who would like to review the document before it is approved.</p> <p>29/7/25: contacted Mac & Will to clarify scope of rec ground maintenance of public places.</p> |

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| 29 | Legal/Property | Leases and Land Ownership | Red | In Progress | <p>Mar 26: Advice letter received from HALC Legal Services setting out their recommendations. To be circulated with Council members and discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>Feb 26: A meeting has been arranged between a representative from HALC Legal Services and the Clerk to review scope and options for progressing matters. The Clerk will report back following the meeting.</p> <p>Jan 26: received response back from HALC Legal Services advisor confirming receipt of the documents and will respond with any questions, noting that the advisor is on limited work time due to a broken arm. Scope of the work to be confirmed in February meeting.</p> <p>DEC 25: Discovery piece is now complete and the document and supporting evidence prepared for HALC Legal Services. The document has been circulated for consideration at the next meeting.</p> <p>Sep 25: see issue 18 update.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p> | Apr |
| 32 | Public Rights of Way | Missing Signpost | Amber | In Progress | <p>Jan 26: Fingerpost sign incident still reported as open.</p> <p>18/08/25: Fingerpost sign reported missing from Drs Lane, location 242/1/1. Reported to Hampshire Country Council reference number 250850735HCC Rights of Way: a job has been issued to Countryside Access Ranger Team - advised this make take some time before it is completed.</p> | |
| 33 | Projects | Neighbourhood Plan | Amber | Complete | <p>April 26: SDNP advised of council response as resolved at meeting held April 2026. This issue will be closed. When Council have decided to move forward with a Neighbourhood Plan a new issue will be raised.</p> <p>Mar 26: SDNPA has requested an update on the Parish Council's current position regarding progression of a Village Design Statement or a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), to inform a report to Members. They have also advised that, from 30 June 2026, design statements can no longer be adopted as SPDs and will carry limited weight.</p> <p>28/10/25: Initial discussions held with neighbouring clerks; seeking advice from HALC (Steve Tilbury) for an independent view on developing a neighbourhood plan, including any funding options and if they recommend professional services in the area. I've been advised by the neighbouring clerk that funding has been withdrawn but will follow-up when discussing with HALC.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p> | |

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| 36 | Planning | Planning Application | Amber | In Progress | <p>Nov 25: the planning application is still awaiting review. They have a significant backlog, and no timescales are available as to when it will be seen.</p> <p>22/10/25: progress update requested from Winchester Council on Planning Application SDNP/24/03257/FUL. There has been no response so I have also asked Cllr Wallace if he can assist, as I note he was involved previously.</p> |
| 37 | Open Spaces | Play Equipment | Green | Complete | <p>April 26: Site visit complete and proposed scope completed and checked by the Clerk.</p> <p>Mar 26: Infinity Playgrounds have been appointed. Initial scope of work has been confirmed, in line with the agreed scope resolved at the meeting in March. Awaiting confirmation from the operations team as to a confirmed date for works to take place.</p> <p>Feb 26: Three contractors (Ava Play, Vitality and Infinity Playgrounds) were invited to quote for quarterly inspections, maintenance and any immediate works identified. Two quotations have been received (Ava Play and Infinity Playgrounds) and circulated to Members for resolution. The Clerk has prepared a side-by-side comparison to support consideration.</p> <p>Jan 26: have spoken with Viaplay and even though chased have received nothing back. Infinity Playgrounds have visited and just waiting for clarification on certain costs. Eva recreation also came out to do a site visit and provide costs. This information will be collated and shared with council members, as too late for this month's agenda. To note both Infinity Playground and Eva Recreation advise removal of the slide as this prevents a risk, due to surface area and equipment itself. All surfaces need professional jet washing and borders cleared back (the latter could be done by general maintenance).</p> <p>Dec 25: contacted Viaplay, Infinity Playgrounds. Infinity Playgrounds have visited the site and will prepare a quote to address the issues highlighted in the Playground Inspection Report, that require specialist work carried out.</p> |
| 39 | | Budget | Green | Complete | <p>April 26: Reserves reallocated in line with resolution by council. Issue closed.</p> <p>Mar 26: Reallocation of reserves actioned in line with March meeting. To be reviewed during the end of year financial statement.</p> <p>Feb 26: proposed budget, end of year financial assumption and a reallocation of reserves prepared and circulated for consideration by members, including supporting documentation.</p> <p>The 26/27 draft budget has been prepared and reviewed by a member of SLCC and also an experienced Clerk of many parish councils, and recommendations proposed.</p> <p>1. Water Meadows: Provision removed at this stage as the scope, costs and timescales are not yet defined; any future request can be considered via</p> |

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| | | | | | <p>the Council's grant process once further detail is available.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Neighbourhood Plan: Provision reduced by £5,000. 3. Traffic Calming: Provision reduced by £5,000, leaving sufficient funding for three SAM speed signs. 4. These amendments reduced the level of earmarked reserves proposed, which would otherwise have resulted in an increase in the precept. 5. Increase in clerks' salary and pension following the council meeting in December (for illustration). <p>The remaining general reserve position is stronger and provides improved resilience for unforeseen events and emerging priorities, broadly in line with external audit guidance (e.g. maintaining an appropriate level of reserves/cashflow contingency).</p> | |
| 41 | Finance | Peppercorn Rent | Green | In Progress | <p>Feb 26: response received from Chair of Village Hall. We have now heard back from our lawyer and as we suspected he says that it would not be appropriate for the charity to be charged a peppercorn rent in respect of its occupation and use of the Village Hall. Equally, the charity should not enter into any agreement in this regard. This is because the Village Hall property is held by the Parish Council on trust for the charity and must therefore be made available for the charity accordingly. The payment of a peppercorn rent or use of an agreement would suggest that the charity has some form of tenancy of the property which is not the case. Jan 26: Payment received from the Rifle Club, but they would like to see a Rental Agreement.</p> <p>Dec25: The Chairman of the Village Hall and Rifle Club have both been sent an agreement document to cover unrecovered Peppercorn rents for 2025, with future years to be collected on the 1st of April. This issue was logged by the internal auditor as it needs to be addressed. Rifle Club are raising this with their committee, and the village hall are raising this with their lawyers, to get advice on potential impact - if any.</p> | |
| 42 | Governance | Trust: Recreation Ground: 301982: Removal of Existing Trustees | Amber | In Progress | <p>Nov 25: received in writing formal written notice from the existing trustees that they would like to be removed.</p> | |
| 43 | Open Spaces | Ash Dieback | Green | In Progress | <p>April 26: Trees removed, this has highlighted 3 other trees considered at risk. See Clerks note.</p> <p>Mar 26: confirmed dates for the removal of trees identified as 'at risk' is April 13th - 17th April inclusive. Start time between 0800-0900 hours. Partial road closure expected on the Monday or Tuesday. Subject to change e.g. weather conditions may make the ground unsuitable. WM Sports Club advised of the proposed dates.</p> | |

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| 44 | Open Spaces | Meonwara - Fencing | Green | In Progress | <p>April 26: Contractor approved at April meeting instructed by the Clerk to carry out the work, as proposed.</p> <p>Mar 26: Three contractors have been invited to assess the condition of the fence at Meonwara Crescent and submit quotations for remedial works. It is anticipated that these will be available for Member consideration at the next meeting.</p> |
| 45 | Legal/Property | Meonwara - Lease Renewal | Green | In Progress | <p>April 26: Winchester City Council have advised that the Heads of Terms have changed from 5 years to 10 years, with the remaining terms unchanged. they have appointed their solicitor to draw up the paperwork.</p> <p>Mar 26: Winchester City Council has been advised that the Parish Council wishes to renew the lease for a further five-year term on the existing arrangements. Documentation is currently being prepared by their solicitors and will be issued to the Clerk for review. Winchester has been informed that, should the terms remain unchanged, the Parish Council does not intend to instruct a solicitor.</p> |