



WEST MEON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk's Report for January 2026

General Update:

HR

Vacancy Co-opt: Clerk received an email from a member of public wishing to be considered for the vacancy. The applicant meets the statutory criteria, having lived in the village since 2011. Covering letter and LinkedIn profile have been circulated to Council members.

Finance:

Future Payments: An invoice has been received for the SLCC annual membership subscription for the sum of £158, which has been budgeted for in the current financial year and will be included in next months planned payments.

Planned payments: ILCA training for the Clerk was previously approved by council. The Clerk would like to begin the course in February and understand that is undertaken in their own time.

West Meon & Warnford Sports Club: The Clerk received a grant request for £500. The Clerk also directed them to Hampshire and Winchester Council small grants scheme, as they meet the criteria set out. Grant proposal for discussion in Feb. meeting.

Peppercorn Rent: nominal rent for the Rifle Club and Village Hall has been issued by the Clerk – see item 41.

Sceptic Tank: Village Hall drainage: A drainage issue occurred at the Village Hall in December. ECS attended on 23 December to jet the drain and advised that the main tank adjacent to the rifle club is very dry with a build-up of solids and would benefit from emptying and jetting. The Village Hall have notified us of this, as the Parish Council has shared control of the car park area. The Clerk has requested three quotations so the matter can be considered by the Council at the next meeting.

Correspondence

Water Meadows: Members are advised that the legal purchase of Court House Meadows (water meadows) is in progress. Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust has provided a flyer which will be distributed locally seeking donations. While this matter falls outside the remit of Parish Council business, it was agreed during a call with HLOWWT, that the Council would assist by sharing the information on the *We Are West Meon* Facebook page and other local groups.

Droxford Parish Council: received a request to publicise the development work proposed at Corhampton Golf Club. The planning application was circulated and the meeting being held at Droxford was publicised on *We Are West Meon* Facebook page.

Storeys Meadow: An email was received by the Clerk, from a resident seeking clarification regarding a recent planning application relating to a Deed of Variation to the Section 106 Agreement at Storey's Meadow and the general process for allocating affordable housing. The Clerk responded providing factual clarification.

67 Bus: website redesign for the community bus was shared by Cllr Pett and circulated to members to test and feedback. Cllr Davies has so far feedback observations.

Speed & Road Safety:

Traffic Noise/Average Speed Cameras: observations from each council member and collated by the Chair have been submitted to MP Danny Chambers.

Recreation Ground

Play Inspection Company: have been instructed to carry out the 2026 annual play inspection including estimated life expectancy assessments at Headon View and Meonwara sites.

Grounds Maintenance Contract: has been sent to WM&W Sports Club for review before sending out for quotes.

Ash Dieback: three site visits by three contractors, Tee Assist, Bishops Waltham Tree Surgeons and Arbutus Garden Landscapes. In conjunction we received the 2009 Hazard Survey that shows the health status of the trees, and this has been sent to each of them, plus the trees identified to get a like-for-like quotation. For discussion in meeting.

Site Visit by Eva Play – see issue 37 for update.

Protruding object on bottom football pitch: The Clerk was informed of a protruding metal post on the lower ground football pitch. With the help of M Edwards the object was removed and the Clerk updated the parishioner. The object removed was a metal peg, previously used at the goal post end, before the pitch was extended.

Governance (Policies): I have created and circulated the IT policy for review and circulated the Asset Register Policy and amended Bonfire and Firework policy for review at this month's meeting. A list of all outstanding policies has been circulated to all council members for an update at the February meeting.

Parish Council Website: the website has been updated so that all meeting and supporting documentation are contained within a single page. There is still work to be done and this will be carried out when there is time.

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>Jan: 25 - Sapling Arboriculture have submitted the planning application to South Downs Planning Authority.</p> <p>Dec 25: decision for January meeting, to proceed with submitting a Planning Application for the Holm Oak Tree.</p> <p>16/11/25. Invoice sent from S Arboriculture for inspection report and recommendations - already circulated. For them to submit the planning application is £105 + VAT.</p> <p>17/10/25: Technical report received from Sapling Arboriculture, for consideration at next meeting. Invoice for work carried out for the assessment received, for next month's payment.</p> <p>3/10/25: Met with Sapling Arboriculture with Cllr Main. The tree was inspected and while healthy, the initial views are that the tree had outgrown its location. This is causing structural damage to the flint wall. Reducing the height will not change this. A full report will be provided, to be considered by WMPC in July: Meeting scheduled for 9th September, Sapling Arboriculture (Tree Inspector Specialist) to review the tree/root system and damage to the wall at The Cross.</p> <p>June: Enquiry sent to 3 tree surgeons. Two quotes received and submitted. TPO in place – options limited.</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</p>	

					<p>Title Deeds on Land Registry and access to original deeds. 19/8/25: Bramsdon & Child have confirmed they have located the original deeds in their South Sea office. 5/8/25: email sent to all members of Bramsdon & Childs, escalated due to lack of response. 28/7/25: Email sent as no response since previous call. Have asked for the issue to be escalated. June 25: Chaser email sent as application status unclear, so issue remains unresolved (Bramsdon & Childs Solicitors). No response as 5/07/25.</p>	
17	Working Groups	Flood Action: Weir, Culverts, Drains, Bridges - Reporting Issues	Red	In Progress	<p>Jan 26: Received from Cllr Bolton information received regarding weir revetments and potential CIL funding. Cllr Davies to liaise with Cllr Bolton on the application. Dec 25: Cllr N Bolton emailed to say that he is discussing with Cllr Pett ownership of the weir. Although no funding is available, confirmation for actual ownership for future needs is still being sought. Nov: District Cllrs have confirmed: EA representative P Taylor has previously stated that the Weir is the asset of the EA. However, the EA have limited funding, and this is being taken up with serious flooding issues. 17/10/25: Entry 1 – Funding position Three independent contractors provided cost estimates ranging from £24,000–£90,000 for repairs. Current position: Following legal advice, the Parish Council does not have the statutory power to fund or undertake these works under Section 137 or other powers. Email sent to the Environment agent requesting, Confirmation of ownership/responsibility for the weir; A possible site visit/assessment; Advice on repair options, indicative costs, and Information on any EA or partnership funding opportunities (including future capital or community schemes).Await clarification of ownership and responsibility before exploring external funding routes. 18/09/25: ENQ2025/24645: Response received from EA, this has been circulated to R.Gedye/H.Davies, for review and consideration before responding back. This relates to the summary of the 5 key issues (published online) specifically the culverts and increased flood risk. 18/8/25: HH advise that maintenance of Culverts is the responsibility of EA. Details of the issues have been passed onto EA for response. 23/7/25: HH have checked the highway culvert underneath Lynch Lane, assessed as clear and flowing. Enquiry closed.</p>	

					27/6/25: EA response: to remove blockages at low-priority weir; no repair funding available. Other pinch points are landowner or Highways responsibility. Any works in this area would need to seek permits from EA. June 25: Email sent to Hampshire Highways (ref 7177260) and the Environment Agency regarding ongoing concerns raised because of the Hydrox report and input by the Flood Risk Group. Response received from EA and circulated. Awaiting response from Hampshire Highways. Email sent 20/6/25	
18	Legal/Property	Legal Advice: Sports Club & Village Hall	Green	In Progress	<p>Jan 26: see issue 29 for update.</p> <p>17/10: Confirmation received back from HALC legal advisors that copies of the original documents are sufficient.</p> <p>1/10/25: Cllr Davies and I visited Hampshire Archives: 4 hours spent looking through historic records, to feedback at meeting. Further 2 hours searching information on the clerks' emails/files (historic). Records include: Abstract of Title, Conveyance 1986, Deed of Release 1986, Lease 1978 (Recreation Ground), Redemption Notice 1956, WMVH Conveyance 2017, WMVH Conveyance Document 1952, Deed of Release (Tennis Courts), Charity Commission (Recreation Ground) 1932. Noted that Hampshire Archives have no minutes between 1990 and current date.</p> <p>26/08/25: Meeting held between Clerk, Cllr Silk and Senior Legal Advisors, specialising in Charity and Parish Council land. Following meeting the next steps summarised and to be considered/agreed in September Council meeting.</p> <p>11/8/25: request has been forwarded to HALC's legal advisors due to specialist nature.</p> <p>6/8/25: request submitted to HALC asking for advice. Uncertainty around legal ownership of land occupied by the Village Hall. Delay is preventing VH from progressing to a CIO status. Legal advice requested.</p> <p>July 25: email sent to HALC requesting free one hour call to discuss leases and Village Hall proposed ICO status.</p>	
22	Projects	Woodlands Entry Signs: Confirmation of location	Red	In Progress	<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</p>	

					inside the Bramdean boundary, https://w3w.co/turkey.passively.crystals but will wait to hear back from Bramdean Parish Council, their views. Nov 25: Two of the three signs have been installed. Third location lies within Bramdean boundary. Have tried calling the clerk and left message but no response. Budget preparation has prevented me from pursuing further but will be picked up in the following month. A third site location has been provided but needs to be checked for suitability. - For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.	
23	Projects	Woodlands Fingerpost Signs	Red	In Progress	22/08/25: HH confirmed they are still waiting for a date from contractor who has been assigned the work. 18/08/25: Update requested from Hampshire Highways 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).	
26	Working Groups	Car Park: Resurfacing and Space Optimisation - 3 quotes	Red	In Progress	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. 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 VAT. However, it 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. 28/7/25: initial enquiry sent out to Nidagaveluk.co.uk, info@slatterestatesurfaces.com, info@randcgroundworks.com and Ed Bagshaw Ltd.	
27	Finance	Quote/Tender process: public spaces	Green	In Progress	Jan 26: the mowing and hedge trimming specification has been sent to W&WM Sports Hall for review and feedback before sending out for quotes. Dec 25: Draft specification for ground maintenance has been prepared and circulated, for consideration and feedback by council members. 27/10/25: meeting to be held with Chair Sports Pavilion to review next year's schedule. 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	Jan

					Sports , who would like to review the document before it is approved. 29/7/25: contacted Mac & Will to clarify scope of rec ground maintenance of public places.	
28	HR Development	Training Request	Green	In Progress	July: request received from Cllr Burke to attend the following NALC training courses: The Art of Communication: Navigating Tough Decisions on 26 November, Mastering Asset Management on 28 January, and Future Leaders on 25 February. The budget for training allocated to Councillors has been spent. Council to decide if this can come out of General Reserves.	
29	Legal/Property	Leases and Land Ownership	Red	In Progress	<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>22/08/25: meeting held with legal advisors. Discovery piece is required to collate all the historical documents relating to the land and buildings. Summary document has been provided and will be circulated.</p> <p>11/8/25: request has been forwarded to HALC's legal advisors due to specialist nature: reference 3146 - response time 5 days from reviewing the request. Advice sought on whether WMPC should engage a solicitor, appropriate and legally sound way to regularise the land ownership and trust arrangements, lease requirements between WMPC and the Village Hall charity, how to protect the council's interest if land is transferred, suggested next steps to clarify responsibilities for both parties.</p> <p>6/8/25: request submitted to HALC asking for advice. Uncertainty around legal ownership of land occupied by the Village Hall. Delay is preventing VH from progressing to a CIO status. Legal advice requested.</p>	Jan
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 County Council reference number 250850735HCC Rights of Way: a job has been issued to Countryside Access Ranger Team - advised this may take some time before it is completed.</p>	

33	Projects	Neighbourhood Plan	Green	In Progress	<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>17/10/25: SDNP have emailed confirming the process to register an application, involving mapping of the area. I have also contacted two companies to provide estimates for professional services to give an idea of costs and time and effort that will be required. Two companies contacted are Adams Henry in Winchester and Southern Planning Practices in Twyford. 18/08/25: email circulated with proposed date for strategy meeting (29th, 30th September 1st and 2nd October).</p>	
36	Planning	Planning Application	Green	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	In Progress	<p>Jan 26: have spoken with VitaPlay 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 VitaPlay, 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>	
38	Finance	Precept	Green	In Progress	<p>Jan 26: the precept for West Meon Parish Council was submitted to Winchester Council requesting £41,828.00, as approved in the January meeting.</p> <p>Dec 25: Based on the Electoral Register information from Winchester Council the recommendation is that the Parish Council do not increase</p>	

					the precept value per taxpayer this year. In 2025-26 the tax base was 404.80 and in 2026-27 this has increased to 418.08. Based on the increase this provides a precept value of £41,828.00. Decision for January meeting.	
39		Budget	Green	In Progress	<p>The 26/27 draft budget has been prepared and reviewed by a member of SLCC and 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 the Council's grant process once further detail is available.</p> <p>2. Neighbourhood Plan: Provision reduced by £5,000.</p> <p>3. Traffic Calming: Provision reduced by £5,000, leaving sufficient funding for three SAM speed signs.</p> <p>4. These amendments reduced the level of earmarked reserves proposed, which would otherwise have resulted in an increase in the precept.</p> <p>5. Increase in clerks' salary and pension following the council meeting in December (for illustration).</p> <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>	Jan
41	Finance	Peppercorn Rent	Green	In Progress	<p>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	Green	In Progress	Nov 25: received in writing formal written notice from the existing trustees that they would like to be removed.	