

## DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 in Damerham Village Hall

<b>Councillors present:</b> Cllrs P Tandy, D Crane, G Ruth, R Major, K Anderson, A Bellows, P Stephens, A Pardoe, P Doherty
<b>Members of the public present:</b> 2
<b>Others present:</b> Parish Clerk: Lindsey Malcom

**To receive the Chairman's report for 2025-2026:** Cllr Tandy gave his report for the year, which was well received by all councillors.

**26.2.1 To elect Chairman of the Council for 2026-2027 and to receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** Cllr Stephens nominated Cllr Tandy, who accepted the nomination. Cllr Bellows seconded the proposal. All voted in favour and it was RESOLVED to elect Cllr Tandy to the position of Chairman. The Chairman signed the Declaration.

**26.2.2 To elect the Vice Chairman of the Council for 2026-2027 & to receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** The Chairman proposed Cllr Crane, who accepted the nomination. Cllr Parode seconded the proposal. All voted in favour and it was RESOLVED to elect Cllr crane as Vice Chairman. The Vice Chairman signed the Declaration.

**26.2.3 Apologies and declaration of quorum:** NFDC Cllr Richards her had sent her apologies. Quorem was declared.

**26.2.4 To receive any declarations of interest from any Councillor on any agenda item and to receive confirmation from all Councillors that Declaration of Interest forms are up to date.** Cllr Anderson declared an interest in the Cowslip Cottage planning application. No changes to DoI were reported.

#### **26.2.5 Public Participation Session**

A member of the public raised the issue of a new display for the phone box and had previously sent in some information. The Chairman stated that the information will be circulated and discussed at the July meeting. The attendee also mentioned the videos on the parish website that are no longer there. The Chairman and Clerk will look at the links and renew them if possible.

**26.2.6 To approve & sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th March and 20th April 2026:** The Clerk apologised for neglecting to bring copies for the Chairman to sign. However, all agreed that they were happy with both sets and voted all in favour of approving them.

**26.2.7 To review, approve and adopt Parish Council legal documents:** The Asset Register had to be updated with the Clerk laptop. Cllr Major proposed that all documents, be accepted by the council. Cllr Anderson seconded the proposal. All voted in favour and it was RESOLVED to accept the core legal documents with the addition to the Asset Register.

**26.2.8 To consider and confirm the dates & times of ordinary meetings of the Council for the current year:** It was agreed to continue with the third Monday of every other month, with a planning meeting on the third Monday of the intervening months, if necessary.

**26.2.9 Elect official signatories to official documents on behalf of Damerham Parish Council:** Cllr Pardoe proposed, Cllr Ruth seconded the proposal that Cllrs Tandy, Crane and Major remain signatories on the bank. All in favour in favour and it was RESOLVED that they should remain signatories.

#### **26.2.10 Finance**

**10.1 To review current balances and approve expenditure.** The Clerk distributed the current bank balances and reconciliation and advised that CIL monies of £1306, the first half of the precept and VAT reclaim of £1143 had been received.

Payments since last Ordinary Parish Council meeting:

2.4.26	L Malcom	Clerks wages March	240.00
17.4.26	Time2Display	inv 705777 Parish Pump	96.00
28.4.26	ML Simpson	grass cutting	160.00
30.4.26	HMRC	clerk taxes April	49.40
30.4.26	L Malcom	clerk wages April	198.10
30.4.26	Unity Bank	service charge	7.00
8.5.26	HALC	subscription 26/27	317.00
8.5.26	Zurich Insurance	council insurance 26/27	667.57

**10.2 To be advised of the period for the exercise of public rights:** The Clerk advised that the public have the right to inspect the accounting records for 2025-2026 from Wednesday 3rd June until Tuesday 14th July.

**10.3 To consider award of s137 grants to local individuals and organisations:** Friends of Western Downland School and St George's Church had applied for a grant. The sports field and village hall will apply retrospectively. The Chair suggested giving the same amount to all. Cllr Major proposed and Cllr Bellows seconded this proposal. All voted in favour and it was RESOLVED to give all four applicants £500. The attending member of public gave his thanks on behalf of the church.

#### **26.2.11 To receive Officer reports:**

**11.1 Parish Footpaths Officer:** With regards to FP 21, Cllr Bellows advised she had been in contact with landowners regarding the stile which needs mending or replacing. Another landowner has 3 kissing gates for this path and has so far installed one at one end of his fields.

The school was taking the Reception Class to see the lambs at Manor Farm Cottages and both landowners kindly arranged for the 5 bar gate to be unlocked to enable the children to access footpath 21 safely, otherwise they would have needed to walk on the road. Green Lane - The gate at the end near the school has been broken for years. It was always left open as it was easier for parents with pushchairs/prams to negotiate. It had broken at the bottom and was difficult to close or open as it had dropped significantly. Cllr Bellows has since established that this is the responsibility of HCC Highways Department as they installed the original gate and the Chairman has reported this. In the meantime Cllr Ruth has kindly removed the gate and made it safe.

Cllr Crane brought up the issue of rotting sleepers on the boardwalks of footpath 49. The parish council had previously received a grant for these and expressed surprise at the level of decay after only 5 years.

**11.2 Dark Skies Officer:** Cllr Bellows announced big news for next year: Star Fest will be held for approximately 3 days in March '27 around the 12th as that is the window of opportunity with the moon etc. Steve Tonkins had put out a call for any parishes willing to host this and he received 17 replies across the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. He was surprised at this and is now thinking along the lines of various parishes combining - possibly Damerham, Martin, Cranborne and Rockbourne. Cllr Bellows advised she had put forward Damerham Village Hall depending on availability as it is a good size and has a fair-sized car park. This would be primarily for daytime events involving the general public and schools. She has also suggested Jubilee Campsite for the actual star gazing as it has proven to be a good place for star gazing, hot and cold refreshments can be provided and parking is very good.

**11.3 Parish Transport Representative:** It was agreed not to have a representative as there is no bus service

**11.4 Any other reports from meetings attended:** None

**26.2.12 Matters to report - To discuss any questions not on the Agenda:** None

**26.2.13 Planning Applications:**

**13.1 To receive & comment on applications received:**

**26/10364 Listed Building Alteration COWSLIP COTTAGE, LOWER DAGGONS LANE, SOUTH END, DAMERHAM SP6 3HW x1no. rooflight in the south facing side of the roof in the main bedroom**

Planning permission had previously been granted. Cllr Major proposed, Cllr Doherty seconded, all voted in favour and it was RESOLVED to recommend PAR3 approval.

**13.2 To review decisions received from the NFDC Planning Authority:**

**25/10502 COURWOOD FARM, COURT HILL, SANDLEHEATH, DAMERHAM SP6 1QD**

**Granted Subject to Conditions** - The parish council had previously recommend PAR 1 Approval. The decision was noted.

**13.3 Other planning matters: None**

**26.2.14 Community matters: None**

**26.2.15 Environmental matters**

**To receive an update following the Lengthsman visit to the village on 8th May. Suggested tasks for next visit on 27th July:** Cllr Crane asked Cllr Ruth if anything needed to be done in Mill Lane in July. Cllr Ruth suggested reinstating the dragons teeth. The Chairman suggested this is something the lengthsman could do. He also advised he had reported the blocked drain to HCC. It was agreed that general footpath clearance would be needed as there would be a lot of growth by July. Cllr Ruth will do a survey of Mill Lane and report. Cllr Major proposed, Cllr Crane seconded and all in favour of allowing up to £500 to buy new wooden dragons teeth.

**26.2.16 To receive items of correspondence: All correspondence has been forwarded to Councillors prior to the meeting.** A playground equipment firm had requested meeting if interested in approving play equipment. Cllr Crane suggested may be a good idea as there are some plans to replace ship. The Clerk agreed to reply to the School Playground Company.

**26.2.17 Matters to be raised on the next agenda:** Cllr Crane raised the issue of trying to organise a local parish meeting to discuss LGR after 11th June. The outcome this discussion to be on July's agenda. Cllr Bellows would like to discuss resubmitting local gym application for NFDC CIL funding.

**26.2.18 To set date & time of the next Parish Council Meeting at Damerham Village Hall:** Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2026 at 7.30pm and Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June if needed for planning.

Meeting closed at: 19.54

Lindsey Malcom, Clerk to the Council

Email: [clerk@damerham.net](mailto:clerk@damerham.net)

*These are draft minutes until approved at the next meeting*

*Lindsey Malcom – Damerham Parish Council Clerk [clerk@damerham.net](mailto:clerk@damerham.net)*

## PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2025-2026

This has been another quite eventful year.

I am sure we will have continuing budget pressures that will no doubt stay with us into the next financial year and beyond.

It is now much clearer how the Parish Council will sit in the new unitary Council system. The new Mid Hampshire Council will be made up of New Forest, Winchester, Test Valley, East Hants and Winchester, without the waterside parishes currently in the New Forest District Council area. There are moves, however, to try to keep all New Forest Parishes together, but this is currently unresolved.

There will be elections next year to the new unitary Councils, which will then shadow the current system until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2028 when the unitary system becomes live. We will also have Parish elections next year.

We are continuing to support ongoing maintenance to the Meadow, Footpaths and emptying of our Parish waste bins. Also providing s137, the grant scheme that helps toward supporting local organisations.

The Phone Box project continues, and we have had 3 artists put their work in there. We now move to the next phase deciding what will replace these, although we can bring back any of them if we wish.

This year we have seen a large project on Bridleway 49. Cllr Bellows has worked hard for many years to secure funding for this project. I would like to thank her for her hard work bringing this to fruition and making it happen.

There have been a number of planning applications, and these have been mostly supported by the Parish Council, even if Councillors and Officers at NFDC have had a contra view. I am sure we will continue to make decisions based what we feel is best for our Parish and not the views of decision makers in another place.

Could I now thank my fellow Councillors who give up their time for free in support of our Parish? It can sometimes be a contentious job, but I hope they, as I do, think it does make a difference and most of the time is worthwhile.

Whilst I am still on the thanking subject, I would like to once again thank our Clerk who continues to support the Parish Council and in particular myself and Cllr Crane in the day to day running of the Council.

Lastly, once again, I wish to mention and thank Cllr Crane as Vice Chair. He has been invaluable; he continues to take some of the workload that may have in the past been covered by the Chair.

As we approach the transfer to unitary authorities with elections next May, and final integration in 2028, may I ask Councillors to think that it may be the time for change.

I hope that Council, as a whole, is ready for what could be another difficult year with many potential changes, but working together for the benefit of our Parish, I am hopeful that we can make a difference.