

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE PARISH OF SHERBOURNE
HELD ON MONDAY 14 APRIL 2025 AT 7:30 PM
IN SHERBOURNE CHURCH**

Present:	Cllr Tony Merrygold (Chairman)
	Cllr John Murphy (Chairman BS&W JPC)
	Cllr John Barrott (Vice Chairman BS&W JPC)
	Cllr Jan Matecki (WDC and WCC)
	Cllr Peter Phillips (WDC)
	Helen Dexter (Clerk)
	Six Sherbourne Electors

Opening Remarks (Cllr T M Merrygold – Chairman of Parish Meeting)

Firstly thanks to the Church for allowing us to use the building this evening. This is a Parish Meeting and NOT a Parish Council Meeting, even though your parish councillors are here and we have the benefit of the Parish Clerk to minute the meeting.

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 15 Apr 2024

The minutes were approved as a true record. There were no matters arising.

Annual Report of Chairman of Parish Meeting (Cllr T M Merrygold)

As ever I'll try and keep my report short, covering off a few local village matters and then we'll have reports from Neighbourhood Watch, the PCC, the Chair of the JPC and Cllrs Matecki and Phillips will cover WCC and WDC activities and issues.

Firstly picking up an issue from last year's meeting raised by Tony Reece. There was a load of metal sign frames on the triangle of tarmac by the A46 bus stop.

After a round of fruitless email exchanges with National Highways, WDC and WCC the Chairman eventually managed to arrange for someone to collect it as scrap metal.

Bus Stop

Following the need for some major work to the roof on the brick bus shelter in Barford, a check on the bus shelter on the A429 showed it also needed some minor maintenance.

- The roof proved to be sound overall with a small amount of wood rot to the barge boards and soffits in one corner.
- However the front and side brick panels had suffered from years of being sprayed with rain and road salt and many of the bricks were spalling and mortar eroding away.
- The bases of two of the oak posts had started to rot.

The contractors working on the Barford bus shelter were contracted to repair the posts, relay the brick panels and fix the barge boards and hopefully this will keep it in good condition for the next 20 or so years.

Next an update on some of the **Planning Applications**.

A few years ago I looked through the statistics for Planning Applications and generally the JPC agree (or don't object) to about 90% of them, we make suggestions / recommendations on about 5% - most of which are taken into account and we only really object to about 5%. So I will focus on the few with which we had issues.

1. Village Hall

- a. A Planning Application for 'Change of Use' of the Village Hall to offices had been refused last year on issues around parking and the Applicant was told to 'actively market' the hall for public use for 12 months. The building was 'marketed' for public use and the plans changed to include the demolition of the brick garage to increase the parking – the JPC removed their objection. There are a few comments from WCC Arboriculture and WCC Highways – not yet approved.

2. Barn in Black Barn Paddock

- a. A Planning Application was submitted to convert the barn to three dwellings. This received multiple objections from villagers covering everything from: access; parking; loss of views in the Conservation Area; problems with Severn Trent etc.
- b. This was refused on the grounds that **part of the building** is in the Conservation Area.
- c. A subsequent Application was submitted to demolish the 'lean to' at the Vicarage Lane end of the barn, the only element in the Conservation Area. This Application has been Approved.
- d. We can therefore expect the original application to be re-submitted.

3. Dogz and Mogz

- a. There was an issue with a company called 'Dogz and Mogz' using part of the paddock at the Fulbrook Lane end of Vicarage Lane for dog walking causing issues with access and noise nuisance. This had been referred to both Planning Enforcement and Environmental Health. After representations from your parish councillors and Cllr Matecki they were issued with a STOP Order and have now stopped their activities.

4. Solar Farms

- a. Both these applications which have been granted seem to be progressing slowly with the developers submitting reports to show they are meeting the various conditions imposed on them covering construction plans, archaeological investigations etc. No visible progress but clearly some movement.

Sand and Gravel Quarry

The battle against the Planning Application to operate the Sand and Gravel Quarry continues to be fought by the Sand and Gravel group and Cllrs Phillips and Matecki (who will cover this briefly later). Smiths Concrete have still to respond to some of the issues raised. The best source for detail on this is to read the Sand and Gravel updates in Village Voices.

Severn Trent Water Issues

As you know there have been a number of problems in Sherbourne with Severn Trent Water, both in terms of water supply and with sewage.

Severn Trent have been doing some work in the village, checking pipework with cameras etc, but no signs of them actually fixing any problems. However in January of this year Severn Trent sent out a circular to the local councils proudly announcing they had put in place a dedicated email address for Councillors to use.

Fired with enthusiasm I sent off an email thanking them for the initiative and detailing the problems. I received a response from Mr Ed Ruane their Stakeholder Engagement Manager who assured me he would raise the issues with his 'Operations Team' and come back to me as soon as possible.

I chased him for an update and he said he would phone me to discuss. I have not heard from him yet.

South Warwickshire Local Plan

How many of you attended the meeting that the JPC organised in Barford School, on the South Warwickshire Local Plan? [Three people raised their hands].

Even though the JPC have been looking at the SWLP and setup a working group to go through this in detail we all found this a very useful meeting, explaining some of the background, criteria etc. Some of the main lessons I took away from it were:

- Just adding 10% housing to all towns and villages doesn't work. No way to build infrastructure, roads, schools, health services etc. Hence the decision to focus on **Strategic Growth** settlements.
 - Even though they are looking at 24 possible sites for Strategic Growth – 12 of which could be used for New Settlements – they only expect 3 to go forward.
- Not everything detailed in the plan will happen.
- Housing density target is 30 dwellings per hectare.
- They have to **Rule Things IN** before they can be **Ruled Out**.
- Definitions of Sustainable Development and clarification of the 20 Minute neighbourhood– 10 Minutes each way.

- Look at the reverse of your agenda
 - The sites on either side of the A429 in (LIGHT GREEN and LILAC) which had been put forward for commercial use, have been SIFTED OUT. This means they are definitely not going into the next phase of the plan.
 - The two sites in (ORANGE) – Black Barn Paddock and the Paddock on the corner of Vicarage Lane, Fulbrook Lane have both been passed on for FURTHER ASSESSMENT. This means they have neither been ruled in nor out, but can still be considered and Applications could be submitted by a developer.
- There are other major issues in the SWLP which could/will affect the wider area including the villages of Barford and Wasperton:
 - Warwick University Campus – which I used to know as the HRI – just north of Wellesbourne – being put forward for both business and housing development. While in principle there look to be some benefits of developing highly skilled, well paid, jobs in this part of South Warwickshire, there are no details or numbers in the outline plan and whatever is built will add greatly to the traffic volumes on an already busy A429.
 - Look at SG09 - there is a very interesting proposal to build a new Motorway Junction between J13 and J14 – being called J13A, which will result in the closure of both the current junctions which we all know have their problems. This only works if a large commercial / logistics development is allowed on both sides of the M40 (SG09 and dark green patch below) which will provide enough funds to build the junction.
 - In principle, again this has some merits, but then it has been suggested that the area to the south of the M40, north of Barford (ORANGE X1) could be used for one of the Strategic Growth Settlements.
- The JPC Working Group have looked at the SWLP in detail and has submitted a lengthy response covering our views on all of the above, and the other sites that will affect the three villages.
- At this point I'd like to thank Barb Moore and Jim of the Sherbourne Residents Association for circulating details of the SWLP including how residents could submit your own comments, and I know some of you have submitted your own responses.

Notice Boards

On the subject of routine maintenance – over the next month or so I'll be doing some routine maintenance on the two village notice boards – so don't worry if you see all notices removed for a week or so.

Finally, I would like to give thanks to a number of people:

- Those Sherbourne residents who litter pick around our lanes. Sadly litter starts to appear very quickly, often the next day – but thanks anyway.
- Thanks to our parish councillors who have served their electors well throughout the year.
- And finally thanks to the Parish Clerk for saving me the trouble of having to run a meeting, speak and make notes all at the same time.

Sherbourne Neighbourhood Watch (Helen Whiter)

The Sherbourne Neighbourhood Watch Scheme was pleased to report low crime in the village, with just the odd issue raised by residents.

It is difficult to find volunteers to run the Neighbourhood Watch, however the Residents Association have agreed to support. Sherbourne Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Helen Whiter, is delighted it will continue to operate.

Sherbourne Residents Association (Barbara Moore)

The Sherbourne Residents Association was initially set up in August 2021 to bring awareness to all residents of the growing pressure for development in and around the village - the South Warwickshire Local Plan. As a high percentage of property in the village is owned/rented by the Estate, the Sherbourne Residents Association tends to represent the interests of the homeowners.

A petition to reduce speeding in the village has been initiated which has received 80 signatures with several more due to come in. The petition will be submitted to Cllrs Matecki and Phillips after the 1st May. The majority of comments received from residents refer to not only speeding issues but also the lack of footpaths.

The removal of the Village Hall was acknowledged. Whilst the church is available for use by the residents, this location does not have the facility to provide food and there are inadequate toilet amenities.

The furniture from the Village Hall has now been donated to the Scout Hall.

Village Hall funds are still available and it was suggested that the residents hold a summer village fete to exhaust the remaining funds.

Response by Cllr Matecki

Cllr Matecki commented that after the election he would welcome the opportunity to sit down and talk about the options to reduce speeding in Watery Lane, with a view to putting together a strong argument of what the residents wanted and how to go about it.

Cllr Merrygold commented that police will only support a speed reduction if it is self-policing.

Cllr Matecki commented that hopefully the backing of the Residents Association will help and advised that the locally elected Councillor will have funding available for traffic calming measures.

Sherbourne PCC (Rachel Miller)

All Saint's Church Sherbourne is a major landmark for our village. Built in 1864 it has remained an active church for Sunday services, baptisms, weddings and funerals ever since. This report covers a few short updates in regards to the church.

1. Joining the Electoral Roll

Every six years the Church of England requests if anyone would like to join the electoral roll of each church. Even those already on the current electoral roll are required to register again. There are a few requirements to be on this (as below) but if you would like a form to be included please email Reverend John Horton - hortonjohn1949@gmail.com.

Details of requirements include:

- baptised
- aged 16 years or over
- has made one of the following declarations and duly applied for enrolment:

- The first declaration is that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it and is a resident in the parish.
- The second declaration is that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in Communion with it, is not resident in the parish, but has habitually attended worship in the parish during the preceding six months.
- The third declaration is that the person is a member in good standing of a Church which is not in communion with the Church of England but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and is also a member of the Church of England and has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

The Electoral Roll is your parish church's register of electors. In the same way that being on the civic Electoral Roll allows you to vote in parliamentary and local elections and referenda, joining the Church Electoral Roll means that you can vote on Church matters, attend the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and most importantly it does help show the Church and its strength.

2. Shout Choir returns to All Saints

As our church looks to become more a hub of the community, on Friday 13th June the church is hosting a fund raising event which will be a fun evening of classic "Beatles" songs. More information to come.

3. Church toilet - fund raising

Currently the church only has one outside toilet which is no longer fit for purpose. After a large amount of work focused on applying for approval for a permanent accessible WC, washbasin and baby changing facilities the church is now in the final steps of the project and looking forward to having a toilet now inside the church. This however, has come at a large cost. If you would like to make a donation to the church toilet fund please email the Treasurer Anne Stokes anne_stokes@hotmail.co.uk who will be able to give you the correct bank details for the church.

4. VE Celebrations at All Saints

On Monday 5th May, the Church will be open from 2-4pm to mark the 80th anniversary of VE and VJ Day whilst also remembering a local man, Henry Eric Maudslay, who was the youngest Squadron Leader involved in the Dambusters raid on the Ruhr Valley. He was killed in action during the raid in 1943, at only 21 years old. Refreshments will be available in the Church, and admission is free.

5. Magazine Swap Shop

As part of our drive to be an ECO Church (for which we got our Bronze Award this month), we have set up a Magazine Swap Shop, where for £1 per magazine you can access a selection of magazines that will help Sherbourne Church in its fund-raising activities for our new toilet. All are welcome to come and browse the selection - from Country Life, to Private Eye, to Classic Car and The Oldie and many more too.....

The church is open every Sunday with a regular update on service times/monthly coffee morning in the monthly 'Village Voices' - everyone is welcome.

Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton JPC (Cllr John Murphy – Chairman)

2024-2025 has been another busy year!

We started off the year by embarking on our IT modernization project, by installing a new JPC specific computer for the clerk, ready for the impending new clerk/RFO appointment. This is being slowly followed by our move to IT independence and security upgrading, progress on Social Media and specific domain names for emails and a new website – all taking a lot of time and concentration. Additionally, we are hopeful that we may get a new phone mast near to J15 and this may improve the poor mobile signal that we enjoy in our villages - basically, the nearer the mast is the better our signal will be, but we must be aware that the M40 is the priority – not us!

We formed a Succession Planning/Staffing Working Party to recruit a new clerk/RFO and this worked very well, progressing steadily over the early summer to a full appointment in June. James Johnson retired at the end of July and Helen Dexter took over in August ready for her first solo JPC in September.

We started renovation of the Wellesbourne Road bus shelter early in the year expecting a relatively simple strip and re-tile, however once exposed the scale of the job was clear and a much more radical approach was needed. This caused delays in authorizing funding and getting licences for erection of scaffolding “on the highway”. Costs escalated from £4K to £13K and the project was finally completed in October!

Work on the Barford shelter drew our attention to the Sherbourne shelter, which looked a far more complicated job. As it happened, due to the sound roof and a very practical approach, the work was rather simpler than expected and was completed well under its £3500 budget.

CCTV installed at KGF proved its worth very quickly when a miscreant was easily identified and promptly handed on to the Police for their attentions. Thankfully the CCTV deterrent effect seems to have drastically reduced the vandalism seen on site and whilst a few parents were initially concerned about the CCTV presence, hopefully most are now feeling reassured.

CCTV has also been suggested recently as a response to car and house crime which seems to be on the rise. We have asked the Police to look at the possibilities which may help them and also act as a deterrent. Installation and management costs are likely to be considerable, and where do we stop and start with it?

The end of the year saw us completing the Allotment Path/Public Footpath W96 through to Wasperton Lane and BYCC, along with a tidier link to the latter. The footpath component was funded by JPC s106 contributions from developers and the BYCC section was funded by Barford Community Charity.

Also at BYCC the JPC managed the installation of a defibrillator – suitable for both adults and children – funded by a WCC grant and some money raised by the “Dads’ Football Group”. This will be maintained and funded ongoing by the JPC.

Meanwhile, along with various planning issues, the latest debate concerns the district and county councils – the “Unitary “ debate – Unitary councils will happen as decreed by the current government, but there is a lot to discuss about whether it is a single body for Warwickshire or whether we divide into North and South. Also where else we align with and the possibility of local mayors? – and whether parish councils take on more duties and responsibilities? – lots to consider.

Currently the JPC is under quota for councillors and an extra member is required for both Barford and Wasperton – come and see how our meetings work and consider joining us. It is interesting and involving work

Development Updates:

- Sand and Gravel Quarry – currently paused pending applicants’ responses. Further consultation expected.
- Land Around Barford House – Currently no progress due to funding difficulties. Other developers being explored.
- Glebe Hotel site – Permission granted at appeal for partial demolition and erection of 4 town houses. Demolition currently under way.
- W/23/1178 – Bremridge 3 – Permission granted with temporary access onto A429 Barford Bypass - development imminent.
- New South Warwickshire Local Plan – Now past the Preferred Option stage. We held a very successful public meeting with the lead officers presenting. JPC has made strong submissions. The next stage will be the Draft Deposit Plan due in late 2025 for further consultation.

Councillor attendance records 2024-2025:

Councillors	JPC Meetings			Planning Meetings		
	No of Meetings	Present	%	No of Meetings	Present	%
Cllr J T Barrott	10	10	100%	12	10	83%
Cllr J D Billingham	10	10	100%	12	12	100%
Cllr R Clay	10	10	100%	12	12	100%
Cllr H Gadsden	10	6	60%	12	5	42%
Cllr J M Hawkesford	10	8	80%			
Cllr G Jackson	10	8	80%			
Cllr Mrs S Jarratt	10	9	90%	12	10	83%
Cllr Mrs L M Jones	5	2	40%			
Cllr T Merrygold	10	10	100%	12	12	100%
Cllr J V Murphy	10	10	100%	12	12	100%
Cllr Mrs R Newsome	10	8	80%	12	7	58%
Cllr P B Phillips	10	6	60%			
Cllr B Ranner	10	8	80%			
Cllr M J Sheard	10	10	100%	12	7	58%
Cllr Mrs K E Thomson	10	3	30%			
Cllr Mrs L Wallis	7	4	57%	6	4	67%

WDC councillors (Cllr Peter Phillips)

Good evening

I'm Peter Phillips, one of your Warwick District Councillors, alongside Jan Matecki, who has also been your County Councillor for the last four years. I am also a Parish Councillor on the Joint Parish Council.

Our WDC report is dominated by one issue for the whole of Budbrooke Ward – the South Warwickshire Local Plan, which sets out the housing plans for the next 25 years. The current Green/Labour administration at Warwick District have put forward a total of 26,885 houses in Green Belt around Budbrooke ward, Kenilworth and the north of Leamington. In addition our next door village of Barford in particular is also facing a potential 25,845 houses between the village and the south of Warwick.

The spillover effect on Sherbourne could be massive, with for example, significantly increased traffic using the A429 and in consequence Watery Lane, pressure on local schools, hospitals, GP surgeries, the water supply etc.

There were also proposals for housing and warehousing around the village, but in the first run through of the Local Plan, officers “sifted out” these proposals. Jan and I will keep a wary eye on this and will advise if there is any change.

Jan and I have also attended scores of meetings over the last 12 months in support of the opposition to these proposals, including public meetings, such as the one in Barford School, meetings with the portfolio holder and planning officers, as well as at parish councils and knocking on doors to talk directly to residents, getting information, answering questions and encouraging residents to respond. It has been our key focus this last year. I'm pleased to say there were at least 23,600 responses across South Warwickshire and these are now being processed by officers. I have no doubt that you in Sherbourne played your part.

We can expect further consultations later this year and we will continue to keep you all informed of these as and when they arise.

Also an issue of increasing concern has been the siting of solar farms on agricultural land in the Green Belt, such as the two at Sherbourne. We look at each proposal individually on Planning Committee, on which I sit, and see if there are exceptional circumstances to approve these on Green Belt land. For instance, I note that there are masses of rooftops in and around our District that could provide solar as well, so I will continue to keep an open mind, but for me to support such a proposal it has to be truly exceptional and I have not seen one that meets that criteria yet.

Jan and I continue to respond to the ongoing normal issues that come up across the ward. We realise that to the individual and families concerned it is far more important than just “day-to-day.” It would be inappropriate to go into details in a public forum, but suffice to say that if any resident has an issue that they want help with from the District Council, please get in touch with me or Jan.

Both Jan and I continue to support the work of SAGAG in its fight to stop the Barford quarry. There is silence from the proposer, but when they have responded to the questions from the County, which may be in the very near future, we will have only up to weeks to respond. As your councillors we will support you the residents in this fight with whatever it takes.

I will briefly cover the government’s proposal to create a unitary authority in Warwickshire – that is merge all 5 District/Boroughs plus County into one new unitary council. In principle, I support this – yes, a turkey voting for Christmas – there is often confusion on many doorsteps as to which council does what. As an example there are some county council candidates, from a different party to me, who believe that they are responsible for bins. This is a district matter, not county. And this list of confusion goes on and on. Simplifying the structure will both make it easier and be more cost effective for the residents of Warwickshire. But the cackhanded way the government has gone about this, means we have no idea how, when, or even if there will be changes, which creates a great deal of uncertainty, especially for our District Council’s employees.

Thank you again for your ongoing support of our work as Councillors and we look forward to working for you over the coming 12 months.

Peter.Phillips@WarwickDC.gov.uk

Warwick District Councillors’ Annual Report (Cllr Jan Matecki)

I’m delighted to begin with our educational achievements. In September 2024, Oakley School in Bishop’s Tachbrook opened its doors—a state-of-the-art, £60 million all-through school that spans from nursery right through to secondary education. This flagship project, the largest capital programme the County has ever undertaken, welcomed its very first reception, Year 7, and Year 8 students. This bold new start not only equips our children with outstanding facilities but also marks an enduring commitment to the future of our young people.

Turning to our environmental goals, significant strides have been made. With nearly £864,000 secured from the Local Authority Treescape Fund, we have approved 24 community orchards—half of which are already flourishing. Alongside this, we’ve reduced our carbon footprint by almost 1,760 tonnes through innovative energy-saving measures in Council buildings, improved streetlighting, and smarter business travel policies. Looking ahead, an investment of £3.3 million will further accelerate the shift to greener transport by funding electric vehicle charging points across both urban and rural areas, providing accessibility to some 700–800 new points and 1,500 charging sockets.

Our commitment to sustainable transport continues with our expanding electric bus fleet. We now have 27 electric buses operating locally—plus an additional 11 for inter-county routes. The growing success of our IndieGo Plus demand responsive service and the impactful Companion Plus One scheme, which supports those who need a carer to travel safely, further underscores our dedication to ensuring that every journey is efficient and inclusive. In tandem, our proactive ‘find and fix’ pothole gang has nearly doubled the pace of road repairs this year, demonstrating that preventative care makes a real difference in our everyday lives.

Of course, we also recognize the challenges we face. Home-to-school transport now serves around 12,000 pupils a day—a 20% increase in just three years. As we work to manage rising costs while maintaining high-quality service, rest assured that every child’s safe passage remains a priority.

Our children’s services have seen remarkable growth as well. By joining forces in the Families First for Children Pathfinder Programme—with partners like Warwickshire Police and the Integrated Care Board—we’ve established locality-based family help teams and opened four new Ofsted-registered children’s homes. These initiatives not only streamline service delivery but also help ensure that vulnerable children remain close to their families and communities.

As we navigate proposals for local government reform and the transition toward a single Unitary Council, we remain focused on addressing financial pressures and upholding sustainable long-term

strategies. While discussions continue at the national level, we are committed to shaping a future that reflects local needs and secures a better tomorrow. A joint submission was sent to the government with proposals for a single unitary submitted by the County, and a North and South Warwickshire proposal by the districts and boroughs. It is expected to have feedback from the government on these proposals in May.

On a more local level, the proposed 20mph speed limit along parts of Barford has been delayed due to the design team not preparing drawings for the scheme. These are now being worked on and it is hoped that the formal consultation will be issued in the very near future, with completion later in the year.

I was also pleased to be able to help with a grant for a new defibrillator at the new Barford Youth and Community Centre, which will hopefully save lives in the future.

Finally, the planning application for the quarry at Wasperton is currently paused while the applicant provides additional information. The information is expected to arrive by the end of this month which will recommence the planning application. Please look out for the restart of the process and be ready to submit your comments in response to the new information.

A.O.B

Cllr Phillips advised that Jeremy Wright MP was building up a dossier on ST and asked that if we have any issues to let him know. Please note, he is not there to solve problems, but to build up a dossier of issues relating to ST. Cllr Merrygold committed to pass on details of the Sherbourne related problems.

Appointments

Tony Merrygold was appointed chairman of the parish meeting for 2025-26.

Closure

The meeting closed at. 9:05pm.