



## Upavon Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026 Followed by AGM

Village Hall, Andover Road, Upavon

### MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 7.04pm.

<b>1</b>	<b>Absence apologies and Declaration of Interests</b> Present: Chairman Anthony Gallagher (AG), Vice Chairman Andrew Flack (AF), Cllr Elaine Pepper (EP), Cllr Phil Garside (PG), Cllr Rosalind Ayling (RA), Bee Barff Clerk (BB), Bill Coker Churchwarden (BC), Mark Laker Village Hall Committee (ML), Jeff Williams Lt Col (JW), John Cabra and 16 members of the public. Apologies: Apologies were received from Cllr Rebecca Lamb (RL), Paul Oatway WCC (PO).	
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting</b> The minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 were approved and signed as a true copy by the Chairman. (AG).	
<b>3</b>	<b>External Reports</b>  <b>I. Churchwarden's report</b> – Bill Coker reflected on how changing times mean the church is no longer the traditional centre of the community, though he highlighted the history of St. Mary's Church and encouraged residents to visit the church and cemetery. He noted that the full 2025/26 Church Report is published and available to read in the church porch. Acknowledging Upavon's strong military aviation heritage, BC reported a highly successful 2025 Remembrance Day service with 180 attendees, including many serving personnel in uniform. He also highlighted the continued popularity of the Summer and Christmas fairs, alongside regular drop-in coffee mornings organised for the community. BC advised that a recent survey of the church building, which is Grade I listed, identified a need for significant maintenance, with funds raised from these community events supporting the necessary upkeep. He expressed gratitude to those who donate to the foodbank located in the porch, and extended formal thanks to all the church volunteers, bell ringers, and committee members whose efforts maintain community spirit beyond regular worship. Finally, BC expressed great appreciation to the UPC for its £1,000 donation towards the church's ongoing operations.  <b>II. Village Hall Committee</b> – Mark Laker expressed thanks for the invitation to speak and introduced the new committee, which was formed in February 2026. Reflecting on 2025, ML noted that hall maintenance included essential building work and the installation of a new notice board at the front of the building. The hall continues to be regularly used for a variety of activities, including short mat bowls,	

	<p>table tennis, Pilates, and Karate. The new committee aims to maintain and improve the facility, with a newly appointed social secretary expected to enhance advertising and promotion. A visual survey of the building has been completed, and the committee is currently awaiting a detailed list of required updates to keep the hall up to standard. Plans for the upcoming year include the implementation of an online booking system, which is currently in progress, alongside minor cosmetic improvements to the hall. ML extended his gratitude to the new committee members—Lesley, Julie, Trudie, Debbie, Richard and Emma. ML concluded by formally thanking the UPC for its £1,000 donation.</p> <p><b>III. Trenchard Lines</b> – Lieutenant Colonel Jeffery Williams, who assumed command of Upavon Garrison in September 2025 following a ten-year tenure by Grant Ingleton, shared a brief history of the camp. JW explained that the Upavon camp has now merged with Netheravon, forming a major hub for key military headquarters and units. Regarding infrastructure, JW outlined that construction for new technical workshops and accommodations is scheduled throughout 2026. Airfield activities also remain active, accommodating operational training, the Army Gliding Association and a private gliders club. JW concluded by expressing a strong eagerness to maintain and grow the garrison's links with the village, emphasising his desire for the military establishment to remain actively involved with the Upavon community.</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Chairman's Report 2025/26</b> – AG expressed formal thanks to the Councillors, the Clerk, and County Councillor PO for their continuous dedication and support. AG highlighted several major projects from the past twelve months. The Council committed £10,000 towards the £45,000 Riverside Park Pavement pedestrian safety project, with a funding update from Andrew to follow later in the meeting. Wiltshire Council officially handed over the Farrier's Field playground alongside a £20,000 grant in 2025/26. The Council is currently reviewing refurbishment designs, which will feature a much-requested toddler area, aiming for completion in the 2026/27 financial year. Financial milestones included securing a £2,000 Area Board grant to maintain the Blue Bus service for local youth and donating £300 to SWAST to assist in funding a second vehicle for local volunteer first responders. The community successfully raised £601.56 for SSAFA through the annual Curry Lunch, an event that the Council will run again this year. AG also issued an apology regarding the absence of a village Christmas tree last year due to an administrative error, guaranteeing a tree for the upcoming season. To foster community engagement, the Chairman announced the imminent launch of monthly drop-in coffee mornings at The Ship, providing an informal venue for residents to discuss local issues with the Parish Council. The report concluded with gratitude for the community's ongoing involvement and optimism for the year ahead.</p>	
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Questions and closure</b> No questions were raised and the meeting closed at 7:33pm.</p>	

Bee Barff  
Clerk to Upavon Parish Council