

Minutes of the meeting of Arreton Parish Council held on **Monday 13th April 2026 at 7.30 p.m. in Arreton Community Hall**

Present: Cllrs Gurney-Champion (Chair), Taylor, Dodson, Cooper, Roberts and Filer

In attendance: Claire Gale (Clerk), IW Cllr Caroline Gladwin, Steve Davis (Volunteer Tree Warden)

A minute silence was held as a mark of respect for Cllr David Healy (Vice Chairman) who passed away recently.

044/26 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies from Cllrs Mills (work commitments), Mounted Rural Police Officer Joanne Laver and PCSO Justin Keefe.

045/26 Questions from the public

There was a comment that the St John Ambulance community first aid training session held at the Community Hall recently was extremely good. It is hoped further sessions will be offered in the future.

046/26 To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest and requests for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011

There were no declarations.

047/26 To give notice of any item to be raised under agenda item 056/26

Cllr Filer had one item.

048/26 To receive and confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th March 2026

RESOLVED: To agree and sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th March 2026.

049/26 To receive regular reports

a) IW Councillor

Cllr Gladwin reported that she is continuing her road safety campaign and has requested the IWC to reduce the speed limit on Whitwell Road from 60mph to 40mph, she has contacted the MP about what can be done to ensure funding for the Hospice. Cllr Gladwin continues to campaign against any school closures and to pursue planning enforcement matters including the land adjacent to the Fighting Cocks Pub.

b) Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that he has prepared for the annual meeting, hosted the Community Resilience meeting and carried out the Clerk's annual appraisal. The Chairman also met with Tom Smith about item 054/26 on this agenda.

c) Clerk's Report

Following the last meeting the Clerk contacted Island Roads about gully and mud clearance on Merstone Lane. A response was received stating that the Merstone Lane gullies are cleared annually. Cllr Taylor confirmed that she had seen the vehicle completing this last week. Island Roads also stated that a drainage case file about surface water run-off from private land and potential enforcement has been submitted to IWC. The Clerk also requested a report for Annual Parish Meeting from PCSO Justin Keefe, sent a letter of congratulations to Robyn Munt on her appointment to the position of Vice Chair to the NFU National Committee. A response was received and the letter was much appreciated. The Clerk contacted the contractors about the quotations for the tomb repairs, amended the Parish Information Leaflet and sent photographs and details of the successful quotation for the tomb repairs to the Church Warden.

The Clerk has attended and SLCC and island clerks meeting online about reviving the Isle of Wight Branch of the SLCC and the Community Resilience tabletop exercise meeting, dealt with burial enquiries and plot marking, began work on end of year accounts and contacted Wight Computers over issues with Clerk's email and changes to councillor email. Information about volunteering with the Royal British Legion was shared with the meeting. The Clerk has enquired about the appointing of a new representative for the Arreton area following the retirement of Derek Rossi.

d) Community Centre

Cllr Dodson reported that a new gas cooker has been installed and the gas safety certificate issued. He attended the Village Halls Week event at Mottistone Manor which was attended by over 800 people. An application to be a venue for the BBC Radio 4 programme Any Questions has been submitted. Following the Community Resilience Meeting Cllr Dodson has sought 2 quotes for solar panels and battery storage with a view to improving the carbon footprint of the hall and is in touch with Iain Lawrie (IWC) about possible grant funding. Community Resilience equipment – torches, high visibility vests and lighting -has been received and is stored at the hall. On bookings a new pilates class has started.

e) IWALC

Cllr Roberts attended the IWALC Executive Meeting on 26th March and reported that the IWC is £11 million in deficit for this coming financial year and are looking to local town and parish councils to take over assets across the island. Adult Social Care and other statutory services take up most of the budget. Central to this vision is the clustering of resources among smaller parishes to improve efficiency and the early involvement of local councils in policy discussions. It was noted as an example that Puckpool Park, which is an Island wide asset, managed by the Isle of Wight Council, has been allowed to deteriorate and is now beyond the resources of the local council (Nettlestone & Seaview Parish Council) to take on. The report from the IWBRUG noted frequent cancellations to train services and bus services coping well with diversions despite the high number of emergency utility works currently taking place.

f) Other Meeting Reports

There were no other reports.

g) Cemetery and Churchyard Matters

The pest control business visited Gore Cemetery on 9th March and took videos. 2 rabbits and 10 large rats were detected. The Clerk has since visited Gore and noted that rabbits are entering through a gap in the rabbit proof mesh in the far-right corner. Cllr Taylor will investigate and organise to repair this from the adjacent field. A funeral organised by mainland funeral directors will take place at Gore Cemetery on Tuesday 14th April. The family have purchased an additional plot to enable this burial to go ahead. The Clerk will attend. There will be an interment of ashes at St Georges Church on 23rd April.

h) Highways and Footpaths

Several concerns were noted. Namely the cycle track between Merstone and Redway is in a dangerous state and needs resurfacing, the car park at Merstone Station is in poor condition and the ditches from Merstone Cut to East Lane are full of rank water and are flooding the path. Cllr Dodson reported that some of the wooden posts on the verge opposite The White Lion are damaged and there is a lot of bramble growth around the bus stop. Cllr Taylor also reported incidences of fly tipping in the layby in East Lane. The Clerk will contact Island Roads and Gift to Nature to ask whether any maintenance work or remedial plans are in place.

i) Volunteer Tree Warden Report

The Volunteer Tree Warden reported that he had been contacted by residents who live close to a plot of land that was up for auction in March, the former Christmas tree plantation located next to the Newclose cricket ground. The site has been left to go wild for several years during which time it has become home to protected species, including Red Squirrels and Badgers and there are mature oak trees noted by the Tree Officers Report. The site has planning permission for the construction of some 'glamping pods'.

The Tree Officer researched the TPO documentation and had a site meeting with the residents, explained the TPO process, discussed their concerns and was able to signpost them to the appropriate resources to register their concerns.

The government has published a whole new raft of information & guidance for local authorities on trees and woodlands which he will look at in due course. He has visited, measured and recorded a large oak tree identified during the winter by a stream alongside the bridleway that runs down from Rookley (adjacent to the new houses by the former Rookley Post Office) to the Cycle track between Merstone and Blackwater. It has a main trunk circumference of 17ft and a huge canopy supported by 4 main boughs. Photographs were circulated by email. This is recorded in the Treezilla app.

050/26 Finance

The Clerk advised that the NS&I investment account which holds the Endowed Grave Fund no longer send statements out and these have to be requested by post. Consideration needs to be given to a better option for holding these funds.

RESOLVED: To note the finance report for March, the end of year budget report and approve the payments as presented.

051/26 Planning and Appeals

The following applications were considered:

26/00335/FUL Arreton Manor, Arreton Street, Arreton, PO30 3AA

Proposed array of 48 ground mounted panels

26/00416/FUL Lake View Care Home, Blackwater Hollow, Newport, PO30 3BJ

Retention of three storey rear extension, single storey rear extension; alterations to façade materials, revised parking and access arrangements; alterations to landscaping

RESOLVED: To submit a neutral response to application 26/00335/FUL and a support response to application 26/00416/FUL

052/26 St Georges Cemetery Tomb Works

The Clerk reported that the owners of Arreton Barns had confirmed that they had no family connection to the Gibbs family tombs in the churchyard. Photographs and the quotation for remedial work have been forwarded to the Church Warden for the Faculty progress. As the church wish to complete some window repairs it is hoped the Faculty fee can be shared. No work can take place until Diocesan approval has been received.

053/26 Arreton Cricket Club

The Council considered a request by email for support from Arreton Cricket Club. The Council concluded it is not currently in a position to help but it was noted that there may be scope for the Arreton School Trust to assist in the near future. The Clerk will contact the Cricket Club following the next School Trust meeting on 20th April.

054/26 Gift of Land

The Chairman reported that around 4 years ago the Parish Council had been approached by Tom Smith offering the gift of a piece of land within the Parish of approximately 2 acres at the back of houses at the Chapel Lane end of Merstone Lane. This offer has been renewed. As agreed at the last meeting the Chairman has visited the site. The land is pasture with a small area of woodland and some fruit trees and is bounded by ditches. The Chairman has also met with a resident whose garden backs on to this land who stated that Rotary on the Wight may be interested in helping with this as a community service project. Further information is needed but a partnership arrangement could be a good way forward.

RESOLVED: To arrange a site visit for all councillors to attend.

055/26 To note the date of the next meeting 11th May 2026

056/26 Any other matters raised by Councillors for discussion only

CLlr Filer had been contacted by a local resident with concerns about the number of rats around the bin area by the primary school. The Clerk will email the school to alert them.

The meeting closed at 8.31p.m.

Claire Gale, Clerk to the Council

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16th April 2026

..... Chairman

..... Date