

**Minutes of Holt Annual Parish Meeting**  
**Held Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Holt Village Hall 7:30pm**

Item	
	<p><b>Attendance</b></p> <p>Cllr Geoff Chopping  Cllr Jonathan Cutts (Chair of the Parish Council)  Cllr Peter Finney  Cllr Geoff Pike  Cllr Guy Reynolds (Vice-Chair of the Parish Council)  Cllr Janet Wallace  Cllr Sarah Weaver  Cllr Janey White  Mrs Lisa Goodwin (Clerk to the Parish Council)  Cllr Will Chakawhata (Dorset Councillor Stour &amp; Allen Vale Ward)  Cllr Nick Ireland (Leader of Dorset Council)  38 members of public.</p>
01	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed those present including Cllr Will Chakawhata and Cllr Nick Ireland.</p>
02	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Cllr Wrettham Ladbrooke-Chartres  Cllr Jackie Egan  Mr &amp; Mrs P Miller  Cllr Stella Jones (Chair Dorset Council)</p>
03	<p><b>Good Citizen Award 2025</b></p> <p>The nominated candidate for this award declined acceptance.  There were no nominations for the Youth Award this year.</p>
04	<p><b>Confirm the minutes of the last Annual Meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b></p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Janet Wallace and seconded by Cllr Guy Reynolds that the minutes of the last meeting held <b>14<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b> were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chair.  RESOLVED.</p>

05	<p><b>Matters Arising from the minutes of the last Annual Meeting</b></p> <p>None.</p>
06	<p><b>Annual Report of the Parish Council by the Vice-Chair, Cllr Guy Reynolds</b></p> <p>As with any other year, your Council has continued to work hard on your behalf to ensure Holt Parish continues to thrive and be a pleasant place to live and work. All Councillors are volunteers and give of their time for the greater good of the Parish and I would like to thank them all for their diligence and enthusiasm in their duties.</p> <p>There are, as ever, a considerable number of individuals to pass our thanks on to for their help over the past year and indeed often many years. Our thanks is extended to Charlie Hiscock, Limecove, Mike Clifford and Ian Mulliner for their help at the Cemetery, it continues to be a beautifully kept space for peaceful contemplation.</p> <p>Our thanks to Ann Korta for continuing to oversee the Neighbourcare Transport Scheme. We should also note Ann's many years on the Parish Hall Committee and thank Jackie Egan for stepping into the role of Chairperson in her place. We appreciate the effort all members of the Village and Parish Hall committees make on our behalf in order that our community can use and enjoy these two buildings. Another space within the village that is kept in a very neat and tidy condition is the Village Green, which is a lovely open area for all to enjoy. Limecove do a super job keeping it neat throughout the year and we are grateful for their efforts on our behalf. The deteriorated Millennium sign at the top of the green will be replaced this year.</p> <p>Within our own Council, I'd like to specifically mention the roles undertaken in addition to those of the normal Councillor. Our Chairperson, Jonathon Cutts, is our representative on the St Margarets and Stone Almshouses, which own 17 Almshouses and a further 9 properties within Wimborne. Eligible residents of Holt can apply if this is ever needed. Councillor Sarah Weaver goes above and beyond in her effort as our Footpath Officer, frequently covering all routes within the Parish. She has recently been most tenacious in getting the early repair of the footbridge in Holtwood damaged by a horse, despite being told numerous times that there was no hope of it being done in the near future.</p> <p>Our Highways group of Jonathan Cutts, Geoff Pike and Peter Finney have been hugely successful in their approach to the implementation of reduced speed limits within the Parish. After planning issues, the volume and excessive speed of traffic is the most regularly raised subject at our meetings and we as a Council share our Parishioners concerns and frustrations. We reported at the last Annual meeting that we had an agreement in principle from Dorset Council that speed limits would be lowered at Horseshoe Crossroads, through Holtwood, along a section of Holt Road and Holt Lane. These plans have moved forward considerably under the guidance of the Highways Group and the Parish Council are contributing financially to help progress the project, in addition to agreed contributions from Knowlton Parish Council and Vale of Allen Parish Council towards the work at Horseshoes, where there is a shared boundary. The next stage will be the public consultation. The progress may seem frustratingly slow to some residents, but we really are moving quite quickly within the scope of local speed limit changes. Our approach has been noted as progressive and unusually effective, and we have the Highways Group to thank for that.</p> <p>We are considering applying for a 20mph limit in Furzehill and will shortly be launching a consultation. A recent survey did not identify a sufficient number of vehicles exceeding the</p>

	<p>current 30mph limit, but did note the high volume of traffic, so a further restriction here may be worthwhile.</p> <p>Our Speedwatch group continue to be active, running 6 sessions over the past year, often with the support of the Police. We have a new approved site in Furzehill and this will be used in future sessions. We also have purchased an additional Speed Indicator Device, together with upgrading our current mounting poles to solar power.</p> <p>The Parish Council continues to distribute public funds to worthwhile projects and organisations. £500 was granted to St James' School to assist with transport costs for school trips. The Reef youth club in Colehill also received a one-off grant of £500 towards continued upkeep and development. A £100 donation was also made to the Tivoli theatre in recognition of the excellent talk we all enjoyed last year.</p> <p>The Parish Council has welcomed a new member in Janey White and we look forward to her continued valuable input over the coming year. We gained two new seats when the Parish absorbed the Furzehill lobe, and one seat is as yet untaken. We would be delighted to hear from any Furzehill residents that may be interested in joining the Council.</p> <p>Although the Parish Council is responsible for myriad local tasks within the Parish, two issues dominate our time and caseload: Planning and Traffic.</p> <p>The Parish Council have commented on 45 planning applications this year, some of which are contentious and absorb a considerable amount of time. Meetings have run as late as 10pm as a result of planning discussions. The Council always approach applications from a neutral position and all comments are reasoned and impartial. We have a responsibility to try and allow responsible and sympathetic development within the Parish at the same time as respecting the views of residents, not always a straightforward task. We continue to invite all Parishioners to attend meetings to air their views on Planning applications relevant to them.</p> <p>The Parish Council has kept our precept level frozen this year, the third year in a row, with a Band D household contributing £27.00.</p> <p>Two public servants deserve a final mention for their work in support of the Parish Council. Firstly, our thanks is extended to Will Chakawhata, our Ward Councillor. Will is always most supportive of the Parish Council and is skilled at helping us work effectively within the layers of local government. In addition to this, he regularly attends our meetings, often in inclement weather conditions through the Winter months, to ensure we are up to date with the latest from County Hall. Thank you also to the Leader of Dorset Council Nick Ireland for attending this evening.</p> <p>Last but by no means least, our gratitude must be expressed to our Clerk, Lisa Goodwin. It is no exaggeration to say that the learned Clerk is the lynchpin which holds all things together and we are under no illusion that effort is extended above and beyond her remit to ensure we are as successful and efficient as we can be. An extraordinary amount of work takes place to make the Parish Council function; herding Parish Councillors is similar to the metaphorical cats, and we are all most grateful for Lisa's work.</p>
07	<p><b>Matters arising from the Annual Report.</b></p> <p>None.</p>

08	<p><b>Audited Accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2024</b></p> <p>The audited accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024 were displayed for members of the public to view and are available on the website <a href="http://www.holtparishcouncil.org.uk">www.holtparishcouncil.org.uk</a></p>
09	<p><b>Dorset Council Report</b></p> <p>Cllr Will Chakawhata as the ward councillor for Stour &amp; Allen Vale introduced himself to those present and expressed his objective to connect with residents directly or via the Parish Council.</p> <p>Cllr Nick Ireland, introduced himself and provided a round-up of Dorset Council matters since his appointment as Leader last May.</p>
10	<p><b>Public Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr Tim Harris asked Cllr Nick Ireland to clarify how Dorset Council is managing Planning Enforcement in the area as two officers have left in recent weeks and would the Head of Planning, Mr Mike Garrity like to visit Holt Parish Council to clarify the current situation? <i>Cllr Ireland responded that Enforcement is a priority and currently under resourced which needs to change. The Local Plan inherited from the former East Dorset Council needs to be refreshed and is due to go to public consultation July/August with a view to submit to the Planning Inspectorate, December 2026. The Plan needs to meet Government housing targets and residents are encouraged to respond to the consultation.</i></li> <li>Mr John Cardwell asked Cllr Nick Ireland for an update on development of the former East Dorset Council Offices at Furzehill. <i>Cllr Nick Ireland understands the site is close to being sold but there is an issue with a right of way.</i></li> <li>Mr Bob Hazell asked the Parish Council to reconsider placing a Speed Indicator Device in Lodge Road where there is an existing pole for a unit as vehicles regularly exceed 30mph particularly in the morning and late afternoon. The road is also regularly used by horse-riders. <i>Cllr Guy Reynolds explained that all sites have to be assessed by Dorset Council. Cllr Jonathan Cutts added that the subject of traffic and speed is very important to the Parish Council and members are trying to do as much as possible but it cannot all be done at once. Dorset Council has limited resources but has been very supportive of the Parish Council's objective to address concerns. It is possible the location could be added as a location for Community Speedwatch. Mr Hazell offered to join the CSW team.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Nigel Allman raised concern with the road surface at Furzehill close to the junction with the B3078 and the possibility of a sink-hole waiting to happen and asked if anything could be done. Mr Stan Bielecki added that drivers are avoiding the dip in the road only 20m from the junction which could cause a collision. <i>Cllr Jonathan Cutts encouraged residents to report any incidents online to Dorset Council to help build a picture of evidence for road safety requests.</i> <b>Action for the Parish Council &amp; Cllr Will Chakawhata.</b></li> <li>• Mr Peter Griffiths added that he would like to see the Speed Indicator Device back in use in Lodge Road. Mr Ralph Moore advised that Dorset Council had said that the number of locations for a SID were limited in the parish. <b>Action for the Parish Council &amp; Cllr Will Chakawhata.</b></li> <li>• Mrs Ann Lonsdale has been asking for the improvements to the section of road between The Stocks and Bothenwood for a number of years as there have been a number of incidents.</li> <li>• Mrs Celia Moore added that the uneven road surface at Furzehill is terrible if towing a caravan.</li> <li>• Cllr Janet Wallace asked Cllr Nick Ireland for clarification on the rejection of the BCP Local Plan reference the housing requirement. <i>Cllr Nick Ireland explained that the BCP Local Plan did not meet housing targets and Dorset Council had a duty to consider co-operation with BCP, this was rejected as Dorset Council cannot meet its own target. Cllr Ireland continued to explain that Dorset Council put a proposal to Government to become a combined authority with neighbouring councils, purely to improve funding but this was rejected.</i></li> <li>• Cllr Will Chakawhata took the opportunity to report that talks are continuing to re-open the QE Leisure Centre swimming pool to the public.</li> </ul>
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The Chair closed the meeting at 20:30

After a break for refreshments, the Chair introduced Guests, Mike & Jayne Twomey who gave a fascinating talk about the history and books in The Wimborne Minster Chained Library

**These minutes are to be signed by the Chairman after approval at the next Annual Meeting.**

**Signed;..... Date:.....**