

THE HANNEYS

Hanney and West Hanney

Annual Parish Meetings

Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7:30pm

Hanney Village Hall

With drinks and nibbles after

Minutes

The Annual Parish Meeting is a meeting of all the local government electors of the Parish. The purpose of the meeting is to enable the electors to have their say on anything they consider is important to the people of the Parish and so that the Parish Council and other relevant bodies can explain what has been done over the past year.

It is the custom for all the Parish Councillors and the Clerk to attend giving the public accountability for all the actions of the Council over the past twelve months.

Other local bodies may also attend to provide feedback on their activities in the past and coming year.

Only the voters on the Electoral Register for the two Parishes are entitled to speak and vote.

The quorum for an Annual Parish Meeting is two.

In attendance: 17 members of the public, 5 members of East Hanney Parish Council, 3 members of West Hanney Parish Council, Clerk to East Hanney Parish Council and Clerk to West Hanney Parish Council.

This is our Fourth Joint Annual Meeting – Reflecting shared facilities and shared issues across East and West Hanney.

1. Apologies:

Cllr Packham

Cllr Ruston

Cllr Bligdon

Cllr Pratsides

East Hanney – RFO – Jayne Dennill

2. **Approval of the Minutes of the Joint East and West Hanney Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th April 2025** – the minutes were approved and signed by East & West Hanney Parish Chairs.

3. **Matters Arising from the aforementioned minutes.**

None

4. **Report from Chairman of EHPC.**

Delivered Improvements and Governance Work

During the past year, the Parish Council has continued to deliver a range of improvements and governance initiatives for the benefit of the community. These have included enhancements to the playground, upgrades to footpaths, and approval being granted for the replacement pavilion project.

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The Council has also continued to strengthen its financial governance and compliance processes, including work associated with AGAR requirements and increasing regulatory responsibilities. Special thanks were given to Jane (RFO) and Lisa (Clerk) for their ongoing hard work and commitment.

Community Awards

This year saw the launch of the new Community Awards initiative, which received more than 30 nominations from residents. The awards were introduced to recognise the valuable contributions made by individuals and groups within the community.

Coordination with External Bodies

The Council has continued to work closely with a range of external organisations on several significant local issues, including flooding and sewer management, reservoir proposals, road repairs, Letcombe Brook management, and the Ebbs Lane flood relief works.

Ebbs Lane was highlighted as a key collection point for floodwater within the village. Multi-agency collaboration has taken place involving Oxfordshire County Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, and Thames Water.

It was also noted that a sewer pipe restriction issue had been addressed through works to sink the pipe beneath the stream, improving water flow and reducing blockage concerns.

Engagement and Communications

The Council reaffirmed its commitment to improving transparency and communication with residents. It was noted that greater detail from meetings is shared through Hanney News and ways of sharing the parish meetings to a wider audience will be reviewed.

Residents were encouraged to provide constructive feedback and to participate positively in Parish Council meetings and community discussions.

Planned Works and Upcoming Priorities

Key priorities for the coming year include:

- Commencing the replacement pavilion works.
- Improving the footpath along the brook where bank erosion is occurring, between the iron bridge and the stile.
- Ongoing reservoir discussions & DCO process.
- Flood mitigation works
- Further planting of the woodland on Kings Leases and other green spaces.
- Investigating the replacement of the multiplay castle.

The multiplay castle is currently subject to an estimated immediate repair cost of approximately £10,000. However, due to the age of the equipment and potential liability concerns raised by contractors, full replacement is considered the more appropriate long-term solution. Replacement costs are currently estimated at between £30,000 and £40,000.

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The Council confirmed that resident feedback will be gathered through surveys, including both online and in-person options, before decisions are finalised.

Shared Facilities and Costs

The playground is a well-recognised and utilised facility which is great to see, however it brings ongoing maintenance costs which, as a shared facility, would benefit from both East and West Hanney parish council contributions to its maintenance. East Hanney PC maintains the overflow car park and flood relief infrastructure which benefit both communities, yet the costs lay with EH residents. A sustainable way forward should be discussed, so that necessary funds can be ring fenced and I welcome discussions with WHPC to achieve an equitable solution.

Planning Matters

The Council confirmed that it will continue to oppose inappropriate large-scale developments that are not aligned with the neighbourhood plan or the rural character of the village.

Regarding the proposed reservoir, the Council clarified that its position is not one of outright opposition, but rather that any proposal should be of an appropriate and justified scale for the area.

5. Report from Chairman of WHPC.

Solar Farm Update

Planning permission has been granted on appeal for a solar farm covering approximately 150 acres east of Denchworth. Construction has not yet commenced.

As part of the approval conditions, all construction traffic is required to use a designated route via Cobweb Barn Industrial Estate at Lyford to access the site from Denchworth Road. Highways improvements have been undertaken to support this arrangement.

Neighbourhood Plan

The West Hanney Neighbourhood Plan reaches its five-year milestone in October, and preparations are now underway to review and update the plan to ensure it continues to reflect local priorities and planning policies.

Flooding

The village experienced fewer incidents of surface water flooding compared with recent years. However, Church Street continues to experience flooding issues near the Spring Close entrance.

The Parish Council is working with officers from the Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to explore potential mitigation measures.

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Appreciation was expressed for the continued efforts of the Hanney Flood Group and the Future Flood Resilience Group, particularly for monitoring Childrey Brook flows at Botany Bridge and Gallows Bridge.

Traffic Calming and Speed Indication Device

A replacement Speed Indication Device (SID) has been purchased for the village.

Following repairs to the original unit after storm damage, the repaired device was returned and the spare unit was subsequently loaned to East Hanney Parish Council.

Trees and Public Realm Improvements

Three specimen trees have been planted at Headings Pond to replace trees lost during storms and an ash tree affected by ash dieback disease. The new planting includes a sweet gum, birch, and handkerchief tree.

A stainless-steel wheat sculpture has also been installed at Meadow Way. The project was funded through a Section 106 contribution from developer Laggan Homes via Vale of White Horse District Council. Artist Tony Davies incorporated a hidden “creature” hallmark within the sculpture design.

Community Speed Watch

The Community Speed Watch initiative continues to be led by Councillor Ahmed Farag, supported by volunteers from both East and West Hanney, with a particular focus on the area near St James’s Primary School.

The initiative works in partnership with Thames Valley Police, and additional volunteers are welcomed. Full training is provided for participants.

“Pass Slow and Wide” Signage

The Parish Council supported the introduction of “Pass Slow and Wide” signage to improve safety for horses and riders using local roads.

Special thanks were extended to highway superuser Councillor Dicken Green for arranging the approved road traffic signs and assisting with pothole marking.

Churchyard Concerns and Burial Ground Extension

Following resident concerns regarding the appearance and maintenance of the churchyard, and a petition signed by more than 300 residents, both Parish Council Chairs met with the Vicar and Churchwardens in July last year.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) committed to prioritising improvements to churchyard maintenance and to developing a management plan in line with “Caring for God’s Acre” guidance.

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Concerns were also raised regarding land gifted in 1997 for burial ground extension purposes, with it noted that approximately half of the field has not yet been consecrated or used for burials.

The PCC agreed to request a survey and investigation into the suitability of the extension field for burials and ashes following completion of the church refurbishment works. Both Parish Council Chairs will continue to follow up on this matter.

Reservoir Proposal

The proposed reservoir scheme, now renamed the Whitehorse Reservoir (formerly SESRO/CESRO), is expected to submit a Development Consent Order application toward the end of the year.

West Hanney Parish Council has submitted a detailed response as a statutory consultee. The Council stated that, should the scheme proceed, it will continue working to mitigate potential harms and secure the maximum possible legacy benefits for the local area.

Community Woodland Maintenance

The Nigel Edie Community Woodland continues to be maintained with the support of volunteers led by Paul Sayers.

Special recognition was given to Dez Thomas, who for 14 years has maintained woodland rides using his vintage Ferguson tractor, but is no longer well enough to continue.

Contractor Paul Smith of Paddock Care will now take over the maintenance work, with the first scheduled cut planned for 1 June.

Parish Clerk Retirement

It was announced that Barbara Martin will be retiring as Parish Clerk in September.

Residents aware of any potential candidates interested in the role were encouraged to contact the Parish Council Chair for further information.

6. Hanney Community Awards

Award Scheme Introduction

A new Hanney Community Awards scheme was introduced this year to recognise residents who have made a positive contribution to village life and the wider community.

The initiative received more than 30 nominations in its first year, demonstrating strong community engagement and appreciation for local volunteers and contributors.

Judging Process

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The judging panel consisted of two councillors from East Hanney Parish Council and two councillors from West Hanney Parish Council.

Nominations were assessed using a scoring matrix which considered:

- The impact of the contribution,
- The duration of service or involvement, and
- The overall detail and significance of the contribution made.

The original award structure included categories for under-17 and over-17 nominees. However, as no nominations were received for the under-17 category, it was agreed that awards would instead be presented in the following categories:

- Community Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award

It was noted that the Lifetime Achievement Award may not necessarily be awarded annually in future years.

Community Award

Clive Manvell – recognised for his leadership of the flood group and his sustained contribution to the local community.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Bob Wilson – recognised for his long-term service to the village, including his involvement with the tennis club and leadership of village litter picks. His achievements as an explorer were also acknowledged.

As neither recipient was present at the meeting, it was confirmed that the awards would be presented at a later date.

Thanks

Special thanks were recorded to Alexis for coordinating the administration and organisation of the awards process.

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7. Reports from local bodies and representatives

Hanney Flood Group Report

(Report summarised from Clive Manvell's submission)

Flood Prevention and Brook Maintenance Work

During the summer months of June to August, volunteers carried out extensive Himalayan Balsam removal work along both banks of Letcombe Brook, beginning at Lower Mill bridge and continuing downstream where time allowed.

Additional work included the removal of tree obstructions and rubbish from the brook, including a ladder and two scaffolding planks.

It was reported that the continued annual effort has significantly reduced the amount of Himalayan Balsam present year-on-year. However, it was stressed that regular clearance remains essential due to continued germination.

The condition of the brook south of the village was described as generally healthy, with mostly clear water and visible gravel and sand beds.

Ongoing Flood Mitigation Works

Works near Lower Mill Cottage included widening the bypass channel and stream areas to improve water flow.

The bridge at Poughly Farm remains under discussion, with concerns continuing that the structure may have been built too low.

A flood barrier, purchased jointly with several parties, is intended for installation across Halls Lane to help prevent floodwater flowing toward the Ebbs Lane area.

At the footpath near Philberd's Manor, more than 1,000 sandbags were positioned to support erosion control and help prevent collapse of the path edge.

Drainage and Culvert Clearance

In October, the local team cleared culvert entrances and exits within the Ebbs Lane area ahead of inspections and jetting works undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council Highways contractors.

Following subsequent heavy rainfall, it was reported that floodwater remained contained within the ditches, demonstrating the effectiveness of the preparatory work undertaken.

Acknowledgements

Grant support from the Oxfordshire County Council Flood Mitigation Team was gratefully acknowledged.

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Special thanks were extended to Tim Glass for helping keep projects on track and for deputising for Clive Manvell when required.

It was confirmed that the full Flood Group report would be published online for residents to read in full.

West Hanney Allotment Gardens

West Hanney Allotment Gardens currently have vacant plots available, and interested residents were encouraged to contact Barbara Martin for further details.

Annual rental charges, including water supply, are:

- £11 for a full plot
- £5.50 for a half plot

Existing allotment holders also offer advice, support, and encouragement to new allotmentees.

East Hanney Allotments

Approximately four allotment plots are currently available in East Hanney.

Reference was made to the expectation that at least 75% of plots should remain under cultivation throughout the year, in line with the approach adopted in West Hanney. Smaller plots will be made available to help residents start up allotment keeping.

Hanney Parochial Charities

A change in leadership was noted, with Jim Stagg stepping down as Chair after 10 years of service. David Corps has now assumed the role of Chair.

The charity continues to offer:

- Confidential financial assistance for residents experiencing cost of living difficulties.
- Grants to support further education.

Residents seeking assistance or further information were encouraged to make contact confidentially.

Hanney Tennis Club Report

Hanney Tennis Club currently has approximately 100 members, primarily from East and West Hanney, with additional members from surrounding areas including Abingdon, Grove, Wantage, and Denchworth.

The club continues to provide coaching programmes for both children and adults, and prospective members were invited to attend social tennis sessions.

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Last year, the club installed new LED floodlights to replace older metal halide lighting. The project was partly funded through Section 106 contributions and has reduced both electricity consumption and the club's carbon footprint.

Village Hall Chair's Report

Significant investment has continued to be made in maintaining and improving the Village Hall.

During the last financial year, nearly £10,000 was spent on building maintenance and fabric improvements, with further expenditure continuing this year.

Recent works include:

- Installation of new entrance doors at a cost of approximately £5,000.
- Replacement of a damaged kitchen rooflight, together with two additional rooflights, scheduled for the following week at a cost of approximately £3,000.
- Repainting of parking bay lines, completed at a cost of approximately £3,000.

It was noted that booking fees have remained unchanged for the past two to three years. However, a proposal to increase fees will be considered at the Village Hall AGM in August in order to support cost recovery and align charges with comparable local halls.

Thanks were extended to the Village Hall cleaner, Sally, and Treasurer, Phil Donovan, for their continued support and contribution.

Community Woodland and Church Farm Meadow Report

The report provided an update on the ongoing management and maintenance of the Nigel Eady Community Woodland and Church Farm Meadow.

The Woodland, originally planted in the 1990s under an EU Set-Aside scheme, was gifted to West Hanney Parish Council in 2012. Church Farm Meadow was later transferred to the Parish Council in 2017 through a Section 106 agreement linked to the St James Way development.

The past winter was described as the third consecutive exceptionally wet winter, resulting in extensive flooding, standing water, and damage to sections of the woodland rides, making large areas inaccessible for periods of time. It was noted that many walnut trees near the Forest School have died due to prolonged wet conditions, and replacement with more water-tolerant species may be considered.

Volunteer working parties continued throughout the autumn and winter months, focusing on maintaining rides, controlling scrub growth, and preserving wildflower areas. Due to difficult ground conditions, efforts were concentrated mainly within the drier northern section of the woodland.

To assist with maintenance, West Hanney Parish Council engaged contractor Paul Smith of Paddock Care to undertake hedge and ride-side cutting works. The contractor's work was praised for achieving significant improvements efficiently, and future rotational maintenance arrangements may be considered.

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Special recognition was given to Des Thomas, who has maintained the woodland rides for many years, but who is no longer able to continue. The Parish Council has now arranged for Paddock Care to undertake mowing on a contract basis.

The report highlighted positive wildlife developments, including continued growth of orchids, cowslips, and ox-eye daisies. Nest box monitoring showed strong bird activity, with most boxes occupied by nesting birds or small mammals. New “Woodstone” predator-resistant nest boxes have also been installed within the woodland and at Headings Pond.

Wildlife regularly observed within the woodland includes muntjac and roe deer, rabbits, hares, foxes, and badgers.

At Church Farm Meadow, annual cutting and hay removal work was again carried out by Alan Cottrell. This ongoing management approach continues to successfully encourage wildflower growth by reducing grass competition and soil fertility over time.

The report concluded with thanks to all volunteers and contributors involved in maintaining both sites, with particular appreciation expressed to Des Thomas for his many years of practical support and maintenance work.

8. Open Forum – Questions and Suggestions

Public Toilet Provision Near the Recreation Area

Concerns were raised regarding the lack of public toilet facilities for users of the play park and recreation area, with additional pressure reportedly being placed on the village hall and shop toilets. Paul Aram (EHPC Chair) mentioned that a trial toilet would be put in place this summer holiday to help the council understand the cost implications, use and any other issues in running a public toilet which may end up costing EHPC residents to provide and maintain on an ongoing basis.

Bonfires and Restrictions

Clarification was provided that there are no specific “Hanney-only” restrictions relating to bonfires beyond the general nuisance and environmental health regulations enforced by Vale of White Horse District Council.

Residents were encouraged to consider the environmental impact and potential nuisance caused by bonfires, with composting and use of brown bins promoted as preferable alternatives where possible. Please be neighbourly and consider the impact on others of burning garden waste and only do so if no alternative is available.

Posters, Banners, and Notices on Parish Land

Discussion took place regarding the need for clearer and more consistent guidance relating to posters, banners, and notices displayed on parish-owned land, following concerns about perceived inconsistencies between different organisations and requests.

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Meeting Close at 20.35

All Reports will be on the Parishes website.

Cllr Paul Aram

Cllr David Corps

Chair of East Hanney Parish Council

Chair of West Hanney Parish Council