Minutes of the Meeting of Wonersh Parish Council held on Thursday 30 July 2026 at 7.30pm, at the Wonersh Sports Pavilion

Present: Cllrs Max Gibbs, Georgie Grant, Chris Howard, Kat Parkinson and Anthony Shutes (Chair).

In attendance: Lisa Davison (Clerk), Louisa Coughtrey (Financial Officer), Waverley Borough Councillor Michael Goodridge and seven members of the public.

26/27 072 To consider and approve apologies for absence.

The Council considered and approved apologies from Cllrs Ben Knight Stephen Lavender, Rob Merriman and Kevin Sloan.

26/27 073 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests.

Cllr Shutes noted a non-pecuniary interest in the Orchard on Barnett Hill Fields and Cllr Gibbs membership of the Blackheath Village Society, with consideration of the Blackheath Common Consultations.

26/27 074 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.

There were seven members of the public present, one with a general interest in proceedings. Four with an interest in Barnett Hill Fields, of these, one had a specific interest in sheep, two, the orchard and one an overarching interest. There were two members of the public with an interest in the Blackheath Common consultations.

Cllr Shutes brought items 25/26 090 and 25/26 084 up the agenda mindful of attendees.

Borough Cllr Goodridge was also in attendance, joining later in the meeting, they provided a brief update on the Local Government Reorganisation.

Cllr Shutes brought items 25/26 085 up the agenda considerate of Councillor interest and support.

26/27 075 To consider and approve the minutes of the Council meetings held on 18 June and 13 July 2026.

The Council resolved to approve these and Cllr Shutes duly signed these.

26/27 076 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by the Council.

Cllr Shutes raised the recent receipt of the paperwork for the sale of Gerald's Wood and the dedication of the Public Rights of Way. The Council noted that following a review this would be signed by Cllrs Shutes and Lavender, witnessed by the Clerk, as delegated under 25/26 179 and confirmed under 26/27 267. An update will be issued at the September Council Meeting.

Councillors queried the presence of the white markings on the road between Wonersh and Shamley Green. They requested that the Financial Officer follow up with the relevant authorities to understand the reason for these and whether further traffic disruption is anticipated.

The Clerk noted receipt of a response from Waverley as to the extent of the land under their ownership / management and this would be reflected in an updated report in advance of the Commons Working Party Meeting.

Action: Clerk to update the report on Land Asset Transfer

The Clerk noted the response to the Local Plan Scoping Consultations was in the files.

The Clerk updated the Council as to a Local Land Availability Meeting, where land owners had responded to a 'Call for Sites' from Waverley Borough Council. These parcels of land were then graded green, amber or red as to the potential for development. There is no immediate assumption that these will be included in the Local Plan upon review and any development would be subject to the national and local requirements of the planning process. There were two proposed land parcels in the Parish and these and the maps will be made public with greater contextual details provided to Councillors and Parish Councils shortly. A review of grey belt is also being completed to provide evidence for the Local Plan.

Action: Clerk to circulate upon receipt.

Cllr Parkinson queried the updates on Longacre and will follow up accordingly in advance of the September Council Meeting.

26/27 077 To receive the approved Minute of the Planning Committee held on 14 May and 4 June 2026.

The Council noted these.

26/27 078 Finance – to consider and approve the following:

(a) The list of payment and receipt vouchers in June 2026
(b) The end-June 2026 financial statement
(c) The reconciliation of accounts, completed by non-signatories
(d) £45.00 to Mulberry Local Authority services for Cllr Parkinson training
(e) £150.00 to My Locks Guildford for the new lock on the Clerk's office
(f) £281.22 to Guildford Borough Council for the weedkiller application to the Wonersh Cricket outfield in May 2026, covered in full by the Cricket Club contribution received below.

The Council resolved to approve these.

26/27 079 Finance – to note receipt of:

(a) £529.34 from Wonersh Cricket Club, 50% of mowing costs from February to April 2026, and 100% of the weedkiller costs applied in May 2026
(b) £99,965.00 PWLB loan for the Arbuthnot Hall redevelopment project
(c) £69.83 refund from Taurus Wine for unused Annual Assembly drinks
(d) £514.83 in bank interest on Unity Trust Savings Account

The Council noted these.

26/27 080 Finance – to note transfer of:

(a) £50,000 from Unity Current to Unity Savings to maximise savings interest income

The Council noted this.

Cllr Shutes brought 25/26 086-091 up the agenda

26/27 081 To receive an update on the Council's Communications Strategy and approve next steps, including resource implications.

Cllr Howard presented the outline plan to the Council which was welcome. She requested that Councillors review the draft and provide comments to the Financial Officer and them, so a final version can be tabled at the September Council Meeting for approval.

Action: Councillors to comment upon the Communications Strategy.

Financial Officer and Cllr Howard to update.

Clerk to include on the September Council Meeting Agenda.

26/27 082 To consider the Council's Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that they were reviewing the existing document as part of CiLCA and with consideration for suggestions from the Internal Audit. The Clerk requested delegation to the Clerk and appropriate chairs, to progress this for submission in advance of the coursework deadline. This was confirmed and full Council approval will be on the September Council Meeting agenda.

Action: Clerk to progress with input from appropriate chairs, for submission as part of CiLCA

Clerk to include on the September Council Meeting agenda.

26/27 083 To consider the Council's approach to resilience and approve next steps including resource implications.t

[Cllr Parkinson left – note some agenda items below had already been deliberated]

Cllr Shutes to report on the attendance at Surrey-wide event looking at resilience under four categories:

- Flooding
- Adverse weather
- Wildfire
- Power outage

There is funding available to support projects building more resilient communities. The Council agreed that each village should develop resilience plans under these categories and that scenario building around these could assist in the next steps.

Action: Cllr Gibbs, Howard and Shutes to progress village-level resilience planning

Clerk to include on an appropriate Council Meeting agenda for Parish-level follow ups.

The Clerk noted attendance at a St Martha's-led event looking at Community Emergency Information Hubs and for St Martha these look outside the parish boundaries and including the Memorial Hall. Wonersh Parish Council welcomed their proactive approach and would look to engage further once initial scoping activities were completed.

Action: Clerk to communicate the Parish Council's receptiveness to Surrey County Council Officers.

26/27 084 To consider the following consultations from Waverley Borough Council regarding Blackheath Common, due 10 August 2026, and approve next steps.

(a) Blackheath Common Management Plan 2014-2024 Revised Extension
(b) Blackheath Common Wildfire Management Plan 2026

Cllr Howard presented an excerpt of the presentations shared at the Blackheath event including highlighting key elements of the responses.

The benefits of a holistic response considerate of all stakeholder landowners was noted with consideration for commons and wildfire management. Community participation with activities and how these might further benefit the activities managed by Waverley Borough Council was emphasised. The clarity of response and how these feeds into and comes out of the evacuation plan was raised and whether having advanced details of these would be reassuring or potentially confusing was touched upon in discussion.

The potential loss of oak trees to introduce fire breaks where there is an already established fire break locally, which could be improved through the already planned cutting back of spruce was emphasised.

Members of the public noted that they were here to observe the other raised concerns about inconsistencies and concerns over approvals from Natural England and whether the woodland management plan should be reviewed following wildfires in the vicinity of planned works.

Cllr Howard noted the draft responses in folders for Council comments and the Clerk noted that Waverley Borough Council Officers had responded effectively to preliminary questions.

Action: Working Party to receive comments upon draft and submit within the consultation timeframe.

26/27 085 To receive an update on a proposed 20mph zone for Wonersh Village and approve next steps.

Cllr Shutes to update Council as to meeting with Borough and County Councillors and Officers from the Surrey County Council. This was a useful meeting where ideas were shared and to which Councillors at all levels could engage with proposals and either better understand or influence these as an early step in the consultation process. It is anticipated that these will go out for public consultation around October, potentially with two public events, one in Bramley and one in Wonersh. The practicalities of extending the project to meet other needs was managed, both in terms of budget requirements and impact upon other planned junction improvements but this would be a strong first phase. The council noted the importance of mobilising the community in response to this and drew on the example of Shalford and what had been effective there. There was support for the proposed project at all levels but the timing of the LGR means this will likely await funding under the new unitary authority.

Action: Parish Councillors and Officers to actively engage and publicise Surrey County Council's public consultation process for local improvements to road safety.

To involve members of the public with transferrable experience from Shalford where practical and beneficial.

26/27 086 To receive an update the boundaries of the common near the Barnet Lane Playground and approve next steps.

The Council received the update as to the commons boundary alongside Little Acre and agreed that this was a special case, which did not set a precedent for other ditches on Wonersh with regards to boundaries. Owners of Little Acre had provided extensive evidence in support of the claim of Parish Council ownership and responsibility up to their hedge. Mindful of the uncertainty and the potential costs of further survey and legal advice for further households along this stretch of ditch, the Council agreed to take responsibility for the trees beyond the current demarcated household boundaries for all properties between and including Little Acre and Lawnsmead Hall. A key determinant of this is the playground and SGN infrastructure. They also committed to ensuring that the main pathway onto Barnett Lane was clear of brambles but the remainder of the brambles be left as habitat and to screen the ditch, to encourage play on the wider common.

The Clerk noted that they had instructed the tree surveyor to review this area subject to confirmation at this meeting.

Action: Clerk to confirm instructions with Tree Surveyor and to follow up with householders as and when applicable.

26/27 087 To receive the reports from the Annual Playgrounds Inspection Reports for Lords Hill and Barnett Lane Playground and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that the report and the updated risk assessments, with actions to mitigate are in the folder for Council approval of actions. This includes approving the follow up actions for the routine maintenance contractor. The Council noted receipt of these and approved the actions for the Routine Maintenance Contractor. They also confirmed that subject to these being within the Clerk's limit then items such as bolt caps and braces can be purchased and confirmed at the next available Council meeting. Given the high costs, when further loose chippings / bark is required, this will require Council approval.

The Clerk enquired as to whether the Council would like to follow up with other suggestions to resolve low risk concerns. This includes HIC testing of surfaces and mole removal. It was confirmed that the Council would like to improve the surface regardless of the HIC testing results, so these were not necessary, and that they will not be removing the moles, as Lords Hill is a rural setting. Obtaining a quote for the tree works which can't be completed from the ground in the follow up works to the Tree Survey was considered appropriate.

Action: Clerk to instruct routine maintenance contractor

Clerk to include in the request for quotes for follow up actions

Clerk to include items for note or approval on future Council Meeting agendas.

26/27 088 To receive an update on plans for Lords Hill Playground and approve next steps.

Cllr Parkinson shared options for potential equipment for Lords Hill Playground utilising the existing contractor Rhinoplay. The Council explored whether other alternative providers might

practical and also offer best value. The conclusion at this stage was, subject to this being within procurement limits then working with the existing provider would manage the complexity of future repairs. It might also provide an incentive to resolve issues with recently installed items too. The Clerk requested delegation to progress equipment under the £30,000 threshold in consultation with Cllr Parkinson, including for applying for matched funding, with updates to Council as required. This was approved.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Parkinson to progress

Clerk to include on future Council Meeting Agendas as required.

26/27 089 To receive an update on the Vehicle Activated signs in Wonersh and approve next steps.

Cllr Shutes provided an update on the solar battery-operated VAS in Wonersh. The one into the village from Shamley Green was operational but set to trigger at 35mph mindful of battery longevity. The one into the village from the direction of Shalford/Guildford was no longer operational and Surrey County Council were exploring its replacement. There is potential support from the County Councillors pot for 2026/27, provided it can be spent by March 2027. Match funding would be considered favourable in these instances and CIL is being proposed as an option for a replacement VAS.

Action: Clerk to explore with Surrey County Council Councillors and Officers funding options here and

26/27 090 To receive an update on Barnett Hill Fields, including an update on sheep grazing and details of the proposed orchard, and approve next steps. *25/26 078 to consider and approve(g) £125.33 to Devon Pond Plants for plants for the Barnett Hill Fields wildlife pond, and (h) £242 to JT Atkinson being part-payment for gravel for the Barnett Hill Fields wildlife pond. Covered by the grant from Wonersh Foundation.*

The Council resolved to approve the above payments.

The Council received an outline verbal plan and proposed budget for an orchard measuring approximately 30 by 20 metres on the lower field Barnett Hill Fields. More details are available in the Council Meeting folders. These were positively received by the Council, who were reassured as to its proposed management and upkeep.

With some flexibility for species availability, the following 2–3-year bare root trees measuring around 5m are proposed:

- 12 apple trees, a mixture of cookers and dessert apples with a variety seasonal type.
- Three pears
- Three plum/damson gauge
- Two cherries
- Two nut
- One each of medlar, mulberry and crab apple.

There will be an update in Autumn 2026 and an annual plan will be lodged with the Council for their consideration and, where appropriate, approval.

The proposed first phase spend of £4,000, to be covered by a grant from the Wonersh Fair proceeds, was approved in principle. It was highlighted that for actual spends to be made from Council bank accounts, then Council approval was required, particularly where spends exceed £250 for Clerk's approval £1,000 for Clerk and Chair's joint approval. This was acceptable for all proposed purchases which would be included on the September Council Meeting for approval, with one exception. This exception was the trees to be purchased in August and it was proposed that these purchased directly by the Fair Committee and donated, particularly as there is no VAT payable on these.

Discussion around these related to how pests would be managed, mindful of the biodiversity value of the area, including the presence of bats as you move up the food chain, and the lens through which the Council makes decisions. Natural and organic methods were encouraged and may well be mandated following decisions to be made by Council more generally in the Autumn. The use of bulbs, natural predators and also specialised advice on options were mentioned.

This project had benefited from members of the Rosamund Community Orchard sharing advice and resources. In relation to this, a member of that community requested that they carry out research exploring how the BHF orchard is established as part of a qualification they are doing. The Council supported the request unanimously.

Action: Clerk to confirm Council approval, including request that trees be donated directly.

Members of the Orchard Management Team to advise the Clerk of any upcoming expenditure at least ten days prior to a Council Meeting, including specific details and where appropriate supplier.

The Council received a verbal update as to the recent grazing of sheep on the Barnett Hill Fields and also a reassuring response on concerns that the grazing of sheep could raise health concerns for dogs. More details are available in the Council Meeting folders.

Key positive outcomes included the providing grazing opportunity for Surrey Wildlife Trust wethers, which in turn led to the effective management of ragwort. Learning opportunities for the next, proposed grazing period was increased information and signage to ensure members of the public are adequately informed as to the limited risk to dogs of herds of this nature and also the importance of dogs being on leads. The adaptations to routes through the field was recognised to be limited and restricted to a short period of time.

On this basis the Council confirmed support for further Spring grazing in 2027 and also for grazing in Autumn 2026, if this option was available. If the latter was progressed this would remove the need for an Autumn flail and delegations were put in place for the Clerk and Cllr Shutes to respond and follow up with the contractor on the basis of need.

A further update, relevant to the mowing of the fields was the 65 reptile survey mats for monitoring the presence of snakes and other reptiles on the fields. Details of their location would be shared with contractors, as required by the mowing schedule.

Action: Clerk to follow up in more detail with individuals concerned about dog health.

BFG to confirm possibilities for future grazing and to lead on approved improvements to communications for future grazing periods.

Clerk and Cllr Shutes to work with mowing contractors to understand next steps and ensure there is awareness of the position of survey equipment, or that that this equipment is temporarily removed for the mow.

26/27 091 To receive recommendations and updates from the Commons Working Party – with input from the Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group and Shamley Green Environment Group – and approve next steps.

Cllr Howard updated the Council as to the ponds in Shamley Green, with works to Spillway completed and installing a further silt trap scheduled to capture silt from road run-off. It was noted that in this dry weather the silt within the pond is presently protecting clay liner. The Council recognise the appetite to progress explore further its removal and Officers reminded the Council of the importance of having an up-to-date ecological survey to rule out protected species effected by works outside the winter months, requiring further permissions, and also to provide benchmarking in advance of future works. On this basis it was agreed that any works would proceed next financial year and considering this at the September meeting, following the meeting of the Commons Working Party, would assist with the budgeting for these necessary steps.

Action: Clerk to ensure Shamley Green Environment Group and Commons Working Party were up to date on the current status of Council decisions.

Cllr Howard to progress a paper for consideration by the Commons Working Party and update for the September Council Meeting.

The Clerk noted correspondence from a resident which amplified concerns from Waverley Borough Council and Surrey Fire and Rescue Service regarding the management of the commons in some areas. The Landowner confirmed that the decisions taken by the Parish Council were fitting for the context. There were no concerns about the dead-hedging within the copse managed by the Borough Council and the Parish Council might like to explore an earlier cut and collect as, given the recent weather, wildflowers had peaked early too, so responding to local concerns would not impact negatively on biodiversity in this instance. The Council resolved to explore practicalities in bringing forward the cut and collect with each of the contractors working on the owned and leased commons and Barnett Hill Fields mindful of this. Cllr Shutes also requested that strimming around the posts upon the owned common would match works on the leased common.

Action: Clerk to work with contractors to bring forward the cut and collect and also request strimming around posts on the owned common.

With consideration for the prolonged dry weather and warm temperatures, Cllr Shutes noted the loss of a limited number trees in Wonersh and Cllr Howard noted similar for Shamley Green. The Council thanked those taking the time to water the local, young trees using a watering can during the heatwave.

The Clerk noted the request from SGEG that in addition to the existing areas included on the tree survey that the parcel of wooded are within the leased area for Shamley Green Common also be surveyed. The Council resolved to approve the additional £375 for these works under

the Clerk's and Chair's limit and for this to be formally included on the September Council Meeting agenda.

Action: Clerk to confirm additions to the Tree Survey in advance of its completion in August.

Clerk to include this amount on the September Council Meeting to confirm approval.

Cllr Grant requests for posts within the commons and alongside the highways – reinstalling those previously damaged – and Cllr Shutes requested a small number between the bunds. Agreeing the position of these was delegated to the Clerk and Cllrs Grant and Shutes, with the Clerk to follow up with landowners for permissions where this is considered necessary. Financial approval was granted up to the Clerk's limit for any works which can be completed now, with the full amount being included on the September Council Meeting agenda.

Action: Clerk and Cllrs Grant and Shutes to confirm where replacement/additional posts are required and desired.

Clerk to advise contractor

Clerk to include on September Council Meeting Agenda.

The Clerk noted the request for parking on the duck pond green for the family fun event at the Bricklayers. The Council confirmed that this was approved and fees are waived to support local, community events for families locally.

Action: Clerk to confirm approvals and provide access for these purposes.

26/27 092 To consider and (re)appoint two WPC representative trustees to Wonersh United Charities (WUC). Louise Healy (Wonersh), with effect from June 2026 and Sue Cory-Wright (Shamley Green), with effect from September 2026

The Council Considered and reappointed these trustees to Wonersh

Action: Clerk to the Council to advise the Clerk to WUC.

26/27 093 To receive concerns raised over filming in the Parish and approve next steps.

The Council received a brief update on responses from the Borough Council and escalation of concerns within Surrey County Council. They formally approved the proposed letter to the former seminary owners given the impact upon local residents.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Shutes to follow up with former seminary owners regarding the use of the field by a film production crew.

26/27 094 To receive the summary of suggested actions responding to the weekly playgrounds inspection and approve next steps.

In response to concerns raised through the regular inspections, the Clerk has followed up with Rhinoplay on relevant items and with images of the splits, shakes and cracks on Hare Tor and to a lesser extent the Trusham Tractor.

Action: Clerk to progress concerns.

26/27 095 To receive any signed off risk assessments for voluntary works and note expected forthcoming ones for Council consideration.

Work continues under existing approvals.

26/27 096 To consider external communications for the coming months and approve next steps.

The prompt follow up with a reminder on the Blackheath Consultations was requested. Plus, a concise summary of the following points raised at the Council Meeting:

- The successful grazing of the sheep and future plans
- The reptile mats for surveying purposes
- The planned orchard
- Shamley Green spillway repair.
- The earlier cut and collect and increased general awareness of the mowing maps.

Action: Officers to progress these communications based upon information received in reports in advance of the Council Meeting.

26/27 097 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.

Cllr Shutes drew attention to recent communication on the reinstatement of a railway utilising the Downslink and serving Horsham, Cranleigh and Guildford, plus points in between. The loss of biodiversity corridor which also served walkers and cyclists was raised as a consequence of this largescale investment.

The Clerk raised concerns about use of bus stop on Blackheath Lane for antisocial purposes and noted that residents had lodged concerns with the police. The Council noted that as it is no longer used for an active bus service then it's removal could be considered subject to public support.

Action: Clerk to include on a future Council Meeting Agenda to confirm next steps.

The Clerk noted that Waverley Borough Council had enquired as to the availability of the Shamley Green Community Room as a polling office, whilst the Arbuthnot Hall was being redeveloped. The Council confirmed that the space available at Christ Church and the associated parking was better suited to these purposes.

Action: Clerk to confirm the Council's position.

26/27 098 Dates of future meetings:

Council Meeting:	**17 September 2026**
Planning Committee:	**6 and 27 August 17 September 2026**

These were confirmed.