

Meeting:	CLAPHAM PARISH COUNCIL 20 th January 2026 at 7.10 pm
Council Members in attendance:	Cllr. Phillipa Simms, Chair (PS) Cllr. John Keech (JK) Cllr. Eric Cooper (EC) Cllr. Ian Gaskin (IG) Cllr. Allan Prudham (AP) Cllr. James Petrides (JP) Cllr. Jacky Fraser (JF) Cllr John Reid (JR) Cllr. Sarah Walker, Vice Chair (SW) Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS) Cllr. Tamsin Bromley-Rahike (TBR) Cllr. Adrian Langley (AL) – left 7.20pm
Apologies received:	Cllr. Ali Dove (AD) Cllr. Charlie Tompkins (CT) Cllr. Michael Walmsley (MW)
Non-attendance:	
Borough Council Member:	Borough Cllr. Jane Walker (JW) – left meeting at 19.55hrs Borough Cllr. Jon Abbott (JA) (Both late arrivals due to Borough meetings)
Clerk to the Council:	Rosemary Plum (RP)
Public Attendance	

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr. Eric Cooper – Matters relating to allotments
- Cllr. Philippa Simms – Matters relating to Village Hall

3. Open Forum

Nothing to report.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Sarah Walker

SECONDED: Cllr. Ian Gaskin

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes (for information only)

Nothing to report.

6. Clerk's Report (for information only)

- I. IG managing the defib at allotments entrance. Waiting for Borough to clear drains and the accumulated water should recede, after which IG will register the system and it will be functional. RP comms and map
- II. Kings ditch – JDT cleared the banks of weeds and regrowth however the ditch was blocked in several places by build up of debris, twigs, branches and a mattress possibly from the flats. DB has cleared but the culvert at the south end of the allotments leading under the car parking area is blocked and water was too deep last week to clear it. Will be done as soon as safe to do so.
- III. Borough has blasted through the waterway that runs under the High Street into the ditch running between residents' properties on the High Street. The residents arranged for the ditch to be cleared of all the debris that came through and the banks are now well maintained.
- IV. Milton Road Burial ground ditch unearthing completed – two new culverts have been revealed that drain water into what appears to be an underground holding tank.
- V. Culvert should have been disclosed on the plans when we took over the lease. RP liaise with IG Chair of Envco to investigate further.
- VI. Cody Road garages – specialist repair on door required.
- VII. Solar lights on order for Cody Rd garage and parking near allotments. Still awaiting delivery.
- VIII. Updating website to include new pages on NDP as well as EWR updated information. Going forward looking to push the website more through our Facebook pages and regularly update latest news.
- IX. Private business advertising board in Green Lane has been removed.

7. Police Matters

a) Crime Figures

- I. Incident of modern slavery noted.
- II. Lot of crime concentrated in the Twinwood Road/Saddle Close area.

8. Borough Council Report

- I. New food recycling bins coming out over next 2 months, scheme starting first week in March. Government is paying for the bins and initial collection. You can put bags in the little kitchen bin. Leaflet inside with

instructions and FAQs. Outside bin is lockable to prevent contents spilling if animals knock it over.

- II. Paula Radcliffe Way roadworks – first week of Jan was chaos but we did get it changed and got work finished the first weekend – now a lot better.
- III. Railway Bridge Lovell Rd - pump and outlet moved and now seems to be working after heavy downpours. Borough will continue to monitor it. Officer has a plan B if it doesn't work. Still pursuing Network Rail regarding costs incurred.
- IV. New free school north of the Borough in Beverly Crescent – one of only a few in the country being taken forward. Good to relieve pressure on the amount of housing development in the area.
- V. St Josephs School premises being purchased by the Borough as a school for social, emotional and mental health.
- VI. Family hubs doing outreach session at Oakley Village Hall once a month for parents with health visitors.
- VII. Borough improvement plan put forward for exceptional financial support from Govt for up to £59m.
- VIII. Fate of Oasis Pool will be known by end of the month.
- IX. Red rating for roads and potholes is wrong.
- X. MW asked if any possibility the raised platform under Lovell Rd bridge can be put back – JW advised it's an aspiration but Borough doesn't have money at the moment. Would be good to have it back.
- XI. NS asked for information on rumoured mass redundancies in Borough Hall. JA aware there's a proposal as part of the improvement plan. Aim to try and protect frontline services. Voluntary redundancy open and in consultation with unions. Asked for 10% reduction in staffing – most from vacant posts. Consultants currently looking at system change rather than cutting back in the first instance.

9. Environment Committee

- a) Update
No meeting this month.

10. East West Rail

- a) Update
 - I. Meeting 27th January Clapham Village Hall following last meeting with EWR when we requested further discussions. Invite gone out to councils along our section. If there are any specific matters to raise, let EC/SW know to put on the agenda.
 - II. LRG have 3 or 4 meetings planned covering Bedford and St Johns stations. First hour for cllrs and then open to general public.
 - III. JW said residents want to know which cllrs to lobby with their views.
 - IV. IG read report Development Consent Order (DCO) will take 18mths from when it's submitted – pressure from big companies to speed up process but its set in statute. Can't do anything to speed it up?
 - V. Don't anticipate seeing trains running until 2030's.

- VI. CT met with EWR today – there are no plans for a tunnel, need soil to go elsewhere, it's going to take 10 years to build. We need to be prepared that Green Lane can never be used and we have to prevent these lorries going through the village to Bedford.
- VII. Would be good to voice some of CT independent concerns about soil stock piling at the meeting on 27th Jan.
- VIII. PS /EC talking with Clapham Park Management Cttee rep to get their concerns.

11. Planning Committee

a) Update validations & decisions

- I. Report circulated prior to meeting.
- II. Bromham had allocation of 500 houses in NDP and now have 800 dwellings approved + 179 speculative refused at cttee last night. Members on cttee really emphasised importance of NDP. Borough also refused another plan on Oakley Rd, Bromham.
- III. Issue about speculative development – no 5yr land supply with 1.5yrs deficit. Hope that with all speculative development now going ahead, the situation can no longer be as bad. JA advised until we get Bedford local plan, we cannot calculate how many more speculative decisions will go through.
- IV. Proposed building rear of 37 Mountpleasant Road deferred for site visit on 2 February. EC welcome to be there to answer questions. JA will provide details to EC.
- V. 256, High Street gone to appeal for extension to property.
- VI. 2, The Close going to appeal.
- VII. Towers Health Club – external illuminated external sign approved. CPC wasn't consulted. Feedback to RP if lighting dazzles drivers.
- VIII. Greenacres School – various conditions to be discharged. CPC not consulted. Approved despite no response from several utilities companies. If we see flooding and water issues getting worse, we must pick that up.

a) NDP update

- I. Progress been made since last meeting, SW been preparing correct approach for the revision.
- II. Worked with consultant who's confirmed the draft strategy and narrative is OK.
- III. 6 week consultation with simple questionnaire will be launched with Spring edition of Village News.

12. Communication

a) Updates

Nothing to report.

b) 4YP Summer Provision

- I. Keen to continue working with Clapham PC and still motivated to get higher numbers.
- II. The facilities provided by Clapham PC offer young people an amazing opportunity and 4YP want to be part of supporting the community.
- III. 4YP service provider costs have increased, but they have reduced cost to CPC by £500 from the quote.

PROPOSAL: To commission a 4-week summer holiday provision Youth Club provision at a cost of £2,386.80 (including 15% discount).

PROPOSED: Cllr. Phillipa Simms

SECONDED: Cllr. Sarah Walker

13. Allotment Committee

a) Report from Allotment Committee meeting

- I. Report circulated prior to meeting.
- II. Revised Allotment H&S policy put into use immediately.
- III. Young volunteer doing DoE as accompanied minor and going very well. Will also be volunteering with RG.
- IV. Tree audit – determine which trees are plot holders/allotments responsibility and which are CPC maintenance.
- V. Tree review part of the ongoing inspections for plot holders.
- VI. Association prepared budget for presentation to meeting which will be aligned to the final precept.
- VII. Need to put signs in place to prevent accidents with vehicles.

b) Maintenance of road through allotments

- I. Major road in appalling condition after many years of no repair and now very dangerous.
- II. Doesn't just serve allotments but all residents and children. Estimated professional repair £3k approx. Needs to be done asap.
- III. Complaint from someone who tripped over on the north part.

PROPOSAL: Wait until suitable weather window to contract professional company to resurface road. In meantime use MOT to fill potholes.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Sarah Walker

SECONDED: Cllr. Allan Prudham

14. Burial Ground

a) Update

- I. Investigate installation of dog bin or multi use bins by the graveyard entrance on Milton road. RP
- II. Monitor condition of vehicle access up to turning circle in Burial Ground.

15. Highways & Footpaths

a) Update

- I. Request renewal of white lines down Milton Road and repair of potholes from Texaco garage upwards.
- II. Request gully clearance outside Riverside Gardens.
- III. When is flooding on corner of Highbury Grove and High Street going to be addressed? RP to renew request to Borough.
- IV. RP to renew request to remove vehicles parked on the corner in The Close.

16. Village Hall

a) Update

- I. Continues to do well with several new classes.
- II. Prices increased from 1st January 2026.

17. Finance

a) Ratify Precept 2026-27

PS gave thanks for lively discussion of budget on 13th January 2026. Annual Precept increase held at 10%

PROPOSED: Cllr. Sarah Walker

SECONDED: Cllr. Eric Cooper

VOTES: All in favour except Cllrs. Sparrow and Reid who abstained from voting as they would have voted against parts of precept had they been in attendance at the meeting on 13th January.

b) Payment of Accounts

Accounts to be ratified were circulated to members prior to the meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Tamsin Bromley-Rahike

SECONDED: Cllr. Ian Gaskin

18. Correspondence

1. See above – burial grounds
2. Resident – request for 4 or 5 trees be planted outside my house RP
3. Resident - problem for anyone with a mobility scooter or pushchair to get along Clapham High Street because of parking on pavements and across the lower parts of kerbs, especially by the car sales place and the shops. RP to investigate the placement of bollards. RP

19. Date of Next Meeting

- Tuesday 17th February 2026 in the Methodist Church Hall, Clapham

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 21.16 hrs.

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	17 th February 2026

Chair

