

Meeting: CLAPHAM PARISH COUNCIL
17th March 2026 at 7pm

Council Cllr. John Keech (JK)
Members in Cllr. Ian Gaskin (IG)
attendance: Cllr. Jackie Fraser (JF)
Cllr. Michael Walmsley (MW)
Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS)
Cllr. Adrian Langley (AL)

Apologies Cllr John Reid (JR)
received: Cllr. Allan Prudham (AP)

Non- Cllr. Charlie Tompkins (CT)
attendance:

Clerk to the Rosemary Plum (RP)
Council:

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from:

- Cllr. John Reid

2. Declarations of Interest

Nothing to report.

3. Open Forum

- I. JK expressed concerns about behaviour of developers at property next to Horde & Groom public house. A number of perceived issues include use of clear glass instead of obscure and multiple rooms on first floor. RP to advise Borough building inspectors. RP
- II. MW/JK have positioned plastic trough near Clapham sign at entrance to village from Bedford. JK has asked Men in Sheds to make a wooden trough at JK expense.
- III. IG called for an update on litter picking which is under review with Scouts and Duke of Edinburgh students.

4. Ratify Minutes:

The minutes of the previous meeting held 14th April 2026 were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and signed by the Vice Chair.

PROPOSED: Cllr. John Keech

SECONDED: Cllr. Jackie Fraser

5. **Matters Arising** *(for information only)*

Nothing to report.

6. **Clerk's Report**

- I. Updates from Borough re parking issues across the village - later on agenda.
- II. Update from Stephen Liley re old churchyard – later on agenda.
- III. RP has reviewed and updated. Regulations for burial ground and churchyard will be circulated for information of Councillors prior to Parish Council meeting in May. NS called for a copy of the finished document to be provided to all local churches to help support families. RP
- IV. Flood group new members – later on agenda.
- V. Received from the Borough this afternoon: Emergency temporary road closure Green Lane is anticipated to be in operation from 12th May 2026 to 18th May 2026- 24 hours onwards until the works are complete. RP

7. **Riverside Gardens**

a) Update

- I. Volunteers breakfast arranged for 15 June. One of the team is unavailable on this date so a breakfast voucher for her and her partner will be arranged. JK
- II. Gardens looking beautiful and volunteers continue to do a wonderful job.
- III. Litter collection – RP updated all on the proposed new bins.
- IV. MW/IG will schedule repainting benches. IG/MW
- V. Reminder about fishing platforms. RP to speak to Ward Councillors for advice. RP

8. **Flood Group**

a) Clapham Flood Plan – Update

- I. RP outlined draft letter and plan to call for volunteers. RP

b) REPF grant – Update

- I. RP confirmed grant application for £900 for flood equipment has now been submitted to the Borough Council. RP
- II. IG called for annual audit of flood group equipment.
- III. RP to circulate details emergency flood equipment location to all Envco members. RP

9. **Highways & Footpaths**

a) Update

- I. Thanks given to RP for sending out powerful letter re Green Lane. NS concerned there has been no reply regarding speeding and traffic in Green Lane.
- II. Serious concerns expressed about condition of road surface and structure. Councillors don't believe the road is up to standard for

the current weight of traffic it bears including regular transit of enormous HGV's.

- III. Green Lane was built in 1920's and not for 40+ ton vehicles. The Borough needs to look at this situation particularly in light of the threat of EWR using the road. Risk of weight and volume of EWR traffic collapsing the road.
- IV. NS called for an update on whether realignment of High Street for the 500 house Milton Road development has been approved.
- V. RP updated members on the information received from Borough Highways regarding the issues of parking tickets in the village.
- VI. Borough Head of Highways will be attending the May Parish Council meeting to discuss the situation further and advise on the latest intended action by the Borough.
- VII. Grass crete is an option for The Close but it does not mean this becomes a designated parking area. If traffic wardens are in the area or called out, it will still be considered parking on the grass verge if there are double yellow lines on the road at that point and a parking ticket will be issued. Adding grass crete to tidy up the verge does not create parking spaces where there are already double yellow lines. RP will receive costs in due course. In the meantime, the hole in the verge along The Close has been filled in.
- VIII. JF raised concerns about motorbikes circling the village and speeding along the old A6. She wants to know what is going to be done to control traffic behaviour. RP to ask Borough about SIDs.
- IX. Concerns raised about electric bikes travelling on the footpath in Green Lane at 30mph without making any noise.
- X. IG reminded each councillor they have an area to monitor, however very few councillors contact the clerk with information.

10. Burial Ground & Church Yard

a) Old Churchyard – update

- I. In response to concerns raised to Rev Stephen Stephen Liley about the condition of the old churchyard, Rev Liley advised as follows:
"Thank you for bringing to our attention the concern of some of the residents about the upkeep of the Church Graveyard. Yes, you're right that as a 'closed churchyard' it is under the care of the local Borough Council. Having said that there are a lot of weeds growing up in certain graves, which a small dedicated team do tackle periodically along with the upkeep of the Fellowship Centre and church driveway. At the moment, there's rather a lot to do, as you can imagine, with everything growing so quickly. If there's folk interested in helping to care for this, we'd be very interested to hear from them!
Added to which, once the grass growing season begins, the Borough Council often don't keep up with the pace of the growth that takes place. It's an annual issue, but one we've grown understand and*

accept. It can mean that that side of things occasionally looks a bit uncared for.

There is also our natural wildflower section on the northeast side of the church, which is clearly marked out, so won't be subject to grass cutting at the time being.

It would help to know (the photos perhaps) what has caused those residents concern. Would you be willing to forward them to us, please?

Headstones - we regularly check the safety of headstones, which is the best way to assess if they are in danger of toppling. This is a statutory requirement on churches.

The actually aesthetic condition of headstones, and the graves themselves, is the responsibility of families. (There are legal and insurance reasons for this.) For although families don't own the plot, they will have been made aware that the upkeep of the graves is their responsibility. Sadly, when relatives are no longer around to do that, the condition of the graves themselves inevitably declines. For many this is part of what a graveyard is, reflecting the nature of life and death. For others, it can be less palatable.

Gates - we routinely lock the gates each evening, and have done so for 20+ years. We are, however, about to shift to our summer hours, for which new notices will be displayed for folks. (We have to lock them, at a time manageable to our team, so as to try and prevent lead theft from the roof over night.) The new hours will be c7.30pm each evening. Currently it is c5.30pm.

It may help to know that the gates were locked during one day last week, as we were expecting a contractor to come and install a new water stopcock. Unfortunately they didn't turn up, so this may yet have to happen again soon. (We did communicate this through the school, I believe, to try and reduce difficulties at school pick up time.)"

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| II. | Entrance to Milton Road Burial Ground, hedges and verges, looking very scruffy. RP to speak to Borough. | RP |
| III. | Burial ground entrance stone should be looked at for wear and tear | RP |
| IV. | Need to trim around the trees outside the shopping parade. Saplings coming through RP to speak to Borough. | RP |
| V. | NS called for discussed at Parish Council meeting about the AWA plot next to Tesco's. | RP |
| VI. | MW advised the committee of plans being prepared for a new parish hall at the fellowship centre. | |

11. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 9th June 2026 in the Committee Room, Clapham Village Hall

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 21.00hrs.

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	Chair
Dated	19 th May 2026