

Meeting: CLAPHAM PARISH COUNCIL
16th June 2026 at 7.20pm

Council Members in attendance:

Cllr. Phillipa Simms, Chair (PS)
Cllr. Sarah Walker, Vice Chair (SW)
Cllr. Jacky Fraser (JF)
Cllr. Tamsin Bromley-Rahike (TBR)
Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS)
Cllr. Adrian Langley (AL)
Cllr. Eric Cooper (EC)
Cllr. Chris Hardwick (CH)
Cllr John Reid (JR)
Cllr. John Keech (JK)
Cllr. Ian Gaskin (IG)
Cllr. James Petrides (JP) – late arrival
Cllr. Charlie Tompkins (CT) – late arrival

Apologies received:

Cllr. Allan Prudham (AP)
Cllr. Michael Walmsley (MW)

Non-attendance:

Borough Council Member:

Borough Cllr. Jane Walker (JW)
Borough Cllr. Jon Abbott (JA) – needs to leave at 8pm

Clerk to the Council:

Rosemary Plum (RP)

Public Attendance

3 members of public

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr. Allan Prudham (AP)
- Cllr. Michael Walmsley (MW)

2. Declarations of Interest

- EC - allotment holder
- CH - allotment holder
- JP – Village Hall Committee member
- PS – Village Hall Committee Chair

3. Open Forum

- I. Two long-term residents from The Warren concerned about difficulty with parking opposite the car park behind the Chinese restaurant on the High Street which has now been sold and there is very little opportunity for residents to park elsewhere in the village. Residents asked for this to be looked at and addressed somehow. PS ask for

clarification on what the residents hoped could be achieved e.g. change of timings? Permit parking? The Parish Council is aware of the parking pressures throughout the parish for many different reasons. The Borough Council has advised that when Milton Rd work starts, double yellow lines will be reviewed as they were put in place when High Street was a trunk road. RP to request from Borough Traffic Management an assessment of the parking regulations on the High Street.

RP

- II. CT renewed his call for developers to donate land to the parish to assist with parking. He further reminded all of his suggestion for a land swap between Henmans/Wests with Milton Road development. PS advised that discussions provided inconclusive as the Borough deemed the suggestion a 'non-starter'.
- III. Another option could be increased parking at the shopping parade. PS advised this is already under consideration as part of the Milton Road development when it happens.
- IV. CT called for the Parish Council to speak to Charles Wells Brewery about using the car park behind the former Star public house.
- V. RP to speak with Borough Highways Manager to include in his village traffic re-evaluation and add any updates to the July Agenda if available.
- VI. Direct conversations have taken place with Motorhouse. There may be the opportunity for Motorhouse to come to a private commercial arrangement with the owners of a piece of land on Bedford Road, near Towers, just outside the parish boundary. PS asked members if they would support negotiation with Motorhouse that they use this land for storage on condition they do not park any cars on the High Street or in the Village Hall car park. This would also allow Motorhouse to receive all vehicle deliveries outside of the village.
- VII. EC said it's premature to take a view because the Parish Council is doing its best to keep open space between Clapham and Bedford and this would undermine our argument by having a storage area on open land. When EWR arrives, this could lead to further development because a precedent will have been created.
- VIII. It was noted no decision can be made under open forum and the matter will be added to an Agenda with full report for a future meeting.

RP

PS

RP

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. Adrian Langley

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

- I. JK and NS were appointed as judges at last weeks' Environment Committee for the Best Kept Allotments on 15th August

6. Clerk's Report (for information only)

- Reece Forder, new Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) for Bedfordshire Police, working within the North Rural area. I have moved over from the Halsey Road Station in Kempston. I am committed to supporting the community, building positive relationships, and ensuring that residents feel safe and supported. Should you ever require assistance, have any concerns, or simply wish to get in touch for any reason, please do not hesitate to contact me via email. I will respond as soon as possible. I look forward to working closely with the community and being a visible, approachable point of contact.
- Apologies for these justified concerns. Ian is on his own now, as his partner in crime, Phil, Retired a few months ago. No excuses though, I will go over your points with Ian tomorrow. We will make sure all the raised concerns are covered and everywhere is looking good. It's going to be a tricky summer I think.. Lots of rain and sunshine = grass, shrubs and weeds growing like mad with only one experienced person to do the work.
- Meeting with Borough about S106. He will help us push for funding for a new fishing platform but it won't be easy as the Borough believes fishing is a recreational hobby and not a sport. Of course, I argued against this and pointed out it's a sport for the many people with limited mobility etc.
- We were joined remotely by one of the planning officers who aimed to explain the purpose of S106 monies – this led to me asking for clear and meaningful engagement with us as a Parish before they go ahead setting expectations for our S106 monies as we know what we need and how best to spend it in the Borough.
- Envco agreed to a request to position memorial bench in Riverside Gardens at no expense to the Parish. Committee agreed to this going ahead on condition they are involved in the decision on where it will be placed within the Gardens.
- Planning inspection has been requested for 13A High Street.
- Kings Ditch – weeds are very high. RP given go-ahead to Parish Maintenance Officer to spray weeds overgrown in Kings Ditch. This is more cost effective than contracting third party company to clear the ditch.

7. Police Matters

a) Crime Figures

Report circulated prior to the meeting.

- I. NS would like follow up on whether perpetrators have been caught. RP to renew request. RP

8. Borough Council Report

- EWR - Impact on Clapham and tunnel included in response to EWR reiterating the call to mitigate these issues.

- The Borough is in the middle of the Ox-Cam growth corridor with the Minister wanting to encourage building everywhere.
- New bridge being position between Queens Park and Kempston.
- Rural Affairs cttee to be reconvened soon.
- Changes to Cabinet with 8 instead of 10 members. Adults and Health portfolios have been combined.
- Borough Environment Committee met with bus companies on 16 July regarding services.
- Free tennis sessions in Park this summer.
- Refuse collection crews going out earlier in the morning during hot weather.
- Local Plan has been restarted with a call for sites open until Sept/Oct 2026. The Borough is waiting to see what land-owners put forward and this will then be open for consultation. Not a complete rewrite but needs to include Universal Studios and EWR. Hope to have it in place by 2029.
- River Festival this year – weekend of 18-19 July.
- Borough Council website now has pages for Universal Studios.

9. Environment Committee

a) Report from meeting 9th June 2026

Report circulated prior to the meeting.

- I. Thanks to MW for repainting all the benches in RG. Unable to remove the graffiti from the table – will try another product.
- II. JK and NS hosted successful RG volunteers breakfast with positive feedback.
- III. Talking to scouts and FC about village clean up.
- IV. Flood Group – RP has put together information for the Village News, Social Media and website.
- V. CH spoke to neighbour about joining. Has 4x4 and he will follow up.

b) Emergency Flood Group & Plan – Update

See above 8a).

c) Fishing Platform – Update

See clerks report.

10. East West Rail

a) Update

- I. Thanks given to EC for a ‘fantastic job’ of drafting our extensive consultation response.
- II. EWR will produce a report based on the consultation in due course. No date has been provided.

- III. Parish needs to think hard about whether we want to pursue fighting for a tunnel. Tech note says it's feasible but EWR say they're not interested in providing it.

JA gave apologies and left meeting at this point.

11. Planning Committee

a) Update - validations & decisions

- I. Report circulated prior to meeting.
- II. Additional application 13A High Street to build further.

b) NDP update

- I. SW circulated consultation statement and updated draft NDP which has now been reviewed.
- II. Our planning consultant now having to do more work this week to provide SEA report, after which we will be re-submitting to the Borough planning authority.
- III. In accordance with legislation we have to start the review process again next year with a question mark over the merit of the NDP generally.

12. Communication

a) Updates

- I. Clapham Show 22nd August.
- II. Special raffle for a lego crane – call for volunteers to sell tickets.

13. Allotment Committee

a) Report from meeting 1st June 2026

Minutes circulated prior to meeting.

RP

- I. 8 residents have put gates from their garden into the allotments. 6 of the 8 have plots and 2 have put bridges across Kings Ditch. Major issues for insurance and security. RP to write suitable letter outlining concerns.
- II. Few issues with theft on the allotments – people could be getting through from gates and caretaker found someone sitting in the allotments who was not a plot holder.
- III. CT said we cannot prevent residents putting a gate in their boundary if they legally own the boundary. They have a right to access our land for maintenance.
- IV. CPC has right to remove bridge as an obstruction to the watercourse.
- V. Haven't had many problems over the years apart from the recent person. Public right of way is only through the centre path of the allotments site. No public right of way through the rear paths.
- VI. Need to clear past trees in the very top corner and ensure they get fair access.

14. Burial Ground

a) Update

- I. Severe subsidence at Milton Road on three graves.
- II. Issues with non-compliance are getting worse.
- III. Updated the burial brochure to include no solar or battery lighting to be used on plots.
- IV. Appeal from a resident who can't understand the meaning of 'the cemetery is full'.

15. Highways & Footpaths

a) Update

- I. Pedestrian crossing from The Glebe to other side of Milton Road needs strimming back to clear vision lines.
- II. Smashed vehicle on Fetlock Close – belongs to no.18 Fetlock Close. Send images to parking enforcement. **RP**
- III. Bench outside 220 High Street is in very poor state of repair. **RP**
- IV. Borough Environmental Development and Viability Department has asked the parish council to consider taking on the maintenance for Borough owned areas within the parish. **RP**
Awaiting proposal from Borough.

16. Village Hall

a) Update

- I. Fundraising and quizzes going well.
- II. More new classes started.
- III. Organisations who use the hall are also investing in equipment.
- IV. New BRCC village agent coming to use the facility.
- V. Fees being increased by 10% from January with notifications going out end of June. **RP**
- VI. Next years precept budget - think about costs for resurfacing VH car park. **RP**

17. Finance

a) Payment of Accounts

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

PROPOSED: Cllr. John Keech

SECONDED: Cllr. James Petrides

18. Correspondence

- a) Formal complaint has been made to Parish Council by a non-resident who received a Penalty Charge Notice for parking in the Village Hall car park. **SW**
 - I. Working Group of EC/SW/JP/CH will investigate the formal complaint with a suggested 14 day turn around. SW will contact to confirm investigation.

19. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 21st July 2026 in the Methodist Church Hall

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 9.20pm

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	<i>CH and JW apologies for next meeting</i> <i>Chair</i>
Dated	21 st July 2026