



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Minutes

Minutes of the Estate Management Committee held on

Thursday 16 April 2026 at 19:30 at

Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road, Mortimer, RG7 3TB

These minutes are subject to approval.

Present

Members

Cllrs D Backhouse, G Bridgman, S Hill (Chairman), D Kilshaw, and M Lock.

Other Councillors

Cllr D Morsley.

Officers of the Council

Miss D Davis.

Public/Press

There were no members of the public and the press in attendance.

Commencement

The meeting commenced at 19:30

Part I

25/062 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs H Geary and R Saunders.

25/063 To receive any declarations of interest

To receive from Members at this point or at any point during the meeting, in respect of any items included on the agenda, disclosure of any interests, and/or gifts and hospitality, in line with the Parish Council's Code of Conduct.

None.

25/064 Public Questions

None were received.

25/065 Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the Estate Management meeting held on Thursday 22 January 2026 were received and approved unanimously for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting following some minor suggested edits at the meeting.

25/066 Chairman's remarks

Cllr Hill:

- Reported that it had been a busy few months. The fence and memorial wall project is being managed by Cllr Kilshaw, and the fence has been completed to a good standard..
- In relation to the Fairground Trust, Cllr Bridgman queried whether a contribution would be received towards the fence. Cllrs Kilshaw and Lock declared an interest as members of the Trust. The Clerk advised that, although the Trust's minutes have not yet been approved, an informal indication has been received that a contribution will be made. Cllr Bridgman expressed thanks for the Trust's support and anticipated contribution.

25/067 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received. Updates were noted regarding the CCTV camera grant, with next steps identified as signage and obtaining the necessary permissions. It was agreed that an update would be included in the next newsletter.

Cllr Morsley expressed thanks to the Estates team for taking on responsibility for the Cycleway from the Community.

#Cllr Bridgman proposed that an item be added to a future agenda to receive a report from the Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway Steering Group. Seconded by Cllr Hill.

Resolved unanimously.

It was noted that discussions have taken place with Englefield and initial queries have now been resolved. Further discussions have also been held with Wokefield Common regarding a Section 30 agreement to register the relevant section of the cycleway as a public right of way rather than by lease.

25/068 Items to be taken into private session

To determine which items, if any, of the Agenda should be taken with the public excluded.

Cllr Hill proposed items 25/069.2 Tree Surveys, 25/069.3 Fees and Charges 2026/27, 25/069.4 Dog Waste Increase, 25/069.5 Quarterly Inspections be taken into private session.

Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

25/069 Items for consideration

1 Policies

To consider any Policies within the ambit of the Committee requiring consideration, amendment or proposal to full Council.

None.

2 Tree Surveys

To review the previous tree surveys and appoint the contractor for the 2026 tree survey.

Minuted at Part II.

3 Fees and Charges 2026/27

To consider the Community Committee's recommendation that charges for use of the Fairground be removed for small-scale regular community activities (eg children's sports or exercise classes), with charges retained for large-scale commercial events such as fairs and circuses.

Minuted at Part II.

4 Dog waste Increase

To review the letter regarding the increase in dog waste disposal costs and resolve the quotations for the dog waste disposal contract.

Minuted at Part II.

5 Quarterly Inspection

To resolve the quarterly playground inspection quotations.

Minuted at Part II.

6 EV Charger

To resolve whether to Support the installation, by West Berkshire Council and/or its delivery partner, of up to four 7kW electric vehicle (EV) charge points (providing up to eight charging bays) within the West End Road car park, at no capital cost to the Parish Council.

A detailed discussion took place. Concerns were raised regarding:

- Low usage of similar on-street charging points in nearby areas.
- The likelihood that most EV owners charge at home.
- The suitability of slow charging (7kW), particularly for short-stay visitors.
- The potential loss of up to eight parking spaces in an already well-used car park.
- Possible conflict arising from reserved EV bays.
- Infrastructure capacity and the need for changes to existing signage, including overnight parking restrictions.

It was suggested that rapid charging provision would be more appropriate than multiple slow-charge bays, and that there is already significant underused rapid charging capacity within a short distance of the village.

Cllr Hill proposed that West Berkshire Council be asked to reconsider the scheme, suggesting a reduced provision of two charging points (four bays) with fast/rapid charging only.

7 West End Road Car park

To review the recent correspondence regarding the faded white lines and space availability at the West End Road car park.

A discussion took place regarding potential solutions. It was agreed that, as an initial step, evidence should be gathered on car park usage over a one-month period to better understand demand and patterns of use.

Members considered the possibility of introducing time-limited parking, potentially enforced via camera monitoring and charging. The need for a publicity campaign to discourage long-term parking was also highlighted.

It was noted that this is likely to be a longer-term issue as the village continues to grow, and that consideration may need to be given to increasing capacity in the future.

In the short term, it was agreed to:

- Obtain quotations to repaint the white lines.
- Investigate introducing 30-minute parking in a limited number of bays.
- Include messaging in the parish newsletter.

8 Utility square

To discuss and agree a name for the Utility Square, for example Community Square or Fairground Square.

It was resolved unanimously to rename the Utility square the Community Square.

25/070 Action Tracker

To review the Action Tracker, receive an update outlining actions taken since the last meeting, and consider further actions.

The Action Tracker was reviewed and updated.

25/071 Finance

Regular or previously authorised payments made - to note Clerk To receive and note a summary (Schedules Cii): Report 25/071.

Nothing reported.

25/072 Items for information only

None.

25/073 Minor Matters

- Cllr Bridgman raised a matter under the Utility Square item, advising that licensing would be brought to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It was suggested that the Council could obtain a street trading licence for defined areas of land and subsequently permit vendors to trade as part of a public partnership arrangement. Clarification will be sought from West Berkshire Council regarding licensing requirements for school fayres and village events.
- Cllr Kilshaw requested that The Clerk arrange for the cemetery signage to be cleaned by the custodian.

25/074 Communications

It was agreed to communicate updates regarding the memorial wall once the policy has been updated in July.

Items to be included in communications were identified as the Cycleway and the West End Road car park.

25/075 Future Agenda Items.

- Review of cemetery fees.
- Cycleway update to be included on the July agenda..

Part II

25/076 Exclusion of Press and Public

To pass a resolution under s.1(2), Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Cllr Hill proposed to proceed into Part II,

Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

1 Tree Surveys

To review the previous tree surveys and appoint the contractor for the 2026 tree survey.

Cllr Bridgman proposed that Saplings be appointed to undertake the tree surveys, Cllr Kilshaw seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

It was noted that the trees immediately close to the Cycleway will need to be surveyed in 3 years.

2 Fees and Charges 2026/27

To consider the Community Committee's recommendation that charges for use of the Fairground be removed for small-scale regular community activities (eg children's sports or exercise classes), with charges retained for large-scale commercial events such as fairs and circuses.

The Committee considered the Community Committee's recommendation to remove charges for small-scale, regular community activities (e.g. children's sports and exercise classes), while retaining charges for large-scale commercial events such as fairs and circuses.

A detailed discussion took place regarding commercial and non-commercial use of the Fairground, including:

- Whether to charge non-commercial users for extended use of the grazing area, and whether the cost of administering small fees would outweigh the benefit.
- The potential for the grazing area to provide wider community benefit.
- Consideration of reduced rental rates for commercial operators occupying the site for longer periods.
- The possibility of hosting a market, which could involve multiple small commercial traders but provide a service to the village.

- Whether smaller commercial users should pay an annual fee with agreed usage times.

The meeting paper was reviewed:

- Commercial use of the full grazing area: It was agreed that full charges should apply.
- General charges: To remain unchanged.
- Cricket: It was agreed to defer this item pending resolution of the lease between SMPC, the Fairground Trust and the Fairground Hall. Background to the current fee (£11) was noted.
- Fitness sessions: It was agreed to retain the current approach, noting the difficulty in distinguishing between user types and the importance of supporting small local providers.

Cllr Hill proposed to continue with the 3% increase in fees and retain the existing charging structure for 2026/27, with a further review of charges for commercial events (e.g. fairs and markets) to be brought back in July. This was seconded by Cllr Backhouse.

Resolved with one vote against.

3 Dog waste Increase

To review the letter regarding the increase in dog waste disposal costs and resolve the quotations for the dog waste disposal contract.

The Quotations were reviewed, concerns were raised that Shield may face capacity issues in the future due to taking on a large number of contracts.

Cllr Hill proposed that the contract be awarded to Shield. Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved by majority vote with 2 in favour, 2 abstentions, and 1 against.

4 Quarterly Inspection

To resolve the quarterly playground inspection quotations.

The Committee considered quotations for the quarterly playground inspections.

Following discussion, Cllr Bridgman proposed that the three non-essential inspections be undertaken in-house, with Cllr Kilshaw arranging the purchase of the required standards for the office.

Resolved unanimously.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:20

Date of next meeting: **9 July 2026.**

Miss Danielle Davis

17/04/2026