

Minutes of West Dereham Parish Council

Annual Parish Assembly Meeting Minutes

Thursday 2nd April 2026 at 6:30 pm at
West Dereham Village Hall

Parish Councillors Present: Cllr Nick Drew, Cllr Ann King, Cllr Stuart Glover , Cllr Mark Norton and
Cllr Keith Gore – Locum Clerk/RFO – R Shaw,
4 members of the public were present.
Apologies for absence - NONE

Agenda

26. APA 01 Welcome from the Chair and to receive Apologies for Absence. **(LGA 1972 s 85(1))**

26. APA 02 To Receive report from the Chair of the Parish Council –

See report attached from the Chair.

26. APA 03 Report from the members of Groups within the village –

- A report was presented on behalf of the West Dereham Village Trust – Reg 1134420
- A report was presented by a member of the West Dereham branch of the Royal British Legion – 3689 –
 - A report was read out by the Chair from Lovell’s Dole – Reg 206864
 - A report was read out by the Chair from St. Andrews Church.

All reports attached for your information

26. APA 04 Open Forum for Public Participation: an opportunity to hear from members of the public.

MOP present had nothing to add to the meeting.

Meeting Closed: 18:46 (6.46pm)

Signed _____

Dated _____

Report to West Dereham Parish Council - St Andrew's Church April 2026

St Andrew's is part of the Wissey Valley Benefice, a group of eight churches: West Dereham, Boughton, Wretton with Stoke Ferry, Beachamwell, Wereham, Whittington and Methwold.

For several years we have not had a paid rector, and services across the benefice have been led by self-supporting lay and ordained ministers. At Easter, 2025 the rector of our neighbouring Grimshoe Benefice retired, and the Diocese of Ely took the decision to bring our two benefices together, forming a group of twelve churches.

We now share a paid administrator and are in the process of recruiting a rector to serve all twelve churches. This has been a particularly busy time, with fewer people available to take weddings, funerals and baptisms, alongside regular services. Across the benefices, each church has agreed to reduce services to two or three per month, with a joint Benefice Service on fifth Sundays.

On Palm Sunday, the service at Barton Bendish was attended by over 60 people, reflecting a strong sense of shared worship. At West Dereham, we currently hold two services each month. On the second Sunday there is either 'A Celtic Morning' or Holy Communion, and on the fourth Sunday we host an informal Family Breakfast Church, offering a continental breakfast, good coffee, a simple service, and crafts for children. This continues to grow in popularity, with over 30 people attending in March.

Work on the installation of the new organ continues each Friday morning, led by Chris Young and his team.

We are hopeful that this will be completed in the coming year. Our Book Borrowers scheme is now up and running, providing free children's books for the community to borrow. Financially, we are just about maintaining our position. Our annual parish share to the Diocese is £3,889, in addition to the ongoing costs of insurance, heating oil, water, and essential repairs. We are extremely grateful to local businesses who generously provide services free of charge or materials at cost; without their support, we would face significant challenges. We are also thankful to those who contribute through our JustGiving page.

A church has stood on this site for at least 1,400 years. It is a 'thin place' where heaven and earth meet, and where prayer and worship have continued through times of war, peace and change. Generations of local people have been baptised, married, and commended to God here.

The church remains open every day, offering a place of welcome, quiet, and reflection for all, those of faith and none, who seek the peace and stillness it offers.

Janet Tanton - Licensed Lay Minister

Signed _____

Dated _____

LOVELL'S DOLE & town close charity
Charity Commission Reg No. 206864
Report for Annual Parish Meeting April 2026

The Trustees of Lovell's Dole would like to thank the Parish Council for the opportunity to report about our Charity and also notify every one of its aims and guidelines.

In 1693, Gregory Lovell Esq., 'a native of this town' started a charity still known today as Lovell's Dole. Details of how he wanted the charity to be conducted can be seen on the panel behind the font in St Andrew's Church. It is essentially still the same although we have been governed by the Charity Commission's rulings for many years.

Thankfully since Gregory Lovell's days there have been enormous changes in living conditions, but the Trustees are still obliged to ensure that the small pot of money entrusted to them is used where it brings the most assistance.

Their remit of the Trustees, as defined in our Constitution, is '*to apply the income of the Charity as they think fit for the benefit of those residents of the Parish of West Dereham as they select*'.

The guidelines for receiving Lovell's Dole are as follows:

Recipients will be 75 years of age and over and have been residents of West Dereham for at least 10 years.

Consideration will be given to residents of West Dereham, for at least 10 years, with long-term chronic health conditions who are under the 75-year age limit.

Lovell's Dole is paid as an annual monetary Christmas gift.

The Trustees are also able to consider applications for assistance in times of serious and critical health situations with small financial grants.

Further to this, if you know of anyone who you think may be in need of immediate assistance, please contact the

Chairman as it is within their authority to help.

In addition, we have a sum of money that was set aside at the turn of the 18th century for starting out young people in apprenticeships. The Trustees feel this fund should specifically assist younger residents of West Dereham who are in financial need, in working towards their future career development. We can only offer small grants from this limited fund, but examples might include assistance which would resource and enhance employment opportunities (travel costs, help towards interview outfit, etc.) or related to further education studies (books, help towards course studies, etc.

If you think you might be eligible for Lovell's Dole, please contact us before 30th September 2026. If you have any enquiries about anything else mentioned above, please contact either me or our Clerk, Ghislaine Mason.

The Trustees will consider all enquiries.

Pam Bullas, Chair, Lovell's Dole
 The Hollies, Station Road, West Dereham, PE33 9RR
 01366 501287

Ghislaine Mason
ghislainemason@yahoo.co.uk

Signed _____

Dated _____



West Dereham Branch No. 3689
The Royal British Legion by
Nick Cann, Chairperson



Parish Meeting 2 April 2026 – West Dereham RBL Branch Report for 2025-26

I was responsible for establishing our West Dereham Legion Branch in 2014 at the request of several villagers and by 2019 our number had risen from 16 to 31. Our activities and momentum were adversely affected by Covid in 2020 and 2021. Currently our strength on paper stands at 24 although 7 of these are absentees, unlikely to attend any further meetings.

I handed over my duties as Secretary in 2024 and the Secretary for Legion year 2024-25 was Simon Comben. Simon lasted just the one year due to illness and Alexander Cann then volunteered to act as Secretary for year 2024-25 only while a replacement Secretary was sought. On 28 September at the last AGM it was confirmed that nobody was willing to assume the Branch's administrative duties and, without a Secretary, we couldn't continue effectively as a Branch. This situation was reported to Headquarters Norfolk County.

We have now become a 'County Supported Branch' which means that Norfolk County has assumed responsibility for us. This will continue for up to 3 years in which time we may yet find members willing to perform as Branch Officers in all key appointments. If not, then our Standard must be laid up and the Branch will cease to exist. The next step is for Lorraine Hunt, our Treasurer, to pass all funds in our Lloyds Bank account, £1,572.92, over to Norfolk County, who will then administer these on our behalf.

In September at the AGM I took over as Chairman of the Branch from Jack Walker in order to become one of the two Branch Points of Contact required while under external administration. Alexander Cann volunteered to become the second POC. We are required now to hold two meetings in the year and these will take place in June and September. Remembrance Sunday remains unaffected by the situation. Peter Starling is still our Branch President but is unable to attend any meetings, Tom Foy remains our Standard Bearer and Doug Lawson is our Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator. The 3 Poppy Appeal boxes in the village last November produced £37.19, less than previously - being £71.27.

Signed _____

Dated _____

WEST DEREHAM VILLAGE TRUST
Registered Charity No 1134420

Annual Report to West Dereham Annual Parish Meeting 2026

West Dereham Village Trust continues to fulfil it's legal obligations to the Charity Commission.

The Annual Return was filed in September 2025.

There is no requirement to make a return for the accounts because the Trust's funds fall below the specified level.

The Money Manager account stands at £908 and the Charitable Account stands at £1613.

There is an outstanding issue with the Village Hall with regard to the repayment of the Hall Renovation loan but the Trust is hopeful that this will be resolved amicably and before long.

The Trust is looking for Trustees and anyone who is interested should contact the Chairman.

Alexander Cann
Chairman



West Dereham Parish Council

WDPC REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2nd April 2026

2025/26 has again been a busy if not distracting year for the Parish Council. I would like to thank fellow Councillors and our Clerks (both fulltime & locum) for the time and effort put in over the past year and also extend this to the Parish, who have continued to show great communal spirit and engagement to deter planning proposals which threaten the environs of our village. So, in no particular order, here is a summary of the key points:

- Since our last annual report, the Parish Council has reduced to 5 members following the resignations of Councillor Caley & Challen due to family and work commitments. The Council thanks them for their contributions during their tenures and wish them well for the future. This means there are two vacancies available on the committee. These are advertised on Paris Council website and via the Pump.
- The Play Park continues to flourish and is widely used and through weekly inspections it is checked, maintained and remains in good order.
- The more detailed quarterly inspections are now being carried out being completed by two committee members undertaking a thorough examination based on the weekly inspection schedule.
- The Clerk will now be organising the second annual external and independent ROSPA inspection to be completed in July of this year.
- The litter bin installed for the playground has been a great success resulting in the playground being generally litter free.
- The Playground Committee raised funds towards the upkeep of the Playground hosting a Quiz evening which proved successful. Further fund-raising events are being planned.
- Thanks goes to Edward Glover who with guidance from his father Dale has almost completed the refurbishment of the Phone box from Station Road for his Silver DofE Award. Plans are now being arranged to construct a new base for the phone box and install the second defibrillator.

Signed _____

Dated _____

- The Parish Council has continued to support SOWDAG and the Community in opposing inappropriate planning applications and appeals. In particular two Appeal Hearings have been attended in respect of the Station Road Gypsy & Traveller Site application, a decision for which is expected from the Planning Inspectorate by 10th April 2026.
- The allotment plots now enjoy 80% + occupation, but of course additional tenants are welcome to fill all plots.
- PJ Homes & Gardens continue to undertake the work on the Grounds Maintenance around the village, with the cutting season just starting. Peter also refurbished the bus shelter at the Village Hall; this being partially funded by a grant obtained by the PC.
- Concrete bases for the benches at the play park are also scheduled to be installed in coming weeks.
- Having invited tenders for the PC Farm Tenancy, this was renewed in October 2025 to the previous tenant and will run for the next 3 years.
- In January 2026 parish councillors undertook a review of village assets which fall under the responsibility of the Parish Council. Photographic as well as written records continue to be scheduled.
- In early 2026 the Parish Council voted for their Website to be replaced with an updated version. This has been built and completed by Rob Shaw our Locum Clerk, who has done a sterling job in modernising the Website. This is now up and running and packed with information not just about the Parish Council but the village and beyond too.
- Considered plans in researching about implementing a Neighbourhood Plan have stalled as available funding has been withdrawn by Government. The Parish Council is investigating how this affects our status, particularly in light of the proposals of a Unitary Council and the suggestion that this system will expect additional responsibilities to be delegated to Parish Councils.
- Long awaited administrative and protocol systems for the PC Cemetery are well advanced and being progressed.

Signed _____

Dated _____