

UPTON SCUDAMORE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of Upton Scudamore Annual Parish Meeting of the Electorate Held at St Mary's Church on Tuesday 5th May 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Councillors

Lesley Welch (Chair), Chris Allinson, Steve Foot and Malcolm Pryor.

In attendance: Rebecca Hathaway-White (Parish Clerk), Cllr Parkes and eighteen members of the public.

- 1. Welcome and acceptance of apologies.** Jane Faulkner. Cllr Welch welcomed residents to the Parish meeting.
- 2. Approval of minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 6th May 2025.** The minutes were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.
- 3. Chair's Report.** Cllr Welch read the parish council's annual report.

Although we have not had to hold any extra meetings this year it has, as ever, been very busy with various planning and licensing applications and work on maintaining the village infrastructure. Our main focus this year has been on organising the new website and we have also been involved with the initiative on local resilience.

Planning

Various applications have been made regarding work at the Old Rectory. Following a complaint received by Wiltshire Council Planning Department regarding the appearance of the agricultural barn, enforcement officers visited the site and, as result, an application was made for a variation to the building. This was approved as, although changes had been made without authorisation, these did not impact its use as an agricultural barn.

This was followed by a further application for a Prior Approval Notice for a road to link the barn to the house which was refused. A formal application was then made for the link road and after visits from enforcement officers this was withdrawn. It was made clear to the applicant that the use of the barn for storage of biomass pellets for the house was incompatible with the strict condition placed on the original application that the barn was for agricultural use only.

Applications were received from Thoulstone Park for a natural burial area and also one for a linear roped area and fencing. There was an application from Temple Farm for a change back to residential use and one from Aspen for permission to erect a garden office. All of these were approved by Wiltshire Council.

We also had notice that an application had again been submitted for the housing on the land west of Westbury Road and the Parish Council lodged an objection to this.

Licensing

We received an application from Thoulstone Park for a licence to serve alcohol in the Pavilion Café and a further application for a licence for the Raquet Court. No objections were made.

We also received an email from Jess regarding the Born Adventurers Festival in July thanking the village for its support.

Resilience

The Warminster North and Rural Community Preparedness Pilot Programme is a new initiative in collaboration between Safehouse Pro Limited – a local company dedicated to household and community resilience – and the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Resilience Forum. The intention is to have Household Preparedness Guides tailored specifically to meet local needs.

There have been several meetings during the year and we hope that this will result in a leaflet being produced for Upton Scudamore.

As part of this initiative Melanie from SSEN attended the February Parish Council Meeting. She provided leaflets on the support available during power cuts which were distributed in the village. If you did not receive one there are some available this evening. She also indicated funding might be available for providing items to be used during power cuts and the Parish Clerk is to investigate if funding would be available for Power Banks for the village. These would have to be kept centrally but would provide power for providing hot drinks etc during any prolonged power cut.

Malcolm Pryor, the Vice Chair, Asset Manager and our representative on the Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Group has had another busy year. You will have noticed the signs indicating Upton Scudamore is not suitable for heavy goods vehicles which will, hopefully, discourage large lorries from trying to drive through. We did, however, have some damage caused by a lorry attempting to turn round at Biss Close resulting in the sign being bent over. We have been assured this is an insurance matter and hope it will be replaced though there is no time frame for this.

We have asked the LHFIG to consider Child Safety signs given the speed of some vehicles driving through the village and the number of bends where visibility is poor. Malcolm has also requested a Metro count to assess the number and speeds of vehicles and, although there is a waiting list, we have now been added to it. As a number of residents have raised concerns regarding the problem of parking on the corner opposite the Angel, Sarah Dearden (Senior Traffic Engineer) visited the village to assess the situation. However, she reported she could not see a viable solution within the remit of the LHFIG.

We are still awaiting the replacement of missing signposts and the Parish Clerk continues to follow this up. We were asked this year if we would like any of our gritting bins re-located and agreed to move the small gritting bin from Halfway Corner to the Village Green.

The bi-annual tree survey was carried out and the required work carried out.

Defibrillator

As ever we are grateful to Tony Coates for checking the defibrillator on a daily basis. Chris Allinson makes a monthly report to the South West Ambulance Trust who are responsible for the maintenance of the equipment. It is encouraging that the Defibrillator indicated it needed attention while still available for use and Chris was able to alert the ambulance service to attend to the problem. Thank you Chris for arranging the Defibrillator Awareness training at the end of April. Thanks must go to Sharon who delivered the session. It was outstanding – very clear and focussed. I think I have attended every session since the defibrillator was installed yet again I learned something new at this training.

Parish Steward

Steve Foot is our Parish Steward Liaison and usually goes round the village before a visit is due checking what needs to be done. We are extremely lucky with our Steward who has sourced equipment for clearing the moss on the pavement at Biss Close and clearing the pavement outside the church in addition to grass cutting, clearing foliage obscuring signs and carrying out general maintenance work throughout the village.

The blocked gully outside Keyford was reported and has been cleared. If you have any issues with the gullies near you they can be reported via MyWilts, or to Steve, for attention.

We are, as always, very grateful to Bill Parks for all his support for the village. Special thanks to him for his help in organising the clearing of Footpath USCU10. Clearing footpaths is generally carried out locally by Nigel Linge though he has no responsibility for the village. He did, however, manage to find a volunteer to help him clear this footpath.

The issue of a cycle path was also raised by a local resident. Sadly funding for these is very limited and tends to be allocated where it can be of most use. This basically means that it is most likely to be used where most people will benefit i.e. in more densely populated areas.

Police

Jane Faulkner is our Police Liaison. This year we had a visit from the Mobile Police Station on 10 June. She is also working with the Bobby Van team to arrange a visit. These talks have been very valuable in the past and it is always good to be kept up-to-date on the latest issues.

This summer was particularly dry and we did have an issue with a bonfire being left alight and unattended for days at a time. Bonfires are a particular nuisance, especially when the weather is fine and we want to use our gardens. This one was particularly problematic given the increased fire risk last summer. The Parish Council discussed this and agreed that problem fires would be logged and reported on the official form from Wiltshire Council.

Parish Council Website

As a Parish Council we need to have a dedicated website and we have been looking at possible providers over the past year. I am very grateful to Malcolm and Steve for taking the lead on this and as a Council we decided to appoint MyParish to set up our site. As part of this, all councillors have been allocated new email addresses which will be @gov.uk. This will allow us to make use of the Government Notify service. This means setting up a list of residents who wish to be updated of Parish Council information. The confidentiality of the emails provided will be kept by Government Notify. Agendas, events organised by the Parish Council such as the Defibrillator training, Minutes etc can then be quickly circulated to those on the list. We will also be able to use this to circulate information such as road closures quickly and easily to keep residents up-to-date with anything which might impact their daily life. Although we can't use this until our new website is up and running, Rebecca has trialled the Notify scheme with one of her other councils and it seems to be very effective and should address the concerns about how we can best keep residents informed. We are very grateful to Rebecca for her work in investigating approved providers and the details of their services and costs.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the Councillors for their hard work and commitment throughout the year. They are an amazing team and we are very lucky to have them. I

would also like to say thank you to Rebecca, our Parish Clerk. She has had a very challenging year not just getting to grips with a new Council but organising and implementing our new website while carrying out all the usual financial and administrative requirements of the Parish Council. Last, but by no means least our thanks to Bill Parks. He is always available for advice and his commitment to this village is legendary.

4. Presentations by local organisations. (*Please note that the reports in italics are written reports provided by the organisations*)

Upton Scudamore Community Association

Presentation to the Upton Scudamore Parish Council Meeting on 5 May 2026

1. Introduction

In our presentation to the Council 2 years ago we described our history, aims and functions in some detail. It is not proposed to repeat all that here, although it is important background if one wishes to gain an understanding of why USCA exists and where we stand in relation to the Parish Council, and in particular to the Parochial Church Council (the PCC). If anyone does want this more detailed explanation please let me know and I can e mail it to you.

I will simply repeat that our founding purpose was and remains to benefit the residents of the village, but with the specific aim of raising money to establish, or secure the establishment of, a village community centre. For various reasons, we concluded long ago that the church is the only suitable location for this, and we have now reached agreement with the PCC that USCA will not be charged for use of the church for community events but it will pay for any electricity used.

We are looking forward to the upcoming APCM for St Mary's church On 24 May when we hope that a new PCC can be established which better reflects the village church community. In the meantime, USCA continues to organise community events for the benefit of village residents, and to provide support for a number of other initiatives of benefit to the community.

2. Activities

Here is a list of our main activities for the year, in no particular order:

- Purchase of Marquee and acquisition of Gazebo

As previously reported, we have now acquired a large marquee, and have also been generously donated by Chris Rowley a smaller gazebo. We have also now purchased a floor for the marquee to improve further the outdoor experience!

- Commemoration of the 80th anniversary of VE Day.

We organised a full day of events on Saturday the 10th May to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day, culminating in a village picnic on Biss Close Green, where our new marquee and gazebo featured for the first time. We were blessed with gorgeous weather and by common consent this was a very enjoyable and successful event.

- Cream Tea & Croquet Event

By kind permission of Julia & Chris Rowley we held another Cream Tea & Croquet event in early August 2025. Once again, the weather played its part and it was a great occasion for the community to come together and engage in some fierce, but friendly, completion whilst also enjoying some wonderful cream teas and cake.

- Pub Quiz held on 26 January 2026

This popular event continues to draw a good crowd. We intend to continue with these quizzes on an annual basis.

We are open to all suggestions for future events. Just send an email to any of our committee members or to the Secretary with your suggestion.

Contact details:

Committee members:

John Pollard jspnoise@aol.com
Jonathan Tanner jcptanner@hotmail.co.uk
Claire Tanner petitpois969@hotmail.co.uk
Sue Mack suemackrda@gmail.com
Fleur de Rhe-Philippe fleurdrp@btinternet.com
Brian Etherington sueandbriane@talktalk.net
Ian Withers ian.withers@outlook.com

Secretary:

Wendy Thomas thomas00wendy@hotmail.com

Tai Chi

Classes are held on a Tuesday at 10 am for 45 minutes & cost £5. We currently have 11 people in the class and I've recently sent a flyer round the village to encourage new people. Since then I have had inquiries from six newcomers who are trying out classes to see if they like them. Classes are held in the church in inclement weather or in my garden when the weather is fine. We are allowed rent free use of the church, as all proceeds go to the church. From April 2025 to March 2026 we raised £2000, bringing the total donated to the church to £9586 in five years.

The Choir

The Choir has been meeting every Wednesday to rehearse for the village service which is on the first Sunday of the month. We also rehearse for a concert, that we put on every year to raise money for the church. It's always very well attended and great fun, with fish and chips in the interval. This year it's on May 30th. The Choir are very supportive to the church and we get more parishioners coming to the village service, which we hope is, in part, because of us leading the singing. We always welcome new members.

Thoulstone Park – Sent via email

Wildlife is doing well - plenty of roe, hare, muntjac, buzzards, kites...so the rest is probably doing ok too. The trees are generally doing great too.

Business has really improved over the last 12 months with the introduction of various activities and growing awareness of what we have on site.

We have opened a crazy golf course - wild golf – 18 holes of pure fun. It never fails to bring a smile. The person who designed and built the course also operates it.

We have opened three Padel courts and an indoor Pickleball court. Open to the public and bookable either through the website or through an app called Padelmates. The person who designed and built these also operates this business.

The Climb & Clamber wall is doing well now that the weather has improved and is part of the range of on site activities operated by the Wiltshire Outdoor Learning Team (WOLT)

We now have Pilates, Yoga, Ball Room Dancing, reflexology, Aikido and sports massage. We continue to look for new therapists and teachers for our wellness room and therapy rooms in the bat barn.

The range is now attracting customers for events such as private parties, business conferences and 'offsites'.

The natural burial ground has welcomed its first 'resident' and is 'open for business'. :-)

The parkrun on Saturdays is very popular and our community yoga on Sundays likewise.

And the Warminster kids football Club (Minikickers) are now playing matches on Saturdays and Sundays.

We have no plans for any public event that involves amplified music such as festivals this year. As much as we would like to host events similar to the Born Adventurers family focused festival that we held last year, we have plenty to keep us busy for now.

And for more regular information on what is going on, please sign up to our newsletter :

info@thoulstonepark.com, www.thoulstonepark.com.

Neighbourhood Policing Team – sent via email

Please find below the policing report from the last year ranging from **29th April 2025 – 29th April 2026**

There has been a total of **24 crimes recorded** in your area for the above time frame provided. **(1 year)**

Crime data released by the Office for National Statistics shows a decrease in overall recorded crime across Wiltshire, with significant reduction being seen in areas identified as priorities for the force by Chief Constable Catherine Roper - burglary, violence and safer public spaces.

- There have been **1 instance of burglary** reported, where unknown person has broken into a store building and stole a tractor among other equipment.
- There have been **1 instance of Anti-Social Behaviour reported**, where a male approached teenage female and has asked where she was going to ask if she was available to ask her out.
- **Theft offences** remain low, with **none recorded** during this time frame.
- There have been **2 instances of criminal damage recorded**, where a person has broken into a neighbour's property and caused damage. Unknow suspect has damaged the gate to the farm by damaging the hinges, bent the posts and rails.
- **Public safety and welfare- Animal/wildlife offences-** there have been **2 instances recorded**, where unknown person have been seen hare coursing on Salisbury Plain. Vehicle seen with dogs out and running- believed hare coursing.
- **Violence against the person-** there have been **6 reports of this nature** recorded in your area where 4 of them have been registered at the local children's home, including instance where

reporting person has been touched in sexually suggesting way on his buttock, both parties live in children's care.

- **RTC's** – there have been **1 instance reported**, where driver turn around on local roundabout and lost control of the vehicle and ended up on grass verge after hitting newly repaired fence.

The local neighbourhood team will be increasing their presence in the rural community which will involve a higher level of patrols in the area. This gives local communities the opportunity to engage with officers and express any concerns they may have and also to ask for any advice they may require.

We are committed to keeping your community safe and secure. Therefore, we strongly encourage to take the following steps to protect your home:

☐ Install CCTV and Ring doorbell- these can help deter criminals and provide valuable evidence in case of an incident.

☐ Stay alert for Rogue Traders- be cautious of doorstep callers offering services. Always check ID and never feel pressured into making quick decisions. If in any doubt, say no and report suspicious activity to the Police and Trading Standards Department in Wiltshire Council.

Please be aware of the Bobby Van Trust, a registered charity who work alongside Wiltshire Police and offer a completely free service to anyone over 60 (or over 18 and registered disabled). They offer a free Home Security service which includes checks for door and window locks, lighting, dummy CCTV cameras and more. They also offer a Stay Safe Online service which will help prevent any fraud related offences occurring. Their contact number is 01225 256867 and their website is BobbyVanOnlineSafety@wbvt.org

Lastly can I encourage everyone to sign up to the Community Messaging service, where you can get up to date information on what is going on in your area.

Cllr Bill Parkes – Unitary Councillor

Congratulates the PC for the amazing amount of work that has been done within the village, and to the clerk for setting up the new website and email notifications.

There has been a consultation on parking charges across the county. Weekends will now be charged at the same rates as the weekday parking charges. I do not believe it's a positive move and have lodged objections.

Changes to the waste collection services. Starting in August 2027 Wiltshire Council will be collecting food waste but the general waste bins will change from collection every 2 weeks to every 3 weeks. There is a likelihood where you will have to use a booking system to use the recycling centres.

The Parish Steward remains on pothole duty. In May he will go into grass cutting. I will try and find out when he's due to start again.

There are big concerns about highways and road conditions. The current administration is relying on borrowing 15 million which is forecast to cost 58 million in interest charges over the next 50 years which will have a big impact on future generations.

5. Open Forum.

A resident raised the resilience plan and has said that they have a Rayburn and are willing to have their name listed as somewhere people can go to when in need. Cllr Welch noted the details. Resilience Plan.

Cllr Welch thanked everyone for attending and their contribution.

Approved by the Council as a true record.

Signed.....Chair Date.....

Minutes and reports are available on the Website www.uptonscudamoreparishcouncil.gov.uk or from the Clerk on request.

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