**Minutes of Alderholt Annual Parish meeting held on Monday 27th April 2026 at 7.00pm at Alderholt Village Hall.**

**Present**

Cllr A Butler (Chairman), Cllr A Hibberd, Cllr G Logan, Cllr M Smethers and Cllr D Tooke
Nicky Ashton (Clerk) and 13 members of the public.

**1. Welcome from the Chairman of the Parish Council**

Cllr Butler welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**3. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 14th April 2025**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**4. To receive the Annual Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr A Butler**

This has been my first year as Chair of the Parish Council and thankfully it has been a quieter year than last year when the Alderholt Meadows planning appeal took place!
Unfortunately, Cllr Russel Stone resigned from his post as councillor during the year and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him again for his contributions whilst on the Council. This means there are currently two councillor vacancies so if anyone
is interested in joining us in representing this beautiful village, please contact the Clerk.
The Parish Council has responded to a number of consultations in the last year to ensure the parish is represented:

- Dorset Local Plan
- Sandleheath Neighbourhood Plan
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils Smaller Parish Council survey
- Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan Modifications
- National Planning Policy Framework
- New Forest District Council Spatial Options and Policy Direction Regulation 18 Local Plan 2025-43
- Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority Consultation

and we will be responding to the current Dorset Council consultation launched on review of local election boundaries. Please note this is a consultation they are encouraging residents to respond to and you can find the link on our Parish Council website. If you have any queries regarding the consultation please contact the Clerk who may be able to assist you.
I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Gina Logan for solely compiling responses to five of these consultations and working with myself and the Clerk to compile responses to two more of the consultations. So, she was involved in all consultations except one. Thank you Gina.
Councillors and the Clerk have also attended various meetings/events during the year to again ensure the parish is represented. Meetings included:

- Climate and Nature Workshop
- DAPTC Town and Larger Parish Council meetings
- Fresh Start Event – Devolving Dorset
- Dorset Council Town and Parish Councils Forum on Planning and Building Control

Unfortunately, there was a vandalism incident at the orchard in the Amanda Harris Recreation Ground last year. The incident was reported to the police. Works were carried out by the Green

Spaces Working Party and as a result of those works many of the trees were saved with only four trees having to be replaced recently. I would like to thank the working party and in particular Cllr Steve Butler for organising the works and tree replacements.
During the last year the Parish Council has carried out various works including the replacement of safety surfacing in the Amanda Harris Play Area which has assisted in preventing the areas under the main swings and the roundabout from becoming wet and muddy. There has also been other repair works carried out at the play area. Repairs have also been carried out to the Speed Indicator Devices which again were required due to vandalism. Dog bins were replaced due to their poor conditions and we continue to pay Dorset Council for the emptying of the four bins owned by the Parish Council. We also paid for signage on Ringwood Road to alert drivers of pedestrians and horse riders using the road. We are currently liaising with Dorset Council regarding the speed of traffic on the road as a result of concerns raised by residents and have paid for a speeding tube to be placed on the road to monitor the traffic. The results will then assist in determining what further action to take.
In the last year we also acknowledged both VJ day and VE day by raising flags at St James Church and I wish to thank those residents who joined us. We also put up the Christmas tree again this year and my thanks goes to Cllr Adrian Hibberd for putting it up and to Cllr Gina Logan together with a member of the public for decorating it.
Alderholt Parish Council continues to fund the Wednesday shuttle bus between Alderholt and Fordingbridge and will continue to do so for the new 2026/27 financial year. We would urge you to please carry on using it to secure its future. We also secured another grant from Dorset Council of £2500 to assist with funding this service.
Another successful Fete took place in summer 2025 and thanks must go to those who helped organise the Fete and to the many volunteers who helped on the day. Another Fete will be held this year on Saturday 20th June and we hope to see you there. You will find out more details this evening as a presentation is being given about the Fete. The Fete is to assist in promoting local businesses and organisations and there is no fee for residents to attend as we want to bring the community together and celebrate our lovely village.
We took part again in the Great British Spring Clean this year which is a national event organised by Keep Britain Tidy. I would like to thank the volunteers who took part again this year, Sheila, Melanie, Kathryn and Martin – thank you very much. In total 12 bags of rubbish were collected.
Finally, I'd like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their support during this last year, and to the staff.

**5. <u>Presentations</u>**

**Alderholt Recreation Association (ARA)**
The Chairman of the ARA gave a presentation about the ARA and recreation ground. The ARA has been in existence for 48yrs and was set up three years after the purchase of the recreation ground by the Parish Council (the recreation ground celebrated its 50th anniversary last year). The ARA was set up by the Parish Council Chairman at the time and a local village solicitor. It was agreed that those who use the recreation ground should be the one's that manage it. There are seats available on the Management Committee for local organisations and is principally managed by clubs who use it. There are also three seats available for members of the public. Quite proud of what they've achieved even though money is limited. 90% of work carried out by volunteers with one person being paid. Weather has an impact on the recreation ground with wetter winters and dryer summers (originally predicted this would happen and now true!). Site gets wet in winter and to drain it probably would cost a phenomenal amount of money. Thank you to everyone who uses it including dog walkers who are very appreciative of being able to use it. Thank you for also keeping it clean.

Cllr Butler thanked everyone on the ARA for their work. An open space benefits everyone so it is much appreciated.

**Alderholt Village Hall**
Unfortunately, the Chairman of the Village Hall was unable to attend the meeting. Cllr Butler pointed out that the village hall committee require volunteers if anyone was willing to put themselves forward.

**Big Alderholt Fete 20th June 2026**
A powerpoint presentation was given to show what entertainment will be happening during the day and the times. A list of stall holders was also provided. It was also pointed out that volunteers are needed to assist on the day.

**Two Bridges**
Two Bridges gave a presentation on the transport services they provide. They are a group of volunteers running a community transport service for medical appointments only – surgeries, hospitals, dentists and chiropodists. The service does not include transport for shopping, banks or hairdressers. Discretionary service also included for visits to care homes/hospitals to see close relatives or friends. There is no limit to how far clients can be taken, in the past clients have been taken as far as Portsmouth and Frome. For the period March 2025 to March 2026 there were 922 requests for drivers of which 244 were for Alderholt clients (26%). There are currently 34 drivers of which 4 are from Alderholt so would be beneficial to have more Alderholt ones which would assist in saving mileage costs. The system works in the following way: clients ring the coordinator who takes client details including if wheelchair user or have any other special needs. List of job numbers providing details of where client wishes to be taken, date and time of appointment and any special needs emailed to drivers. Drivers review list and confirm which job numbers they can do. Clients are then informed by coordinator of who their driver will be. Donations are requested to fund the service. Having Alderholt drivers would assist in saving Two Bridges money due to close proximity. If you wish to be a coordinator happy to hear from you but currently in need of drivers so please call or email. Questions asked regarding age limits for drivers, it was confirmed that there is no age limit. Only requirements are drivers use their own cars, have drivers' licence, car insurance and car has passed MOT. Contact details can be found on Dorset Community Transport Directory - Dorset Council.

**Dorset Councillor Dave Tooke**
Cllr Tooke gave a powerpoint presentation which gave an overview of Dorset Council activities – council priorities, planning, highways and transport, environment, adult and children's social care and council tax. Council priorities include Transformation Plan 2025-2029, managing financial pressure while protecting services and improved engagement with towns and parishes.

**6. Questions**
The Chairman invited open questions from the floor:

Q. Resident spoke regarding the speeding tube being placed on Ringwood Road as mentioned in the Chairman's report and stated they felt the village should be looked at as whole for speeding issues such as Hillbury Road. Asked the Council to look at the wider picture.

Q. Resident raised concerns about a farm building in the village which looked unsafe and requested Council approach the owner.

Cllr Butler thanked everyone for attending the meeting and the meeting was closed at 8.16pm.

DRAFT