

CORSCOMBE, HALSTOCK & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes for the Parish Council Annual meeting **7.00pm on Monday 18th of May 2026**

Meeting to be held at Corscombe Village Hall.

Councillors present: Richard James (RJ), Henry Lovegrove (HL), Nigel Clarke (NC), Roger Hallett (RH), Grant Prior (GP), Deborah Childs (DC), Cllr. Arnold (GA) and Cllr. Fry (RF)

0 members of the public were present.

The meeting started at 7.00pm and was chaired by the chairman Cllr. James.

1. To receive apologies and accept declarations of Interest

Apologies from Cllr. D. Hallett, Cllr. Sherwood and Dorset Councillor Chris

Kippax

Note late arrival of Cllr. Lovegrove arrived at item 9

No declarations of Interest

2. To agree the election of Chairman

It was agreed that Cllr. Richard James should be re-elected as Chairman

Proposed Cllr. Childs, seconded Cllr. R. Hallett. Approved 6/6

Cllr. James Sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the

Presence of the Clerk.

3. To agree the election of Vice Chairman:

It was agreed that Cllr. R Hallett should be re-elected as Vice Chairman

Proposed Cllr. Clarke, seconded Cllr. Prior. Approved 6/6

Additional item moved from the Parish Council meeting following the Parish Council Annual meeting - Co-option of a new West Chelborough Cllr. Member to replace Cllr. John-White-Hamilton who stepped down.

This follows the required period of Notice of Vacancy'

Proposed Cllr. Childs, seconded Cllr. Clarke Approved 6/6

Cllr. Worthen Sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the Presence of the Clerk.

Public period for comments on issues on the agenda

None

4. To agree the election of the 3rd and 4th member of the Staff Working Group

It was proposed that the 3rd member of the Staff Working group should be

Cllr. Lovegrove and that the 4th member of the Staff Working group should be

Cllr. Clarke

Proposed Cllr. Arnold and seconded Cllr. Prior Approved 5/5

5. To note the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 19th May 2025

Proposed Cllr. Hallett, seconded Cllr. Childs Approved 6/6

6. To note members' attendances 2025/2026

Noted

7. Chairman's Report 2025/2026

The Chairman presented the Chairmans report. See appendix 1

8. To note reports from representatives 2025-2026

Representative councillor(s)	Role	Report 2025-2026
Richard James	Chairman Halstock Village Hall Staff Working group	
Henry Lovegrove	Rural Transport, Staff Working Group and Corscombe Village Hall	Rural Transport: I managed to get the weekly bus service from Corscombe via Halstock reinstated during the year. Passengers need to pay now, but can choose to descend at either Sherborne or Yeovil. Staff working group: this has met on a couple of occasions, most importantly at the end of the year to discuss the Clerk's performance and discuss her 2026/27 action plan and pay grade.
Roger Hallett	Vice Chairman, Playground, Staff Working Group	
Helen Sherwood	Speedwatch	
	HELO	
Grant Prior	Police Liaison and Home watch	Over the last year our local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Alex Bishop and I have held regular monthly police surgeries in the Halstock community rooms behind the village shop. This is an opportunity to chat with Alex, raise any concerns with him (there is a private space available if parishioners need it) and listen to his latest news and information. It's not all police talk we also enjoy a chat with a tea, coffee and a piece of homemade cake. To stay up-to-date with local police news why not sign up to the Neighbourhood Watch website at: https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/joinNW . This is

		free and you can decide how little or how much news and information you are emailed. I have also been able to direct parishioners to the right person if they needed to contact Dorset police and have acted as a contact to raise concerns about abandoned cars or vehicles that had been involved in accidents with the police or Dorset council.
David Hallett	Planning working group	
Deborah Childs	Rights of Way Group	

The Clerk also summarised the findings from the Corscombe Annual Parish meeting held on the 14th May and the Halstock Annual Parish meeting held on the 15th May. See Summary appendix 2

9. To appoint representatives for 2026/2027 (Appendix D)

Representatives 26-27

Representative councillor(s)	Role
Henry Lovegrove	Rural Transport Staff working Group
Roger Hallett	Vice Chairman Playground Staff working Group Vice Chairman
Helen Sherwood	Speed watch
Nigel Clarke	Staff Working Group
Freda Henessy will be asked if she would like take on this role once co-opted	HELO
Grant Prior	Police Liaison and Home watch
David Hallett	Planning working group

Paul Werthon	Planning working group
Richard James (Halstock)	Chairman Halstock Village Hall Staff working group Planning Working group
Deborah Childs	Rights of Way Group

Non- councillors –
Marine Balch - Rights of Way Lead
Tony Hill - Speed watch

Approved 8/8

10. To Reapprove the adoption of the General Power of Competence

The Power of Competence was readopted as the Parish Council still had 2/3rd of its councillors elected.

Proposed Cllr. Lovegrove, seconded Cllr. Clarke approved 8/8

11. Review and approval of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

updated document (E).

Proposed Cllr. James, Seconded Cllr. Lovegrove accepted 8/8

12. Review and approval of the IT and Cyber Security policy (F)

Proposed Cllr. James, Seconded Cllr. Lovegrove accepted 8/8

13. Review and approval of policies in respect of obligations under the

freedom of information and data protection legislation (see Data

Protection and Privacy Policy and updated publication policy).

Proposed Cllr. James, Seconded Cllr. Lovegrove accepted 8/8

14. Ratify Asset Register and Risk Assessment updated 31st March 2026

Approved 8/8

15. Review and approval of delegation arrangements and terms of reference of;

- **Staff Working Group**
- **Public Rights of Way Group**

Proposed Cllr. Lovegrove, seconded Cllr. Clarke Approved 8/8

16. Review and approval of the Council's employment policies and procedures.

Proposed Cllr. Lovegrove, Seconded Cllr. R Hallett. Accepted 8/8

17. Review and approve all other council documents not covered above.

(Note All Parish Council Documents and Policies can be found on the Parish Council website (CHDPC.org.uk) or can be obtained on request from the Clerk)

Proposed Cllr. Lovegrove, Seconded Cllr. R Hallett. Accepted 8/8

18. To approve the awarding of the insurance contract for 2026/2027

Approved 8/8

19. Review and approve subscriptions to other bodies – DAPTC, ICO and SLCC.

Reviewed and Approved 8/8

20. Review of Power of Competence expenditure incurred during 2025/2026

Payment to Halstock Church towards the renovation of the Church organ

£500.

Payment to Dian Stains memorial charity £50

Reviewed and Approved 8/8

21. To note the Parish Council meeting dates and venues 2026/2027

Noted and approved 8/8

Dates of Parish Council Meetings 2026 to 2027

July 26	Halstock	27.7.26 7.30 pm
September 2026	Corscombe	28.9.26 7.30 pm
November 2026	Halstock	30.11.26 7.30 pm
January 2027	Corscombe	25.1.27 7.30 pm
March 2027	Halstock	22.3.27 7.30 pm

Proposed May meeting Parish council annual meeting and Parish council meeting 24th May 2027

Note: Appendixes and any documents not shown below can be found on the

Parish Councils website (chdpc.org.uk) or can be requested from the Clerk.

Clerk to the Council: Tessa Safadi, Tel: 07595598995

Email: clerk@chd-pc.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Corscombe, Halstock and District Parish Council Annual Report 2025/26

Summary

This year has seen steady progress across a wide range of community priorities, practical improvements and partnership work. Much of what has been achieved reflects the commitment of parish councillors, volunteers, and local organisations working together to support our villages.

Community Infrastructure and Local Improvements

We have continued the restoration of our historic fingerposts, with thanks to Nigel Clarke and Roger Whittingham for their work on the Halstock Triangle, the Fox Inn junction and Grexy Cross. A new Parish Noticeboard has been installed near the Fox Inn in Corscombe, and a replacement salt bin has been provided for West Chelborough. The Parish Council also maintained a presence at the Corscombe Village Fête, helping residents meet councillors, raise issues and learn more about the work of the Council. Under our General Power of Competence, the Parish Council also made a donation to the Church to assist with the servicing and repair of the organ.

Transport, Highways and Road Safety

We have worked closely with PlusBus to help establish a weekly bus service, improving access for residents without transport. Highways issues remain a major area of focus. We continue to press Dorset Council on:

- potholes
- road signage
- the volume and timing of roadworks and road closures

Consultation with Dorset Council Highways and parish residents on speed limits will continue into 2026–27. The Speed Indicator Device in Halstock continues to operate successfully thanks to Tony Hill and the SpeedWatch volunteers.

Community Safety, First Aid and Emergency Preparedness

This year we arranged First Aid Training for residents and established WhatsApp First Aid Community Support Groups in both Halstock and Corscombe to improve local resilience. Councillors have also raised awareness of Asian Hornets, supported the Great Big Hedge Survey, and contributed to wider climate and ecology initiatives. We have begun updating parish organisations on Martyn's Law, the new national

security legislation for public events. While our local fetes fall below the threshold, it remains important that organisers are aware of the requirements.

Communication and Digital Improvements

The Clerk has introduced bimonthly Parish Council newsletters, improving the flow of information to residents. We now have a dedicated Parish Council email address for the Clerk: clerk@chd-pc.gov.uk. Planning applications are now routinely shared on Facebook, WhatsApp, and the Parish Council website (chdpc.org.uk), increasing visibility and engagement. The Parish Council website has also undergone an upgrade to improve usability and access to information.

Partnership Working

We continue to strengthen our relationship with the Halstock Village Trust, collaborating on issues including road safety, potholes, and mobile phone signal concerns. We have also maintained regular contact with Dorset Council officers and other agencies on highways, planning and community matters.

Playgrounds, Recreation and Local Facilities

Routine maintenance of the Corscombe playground and outdoor gym has continued. Despite considerable effort, we have not yet identified a suitable location for a Halstock playground, but work on this will continue. The long-running Wessex Water sewage facility upgrade is now nearing completion.

Governance and Council Business

The Parish Council successfully met both its internal and external audit requirements this year. We were saddened by the loss of Diana Stains, whose contribution to the parish community is warmly remembered.

Looking Ahead

The coming year will see continued work on highways issues, speed limit consultations, community safety, environmental initiatives, and the ongoing search for a viable playground site in Halstock. We will also continue to strengthen communication with residents and ensure the Parish Council remains accessible, responsive and transparent.

Appendix 2 Summary from Annual Parish meeting reports

Corscombe

Hawkins Trust

The Hawkins Trust continues to provide confidential grants and loans to Corscombe residents facing financial hardship. The Trust advertises regularly in *The Chimes* and welcomes applications from anyone needing support.

Swish Events

Following a successful clothes-swapping event last year, another "Swish" event is planned for June 2026 in partnership with The Fox. These events help reduce waste, refresh wardrobes and provide a sociable community gathering.

Village Coffee Mornings

A series of informal coffee mornings have been held in residents' homes and gardens throughout the year. They provide a friendly opportunity to meet neighbours and catch up on local news. A £1 donation supports the Village Hall, with an optional raffle. New hosts are always welcome.

Friends of Corscombe & Halstock Community First Responders

Although the Community First Responder team no longer operates, the Friends Group continues to support emergency healthcare within the parish.

Current priorities include:

- Maintaining local public-access defibrillators.
- Providing awareness training.
- Exploring opportunities for basic life-support training.

The Group currently holds funds of £6,280, which will help cover ongoing maintenance and replacement costs for six local defibrillators. The Parish Council has agreed to work alongside the Group and will assume responsibility for the scheme when the Friends Group's funds are exhausted.

Bellringers

The bellringing team continues to meet weekly and has welcomed several new recruits, bringing membership to ten regular ringers, with more trainees joining recently. The team has supported services and celebrations at both Corscombe and Halstock churches and looks forward to a busy year ahead.

Corscombe Village Hall

Significant improvements have been made to the Village Hall, including:

- Installation of Wi-Fi.
- Replastering of the south wall.
- Planned resurfacing of the car park.

Future projects include replacing the storage sheds and installing an electric vehicle charging point. The committee continues to organise successful fundraising events but is keen to attract more hall bookings.

Beaminster Country Cars

This valuable volunteer transport service now has four Corscombe drivers. It provides transport for medical appointments, prescription collection, hospital visits and other essential journeys where no public transport is available. Demand remains strong and the service continues to be greatly appreciated.

Corscombe Fundraising Committee

The traditional fete committee has now disbanded. This year's community fundraising event will instead take place at The Fox on 13 June. The opportunity remains open for a new group to take on the organisation of future village fetes.

Knit & Stitch

The group continues to thrive with regular fortnightly meetings. Members share skills, work on personal projects and enjoy a social afternoon together. Donations from refreshments support local charities.

Halstock

St Juthware and St Mary Church

The church faces major repair and restoration projects following storm damage to the roof, alongside urgent quinquennial maintenance works. Together these projects are expected to cost around £160,000.

Fundraising has already reached approximately 50% of the target through donations, pledges and community events. Upcoming fundraising includes:

- Open Gardens (13 June)
- St Juthware and St Mary Festival (10–12 July)

The church remains an active centre of village life, with growing congregations, community events and volunteer involvement. Long-term plans include improved facilities, better accessibility and developing the church as a community hub offering support and information services.

Halstock Community Hall

The hall continues to host a wide range of activities including:

- Yoga
- Badminton
- Art classes
- Short mat bowls
- Film nights

Broadband and card payment facilities have proved popular. Richard Buckland has taken over as Chair, and plans are being developed for future improvements following a village consultation exercise.

Royal British Legion

Although the local branch closed two years ago, support for the Poppy Appeal remains strong. This year's appeal has raised £2,777 so far. Volunteers continue to play a vital role, and additional support is being sought for future appeals.

Halstock Village Shop

The village shop remains a vital community asset. Sales remain stable at around £435,000 annually, and the business continues to operate profitably. Solar panels have recently been installed, helping to reduce energy costs. Continued local support is essential to ensure the shop's long-term future.

Community Speed Watch

Volunteers continue to monitor vehicle speeds in partnership with Dorset Police. Following traffic surveys, a new Speed Indicator Device (SID) has been installed and is rotated between two village locations. Additional volunteers would be welcomed to support the scheme.

Halstock Village Cinema

The cinema continues to provide monthly screenings of recent films in a friendly social setting. Audience numbers have grown steadily, and proceeds help support the Village Hall. Thanks to funding from the British Film Institute, modern projection and sound equipment continue to provide a high-quality cinema experience.

Halstock Village Fete

Storm Clara prevented the traditional outdoor fete from taking place in 2025. However, by partnering with the Gardening Club and moving indoors, the village still enjoyed a successful event attended by more than 200 people.

The event raised £1,309 for local causes and demonstrated the strength of community spirit in Halstock. Planning is already underway for the 2026 fete.

Halstock Village Trust

The Trust remains in a strong financial position, with assets increasing during the year. Funding has supported:

- The new village website.
- Replacement Village Hall tables.
- Community projects and facilities.

The Trust is also considering future support for both the Village Hall refurbishment and church restoration projects while maintaining its long-term financial sustainability.

Halstock Community Arts

Community Arts hosted five live performances and a children's workshop during the year. Arts Awards totalling £1,400 were presented to support local creative projects and young artists. Refreshments at events continue to help fund future awards.

Rights of Way Group

The group continues to monitor and maintain local footpaths and bridleways. Volunteers have cleared storm damage, improved overgrown sections and reported issues to Dorset Council. Work continues to improve accessibility and keep routes open for residents and visitors.