The Civil Parish of ALVESTON including Rudgeway & Earthcott

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
Held on 20th April 2026 at 7.00pm in the Jubilee Hall

Present: - Cllr John Graham (PC Chair), Cllr Anne Curtis (PC Vice Chair), Cllr Carmen Vazquez, Cllr Paul Caddick, Cllr Vicky Moore, Ward Cllr Matthew Riddle, Ward Cllr Tony Williams, Elaine Lee, Michael Casey, Jim Godden, Peter Waller. Hayley Grove.
23 members of the Parish Community, Alveston WI, Graham Smith (Clerk to the Parish Council).

Apologies: - Cllr Lydie Veldkamp, PC Paula Perry, Julie Simpson (Head Teacher).

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1. Welcome by Parish Council Chairman Cllr John Graham

John Graham (JG) introduced himself as Parish Council Chair and passed apologies from those councillors unable to attend.

Agendas are available at the entrance and is a report from St Helen's School. There are many items to cover this evening with reports from; Councillors, Committees of our local community buildings, the Community Forum, our community charity, and Alveston Community Events. These will be followed by a question / answer session. Then refreshments prepared and served by our Alveston WI-Thank you.

2. St Helens Church of England School Board of Governors

In the absence of Julie Simpson, Executive Head Teacher, (Clerk) had printed many copies of the report and made it available for all present.

St Helen's is a one form entry village school in Alveston, South Gloucestershire. It is a Church of England school linked with the Diocese of Bristol. In April 2023, St Helen's formally federated with St Mary's CE VA Primary School in Yate, following a successful informal partnership since 2019.
There are currently 204 children on roll. 10% Pupil Premium Children, of which 4% FSM. 12% SEND with 3.2% of EHCP children.
The school received a SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection in October 2025:

Over the last year there have been many successes to celebrate. In 2025, the end of key stage assessment demonstrated that our children consistently achieved above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics.
Our children have participated in events across the year, including football and netball tournaments and we recently won the interschools football competition coming top of the schools in the category. We are very proud of the children's achievement and success.
Children were involved in the Christmas and Easter celebration at St Helen's Church demonstrating their skills of hand bell ringing and singing. We greatly value our strong links with the church community and the regular events we share together, including Prayer Spaces and Open the Book Worship.

Portacabin Building - This temporary building is a vital part of the school as it provides accommodation for the pre-school and the after-school club – both essential services for the community and families. The building continues to deteriorate, and we have been unsuccessful in accessing additional funding to replace the building in the near future.

Looking Forward - The Governing Body have taken the decision to join the Severn Federation Multi Academy Trust and St Helen's School will become part of this Trust in the autumn term.
The Severn Federation Academy Trust's schools are creative, inspiring, nurturing and inclusive places to learn and work. Each school celebrates its own unique identity with a strong Christian distinctiveness in our Church schools.
The Severn Federation Academy Trust provides excellent partnerships and support to our schools, developing outstanding learning communities. We work closely with many local and national

organisations including: University of Gloucester to provide Initial Teacher Education; Odyssey Teaching School Hub; GLOW Maths Hub, English Hub; Diocese of Gloucester; Diocese of Bristol; seeking out the best practice.
Our strong central team provide a wide range of support and services to our schools and are never more than a phone call away.
At the Severn Federation Academy Trust, we put children at the heart of all that we do. Through the love we provide to all in our communities, everyone flourishes to live life in all its fullness.
We are looking forward to collaborating with the schools in the Trust and continuing to expand the breadth of experiences for our children at St Helen's School.

3. Community Reports.

3.1. Jubilee Hall Management Committee

Report given by Michael Casey.

1. There have been 4 committee meeting held in the last year. The committee for last year has been :-

a) Michael Casey Chair
b) Alice Keehn. Bookings Secretary
c) Sharon Armstrong Calendar Secretary
d) Elina Beet. Treasurer
e) Elizabeth McCleod Minutes Secretary
f) Vicky Moore. Co-opted committee member

Following the recent AGM all officers are continuing in post.

In addition to Les Forrest and Carol John help considerably with day-to-day matters in the Hall

Since the resignation of Marion Reeve, we have not had a designated Parish Council representative on our committee. We would like one please

In comparison to previous years there has been little major project work undertaken. The front doors have been replaced.

The Building Management System has worked this year to manage the calendar and heating of the Hall. From feedback the heating of the Hall seems to have been a success. Automatic invoicing has been implemented and after some teething problems the system seems to work fine. The Users have adapted to the change, and we thank them for that. As the Accounts is run by a volunteer, we needed to simplify the invoicing to save time. Additionally, we have just implemented an accounting package to make controlling the finances easier

We can report that the Hall is still operating at a profit. Our 25/26 accounts are now with Brian Lee for auditing. We thank Brian for his help on this issue

In the recent committee meeting it was agreed to increase our hall rates by 2%. These new rates are applied from 1st April 2026

The Garden continues to be a credit to the Hall. For this we thank Alveston Community Forum and the WI

Wi-Fi is being delivered by TruSpeed. To date the service has been good and only really failed when South Glos Road contractor dug up the cable!

Last year we reported the works we were emplacing to take account of the issues raised by the Southport incident. The new front doors were part of this work. As the last items we are about to change the lock to the Bush Room and the Key Safe code

In the summer of 2025, a piece of timber soffit board fell off the Hall near the front entrance. This led to significant survey work and culminated in us sending in a grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a sum greater than £100,000 to fund the work needed to be completed on the Hall. As part

of this exercise, we employed Heritage Consultant David Arnold of Arnold Bartosh Ltd to advise us on the best approach for this Grant

The application for was very prescriptive and after 6 rewrites we applied to HLF in January 2026. This application was summarily rejected in February 2026. No reason was given. We are therefore attempting to find out why there was this rejection. This is ongoing. We do have a feeling that the HLF focus is now more social and welfare benefits than the repair of building fabric.

Obviously, this is a very serious situation as this work does need doing and now, we need to review costs and budgeting. The HLF was the correct agency to apply to but now we are going to need to look at funding it between ourselves and yourselves in a timescale to be agreed.

3.2. Youth Centre Management Committee

Report given by Jim Godden (Chair of the YC Management Committee).

As many of you are aware, we lost our Treasurer Graham following a short illness. Graham had been a very strong presence on the committee for many years and will be sorely missed. We are planning to install a park bench in his honour near the pump track which will look towards the youth centre.

Ivor stepped down as chairman at the last AGM, and we are very thankful for his many years in post. I have agreed to take on this role. Amy has come forward to act as treasurer for which we are most grateful. We have a very strong committee as follows ..

Chairman – Jim Godden
Secretary – Anne Davis
Treasurer – Amy Clayton
Bookings – Vicky Moore and Amy Clayton
We have also just co-opted Karen McCarter onto the committee. We also have representatives from the regular user groups attend our meetings which occur every month.

We have made some significant changes this year to the youth centre. The toilet block has been completely replaced with a disabled toilet including a baby changing area. We have also installed 2 unisex toilets and associated sinks, hand dryers etc. We were able to do this through donations from the lottery, the parish council and using our own funds. A big thank you to Ivor and Amy for managing the builders to complete this work.
The foyer is undergoing a revamp, with a new carpet and removal of the old tiles. The walls have been plastered and are soon to be painted.
The climbing wall had a deep clean and was repainted which was long overdue. All the holds were removed and are due to be put back. Most of the ceiling was also cleaned – thanks to the Jubilee Hall for use of their scaffold tower.
We manage to keep most of our maintenance in-house which reduces costs and enables flexibility of completing it around the hall usage.
After a number of issues with the cleaners, we have now changed our contract. A deep clean of the hall has been completed and the floor looks better than it has for many years.
We have a number of projects for the next year as well as general maintenance to keep the centre in a good state of repair. We also look after the car park area, regularly clearing it of litter and tree debris and maintaining the hedges.

Our finances are as follows ..
Income £14,064.77
Expenditure £36,305.33
Bank accounts as at 31.3.26 total £32,869.18
(Reserve £821.98, Business £11,961.06, 95 day £20,086.14)

The youth centre continues to be heavily used, and we have to turn away requests for booking due to its popularity. On average the hall is used for regular sessions for 35 hours per week. We also have one off bookings for parties and events.

3.3 Charity of Emily Amelia Ponting

Report given by Elaine Lee

I am pleased to provide a report from the Charity of Emily Amelia Ponting. We are a small group of locals who act as Trustees and follow the instructions left by a very generous lady who died in 1901. She asked for the funds to be used for grants for "the education, improvement, recreation and enjoyment of inhabitants and parishioners of all ages."

This Charity was later combined with funds left by Edward and Thomas Bush. They supported the construction of St Helen's Church and its clock. As you may know, they also gave funds towards building this Jubilee Hall. All money was later combined with funds left by Henry King who had died much earlier. Now all these Charities were joined about 70 years ago as Alveston Charities but now is known as the Charity of Emily Amelia Ponting.

We are a registered Charity. We follow instructions laid out in the scheme which stipulates that Trustees must include: the Vicar of St Helen's, a member of the Parish Council and three other villagers. Currently we have Rev. David Moss, Parish Councillor Rep. Anne Curtis, and Villagers, Sandra Body, Angela Williams, and myself, Elaine Lee, as Chair. We are grateful to have Les Forrest as our efficient Treasurer and Bill Beer to check our annual accounts. Sincere thanks go to both.

During the past year we received only a few Grant Applications. Either we need to advertise more, or everyone is richer! Last year our main expenditure was £750 towards attractions for the September Show, which, I hope you will agree, comes under the heading of "recreation and enjoyment." We also gave funds towards a young Guide's trip abroad, £125, and we agreed a grant of £1,000 towards safely removing low grade asbestos from the Church boiler room.

We give out Christmas gifts of cash to villagers we know who are ill, or to single parents struggling to make ends meet or who we appreciate for work they did for the village during past years. However, last Christmas, (2025), there were less people to give to as some had moved away from and one sadly, had died.

In 2025 we distributed just over £2,000. Les, our Treasurer, recently told Trustees that income from our investments last year was £3,000 less that in 2024. So far this year I have received just one application for a modest amount which I will discuss with all the Trustees. Please think of us if you hear of anyone who deserves, or needs, cash for a project or for their wellbeing. Donations are also welcome and appreciated. Our contact details are on the main Notice Board in The Parade or they can contact Rev. David Moss or myself Elaine Lee. Thank you.

4. Alveston Community Forum

Report given by Peter Waller (chairman of Alveston Community Forum)

The Forum continues to provide a volunteer force to benefit the Village and it's Parish Council. We are always on the lookout for new volunteers and for ideas about what we can do for the village. If any residents are interested in getting involved or are aware of things that need volunteer support, please do not hesitate to contact us

Repair Café - Since the last report to the Parish Council we have held three successful repair events. Two more are scheduled for this year, the 16th of May and the 17th of October. At the last event on the 17th of January, we had 20 volunteers which is close to the record. Since 2019 we have held 16 Repair Cafe Events and have completed over 450 successful repairs. I am most grateful to all those who have taken part as repairers, Admin Team and the Refreshments team. The customers have been very generous with their donations. So, our contribution since the last report to Forum funds in the last year stands at £318.34 after costs. We have been able to buy four new tables for the Church, so we don't have to keep borrowing from the Jubilee Hall, and we have taken delivery of new banners with larger writing to put up outside the church.

Parade Maintenance - The New Parade Volunteers has grown in numbers with some dedicated team members and some additional helpers who volunteer when able. During 2025 we have maintained the weeding - the weeds between the slabs have been particularly determined, whilst weeding / maintaining the borders. The old bench was restored - being dissembled, sanded and re-treated. A new bench was donated and fitted in the Parade. Thank you Yvonne and Andy Quinn. Both benches are being constantly used in the good weather!

Some new planting also took place. The "good" posts which support the canopy were sanded and then had two coats of paint. Jim continues to be outstanding with his work and his lawn care. During 2025 we had 2 days of action, one kicking off the work in Spring and the 2nd putting the gardens to bed for the autumn / winter.

There have been frustrations with the need for significant work on the canopy. The cost has been a surprise to some of the 4 shop keepers, but we are continuing to get quotes and hopefully we can progress the canopy during the spring / summer of 2026. Once this work has been completed the volunteers will then do work under the canopy, with sanding down and painting. We are also negotiating the replacement of 6 posts. We have a verbal agreement to progress with the replacement of the remaining posts, which the volunteers will paint and maintain for the shops.

We have also canvassed for a new border within the patio area. This will mirror the existing border and will bring us low covering plants and colour for the parade. It is hoped that this will also be cost neutral as we will be applying for grants / sponsorship. The Local Gardening Club is also being approached for support / expertise.

We are canvassing for another bench for the parade. One of the volunteers is completing a mosaic table which when completed will be placed next to one of the benches. Rosie, the volunteer, is part of a local mosaic group and it is hoped that this may be the prototype for another such table in the future! Fingers crossed.

We have re-invigorated a Parade Management Group and held some useful meetings and conversations. This is still work in progress.
The group aim to try and progress in 2026:

- Maintenance of slabbed areas and pathways - weed control and safety with some slab movements.
- New bench - Cost neutral
- New "coffee table" - Minor cost with glue, mosaic and resin - If a success the commission of another similar table.
- Maintenance of new posts - when fitted. Cost of posts and fitting by Shop owners. Paint and maintenance by the group
- Underside of the canopy from the Win Chef to the Cafe to be restored. This will be repeated once the canopy from Mr Perrys to the Post Office is repaired / replaced.
- New border to be completed. Subject to cost and sponsorship. Aim is to have this as a cost neutral project.
- If there is agreement with a new canopy (Mr Perrys to Post Office) the volunteers will assist with safety / removal etc.

We have potentially set ourselves a bit of work! There is some help and support from the group and the wider community. Some of this will be subject to continued and enhanced buy in / commitment from the Shop Owners / Keepers. But the group is determined to try and progress and make the area a community hub for the village.

Phone box Book Exchange - Carol and Jim have continued to keep the phone maintained, box tidy and well stocked. We need more novels and be happy to receive anything enjoyed reading but no longer needed. Children's books are especially welcome. Note…we do not need reference books, toys, games, magazines or DVDs. The number of books borrowed this summer was spectacular. (I think because people take something to read on holiday)

Litter Busters - I am delighted with the number of volunteers who take part in litter busting. Many thanks to all of you who attended the three events since my last report and also to those who use their daily walk as an opportunity to collect discarded rubbish. This effort makes a huge difference to the village. The task is made no easier by the outsides who pass through the village ejecting their cups and cartons onto our roads. Despite their lack of consideration the volunteers keep the village looking neat and tidy.

I would also like to make mention of the kindness of the Ship which provides coffee for the volunteers after each of our events. This is organised by Vickie Moore to whom we are most grateful.

In the last year we have held regular litter picks once a week in term time with the over 16 students of the two bridges academy. Many thanks to the seven volunteers who take part. Not only are these litter picks enjoyed by the students (and the volunteers) they are also a useful experience and an opportunity for the students to develop skills which could help them in the job market.

Christmas Decorations - Jim Godden has once again managed to get those pesky little LEDs to work in spite of the rain and wind. Thanks to him and of course to the staff and little elves of the pre-school who decorated the Christmas tree.

Treasurer's Report -
We have a balance of £7,361.03 as of 28th February 2026 compared to £7,802.15 at the beginning of April 2025. The income from three repair cafes was £749.09. This compares to an expenditure of £430.75 on church hire and advertising, including a contribution to Helmet. In addition, proceeds from these and previous years have enabled the purchase of extra tables for the café to be available in the church and a new advertising banner.

The Parish Council again provided funds to cover the cost of insurance - £272.70.
£226.50 has been spent on plants and planters for the parade and a Christmas tree.
One new plant (£29.99) has been purchased for the Jubilee Garden.
Peter Waller raised £179.44 with his games at the Summer and Christmas Fayres.

5. Alveston Community Events Report

Report given by Hayley Grove – Alveston Community Events

Thank you' s – Graham and the Parish Council, Jubilee Hall, Youth Centre and St Helens Church, we could not do our events without your continued support.

Alveston Village Fair (6th September 2025) - The weather was kind, and we the organiser's although stressed enjoyed the day. It was great to see so many people from the village out enjoying themselves. The bar and the WI Ladies were kept busy all day serving drinks and refreshments. We did manage to make a small profit, which was given back to local groups who helped on the day, WI, St Helens Church, Helmet and Scouts

Halloween Trail (October 2025 -The trail started and ended at St Helen School, with over 190 children attending this year, it just seems to get bigger and bigger each year, the weather was windy but dry, all adults and children enjoyed the trail of 10 properties, disco and bar, small profit made due to costs.

Christmas Fair (December 2025) - Held in the Methodist Halls again, we had more stalls, and entertainment, along with bacon sandwiches at 10:00am followed by burgers and hotdogs at 12:00pm, thanks to Alex, Ian and Rick who keep us all feed. We already have a waiting list for people wanting to join us this year. We made a small profit.

Bingo (February 2026) - At the ship was a complete sell out, we couldn't have fitted another sole into the room.

Thank you to the Parish Council, Emily Amelia Ponting for your funding, helping keep the village fair free for all. We do have our own bank account, constitution, trustee and are self-insured.

Village Fair is Saturday 5th September this year, and we are looking for funds to help with the cost, we also need some help to set up, clear up, offer of raffle prizes.

6. Parish Council Chairman's Report

John Graham (Parish Council Chairman) presented.

Thank you for your very informative reports and thank you all for your hard work. Thank you to the parish councillors, Anne Curtis, Paul Caddick, Carmen Vazquez, Matthew riddle for their work in the community

groups and the contribution to the council meetings, who all give their time voluntary. Welcome to two new councillors this year, Vicky Moore and Lydia Veldkamp.

Thank you also to Kate Driver our cemetery caretaker and to Graham Smith our parish clerk. I would also like to say thank you to Cllrs Matthew Riddle and Tony Williams for the help we receive from them both in supporting the parish.

People who do not sit on a committee but have a great impact on our parish, the cemeteries, the green space, allotments, to name a few, we are a lucky community to have you all so thank you for the continued work.

This year we have been busy within the parish. Our new nature area on Down Road is almost complete in time for Sprong / Summer. This was funded entirely by south Glos council under a specifically allocated S106 grant, so has not come from parish precept. Councillors have set money in this year's budget to enable new toddler equipment in the Lime Kiln Park and to enable additional s137 payments toward the Jubilee Hall.

Sporting activity is on the up with the Jubilee Field fully in use for junior football in winter and Alveston Cricket Club playing their home games in summer. The pump track is well used and enjoyed. The cemetery is always maintained to the highest possible standard, and this year has seen its usual level of internments, erected and newly inscribed memorial stones. The allotments remain popular however; there are a few vacant plots should any parish resident wish to apply.

There are also our daily "housekeeping" functions which ensures the parish continues to be an outstanding place to reside. The month-by-month activities of the parish council are contained within the meeting minutes and available at www.alveston.org.

Before I finish, I would just like to add that we are always looking for new candidates to join us as parish councillors, if you would like to join us, please see Graham Smith, the clerk or myself for any further information, you would be made more than welcome.

Thank you once again to you all, together we make our parish a great place to live.

7. Parish Councillor Council Reports

Finance Report

Given by Graham Smith – Parish Council Clerk

Although the year end accounts are still to be finalised The Parish Council this year has had to draw on its reserves by 10K but remains financially healthy although stringent observation will be maintained at meetings. This drawing of general reserve is due to increase costs and a large amount of unbudgeted grant aid requests particularly the appeal for funds from the Jubilee Hall which will continue for several years to come. It is noted that grant applications which were one within the hundreds of pounds have now become grant requests in the thousands. The parish council has allowed for this in the 2026/27 budget.

South Glos Council is running a consultation regarding offloading its special expenses costs to Parish councils which may not only have a significant financial impact but also, in some instances, will impact upon the Clerks workload. Councils' response will be discussed in a meeting in June but if goes through will likely have an impact upon parish precepts.

As usual the Parish council goes through a stringent Audit process and the internal audit, and Annual Governance and Accountability return will be completed in May in readiness for public rights inspections for six weeks commencing beginning of June.

Planning Report

Given by Councillor John Graham – Chair of Planning committee

The Planning Committee met 13 times in the year to consider all the planning applications made in the Parish under our role as formal consultee.

The committee considered 35 Planning Applications and of these applications 17 were approved by South Glos Council Planning, 5 were refused, 3 applications were withdrawn and 10 undecideds at the time of the meeting. There were 3 licence applications, 1 appeal to the Secretary of State and 3 referrals to the SGC Circulated Schedule of which 1 referral was “called in”.

Several meetings were attended by people within the Parish, generally to share their objections with the committee.

Allotments Report

Given by Cllr Paul Caddick

There are currently four vacant plots with no one on the waiting list but currently two in the process of being taken.

The Parish Council continue to carry out regular inspections and over the summer had conducted a full inspection which revealed the necessity to repair the fence and clerk and chair will review timescales shortly.

The Parish Council continues to work closely with the Alveston Allotment Association to ensure that allotment holders enjoy their allotments to the full.

8. Open Forum – Questions and Discussion

No questions were raised.

9. End of Business

Councillor John Graham closed the meeting thanked the members of Alveston Women’s Institute for providing the refreshments.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.