

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 6th October 2026 in
Much Hadham Village Hall, at 7.30 pm.

* Cllr B Bird

* Cllr T Bond

* Cllr I Hunt (Chair)

* Cllr A Love

* Cllr D McDonald

* *Denotes present*

* Cllr B O'Neill

* Cllr M Scarlett

* Cllr S Smith

Cllr J Westlake (Vice-Chair)

In attendance: V Mazza (Clerk), Cllr I Devonshire (EHDC), Cllr M Pope (HCC) & 4 members of the public

26/142. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received, and approved, from Cllr J Westlake

26/143. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None.

26/144. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

26/145. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The chair welcomed Cllr Alan Love to his first meeting following his co-option.

26/146. PORTFOLIOS AND COMMITTEES

RESOLVED to approve interim changes to the allocation of portfolios and appoint Cllr A Love to the Burial Authority.

ACTION: Clerk to update website

26/147. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 1st September 2026 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair after the meeting.

26/148. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

Regarding the application for the allotments car park to be made an Asset of Community Value, EHC gave a cautious response, noting that car parks are generally not considered assets of social benefit in themselves, although they may support other valued community assets. Once ownership has been confirmed, EHC will consider the application on its merits.

26/149. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) COMMUNITY

Recreation Ground / Pavilion:

Cllr D McDonald reported that pre-app advice from EHC Planning about the prospect for long-term use of the Pavilion is being considered in more detail.

Cllr T Bond reported that a regular hirer is looking to use the Pavilion 4 days a week so it would be occupied whilst long-term options are being considered.

Sports Association:

Cllr T Bond reported that Sport England had updated the details they hold about the facilities located at the Recreation Ground.

Cllr D McDonald reported that the Bowls Club had received details of the proposed remedial works relating to the pavilion subsidence claim. A meeting with the loss adjusters was being arranged to review the works and any policy coverage issues.

Cllr S Smith reported that the pavilion defibrillator had been accessed by emergency crews for the second consecutive month.

ACTION: Cllr D McDonald will attend meeting with the Chair of the Sports Association.

Village Hall:

The Chair announced that the next management committee meeting is on 13th October.

(ii) PLAYGROUND WORKING PARTY

The Playground Working Party has been unable to commence the planned community clean-up due to current water restrictions, and identified maintenance and repairs remain outstanding.

Broadmead Leisure's September inspection found no high-risk areas, with three medium-risk items requiring maintenance.

The Recreation Trust had contributed £1,800 towards the project, and quotations are being obtained for the basketball area surfacing.

Three playground contractors have been approached, with one quotation received and reports/quotations awaited from the others.

ACTION: Clerk to transfer £1800 received from the Recreational Trust to Earmarked Reserves.

(iii) ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY)

Cllr S Smith reported that a dedicated HCC PRoW officer for our parish and other neighbouring parishes is now in post.

He had reported the removal of a fallen tree on Bridleway 28 and a request to the landowner responsible for the dead oak tree to be made safe on BOAT 46.

ACTION: Cllr S Smith to ask the tree surgeon attending the Recreation Ground later this month to assess the 'dead' tree hanging over the telephone kiosk and any others along the road verge.

(iv) HIGHWAYS (INCLUDING "20'S PLENTY")

Cllr D McDonald had received confirmation that no changes had been made to HCC's 20mph policy and that any future application for a 20mph zone in Much Hadham would likely require funding through the County Councillor's Highways Locality Budget. No immediate progress was therefore expected, although Cllr McDonald had contacted Cllr Mark Pope to explore any future opportunities.

Cllr S Smith reported that Parsonage Lane is now fully open after a lengthy closure while the National Grid upgrades were in progress

(v) MEDIA

Cllr T Bond reported on his postings to social media and the website. The monthly report featured in the parish magazine will now also be shared via Facebook to reach more residents.

(vi) SECURITY

Cllr A Love reported that there had been no crime in the parish in the last two months, as advised by our PCSO.

(vii) STANSTED AIRPORT

Cllr D McDonald reported that the the second Stansted Airport Parish Council Forum meeting will take place on 22 October. Efforts to gain support from other Parish Councils to raise key shared concerns, including out-of-hours night flights, have received limited response, and these efforts have now been abandoned.

(viii) OTHER

Cllr S Smith reported that a newly appointed EHDC Planning Enforcement Officer has visited the field opposite Danebridge Road after the 24th September which had

been set as initial deadline date for the first part of the field's restoration programme.

The Chair reported that a film presentation, 'The People's Emergency Briefing', on climate change had taken place on 15th September. Cllrs attended along with 60 residents.

ACTION: Cllr J Westlake will be following up on the issues of sustainability and the environment, following a NALC webinar. She hopes to present proposals for greater involvement of the PC at the December meeting.

26/150. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

County Cllr M Pope had held a surgery at Albury Village Hall. He provided updates regarding the road markings at the Kettle Green Lane junction, repairs at Snells Corner planned for 2017/18 and the proposal for 20mph zones in Little Hadham. He also confirmed that he has £10,000 remaining in his budget and that the objective of 20mph for Much Hadham is a priority. Local Government Reorganisation decisions are expected in November, but the usual district and parish council elections remain due to take place next year.

District Cllr I Devonshire thanked Cllr Bill O'Neill for painting the railings outside the Almshouses. He also announced that planning enforcement action was being taken at Great Hadham Golf and Country Club, where far more holiday lodges than approved are being installed. Some occupants were allegedly living there permanently contrary to planning permission and not paying council tax. The site has a history of similar issues, he said, and court proceedings may be the next step.

26/151. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

A resident raised concerns regarding the proposals for Footpath 22 (*see agenda item 26/152*), including the potential 'loss of heritage', who would bear the cost of school fencing and the 3m wide access.

Concerns were also raised about the use of the ford at Oudle Lane, where a contractor working at the development had been seen washing mud off vehicle wheels.

Another resident raised concerns about the speed of vehicles (up to 60mph) between Lordship Farm and Bromley Lane.

ACTION: Chair to add to Report on Outstanding Matters an item to seek a reduction in the speed limit, and Cllr D McDonald to initiate contact with HCC.

26/152. FOOTPATH 22 – TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE DEFINITIVE MAP OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY THROUGH ST ANDREW’S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cllr S Smith provided an overview of the consultation proposal to re-route Footpath 22, The Chair read a letter from the school’s Chair of governors and Headteacher, supporting the proposal and highlighted existing safeguarding concerns associated with the footpath running through the school grounds.

Councillors discussed pupil access via the existing gates, the potential for misuse of a wider path by motorcycles etc, access for the Almshouses tenants to maintain their hedges and other matters. Concerns were also raised regarding the current risk to the security of pupils from unrestricted public access.

RESOLVED: To support the proposed amendments to the definitive map. It was agreed that the response to the consultation would emphasise the school’s safeguarding obligations but also include reference to the concerns and unanswered questions raised by residents and cllrs, to ensure these were addressed in the final Order.

ACTION: Chair to draft and submit a response to the consultation.

If residents wish to comment on this proposal, they should do so between now and 15th October by accessing the following link <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/row>

26/153. ALMSHOUSE CHARITY

The accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025 were received and noted. The Chair expressed the thanks of the Parish Council to the trustees for their diligence and hard work in caring for the almshouses.

The Chair, on behalf of the Chair of Trustees, thanked Cllr B O’Neill for kindly repainting the railings in front of the Almshouses.

26/154. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts:

Payable to	For	Amount £
MHSA	Grass Cutting - Q3 invoice	882.00
		Total: £882.00

RESOLVED: to approve the payment of accounts

ACTION: Payment to be authorised online following the meeting by Cllr T Bond & Cllr B O’Neill.

Payments authorised by Clerk/Chair and automated payments were noted. See Appendix A.

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statements for 2026/27 to date were received. The summary financial position was as below. The Chair confirmed that a bank reconciliation was included in the financial statements and was signed by Cllr M Scarlett.

Much Hadham Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
Summary - Cost Centres Only (Between 01/04/2026 and 30/09/2026)

Cost Centre	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	
							+/- Under/over spend
01 Income	62,345.00	67,179.08	4,834.08 (7%)			0.00 (N/A)	4,834.08
02 Administration			0.00 (N/A)	9,660.00	5,033.17	4,626.83 (47%)	4,626.83
03 Burial Authority	4,400.00	2,028.00	-2,372.00 (-53%)	6,602.00	460.59	6,141.41 (93%)	3,769.41
04 Staff			0.00 (N/A)	14,191.00	6,653.69	7,537.31 (53%)	7,537.31
05 Loan Repayments			0.00 (N/A)	8,122.00	4,061.05	4,060.95 (50%)	4,060.95
06 Open Spaces and Buildings			0.00 (N/A)	51,033.00	10,628.39	40,404.61 (79%)	40,404.61
07 Grants Given			0.00 (N/A)	6,000.00	500.00	5,500.00 (91%)	5,500.00
08 Other Items			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
NET TOTAL	66,745.00	69,207.08	2,462.08 (3%)	95,608.00	27,336.89	68,271.11 (71%)	70,733.19
Total for ALL Cost Centres		69,207.08			27,336.89		
V.A.T.		210.00			1,872.06		
GROSS TOTAL		69,417.08			29,208.95		

(iii) RESOLVED: to review and approve a revised Reserves policy

ACTION: Clerk to update website

(iv) RESOLVED: to approve a monthly standing order be established for the Clerk's Salary

ACTION: Clerk to instruct bank

(v) RESOLVED: to approve a bank transfer of £15,000 to the savings account

ACTION: Clerk to instruct bank

26/155. STAFFING COMMITTEE

(i) The draft minutes of the Staffing Committee Meeting on the 16th of September 2026 were received and decisions taken were noted.

(ii) RESOLVED – to approve a Dignity at Work policy to replace the Bullying and Harassment policy.

(iii) RESOLVED – to approve an Equality and Diversity policy.

ACTION: Clerk to update website with both policies.

26/156. PLANNING

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 1st September 2026 were received and the decisions taken were noted.

26/157. BURIAL AUTHORITY

The minutes of the Burial Authority Committee meeting held on 1st September 2026 were received and decisions taken were noted.

26/158. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

26/159. CLERK'S INFORMATION

The Clerk reported that Parish Council minutes would be produced in a more concise format, focusing on key discussion points, questions raised, decisions made and actions agreed, rather than repeating information contained in Councillors' reports. This approach aims to make the minutes clearer and easier to follow while ensuring important matters are recorded.

The Clerk also reminded Councillors of the training courses available through HAPTC.

26/160. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 3rd November 2026, Much Hadham Village Hall at 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.01pm

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2027

Payments authorised by Clerk/Chair and automated payments - September 2026

Excluding payroll costs

Month	Ref	Payable to	For	Amount £
August	DD	Unity bank	Service Charge	7.00
Sept	DD	Scribe	Accounting Software - Monthly Fee	44.40
	DD	Nest	Pension Contributions	
	DD	Lloyds	Service Charge & Clerk Mobile phone payment	9.00
	SO	M Windmill	Litter Picker	110.50
	DD	ICO	Renewal of Data Protection fee	47.00
	76	Community Heartbeat	Annual Support for Defib device	235.20
	77	Cllr J Westlake	Reimbursement for Webinar	42.00
	78	Citizens Advice - East Herts	Grant	500.00
	79	Broadmead Leisure	Playground Report	60.00
	80	Clerk	Salary - September 2026	
	DD	Eon	Pavilion Electricity	91.16
			Total:	1146.26