

Minutes of Somerford Keynes Parish Council Meeting

Village Hall, 13th July 2026

Present: Cllr A. Clark (AC), Cllr H.Collins (HC), Cllr N.Hunt (NH), Cllr M.H-Oldland (MHO), Cllr J Whitwell (JW),

Also present: Clerk S. Pawlowska (SP) and four members of the public.

1. Apologies

Cllr M. Keegan (MK), Cllr G.Valentine (GV), CDC Cllr M.McKeown (MM)

2. Declaration of Interest

None

3. Public Session

Nothing raised

4. Approval of Minutes of 9th March 2026 Meeting

Proposed AC, seconded HC

5. Village Lake Report from Mike Wilding

Mike's report is Appendix Two

6. Mark Harris & Brian Phelps from Hang Loose Adventures

The PC welcomed Mark and Brian, who may be taking over the operation of Cotswold Country Park and Beach from April 2027, to hear about their future plans. They both stressed that they want to maintain as a family attraction and will not be trying to increase capacity at peak times. No dramatic changes, no zip lines (the other two sites Hang Loose operate both have them), & no large noisy events. Their main focus is on opening all year round to provide a place to have a coffee, walk dogs and engage with nature through the winter months/off season. They will work closely with the Lakes Trust to improve paths and add bird viewing hides. There is an opportunity to make the site more commercially viable with a year-round opening, reinstating the beach, tidying up the site and improving the buildings.

The Parish Council noted that Shorncote residents are disturbed by the noise from the Aquapark, but were otherwise supportive of the proposed approach and will look to maintain an open dialogue.

7. General Matters

7.1 Thames Water Sewage Treatment Plant

Increased odours emitted from this site have been noted in Shorncliffe.

Action: MK to engage with Thames Water

7.2 Community Event

The PC is supportive of providing funding for an event that could offer something for all parts of the community.

Action: MHO to progress.

7.3 Water Lane Hedge

This is a little overgrown on the footpath side,

Action: HC will engage with Lower Mill to ask if they are able to help with the cutting back.

8. Community Infrastructure Levy

8.1 Coffee Machine in Village Hall

Parishioners had asked for a bean to cup coffee machine to be provided to enable them to sell quality drinks at events to raise money for charities. The PC agreed to fund this, and it will be kept in the village hall. The Village Hall Committee agreed to this, on the basis that it's not for general use and is kept locked away when not being used for such events.

Action: SP to order the coffee machine.

8.2 Village Hall Table Tennis

The VHC rejected the PC's proposal (requested by a number of parishioners but objected to by others) for an outdoor table, on the basis of loss of parking space and safety. They have agreed to have an indoor one, although there needs to be a process to manage this, such as access to the hall. There is a requirement for someone to take responsibility for this in order to progress.

The PC would like to hear from anyone that would like to organise this, appreciating the original request was for something more informal.

A councillor expressed disappointment with the VHC's views on these matters. The Village Hall is a community asset which should be made available to all. Whilst the PC tries (not always successfully!) to engage with and support all groups across the community the decisions of the VHC appear to focus on only addressing the needs of a small subset.

8.3 Bleed Packs

One bleed pack has been installed at the Village Hall. As the telephone box is too small for the other bleed pack, it has been agreed with the management at the Bakers Arm's that it can be installed there. Marcus' provider (who is a paramedic) has agreed to run a session free of charge for residents to cover the use of the packs and the defibs. More information to follow.

8.4 Shorncote Parish Church

Whilst happy in principle to fund repairs, the PC are still awaiting more quotes from the Church Conservation Trust to ensure best value is achieved.

8.5 Bus Shelter Repair

The approved repair to the bus has taken place and been paid for in full.

Action: SP to make an insurance claim with Zurich to see if we can reclaim any of the money spent.

8.6 Neigh Bridge Swings

Whilst the Lakes Trust said these would be installed in July there seems to be no evidence of construction work on site.

AC is meeting with them on July 15th and will ask for clarification.

8.7 Mower for Church Yard

The PC has funded the purchase of a new mower for the group of volunteers that maintain the church yard. The PC thanks them for the fine state they keep it in.

9. Planning

PL/2023/03359

Anaerobic Digester

This application was refused permission by Wiltshire Council on July 14th.

10. June 2026 Income and Expenditure

<u>Income</u>	£199.61	Interest Earned June 2026
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Total Income	£199.61	
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Expenditure

June 2026	£463.13	SP Clerk's salary (June)
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Total Expenditure	£463.13	
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Village Lake	£0	
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VL Total Expenditure	£0	
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CIL Expenditure	£45	Made in Oak
	£1245	Made in Oak
	£685	Mower for churchyard

Total CIL Spend	£1975	
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Transfers	£None	
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Petty Cash Expenditure	£0	
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Total Petty Cash Spend	£0	
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11. Correspondence

Neigh Bridge

The PC are aware of the issues at Neigh Bridge and have previously published detailed comments on this.

AC is attending a meeting with the Lakes Trust to discuss further on July 14th.

13. Any Other Business

None.

Meeting closed at 8:50pm

Date of next meeting is September 14th 2026

Appendix 1

Village Lake QUARTERLY LAKE REPORT, covering period Apr- Jun 26

1. Lake Committee: Due to the resignation of Jane Hayman due to family commitments we have been looking for new committee member(s) and have recently recruited Hugh Goodier who is a long term Mill Lane resident, and Tracy Quigley, both members of the "Friends of the Village Lake" group formed earlier in the year.
2. Bulb planting: The recently formed "Friends Group" planted snowdrops & bluebells "in the green" during early April. These bulbs usually take 2 seasons to flower
3. Wildflower areas: The main wildflower areas are on the N side of the Lake, and are improving each year, but do need autumn and winter maintenance to avoid grasses and invasive weeds (primarily hogweed, taking over) . There are also 3 smaller wildflower lake edge areas on the Spine road side. The recent Bio Blitz morning (see below) identified 30 different wild flower species including the interestingly named "Ladies Bed Straw"
4. Bonfires: Due to the very wet early spring, our annual planned bonfire could not be lit, and the very dry weather and heatwaves have made it rather dangerous to light, so the dry heap will be covered and lit in the autumn, on a suitable day
5. Bio Blitz Morning: Last Saturday 11 July, a very successful event was attended by about



20 villagers, including about 10 children, led by James Ponting (Lower Mill Estate ecologist) and the Lake committee, the morning included moth trapping and identification. A "sightings" board has now been fixed in position under the notice board, so people can write on what they see.

6. General Maintenance: Trimming overhanging brambles, twigs etc, mowing the path, removing a dead branch from our TPO (Tree Preservation Order) sycamore beside

the sheds, and other fallen branches, monthly inspections (including water level gauge readings, all continue by committee members

Mike ... The Lake Committee:

12 July 26

EXPENDITURE 26/27

Date	Item	Cost (ex VAT)	VAT	Total
8 July 26	3 White Chalk markers	£7.00	-	£7.00
8 July 26	Plywood, blackboard paint and brushes for sightings board	£39.33	£7.87	£47.20

