

Annual meeting of the Parish of the Upper Deverills Held at Upper Deverills Village Hall on Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 6.00pm

The meeting was opened at 1800
2 members of the public present

Welcome

Chair welcomed all to the meeting of the Parish.

Apologies for absence

Cllr Hardwick, Ollie Mead Chair of the Cricket Club, Henry Stratton Treasurer of Cricket Club, Tas Richardson Upper Deverills Speed watch team.

Chairs Report

Started by explaining how the council is made up, the council at the moment consists of the parish clerk and 4 parish councillors. There is no representative for Brixton Deverill and Cllr Fagan encouraged anyone who would like to represent the parish to come forward.

Councillors often hear from members of the public that the parish council never does anything – in the last year they have considered 15 planning applications, represented the UD at Warminster Area Highways group, responded to the consultation on the closure of Mere Fire Station, supported local organisations financially, replaced local infrastructure such as finger posts and notice board, organised a litter pick, lobbied to improve mobile phone signal in BD, liaised with Wessex Internet, held 7 parish council meetings, worked with Wiltshire Council on flooding solutions in MD and KD. Supervised tasks for the parish steward/clearing of rain water gullies, made representations to Wiltshire Council on HGVs on B3095, contributed to the Cranborne Chase national Landscapes management plan and kept the precept at the same level for the last 3 years in a time of rapidly rising costs.

The Chair also thanked the people who put in a huge amount of effort, on a voluntary basis to make the community what it is, these included

Dark Skies champion

Community Speed Watch

SID

Neighbourhood Watch

Village Hall committee

The litter pick

Parish News

The website

The clerk

Dark Skies

The UD are part of the Cranbourne Chase and were the 14th area to join the Dark Skies.

All of the UD are in the core part of the Dark Skies area, so there is an obligation to conform.

There has been a liaison with West Knoyle over the Willougby Hedge light pollution as this is an area that is in the core of the dark Skies area.

It was noted that the new service area at Chilmark may contribute to the light pollution, but we will have to wait to see this, but light pollution should be considered in planning applications.

Neighbourhood Watch

The NW coordinator sees himself as a liaison between the police and the community and tries to work along those lines and is using the Parish News to keep members of the public updated.

Rural crime is increasingly becoming connected to serious / organised crime and will range from petty crime to heavy plant/farm machinery thefts.

A 10 page leaflet has been produced on CCTV and its uses, for anyone who is interested in using this as a deterrent, please contact the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator to acquire one.

Village Hall Committee

A report was sent and read out by the Chair. The members of the public present supported the Chairs statement at what a fantastic job the committee is doing.

The Village Hall remains a vital community resource for the valley, serving as a social hub for our three villages. It hosts private events, weekly Pilates classes, theatrical and musical performances, and acts as the cricket pavilion.

Committee Activities

The Village Hall Committee organizes a full programme of well-attended events, including:

- * Monthly pub nights with occasional live music by the Happy Valley Band
- * Spring Feast with live music and poetry
- * Annual Duck Race
- * Summer Show, Fete and Dog Show (always popular and increasingly well supported)
- * Remembrance Sunday Curry Lunch, Quiz, Childrens Christmas Party, and Carol Service
- * Talks on a range of topics.

Governance and Legal Updates

We have regularized our legal standing by locating the original deeds, establishing a new governance document, and appointing three trustees (Ted Flint, Tim Watts, Kevin McBride) to replace the long-deceased original trustees. We are in the process of registering the Hall with the Land Registry. The next step is converting the charity into a Charitable Incorporated Organization to limit trustees personal liability. We are grateful to the Dufosee family for their financial support in covering legal costs.

Future Plans

Given the community's limited size and the cost of a new building, we have opted to extend the current buildings lifespan as far as possible through a programme of improvements, using reserves as seed-corn funding with which to seek grants for the larger projects. We will canvass community input on desired improvements and are open to collaborating with the Parish Council and Parochial Church Council on a wider survey.

Challenge

While the Hall thrives, the average age of regular users and Committee members is ... quite high. We recognize many younger community members have different priorities for their leisure time but will continue our efforts to sustain engagement and energy.

We are grateful to the Parish Council for its support.

Ted Flint

Cricket Club

A report was sent and read out by the Chair

Please accept our apologies for not attending the parish council meeting on Wednesday 13th May.

The Deverills Cricket Club ("DCC") continues to greatly appreciate the financial support of the Upper Deverills Parish Council through its £1,000 grant which, in keeping with previous years, we would like

to apply for in 2026. The annual grant is essential to the ongoing financial viability of the club and alongside match fees and annual player subscriptions comprises our income.

The club continues to make a small annual surplus by carefully managing expenses. These principally comprise insurance, maintaining mowers and equipment and buying seed, fertiliser and weed killer for the square / field. We operate with a low input mindset given the small number of games and keep all applications, including the use of water, to a minimum. The club's financial reserves of around £3,000 are lower than we would like given rising costs (especially insurance) and the need to occasionally invest in equipment. Maintaining a small annual surplus is therefore important to build our financial reserves over time.

The club continues to play around 6 fixtures a year against local teams. While we are able to raise a team, club cricket generally is struggling for numbers and the DCC is not immune. We continue, however, to be well supported by local members with most players living in the Deverill valley or having historic connections to the valley. Fixtures are greatly enjoyed by all who play and many who come to support. A core group of club members remain engaged and contribute their time (free of charge) to keep the club running.

While the DCC is the recipient of this grant the benefits to the Upper Deverills are more widespread. The DCC mows and maintains the field which while privately owned is made available for wider use. The field receives a lot of use from non-cricket activities such as events connected to the village hall, parking, dog walking and just general use of the field for people to play games etc.

DCC members would like to thank the Upper Deverills Parish Council for their ongoing support which remains essential to maintaining the field for both cricket and the wider community.

UD Speed Watch Team

A report was sent and read out by the Chair

The Upper Deverills speedwatch team consists of 15 volunteers.

We have the speed device every other week.

This year, so far, there has been 13 sessions.

During these 13 sessions 1678 cars have passed us.

There have been 68 cars exceeding speed limit.

The top speed recorded is 51mph.

Changes within the community speedwatch system mean the Community road safety team are being moved from Citizens in Policing to Specialist Operations.

I'm not sure if or how this will affect us.

It would be great to have some new team members so we can carry out more sessions.

I will continue to lead the team this year, after that we will have to wait and see.

Alan - Upper Deverills Speedwatch Team Leader

Open Forum

There was discussion about the new tarmac that had recently been laid – it was thought that the smoother road would lead to faster speeds and make it more of a rat run.

The meeting was closed at 1834

