



Spring Newsletter

clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

First Floor, Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES • 01225 705700



Clerk Teresa Strange & Chair John Glover

NEW COUNCILLORS

There were no elections for the parish council on the 1st May as all those who stood were elected uncontested.

All nine that have been elected unopposed were existing parish councillors. A few of those returning as councillors have been in the role for many years, whilst some have been co-opted over the last couple of years, so a good mix of experience and new ideas, along with the four brand new councillors who were co-opted at the Annual

Council meeting on 12th May.

Councillor John Glover was elected Chair, and Councillor David Pafford was elected Vice Chair, both returning to the role, with unanimous votes.

Councillor Mark Blackham and Councillor Martin Haffenden were co-opted on to the council in the Bowerhill Ward; and Councillor Chris Griffiths and Councillor Tony Hemmings were co-opted in the Beanacre, Shaw, Whitley and Blackmore Ward.

NEW TERM OF OFFICE

All Parish Councillors are volunteers; they are passionate about their communities and seek to make a change to help improve residents' lives.

They give up their time, and spend a lot of energy, working to get the best for the communities that they live in, and represent. The Melksham Without Parish Councillors have good local knowledge and a unique understanding of the distinct characteristics of the five villages, two hamlets and other rural areas that they represent.

Where they don't have direct decision making authority, they

will engage with those who do, for the good of the community. They strive to:

- have a holistic view across the parish
- influence decision makers
- join up the dots and look at the bigger picture
- look at highways and speeding issues

They are committed to achieving the right infrastructure, from community facilities to health and education provision, for all parish residents. At the start of the new term of four years, they have broken that down into more specific priorities and objectives, which are listed in no particular order.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Parish council meetings are held in public, and the aim is always to be as transparent as possible.

A recording of the meeting is shared on YouTube the following day and then removed once the minutes for that meeting have been approved and uploaded to the website. The parish council meetings are held on a Monday evening at their offices on the first

floor of the Melksham Community Campus from 7pm. Please check the agendas for more details, these are posted on local noticeboards and are on the website. You can also pop into the office to talk to officers about issues you wish to raise, or if you are seeking information. It's always manned Monday to Thursday 10am -12 and 2 - 4pm but you will often find officers there outside those times.

NEXT MEETINGS Commencing at 7pm

Finance Committee	Monday 2 June 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 9 June 2025
Staffing Committee (To Start After Planning)	Monday 9 June 2025
Full Council	Monday 16 June 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 30 June 2025
Asset Management (Venue Tbc)	Monday 7 July 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 21 July 2025
Highways Committee (To Start After Planning)	Monday 21 July 2025
Full Council	Monday 28 July 2025

GRANTS

The parish council provide grant funding for a variety of organisations based in the parish, as well as from the wider community that benefit the residents of Melksham Without.

Grants totalling £35,677 were presented at the Annual Parish

meeting before the Pre-Election period. The meeting is always interesting as we hear from such a wide range of groups providing activities, support and venues in the parish and the council are always amazed at the sheer volume of volunteers giving up their time

OBJECTIVES & PRIORITIES FOR 2025/26

- To progress the review of the joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan through Examination and Referendum*
- To implement, monitor and use the policies in the current and reviewed Melksham Neighbourhood Plan*
- To progress the installation of a drinking water refill point at Shaw Sports Field
- To review the Emergency Plan*
- To progress the Shurnhold Fields car park and improved entrance project*
- To continue to maintain a good working relationship with Wiltshire Council, the Area Board and all the neighbouring parishes who about Melksham Without.
- To agree a new lease for Shaw Village Hall with the Management Trust
- To ensure the best outcome for the parish from any major National Infrastructure projects
- To build funds for a new East of Melksham Community Centre
- To review and update the parish council website (both content and to meet new accessibility criteria)
- To progress project for a footbridge over the brook to connect Buckley Gardens development to Bowood View development (off Semington Road, Berryfield)
- To support village halls and community groups with any impact of new legislation e.g.: change in Waste rules, Martyn's Law

* Working with Melksham Town Council

OBJECTIVES & PRIORITIES FOR TERM OF COUNCIL (2025-2029)

- To assess and make best use of evolving technology such as AI and Microsoft tools
- To work towards obtaining the Local Council Quality Gold Award
- To continue to provide enhanced access to council meetings via remote technology to improve community engagement.
- To achieve the best outcome for the parish, for the proposed A350 Bypass.
- To continue to progress wider Realtime Information (RTI) in bus shelters across the parish and town*
- To obtain higher speed internet access in the parish
- To improve drainage at Bowerhill Sports Field
- To continue the Melksham Community Support project with Age UK* and look to develop a similar project for younger age groups
- To campaign and progress an improved Melksham health facility/hospital
- To progress an East of Melksham Community Centre*
- To progress Road Safety improvements
- To achieve the best outcome for the community from current and future planning applications for major development in the parish
- To facilitate 3G pitch/es as per the identified need for two pitches in the Melksham community area
- To progress the Bowerhill Sports Field enhancement project with teen shelter/gym equipment

* Working with Melksham Town Council

JOINT MELKSHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Melksham Neighbourhood Plan steering group is made up of representatives from the parish and town council, Wiltshire Council and members of the community.

The current Neighbourhood Plan has been reviewed, with several consultation stages, and has now been examined by an independent Planning Examiner. This is being reviewed

by Wiltshire Council, and we await their recommendation for the reviewed Plan to go to Referendum.

It's a lot of detailed work, but important as the Neighbourhood Plan, alongside Wiltshire Council's Local Plan, sets out where development will be in the next 15 years, and the infrastructure to support it.

WHO IS MY COUNCILLOR?

BERRYFIELD WARD



Martin Franks
martin.franks@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



Richard Wood
richard.wood@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

BEANACRE, SHAW, WHITLEY AND BLACKMORE WARD



John Doel
john.doel@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



Chris Griffiths
chris.griffiths@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



Tony Hemmings
tony.hemmings@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



Peter Richardson
peter.richardson@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

BOWERHILL WARD



Alan Baines
alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



Mark Blackham
mark.blackham@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



John Glover (Council Chair)
john.glover@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



Martin Haffenden
martin.haffenden@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



Mark Harris
mark.harris@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



David Pafford (Council Vice Chair)
david.pafford@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk



Anne Sullivan
anne.sullivan@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

CIVILITY AND RESPECT

The parish council have signed up to the national "Civility and Respect" pledge as well as the Wiltshire "Positive Conduct equals Positive Democracy" campaign which encourages local councillors and officers to embody high standards.

ALLOTMENT VACANCIES

Want to have a go at "growing your own"? This is a really good time to take on a new allotment as it's the start of the growing season.

There are vacancies at the parish council's Allotment sites at Berryfield. Please get in touch by phone on 01225 705700 or by email at admin@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk if you are interested in a plot.

SPRING CLEANING

All the play areas in the parish have had a good clean of the play equipment and the safety surfacing too, before the Easter holidays.

Weed spraying of all the road kerbs and around the bus shelters in the parish is planned during the current dry weather.

VILLAGE HALLS

The council has facilitated some meetings with representatives from village halls and community centres in the wider area so that ideas and information can be shared.

This has gone well with a WhatsApp group being set up so that information can be shared in one place and provides a framework of support for all the volunteers giving up their time to run these valuable community spaces. Please get in touch if you run a community building in Melksham and the wider area and would like to join the group.

WANT TO KEEP IN TOUCH?

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