

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF SAVERNAKE PARISH COUNCIL 21ST MAY 2025
MEETING HELD AT SAVERNAKE PARK FARM, CADLEY, SN8 4NE

PRESENT

Guy Singleton (Chairman) (GS)
 Nigel Eayrs (NE)
 Nikki Boutal (NB)

Councillor
 Councillor
 Councillor
info@savernake-pc.org

Suzie Singleton (SS)
 Kym-Marie Cleasby (KMC)

Parishioner & Minute Taker
 Wiltshire and Marlborough Councillor
Kymee.Cleasby@wiltshire.gov.uk

11 parishioners

These draft Minutes have been approved by the Parish Councillors but, if any parishioner who attended the meeting has any comments, or suggested amendments to these minutes please contact the Parish Council on info@savernake-pc.org by the end of September 2026.

ITEM		
1	WELCOME GS welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the other Councillors and Kym Marie Cleasby.	
2	APOLOGIES AS MP Several Parishioners also sent apologies	
3	APPROVAL OF MINUTES The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 21 st May 2025 were approved. A copy will be uploaded to the SPC website.	
4	UPDATE ON PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITIES GS gave an overview of the works carried out by the Parish Council since the last Annual Meeting in 2025. A copy is attached to these Minutes at Appendix A.	
5	FINANCE REPORT NE went over the Parish Council's income and expenditure over the last 12 months.	

ITEM		
	A summary of this is attached at Appendix B.	
6	UPDATE OF SAVERNAKE FOREST GS read out a report by Nikki Morgans of Forestry England. A copy is attached at Appendix C.	
7	WILTSHIRE COUNCIL KMC introduced herself and gave a brief overview of who she is and what she does. She took queries from parishioners, and was able to respond, together with the councillors, to the matters arising below.	
8	MATTERS ARISING - Paul March asked how much money Postern Campsite had contributed to the local economy. GS replied that he was unsure but in an Interest Group supporting the campsite it had been reported anecdotally that fast food outlets in Marlborough believed it added up to £1000 to their takings over a weekend. KMC added that she would investigate whether such figures were available and, if so, would report back to the Parish Council. - Chris Podger asked about the trees between Maurice Way and the A4. Apparently the common areas include trees alongside the A4 that they have no access to. The land is managed by a company, but they do not respond or take any action. A tree survey had highlighted that several ash trees were affected by Ash Dieback including at least one leaning over the A4 and in danger of falling. They hoped that it would be possible for Wiltshire Council to take ownership of the land and to deal with the trees. KMC responded that she would see if she could find out anything about this. - Hilary Twentyman reported that she was still in contact with Savernake Hospital with regard to potentially finding a new home for the Mammogram Unit. She understood that one possibility for it to be sited would be at Marlborough Leisure Centre. They would still have access to power and water, and it would be a better site to attend rather than when it has been at the back of the hospital amongst their bins.	

ITEM		
	- It was reported by several parishioners that the footpath on A4 was dangerous, being very overgrown and difficult in some cases to use. The school bus now drops children on the A4, rather than outside the hospital, so they have to cross the road to get home. - Another parishioner had recently contacted the Parish Council to report that he had tried to get to the hospital for an appointment in his mobility buggy but as unable to get past some of the vegetation which was encroaching on the path. There was some discussion on what might be done about this. GS replied that he would contact the Parish Steward to see if he could do anything, but noted that only a very small portion of the footpath was actually within Savernake Parish boundaries, other stretches being the responsibility of Marlborough and Mildenhall councils. Various options were suggested including Other transports options were discussed such as Wiltshire Connect https://www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk/getting-around/bus/wiltshire-connect/ for which bus passes can be used to pay for journeys, also Link volunteer drivers (Email: chair@marlboroughlink.org.uk) and Kennet Community Transport (Contact: 01672 519067). - It was noted that the road markings faded on A4, and parishioners asked if they could they be repainted. GS (?) replied that he would endeavour to report this. <i>Post meeting note: GS received a message from the Community Governance Review team to confirm that they did not suggest any changes to Savernake Parish's boundaries or electoral arrangements to consult upon.</i>	

Signed

Date

Name

Appendix A

There are two main things which the Parish Council has been involved with over the past year.

Firstly - in conjunction with Hilary Twentyman, Maurice Way residents and the NHS - the installation of the double yellow lines at the Hospital, which should help keep the access road and pavement clear. In this case Hilary had done much of the work, but the Parish Council was able to work through a Wiltshire Council body, known as LHFIG, to get agreement for the work to be done, and then for the Highways department to do the work. In this case the Hospital agreed to pay for the works. It has taken almost two years to get the work agreed and completed, but we have now got the work done.

The second main thing we have done this year is the installation of signs and white gates and road narrowing signs at Clench Common, this has again been carried out through the LHFIG system in order to get consent for the work, and here Ramsbury Estate has kindly contributed towards the cost of the gates and signs. I would like to thank Nikki and her family for installing the gates. We hope that these will encourage drivers to slow down whilst they are driving through the Hamlet.

This, I think, brings me on to what we would like to try and achieve in the future - the reduction in the speed limits on the A4 through Forest Hill and on the A346 through Cadley. In both cases the current speed limit is 50mph, and we would like to get them reduced to 40mph, which would also allow us to install SIDS - Speed Indicator Devices. This has been looked at in the past, and the Wiltshire Council Highways have not agreed as we do not tick all the relevant boxes. Speaking to Kym Marie Cleasby, (our local Wiltshire and Marlborough Councillor), at our last Parish Council meeting she indicated the Wiltshire Councillors are looking at the guidelines, and there may eventually be a way forward.

We would also like to get a speed limit introduced at Clench Common. At present as you turns off the A345 (which has a 50mph limit), into the lane, you are greeted with a de-restriction sign (which implies a 60mph road). It would be nice at the very least to get the de-restriction sign moved to the other end of the main residential area, or preferably to have a lower limit on the lane, through the residential area.

On other matters we have considered and responded to about 15 planning applications during the year.

We have also been involved, together with Marlborough Town Council and in communication with Forestry England to try and get the Campsite reopened. We have had positive responses from FE, they are looking at investing in the site to try and make it more attractive for an operator to take it on, and they say that they are keen that it is reopened.

Finally, you may have heard that Wiltshire Council are holding a Community Governance Review into Parish Councils, this is looking at whether the current system is suitable for the future. We are aware that Savernake is a very small Parish in terms of population.

We have submitted our response, which is that we feel that the current system works, and we believe that we can deal with Parish Council matters in a timely and efficient manner. We have added that in the event that the review considers that the Parish is too small, then we would prefer to link up with one of the adjacent rural parishes, rather than becoming part of Marlborough Town Council.

To date we have not had a response from the Committee carrying out the review, so we will, have to wait and see what the outcome is.

Guy Singleton
Chair of Savernake Parish Council

Post Meeting Note: We have now heard from the Community Governance Review that the do not intend to change our Parish Boundaries.



Savernake Parish Council

Appendix B

Savernake Parish Council - Finance

1. 2025-26 Precept Income & Expenditure

♦ Precept from Wiltshire Council + Bank interest + VAT refund	+	£ 1,532
♦ Expenditure during the year	-	£ 1,101
♦ Balance added to reserves	+	£ 431

- ♦ The Precept received from Wiltshire Council was again unchanged at £1,300
- ♦ Expenditure included regular recurring costs (insurance, website, administration etc)
- ♦ Project expenditure included the start of improved road signage at Clench Common

2. Bank Balances

♦ Reserves at the start of the year (1 st April 2025)	+	£ 5,779
♦ Added to reserves	+	£ 431
♦ Reserve funds at 31 st March 2026	+	£ 6,210

3. 2026/2027 Forecast

♦ Precept from Wiltshire Council + Bank interest	+	£ 1,325
♦ Recurring expenses	-	£ 900
♦ Project expenditure (Road Safety)	-	£ 750
♦ Funds drawn from reserves	-	£ 325

♦ All reserves at the start of the year (1 st April 2026)	+	£ 6,210
♦ Deduct the deficit arising from the year's expenditure	-	£ 325
♦ Forecast reserve funds at 31 st March 2027	+	£ 5,885

4. Summary

- ♦ The Precept continues to fully cover the Council's recurring expenses
- ♦ The Council plans to use some reserve funds for further road safety measures
- ♦ Reserves continue broadly in line with historic levels
- ♦ The Council is confident of its 2026-27 Budget and foresees no risk of being unable to fulfil its financial commitments.



**Savernake
Parish Council**

Appendix C

Forestry England update from Savernake Forest

Summer is finally on the way and it's one of the busiest times of year for wildlife surveys.

Readers and forest visitors might remember the work we did to improve some of Savernake Forest's ponds over the winter. This involved carefully removing silt and vegetation to improve conditions for breeding amphibians, especially great crested newts.

Since then, we have surveyed for newts to find out how their behaviour was influenced by the changes. We do this by using a Dewsbury trap, which is a specially designed weighted box that safely captures newts that we can record and release. We were delighted to find that, following our winter maintenance, great crested newts are now using Crockmere Pool for the first time since we started surveying in 2013! They are also present in Column Pond and Bitham Pond, and potentially Thornhill Pond too.

Great crested newts have been around for about 40 million years but, mainly because of human-driven habitat loss, they are now a European protected species. Great crested newts are amphibious. They spend most of their time on land, but rely on ponds for breeding in spring and early summer. You can help us to care for this special creature by keeping dogs out of ponds, especially during the crucial breeding season.

In other habitat news, we will soon be removing some large quantities of rhododendron from Bedwyn. Although rhododendron flowers are strikingly beautiful, the evergreen shrub is an invasive non-native species that causes problems for habitats and wildlife. Rhododendron was introduced to the UK in the 18th century, and planted across gardens, parks, estates, woodlands, and heathland. Unfortunately, rhododendron can spread very quickly, out-competing other plants and reducing opportunities for native species.

Removing rhododendron will make Bedwyn look quite different in the short-term. We hope that the space created will be colonised by native plants and trees that can take advantage of the increased light and reduced competition for space and nutrients.

If you have any questions about Forestry England's work in Savernake Forest and its outlying woodlands, please get in touch at westengland@forestryengland.uk.

Nikki Morgans, Area Forester