Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish (Electors) Meeting held on Monday 18th May 2026 at 7.45pm in the Main Hal, Idmiston Parish Memorial Hall.

Present: Cllr Kirsty Exton (Chairman), Cllr Mark Bunce, Cllr Kate Fry, Cllr Karine Gratton-Cooper, Cllr Adam Grundy, Cllr Gill Kite, Cllr Wayne Maher

Also present: Jay McGowan (Clerk), 3 members of the public.

Cllrs welcomed residents to come and view the Gomeldon Play Park designs from 7.15pm; due to the response from residents this viewing time was extended to receive further public feedback.

The meeting started at 8.25pm

1. **To receive apologies.** None received.
2. **Minutes - To approve as a correct record, the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th May 2025.**
   The Minutes of the 2025 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record without amendment.
3. **Matters arising.** There were no matters arising that had not been addressed by Idmiston Parish Council.
4. **A report on the year from Cllr Kirsty Exton, IPC Chairman:**

We started the year with only 7 Councillors out of a possible 15, which made life very difficult at times, as we needed a quorum of 5 to hold meetings. The decision was made to request a reduction of the number of Councillors needed in the Parish from 15 to 11 and hopefully this will be in place for the next elections in 2029. We tried our best to recruit more people to join us and we now have 11 Councillors with thanks to Andy Oliver, Gill Kite, Karine Grattan-Cooper and Kate Fry.

We know there are concerns about planning applications in the Parish. We joined with local residents to try and stop the 21st house at Styles Close, but once again the Planning Committee went with the developer, due to the lack of houses needed to fulfil the Government's requirements for housing in Wiltshire. Please keep an eye on the Wiltshire Planning site and make comments when you see an application you are

unhappy with. This helps the Parish Council to make a case against future development.

There are still jobs outstanding in the Parish, but the dropped kerbs from Malvern Way across Winterslow Road has been completed. The 30-mile sign has now been replaced on Gomeldon Hill, but we are awaiting a second sign. Traffic calming has yet to be agreed. The state of the road at the top of the High Street is still with Wiltshire Council and we are waiting for this to be resolved.

We held an excellent Family Fun Day in June at Riverside Playpark organised by Cllr Wayne Maher. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the day and gave up so much of their time to this event. The next event will take place in Summer 2027. Thank you also to Wayne for Santa's Sleigh Run which once again raised money for charity, this time totalling £8060.

We spent time looking for a new Clerk to replace Catherine Purves and held interviews with several candidates before choosing Jay McGowan as our new Clerk. We welcome Jay and already see how hard she is working for us. Thank you to Catherine for all her hard work since she joined us in 2018. Her help and support was greatly appreciated.

In August we were very sad to hear that Valerie Cresswell had died. She played a major part in the original Neighbourhood Plan and gave many years to the Parish Council and the Memorial Hall. She will be sadly missed.

In October Roy Gould was presented with the Freedom of the Parish in recognition of the 50+ years he had been a member of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council decided to make a donation to a new Youth Initiative started by the Southern Area Board. This led to an event in the summer in the Memorial Hall followed by a Youth Club being set up in the Memorial Hall which meets every fortnight. At Easter there was a cooking event on two different days which went down well.

Gomeldon School have made a Travel Plan and that is with Wiltshire Council. They have some excellent ideas, and we look forward to helping them put this into place when it is approved. Many thanks to Hannah who has spent many hours on this plan.

The road from Porton Camp to Porton is due to be resurfaced in June and the potholes on Winterslow Road will be filled. We thank Dstl and Rich Rogers for their help in this matter.

In February we did a Rural Housing Needs Survey as required by the inspector before we could review the Neighbourhood Plan. We thank everyone who filled this in for us and also to those who came along to the Public Meeting in February. The Working Group will meet shortly to discuss the results as we try and move the Neighbourhood Plan forward. The results are at https://www.wiltshireintelligence.org.uk/library_/rural-housing-need-survey/

The refurbishment of Gomeldon Playpark is in hand. The public meeting gave us good feedback as we look to see how we get the best value for money with our limited funds.

We know that the continued closure of Riverside Playpark in Porton has caused much frustration and anger. Initially it was closed because of the usual flooding, but then when the white coating appeared we asked for help from the Environment Agency who advised us to keep it closed and then Public Protection suggested that we got it tested. It then proved difficult to find someone to do this for us and neither of the agencies nor anyone else we asked could give us a name to do this. When we received the test results, it did not tell us what they meant, so again there was a slight delay until we could find someone to confirm that it was safe. One reading gave slight concern. Because it is a Public Space, the safety of residents had to be our top priority. We can now go ahead and get the playpark re-opened, and we thank you for your patience.

We would like to say thank you to the volunteers who make life in the Parish so much better; the people who open and shut the gates at Riverside Playpark, the small Speedwatch team, people who plant tubs, especially in Gomeldon and Katherine Wilford who manages the everyday events at the Memorial Hall and her team of Rebecca, Emily and Andrea. Also thank you to Mrs Hyde, the gatekeeper at Gomeldon and Mr Ransome who looks after the Churchyard at St Nicholas Church, Porton. Lastly thank you to Kate and Gill who have taken over the Newsletter from me. Please continue to make your most interesting contributions.

5. **Any other Parish Business.** No issues raised.
6. **To close the meeting.**
   With no further business to discuss Cllr Exton closed the meeting at 8.32pm