

1. **Apologies:** received from Ken and Faye Mansbridge and Peter and Anne Sharp
2. **Election of Chairman:** John Bradbury was willing to stand again and was unanimously elected. Nominated by Debby Snook and seconded by Frances King. He said that he felt that it was time for a change as he has been chairman for a number of years.
3. **Minutes of last meeting:** the minutes of the last meeting were agreed, proposed by Marion Brooks and seconded by Jackie Collis.
4. **Matters arising from the minutes:** none
5. **Report of the Activities of Char Valley Council 2016/2017:** Debby Snook, chair of Char Valley Parish Council gave the report. The report is attached to these minutes, but a brief summary is as follows: The CVPC is gradually becoming responsible for more maintenance in the parish, specifically for fingerposts and village signs, now that DCC no longer has the budget to carry out these works. A residents' survey took place in November 2016 to ascertain the parishioners' views on all aspects of the parish and in particular their views on development. This was to help CVPC to decide whether to go ahead with a Neighbourhood Development Plan. John West, our parish clerk, resigned in February due to other commitments, and Annette Marks was appointed, taking up duties in February 2017. The fingerpost project is going well; around half of the 21 posts in the CVPC area are either works in progress or have been completed. Verges will be cut once a year and a second cut will take place as necessary. Unitary status for the county will probably go ahead in 2019. There is concern that planning permission granted to small holdings will be detrimental to the AONB in our parish.
6. **Report of the Residents' Survey:** Debby Snook continued with the report on the residents' survey. A copy of this is attached to the minutes, but a brief summary is as follows: The difference between a neighbourhood plan and a parish plan was explained. The former is included in the WDDC local plan and has legal status. The latter is aspirational in content, covers wider issues, not just development, and has no legal status. John West, then Parish Clerk, wrote a summary of the answers received by the 20% of parishioners who replied to the residents' survey. Generally parishioners are satisfied or very satisfied with the area. Caution was expressed over any overload to present infrastructure which could be caused by development. 77% of respondents supported the WDDC local plan which limits new housing in the CVPC area to replacement buildings, sub division, rural (agricultural) workers housing, and affordable housing schemes on exception sites. This suggests that creating a NDP would be unlikely to have the support of the local community. Other opinions expressed concerned verges, road maintenance, drain clearance, pot holes and road safety. Ideas regarding a directory of local food and drink suppliers, farmers' markets in local village halls, an exhibition about farming, and a local walking map were expressed. Renewable energy information in the form of an exhibition at a local village hall was also considered as a possibility for the future. A second report was read out, written by Councillor Hilary Joyce, which further explained neighbourhood development plans, what they entailed and how the community is involved. These reports provoked discussion about the size of the large eco house being built at the bottom of Long Lane, which will be brought up at the next Parish Council meeting on 8 May. With regard to a neighbourhood development plan, the general feeling of the meeting was to leave things as they are, and therefore not to start preparing for a neighbourhood development plan.
7. **Report from the Trustees of the Playing Field Committee:** Jon Snook gave the report. The accounts stand at £462.92 and £1,995.94. A discussion took place regarding the insurance liability when the playing field is used by, for example, wedding parties who have booked the hall. Bill Taylor will pursue this with the Village Hall insurers, and Debby Snook will clarify the position with the Parish Council Insurance.
8. **Election of the Playing Field Trustees (as a sub committee of the Parish Council):** Jon Snook and John Bradbury are both willing to stand again. Elected en bloc, proposed by James Watson and seconded by Margaret Taylor.
9. **Report from Best Kept Village Committee:** Marion Brooks suggested that the 'Village Clear Up', in preparation for the judging of the Best Kept Village Competition, should take place on Sunday 30 April at 10.30. Helpers are to meet in the car park at the village hall. Debby Snook will arrange a poster for the notice board. The account now stands at £4,041.21.

10. **Village Hall Committee:** the report was read by John Bradbury in the absence of Peter Sharp, chairman of the village hall committee. There is to be no village fete this year and more helpers are needed if we decide to continue in future years.
11. **Wootton 2000 Group:** John Bradbury gave the report. He reported that there had not been much activity since the death of Guy Bryan and the Wootton 2000 Group needs someone to drive it. Holding another exhibition was debated, possibly February 2018. A meeting was proposed to be held during the summer, John and Sue Bradbury, Jon Snook, Katie Sawyer, Marion Brooks and John Tucker all expressed an interest in attending this. A date will be arranged. Debby Snook will contact Neil Mattingly, a local historian, to see if he could attend the meeting. Amy Ralph said that Thorncombe village had a similar group, and it would be worth checking out the website, Thorncombe Village Trust.
12. **Friends of St Paul's:** Sue Bradbury said that the church is not in the centre of the village and is virtually invisible, support is gradually diminishing which means it could be shut at some point in the future. The idea of Friends of St Paul's is to ask if donations can be given for the maintenance of the church as an historic building, of importance to the village. A small gift could be given on a yearly basis. There will be a joint lunch with Catherston Leweston as last year, to be held at the Manor in June at a cost of £15, proceeds of which will be split between Wootton and Catherston. A generous donation was made to kick start the fund but if a serious maintenance problem occurs, this could be disastrous for the future of the church.
13. **Village website:** after some discussion it was decided that a village Facebook page would be more appropriate and easier to manage than a website. Kate Sawyer will have a word with George, her son, about opening it.
14. **Residents' discussion:** the playing field insurance position was raised again. Bill Taylor will discuss with the village hall insurers and Debby Snook to discuss with the parish council insurers. Steve Sampson asked about a possibility of a defibrillator for the village. Debby Snook had checked with the British Heart Foundation regarding funding, but all funds had been spent at present.