MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

2026

Full Council Agenda

Monday 16th February 2026

Town Hall,
Market Place,
Melksham,
Wiltshire
SN12 6ES

01225 704187
towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk
www.melksham-tc.gov.uk

MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall,
Market Place,
Melksham,
Wiltshire
SN12 6ES

CEO Miss Hayley Bell, Assoc CIPD, CertHE, FSLCC

01225 704187

towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk

Tuesday 10th February 2026

Dear Councillors S Rabey (Town Mayor), J Westbrook (Deputy Town Mayor), P Alford, P Aves, E Calland, R Cleary, J Crossley, M Drewett, G Elson, A Griffin, J Oatley, T Price, C Stokes, A Westbrook, A Whitlock.

You are summoned in accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, Sch 12, paras 10 (2)(b) to a meeting of the Full Council of Melksham Town Council for the transaction of the business shown on the agenda below.
Monday 16th February **2026,** to be held at 19.00 in the Council Chamber, Melksham Town Hall, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 7ES.

The quorum for Full Council is 8.

Public Participation.

Members of the public and the press may attend this meeting in person or join the meeting on teams via the following link https://tinyurl.com/48nkf2w6 . Public participation will take place near the start of the meeting.

Each speaker is limited to three minutes, with a total public session of 20 minutes. Members of the public are requested to send their question to CEO@melksham-tc.gov.uk by noon on the working day before the meeting. You should still attend the meeting, in person or online, to ask your question.

No decisions will be made on matters not already on the agenda. The Council may ask the public and press to leave if confidential matters need to be discussed.

The Seven Principles of Public Life.

All members are reminded of their duty under the code of conduct to uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Hayley Bell – CEO

Full Council Terms of Reference

1. **Membership**: All 15 elected members of the Town Council.

The following matters shall be reserved for decision by Full Council, but the appropriate Committee(s) may make recommendation for the Council's consideration:

1.1   The Precept demand
1.2   Borrowing money
1.3   Making, amending or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Duties and Powers of Proper Officer provisions
1.4   Making, amending or revoking by-laws
1.5   Making of Orders under Statutory Powers
1.6   Matters of principle or policy
1.7   Addressing recommendations in any report from the Internal and External Auditors
1.8   Nomination of members of all proper and sub committees
1.9   New powers or duties
1.10   Prosecution or defence in a Court of Law
1.11   Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Council to any enquiry on matters affecting the town
1.12   To receive and adopt the Annual Accounts
1.13   To receive and sign off the Annual Internal & External Audit and Return
1.14   To receive reports referred to the Town Council from the various Committees/Sub-Committees
1.15   To set up Working Groups as necessary
1.16   To receive reports and consider recommendations from Working Groups set up by Full Council
1.17   To appoint representatives on outside bodies or joint bodies
1.18   To confirm the appointment of the Town Mayor/Deputy Mayor
1.19   To confirm the schedule of meetings of the Town Council/Committees and Sub-Committees for the ensuing year
1.20   To receive petitions and deputations from members of the public or any organisations
1.21   Any other matters not delegated to a Committee or Sub-Committee or referred to the Council by Committees or Sub-Committees

Full Council

1. Apologies.   **19.00– 19.01**

To receive apologies for absences

(Local Government Act, 1972 s.85)

2. Declaration of Interests.   **19.01 – 19.02**

To declare an interest relating to the business of the meeting.

(Melksham Town Council Code of Conduct)

3. Minutes   **19.02 – 19.05**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, Monday 2nd February 2026

(Local Government Act 1972, s. 12)

4. Public participation   **19.05 – 19.25**

To allow public participation, 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes allocation.

(Local Government Act 1972, s. 12)

5. Questions from Councillors   **19.25 – 19.35**
(Melksham Town Council Policy and Local Government Act 1972)

6. Town Mayor's Announcements   **19.35 – 19.45**

7. Reports from Unitary Councillors   **19.45 – 20.05**

Unitary Councillors to report on any matters affecting Melksham which have been discussed at Wiltshire Council meetings.

Councillor Alford
Councillor Griffin
Councillor Hubbard
Councillor Stokes
Councillor J Westbrook

8. East Melksham Community Centre   20.05 – 20.10

9. Policies   20.10 – 20.25

    9.1   Volunteering Policy

    For approval

    9.2   Freedom of Information Policy

    For approval

    9.3   Financial Regulations

    For decision.

    Recommendation. That section **5.9** of the procurement guidance be amended to remove the requirement that *"where the value is between £100 and £4,999, officers shall try to obtain three estimates."*
The revised threshold should state that the requirement to obtain **three estimates applies only to purchases of £5,000 and above**.
Rationale
- The current £100–£4,999 range is disproportionately low for requiring three estimates and creates unnecessary administrative burden.
- Raising the threshold to **£5,000** aligns the process with typical local-government procurement practice and allows officers to act more efficiently for low-value purchases.
- The change maintains appropriate financial control while improving operational flexibility.

10. Motions from Councillors   20.25 – 20.40

    10.1   Motion on Melksham Town Council Play Areas

    For decision

11. Calendar of meetings 2026-27   20.40 – 21.00

Council is asked to confirm that, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Full Council has the authority to determine and amend its committee structure, including changing committee names. Approval is therefore sought for the proposed updates to committee titles, with any agreed changes taking effect from the new calendar of meetings and being reflected in the council's governance documents and standing orders.

Council is also asked to approved the proposed calendar for 2026/27.

12. CIL   21.00 – 21.10

The CEO and the Finance Manager met with Denise Evans, Section 106 and CIL Officer at Wiltshire Council, to discuss matters relating to Melksham Town Council's funding. Work on this is now progressing jointly, and the Finance Manager will also be meeting with the Clerk of Melksham Without Parish Council as part of the ongoing coordination.

13. CCTV Update   21.10 – 21.20

The CEO has spoken with Wiltshire Council's design engineer, Paul Metcalf, regarding the proposed CCTV location. Paul has confirmed that he holds all necessary details for the assessment and will ensure that the Town Council receives a full copy of the information as part of the permissions process.

14. Cemetries Tasks and Finish Group   21.20 – 21.30

Melksham Without Parish Council agreed its position at the meeting on 8 December, and this forms the basis of the update to councillors.

Melksham Without resolved to write to Wiltshire Council requesting that it reverses its decision not to provide a cemetery extension. Councillors agreed that Wiltshire Council should meet its responsibility to ensure sufficient burial capacity and deliver an extension that provides at least three years of additional space.

The parish council also agreed that, if Wiltshire Council does not reinstate and deliver the extension, it would support using the joint Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) fund held between Melksham Without Parish Council and Melksham Town Council—to fund an extension to the existing cemetery.

For decision. Melksham Town Council to consider whether to take a parallel step by writing to Wiltshire Council to request that the decision is reversed and that the cemetery remains open to new burials.

15. Items to Note   21.30 – 21.45

15.1   Resolutions

All council resolutions are now stored on SharePoint, providing a more streamlined and up-to-date way for councillors to view progress and access information as it develops. Links to the relevant folders will be circulated to all councillors. If you need any support accessing the system, please speak to an officer who will be happy to assist.

15.2   Sir David Attenborough

To note.

Melksham Town Council, in partnership with Melksham in Bloom, was delighted to extend an invitation to Sir David Attenborough to visit the town in celebration of his 100th birthday. This invitation was in recognition of the special tributes within the town, including the planting of flowers, dedication of windows, and other acts of commemoration honoring his lifetime of contribution to environmental awareness. The Council is pleased to note receipt of a gracious response from Sir David, acknowledging the invitation.

15.3   Town Hall Maintenance

Melksham Town Hall has not undergone significant maintenance for some time, and certain areas are in a poor state of repair. Additionally, the heating system is not currently functioning adequately. To address these issues, a two-week maintenance programme is scheduled to commence 2nd March 2026. The works are budgeted within the Council's planned expenditure and will ensure the building can be fully hired out following completion. During this period, Melksham Town Council will continue to deliver its core services as normal, with operations temporarily relocated to the Assembly Hall. Council meetings will continue in the Council Chamber, with access via the rear entrance of the Town Hall. This programme will address the urgent repairs, improve facilities, and enable wider community use of the building.

15.4   Area Board Review

See Agenda Pack

15.5   Melksham Health & Wellbeing Meeting Notes

See Agenda Pack

15.6   Age UK Report

See Agenda Pack

15.7   Shurnhold Fields

See agendas Pack

16. Committee Minutes   21.45 – 21.50

16.1 Economic Development and Planning

To receive the minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meetings held on 16th December 2025 and 13th January 2026

Link to 16th December 2025

Link to 13th January 2026

MELKSHAM TOWN
COUNCIL

16.2 Finance, Governance and Performance

To receive the minutes of the Finance Administration and Performance Committee meeting held on 3rd November 2025

Link

16.3 Personnel

To receive the minutes of the Personnel Committee meetings held on 6th October 2025, 24th November 2025 and 1st December 2025

Link to 6th October 2025

Link to 24th November 2025

Link to 1st December 2025

16.4 Working Groups and Task & Finish Groups

To receive the minutes of the CCTV & Community Safety Working Group meetings held on 12th January 2026.

Link

To receive the minutes of Cemeteries Task & Finish Group meeting held on 23rd September 2025.

Link

www.melksham-tc.gov.uk

MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council Extraordinary Meeting

on Monday 2nd February 2026

PRESENT: Councillor S Rabey   Town Mayor
Councillor P Alford
Councillor P Aves
Councillor E Calland
Councillor R Cleary
Councillor G Elson
Councillor A Griffin
Councillor J Oatley
Councillor C Stokes

IN ATTENDANCE

OFFICERS   Hayley Bell   CEO/Town Clerk
Dave Elms   Amenities Manager
Andrew Meacham   Committee Clerk

PUBLIC three members of the public and one member of the press were present and three members of the public were present virtually.

A representative of Smart Integrated Solutions was present

197/25   Apologies

Apologies were received from the Deputy Town Mayor Councillor J Westbrook, Councillor Crossley, Councillor Drewett, Councillor Price and Councillor Whitlock.

The Deputy Town Mayor Councillor J Westbrook joined the meeting via Teams as an observer only.

198/25   Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Although not a pecuniary interest, Councillor A Westbrook wanted it made clear that she has a business relationship with a contractor who may be mentioned during discussions and she would leave the room if this was the case.

199/25   Minutes

The minutes of 12th January 2026, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor and Chair Councillor Rabey.

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200/25   Public Participation

2026/27 budget includes an amount for Capital Investment of £90842. Presume this is ongoing cost of taking on the Blue Pool from Wiltshire Council. This works out at around £15 on annual council tax bill. Are residents going to have to pay this amount every year until the Blue Pool project is started? When is the project likely to start?

The CEO advised that there are currently no long-term plans for the site. In the short-term We are looking at moving the Amenities Team from Bowerhill into the Blue Pool, thus saving the costs of the Bowerhill depot. A plan is being finalised and it is hoped to be in place by the end of March. The CEO would check with the RFO on the finances and come back to the resident.

The Chair asked if there was any other public participation, noting an interest from a resident watching via Teams. There was no further public participation.

201/25   31 Market Place Roof

The CEO gave a verbal update.

202/25   CCTV

Councillor A Westbrook asked the following:-

With reference to the Full Council meeting held on Monday 18th March 2024. (Minute 732/23) it is evident that the resolution did not comply with financial regulations.

How can financial regulations be strengthened to ensure that major infrastructure projects cannot proceed without formal sign-off from the Clerk/CEO or the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)? At the time this project was proposed and seconded, neither of these posts was filled, and no financial advice or guidance could be sought by either the proposer or the seconder.

In light of this, how will the CEO ensure that any future projects which alter or impact the town's infrastructure cannot go ahead without appropriate financial oversight and approval from either the CEO or the RFO

Councillor Alford echoed and supported Councillor Westbrook's concerns.

The CEO advised that the new RFO going on Procurement and Tender training course. Financial Regulations were under review and the CEO would come back to councillors.

The CEO read out questions from Councillor J Westbrook:-

Q. Have we received written authorisation for cameras placed on lighting columns, churches and private buildings properly?

A. Trying to figure out what has happened. Email sent to Atkins but no reply as yet. Telephone chase up but relevant officer was not in office. Will call again tomorrow.

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Q. Are all informal agreements (as referenced in the review) documented, signed and stored in council records?

A. This is under review. Will bring back Council when known.

Q. Has a full Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been completed for the CCTV system?

A. Again, trying to clarify. If not completed, will be done.

Q. Have any data breaches occurred due to missing footage, audio recording without notice or unlicensed frequency use, been formally reported and resolved?

A. Reported ourselves to OFCOM.

Q. Who will be accountable for ensuring future CCTV/security projects are compliant, technically sound and independently verified before approval?

A. This is ultimately a decision for Council. Do we work with a third party to support a designated MTC officer.

Q. How will the Council ensure that all major infrastructure projects – regardless of cost – receive rigorous oversight, professional scrutiny and a proper sign-off process before implementation?

A. Links into Councillor A Westbrook's comments on procurement. Need to listen to and take the advise of external experts.

The CEO read out questions from the family of Cheryl Decarteret:-

Q. Will the Council guarantee that details of all remedial work, once a company is appointed, will be made public?

A. Absolutely. Action will be reported back to the correct council meeting.

How will the Council ensure residents can verify that every recommendation in the report has been completed?

A. Updates will be reported to council meetings.

Q. Will there be a public progress update or audit trail residents can track?

A. Information that is public will be published.

Q. How will the Council ensure tendered contracts are fully checked, line by line, so we know exactly what we're paying for?

A. Through Tenders and Procurement rules and through Council meetings (unless delegated to Clerk).

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Q. What safeguards will be put in place to prevent the Council from again purchasing a system that does not match what was specified?

A. Using expert advice and on-going review.

Q. Will independent technical verification be required both before and after installation?

A. Following procurement rules will ensure information publicly available. Any work will be signed off and made public.

Councillor Stokes spoke to the report and the discussions of the CCTV Working Group.

Councillor Cleary spoke to the report and re-iterated that the system delivered was as specified. Design and equipment used was appropriate at the time of installation.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow the representative of Smart Integrated Services to speak and to allow questions from the press.

It was confirmed that steps were taken immediately on discovery that there was audio recording and it had been turned off.

Councillors asked questions and there was discussion on next steps, maintenance of the system, training and points raised in the report.

It was confirmed that, to the best of officer's knowledge, remote access had now been disabled. It was noted that, going forward, some remote access would probably be required for maintenance.

It was proposed by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Stokes and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the recommendations of the CCTV Working Group and the report of Smart Integrated Solutions.

Meeting closed at: 19:50

Signed .... Dated ....

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Monday 2nd February 2026.

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Melksham Town Council Volunteer Policy

Date Adopted:

Date Due For Review:

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Introduction

Melksham Town Council is deeply grateful to all individuals who wish to volunteer their time and skills to support our community. Volunteering is at the heart of what makes Melksham a vibrant, welcoming town where every individual has the opportunity to thrive and fulfil their potential.

This policy outlines our commitment to creating a positive volunteering experience that benefits both our volunteers and the wider Melksham community. **It is not our intention to use volunteers to replace staff, but to increase our capabilities and make the council feel more community-involved.**

> **Our Mission**: To strengthen the sense of community within Melksham, foster inclusivity, and enhance the quality of life for all residents through meaningful volunteer engagement.

Our Commitment to Volunteers

Council Values in Action

At Melksham Town Council, our work is driven by our core values of **community strengthening, inclusivity, and quality of life enhancement**. We are committed to ensuring that every volunteer:

- **Feels valued and appreciated** for their contribution to our community
- **Enjoys their volunteering experience** and feels their time is used meaningfully
- **Receives appropriate support, training, and guidance** to carry out their role effectively

- **Is treated with respect, dignity, and fairness** regardless of background or circumstances
- **Has opportunities for personal development** and skill enhancement

What We Provide

Insurance Coverage: All volunteers are covered by Melksham Town Council's comprehensive insurance policy while on our premises or engaged in any work on our behalf.

Professional Support: Access to council staff, training opportunities, and clear guidance on roles and responsibilities.

Recognition: Regular acknowledgment of volunteer contributions through various recognition programmes and community events.

Definition of a Volunteer

- Individuals who give time freely, without expectation of payment.
- Categories
  - *One-off volunteers* (e.g., community clean-ups)
  - *Regular volunteers* (e.g. club organisers, event support, flood warden, information services)
  - *Specialist volunteers* (e.g., repairs, researchers)

Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

Equal Opportunities

Melksham Town Council operates an **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy** that applies to both paid staff and volunteers. We welcome applications from all members of our community and are committed to:

- **Fair and transparent recruitment processes**
- **Reasonable adjustments** to make volunteering accessible to people with disabilities
- **Inclusive practices** that reflect the diversity of our community
- **Non-discriminatory selection criteria** based solely on role requirements

Application Process

11. **Initial Contact**: Interested volunteers should complete the online form on the volunteering section of our website to contact the council to discuss available opportunities
12. **Role Matching**: We work with potential volunteers to identify suitable roles based on their interests, skills, and availability
13. **Registration**: All volunteers must complete our registration process to ensure insurance coverage and compliance with our policies

14. **References:** All volunteer roles require two references to help ensure suitability for council activities. Referees should be individuals who can comment on the applicant's character, reliability, and (where relevant) experience, such as a previous manager, colleague, tutor, or community leader. Personal or family references are not accepted.
References will be requested as part of the registration process and must be received and reviewed before a volunteer can begin any council-supported activity.
15. **Induction**: New volunteers receive a comprehensive induction covering their specific role and council procedures

⚠️ **Important**: Anyone invited to work on council activities who hasn't completed our registration procedure will be working at their own risk, not under council coverage.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteer Rights

Clear Role Definition: Every volunteer receives a clear description of their role, expectations, and the support available to them.

Safe Working Environment: Access to a safe, supportive working environment with appropriate health and safety measures.

Training and Support: Opportunities for training, development, and ongoing support from designated council staff.

Respect and Recognition: Treatment with dignity, respect, and appreciation for their valuable contribution.

Voice and Feedback: Opportunities to express views about council matters and provide feedback on their volunteering experience.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Professional Conduct: Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves professionally and in accordance with council values and policies.

Confidentiality: Volunteers must maintain confidentiality regarding council information and comply with **GDPR requirements**. Personal details such as addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, and family relationships must never be shared.

Health and Safety Compliance: Follow all health and safety procedures, including wearing appropriate protective equipment when required (e.g., hi-vis clothing when working on roads).

Boundary Awareness: Volunteers should not identify themselves as council employees or give instructions on behalf of the council unless specifically authorised to do so.

Communication: If volunteers feel inadequately trained or informed to carry out a task, they must communicate this to their designated manager immediately.

Health and Safety

Our Commitment

All volunteers are covered by **Melksham Town Council's Health and Safety Policy**, which will be provided during induction. We are committed to:

Volunteer Guidelines and Council Policies

Introduction
We extend our sincere gratitude to all volunteers for their dedication and valuable contribution to our community. Volunteering should be an enjoyable experience that fosters personal growth and strengthens our collective impact. Volunteers enhance the council's abilities and services; they are not intended to replace staff members. Your commitment helps us deliver more for the community while upholding our shared values.

Volunteer Status
Volunteers are not council employees and do not receive payment or remuneration for their time. All operational matters, including the direction and oversight of volunteers, staff, and councillors, are under the direct control of the CEO. Crucially, volunteers & staff do not work for individual councillors, and instructions for volunteering activities must never come from councillors.

Conduct and Boundaries
Volunteers should not identify themselves as council employees or issue instructions on behalf of the council unless specifically authorized. It is essential to maintain professionalism and clarity in your role at all times.

Health and Safety
When working on roads, volunteers must wear hi-vis clothing unless specifically instructed otherwise. Always sign in and out when undertaking any voluntary role to ensure insurance coverage and accurate record-keeping.

Safeguarding
Volunteers are required to review and agree to the council's safeguarding policy. Any safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the designated manager, People & Culture Officer, or CEO as appropriate for swift resolution and support.

Training and Communication

If you feel inadequately trained or lack necessary information to carry out a task, communicate this immediately to your designated manager. Open communication ensures the safety and effectiveness of all volunteering activities.

Confidentiality and GDPR Compliance

Volunteers are expected to use common sense and maintain confidentiality regarding council information. Personal details, such as addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, and family relationships, must never be shared. Compliance with GDPR requirements is mandatory for all volunteers.

- **Risk assessment** of all volunteer activities
- **Appropriate training** on health and safety procedures
- **Provision of necessary protective equipment**
- **Regular review** of safety measures and procedures

Volunteer Responsibilities

- **Sign in and out** when working in any voluntary role to ensure insurance coverage
- **Follow all safety procedures** and use provided protective equipment
- **Report safety concerns** immediately to designated staff
- **Participate in safety training** as required for specific roles
- **Ensure that they are identified as council volunteers** either by wearing photo ID and / or hi-vis

    🔍 **Note**: Specific safety requirements may apply to different volunteer roles, and these will be clearly communicated during role-specific training.

Training and Development

Induction Programme

Every new volunteer receives a comprehensive induction covering:

- **Council overview** and organisational structure
- **Role-specific training** and expectations
- **Health and safety procedures**
- **Safeguarding requirements** (where applicable)
- **Data protection and confidentiality**
- **Emergency procedures** and key contacts

Ongoing Development

We are committed to supporting volunteer development through:

- **Regular briefings** and updates on council activities
- **Skills-based training** relevant to volunteer roles
- **Professional development opportunities** where appropriate

- **Peer support networks** and mentoring

Training Records

The council maintains records of all volunteer training to ensure:

- **Compliance** with regulatory requirements
- **Appropriate skill levels** for assigned tasks
- **Continuous improvement** in training programmes

Support and Recognition

Ongoing Support

Designated Contacts: Every volunteer should use the Community Officer as their primary point of contact for support and guidance.

Regular Check-ins: Scheduled meetings to discuss progress, address concerns, and provide feedback.

Peer Networks: Opportunities to connect with other volunteers and share experiences.

Recognition Programme

We believe in celebrating the valuable contributions of our volunteers through:

- **Annual recognition events** and awards
- **Public acknowledgment** in council communications
- **Reference provision** for volunteers seeking employment or further volunteering opportunities
- **Long-service recognition** for dedicated volunteers

Volunteer Feedback

We actively seek volunteer feedback through:

- **Regular surveys** and feedback sessions
- **Exit interviews** to improve our volunteer programme
- **Open communication channels** with designated staff

Safeguarding and Data Protection

Safeguarding Requirements

Where volunteers work in **regulated activities** involving children or vulnerable adults:

- **Enhanced DBS checks** will be conducted
- **Safeguarding training** is mandatory

- **Clear reporting procedures** are established
- **Regular policy updates** ensure current best practice

Reporting Concerns

Volunteers must report any safeguarding concerns to:

16. **Primary contact**: Community Officer at: community@melksham-tc.gov.uk
17. **Alternative contact**: People & Culture Officer (if concerns involve the primary contact) at: people@melksham-tc.gov.uk
18. **Final escalation**: CEO (if concerns involve the People & Culture Officer) at: ceo@melksham-tc.gov.uk

Data Protection

All volunteers must comply with **GDPR requirements** and:

- **Protect personal information** encountered through their role
- **Use information appropriately** and only for authorised purposes
- **Report data breaches** immediately to designated staff
- **Complete data protection training** as required

Problem Resolution

Our Approach

We aim to **identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage** through open communication and fair procedures.

Complaint Procedure

Step 1: Informal discussion with Community Officer

Step 2: Formal complaint to People & Culture Officer if unresolved

Step 3: Final appeal to CEO if necessary

Any written complaint or grievance raised, which alleges that a councillor or co-opted member of the council has failed to comply with the council's Code of Conduct, should be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Wiltshire Council.

Whistleblowing

The council has a **Whistleblowing Policy** available to volunteers who observe improper conduct or practices. This policy protects volunteers who raise legitimate concerns in good faith.

Ending Volunteer Relationships

While we hope all volunteer relationships are positive and long-lasting, the council reserves the right to end volunteer arrangements where:

- **Conduct standards** are not maintained
- **Policy breaches** occur repeatedly
- **Reputational damage** to the council may result from volunteer actions

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Policy Review

Regular Updates

This policy is reviewed **annually** to ensure it remains:

- **Current** with best practice and legal requirements
- **Relevant** to our volunteer programme needs
- **Effective** in supporting positive volunteer experiences

Stakeholder Involvement

Policy reviews involve consultation with:

- **Current volunteers** and their feedback
- **Council staff** managing volunteer programmes
- **Community representatives** and stakeholders
- **External best practice** guidance from National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and other organisations

Accessibility

This policy is available in **alternative formats** upon request, including large print and audio recordings, to ensure accessibility for all volunteers.

Contact Information

Melksham Town Council
Town Hall, Market Place
Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 6ES

Phone: 01225 704187
Email: Available through our website contact form
Website: www.melksham-tc.gov.uk

This policy reflects our commitment to creating a thriving, welcoming, and well-connected community where volunteers play a vital role in shaping Melksham's future. Together, we can build a town we are all proud to call home.

Melksham Town Council

Freedom of Information Policy

Date Adopted:

Date Due For Review:

Freedom of Information Policy

1. Purpose of the Policy

Melksham Town Council is committed to openness, transparency, and accountability in its decision-making and use of public funds. This policy sets out how the Council will comply with the **Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)** and related legislation, and how members of the public can access information held by the Council.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All recorded information held by Melksham Town Council, regardless of format (paper, electronic, audio, visual).

- All councillors, employees, contractors, and volunteers acting on behalf of the Council.

This policy covers requests made under:

- The **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

- The **Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)**

3. Legal Framework

- Freedom of Information Act 2000

- The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004

- Environmental Information Regulations 2004

- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR (where personal data is involved)

- ICO Codes of Practice and guidance

4. Publication Scheme

The Council will maintain and regularly update a **Publication Scheme**, making key information available proactively, including:

- Council structure and responsibilities

- Policies and procedures

- Minutes, agendas, and meeting papers

- Financial information (budgets, accounts, audits)

- Contact details

The Publication Scheme will be available on the Council's website.

5. Making a Freedom of Information Request

Requests for information:

- Must be made **in writing**

- Must include the requester's **name** and **contact address**

- Should clearly describe the information requested

Requests should preferably be sent via the dedicated Freedom of Information email but can be posted or hand delivered. Contact details will be maintained on Melksham Town Council's website Freedom of Information page.

6. Timescales for Response

- The Council will respond to FOI requests **within 20 working days** of receipt, unless we require clarification of the request.

- The Council will acknowledge receipt of the request and confirm the deadline for reply.

- Requests under the Environmental Information Regulations will normally be answered within **20 working days**, and no later than **40 working days** for complex requests.

7. Exemptions and Exceptions

Some information may be withheld where a valid exemption or exception applies, including but not limited to:

- Personal data (Data Protection Act 2018)

- Commercially sensitive information

- Information intended for future publication

- Confidential or legally privileged information

Where an exemption applies, the Council will explain the reason and, where required, apply the **public interest test**.

8. Fees and Charges

- The Council may charge for disbursements such as photocopying or postage.
- No cost will be applied for the first 14 hours of working on the request. After this, £25 per hour of staff time will be applied.
- Registered charities will not be charged
- A fee notice will be issued to the requestor allowing 30 days for payment, which will need to be made before the request continues to be processed.

- If payment is not received within 30 working days, a reminder will be sent to the requestor, and another 30 days will be given (60 days in total from the original fee notice). If payment is not received, it will be assumed the information is no longer required and the Council are no longer obligated to proceed with the request.
- Any charges will be communicated in advance.

9. Refusals

If a request is refused, the Council will:

- Provide a written explanation

- Cite the relevant exemption or exception

- Inform the requester of their right to request an internal review

10. Internal Review and Complaints

If a requester is dissatisfied with the response, they may request an **internal review** within 40 working days.

If still dissatisfied after the review, the requester may complain to:
The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

11. Roles and Responsibilities

- The Committee Clerk will have day to day responsibility for managing FOI requests but the CEO will have overall authority.

- All councillors and staff must assist in locating and providing information when requested.

- Training and awareness will be provided as appropriate.

MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Proposed by: **Phil Alford**
Seconded by: **Tom Price**
Dated: **21/1/26**

Purpose of the motion

To ensure that cordoned off parks are brought back into use for the benefit of children in the council area.

Background (Including previous resolution/s made and date/s if applicable)

The parks have both been cordoned off for some time. In both areas, the communities are a considerable distance from alternative town council provision. The nearest alternative to the Riverside is across the A350 or River Avon which is unsuitable for young children. The Dunch Lane park has been closed for around 8 months following the injury of a small child. The nearest council owned alternative is around a mile away in town. The adjacent GWG park is not suitable for very young children.

Current Situation

Melksham Town Council had set a 25/26 maintenance budget for the towns play parks of £74,000. As of the last meeting less than £500 had been spent and some of the town's parks have become so run down, they are unsafe, unusable and cordoned off. Whilst we have agreed a 26/27 maintenance budget of £100,000, if the current £74,000 remains unspent, the current budget balance will return to general reserves and not be spent in this financial year. This will continue to deprive children and families of much need play areas

What financial implications are there?

The financial impact will be to use the existing budget before the end of the financial year. If the money is not spent and the work delayed further inflation will lead to additional costs and reduced provision.

How does the motion link to Town Council policies and core values?

This will improve the public open space, provide positive activities for young people and their families. Support those on low incomes with low cost local entertainment. It will help improve the physical and mental wellbeing of local families and children.

What risks are there? (Provide a risk assessment)

The risk of doing nothing will be to further erode trust in the council, exacerbate reputation damage by demonstrating a lack of action and solidify the existing perception that the council lacks the capacity to effect positive change in the local community. It will also further alienate residents to the north who are less well connected to other council facilities and investment.

What crime and disorder implications are there?

Improved social engagement and community cohesion as young people learn to socialise through play and exploring the world around them. It will also remove dangerous play equipment improving public safety.

What environmental and biodiversity considerations are there?

Enhanced visual amenity.
Potential improvements to biodiversity through additional planting leading to more diverse habitats.

What safeguarding concerns are there?

Motion

This council will allocate the remaining park maintenance budget to the replacement of the Dunch Lane and Riverside Parks. It calls on the CEO to carry out a rapid consultation exercise to allow residents in the affected areas to choose between a few shortlisted options for the play equipment replacement. Then, to procure park replacements during this current financial year. Once the contract is approved, the aim should be to replace the parks as early as possible but ideally before the end of the spring and ready for the summer.

Does the motion impact/ support any previous decisions of council?

This support previous council commitments to young people, public health and families.

Confirmation that the item under consideration has not been discussed by Council within the preceding six months. If it has, has there been a material change and what is this?

This specific proposal has not been discussed.

Please summarise any specific recommendations you have in relation to next steps

Officers should put together a few options for both parks in conjunction with the two town councillors and then engage local residents on preference.

Office Use:

Date of receipt by Proper Officer:	
Date of proposed council meeting for motion:	
Date/s of relevant resolutions: (record full resolution/s here)	
Motion accepted by Proper Officer:	

Motion rejected by Proper Officer:	
Reasons for rejection:	

Melksham Town Council Public Meeting Calendar
June 2026 – April 2027

All meetings are held in the Council Chamber unless stated otherwise.

Month Plan	Meeting Type	Colour
Week One	Operations	
Week Two	Finance	
Week Three	Community	
Week Three	Planning	
Week Four	Full Council	
Week Four	People	
	Town Meeting	

Date	Meeting	Time
01 Jun 2026	Operations	19:00
08 Jun 2026	Finance	19:00
15 Jun 2026	Community	19:00
22 Jun 2026	People	17:45
22 Jun 2026	Full Council	19:00
02 Jun 2026	Planning	19:00
23 Jun 2026	Planning	19:00
27 Jul 2026	Full Council	19:00
14 Jul 2026	Planning	19:00
04 Aug 2026	Planning	19:00
09 Aug 202	Finance	19.00
25 Aug 2026	Planning	19:00
15 Sep 2026	Planning	19:00
21st Sep 2026	Community	19.00

28 Sep 2026	Full Council	19:00
05 Oct 2026	Operations	19:00
6th Oct 2026	Planning	19.00
12 Oct 2026	Finance	19:00
26 Oct 2026	People	17:45
26 Oct 2026	Full Council	19:00
27 Oct 2026	Planning	19:00
17 Nov 2026	Planning	19:00
23 Nov 2026	Full Council	19:00
07 Dec 2026	Operations	19:00
08 Dec 2026	Planning	19.00
14 Dec 2026	Finance	19:00
21 Dec 2026	Community	19:00
12 Jan 2027	Full Council Budget	19:00
19 Jan 2027	Planning	19:00
01 Feb 2027	Operations	19:00
08 Feb 2027	Finance	19:00
09 Feb 2027	Planning	19:00
15 Feb 2027	Community	19:00
22 Feb 2027	People	17:45
22 Feb 2027	Full Council	19:00
09 Feb 2027	Planning	19:00
15 Mar 2027	Town Meeting	19:00
22 Mar 2027	Full Council	19:00
02 Mar 2027	Planning	19:00
23 Mar 2027	Planning	19:00
05 Apr 2027	Operations	19:00
12 Apr 2027	Finance	19:00
19 Apr 2027	Community	19:00
26 Apr 2027	People	17:45
26 Apr 2027	Full Council	19:00
13 Apr 2027	Planning	19:00

Summer Holiday 2026

Autumn Half Term 26–30 Oct 2026

Christmas Holiday 21 Dec 2026 – 3 Jan 2027

February Half Term 15–19 Feb 2027

Easter Holiday 26 Mar – 11 Apr 2027

May Half Term 31 May – 4 Jun 2027

Summer Holiday 2027 From 22 July 2027

England and Wales bank holidays from June 2026 to end of April 2027

2026 (June–December)

- 31 August 2026 — Summer Bank Holiday

- 25 December 2026 — Christmas Day

- 28 December 2026 — Boxing Day (substitute day)

2027 (January–April)

- 1 January 2027 — New Year's Day

- 26 March 2027 — Good Friday

- 29 March 2027 — Easter Monday

- 3 May 2027 — Early May Bank Holiday (outside your requested range but included for context; last holiday before end of April is Easter Monday)

4th February 2026

Dear Hayley Bell

Thank you for your recent letter addressed to my father, and the kind words it contained. For various reasons the new year has brought such a rush of letters that he has asked me to write on his behalf to ask that you forgive him if he does not accept your invitation.

As you mention, this May will indeed brig his 100th birthday and he has already been inundated with generous invitations from all around the country. As he cannot possibly attend them all, he has decided that apart from one public event, he would prefer to celebrate his birthday privately. I do hope you will understand.

Yours sincerely

■■■■■■■■■■■■

from Susan Attenborough

Area Board Review

2025 - 2026

Wiltshire Council

Area Board Review Consultation

- Wiltshire Police (meeting with 2 senior representatives, 3rd October 2025)

- Town and Parish Councils (meeting with 45 representatives, 18th September 2025)

- Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (meeting with 16 representatives, 2nd October 2025)

- Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (meeting with one senior representative, 6th October 2025)

- Area Board Councillors (meeting with 25 representatives, 8th September 2025)

- Wiltshire Council Directors (Resources SLT – 25th September, Place SLT 5th November, People SLT via e-mail 11th November).

Wiltshire Council

Consultation Feedback

Strengths

- Local structure is strong
- Funding is a catalyst to local action
- Working groups deliver impact
- Valued vehicle for parish/ town council engagement
- Strong officer and volunteer contributions.

Development areas

- Meeting format and experience is too formal, lengthy and residents feel like observers
- Lack of strategic alignment
- Resources should be shifted to community-based engagements
- Funding process and resource constraints
- Communication and visibility

Area Board Chairs

Wiltshire Council

Phase one - Proposed Changes

- Model to change name - TBC.
- Clear vision and four key principles of success.
- Updated resolutions for networks to act upon local issues, liaise with Cabinet Members and report back local intelligence to the council.
- Better connectivity to existing countywide forums e.g. Faith Communities, VCSE Alliance, Town and Parishes
- Shift of emphasis and resource, to support wider, more informal engagement and delivery to local outcomes. Not delivery of meetings.
- New business and grant meeting agenda template and structure. Move from 4 business meetings to 3 – to make more efficient use of resource.
- Updated delegation for LHFIG and grant decisions
- Implement LHFIG review proposed changes in line

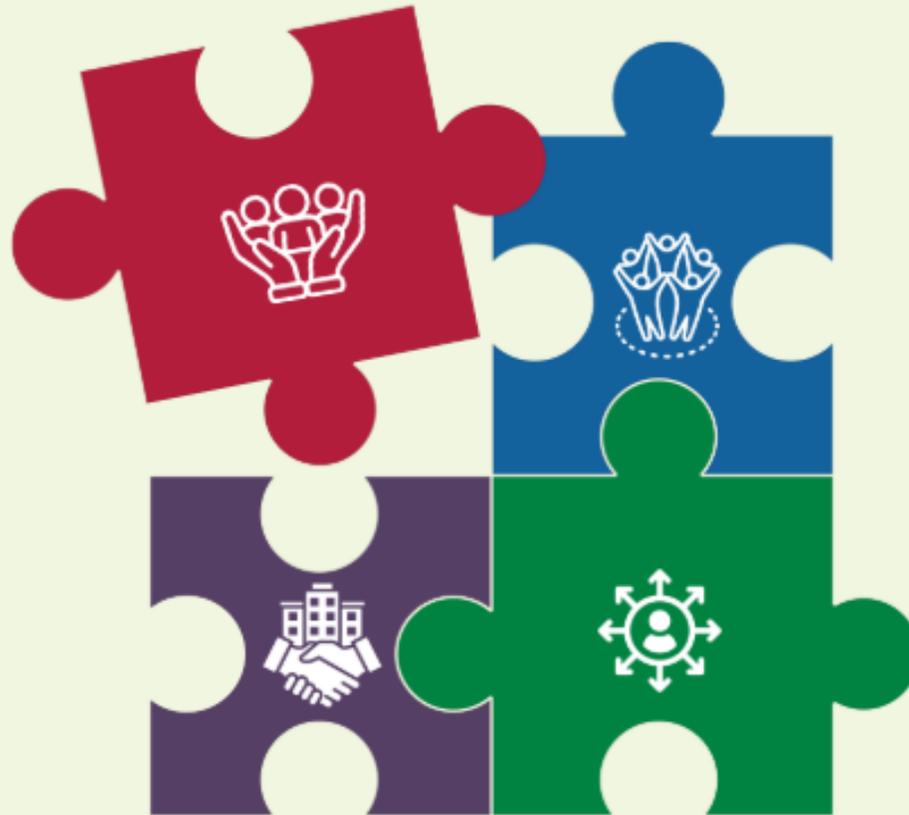Wiltshire Council

What does success look like?

Success for the new Area Boards is being able to demonstrate delivery against 4 key principles:

Continuous, equitable and inclusive **local engagement,** with a wide cross-section of the community.

The building and sustaining of **strong, area-based partnerships.**

Empowered and **resilient communities** who are supported with appropriate advice, guidance and investment.

Clear **local leadership and decision making** that is transparent, evidence led and democratic.

Wiltshire Council

Example Year

	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Community Area Network planning meetings		Cllr and Officer planning meetings		Cllr and Officer planning meetings		Cllr and Officer planning meetings		Cllr and Officer planning meetings		Cllr and Officer planning meetings		Cllr and Officer planning meetings
Business and grant meetings	Business and Grant meeting					Business and Grant meeting				Business and Grant meeting		
Engagements		Volunteer Celebration			Focus Group			Local survey				Visit/ consultation with local group
Network groups	LHFIG	H&WB Group	Youth Network	Environmental task and finish group	LHFIG	H&WB Group		LHFIG	Youth Network	H&WB Group		Environmental task and finish group

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Timeline 2026

Phase one – Milestones

- 19th January – Cabinet Liaison
- 20th January – AB Chairs and Vice Chairs
- February – April - Document/ guidance updates
- Early May - Single member decision for guidance updates.
- 19th May - Full Council - name change

Phase Two - Milestones

- January 28th - Task Group request to OS Management Committee
- March/ May 2026– Proposed that O&S Task Group report back to OS Management Committee with recommendations
- May/ July 2026 – Executive response and confirmation of future funding approach
- Exact implementation date for changes TBC

Phase two – O&S brief

To scrutinise the council's grant funding investment into communities, through consideration of the following proposals:

- The suitability and viability of a Crowdfunding model for Wiltshire's Area Board grants

- To evaluate the proposed introduction of a central 'Wiltshire Council Community Fund', financed by Social Value contributions and Community Lottery proceeds that Area Boards can access

- To evaluate the current Area Board grant funding criteria and consider a more simplified outcomes focused approach

- To assess combining the existing three funding streams (capital, youth, adults) into one, more versatile funding pot.

Wiltshire Council

Melksham Health & Wellbeing Meeting Notes

Thursday 6ᵗʰ Feb, 9.30am – 11am

In attendance:

Richard Rogers (Wiltshire Council)   David Patford (MWPC)

Emma Cade (Prevention & Wellbeing, WC)   Sarah Demmett (Doorway Wilts)

Teresa Strange (MWPC)   Sindy Uttley (Giffords Surgery)

Amanda Wilkes (Help Counselling Services)   Andrew Griffin (Wiltshire Cllr)

Laura Geater (Melksham Library)   John Glover (MWPC)

Sarah Thomson (Age UK Wiltshire)   Paul Wiltshire (Read Easy)

Jon Hubbard (Wiltshire Cllr)   Chris Pickett (Mens Shed)

Sheila Pickett (Riverside)   Sally Boyd (Adult Social Care)

Kate Brooks (CAB)

Agenda Item	Notes	Actions or decisions
Apologies	- Mary Winterbourne - Rebecca Seymour - Bridie Hanraads - Kate Ness - Kelly Martin - Liz Rowley - Ian Cunningham	

Actions from previous meeting	All the actions from last meeting are covered in agenda items below
	
	➢ Richard to speak to AGE UK as funding is available to do another daytime disco.
	➢ Natalie to come back to next meeting with a summary of what would need to be in place for face-to-face counselling in Melksham to return
	➢ Food Insecurity
	    ❖ Explore whether Community First would be interested in a piece of work to put together some peer support volunteers to help nudge long term users more to self-resilience (Richard Rogers)
	    ❖ Speak to Friends of Gifford surgery to see if they can assist. (Georgie Rose)	

	❖ Look to see if a process for referrers and the food bank can be put in place. (Richard Rogers) ❖ Bring everything back to next AB mtg for a decision on funding and moving forward (Richard Rogers)	
Kelly Martin (Spurgeons)	Kelly is unable to attend. She is covering the area until a replacement can be recruited for Carl Houghton who recently left Spurgeons. Kelly can be contacted at: kmartin@spurgeons.org Tel: 07967867869710	

Food Insecurity	Richard begun by outlining the new Community Resilience Fund that Wiltshire Council has responsibility for administering. The key points are:
	• It brings together the previous Household Support Fund and the Housing Support funding but does not include free school meals
	• It is over £4m ring fenced to be invested over 3 years offering an opportunity to be more strategic and work more effectively with the VCS
	• There are 3 outcomes
	    I. Provision of effective crisis support
	    II. Individual financial resilience
	    III. Bolstering support network that is joined up and visible
	• The fund is person centred, needs based and holistic
	• The key difference to HSF is that this is intended to be used to increase community resilience and move away from emergency provision
	• It encourages a cash first based approach that develops a wraparound support structure.
	
	The key area that the H&WB group are trying to address is working with the Melksham foodbank to ensure long term users receive the right support and incentives to build resilience. - Following discussions with partners as well as a visit to Storehouse foodbank in Trowbridge, there are two proposals which were discussed and agreed by the group:
	    1. Support CAB by using £5k of the resilience funding to pay for both a drop-in service as well as insisting that those users of the foodbank wjho wish to continue using the foodbank after 3 months have an assessment to ensure they are	

	receiving the right support and accessing funding they are entitled to. This was discussed and agreed with the following comments being made: • Recognised that not all referrers have the time, skillset and knowledge to ensure their clients have the right support and using CAB would be very helpful • Clients of the foodbank should be encouraged to speak to CAB or another advisor as early as possible and ideally before the 3-month compulsory assessment is required. • Other agencies also attend the foodbank at different times such as Age UK, Spurgeons or Doorway. It was agreed that having a rota would be helpful. 2. That a simple pantry system be introduced so that users of the Foodbank are asked to pay a nominal amount and then be able to choose items to use for their cooking. – This was agreed with the following comments: • The food offered by the foodbank is not necessarily useful or what is wanted by the receiver. This will offer choice and increase taking responsibility • Some people may not be able to cook, and it would be good to continue to find ways to support them to do so. Both proposals were agreed and will be taken to the foodbank trustees for discussion. Kay has already indicated her support to this. If they agree, the following allocation of the £7k resilience funding remaining would be made: £5k – CAB £2k – Melksham Foodbank to setup pantry	**ACTION** – Speak to Kay at the Foodbank to put a rota together (Sarah T.) **ACTION** – Jon H. and Richard R. to take proposals to Melksham Foodbank Trustees
Help Counselling	Amanda Wilkes attended as Natalie has now left Help Counselling. She spoke about the difficulties with face-to-face Counselling in Melksham. These include: • The need for a suitable permanent location • The expensive costs associated with this set-up • The need to have more than one counsellor working at a time	

	• The need to be able to have all the material on hand and offer support for the counsellors. Melksham does have the second highest number of people seen and phone or on-line services are still offered and used. The group understood the challenges and discussed if there were ways of helping those who wanted or needed face to face counselling but could not get to Trowbridge. It was suggested that there are volunteers who would be willing to drive for short trips but have not volunteered for Link Drivers as do not wish to do longer ones. It was agreed to ask Liz Rowley to lead a discussion on this at the next meeting	**ACTION** – Ask Liz Rowley to lead a discussion on recruiting drivers for short journeys only (RR)
Guid to local support	Melksham Area Board awarded Friends of Gifford some funding to help produce an on-line and hard copy of a guide to local support services. It builds on work already begun by others and has been something requested by many groups in the area The guide should be ready by April, and they are planning a launch for it. An offer to add links to existing web sites such as MTC was made and Richard will ensure the group has the link once known	
Updates	There were no additional updates bar a recognition that both funding and volunteers are an increasing strain on the CVS. Recently Carer Support had to fold and other organisations have spoken about the difficult decisions they are going to have to make	
Funding bids	The group discussed the following funding applications or enquiries: ➢ Age Uk Disco – 240 people attended the last Melksham daytime disco, and it was a huge success. There was complete support to run more of them, and Kate Brooks will work with Richard on an application ➢ Help Counselling have applied for £250 towards the Nourish and Flourish project which is a lady's group in Forest. Through discussion and support,	**ACTION** To recommend to the Area Board that these applications are agreed when they come to the area board

	the ladies are helped to lose weight. It is proving successful but would like £250 to complete the course. – Whilst supported it was recognised that it would need a delegated decision if it was not to be retrospective funding. There is currently £5,500 left in the health and wellbeing funding, so applications are welcomed from other organisations. The closing date is Feb 18th and speak to Richard Rogers if you wish to apply.	
Date of Next Meeting	**Thursday 7th May 9.30am, Melksham Without Parish office, Melksham Campus.**	

Melksham Community Support (MCS) service
Q3 – October to December 2025

The service, overseen by Age UK Wiltshire, started in April 2023 with the following outcomes agreed:

1. Improve the **wellbeing of older people** living in Melksham Town and Melksham Without, by offering support, access to information and practical help.
2. Ensure that support is available to **those who need it most**, particularly those who don't have a support network.
3. Promote the take-up of welfare benefits and access to other sources of **financial support**.
4. Promote and provide **holistic support** tailored to the individual's need.
5. Provide an **evidence base** of future needs.

Through this project Age UK Wiltshire employs a part-time (17.5 hours/week) Senior Project Worker, Sarah Thomson, specifically to support the populations of Melksham Town and Melksham Without.

Community First Local Council Community Project award
Following receipt of this award (please see Q2 report) we were pleased with the positive news coverage, which further raised awareness of the Melksham Community Support service - https://melkshamnews.com/community-service-wins-top-award-for-older-peoples-support/.

Promotion
We have promoted the service widely during this quarter, restocking posters and leaflets at a range of community venues, active social media promotion and attending events, giving talks and running information stands, including:
- three visits to the Food Bank to hand out the MCS leaflet and identify any residents who would benefit from support. To date, Sarah has supported four people she met at the Food Bank.
- attending the Celebrating Age Wiltshire Men's Creative Conversation group to discuss the MCS service and hand out booklets about Attendance Allowance and Pension Credit as well as information about the Daytime Disco.

Daytime Disco
In October Age UK Wiltshire held a Daytime Disco in Melksham, one of ten Discos planned across Wiltshire and Swindon, supported by Get Out Get Active. The Disco was a great success, with an attendance of 180 people and really positive feedback - https://melkshamnews.com/residents-flock-to-assembly-hall-for-daytime-disco/.
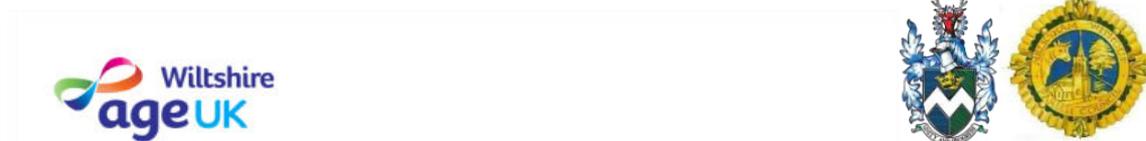
Following such a successful event we were asked whether we could run another one, with Melksham Area Board funding the hire of the Assembly Hall, DJ and other costs; and this took place in early January, with 260 people attending!

Sarah has attended both Discos and they've been a great opportunity to promote the MCS service and may account for the large increase in referrals.

Home Visits – the start of support
During the first home visit Sarah has a Guided Conversation with the older person to help identify any difficulties they may have, the support that is needed and what someone would like to achieve, in a conversational way which helps people to feel at ease. All aspects of someone's daily life is covered, from when they get up in the morning to going to bed at night. We cover domestic issues, personal care and other care needs, health, socialisation, financial needs and their support networks. The Guided Conversation is never hurried and is taken at the person's preferred pace, sometimes over more than one visit. This conversation helps Sarah to identify the areas of support needed and how to help improve someone's general wellbeing.

Activity
During this quarter a total of 32 new clients (Q2–19) got in touch or were referred for MCS support, of whom 7 (22%) live in the Melksham Without Parish Council area. (Of the population served by the project, approximately 70% live in the Melksham Town Council area and 30% in the Melksham Without Parish Council area). We also continued to support 27 people whose first contact was before October, including some people who have received regular or ongoing support since the early days of the service.

During this quarter Sarah made 52 home visits. There were 233 contacts (Q2 –246) with or on behalf of people, and Sarah supported people with 193 (Q2 – 154) issues. The support provided fell into the following six categories:

Finance – helping to put more money into people's pockets	15
Socialisation – helping people to get out and about more	64
Independence - helping people to be sustainably independent and to connected with their community	24
Volunteer support – exploring how volunteers can support people to improve their wellbeing	4
Wellbeing – helping people to feel better	66
Falls prevention – supporting people to take action to reduce their risk of falling	20

Several people have been supported to apply for Surviving Winter Grants, which the Community Foundation continues to fund.

Referrals in

We received new referrals from family and friends, Age UK Wiltshire Information & Advice and Wellbeing services, Adult Social Care, GP Surgeries, Care Coordinators and self-referrals. Most new referrals come directly from older people themselves.

Onward referrals

Onward referrals were made to a wide range of other organisations, such as the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue service for a Safe and Well visit, Adult Social Care, Beyond Dementia and other voluntary and community sector organisations, and statutory services as well as to Age UK Wiltshire's Fitness & Friendship Club, Telephone Befriending, Information & Advice and Wellbeing Checks with Meals services, for further support.

Melksham Community Support phone line

The number of requests made to the MCS phone line for help with shopping and prescriptions remains low, as previously regular callers to the phone line have all been offered additional, holistic support (for example, only one person now requests regular support with prescriptions). Often a request for support for a task that can be managed independently is a symptom of other support that is needed, and it is this other support that Sarah has been talking to people about. Active MCS clients have a direct number for Sarah, with the MCS line the first point of contact for new enquiries.

Volunteers

In this quarter volunteers have helped to tidy a severely overgrown garden, replace washers on dripping kitchen taps and helped to remove an unwanted microwave.

Sarah continues to support a few people with shopping herself to use this as an opportunity to speak with these people in more detail about the support Melksham Community Support can offer.

Client Feedback

"I am so grateful for all you continue to do for me. The chats are so helpful, and they put my mind at ease. Thank you for your time."

"I've had a call from the advice contact team about getting the equipment I need to help me. Thank you so much! So fast, I thought I would have to wait for weeks."

"I have received my Blue Badge. I am over the moon. Many thanks for your help with this. I couldn't have done it alone."

"Thank you so much for your help with this and explaining things to me. They have back paid me, and I am so happy. This is life changing. Please pass my thanks to your Information & Advice service, too. Such a wonderful service."

"Thank you so, so much for your help with the Blue Badge. I am so pleased I came over to speak to you at the Food & River Festival. Having the blue badge makes such a difference

and it is such a help when going to the doctors or the hospital. I can't even start telling you how helpful it is to me. Many, many thanks for helping us get one."

"Many thanks to you and the Information & Advice service for helping with the AA [Attendance Allowance] claim. Had you not visited and got the ball rolling, I would never have done this. Everyone was so kind and helpful - I am very grateful. I will send a donation as a thank you."

"Thank you for getting my prescription. I would have struggled to walk into town today so that has been a big help to me."

"Many thanks to all who were involved with my AA claim. I am now receiving the higher rate of AA. This is such a blessing and will make such a difference to my life. Thank you to everyone. I am so very happy about this."

"Many thanks for coming to see me. It is nice that you have the time to talk and we are not rushed. I can't believe the information you have given me. So much going on - who knew!"

"Thank you! I have really enjoyed you coming to see me and having a chat with me. You are so friendly and easy to chat to. And who knows, maybe I can have some help with my finances, too? Please come back to see me soon."

"Thank you so much for coming out to see me and for all the information you have given me. I feel reassured and more at ease should I need to have this operation, what I am entitled to on discharge. Such a peace of mind and weight lifted off my shoulders."

"Lovely to meet you. Thank you so much for all the info, you have been so helpful."

"Thank you so much for coming to see us and for all the information you have given us. It is quite incredible, and I am a bit speechless. It is so nice to know you are only a phone call away. We are so grateful to you for helping us."

Other Age UK Wiltshire services

- In Q3, the Information & Advice service advised or supported 48 people living in Melksham (Q3 – 40).
- There were 85 attendances (Q3 – 76) at the Fitness & Friendship Club at Bowerhill, with an average attendance of 14.
- Five people in the Melksham area are receiving weekly calls from Age UK Wiltshire Telephone Befrienders.

Age UK Wiltshire news
Please see our website for full details of all the support we offer, information about issues affecting people in our local community and our latest newsletter - https://www.ageuk.org.uk/wiltshire/

We were delighted to be one of 15 Age UKs selected to receive the first ever Good Practice Awards at the Age UK Network Conference in November. The Quality Assured Mark is an award that required no application, as the successful Age UK Partners were identified by the Network Quality & Compliance team in recognition of going beyond the most basic quality requirements, based upon their regular Quality reporting and assessments. The criteria for the award were ratified by the Independent Quality Panel as being key in measuring operational Quality performance.

Ginny Cooper and Kate Brooks
Age UK Wiltshire
19th January 2025
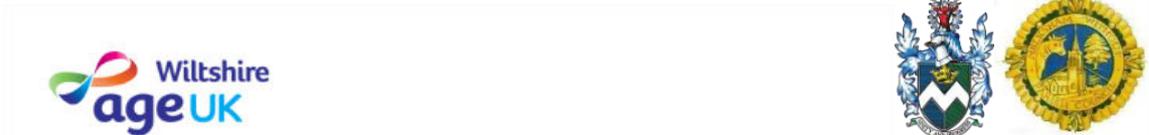
Decision on not installing the two pedestrian gates at Shurnhold Fields

Teresa Strange, 9th Jan 2026

I took a call from Milestone this morning who are doing the flood prevention and car park works for Wiltshire Council and Melksham Without/Melksham Town councils. They were concerned about the two pedestrian gates that were on our original specification, and I therefore popped to site, and as it was time sensitive (with no additional cost) made an agreement on what should be done. Dave Elms has been undertaking the site visits with me, but wasn't available today at short notice, so I went alone, and then spoke to Hayley, who is in agreement.

The pedestrian gates I felt were too restrictive, credit goes to Jason running their site for bringing to our attention. The Right of Way has to be maintained, and the pedestrian route follows the RoW. The gate was only 900mm wide. That is quite narrow. There is a lady who visits every morning with a double pushchair and a couple of dogs, and they measured her wheel tread and its 1100mm wide. She could of course use the main car park entrance, but why are you installing a gate in the first place?   Latest guidance from the Wiltshire Council RoW team when we talked to them about putting in a kissing gate at Shaw Playing Field was that there had been some legal challenges on kissing gates as they were considered to be preventing access; and I think this would effectively be doing the same, would no benefit. I didn't think a mobility scooter would get through either. I have said to them to NOT install the pedestrian gate here.

Photos overleaf.

The pedestrian gates:

The gap between the wood poles would be the access through the gate (900mm)

The RoW pedestrian entrance from the road; you can see the map lectern now installed too.

At the other end of the car park, I think we would just be ridiculed for having a gate when there are big gaps either side:

Again, the wood posts show where the gate would be:

But hopefully you can see the bollards to prevent vehicle access in the background,

You would be putting a gate amongst these gaps, doesn't make sense.

You can also see the shed in its new position, away from the tree line where it would have been in if the car park

So, we measured, and you could fit a car/caravan through the gap if you don't block, so another wooden bollard has been concreted in the is afternoon, blue spray spot.

It was time sensitive as the men available to do this afternoon, as on Monday the dropped kerbs and overhead barrier etc are delivered, they have a full week on that, and then will be leaving site. Road closures in place for next week. Hedge being planted back in the new gap on Tuesday.

The water connection still to be done,and the trench dug across Dunch Lane to enable, but that is to provide water for the "Friends" and at present the standpipe tap has not gone in. We don't want to leave a trench with plates across for indefinite period.

The land needs to dry out before it can be reseeded, including a wildflower mix on the bund. But where the residents wrecked the land before the start of site, its too rutted and wet. So they will return in April to do that.   Boundary ditches also cleared.

Cold wet Clerk ☺