

**Draft Minutes of Derry Hill & Studley Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting**  
**Lansdowne Hall, Petty Lane, Derry Hill,**  
**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**Present:**

**Derry Hill & Studley Parish Councillors**

Derry Hill & Studley WARD  
Cllr Martin Handyside  
Cllr Andrew Turton  
Cllr Philippa Todd  
Cllr Vaughan Mizon  
Cllr Claire Williams  
Cllr Nathan Errington

PEWSHAM  
Cllr John Barnes

3 members of the public attended.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the public.

**1. Welcome**

Cllr John Barnes welcomed everyone to the parish meeting.

**2. Introduction of Councillors**

Councillors introduce themselves.

All councillors in attendance introduced themselves and informed them of the wards they represent.

**3. Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Lord Kerry, Cllr Spence, Cllr MacInnes,

**4. Approval of [Minutes](#) of Parish Meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

The minutes were approved.

**5. Chairman's Report**

A summary of the work of Derry Hill and Studley Parish Council over the past year and a review of forthcoming plans.

Report attached as Appendix 1.

**6. Expenditure and Grants**

A presentation on Income, Expenditure and Grants made over the past year.

Report attached as appendix 2

## **7. Updates from Community Groups**

An opportunity for local community groups to update the Parish on their activities.

Howard Wilson –Branch Chairman, (Melksham, Chippenham and Pewsham Branch) Wilts and Berks Canal trust. [www.wbct.org.uk/mccfl/](http://www.wbct.org.uk/mccfl/)

Provided an update on the works and the future plans for the project. Greater detail can be found on their webpage.

Andrew Turton – representative of Derry Hill & Studley Community Heartbeat Trust, Provided an update, outlining the work that has been completed and the new assets allowed to be provided by funding from the parish council. Asked people to attend the next training session for how to use a defibrillators.

Rub a Dub preschool provided a written update from the preschool thanking for the money and explaining the impact of the project.

## **8. Public Contributions**

This will be an opportunity for residents to express their thoughts on the parish and their suggestions for the Parish Council.

There was a discussion about the road works on Church Road and the schedule for those works.

A member of the public thanked the council for the hard work over the reorganisation. KR-thanks to the council for the changes. They then raised if it is possible to create wildflower borders along the A4, would be an asset to the village and will help the BKV. Would help the join of the village, manage the verge cutting to support wildflowers more. Dorset do very well. (Do they have the machinery for cut and collect?)

A further member of the public asked how have we found the new council? since going out on our own. Discussion about the opportunities that this has presented us.

The meeting closed at 15.50

## **Annual Parish Meeting 2026 Chair's Report**

Thank you for attending this annual Parish Meeting of Derry Hill and Studley Parish Council. It has been my honour to serve as Chair of the Council over the past year, and, indeed, for the two years before that. I'd like to start by taking the opportunity to thank my fellow parish councillors for their engagement and support over the past year, and our excellent Parish Clerk, Katherine Checchia, who provides us with expert advice and guidance.

This is, in fact, the first annual Parish Meeting of the Council. As you'll be aware, last May the local government boundaries were re-drawn in our area, and the former parish of Calne Without became the new parish of Derry Hill and Studley, covering a much smaller area of Derry Hill, Studley, Pewsham, Old Derry Hill, Naish Hill, the Bowood Estate and Sandy Lane.

We've also had a lot of changes to the Council. Myself, Bruce MacInnes, Philippa Todd and Andrew Turton have carried over from the old council, but I've been pleased to welcome the following as new councillors: Martin Handyside, Vaughan Mizon, Jean Spence, Claire Williams, Lord Kerry and Nathan Errington. I should also mention Gavin MacHale, who was elected to the Council a year ago but has subsequently resigned for personal reasons.

Hopefully the transition from Calne Without to Derry Hill and Studley will have appeared seamless. It took a lot of work behind the scenes to make it so, with particular attention to our IT setup, website and Facebook Page, as well as having to properly deal with the transfer of both physical and financial assets from the old Calne Without PC to five successor town and parish councils, as well as to ourselves. That this happened so smoothly is testament to the hard work put in by our Parish Clerk.

One of the first challenges we had as a new council was inSPIRE, the parish magazine. This had been published by the church parochial council; it was developed over many years by the hard work of the editor, Richard Aylen, to become an essential part of our community. Almost a year ago, we were asked by Richard to take over running the magazine, as he was obliged to step back for reasons of poor health.

We have been pleased to take on the responsibility for inSPIRE, with it transitioning from being an ecclesiastical parish magazine, to becoming a civil parish magazine. Under our stewardship, there have been two main changes: firstly, we have broadened the distribution to cover the entire parish; secondly, we have increased the number of print versions from six to ten each year. Again, I'd like to thank our Parish Clerk for taking on the editorship of the magazine.

inSPIRE plays a key role in promoting the community groups and voluntary organisations that are the beating heart of our village. The Parish Council also provides grant funding to groups to help support projects and initiatives. This year, we have supported the village hall with £5,000 funding towards the essential roof repairs and £2,500 towards the Rub'a'Dub preschool group towards new furniture and play equipment.

Over the past few years, the Derry Hill and Studley Community Committee have organised and staged events that have helped to bring the village together. This year, we have helped to put them on a stable footing by undertaking to fund their insurance and website costs on an ongoing basis.

We have also been pleased to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust to support their ambitious project to restore the locks and historic ancillary buildings at Pewsham Locks. I would urge everyone local to visit one of the open days there to see what's happening: these take place on the second Saturday of each month over the summer.

Our ability to support local projects of environmental, educational and social benefit will be strengthened in the future by the agreement we've signed up to with Eden Renewables, to administer the community benefit fund associated with the Forest Gate Solar Farm. This will be worth £18,900 per year, index-linked, for the next forty years, and will kick in following commissioning next year. There will be opportunities for community involvement in administering the fund, so please look out for further details in due course.

We have continued to focus on improving the safety of the roads in our parish, promoting and part-funding schemes through the Calne Area Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Group of Wiltshire Council. In June, the new 20mph speed limit covering Studley and Norley Lane was implemented. In February, new village gates were installed covering Pewsham and Old Derry Hill. A similar project to install village gates on the approach into the village on the A342 Devizes Road is going through the system.

Last year, we were successful in winning a bid for substantive highway scheme funding to deliver traffic calming improvements on Church Road and Studley Lane on the Derry Hill side of the village. This is due to start on Monday.

This year, we submitted a similar bid to fund improvements to the 20mph gateways into Studley and Norley Lane. Unfortunately, this time our bid was unsuccessful, but we intend to resubmit it again later this year.

Over the past year, our Footpaths Working Group undertook a survey of the network of public footpaths and bridleways in our parish. This survey identified a number of maintenance issues and we appreciate the support of the Bowood Estate in promptly addressing the problems within their area. Our footpath network is now in a reasonable condition but we ask that residents continue to draw any issues to our attention.

We've also relaunched the Parish's Climate and Environment Working Group and appreciate the involvement of community volunteers in the Group. We're working on a number of short, medium and long-term initiatives: please look out for the update and feedback survey in next month's inSPIRE magazine.

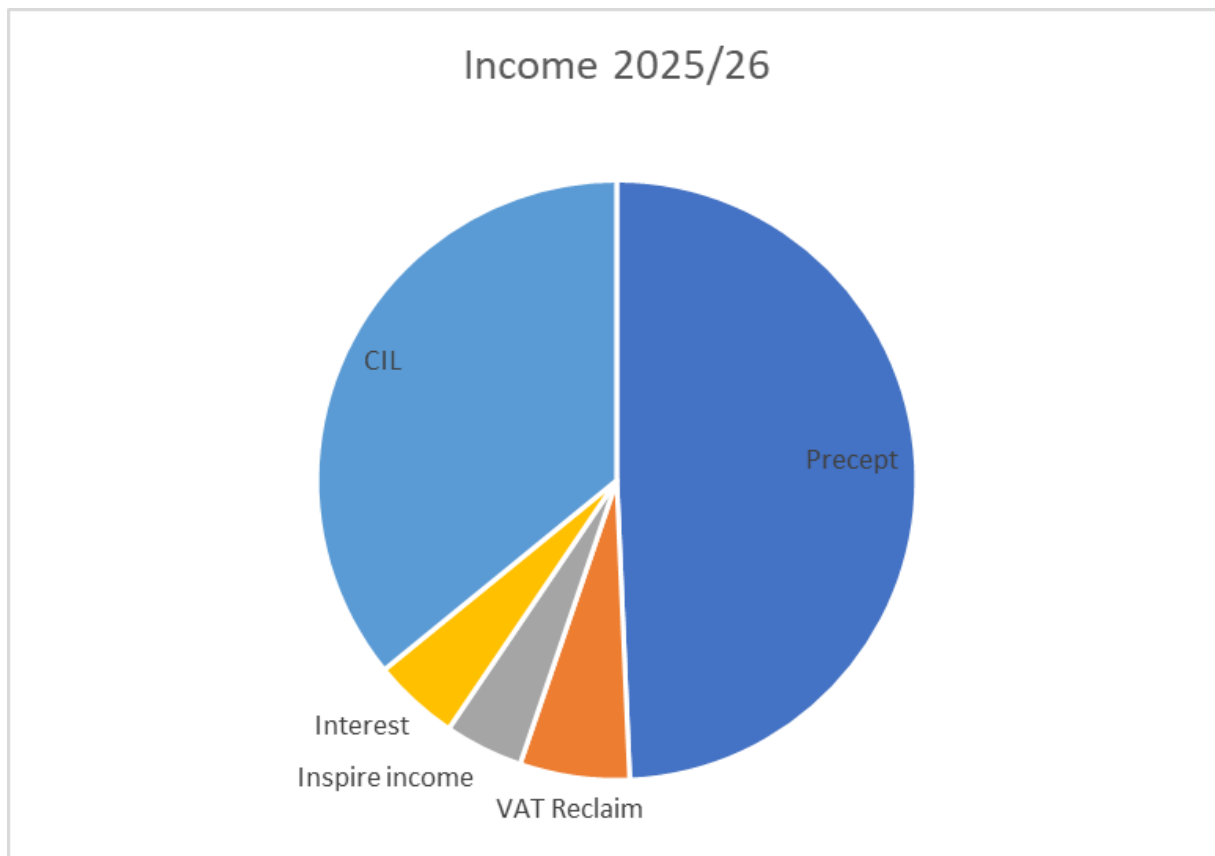
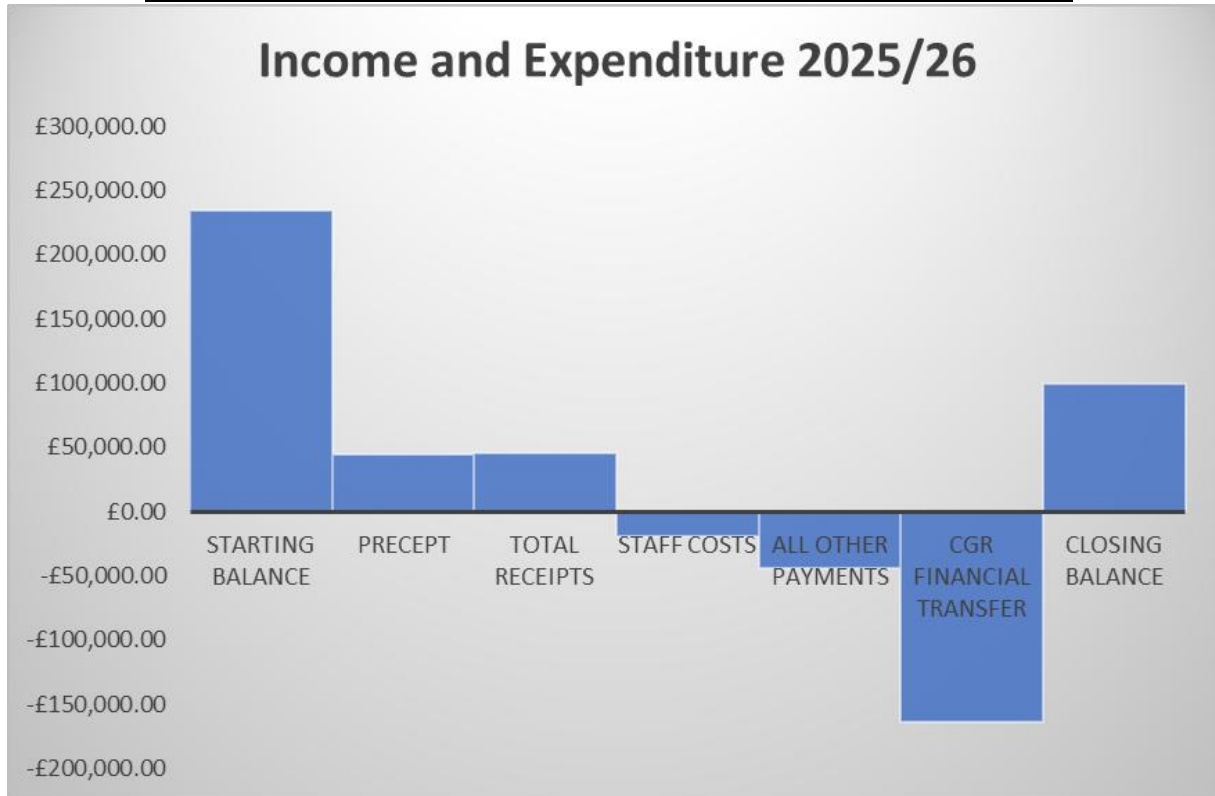
One of the early projects of the Climate and Environment Working Group has been to plant a wildflower mini meadow in a corner of the Bowood Sports Ground on 1<sup>st</sup> May. This has been done to support this year's Best Kept Village Application, which we'll be assessed on shortly. I'd like to offer our thanks to the Community Committee and all the volunteers who have put so much effort into getting our village ready for this year's competition.

The new Parish Council is much more financially constrained than Calne Without. This means that we need to take a more strategic approach to financial planning in order to support the delivery of community improvements. We've started work on our Strategic Plan, which will be a four-year rolling plan to support our financial planning.

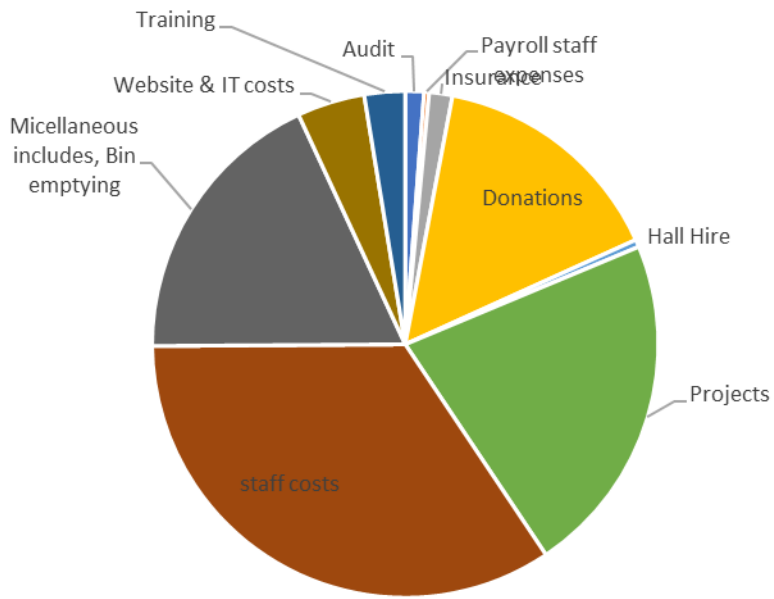
The reason I'm finishing on this note is that, to develop this Strategic Plan, we need to understand what our residents want improvements our residents would like to see in our parish. So, we're using this Annual Parish Meeting to launch a consultation survey is to ask residents for their ideas and views. We'll be circulating copies ahead of the break, so please do take the time to complete it and help to shape the future of our fantastic community.

John Barnes  
Chair  
Derry Hill and Studley Parish Council

**Derry Hill & Studley Parish Council Finance Reports 2025/26**



### Payments 2025/26



### Payments 2025/26 (excluding staff costs)

