

MINUTES OF SPARKWELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held on 6th May 2026 at SPARKWELL PARISH HALL

Present: Cllrs May, Hutton-Fellowes, Vinall, Webb, Sophie Jones (Clerk).

In attendance: Cllr Edie (SHDC), Cllr Carson (DCC), Claire Erasmus, Mark Davis, Barnaby Hudson (TW), 1 Member of Public

Part 1 (Open to the Public)

Annual Parish Meeting

46/26 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Cllr Vinall nominated Cllr May as Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Webb and unanimously agreed.

Cllr May nominated Cllr Vinall as Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Webb and unanimously agreed.

47/26 Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chair

Cllr May signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk.

Parish Council Meeting

48/26 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Serpell Denman sent apologies, which were unanimously accepted.

49/26 Agreement of the Agenda between Parts I and II

Agreed. Councillors noted that one item of business would be considered in Part II of the meeting.

50/26 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Hutton-Fellowes declared an interest in the Sparkwell Scouts application for funding in (minute 61/26).

51/26 County Councillor's Report

Cllr Carson informed the council that the outcome of the Local Government Reorganisation consultation will be on the 19th July. It was noted that local elections are tomorrow (7th May 2026). Cllr Carson would like to set a date to walk around the village to look at the roads and any flood prone areas. The Locality Budget will be available from 11th May 2026. Sparkwell Parish Council no longer use the speed gun, and it was agreed to reallocate it to another parish. Cllr Carson agreed to pass it to Nick Colton for reallocation.

52/26 District Councillor's Report

Cllr Edie noted that South Hams District Council has put forward it's preferred organisation of the government, regarding Local Government Reorganisation. He asked if there are any assets that Sparkwell Parish Council would like to request from SHDC. Councillors suggested Boringdon Camp.

53/26 Public Forum

A member of public was in attendance to discuss planning application 0770/26/FUL. Cllrs May and Vinall agreed to visit the site.

54/26 Hemerdon Mine

Barnaby Hudson from Tungsten West (TW) attended to provide an update. Barnaby will be a key contact for SPC throughout the project. The full mine restart is planned for Q1 of 2027, using full mitigations. The stockpiled materials will be processed first. True mining will happen September 2026, in which blasting will start to get materials ready. Barnaby will provide SPC with a schedule and key dates to be aware of.

TW have approximately 100 employees currently and are recruiting for 15 new roles. They will campaign locally.

It was noted that many of the pre-operational conditions revolve around Low Frequency Noise (LFN). TW hope to be able to run some community sessions to gauge the perspective of parishioners and raise awareness of the project. This will hopefully happen in June.

Cllrs asked if parishioners could visit the site. Barnaby said they can arrange open days to accommodate this.

Cllr Carson asked if the production/focus has changed as blasting is happening in September 2026. SPC were originally informed there is over 18 months of material to process first. Barnaby noted that the primary focus is tungsten operation, with little focus on aggregate.

Concerns were raised regarding the speeding occurring on the road located by Tungsten West. It was part of the Section 106 agreement to address. Barnaby believes the commitment will still be upheld, but he will confirm at a later date.

Regarding tree planting, Barnaby isn't aware of any current plans to replace trees or manage the gorse. However, there are plans in place to manage the deer.

It was noted that residents of Hemerdon were aware of the noise from the mine last week. It was confirmed that there were activities at the mine. Barnaby will circulate his phone number and is happy for people to get in touch and call immediately if they are aware of noise from the mine.

55/26 Planning

- a. 1107/26/VPO – Refusal due to prior agreement. The Lee Mill slip road is still undecided.
- b. 0770/26/FUL – SPC support this application, subject to the condition that the garage cannot be changed to residential use.
- c. 0996/26/VPO – No comment.

56/26 Minutes

- a. Councillors considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 1st April 2026 and some amendments were required. The minutes will be amended and reviewed at the next parish council meeting.

57/26 Road Warden

It was noted that a wall has been hit near Welbeck and looks quite unstable.

58/26 Updates from ongoing projects (Climate Change, Biodiversity, Roads, Trees) – to receive any updates from local ongoing projects/issues.

No updates.

59/26 Chairman's Business

It was noted that Cllr Vinall is now a Board Member of the Newnham Solar Fund CIC.

Cllr Webb raised concerns regarding the building at the fields in Hemerdon (Compass Heights to Stoggy Lane). The fields belong to a government building association.

60/26 Correspondence

- a. To consider giving the LMCA permission to purchase and install new community equipment within the Bottle Park Play Area and/or the surrounding green space (details circulated). Cllrs agreed and **RESOLVED** to approve the installation of new community equipment within Bottle Park, but concerns have been raised regarding safety, storage and insurance.
- b. To consider giving the LMCA permission to install a recently donated church font (details circulated).
Cllrs will discussed installation of the church font and feel it is a good use of the church font. Cllr Edie will look into funding for the LMCA.

61/26 Finance

- a. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the budget analysis report and bank reconciliation for April 2026.
- b. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the grant funding request of £840 from Sparkwell Scouts.

62/26 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at **7pm** on **Wednesday 10th June 2026** at **Hemerdon Village Hall**.

Meeting closed at 21.40pm

This is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed

Name Date