

Minutes of Haresfield Parish Council Meeting

Held in the Village Hall on Tuesday July 28th 2026

Present: Councillors Nicky Ford, Alan White, John Hunt.

Clerk: Madeleine King e-mail: haresfieldpc@gmail.com

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Public Participation: none

Apologies: Cllr Charlotte Tilsley, County councillor John Patient, District councillor Mark Ryder

Declaration of Interests /Dispensations: none

County Councillors and District Councillor's Reports:

Cllr Patient reported via email:

County Council & Committees

- Motions passed on: **Youth Voice in Climate Decision-Making, Community Energy, Highways Community Partnership, Donation of Fire Engines to Ukraine.**
- Meetings held: Commons & Rights of Way, Pension, Constitution, Appointments Committees.
- Economic Strategy Scrutiny Committee expanding to cover: Economic development & regeneration, Spatial planning & major infrastructure, Climate adaptation & mitigation, Air quality, ecology, biodiversity, Flood resilience, Minerals & waste planning and Waste reduction & disposal.

Cabinet Decisions

- New **Joint Minerals & Waste Plan** development.
- **E-Scooter trial** extended 12 months; procurement for combined e-scooter/e-bike scheme.
- Adoption of **Green Skills Strategy 2026–2030.**
- Procurement of **SHaRe Light Touch Open Admission Framework.**
- **£7.642m underspend** allocated to reserves. *"Agreed to allocate the 2025/26 revenue budget underspend of £7.642 million..."*
- **Junction 10 Improvements Scheme** authorised to proceed.

Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund

- Funding now reaching successful applicants.
- £14,000 of £20,000 allocated to Haresfield & Upton projects. *"I have allocated £14,000 of the £20,000 assigned to me..."*

Highways Updates

- **A417 Missing Link:**
 - Temporary route from 29 June for at least five weeks.

- Narrow lanes, 40mph limit, single-lane traffic. Closure of existing A417 section.
"This arrangement is expected to be in place for at least five weeks..."
- **A40 Over Bridge works** (June 2026–Spring 2027):
 - Lane closures and occasional full overnight closures.
 - Slip road to A40 westbound closed 24/7. *"The slip road... will be closed 24/7 for the duration of the scheme."*

Summer Holiday Activities & Food (HAF)

- Free activities and meals for children on benefits-related free school meals.
- Running **22 July – 1 September**.

Library Challenge 2026

- Summer reading challenge for children aged 3+. Six themed zones; Bronze/Silver/Gold awards. 100 school assemblies planned.

Trading Standards

- Nearly **2,000 unsafe 'squishy' toys** seized due to chemical smells and missing safety labels.

District Councillor Mark Ryder reported via email:

- **Draft Local Plan**
 - Planning inspectors have requested a closed hearing in August to discuss a specific highways matter involving only the District and County Councils.
 - The hearing is intended to conclude highways discussions that may inform the new Local Plan.
 - The overall status of the draft Local Plan remains unchanged, with inspectors previously declining to progress it.
- **Local Plan Consultation**
 - Parish councils were invited to participate in the Stroud District Local Plan consultation. Consultation period runs from **29 June to 9 August 2026 (11pm)**.
- **Local Government Reorganisation**
 - Council approved details for submission to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government regarding the move to a unitary authority.
 - Government has confirmed that **Gloucestershire will become a single county-wide unitary authority**.
 - Parish Council elections will be brought forward from 2028 to **May 2027**, so councils should prepare accordingly.
- **Tree Management**
 - A new council policy has been adopted to protect and expand the district's tree population and green infrastructure.

Report prepared by Mark Ryder, dated 22 July 2026.

Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting dated June 30th 2026 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

Village maintenance: A request was received for vegetation at The Hangings to be cut back because the bridleway was overgrown and difficult to navigate. Juliet Browne, the landowner, liaised with the Cotswold Wardens who have now cleared the bridleway.

Highways, traffic and parking: Councillor Hunt and the clerk met Yakub Mulla, Highways manager, to discuss various issues. A request for new white lines (l markings) was made to assist residents with access to/from their driveways. This was deemed unacceptable in front of properties; however white lines may be considered if made by residents themselves. This would attract a payment and no automatic acceptance made. Clerk explained that the landlord of the Beacon Inn had offered use of the pub carpark during the daytime and Yakub explained various schemes that had been put in place in other villages. Clerk to meet the new Head of the school to talk these through.

Village Hall & village events: Draft minutes of the June meeting were amended to ensure consistency and accuracy with the Village Hall meeting minutes. The village bonfire was again discussed, with potential dates suggested and an action to ensure that any event did not clash with any event the Beacon Inn was planning.

Energy from Waste & CLG: Clerk to approach you UBB regarding applying for a grant to purchase a road speed camera, also to contact Highways to determine what would be acceptable and suitable. Cricket club liaising with clerk to submit a grant application for a mobile cricket net.

Emergency plan: In the absence of Councillor Tilsley, the Emergency plan was briefly discussed in regard to the need to determine exactly what supplies should be purchased to be used in the event of an emergency situation. The possibility of fire as a possible risk was also discussed and how to mitigate against this and respond rapidly and appropriately will be investigated. Thank you to those who have offered to be part of the plan in any way.

Communications: Councillors suggested clerk obtain a Parish council phone to be used to make announcements on the village WhatsApp to ensure clarity of the source of information. The new village newsletter was discussed and Paul Wain thanked for getting this off the ground. It was suggested that the church and the pub were both approached to submit information, and possibly other groups. Clerk to meet with Paul to discuss. PC to submit an article for the newsletter to explain the purpose of the PC and to encourage people to participate in the meetings and/or become a councillor.

It was proposed that the PC invite neighbouring parishes to a meeting to encourage joint working on several aspects of interest. Clerk to approach Standish, Harescombe and Hunts Grove to gauge interest.

Biodiversity: It was noted that the rope around the Millenium corner had disintegrated in the extreme heat, clerk to source an alternative and replace it. Rich Gibbs has been working with the PCC and church authorities and we are delighted that his work has paid off and swift boxes are now installed in the tower of St. Peters Church. Thanks to all concerned.

Himalayan balsam is continuing to be a problem in village waterways. Rich Gibbs has removed substantial amounts of it, however it spreads prolifically and its shallow root system means that

it does not hold the banks of waterways in the same way as other plants. Ways to eradicate this are under discussion.

Merryfield trustees: The discovery of the highly poisonous plant hemlock in several locations adjacent to the Merryfield was discussed. Richard Gibbs has safely removed the plants for which we thank him. Clark has contacted SDC, however there is no requirement to report the discovery of hemlock. An article is to be submitted for the Village newsletter and shared with the school to raise awareness of the plant and its properties. The broken fence between the cricket field and the orchard was reported to Mark Heywood who responded to say that although the fence was not his responsibility he would send Ian Exton, his farm manager, to take a look.

Road closures: none, however notification of Temporary Speed Restriction - B4008 Bath Road - Haresfield parish - stroud district. 40 mph restriction Aug 10, 2026 to Feb 10, 2028 for Tritax Park works.

Planning: none

Correspondence: Councillors have received an invite to the police advocacy scheme meeting, scheduled for Sept 15th. A request for a replacement Gloucestershire flag was actioned by the clerk and is awaited.

Finance & Clerks Report: The 2025/26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) was submitted and acknowledged by the national auditors.

The Council received and noted the quarterly bank reconciliation for the period ending 31 June 2026, presented by the RFO. It was confirmed that the reconciled bank balance agreed with the cash book balance.

Transactions/payments agreed:

Cheque payments were agreed and authorised by councillors.

Amazon	ink/stationery	£105.13 (cheque no.400974)
GALC	Councillor TRAINING X2	£95.00 (cheque no.400975)
ADJUSTMENT/Ms M King	land rent 25/26	£200 (cheque no.400976)
Wildcare	owl box	£172.80 (cheque no.400977)
D Mason	audit	£250 (cheque no.400978)
Defib warehouse	replacement defibrillator cover	£150 (cheque no.400979)
GRCC	DONATION	£250 (cheque no.400980)

Any other business:

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Date of next meeting: Tuesday September 29th 2026