

Lydiard Millicent Parish Council Newsletter

Spring 2026



Contact Us

For more information on Lydiard Millicent Parish Council:

- Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LMPCUK>
- Visit our website: www.lydiardmillicent-pc.gov.uk
- Contact our Parish Clerk via clerk@lydiardmillicent-pc.gov.uk or on 07999 641919



Lydiard Millicent Parish Council
Jubilee Club House, Meadow Springs,
Lydiard Millicent, SN5 3NH



Introduction

Welcome to Lydiard Millicent Parish Council's fourth newsletter. It's been another busy year, with the VE 80 celebrations, the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, work to prevent flooding and improve the roads in the area and of course the ongoing maintenance of facilities in the parish. All of our councillors work hard on a voluntary basis to do their best for the community, so I would like to take this opportunity to thank them, along with our wonderful staff, Hayley, Colin and Andrew, for everything that they do.

We hope you find this update of interest. If you would like to know more about any of the articles, or our work in general, please check out our website, or contact me via email at sally.westwood@lydiardmillicent-pc.gov.uk.

Sally Westwood

Chairman – Lydiard Millicent Parish Council

Are you looking for somewhere to hire?



Jubilee Club House was remodelled in the summer of 2024 and now offers a bright and versatile space for meetings, clubs and private celebrations.

Situated at the Recreation Field at Meadow Springs, the Jubilee Club House provides parking for up to 40 cars, tables, chairs and modest

kitchen facilities, and is available for regular group activities and one-off occasions. For availability and bookings, please call **07727 352398** or email council@lydiardmillicent-pc.gov.uk.

Jubilee Club House	Residents	Non-residents
Main Room & Toilets (per hour)	£8.50	£16.50
As above with Kitchen (per hour)	£12.50	£18.50
Children's Parties - All Facilities	£54.00	£70.00

We'd love to see you!

Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 21 May

Please join us at the Annual Parish Meeting at **7pm on Thursday 21 May**, to be held at the **Jubilee Club House**.



The meeting is a great opportunity to hear what has been achieved in the past year, be informed about plans and priorities for the year ahead and get updates from key community groups in the parish. This year we will also have an update on progress on the Neighbourhood Plan, so you will be able to see the great work that the Steering Group has been doing and talk about our development plans. There'll be time to ask questions and we'll have refreshments available too. We look forward to seeing you there!

Monthly Parish Meetings

We don't see many people at most monthly Parish Council meetings, so why not pop in and see what we do? The first 10 minutes are for you to ask any questions you might have. Agendas are published on noticeboards around the parish and on our website so you can see what will be discussed.

Meetings take place at 7pm at Jubilee Club House, usually on the first Thursday of the month, as listed below. Please come along; your input helps to ensure local issues are raised and that our work reflects the priorities of the community.

Meeting	Date
Annual Meeting of the Council and May Parish Meeting	Thurs 7 May 2026
Annual Parish Meeting	Thurs 21 May 2026
General Parish Meetings	
Thurs 4 June 2026	Thurs 3 Dec 2026
Thurs 2 July 2026	Thurs 14 Jan 2027
Thurs 3 Sept 2026	Thurs 4 Feb 2027
Thurs 1 Oct 2026	Thurs 4 Mar 2027
Thurs 5 Nov 2026	Thurs 1 Apr 2027



In conversation with our Wiltshire Councillor

In May 2025, Andrew Matthews became our Wiltshire Councillor, when he won the seat for Royal Wootton Bassett East. We caught up with him to see how he was doing.

You've been a Wiltshire Councillor for about a year now. How have you found it so far?

I've found it both enjoyable and eye-opening. The role gives you a real insight into how local government works and the many ways we can make a difference in people's lives.

How do you balance work as a councillor with your day job and family life?

It's a question I'm often asked. Good diary management and time discipline are essential. I have a separate phone for council matters, so when I'm with my family I can give them my full attention, while still being able to respond to urgent issues when they arise. My family have been incredibly understanding of the demands of this role, which makes all the difference.

What has been your biggest challenge?

Planning is one of the biggest challenges in this division, with several large and sometimes controversial applications to consider. Another challenge is managing expectations. In a world of instant deliveries and services, people naturally expect quick results, but local government doesn't always move at that pace.

What has surprised you most about your role?

I've been surprised by how even small interventions can make a real difference. Whether it's helping a resident navigate a planning issue or supporting a local project through area board grants, it's rewarding to see the tangible impact your work can have on people's daily lives.

What do you like most about your role?

Meeting residents and seeing the dedication of our parish councillors is a real highlight. The Royal Wootton Bassett East division covers a large area, including the town and two civil parishes, so it's a privilege to meet people from across the division and represent them at Wiltshire Council. It's always a joy to be able to make a tangible difference in our communities.

What's on at the Parish Hall

Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall is delighted to be hosting a fantastic programme of events as we head into the summer months. Wine tasting evenings have proved to be very popular and the excellent feedback from the first bingo night means that these may become a regular event.

The hall holds regular cake breaks and light lunches, delicious food-based community events with all welcome, and once a month they welcome Soleluna Pizza, who cook delicious pizzas to order. It also hosts regular classes and clubs; from tai chi to dog agility, there is something for most people to enjoy. Check out their website for a full programme.

Looking ahead to the warmer months, on 4th July, Lydiard Millicent will be holding its first Summer Fete for some time. Based at the Parish Hall and Community Field, it promises to be a wonderful day for all the family, featuring a variety of stalls and an event area hosting a diverse programme of entertainment. Please come along and support the event.

Work to address flooding issues at Common Platt



We are pleased to report that work has been undertaken at Common Platt to address flooding issues that have been ongoing for several years.

Following complaints from residents and as part of flood work following Storm Babet, our Parish Clerk contacted Taylor Wimpey, who had built a number of houses on land in the area and have responsibility for some remaining ditches, to highlight the situation. After several site visits, Taylor Wimpey contractors have now cleared the ditches to an acceptable standard, and local residents have also removed items that would impede the flow of water. As a

result of this work, there were no issues with flooding in the area this winter, despite some heavy rains.

We'd like to thank our Parish Clerk for her persistence and powers of persuasion, and our Wilts Council Drainage Engineer for all of his support and advice.

Talking Money: The 2026/2027 Precept

By the time you read this, you may have seen that the amount allocated to Lydiard Millicent on your Council Tax bill has increased. Nobody likes receiving an increase on their bill, and we understand the challenges residents face in the current economic environment, so we'd like to explain how we came to the new figure.

What is the precept and how is it calculated?

The precept forms part of your Council Tax Bill, and funds services provided by the Parish Council. Wiltshire Council is responsible for county-wide services such as highways, waste management, children's services and education. The Parish Council has a more limited scope, so the precept is a fairly small part of the bill.

Budget planning starts in the Autumn with a review of current spending and income levels, against future needs and potential savings. The proposed budget is discussed at Parish Council Meetings, and the figures are posted on the Council's website. Once the budget has been approved, Wiltshire Council adds it to residents' Council Tax bills.

What does the precept fund?

The Parish Council generates some income from renting out facilities, such as the Recreation Field and Jubilee Club House, and from cemetery fees, but most of its income comes from the precept.

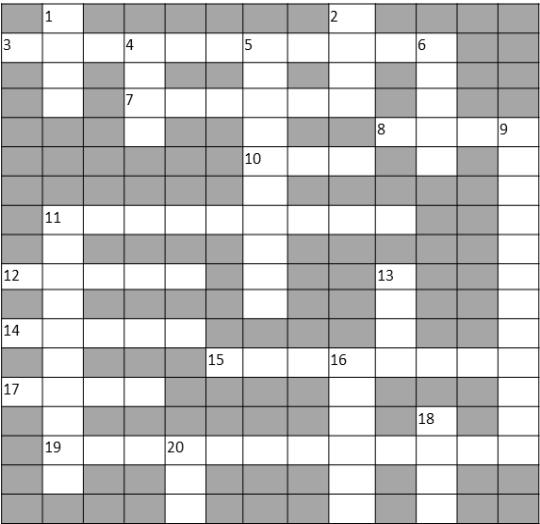
Expenditure covers administration, including salaries, legal and professional fees, plus maintenance of facilities such as the Recreation Field, the cemetery, green spaces around the parish and the speed indicator devices. There are also one-off projects such as highway improvements, or work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Why has the precept increased?

Most of this year's increase is due to the cost of developing our Neighbourhood Plan. This was due to be covered by central government grants, but the funding was withdrawn unexpectedly and with immediate effect in June 2025.

We debated whether to continue with the work, and decided that an up-to-date Plan is important to help ensure future development in the parish is of the right scale and in the right location. We managed to cover some of the cost, increasing charges where appropriate, reducing expenditure where possible and drawing on its reserves. Unfortunately, however, there was still a shortfall, which must be funded through the precept. While we appreciate this is unwelcome news, please be assured we have worked hard to keep this increase to a minimum.

How well do you know the Parish?



One of the nice things about being on the Parish Council is that you get to learn lots of interesting facts about the area.

Just for fun, we've made a little crossword to see how much you know! Answers are given at the end of the leaflet.

Please note: answers were correct at the time of writing, and the editor's decision is final!

Across

- 3 Was the location of the Foresters Arms (6,5)
- 7 (& 6 down) Location of WWII memorial clock (6,5)
- 8 In the same place as 6 and 7, there are six of these (4)
- 10 (& 20 down) Central pub that used to be thatched (3,3)
- 11 Where a house was blown up (9)
- 12 (& 1 down) location of a scheduled monument (5,4)
- 14 This lane leads you to a garden centre (5)
- 15 Where the sheep used to be washed (8)
- 17 ____ Elms pub is still part of the parish (4)
- 19 The location of two pill boxes (7,5)

Down

- 1 (& 12 across) Location of a scheduled monument (5,4)
- 2 We have 15 miles of these, crossing the parish (4)
- 4 These inhabitants of All Saints are extremely poor (4)
- 5 Built in 1965, paid for by fund raising activities (6,4)
- 6 (& 7 across) Location of WWII memorial clock (6,5)
- 9 Believed location of an unexploded bomb (7,5)
- 11 The location of a pub that was famous for live music.
- 13 This momento of an earlier time is at the parish hall (4)
- 16 These wildlife corridors criss-cross our parish (6)
- 18 You may see these in fields and woods around the parish (4)
- 20 (& 10 across) Central pub that used to be thatched (3,3)



Local Highway and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) Update

Wiltshire Council runs LHFIG groups across the county to agree and implement highway improvements. The Parish Council pays a contribution towards the costs of these projects but the majority is funded by Wiltshire Council. We are part of the Cricklade and RWB area group and have been working with Wiltshire Council on the following projects:

- Better pedestrian signage on **Common Platt**, where it joins The Buffer at Ridgeway Farm, to make the crossing to The Willows safer. Work is due to start on June 22nd. This is classed as a major project for Wiltshire Council and has taken a lot of planning.
- Road safety improvements at the **Greenhill Crossroads** have been made. The give way white lines at the end of Lydiard Green and Greenhill have been moved further into the Purton/RWB road to give vehicles from these roads better visibility. The remaining work to move the start of 30mph speed limit north towards Purton is due for completion this summer.
- Wiltshire Council has painted 30 mph roundels on the road at **Greatfield** to remind traffic of the speed limit. We need to monitor to see if they have had any impact and review the possibility of further work.
- Following serious accidents on the **B4696 Braydon Road**, there are new signs and road markings to remind traffic to slow down.

Our LHFIG priorities for 2026/27 will be confirmed at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 23rd April.

Community Directory

Do you want to know more about what's on offer in your local community? The Community Directory is available to download from the Parish Council's website or hard copies are available at the Parish Hall.

The directory was prepared as a guide to groups and services available to support older and vulnerable people living in the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade community area. It's ideal if you're new to the area or know someone who is elderly or isolated, but there's lots of information about groups for all ages and interests too, from book groups to bowls, and scouts to Zumba. You might be surprised at what's on offer!



Community Field

Whether you've lived in the Parish for some time or have recently moved, you'll be sure to have seen this vacant field next to the Parish Hall.



You might not know that this land is owned by the Parish Council, and there have been a number of initiatives considered over the last twenty years or so to bring it into use.

The first idea explored was a “pocket park” for community relaxation and social opportunity. At the time, the community feeling was that the pocket park would not be used enough to justify the cost involved and so the Council agreed it was not a viable option.

The most recent initiative in 2015 was to turn the land into a car park to help alleviate the issues that school parking causes in the area. A survey was sent to all households in the parish and the overwhelming response was that residents felt they shouldn't have to bear the cost for the project. In the absence of a contribution from the school, this option didn't get off the ground either.

Fast Forward to 2025

The Parish Council was approached by the trustees of the Parish Hall towards the end of 2024 to ask if a short-term lease would be considered so that the field could be used both as an extension to the Parish Hall for its hirers and for outdoor community events. The Parish Council was keen to explore this idea, and set up a working party to carry out the necessary due diligence.

We'd assumed that obtaining planning permission to change the use of the field from agricultural to recreational would be straight forward, but as is often the case in planning matters, it wasn't. The Council had to instruct an ecologist to carry out an ecological assessment to ensure the proposal wouldn't cause harm to any flora and fauna on the site. This was followed by a need for a heritage statement to assess any impact the proposal may have on the surrounding designated heritage assets, namely the closed churchyard, the church itself and the conservation area surrounding it.



Whilst all these assessments and reports were underway, a hugely successful weekend of events took place in the field and the Parish Hall to commemorate VE Day 80. Hundreds of members of our community turned out for what was a glorious few days and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with

many asking for more events like it in the future.

In August last year, planning permission was finally granted and the lease agreement was signed. As a result, the community can benefit from events using the field and the Parish Hall, and individuals can hire both facilities for special events. Plans are afoot for a family fete on Saturday 4 July and the Purton Scouts are already using the field for their outdoor pursuits. If you have any suggestions for events in the Community Field, please email lmph1965@gmail.com.

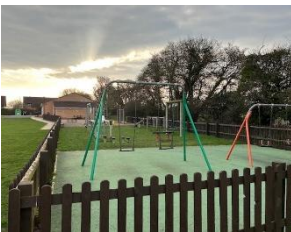
Larry the Lion



Hello, my name is Larry the Lion and I'm the latest addition to our fabulous playpark

I love our playpark and in 2023 our Parish Council spent £20,048 making things safer and improving the activities we can offer. They added a new adventure trail, a wonderful wobbly surfboard, stepping logs and new surfacing under the swings.

To keep it safe for all my friends to play on, our handyman, Colin, undertakes a visual inspection every week, and once a year we have a formal detailed inspection to make sure we keep it safe.



I hope you liked hearing about our playpark. It's one of my favourite places in the whole world because it's where I can run, climb, laugh, and make new friends.

Thanks for reading — maybe I'll see you on the swings someday! Larry x

Neighbourhood Plan Update

The existing Lydiard Millicent Neighbourhood Plan was agreed in 2021, and has been used to affect planning policy and decisions in the area. It is now due for review, and recent changes to national and local planning legislation make it more important than ever that we do this as a community.

A Steering Group, consisting of councillors and members of the public from all areas of the parish, was formed late in 2024 to lead the work. Master Land and Planning Ltd (MLP) has been engaged to guide us through the process, and with their help, we created a questionnaire that went to all households in the parish in March 2025 to gather views on how residents wanted the parish to develop.

In October 2025 we held a community consultation, using results from the questionnaire, information on potential development sites, local views and assets that may need to be protected. The positive response from the parish community to the consultation has given us a strong body of evidence to inform our work plan and to shape a proposed update to the Neighbourhood Plan.

New Housing Allocations

One of the changes to the Neighbourhood Plan will be the inclusion of a housing allocation, based on local evidence of housing requirements. This is important because it gives additional protection against future developments once the new plan is approved. Potential sites are being reviewed by the Steering Group to determine which are most likely to meet Lydiard Millicent's future housing needs, taking into account the aims of the neighbourhood plan, feedback from the community as outlined in the consultation report and an independent site feasibility assessment, undertaken by MLP.

Local Views and Green Spaces



The Steering Group is proposing to increase the number of Local Views to highlight additional important, sensitive, and impressive locations within the parish. It includes suggestions from the community consultation for views towards Lydiard Park, around Stone Lane and underrepresented areas to the west of the parish.

They are also proposing additional Local Green Spaces to be included alongside the Recreation Field and the Community Field, taking into account suggestions made by the community as part of the consultation.

The Local Gap

An important policy within the current Neighbourhood Plan is the Local Gap, which defines an area of land to the east of the village that is important to prevent coalescence of Lydiard Millicent with Swindon. Community feedback has demonstrated very strong support for the continuation of this policy, so the Steering Group is seeking advice on how this policy might be further enhanced and strengthened.

Next Steps

The steering group is working to get our Neighbourhood Plan updated as soon as possible. A revised draft is being prepared for submission to Wiltshire Council, and, if it is approved, it will be published for formal consultation. In parallel, we are working with Wiltshire Council to undertake a Rural Housing Needs Survey from 1st to 22nd June, asking residents to provide information on their future needs. More information will be provided closer to the date; **please take the time to complete the survey so your views can be heard.**

An updated Neighbourhood Plan is essential to the future of the parish, to ensure that development meets the needs and aspirations of the community. If you have any queries about this, please email: neighbourhoodplan@lydiardmillicent-pc.gov.uk

Thank You!



We'd like to say a big thank you to Jacqui Ambrose and Brian Cooper for their continued voluntary work to maintain the beautiful flowerbeds by the church. Their dedication helps brighten the area and is very much appreciated.

Do you have time to help with the upkeep of the flowerbeds? Extra hands are needed, especially for watering during the warmer months and as holiday cover. If you would like to get involved, please do get in touch. Contact 07727 352398 or email council@lydiardmillicent-pc.gov.uk.

Crossword Answers

Across: 3 Common Platt, 7 Church Tower, 8 Bells, 10 Sun Inn, 11 Greenhill, 12 Webbs Wood, 14 Stone, 15 Washpool, 17 Nine, 19 Lydiard Green **Down:** 1 Webbs Wood, 2 Path, 4 Mice, 5 Parish Hall, 6 Church Tower, 9 Lydiard Plain, 11 Greatfield, 13 Pump, 16 Path 18 Deer 20 Sun Inn