



Clerk's Report – April 2026 Holbrook Parish Council

Training/Meetings attended: What it means to be a Parish Clerk in the 21st Century (SLCC) This turned out not to be “training” but an exercise for SLCC to survey clerks on their views and understanding of the good and more challenging elements of the role.

Fitness classes: As you will have heard, we have received a grant of £4,000 to continue the Fitness Classes at Holbrook Academy for one further year. The grant has to be spent in this financial year. An element of the grant application is to reimburse Holbrook Academy for caretaker/cleaning costs. Unfortunately the grant was paid on 31st March 2026, so fell into the 25-26 financial year records, whilst expenditure will be in the 26-27 financial year. It has been put on Earmarked Reserves. Part of the conditions of the grant is to seek long-term self funding for the continuation of the classes.

Playground inspection: we asked Babergh to undertake the inspection and I believe the inspection has recently taken place – we are waiting for the report.

Councillor Vacancy: there are still two vacancies on the Parish Council

Community Speedwatch: one speedwatch has taken place this month. We are planning fortnightly watches, but we are still in need of volunteers. Stutton has 17 volunteers – we have 4!!

Bank issues: a great deal of time has been spent this last few weeks trying to rectify bank authorisations, which they seemed to have changed. One of the things they have done is to swap the authorisation levels with Freston PC (who also bank with Lloyds). Endless conversations with them trying to point out that this is their mistake and they need to go back to the original mandate have proved fruitless. One result of this is that I was paid twice in March, but once that was discovered, I immediately reversed the payment! I have since raised a complaint, which has been upheld and hopefully we will have ironed out the various problems. They are paying us £150 in compensation!

Dog Poo on the Reade Field – I have received an email complaining about dog poo on the Reade Field. I walk there almost every day and have to admit to having to pick up other people's dog poo quite regularly. Suggest a note in next parish papers and also maybe some laminated notices on the gates reminding dog walkers to clear up after themselves.

Audit: a busy month preparing the various documents for the annual internal and external audit. The audit doesn't just cover the financial side of Parish Council activities, but also includes the legality of actions and decisions, adherence to policies, such as GDPR, etc. and compliance with the latest version of the Smaller Authorities' Practitioners Guide. Councillors are asked to consider the assertions in the AGAR document on page 4, Section 1.

Request for parking on the Reade Field for a Bonfire Night event: the supporting papers and the agenda include a request for using the Reade Field for parking for a Bonfire event which will take place on one of the fields on Fishponds Lane. Councillors are asked to consider if this is feasible, given the time of year and possible damage to the field.

Review of fees: as part of the audit process, Council are recommended to review any fees charged. We ask for donations towards grass cutting on the Reade Field from users of the football pitch. This year, the cost of contract grass cutting has increased by 10%. It is

recommended that we pass on an increase of 5% to the users of the football pitch, which forms part of the grass cutting contract. The advertisement fees were increased a year ago and it is recommended that no further increase be made at this time. We are trying to increase the number of advertisers, having lost one or two.

Bench on Alton Green: the family are removing the memorial bench on Alton Green on 17th April to give it a thorough clean before re-siting it where it will be less vulnerable to tree debris.

Email re speeding at RHS: following the discussion at the February meeting of the Parish Council, a further email has been received from a resident asking the outcome of the discussions. A copy of the minutes have been forwarded to him with an outline of the proposed action to be taken.

Jo Hazlewood – April 2026