



ROCKBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting

**Meeting held in the Pavilion, Rockbourne on
Tuesday 12th May 2026 @ 7.00pm.**

MINUTES

In attendance: Cllr Leeson (Chair), Cllr Wise (Vice-Chair), Cllr Branagan, Cllr Carmichael, Cllr Wiggins, Mark Baulch (Clerk)

Also present: One member of the public, name taken and on record

1. Welcome from Cllr Andy Leeson, Chair of the Parish Council.
2. Apologies had been received from Cllr Wallis and District Cllr Richards.
3. Chair's Report – Cllr Leeson read this out and a copy is attached below.
4. Questions and Comments

None

Meeting closed at 19:15. *Next Annual Parish Meeting – May 2027 – date and venue to be confirmed.*

Rockbourne Parish Council – Chair's End-of-Year Thoughts

Good evening, everyone, and thank you for joining us for our final meeting of the year. As Chair of Rockbourne Parish Council, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been a challenging but productive year for our parish. Rockbourne may be small, but some of the issues we face are quite the opposite, and the care and commitment shown by residents, volunteers, and councillors is great to be part of.

Highways and Rural Roads

Highways have once again dominated much of the conversation. Our rural lanes are essential lifelines, connecting Rockbourne to Fordingbridge, Damerham, and the surrounding villages. Unfortunately, they continue to suffer from potholes, worn surfaces, and flooding. We have kept steady pressure on Hampshire Highways throughout the year, and while some patching and minor works have been completed, we know the network needs more than temporary fixes. We will continue to push for long-term, planned maintenance that is very much required for communities like ours.

Road Safety and Speeding

Speeding continues to be one of the most frequent complaints we receive. Rockbourne's narrow street,

bends, and historic layout make excessive speed especially dangerous. Our Community Speed Watch volunteers have been active throughout the year, and their data is strengthening our case for additional enforcement and improved signage. We will continue to explore traffic-calming options and look towards achieving the 20MPH limit within the village.

Flooding and Drainage

Flooding has been a major concern again this year. Heavy rainfall has repeatedly tested our ditches, culverts, and the watercourses that run through the village. Sweatfords Water in particular has caused issues during peak flows with ground water rising with no outlet, unfortunately causing flooding within one or two cottages, mine included. I want to thank residents who reported problems quickly and those who stepped in to clear debris when needed especially up at the South end. I also want to thank those that provided signs and cones to try to keep traffic from causing more damage with bow waves etc.

Sweatfords water, Repairs

The river and associated watercourses have required significant attention this year. Bank erosion, clearance and blockages have all needed coordinated responses in certain areas. Working with advice from Environment Agency and the permission of local landowners, we have cleared invasive weed and tree debris helping to ensure the water course is running efficiently. On going communication with highways for essential repairs has come unfortunately to a standstill but we will continue to hound them, along with continued monitoring by the Bourne and flood working group. Protecting the Winter Bourne is not only about preventing flooding — it is about safeguarding an important part of Rockbourne's landscape, ecology, and heritage.

Community and Heritage

Rockbourne's heritage is one of its greatest strengths. From the Roman Villa to St Andrews church, historic cottages, its rural setting, village Cricket and the amazing social scene centred around the Rose and Thistle and the Village Hall—we are custodians of a remarkable place. I want to thank everyone who has contributed to community events, planning consultations, and local initiatives this year. Your involvement is what keeps this parish active and connected.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the new year, our priorities remain clear:

- Continued pressure for improved highways maintenance
- Stronger action on flooding and drainage
- Enhanced road safety and anti-speeding measures
- Ongoing riverbank and watercourse protection

Support for our heritage, environment, and community spaces

We will continue to challenge where necessary, collaborate where possible, and communicate openly with residents. Rockbourne is a small parish with a strong identity and a strong community — and together, we can continue to protect and improve the place we call home.

Thank you.

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