

OXSPRING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Assembly On Monday 19th May 2025, at 6.45pm at St Aidans Church

Present

Councillor A Walker	(AW)
Councillor E Gratton-Rayson	(EGR)
Councillor L Chambers	(LC)
Councillor I Stanley	(IS)
Councillor G Sedgwick	(GS)
Councillor I Yems	(IY)

In Attendance

Mrs S Tolson (Clerk).

Apologies.

Councillor G Sedgwick.

Councillor Walker in the Chair as retiring Chairperson of Oxspring Parish Council read the Notice of the Annual Assembly.

The Parish Council Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024

These, together with the Internal and External Auditors' reports and certification of accounts were circulated.

Reports of the Parish Council Representatives and Associated Bodies.

Oxspring Parish Allotments Manager.

Mrs Steph Tolson.

There are no vacant plots.

All allotments for the Year starting 1st April 25 have been paid.

During the year 7 plots changed hands.

There are currently 5 names on the Waiting list. 3 of those on the list are Oxspring residents.

3 people joined the waiting list in the last year.

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The Titivators

Councillor Sedgwick reported the following:

The Titivators group volunteers have again been busy all around the village and other parts of the Parish, looking after all areas of Parish owned gardens and other recreational areas as necessary.

Task such as weeding planting of new plants in areas such as Gordons Garden, the Sports field gardens, the installation of the Christmas tree and lights and numerous other tasks.

A recently created WhatsApp group has proved extremely useful allowing much better communication between group members in terms of information about planned activities.

Further improvements are being added such as a Calendar of events scheduling events planned throughout the year along with an initiative for recruitment of more volunteers.

Over the last month in particular the team have been working in the Sports field carpark gardens tidying up the various plots weeding and planting. One particular plot at the rear of the carpark has benefited from the addition of a significant number of new plants and mulching of the area, the plants and bark mulch being supplied through a grant arranged by Adam Price of Greenotes C.I.C. many thanks to Adam for his help and continued support it is very much appreciated.

The team have started work in Gordons Garden which is expected to last for a few weeks more.

Finally, we would like to thank all the volunteers for their dedication and continued support and well done everyone!

Oxspring Friends

Councillor Walker submitted a written report as follows:

The last twelve months have proved to be very successful for Oxspring Friends. We enhanced our offer of Munch and Mingle events to 6 months, and these sessions have gone from strength to strength with lots of new attendees every month. It's good to see the community getting involved and not only are we reaching the older generation in our village, but we are now attracting younger visitors as well. The collaboration with St Aidan's Church is also proving to be very successful and both groups are benefitting from some of our events.

New ventures for this year include a slightly different take on our Christmas Tree lighting up event. Unfortunately, for the past two years we have had to cancel this event due to inclement weather. This year we are going to do something slightly different. Our plan is

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to host a Christmas Fayre in St Aidan's on the day and serve hot mulled wine and mince pies indoors with a visit from Father Christmas. If the weather is good, we will then proceed to the Christmas tree where we will switch on the lights and sing a couple of Christmas carols. We are also hosting a pea and pie and games night in October, and we hope that this event is going to be well attended, so that hopefully we can continue to provide this service on an annual basis.

Our now annual Picnic in the Park event is again being hosted this year and again are going to run the event on the village green next to the children's play area. We will again have live music, various stalls and a cake and cold drinks station. We just need to keep all our fingers crossed for some nice weather.

Last year's Christmas calendar project was a resounding success. We managed to obtain sponsorship which was a huge help, and we ordered 100 calendars of which we sold approximately 95. This was a really good boost for our fund-raising efforts.

We are a very small group of volunteers and hosting these events does create a huge amount of work. We rely very heavily on the generosity of those people and organisations who help with funding but also those volunteers who help with the different events that we try to host to support our lovely community.

Here's to a successful 2025
Ann Walker - Oxspring Friend's Secretary/Treasurer

Oxpring Parish Council Chair's Report.

Councillor Walker submitted a written report as follows:

Welcome to the Assembly meeting for 2025

2024/5 has been another very busy but fruitful year and we were pleased to welcome two new Parish Council members to join us.

Items covered this year include:

- The SID reports that we are publishing quarterly seem to be allaying people's fears regarding speeding, and although it doesn't rule out people speeding through the village the signs do seem to slow the majority of drivers down.
- Road repairs – still a major issue through the village although I note that there are some repairs planned on Roughbirchworth in the town's road repair scheme.
- As part of the Ward Alliance group meetings, I was, as you are aware, instrumental in helping to appoint the two companies to replace the old Twiggs support system. Unfortunately, one of the companies appointed failed to impress either me, on behalf of the Parish Council, or indeed the Ward Alliance. Consequently, some of the jobs that we requested to be undertaken by them were never either started or completed.

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However, the Greenotes CIC group have been rather more successful, and they have helped with a number of projects including health and safety training for the Titivators, supplying us with a grant for the gardens in the football field car park and generally giving advice on how to recruit new volunteers.

- The Parish Council Facebook page seems to be getting more comments, but I think we still need to push this a little and raise awareness regarding the page on social media. We also need to get contributor access to the page for the two new members of the Parish Council.
- Precept – unfortunately, we had to take the difficult decision to significantly increase our precept this year, I don't think we have had any adverse comments and unfortunately the main reason for the big hike was the new NI contributions for the Clerk. I still think we can very safely justify how we spend our residents' contributions to improve and maintain the facilities that we have in Oxspring.
- Yet again, we had another very successful year with the hanging baskets. The baskets at the Willows were perhaps a little more challenging and a huge thank you should be extended to Lisa Chambers for her efforts regarding keeping the baskets well-watered throughout the summer and also a very big thank you to the resident who allowed Councillor Chambers to access her water supply.
- A big challenge for this year will be the building of the proposed new sports room for the Football Club. Hopefully, we can bring this to a satisfactory conclusion for all concerned as this is a really important addition to the facilities that the village can offer.

Lastly, as always, I need to say a massive thank you to our Clerk, Stephanie Tolson, whose work is hugely appreciated., and a big thank you to all the parish councillors for your contributions large and small over the last year. I also must not forget the work of other volunteers who help keep our village in order – Alan Walker for his help with the Titivators and David Shirliffe for all his voluntary work in and around the village, but particularly around the football field.

Here's to lots of new projects and a successful 2025.

Ann Walker
Chair – Oxspring Parish Council

Observations from Members of the Parish.

There was no further business.

This meeting was closed at 7.45pm.

Signed this day **2025**