Meeting of **Clent Parish Council** held at **7:00pm on Monday 20th April 2026**
at Clent Parish Hall, Church Ave, Clent, Stourbridge DY9 9QT

Minutes

Present: Cllr Ed Sheppard, Cllr Andrew Sherrey, Cllr Margaret Sherrey, Cllr Sara ffoulkes, Cllr Mark Brocklebank, Cllr Peter Bates
In attendance: Nick Farress (Clerk), 2 members of Clent Connect, 2 members of the community and 1 member of the press.

5842 Apologies for absence
Cllr Drew Beaumont, County Cllr Karen May and District Councillor Simon Nock.

5843 Declarations of interest
(a) Cllr Ed Sheppard declared a pecuniary interest in Minute 5848 as he is the parish Lengthsman and payment recipient. Cllr Sheppard did not vote on this item or approve the payment.
(b) Cllr Ed Sheppard declared a pecuniary interest in Minute 5850(f) as he is paid by the Cricket Club to mow the fields. Cllr Sheppard left the room for this item.
(c) Cllr Mark Brocklebank declared an other disclosable interest in item 5850(f) as he is the volunteer Chairman of the Cricket Club. Cllr remained in the room for the item but did not vote.

5844 Dispensations
There were none.

5845 Clent Youth Council
The Chair of the Youth Council provided updates on the following:

- Lizzy is the new Chair of the Youth Council.
- Litterpick scheduled for 9th May.
- Football field – the grass is long and it has lots of potholes. Cllr Sheppard would look at this when he next mows the field.

Public comments/questions:
The following issues were raised by the public:
There were no questions.

County and District Councillor Updates
There were no updates.

Chairman's Initials

5846 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th March 2026 be agreed as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

5847 Correspondence

The following correspondence was considered:

(a) From Clent Connect asking for a grant of £5730 to cover hall hire and general operating costs.

It was proposed by Cllr Bates and seconded by Cllr ffoulkes to exclude the press and public for this item due to the sensitive nature of the topic. The vote was lost and the meeting continued in public session.

Concern was raised over the short/medium term financial position of Clent Connect and its ability to continue its operations without relying on parish council grants every year. Whilst the PC welcome grant applications from Clent Connect, it was preferred that grants are for specific items rather than general operating costs (e.g. salaries). It was agreed that Clent Connect would supply a three year budget ahead of the next PC meeting, and that the grant request be deferred until this was available.

It was **RESOLVED** to fund the upcoming first aid training for Clent Connect volunteers which costs £480. The Clerk would arrange an online payment.

(b) From Clent PCC asking for £750 for the annual church clock service. It was **RESOLVED** to pay this grant and the Clerk would arrange an online payment.

ACTIONS: NF

5848 Finance

(a) Payments – March 2026 – it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the payment of the following from the council's current account via the Unity Trust Bank internet banking system:

Date	Ref.	Supplier	Payments
03/03/2026	P25/093	Clent Parish Hall	62.50
06/03/2026	P25/094	Clent Parish Hall	33.00
16/03/2026	P25/095	HMRC PAYE	89.57
16/03/2026	P25/096	Worcestershire CC Street Lighting	485.44
16/03/2026	P25/097	N Farress salary	817.49
23/03/2026	P25/098	Scottish Power	19.40
26/03/2026	P25/099	ed sheppard lengthsman	533.50
26/03/2026	P25/100	Play Safety playground safety inspections	418.80
26/03/2026	P25/101	Sara Ffoulkes Expenses	28.19
31/03/2026	P25/102	bank charges	7.00

(b) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the budget monitoring report (circulated previously)

(c) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the monthly bank reconciliation for March (circulated previously) noting a balance at 31/03/26 £81,348.29

(d) It was **RESOLVED** to open a 32 day notice savings account with Unity Trust Bank and deposit £35,000 from reserves which would be ring fenced for play area improvements. The Clerk would arrange this.
ACTIONS: NF

5849 General maintenance & highway matters

(a) Nimmings Car Park and highway improvements to discourage late night ASB – ongoing.
(b) Litter bins outside parish hall and church – these bins were now in place.
(c) New VAS for Bromsgrove Rd – the Clerk would follow up on progress with installation.
(d) Lengthsman Agreement – it was **RESOLVED** to sign the annual contract to provide the Lengthsman service on behalf of WCC for the 2026/27 year.
(e) Bell and Cross car park hedge height. Historically, the B&C trimmed this hedge and it needs attention. Cllr Bates would check with the B&C landlord to see if this was still the case.
ACTIONS: PB/KM/NF

5850 Field Maintenance & Play Areas

(a) Trim Trail field lease – ongoing with BDC.
(b) Play area new access gate – the gate had been delivered and installation was scheduled before 5th May.
(c) New pathway to roundabout – Ultimate Driveways were due to start work on 5th May.
(d) Path next to pond - Ultimate Driveways would resurface the pathway next to the pond with gravel grids at a cost of £800 plus VAT.
(e) Seating in play area. This was deferred to the May meeting.
(f) Mowing – it was **RESOLVED** to ask Clent Cricket Club to provide the mowing service for the 2026 season. It was also agreed to obtain 3 estimates for the 2027 season.
(g) Japanese knotweed – Cllr Sheppard would deal with an outbreak on the playing field with weed killer.
(h) Memorial fruit trees on the community orchard. It was agreed to allow two Victoria plum trees to be planted in the orchard in memory of Dick Chater.
ACTIONS: KM/PB/SF/NF

5851 Planning

The following applications were considered:
26/00346/FUL - Single storey rear extension & two-storey side extension to private residence - 10 Summerfield Road, Holy Cross. It was **RESOLVED** to raise no objection.

5852 Parish Magazine

There were no specific items for the June issue but the Clerk would provide a general update.
ACTION: NF

5853 Councillor updates and items for next Agenda.

No further updates.

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next Meeting of the Parish Council is the 20th April 2026 at Clent Parish Hall.

Chairman's Initials

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.

Signed as a true record:

Chairman:_____ Date:_____