

CASTLETON PARISH

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 14th MAY 2026 AT 7.00PM, Village Hall, Castleton

These Minutes are hereby approved as a true and accurate record of the above meeting following Resolution of the Council at its next Annual Parish meeting to be held in May 2025.

Signed Chair of meeting

Present: Cllr. A. Darlington (Chair), Cllr. J. Simm (Vice Chair), two Residents.

Minutes taken by: T. Dale (Clerk/RFO)

APM **A: Introduction and Welcome.**

01/05/26

The Chair outlined the purpose of the meeting:

The Parish Meeting is an opportunity for parishioners on the Electoral Roll for Castleton to raise any matters of concern to them which relates to their local community.

B: To appoint the Chair and Clerk of meeting.

The Chair of the Castleton Parish Council chaired the meeting, and the minute taker was Trish Dale.

C: To note persons, present and to consider accepting any apologies for absence.

Two residents attended. Cllr. Adshead, Cllr. Spooner, Cllr. Stannard, Cllr. J. Judge, Cllr. M. Eyre sent apologies.

APM **Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Relating Thereto:**

02/05/26

A: The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th May 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record of that meeting upon agreement of all those present (Proposed AD, Seconded JS, unan).

B: There were no matters arising.

APM **Reports and Presentations:**

03/05/26

A: Parish Council Chair Annual Report for 2025-26.

This year just two of us parish councillors are able to attend this Annual Parish Meeting but together with our clerk we will do our best to inform you and answer any questions.

As for last year, I would like to start with the reminder that parish councils are legal entities in the first tier of local government. Castleton Parish Council has seven councillors and one clerk who (from the Good Councillors Guide) is “the proper officer of the council in law.” Our clerk Trish Dale provides advice and a huge volume of administrative support, delivers many actions in support of CPC meeting decisions and is also our RFO (responsible financial officer). The Parish Council aims to work as a team to provide a service to the community.

Amongst ongoing responsibilities are:

- Caring for a number of village assets such as the War memorial, some benches, some grit bins, and certain pieces of land including the Village Burial Ground on Hollowford Road. Regular maintenance of the green spaces is one of our biggest expenses.
- We are notified of planning and license applications and respond to these as appropriate.
- We listen to and communicate with the community and try to take concerns forward to the relevant authorities. The printing of the Peveril Post is funded by the Parish Council with the help of donations from local sponsors.
- We also lobby for improved local services provided by HPBC and DCC such as street litter bins, maintenance of rights of way, and parking.

To achieve as much as we can, we network at many meetings and forums and meet key people from the various agencies. Amongst these over the past year are Parish and Town Council Liaison meetings organised by DCC at County Hall in Matlock and High Peak Parishes Forum meetings organised by HPBC

at the Town Hall in Buxton, both of which deal with a wide range of matters important to us as a community. In addition, in the context of visitor pressures, we have participated in multi-agency meetings on a Castleton Area Management Plan organised by PDNPA, and in a Peak District Partnership meeting at Bakewell Town Hall organised by EMCCA. In January we chaired an informal meeting of seven HV parish councils at Hathersage, initially to discuss common issues concerned with visitor pressures. The scope has now widened, two more councils have joined, and the third meeting is being organised for a date in June. In addition, there have been separate meetings organised to explain the PDNP Local Plan and Local Government reorganisation.

Throughout the year we have done our best to keep the community updated with what we are doing via the village website, the parish council notice board, the village email group, and Peveril Post. Agendas and Minutes of Parish Council meetings are published every month except in August and December when no meeting is held.

A quick run through of some hot topics of the past year.

Visitor pressures, as we know, Castleton's popularity as a visitor destination for overnight stays, day trips and for large sporting events has been causing problems for decades but much more so since the pandemic. The NP, NT, DCC and HPBC are all very much aware of this fact and are working with us to try and manage these pressures. Some issues such as the rise of overnight campervan parking, obstructive parking, littering and BBQs on verges and in open countryside are shared nationally. Examples of measures in progress are the ongoing TRO (DCC), clearer signage about open fires (HPBC), and a litter bin audit (Alliance/HPBC). In addition, the parish council plans to upgrade our dog poo signage with the help of drawings from Castleton School! We are also in the process of overhauling the 2 big noticeboards in the car park and bus turnaround, for Visitor Information.

Other measures being explored as part of the Area Management Plan include additional car parks outside the village, and a Peak District visitor levy is being considered by EMCCA. The parish council is well aware that residents remain concerned about how and where they can park especially when the village is overflowing with visitors, and about wild camping in cars and vans and the consequences, and we will continue to look for solutions.

Linked to visitor pressures and car parking is public transport.

The Chair invited Cllr Simms to provide an update on Public Transport.

Cllr Simm provided an update on the current position regarding local transport. There is a significant amount of activity underway in relation to public transport. Responsibility for public transport services now sits with the East Midlands Mayor, who has a budget of £14 million: £6 million from central government, £6 million from EMCCA for the Mini Switzerland initiative, and a further £2 million allocated specifically for improving access to Hope Station.

The main project at present is the Mini Switzerland initiative, which the Parish Council supports and continues to monitor closely. However, these developments come at a challenging time, with the Number 62 bus service under threat due to low usage and not being included within the Mini Switzerland scheme. This raises wider concerns about connectivity for residents of Castleton. The threatened 62 service provides an essential link between Castleton, Chapel, and Buxton.

In response, a campaign to save the service has been launched. Cllrs Simm and Spooner are members of the village group Better Buses for Castleton (BB4C). Together, letters have been sent to the Mayor's Office, the bus operator and currently drafting a letter to High Peak Borough Council, raising concerns, and requesting a meeting to discuss the future of the service. Posters have also been produced to promote the message "Use it or lose it."

Further strategic actions are being considered as the situation develops. Updates will continue to be provided through the Parish Council agenda and minutes.

Cllr Simm also advised that she is a member of the High Peak, Hope Valley Rail User Group. Services have improved although there are still issues with the Sunday services.

The residents present were supportive of the efforts to save the 62-bus service, though they were not surprised by the low usage figures. It was noted that the bus does not always arrive as scheduled, leaving passengers stranded. Specific instances were shared, along with similar experiences relating to the rail services. As a result, many residents choose to rely on their own cars instead.

The Chair thanked Cllr Simm for the update and recommended the Chair update.

In addition to promotion of improvements to public transport, other environmental projects have been the creation of a **wildflower area** at the back of the burial ground which will be a haven for pollinators once the weather warms up. The burial ground has also been enhanced by the addition of a **second silver birch**, to

commemorate VE and VJ Day, donated by Matt Eyre.

To support the **Speedwatch** initiative CPC has purchased signage to say we are a Speedwatch village and we are in discussion over where these can be placed.

We continue to see **illegal HGVs** on Winnats Pass, and also, yet again, in the Market Place. The local police are supportive of extra signage at Winnats Head and at Brough, and also of a height and width restriction on Back Street.

In terms of wider matters, late in 2024 the PDNPA launched their **Draft Local Plan**. This will form the basis of planning decisions for a number of years ahead. CPC responded to the first consultation on behalf of the village in November that year. Last year CPC responded to the second consultation and there is another coming up in the summer. The second “wider matter” is **Local Government Reorganisation** which will remove a tier of local government and merge functions currently managed by either DCC or HPBC into one. There are also very likely to be repercussions at parish level, and a “Neighbourhood Governance” structure will be set up possibly to incorporate Hope Valley parishes.

While at this point, we have not supported or objected to it, the **Peak Cluster project** is something that we will be watching very closely. We have responded to the recent consultation with a list of questions and have had a discussion with Breedon. Decisions on the type of carbon capture technology are still to be made and Breedon have offered a community Q&A session which we believe will be more relevant later in the year. In the meantime, we are liaising with other HV parish councils on the matter.

We continue to support the Flood wardens in making the village as **flood resilient** as possible. There has been a lot of progress this year including the de-silting of the riverbed at two locations, organised by the EA. A rainfall gauge has gone active on Breedon land, currently being tested by the EA, which should make our flood warning system more accurate. Non-return valves were fitted upstream of Newhall bridge thanks to a donation from Breedon, and an additional pump was purchased with support from HPBC and pump training sessions held.

A new initiative is a Community Resilience Plan, designed to deal with emergencies in the village other than flooding, such as pandemic. We aim to get this up and running soon and will be inviting involvement outside the parish council.

Thanks to the other Castleton Parish Councillors for all they’ve done this year, and to Trish Dale our excellent clerk, and to all the groups who work so hard for the community including Village Hall, Playing Fields, WI, Bellringers, the Silver Band, the editors of the Peveril Post, Care for Castleton, the Village email group, the First Aid Group, Better Buses for Castleton, the Flood Wardens, the litter pickers, NHW, Speedwatch, Concerned for Castleton, the Garland Committee, our churches, Castleton Christmas and also to Val Burgess for managing the invaluable Village website.

Thanks also to our local HPBC Councillors, our DCC Councillor and to our fantastic Safer Neighbourhood Team.

B: Finance and 2024-25 Accounts, Audits and Annual Return.

This Clerk/RFO to the Parish Council, walked those in attendance through the year end accounts of the Parish Council as set out below:

Accounting Statement 2025/26					
		31-Mar-25	31-Mar-26	Variance £	Variance %
1	Balances Brought Forward	£32,144	£33,427	£1,283	4%
2	Annual Precept	£10,527	£10,736	£209	2%
3	Total Other Receipts	£7,996	£8,016	£20	0%
4	Staff Costs	£4,916	£4,913	-£4	0%
5	Loan interest/Capital Repayments	£0	£0	£0	0%
6	All Other Payments	£12,323	£16,849	£4,526	37%
7	Balances Carried Forward	£33,427	£30,417	-£3,010	-9%
8	Total Cash	£33,427	£30,417	-£3,010	-9%
9	Total Fixed Assets	£16,738	£18,246	£1,508	9%
10	Total Borrowings	£0	£0	£0	0%

The Clerk took those present through the final bank reconciliation, explaining that all figures are compared with the previous year to identify any variances. Any variance of 15% or above must be explained to the internal and external auditors.

It was noted that the variance of 37% under *All Other Payments* was due to additional expenditure on asset items:

- Laptop and configuration – £572
- Flood equipment – £816.
- Repairs to the noticeboard – £990
- Automatic Number Plate Recognition Project – £1,467

Total additional expenditure: £4,805

Taking this into account, the adjusted figure for 2025/26 would reduce to £12,044, representing a variation of –£279.12 (–2%).

The Clerk further advised that the internal audit had been completed and that there were no matters requiring attention.

APM
04/05/26

Presentations, Updates and Reports by Village / Community Organisations

Castleton Bell Ringers

Castleton Bell Ringers continue to receive very positive comments and support from villagers, for which the ringers are very grateful.

They are holding weekly training sessions for new ringers with five new learners at present, and two in waiting. Two of our previous learners have now "graduated" and joined the main tower bands.

Castleton work very closely with other Hope Valley towers as part of the "Hope Valley Ringing Group"

Ringers from Castleton, Hope, Hathersage and Bamford towers share resources and training, and help out at each other's towers if a shortage of ringers occurs. This support has enabled us to fulfil all the ringing requests we have received for Sunday services, weddings, funerals, and special occasions.

We are grateful for the generous donations from "The Friends of St Edmunds" for new ropes, the Parish Council for new muffles, and donations from Leek Night and Open Gardens.

This support, over the last few years, means the bells and ringing equipment are all in good condition, well maintained and safe, allowing us to keep the bells ringing in St Edmunds.

As ever, if you would like to learn to ring, please get in touch!

Castleton Playing Field Committee

The playing fields are an established charity with six trustees led by a Chairman.

The reporting to the Charity Commission is up to date and on time.

At Year End on 31st March, they had £11,568 at bank and on deposit with an income of £4,627 and expenditure of £5,501 in the year.

Income from the Fun Day (in the Village Hall), Secret Gardens, Leek Night, Fell Race, and a grant of £2,794 from Peak Park.

Expenditure included the Fun Day, Insurance, mowing costs, building equipment including the School Area and the Pond.

Maintenance and development of the playing fields is by a team of 6-8 enthusiastic volunteers who meet at the playing fields on a weekly basis. We also have a number of additional contacts in the village who have indicated a willingness to assist with specific tasks. The team has laid on a number of social and fundraising events for the village and the playing fields, these have recently included:

- Scaled down fun day in the Village Hall.
- Horse race night at the George.
- The Duck Race (just the right amount of water).
- With others, the Castleton Fell Race which is drawing increasing numbers having been cancelled during the Pandemic. Activity continues across our lines of development:
- A substantial timber gazebo (£10k) with external support for funding being sought is ongoing.
- Enhancing the play equipment; enclose, clean and paint, replace matting is ongoing.
- Repairs to and re-fencing the school area is largely complete.
- Enhancing the wooded area with ~200 trees from the Woodland Trust has been achieved with help from across the village.
- Provision of raised beds later on.
- Development of the pond area continues, and the pond is starting to flourish.
- Development of the playing field, marking and maintaining a pitch and new removable goal posts have been procured.
- Work continues on development of the playscape among the trees in due course with a willow arch into the school area.
- Wildlife support by the pond and other wilding areas including bat and bird boxes (see pic).

Forthcoming events include:

- 22 May – Fell Race 26
- 18 July – Fun Day 26

- TBC Oct – Village Hall Social Evening.

In summary, the playing fields committee is well founded and well led, it has funds under control, it has an action plan advised by a survey of residents and is proceeding with its implementation.

Castleton Village Hall

The village hall has been managed by the committee for the past year, after the resignation of the Hall manager.

A quick summary of our actions this year:

- Deep cleaning of the kitchen and a big re organisation of kitchen storage and facilities including a "New" dish washer donated by Bradwell Methodist Chapel.
- Fitting of a dual Radon fan extraction system to alleviate high readings in the school room, this has resolved the problem.
- Improving storage and facilities in the Squirrel Store.
- Levelling and resurfacing of the rear of the hall. This was made possible by a large donation from Secret gardens for which we are most grateful.
- Commissioning "Hallmaster" software an internet booking system and key safe system that has greatly simplified the booking and invoicing system and access arrangements.
- Carrying out general maintenance tasks including painting and repairing all external windows and bargeboards, unblocking drains etc.

They recently met with a representative from "Rural Action Derbyshire" and have joined the "Village Halls & Community Buildings Service Affiliation Scheme". This gives them a huge resource to tackle the lease renewal in 2031. Joining the scheme will also give access to advice on insulation and solar panel installation aiming to lower energy costs and improve our carbon footprint.

The hall is used by an increasing number of local groups and individuals, with our biggest customer still being the school.

The committee would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued support and recent donation (£500) towards the ongoing improvements to the village hall.

If anyone would like to join the small committee, who meet four times a year, please get in touch.

Castleton Speedwatch Group

The Speedwatch Group was established in January 2025, holding its first session on 7th March. To date, 34 sessions have taken place, during which approximately 13,000 vehicles have been monitored. Of these, around 300 were recorded driving above the speed limit, despite signage being displayed advising motorists that a Speedwatch session was in progress. While the majority of the public are polite, there have been occasions where abusive language has been directed at the volunteers.

The group currently consists of seventeen volunteers, with six attending sessions regularly. Cllr Eyre has completed the required training and has attended several sessions. However, Cllr Judge is unable to participate until she has received her training. Feedback from the group indicates that it is becoming increasingly difficult to encourage volunteers to attend sessions.

It is strongly believed that signage identifying Castleton as a Speedwatch village would not only boost volunteer morale but also encourage drivers to moderate their speed, as they would not be unaware of when and where the group is active. While Derbyshire County Council (DCC) Highways continue to resist the installation of signage on the highway, which is not understood as Bradwell have mounted their Speed Indicator Device weighing 11kg on a DCC post but are against signage which are much lighter, it was noted that signs could be placed on private property, as previously discussed. The group is willing to assist by identifying suitable locations and liaising with homeowners alongside the Parish Council.

Speeding is reported to occur most frequently on the approach and when leaving the village. The group asked whether the Parish Council would reconsider the installation of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs), as these would have a significant impact on addressing speeding issues. Bradwell Parish Council has recently installed SIDs at a cost of £1.8k the devices are solar-powered and capable of displaying variable messages, which could also be used at times to advise HGVs of restrictions.

However, the immediate priority remains securing the installation of Speedwatch signage within the village.

The Chair and Cllr Simm confirmed that the Parish Council is fully supportive of the Speedwatch Group. Regarding the signage, the Chair advised that Cllr Eyre had received a request from the Police co-ordinator not to install any signage until the matter with DCC Highways has been resolved. There is a difference of interpretation: the Chair and Cllr Eyre believe this instruction applies to all signage, whereas the group understands it to apply only to signage on the highway. The Speedwatch Group will contact the Police co-ordinator to seek clarification and will update the Parish Council accordingly.

The Chair asked those present whether they felt a zebra crossing at The Island would help to reduce vehicle

speeds. All were in agreement that it was a good idea and should be investigated further.

Written Notices.

There were no written notices presented.

Open Forum - Any Business to be Raised for Discussion and Invitation for Questions from the Public:

Questions, issues were raised earlier in the meeting as subjects were raised as part of the reports and presentations above.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm and the Chair thanked everyone for attending.

*Mrs T. Dale, Clerk to Castleton Parish Council
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UNADOPTED