



REPORT OF THE PARISH CLERK FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING TO BE HELD 13th May 2026.

During the year the following councillors served on the parish council:

Jonathan Shepherd (Chairman).

Paula Gwinnett (Vice-chair).

Pauline Ballard.

Edwin Brindley.

Richard Wood.

Nicholas Conway

Adam Dronzek

Holly Kelsall (Resigned September 2025)

Jan Wakefield (Co-opted November 2025)

Christopher Nicholls (Co-opted December 2025)

Special responsibilities of the Councillors:

Councillor Shepherd	Chairman of Alton Parish Council. Footpaths, Round House Maintenance and environmental issues Councillor Shepherd is on the bank mandate.
Councillor Gwinnett	Vice-Chair of Alton Parish Council. Website monitor.
Councillor Brindley	Councillor Brindley is on the bank mandate.
Councillor Kelsall (Resigned September 2026)	Alton Towers Liaison
Councillor Ballard	Represents APC on the Alton Village Hall Committee.
Councillor Wood	Responsibility for Highways and Road Safety issues. Attends the parish assembly meetings on behalf of the council. Is on the bank mandate.
Councillor Conway	Alton Towers Liaison
Councillor Dronzek	Parish cemetery

The last annual parish meeting was held on 14th May 2025.

During the year May 2025 to April 2026 Councillor Holly Kelsall resigned and two new members Jan Wakefield (December 2025) and Christopher Nicholls (January 2026) joined the council, bringing the council to full strength of nine councillors.

Also, in March 2026 Selwyn Burton retired as the clerk, proper officer and responsible finance officer to the council after almost 12 years' service. In March at the same meeting Mrs Anthea Barker took over as the clerk, proper officer and responsible finance officer to the council.

From May 2025 to April 2026 the parish council held 12 meetings, all on the second Wednesday of the month.

Two councillors attended every meeting.



The council as a whole had the following attendance rate. For the first five months (May to September) the council had eight councillors, in October and November there were seven councillors and in December eight councillors and January to April nine councillors. A possible 98 attendances.

There was a 78.6% attendance rate (77 attendances), up 3.6% on last year.

Absence was due to:

- Holiday 3 occasions, 3.1%
- Illness 1 occasion, 1%
- Working 10 occasions, 10.2%
- Family reasons 8 occasions, 8.2%
- Other 3 occasions, 3.1%

Figures rounded to nearest decimal point.

During the period May 2024 to April 2025 the council undertook a number of major changes and one major project.

1. Following the delegated funds from SMDC under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 of £112,178 divided between the play space (playground) £49,905.24 and the playing field £62,273.05. The first £28,034 has been released to the parish council for improvements to the children's play area at the village hall. Thanks go to the 106 committee for their ongoing work and in particular to Alan Heath from the Village Hall and committee member for his work in obtaining the quotes for the work so far.
2. Normal maintenance was also maintained for issues like the Round House and painting of the cemetery gates, plus ongoing work to professionally manage the trees in St. Peter's Church Yard.
3. The council this year decided to put the Lengthsman and Ground Maintenance roles out to tender. Considerable interest was shown and following an open and transparent process Key Maintenance Group received the Ground Maintenance contract and Peter Robinson, T/A Staffordshire Hedge Laying from Cheadle the lengthman's contract. Special thanks to Councillor Paula Gwinnett for the hard work she put in writing the tender documents and putting in place the process for the appointments.
4. In March 2026 Selwyn Burton the Clerk to the Council retired and the Council welcomes the new Clerk Mrs Anthea Barker to the post. Again, special thanks go to Councillor Paula Gwinnett for her hard work in managing this work, from the advert to interview process. The interview panel consisted of Councillors Shepherd, Gwinnett and Wakefield who interviewed four very good candidates before Anthea Barker was selected.
5. The council also decided to purchase a new laptop and printer with associated software for the use of the new clerk together with a SIM only mobile for dedicated use for council business.
6. County Councillor, Su Beardmore has attended several meetings and the council thank her for her support. SMDC Councillor, Nigel Moulton has been a regular attendee to council meetings. Councillor Moulton continues to be a great help to the council, particularly in matters relating to SMDC. The council thanks him for his support.



7. The Parish Council precept has been increased by 10.61% and now stands at £20,500. Which means that a band D property is now charged £35.34p a year an increase of £3.39.
8. The council accounts continue to be managed on-line and the system is working well, saving time and money. This is monitored monthly by the council and bank statements are signed by the council. I would like to thank the council's accountants the Ford Partnership for help and advice throughout the year.
9. I would finally like to thank all councillors for their help and support during the year and in particular to Councillors Shepherd and Gwinnett, the Chairman and Vice-Chair.

Selwyn Burton BSc (Hons), PGCert (Man), FIoL
Clerk to Alton Parish Council (Retired March 2026).