

Cherhill Parish Council

Newsletter

Spring 2026



Parish Council Update

Since the last edition of this newsletter in October, the most significant issue affecting our area has been Wiltshire Council's decision to close two Household Recycling Centres (HRCs), including our own at Lower Compton. This decision was made without any public consultation and represents one of the most serious threats to local infrastructure in recent years—particularly at a time when Calne's population continues to grow.

Since it first opened, the Lower Compton HRC has been owned and operated by Hills Waste Solutions. It is a well-used and valued facility, with many residents relying on it regularly. The decision to close the site was taken by Wiltshire Council's Cabinet in December 2025, without any prior notice to Cherhill Parish Council. We became aware of the proposal through local media and immediately submitted a detailed letter of objection to the two principal Cabinet members involved.

Cllr Ian Thorn- Leader of the Council :

ian.thorn@wiltshire.gov.uk

Cllr Paul Sample – Cabinet Member for Waste,

Climate and Environment : paul.sample@wiltshire.gov.uk

Unfortunately, our representations were ignored. A vote was subsequently held behind closed doors, excluding both the public and the press, and it was agreed that both HRCs would close by the end of August 2026.

In response, and at the request of the local press, Cherhill Parish Council issued a formal statement outlining our objections. This was shared with Wiltshire Council's Cabinet, Calne Town Council, neighbouring parish councils, local MPs, and BBC West. Many residents may have seen the issue featured on BBC's Politics West programme on Sunday 15th February, which included interviews with Cllr Ian Thorn (Leader of Wiltshire Council), Cllr Ashley O'Neill (Calne Rural), as well as local residents and users of the Lower Compton site.

Following widespread public concern, Wiltshire Council has since announced a temporary reversal of its decision. Both HRCs will now remain open beyond August 2026 until a new facility is built and operational near Royal Wootton Bassett. However, this stay of execution is likely to be temporary—perhaps no more than three years.

There are also proposals to introduce a booking system for HRC use across the county. This approach proved unpopular during the pandemic and risks discouraging residents from using recycling facilities. It would also increase staffing and implementation costs, raising questions about whether any real savings would be achieved.

Why Cherhill Parish Council Strongly Objects

The Parish Council continues to oppose these proposals for several important reasons:

- Residents across the parish and surrounding areas would face longer and more costly journeys to alternative sites such as Devizes, Marlborough, or Royal Wootton Bassett.
- Increased travel would result in higher fuel costs and greater wear and tear on vehicles.
- Local roads would experience additional traffic, leading to increased maintenance and repair costs.
- There is a clear risk of increased fly-tipping as access to convenient facilities is reduced.

It is important to note that closing the Lower Compton HRC would not mean the closure of the entire Hills-operated site. Waste processing would continue; only the public recycling area would be removed. We also understand that a significant amount of waste is currently transported out of the county for processing, highlighting the need to expand—not reduce—local recycling capacity.

How You Can Make Your Views Known

Residents are encouraged to:

Respond to the leaflet recently delivered to households by contacting the Wiltshire Councillors named.

Attend Parish Council meetings and use the public participation session to share your views.

Visit the Parish Council website (via the QR code) for updates and further information.



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Footpath and Bridleway Maintenance

The Public Rights of Way (PROW) Working Group continues to meet regularly to address maintenance, access, and repair issues across the parish. Wherever possible, councillors carry out work themselves to reduce costs. Recent efforts included clearing a footpath on to the downs from Cherhill.

Volunteers are always welcome to join these work parties—please visit the website or contact the Clerk for details.

Road Safety and LHFIG Working Group



The Parish Council continues to work closely with Wiltshire Council's Local Highway and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) to improve road safety. The Council contributes 30% of the cost of approved projects.

A key initiative has been the installation of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) to deter speeding. Poles have now been installed along the A4 in Cherhill, and the first SID is operational. Early data

suggests it is already having a positive impact on reducing vehicle speeds.

Re-chalking the Cherhill White Horse

Our iconic White Horse is due for re-chalking on Saturday 23rd May from 10am. This important work helps preserve its historic appearance and ensures it remains a visible and valued landmark.

Volunteers will be guided in applying fresh chalk to restore its brightness. If you would like to take part, please visit the website or contact the Clerk.

Come along and get involved—let's get chalky!

Lansdowne Monument Restoration

Many residents will be aware of the poor condition of the Lansdowne Monument, which has been partially hidden

behind hoarding for many years. The Parish Council has been in ongoing discussions with the National Trust, which owns the monument.

We are pleased to report that a detailed planning application for restoration has been submitted and has our full support. If approved, work could begin as early as May this year.

Community Grants

The Parish Council has established a grant fund to support projects that benefit the local community. The first grant has already been awarded to the Cherhill Scout Group, and further applications are welcomed.

Application deadlines are:

31st March

31st July

30th November

A separate deadline of 30th September applies for larger grants. Application forms and criteria are available from the Clerk or via the website.

New Parish Website

The Parish Council's new website, developed with Parish Online, is now live at:

www.cherhillparish.gov.uk

Email: clerk@cherhillparish.gov.uk

Tel: 07404 154576

Cherhill Village Hall

The Cherhill Village Hall Committee are progressing plans for the new hall to provide a modern, accessible space for our community. As the project moves into its next phase, the committee are seeking volunteers with professional experience to help deliver this important development. In particular, those with skills in project management, fundraising, grant applications, finance, and communications. Your expertise could make a significant difference in helping bring this much-needed hall upgrade to fruition. If you feel you could contribute, please contact admin@cherhillvillagehall.co.uk

Parish Council Meetings

Meetings are held at 7pm at Cherhill Village Hall (unless otherwise stated) on the fourth Thursday of each month. Public participation is always included early in the agenda. Upcoming meetings:

23rd April

28th May (including the Annual Parish Meeting)