



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE **CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMMITTEE** HELD AT THE DRILL HALL ON MONDAY 9th FEBRUARY 2026 AT 7PM

PRESENT:

Cheryl Bould	Town Councillor (Chairman)
Allan Groombridge	Committee Member
Mary Johnston	Committee Member
Mitchell Philpott	Town Councillor
Carmel Stoney	Committee Member

Also in attendance: Faye LeBon, Gavin Watson and Andy Bell (Town Council Officers)

It was *noted* that the meeting was quorate.

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Gill Finch, Michael Goodwin, Carol Kisis, Nigel Scarlett and Jackie Young.

2. To Receive any Declarations of Interest or Requests for Dispensation

None raised.

3. To Adjourn the Meeting to Allow Members of the Public and Councillors with Prejudicial Interests to Speak

No matters raised.

4. To Agree Minutes from the Meeting of 4th November 2025

The draft minutes had been previously circulated. These were *agreed* by the committee and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. To Note Matters Arising from the Meeting of 4th November 2025 (not otherwise included on the agenda)

No matters raised.

6. Wash Up / Debrief of Christmas Lights 2025 with Recommendations for 2026

What went well?

- Community spirit
- Use of the cherry picker. Thanks were extended to Tony Owen for donating his time and equipment on two occasions.
- The road closure

- Purchasing of the henchman ladder.
- Lights were in labelled boxes and not tangled.
- Comms system / walkie talkies
- Camaraderie
- Credit was given to those who arranged the installation of the lights in previous years.

What didn't go so well?

- Not everyone was wearing helmets (people took them who didn't need them, therefore they ran out).
- Vote of thanks not conducted on the day.
- Fewer people available for the take down.
- Had to take down the lights in the Black Boys car park due to a hazard with the height of the waste lorry.
- Third piece of indoor tree now located. To make sure this is available.
- A third person in the leadership team required (an event manager and two deputies needed).

Improvements for next year

- Instructions/photos in each box so that those unfamiliar with the station to be able to work effectively. It was noted that Andy has tagged all the indoor garlands with their location to make installation easier next year.
- To create a list of businesses impacted by the road closure.
- The take down dates didn't work due to the weather. The take down of the inside decorations can still go ahead as not impacted by weather.

7. To Agree Fund Raiser(s) for 2026

Allan is happy to speak with Backtracking to arrange a fund raiser. Allan will feed back some dates to the Clerk for consideration.

8. To Note Items for Information and Inclusion in a Future Agenda

- Fund raiser
- Update Event Management Plan based on feedback
- Any additional light purchases.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday 15th April at 7pm. The clerk will check that the Drill Hall is available.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7.35pm

_____ Signed _____ Date

Notes from Christmas Lights – 15th April 2026

Regrettably the Christmas Lights Committee wasn't quorate on 15th April, so all decisions will have to be carried over to the next meeting. However the following was discussed / reported:

- We discussed whether certain areas of the outdoor light put up / take down were more complicated than others? It was suggested that the area around Barclays Bank may be slightly more complex.
- The Event Management Plan seemed in order, but as a working document can be amended at any point by the committee, up until the event itself.
- Grateful for the offer from Ivan Fisher for an updated decoration for their building. It would be useful to have a mock up of the design.
- Possibility of relocating the existing manger to an alternative location.
- Fund raising event (Back Tracking) on 31st October. Discussions occurred about utilising E-ticket sales, but the event sells out in its current format. Cost of Backtracking and lights would be £560.
- There will be £276.56 transferred to the Christmas Lights earmarked reserves from the 2025/2026 budget. The budget for 2026/2027 was £1,000 income and £1,500 expenditure.
- Discussions occurred about replacing the indoor swags this year, as the current set is looking quite tired.

Next Meeting Wednesday 24th June at the Drill Hall.

Event Management Plan (EMP) – Christmas Lights

This EMP only covers the installation, switch on and taking down of the Christmas Lights. It does not cover the switch on event.

This document will be read in conjunction with the EMP for the switch on event.

Terminology:

Committee	The decision making body delegated to make decisions about the purchase, installation, switch on and taking down of the Christmas Lights. A standing committee of the Town Council and governed as such.
Office	Town Council officers
Volunteers	Those who attend in a voluntary capacity, to assist with the installation, switch on and taking down of the Christmas Lights and other ancillary activities.
Event Manger	The person with overall decision making power on the day of the installation and taking down. It is not practical to have shared responsibility for the event on the day. There needs to be a single decision maker who has overall responsibility for all aspects of the event when it is in progress.

3 months prior to installation

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Event Manager and 2no. deputies to be appointed	Committee	
Contact to be made with Xmas Tree supplier to ensure trees are secured	Office	

2 months prior to installation

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Road Closure(s) to be Agreed	Committee	
Road Closure(s) to be applied for	Office	
Insurance to be checked	Office	
Donation for Christmas Trees to be agreed	Committee	
*Equipment required to be agreed.	Committee	
Ensure Town Hall is booked out for the day before and on installation day, and the day before and on take down day, to enable safe access/egress of basement	Office	
Check all lights are in basement	Committee	

**Agree PPE required and check stock	Committee	
Order PPE if required	Office	

* Suggest:

1no. cherry picker for tree, display at Co-op and Bread Source (equipment and qualified operative donated)

10no. Extending ladders. Town Council has 3. Office to speak with fire service and Cooks as to other commercial ladders available.

3no. Step ladders. Town Council to price up and source.

6no. Walkie-talkies to be available onsite if required.

1no. henchman ladder

**30no. hard hats, 50no. hi viz

1 month prior to installation

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Risk Assessments to be agreed	Committee	
Agree Arrangements for collecting Christmas Trees	Committee	
All lights to be PAT tested. Remedial works / replacements to be actioned.	Office	
Check instructions/ photos are in each box	Office	
Contact to be made with potential suppliers of refreshments (Tesco [bacon], Flour & Bean [rolls], Co-Op [tea and coffee] and Budgens [sausages]) to ensure these are secured. Expect 30-40 volunteers	Office	
Appeal for volunteers for installation and take down [Social media, Just Aylsham, Rotary, Cittaslow, Twinning, Events Committee, Previous Volunteers]	Office	
Speak to WI re: assistance with refreshments	Office	
Check availability of fire service as volunteers	Office	
Check availability of Cooks electrical for lights at Budgens	Office	
Agree volunteer form	Committee	
*Agree number of stations / teams required. Teams for internal works to be agreed	Committee	
Appoint First Aider for the day of installation and take down.	Committee	
Check capping for bumble pins are available	Office	
Check 3 parts of Christmas Tree is located in the basement	Office	

*Suggest 4 people per team (1 person to climb each ladder, one to foot each ladder, one to feed the lights and a banksman).

2 weeks prior to installation

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Review volunteer list to ensure it is sufficient	Office	
Review long term forecast for potential adverse weather	Office	
Start collecting volunteer forms. Send out all forms with a welcome letter.	Office	
Start to programme in which volunteers will man stations on switch on day	Event Manager	
Appoint member to collect forms on the day	Committee	
Appoint member to distribute helmets etc on the day	Committee	

1 week prior to installation

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Review volunteer list to ensure it is sufficient	Office	
Review long term forecast for potential adverse weather	Office	
Check with tree provider that trees are still available for collection on Installation Day	Office	
Check power points are functioning where the power for the lights is obtained from an internal source.	Event Manager	

1 day prior to installation

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Collect refreshments from donors and take to Town Hall	Volunteers	
Lights to be brought up from basement and laid out in their relevant areas	Volunteers	
Move all ladders to Town Hall	Office (or fire service)	
Move artificial tree into Town Hall (3 parts)	Volunteers	

Installation Day

Event Manager to be available at the Town Hall throughout the installation. Ask outdoor volunteers to turn up at 8am. Indoor volunteers at 9am

Appointed first aider to be available in Town Hall

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Welcome volunteers on arrival	Event Manager	

PPE distributed	Volunteer	
All volunteers to have completed volunteer form	Volunteers	
Volunteer appointed to collect forms	Volunteers	
Refreshments to be provided	WI	
Volunteers appointed into teams	Event Manager	
Persons to be stationed on barriers to allow Co-op deliveries through and those attending church	Event Manager / Volunteers	
Teams to report back to Event Manager to confirm completion of appointed tasks	Volunteers	
Decision made to remove individual barriers	Event Manager	
Trees to be collected and installed	Office / Volunteers	
Check all lights work	Volunteers	
All boxes to be returned to the basement	Volunteers	
All stations to be checked prior to leaving site to ensure they are left in a safe condition	Volunteers	
Timing clocks and plugs to be fitted and set for the correct times (on 3pm – off 11pm)	Volunteers	

Switch on Day

Event Manager to be available at the Town Hall

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Bumble pins placed along church yard path to the Lychgate and icicle lights attached	Volunteers	

Switch on Night

Event Manager to be available at the Town Hall

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Teams to be stationed at: Socket at end of Barclays Sockets above Cecil Amey Silver consumer unit outside west end of Town Hall Coxfords Butchers Main consumer unit/timer inside west of Town Hall ?Ivan Fisher Coordinated with countdown	Volunteers	
After switch on, bumble pins and icicle lights to be removed and stored	Volunteers	
Assistance with clear up after switch on event	Volunteers	

1 day prior to take down

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Check weather forecast. Update volunteers with any risk to cancellation. Inside take down can go ahead regardless	Event Manager	

1 day prior to take down

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Check weather forecast. Update volunteers re: go ahead or deferment. Inside take down can go ahead regardless	Event Manager	
Collect refreshments from donors and take to Town Hall	Volunteers	
Boxes to be brought up from basement and laid out in their relevant areas	Volunteers	
Move all ladders to Town Hall	Office (or fire service if applicable)	
Ensure all equipment not accessible on a Sunday is removed on the Saturday	Volunteers	

Take Down Day

Event Manager to be available at the Town Hall throughout the take down day

Appointed First Aider to be available in the Town Hall

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Volunteers welcomed	Event Manager	
PPE distributed	Event Manager	
All volunteers to have completed volunteer form (volunteer form for installation applicable, unless personal details have changed)	Volunteers	
Volunteer appointed to collect any additional forms	Volunteers	
Refreshments to be provided	Volunteers	
Volunteers appointed into teams	Event Manager	
Teams to report back to Event Manager to confirm completion of appointed tasks	Volunteers	
Trees to be dismantled and disposed of	Volunteers	
Lights to be placed back in relevant boxes in the Town Hall	Volunteers	
Check all photos/instructions are in relevant boxes	Volunteers	
Check tags are attached to the garlands	Volunteers	
All boxes to be returned to the basement	Volunteers	
All stations to be checked prior to leaving site to ensure they are left in a safe condition	Volunteers	

Committee Meeting After Event

Task	Responsibility	Completed?
Arrange correspondence thanking all volunteers	Committee	
Wash up of event. Note what went well and what can be improved upon for next year	Committee	

Important Numbers:

Event Manager: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Deputy Event Managers xxxxxxxxxxxxxx / xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

First Aider: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Town Clerk: 07385 664707

[List any other number of importance here]

Christmas Lights – Finance Report

2025/2026

Revenue budget for infrastructure **£2,000.00**

Income from Fund Raiser £1,189.85

Expenditure

Backtracking	£375.00
Petty cash receipt	£14.35
Petty cash receipt	£12.00
Petty cash receipt	£3.45
Petty cash receipt	£2.30
Agreed Blachere decorations (ex VAT)	£2,072.40
Agreed donation for trees	£100.00
Sundry purchases (amazon)	£17.34
Sundry purchases (screwfix)	£4.12
Road Closure	£46.35
Ladder hire x 2	£192.00
Helmets/Gloves	£73.98
Total	£2,913.29

Budget £2,000.00

Add Income £1,189.85

Less Expenditure £2,913.29

Budget Remaining £276.56

To roll into earmarked reserves for 26/27

Earmarked Reserves for Decorations

Balance reported on 31st March 2026 £1,820.26

Add balance from revenue budget £276.56

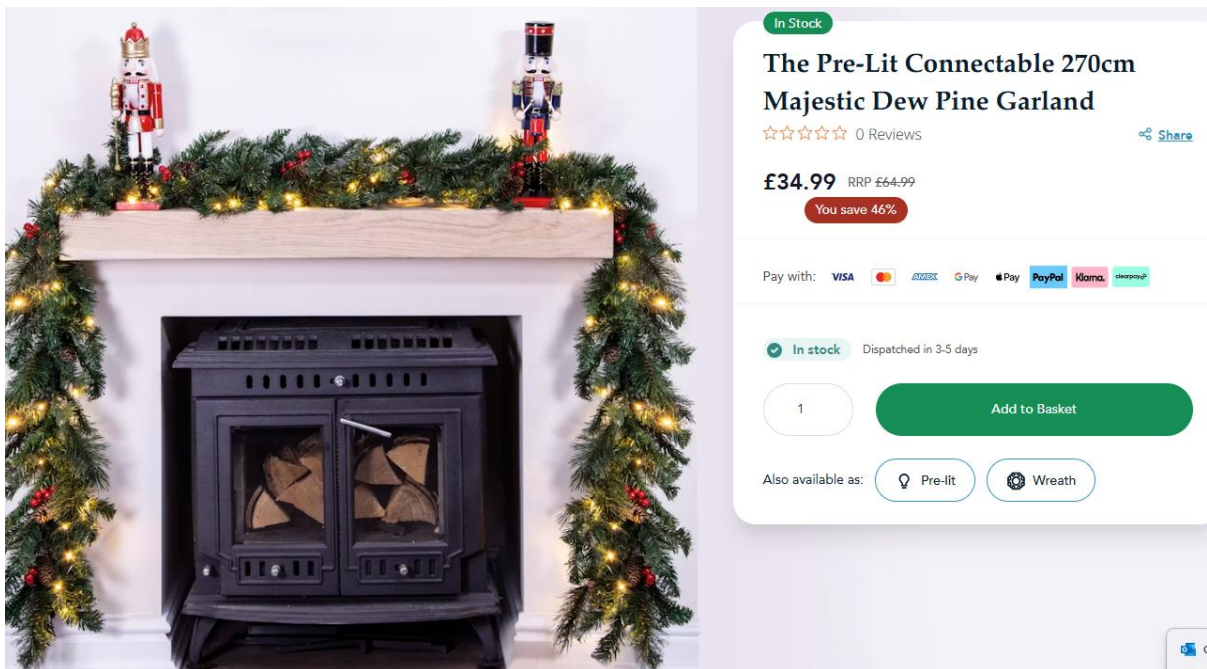
TOTAL for 2025/2026 **£2096.82**

Budget for 2026/207 (in addition to earmarked reserves)

Income £1,000

Expenditure £1,500

At the last meeting, discussions were had as to whether the indoor swags required replacement. Initial searches have been made with the following suggestion:
270cm pre-lit connectable garland



Product Features

- Size: 9ft/270cm
- Pre-lit with 60 warm white LED lights
- Pine Cones & Red Berries
- Number of Branch Tips: 220 branch tips
- Connectable: Maximum of 10 Garlands per included low voltage transformer
- Transformer included
- Foliage colour: Green Foliage
- Realistic look: Realistic Pine Needle "Bottle Brush"/PVC Tips
- Easy assembly: Attached branches
- Fire resistant: Fire retardancy certified
- Indoor/Outdoor: Can be used outdoors

<https://www.christmastreeworld.co.uk/the-pre-lit-connectable-270cm-majestic-dew-pine-garland>