February 2026:

LYTCHETT MATRAVERS PARISH COUNCIL

Fifty Years Ago
The village allotments in Castle Farm Road were opened 50 years ago and are still as popular as ever. Last year there was full take-up, with a waiting list of eight. Renewals are now underway, so please get your application in as soon as possible.

Also 50 years ago there were many complaints about dog fouling on pavements. Unfortunately, this remains a problem today despite the provision of a dog exercise area and 32 dog bins around the village. It was reported even then that notices were considered, but it was agreed dogs were unlikely to read them.

Our Village Library
Our village library was built over 50 years ago and has been a mainstay of the community ever since. The library has been threatened with closure twice in recent years, and the Parish Council has consistently argued for its retention. We asked Dorset Council to transfer the building and land to the Parish Council so we could safeguard this core village service. As reported last month, Dorset Council declined, stating that it wishes to continue running the library. Because of this history of uncertainty, the library should now be protected as an Asset of Community Value (ACV).
The library is far more than a place to borrow books. It is one of the few remaining public spaces that is free, welcoming and open to everyone. An ACV listing recognises buildings that play an important role in community life. It does not prevent change, but it does ensure that if the library were ever sold or closed, the community would be informed and given time to act to protect it.
The library supports people of all ages. It helps children learn to read, supports students and job-seekers, and provides older residents with a friendly and accessible place to spend time. It also offers internet access and help with online services, which is vital for those who are digitally excluded. Just as importantly, it brings people together through reading groups, activities and local projects, strengthening community life.
Applying for ACV status is a simple and practical way to protect something that matters deeply to our village. It sends a clear message that we value learning, connection and shared community spaces, now and for the future.

War Memorial Hedge
The Remembrance Day gathering at the War Memorial is a real community event for the village. While we always try to ensure it looks neat and tidy, especially for November, the hedge has, like many hedges, gradually spread beyond its original line.

The inside edge has now been cut back to its original alignment. The outside edge will be left until the hedge has recovered, and will then be treated in the same way. Expert advice was taken to ensure this approach gives the hedge the best chance of long-term health.

Summer Festival
The date has been set for June 20th and the format will be similar to previous years. All events will take place on the Recreation Ground. There will be the annual dog show, a stage with children's entertainment in the afternoon, and live bands in the evening. The Pavilion bar will be open throughout.

The committee is keen to hear from stallholders, traders and those wishing to run competitions or games, so please contact the Parish Clerk for details.

Parish Assets and Facilities

The cost of running and maintaining community buildings continues to rise each year. The Sports Pavilion and Youth Hall are both over 50 years old and need constant maintenance and upgrading to meet modern standards. Clubs and associations can no longer generate sufficient surpluses to cover these costs and the Parish Council is frequently asked to provide support.

We have therefore decided to bring these facilities under Parish Council management and create a central facilities function. This will be finalised in the next couple of months. Initially it will include the Sports Pavilion, Youth Hall and Lytchett Astro/MUGA. From April 2026, the Parish Clerk will be the main contact for all bookings.

2026/27 Budget and Precept

The precept is the portion of Council Tax allocated to the Parish Council to cover services, maintenance of facilities, and expected inflation. For 2026/27, we have submitted a request for £126,000, representing an increase of 5%, in line with Dorset Council.

Councillor Vacancies

There is still much to be done and we need new people to help shape the future of the village. Anyone who has lived in the parish for more than 12 months can apply. There are currently two vacancies, so please contact the Parish Clerk to find out more.

Being a parish councillor is a direct way to contribute to your community. It takes a few hours each week but is both interesting and rewarding.

Parish Council Meetings

Our next Finance & General Purposes meeting is on February 11th at 7pm, and the next Full Council meeting is on February 25th at 7pm, both in the Village Hall. Agendas are published online and reports are available from the Parish Clerk.

All meetings begin with a public participation session, so please come along if you have questions, suggestions or concerns, it's your village.

Alf Bush
Chair, Lytchett Matravers Parish Council

For more information, visit **www.lytchettmatraversparishcouncil.gov.uk**, visit the Parish Council Facebook page, email **clerk@lytchettmatraversparishcouncil.gov.uk** or call **07596 885667**.