



Yarkhill Parish Council

Strategic & Operational Plan (2026–2029)

Adopted 7th May 2026

1. Introduction

This Strategic & Operational Plan sets out the priorities and objectives of Yarkhill Parish Council for the period 2026–2029.

It provides a structured framework to:

- Support effective decision-making
- Align Council activity with community needs
- Ensure sound financial planning and governance
- Deliver transparency and accountability

The Plan should be read alongside:

- The Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Annual budgets and precept decisions
- Council policies and procedures
- Herefordshire Council's Strategic Objectives <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk>
- With references to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Guidance <https://www.nalc.gov.uk>

2. Vision

To maintain and enhance Yarkhill as a sustainable, well-managed rural community, where residents feel represented, informed, and supported.

3. Strategic Priorities (2026–2029)

Priority 1: Governance & Compliance

Ensure the Council operates lawfully, transparently, and in line with best practice.

Key Objectives:

- Maintain up-to-date Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- Ensure compliance with the Local Government Act 1972 and Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015
- Deliver timely AGAR submissions
- Maintain an up-to-date policy framework
- Ensure Councillor training and awareness

Priority 2: Financial Sustainability

Maintain sound financial management and long-term sustainability.

Key Objectives:

- Set an annual balanced budget
- Maintain appropriate reserves (General & Earmarked)
- Ensure robust financial reporting to Council
- Regularly review value for money
- Align spending with strategic priorities

Priority 3: Community Engagement & Communication

Improve communication and engagement with residents.

Key Objectives:

- Maintain and regularly update the Council website
- Publish agendas, minutes, and financial information promptly
- Encourage public participation at meetings
- Support the Annual Parish Assembly
- Improve accessibility of Council information

Priority 4: Planning & Environment

Support sustainable development and protect the rural character of Yarkhill.

Key Objectives:

- Uphold policies within the Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Respond effectively to planning applications
- Protect local green spaces and environment
- Support biodiversity initiatives where feasible

Priority 5: Local Services & Community Support

Support local initiatives and community wellbeing.

Key Objectives:

- Operate a fair and transparent grant scheme
- Support local groups and organisations
- Monitor and respond to local issues (e.g. highways, lighting, amenities)
- Work with partner organisations where appropriate

4. Operational Delivery (Annual Focus)

Each year the Council will:

- Agree a budget and precept aligned to this Plan
- Aim to set specific annual actions/projects
- Monitor progress through agenda items and reports

5. Monitoring & Review

Progress will be monitored through:

- Regular Council meetings
- Financial reports
- Annual review of objectives

6. Review Cycle

- This Plan will be reviewed as required
- A full refresh will take place every 3 years

Updates will reflect:

- Community needs
- Legislative changes
- Financial position