



Risk Assessment for Aldworth Parish Council

Assessment made for
the year 2025-2026

No.	Item	Hazard	Those in Danger	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1-10	Risk Rate	Measures / Comments	Result
Audit								
1	Internal Audit	Poor Audit Report Public confidence suffers	Clerk RFO	1	1	1	Review of effectiveness of the internal audit is completed annually. Findings are actioned and minuted at Full Council meeting	A
2	Failure to complete / submit Annual Return on time	Poor Audit Report Expense (fines) Public confidence suffers	Clerk RFO	1	4	4	Clerk / RFO to monitor deadlines, ensure compliance and action necessary documentation on an annual basis	A
3	Failure to comply with deadlines for accounts and returns	Poor Audit Report Expense (fines) Public confidence suffers	Clerk RFO	1	2	2	Clerk / RFO to add deadline dates to diary and contact internal and external auditors on an annual basis	A
Code of Conduct								
4	Incomplete / inaccurate register of Members' Interests	Lack of transparency Open to complaints of unfairness or bias	Councillors	1	2	2	Clerk checks at Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and when a new Councillor is elected to join.	A
Land								
5	All land recorded on Asset Register	Lack of Transparency	Council	1	1	1	Clerk maintains Asset Register and all documentation and reviews annually	A
6	Dog Fouling	Exposure to foul	Public	1	10	10	Signage and 2 bins in place, regularly emptied by Triangle Management. Regular commentary in Parish Magazine and social media channels to remind owners of their responsibilities	N
7	Grass Cutting	Trips and Falls Local Eyesore	Public	1	4	4	Clerk to check annually on contract with WBC. Site	A

		Attracting unwanted wildlife					inspections occur throughout the year and Yattendon Estates undertake some maintenance around the area.	
8	Vandalism	Trips and Falls General danger from broken or missing items	Public	1	4	4	Regular inspections carried out around the village and review of comments on social media. Clerk to email WBC with any concerns	A
9	Waste	Trips and Falls General Eyesore Attracting unwanted wildlife	Public Council	1	4	4	Clerk and Councillors to regularly check the village and Clerk to report any fly-tipping to WBC online. A new litter bin has been installed in Bell Lane to help.	A
10	Maintenance of Trees and Hedges	Fallen branches Trips and Falls Danger of road and pavement blockages	Public	2	4	8	Clerk and Councillors to assess regularly around the village. Clerk to advise WBC via online portal or contact Tree Surgeon	A
11	Footpaths	Trips and Falls Overgrown vegetation Flooding Surface issues	Public	2	2	4	Regular inspections carried out around the village and review of comments on social media. Clerk to email WBC with any concerns	A
Computing								
12	Loss of data on Clerk Laptop due to system fault	Interruption to effective administration Possible financial loss	Clerk	1	4	4	All data on Clerk Laptop is stored on Google Drive.	A
13	Laptop & Printer	Cost of Replacement! Repair Costs Accidental damage Theft	Clerk Councillors Parishioners	4	4	16	Clerk to maintain, back up, update and ensure correct running of the laptop regularly. When not in use, kept in locked, fireproof cabinet. No unauthorised use permitted	A
14	Non-compliance with Data Protection	Litigation Poor Reputation	Council Clerk Parishioners	1	4	4	Clerk to monitor on a regular basis and use the ICO website for guidance.	A

Council Meetings								
15	Insurance	Litigation Additional Expenses	Clerk RFO	1	1	1	Ensure both venue for meetings and Aldworth have Public Liability Insurance	A
16	Advertising of Meetings	Poor reputation Loss of confidence	Clerk Council Parishioners	1	1	1	Clerk to publicise the meeting dates for the year, agenda to be posted on Notice Board in Bell Lane on website and social media channels 7 days in advance of the meeting	T
17	Inaccurate, untimely, improper minutes	Poor decisions in future Poor evidence for decisions Lack of clarity for the public	Clerk Chair	1	4	4	Clerk to send draft minutes to all Councillors for inspection no later than two weeks post meeting. Draft minutes to be made public, replaced with approved minutes after next meeting	A
18	Wheelchair Access	Access for all hindered	Clerk	1	4	4	Clerk to ensure all venues selected provide adequate accessibility for all	A
19	Failure to respond to electors wishing to exercise rights of inspection	Complaints received Not transparent Non-compliance	Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk to advertise facility on website and social media channels and to respond to requests	A
20	Failure to achieve quorum at meetings	Business not transacted Decisions not made	Council Clerk	1	4	4	Clerk to issue annual meeting calendar to all Councillors, issue meeting agendas 7 days before the meeting and maintain record of attendance	A
21	Lack of public consultation by Council	Decisions not based on evidence Parishioners disenfranchised	Council	1	2	2	Clerk to ensure meetings are published on Notice Board, Parish Magazine, website, and social media channels, include public questions on agenda, provide advice to public, publish agenda and minutes on the website, consider leafleting	T
22	Councillors acting alone outside meetings	Outside of compliance Indemnities invalid	Councillors	2	2	4	Clerk to issue 'The Good Councillor Guide' to all Councillors when elected,	A

		Personal risk					Councillors to avoid making commitments on behalf of the Council, attend relevant training	
23	Council decisions not implemented	Confidence undermined Reputation risk Possible losses	Clerk	1	4	4	Clerk to publish draft minutes no more than 3 working days after the meeting, minutes are reviewed at next meeting and actions signed off	A
24	Failure to recognise and address conflict of interests	Lack of transparency Open to complaints of unfairness or bias	Council Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk to ensure standards are followed and reviewed regularly to check understanding	A
25	Lack of Professional advice	Poor decisions Costs and waste Possible non-compliance	Clerk	2	2	4	Clerk to ensure Aldworth maintain membership to NALC, BALC, HALC and SLCC* (*shared with EIPC)	A
26	Loss of services of Parish Clerk / RFO	Interruption to effective administration	Council Clerk	2	2	4	Seek locum clerk / RFO to assist until a replacement can be found, train one councillor to complete basic financial tasks, email can be forwarded to the Chair, advertise position on website, and NALC	A
27	Failure to correctly identify local needs and wishes	Non-representation of the people Resources not applied Democratic deficit	Council	1	4	4	Maintain close contact with parishioners, advertise parish meetings, obtain feedback, publish plans, and invite comments, use local press and media channels, host events and seek feedback	A
28	Bad Publicity	Reduces confidence	Council Clerk	1	4	4	Review all press releases or articles prior to publication, manage press relations, be open and transparent	A
29	Allegations of Libel or Slander	Potential for litigation Costs of investigations Reduces confidence	Councillors	1	4	4	Clerk to intervene at meetings, review all press releases and articles prior to publication, adequate insurance cover.	A

Council Administration								
30	Declarations of Office	Failure to comply with WBC Monitoring Officer	Councillors Clerk	1	4	4	Clerk to ensure declarations are signed at the meeting, scanned, and emailed to WBC	A
31	Failure to attract sufficient candidates for vacancies or elections	Reduced representation Lack of resources Possibility of meetings not being quorate	Council	1	4	4	Actively publicise Council activities, vacancies, and elections via all channels	A
32	Inadequate document control	Poor evidence Poor support to Council	Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk to establish and maintain appropriate filing of documents in the Cloud and paper copies in locked and fireproof cabinet, enforcement of version control on documents to be reviewed, maintain legislation updates, and comply with changes in statutes and law	A
33	Documents	Storage Issues Lack of transparency Lack of confidence	Clerk RFO	1	2	2	Clerk to use the SLCC and Berkshire Records office on safe storage of documents, archive relevant items after 5 years both paper and online	A
34	Lack of defined objectives or strategy	Resources not directed Poor performance Risks not base lined	Council	1	2	2	Council to work on compiling a 3 to 5-year plan to assist in identifying projects and work to be completed	A
Finance								
35	Improper contracting procedures	Possible losses Poor levels of service Possible increase in costs	Clerk RFO	1	4	4	Clerk / RFO to ensure latest 'Model' is adopted, separate Financial Regulations are maintained, Clerk / RFO is adequately trained	A
36	Banking	Misappropriation of Council funds Financial Loss	Public Service	1	2	2	All banking arrangements and changes to banking services approved by the Council and recorded in the minutes, invoices should be paid by BACS where possible, or	A

							cheque, Cheques to be signed at Council meetings unless a deadline will be missed, Two signatures needed for BACS and Cheques and stubs to be initialled, Monthly bank reconciliations of all accounts to be completed by RFO and report sent to all Councillors via email, Annual scrutiny of all financial records by RFO and Internal Auditor, If over £25K, External Audit must be completed, any changes in banking are recorded in writing and kept permanently on file, AGAR to be published on website and Notice Board annually	
37	Income – ensuring all requirements are met under customs & excise regulations	Unable to fulfil responsibilities	Public Service	1	2	2	Ensure Council understands and complies with current VAT legislation	A
38	Orders for work, goods, and services Monitoring of performance against standards under partnership agreements	Unable to fulfil responsibilities	Public Service	1	2	2	Reviewed at Internal Audit	A
39	Inadequate Insurance	Balance of costs to be found	RFO Clerk	1	4	4	Council to review annually or if circumstances change	A
40	Failure to calculate / submit precept on time	Inadequate resources to meet commitments Cost of re-billing	RFO Clerk	1	4	4	RFO / Clerk to respond to WBC notices, add to budget meeting agenda and agree as full Council	A
41	Inadequate annual precept and unsound budget	Inadequate resources to meet commitments	Council RFO Clerk	1	4	4	RFO / Clerk and Council to build sound budget, using risk register, asset register and known commitments. Council	A

							to consider reserves and build into Financial Regulations	
42	Failure to account for and recover VAT	Wasted resources	RFO Clerk	1	4	4	Clerk to ensure all VAT numbers are recorded on the Alpha Software, Annual VAT claim on 31 st March each year (unless large purchases have generated a higher claim of VAT), checked during Internal and External Audit	A
43	Failure to stay within agreed budgets	Inadequate control Potential wasted resources	Council RFO Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk to review monthly the budget is on track, monitor reserves and mitigate impact of loss	A
44	Holding excessive or inadequate reserves	Auditors Report Poor use of resources Inability to meet commitments	Council	2	4	8	Clerk / RFO to review as part of budgeting, maintain 100% of annual net expenditure in general reserves (small council limit), align reserves with projects in the 3 to 5-year plan and adjust at full council meeting and record in the minutes	A
45	Fraud by Clerk or RFO	Reputation Costs Litigation	Clerk RFO	1	4	4	Adequate internal audit, regular reporting to Councillors, control systems in place to monitor expenditure	A
46	Fraud by Councillors	Reputation Costs Litigation	Clerk RFO	1	4	4	Adequate internal audit, regular reporting to Councillors, control systems in place to monitor expenditure	A
47	Inadequate awareness of relevant legislation	Failure to comply	Clerk RFO Council	2	4	8	Maintain membership to NALC / BALC / HALC / SLCC, Clerk / RFO to train / qualify	A
48	Failure to comply with relevant legislation	Litigation Costs Reputation damage	Clerk RFO Council	2	4	8	Maintain membership to NALC / BALC / HALC / SLCC, Clerk / RFO to train / qualify, work with internal and external auditors	A
49	Failure to maintain fixed asset register	Improper control Poor Auditors Report	Clerk RFO	1	2	2	Reviewed regularly, Council review at meetings, Internal / External Audit review	A

50	Improper financial records	Potential for wasted resources	Clerk RFO	1	2	2	Internal / External Audit Report	A
51	HMRC Costs not met	Costs Litigation	Clerk RFO	1	4	4	Calculated quarterly by Autela Payroll Services, payment is made via BACS at same time as Clerk salary	A
52	S137 Money	Inappropriate use Loss of resources	Parishioners	1	2	2	Clerk to check the S137 figure annually and calculate total amount using current electoral register, budget amount each year based on calculation	A
GDPR								
53	Personal Data	Litigation Costs / fines Reputation damage Non-compliance	Parishioners Council Clerk RFO	4	4	16	All data is saved using Google Drive, accessed from Clerk Laptop, when not in use laptop is kept locked in fireproof cabinet, laptop is pin protected, no unauthorised access allowed, laptop has firewall, anti-virus software and regular updates, all paper copies of files are stored in locked filing cabinet in Clerk's home, no personal data is recorded in any Council documents in the public domain unless permission has been given	A
54	Sharing of Data	Litigation Costs / Fines Non-compliance Data falling into hands of third party Reputation damage	Parishioners Council Clerk RFO	4	4	16	Personal data is not to be shared unless written permission is sought, and an agreement is reached with the organisation to protect the data once passed to them.	A
55	Hard copies of data	As above	As above	4	4	16	Retention of Documents Policy, locked filing cabinet	A
56	Electronic Data	Theft of equipment Fire / Water / Accidental damage	Parishioners Council Clerk RFO	4	4	16	Clerk Laptop is Pin protected, stored in locked cabinet when not in use, covered under insurance, all data stored on Google Drive only	A

57	Email Security	Non-compliance Third Party Access Litigation Costs / Damages	Council Clerk RFO	4	4	16	All email accounts to be password protected, all Councillors to have a @aldworth-pc.go.uk email account rather than personal email, personal account users sign form to allow access should an investigation be needed, use bcc when sending emails to large databases, do not forward emails from members of public, copy and paste relevant information into separate email, do not keep emails longer than necessary when issue dealt with	A
58	Internet Security	Unauthorised access to laptop or files	Clerk RFO Council	4	4	16	Laptop is pin protected and stored in locked cupboard, anti-virus, firewall and updates are actioned regularly	A
Dog Waste Bins								
59	Provision of Bin	Fly-tipping Local Eyesore Attracting unwanted wildlife	Clerk	1	2	2	Check on emptying schedule regularly with Triangle, pay fee quarterly to Triangle.	A
Planning								
60	Parish Observation Sheet / Planning Portal Consultee In-Tray	Not getting comments to WBC in time	Parishioners	1	2	2	Planning Meetings to be arranged ad-hoc if deadline for comments does not fall before a meeting, ensure agenda is widely published to allow all parishioners to attend, ensure comments are returned before the deadline	A
Playground								
61	Insurance	Risk of Injury Risk of Vandalism	Parishioners Council	8	4	32	Clerk / RFO to ensure adequate insurance is in place annually to cover the Council	A
62	Complaints / Injuries	Risk of Injury Litigation	Parishioners Council	8	4	32	Clerk to maintain record of complaints and injuries and	A

							how they were dealt with, check up on equipment to ensure compliance with standards	
63	Inspections	Risk of Injury Non-compliance Litigation	Parishioners Council	8	4	32	Annual inspection to be carried out by RoSPA, clerk to arrange each year, repairs completed post inspection. Clerk to carry out requests for repair / issues, new play equipment to have a post installation inspection carried out before use	A
64	Budget	Costs Losses Litigation	Council RFO	6	4	24	Maintain ear marked reserves for the annual inspection and repairs annually during budget and project planning	A
65	Fencing & Signage	Trips and Falls Vandalism Risk of Injury Litigation	Parishioners Council	2	4	8	Regularly inspect fencing and signage.	A
Website								
66	Failure of Website	No communication with Parishioners Lack of confidence	Parishioners Council	1	4	4	Clerk to maintain updates to software and plugins, check webmaster has adequate back up plans annually	A
67	Content	Inaccurate information Out of date information Reputation damage Litigation	Council	1	2	2	Clerk to regularly update, delete, amend, add relevant content, in line with legislation, secure copywrite for photographs and GDPR compliance with any personal data	A
68	Budget	Loss of website Additional costs / expenditure	Clerk RFO	1	2	2	Ensure all costs relating to the website are factored into the annual budget and provisions are made	A
69	Tools for maintaining the website	Loss of website Additional costs / expenditure	Clerk RFO	1	2	2	Ensure webmaster uses industry standard software, Clerk received full training and a support plan is in place, clear brand identification is in	A

							place and is professional and well maintained	
70	Dependence on Individual	Loss of website Lack of communication with Parishioners Additional costs / expenditure	Clerk RFO	1	4	4	The Clerk has sole responsibility for maintaining the website, regular training, one other Councillor should know how to access back end system for continuity should Clerk be unavailable, guidebook available	A
71	Freedom of Information	Non-compliance Legislation issues Litigation	Clerk RFO	1	2	2	Webmaster abides by Act as adopted by Council in March 2021 and reviewed regularly	A
72	Data Protection	Non-compliance Legislation issues Litigation	Clerk RFO	1	2	2	Webmaster abides by Act	A
73	Lack of Motivation	Out of date website Non-compliance	Council	1	2	2	Council to be aware the Clerk is sole manager of website and time must be allocated during working week to maintain the website to acceptable standards	A
Other items at risk								
74	Noticeboard	Cost of repair / replace Risk of injury Vandalism	Parishioners Council	1	2	2	Clerk to ensure Notice Board is well maintained, up to date, in good working order and does not present a risk to anyone, ensure added to insurance and Public Liability insurance, reserves for repair / replace	T
75	Bench	Cost of repair / replace Risk of Injury Vandalism	Parishioners Council	2	4	8	Check on suitability of use and repair / replace as necessary, insurance and Public Liability insurance up to date, Clerk to ensure reserves are in place to cover repairs	T
76	Defibrillator	Cost of maintenance / repair / Vandalism	Parishioners Council	8	4	32	The defibrillator may need to be used and may not be successful in saving a life = 32 Guardians regularly check device health and is annually supported.	A

Results Key: **T** = Trivial Risk **A** = Adequately Controlled Risk **N** = Not Adequately Controlled **U** = Unable to Decide (more info needed)
Risk Assessment carried out by: F.Bates Position Clerk & RFO Date: 30th May 2024

Risk Assessment Validated by members of Aldworth Parish Council at the meeting dated 6th May 2025

Risk Assessment Scoring Matrix

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Likelihood	Severity					
	Multiple Death (10)	Single Death (8)	Major Injury (6)	Lost Time Injury (4)	Minor Injury (2)	Delay (1)
Certain (10)	100	80	60	40	20	10
Very Likely (8)	80	64	48	32	16	8
Likely (6)	60	48	36	24	12	6
May Happen (4)	40	32	24	16	8	4
Unlikely (2)	20	16	12	8	4	2
Very Unlikely (1)	10	8	6	4	2	1
Score	Priority	Action				
1 – 16	LOW	Action is required to reduce the risk, although low priority				
17 – 36	MEDIUM	Action required to control. Interim measures may be necessary in the short term				
37 – 100	HIGH	Action required urgently to control risks, unacceptable				