

Woolhope Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Woolhope Parish Council Held on Tuesday 24th June 2025 7.00pm at Woolhope Village Hall

Present: Cllr. M. Slocombe - Chairman
Cllr. P. Hawkins
Cllr. M. Windham
Cllr. S. Crozier
Cllr. L. Mair
Cllr. R. Rolt

In attendance: Nick Richmond-Clerk, Ward Councillor Barry Durkin and 6 members of the public.

1. **To receive apologies, declarations of interest and requests for dispensation.**
Apologies were received from Cllrs May and Scott. No written requests for dispensation were received and no declaration of interests made.
3. **Open forum. To consider the views of local residents on parish matters.**
Cllr Slocombe asked if any members of the public wished to speak. Hannah Dale of Canwood Gallery brought up the proposed Hills Ford Rally so Cllr Slocombe suggested that agenda item 6b be taken now and asked Cllr Durkin if he had any update on a decision to approve the road closures. Cllr Durkin said that the matter was still being considered and a decision would be made shortly which would be immediately communicated to all concerned parties. He said he was well aware of the issues raised by Canwood Gallery. Hannah Dale said that her e-mail to the rally liaison officer outlining the issues with their proposed arrangements for the day of 11th June had not been answered. Peter Randall commented that crows in the village were causing damage and attacking livestock and buzzards but the noise was less than that created by the car rally. Barbara Williams said that she had attended the meeting to talk about Broadmoor Common. Cllr Slocombe then advised the meeting due to some issues that had occurred he had spoken to HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils) and it had been agreed not to discuss them at this meeting but invite all parties to a meeting at the HALC offices. Barbara Williams advised that the far end of the common was overrun with brambles and nettles which need cutting back.
2. **Ward Councillors Report.**
The report had been circulated. Cllr Durkin went through his report mentioning the Hereford bypass the first phase of which is at a planning stage with a start expected in the latter part of 2026. Herefordshire Council accounts were being finalised by the end of June with a £500k underspend. Selection of a new public realm contractor is underway and Balfour Beatty have not applied. He asked that people gave their opinions to the Local Transport Plan.
4. **Meetings:**
The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 27th May 2025 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
5. **Planning Matters**
a) No new planning applications were received.

 22.7.25

b) The following decision was noted:

250924 The Old Vicarage – Conversion of detached garage into studio with small extension – Approved with conditions.

6. Highways Matters

a) To consider any new highways issues for reporting to Balfour Beatty.

The clerk advised that although Scar Lane was not in the list of roads reported to Herefordshire Council this might be just a recording oversight, but he will take some new pictures of the lane and report it as in urgent need of resurfacing the whole lane.

b) To receive an update on the Hills Ford Motor Rally.

Cllr Hawkins commented that it was important to plan and cordon off areas where spectators were not allowed. Cllr Slocombe said that local groups be involved in order to make the most of the fundraising opportunity.

c) Village signs.

The clerk advised that Herefordshire Council had the missing signs on their list of jobs and are possibly waiting until they have enough for a bulk order.

7. Financial Matters

a) The following payments were authorised:

£ 540.13 Clerk salary June 2025

£ 135.00 Clerk tax June 2025.

£ 240.60 Manutan Ltd – two salt bins

b) To receive the internal audit and sign the AGAR report.

The clerk outlined his issues with the internal audit and said he would write notes explaining those differences which will be published on the website along with all the AGAR documents. However this has influenced his decision to resign as clerk. Despite the comments in the internal audit the clerk advised that the accounts were accurate, had been presented regularly to parish council and bank reconciliations regularly signed by a councillor and on that basis asked that the Annual Governance Statements be signed such that they can be published on the council website ahead of the 1st July deadline. A vote of confidence in the work of the clerk was unanimously passed and the Chairman and Clerk signed the forms.

c) To agree the dates for the notice of public rights to examine the 2024-25 accounts.

The clerk advised that the accounts must be made available for the public to examine for a 30 working day period which must include the first two weeks of July. He proposed that the dates for examination be 30th June to 8th August and that the notice will be published on 27th June. Councillors agreed these dates.

8. Neighbourhood Development Plan.

To consider the external reviewer.

Cllr Rolt had looked at the credentials of the three candidates and proposed that the most experienced and suitable candidate was Edward Cousins. Council voted to approve the appointment of Edward Cousins and Cllr Rolt and the Clerk are to advise Herefordshire Council of the decision.

9. Broadmoor Common

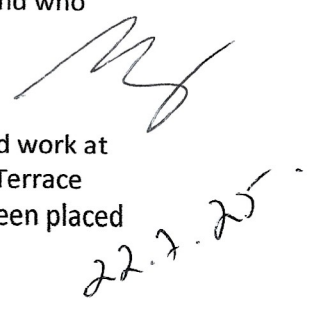
To consider the working of the Broadmoor Common Steering Group.

Cllr Windham advised that the steering group urgently needed someone to run it and it was likely that many would leave the group. Cllr Slocombe said he had someone in mind who had a similar background and experience to Mark July.

10. Lengthsman.

To consider new parish lengthsman work.

The clerk reported that the lengthsman has carried out the drainage grant funded work at Lower Buckenhill near Pyckle Cottage and carried out the parish funded work at Terrace Hall. It was reported that spoil from the ditch clearing opposite Court Farm had been placed



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on the verge, and it was agreed to ask Terry Griffiths to remove the spoil from the verge so that the verge could be maintained by verge cutting when necessary. A discussion was held concerning the land at the front of Stone House/Woolhope Manor which has been left overgrown and unsightly. The ground, although not owned by the resident had been well looked after by a previous owner, and it was decided to approach the owners to see if they will mow it and keep it tidy or if they prefer the stones removed and to turn it into a parking area.

11. Footpaths.

To consider any footpaths issues.

Cllr Hawkins reported on a PROW scheme to share equipment between councils such as brush cutters that would benefit all councils.

12. To consider the problem of crows in the village.

Cllr Slocombe suggested that one solution would be to destroy the nests at an appropriate time such that the birds go elsewhere reducing noise in the village. A general licence to control numbers exists and council will consider humane means of control which it hopes are suggested by a contact at Slimbridge. Shooting would be a last resort but is permitted provided records are kept of the numbers are kept.

13. Correspondence.

No new correspondence was received.

14. To consider further work on the wall at the Church.

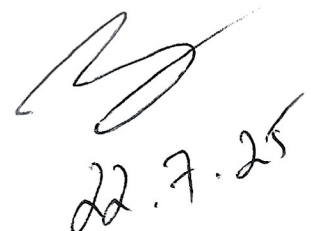
Initial spraying of the ivy had been effective but more work is required. Removal of the pile of waste from clearing the church wall is to be arranged by Councillor Crozier and a small working group before the waste becomes a fire hazard

15. Date, time and venue of next meeting and items for the next agenda.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 22nd July 7.00pm at Woolhope Village Hall.

Clerk - Nick Richmond

27th June 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the date '22.7.25' written in a similar cursive style.