

Woolhope Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Woolhope Parish Council Held on Tuesday 23rd September 2025 7.00pm at Woolhope Village Hall

Present: Cllr. M. Slocombe - Chairman
Cllr. M. Windham
Cllr. L. Mair
Cllr. A. May
Cllr. R. Rolt

In attendance: Nick Richmond-Clerk, Ward Councillor Barry Durkin and 4 members of the public.

1. **To receive apologies, declarations of interest and requests for dispensation.**
Apologies were received from Cllrs Hawkins and Crozier. No written requests for dispensation were received and no declarations 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. The first to speak was Steven Hunt who expressed his concern over the lack of water to residents near Penteloe Brook following what appeared to be the diversion of the water to Canwood. Will Smith spoke on the same issue advising that meetings had been held with Herefordshire Council and that possible action was being considered against Canwood Gallery under both the Land Drainage Act and concerning a breach of riparian duties to maintain existing river flow, in order to restore the previous brook water supply to residents. Will to forward information to Cllr Durkin and the parish clerk that includes evidence of the previous flow of water. Sally Webster spoke to outline activities undertaken on Broadmoor Common including seed harvesting. She advised that the north side of the common had been flailed an activity not covered by the management plan and sought permission from parish council to employ a tractor driver to use the Ryetec machine to collect all the cuttings. Parish Council voted to approve the contracting of the tractor driver Sally to provide the clerk with his details to whom he will issue a works order. She raised the question of the running of the steering group following the meeting at HALC, and it was agreed that the clerk will contact Lynda Wilcox to set up a meeting for councillors. Sally also wished to discuss the removal of the posts from near the road. She asserted that council had been aware of the positioning of the posts and had not agreed to the removal of those leading to the road. Cllr Slocombe said that although not minuted council had agreed to their removal and that the matter was now closed. Sally continued to voice vociferous disagreement and Cllr Slocombe as Chairman of the meeting asked her to be silent. As Sally refused to comply Cllr Slocombe then asked her to leave the meeting which she also chose to ignore, but made no further comment. Angela Eaton read out a letter addressed to Cllr Slocombe outlining their decision that they are no longer able to maintain the grass verges outside Woolhope Manor that appear to be the property of Herefordshire Council. It was decided to instruct the parish lengthsman to scrape an area of mud from the section and employ the gardener who has worked on the coronation garden to strim the grass area.
2. **Ward Councillors Report.**
Cllr Durkin reported that work had started on the relief road from the Abergavenny road to

Rotherwas, and that Brookend St in Ross was to be resurfaced. His report contained details of grant funding for bio-diversity and information on the recent GCSE results which were 'up'.

4. Meetings:

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 22nd July 2025 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

5. To consider the adoption of revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations based upon models received from NALC/HALC.

The clerk advised that both the existing and revised standing orders contained no clause allowing for a secret ballot of councillors where two parishioners attended a meeting for co-option for one position, so as such a co-option was not feasible and he had removed it from the agenda on the advice of HALC. Lynda Wilcox is to provide a wording for an addition to the standing orders prior to the next meeting.

6. Planning Matters

No new applications were received.

The following decisions were noted:

P240886 – Land at Fairlea – Replacement dwelling Approved with Conditions

P242950 – Ag building near Little Canwood – siting of caravan within existing barn – Approved with Conditions.

7. Highways Matters

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

Cllr Windham expressed concern that the work being started on the Sollers Hope road would not extend to resurfacing sections that were currently devoid of any surface. Given that the road closure was for a period of three weeks the meeting felt we should wait to see what was achieved before commenting further. Cllr May reported that some holes had already appeared in the new road surface on the road to Fownhope. Cllr Durkin requested information on the location of the holes.

b) Village signs.

The clerk will ask Herefordshire Council where they are with these reported missing signs and advise Cllr Durkin.

8. Financial Matters

a) The following payments were authorised:

£ 540.13 Clerk salary Aug 2025

£ 135.00 Clerk tax Aug 2025.

£ 540.13 Clerk salary Sept 2025

£ 135.00 Clerk tax Sept 2025

£ 107.50 M Llewellyn – coronation garden work.

b) The 1st September 2025 accounts were noted. The clerk commented that £2,700 had been received from Herefordshire Council funds reclaimed under the 2024-25 Drainage Grant. He also noted that council had included expenditure of £8k on the wall at the Church but so far nothing had been spent.

9. Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The clerk advised that Herefordshire Council had asked if parish council were prepared to initially cover the cost of the NDP examiner (daily rate £750 potential total cost £6 – 8k) and the cost of the referendum £3-4k. Council considers costs of this magnitude unacceptable so the clerk is to respond to Herefordshire Council asking if it can seek competitive quotations from a range of external examiners and if there is a way of reducing the cost of the referendum to a minimum.

10. Broadmoor Common

28.10. 25

10.1 To consider the working of the Broadmoor Common Steering Group.
Covered under agenda item 3.

10.2 To consider the potential donation of £ 2,500 from Paul and Liz Rogers in connection with their easement agreement with Herefordshire Council.

Councillors felt somewhat uneasy about such a large donation, but instructed the clerk to advise the Rogers that the donation would be gratefully accepted, and to ask them if they could identify a project that the funds could be spent on.

11. Lengthsman.

The clerk advised that he has received quotations from Terry Griffiths that he will use to submit an application for the 2025-26 Drainage Grant. He will chase the lengthsman to install the grit bins purchased and issue a works order to remove the spoil at Court Farm. The clerk will speak to the lengthsman about scaping the mud from the wall at Woolhope Manor (Stone Barn ?) and clearing a ditch near Shane Powells house between the what three words locations highbrow.manage.scoping and plantings.disposing.cakes and discuss with the landowner Mark O'Brien.

12. Footpaths.

Cllr Hawkins being away footpaths will be considered at the next meeting. The clerk had advised that Terry Griffiths told him that two stiles had been replaced by gates at the wrong location albeit near the correct location, and it was noted that the gates looked good.

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

Cllr Slocombe reported that this was in hand and could be removed from the agenda.

14. Correspondence.

The correspondence was covered under agenda item 3.

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

Cllr Crozier being away this matter was held over to the next meeting.

16. To discuss the resignation of the Clerk.

A replacement clerk not having come forward the clerk withdrew his resignation on the understanding that council would use the accountant (JD Accounting) used by Walford and Weston under Penyard parish councils for next years internal audit. This was agreed providing that this was a properly qualified accountant which the clerk confirmed. In addition the clerk asked for an increase in salary following the recent pay agreement notified by HALC. It was agreed to increase the clerk salary from SL17 £ 15.58 hourly to SL20 £ 16.90 hourly. The clerk will prepare a letter to Lloyds Bank to set up the revised payments.

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

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 28th October 7.00pm at Woolhope Village Hall.

Clerk - Nick Richmond
25th September 2025

28.10.25