

Pitcombe Parish Council.

Minutes of the Pitcombe Parish Council meeting held on 9th April 2025

Present Councillors Richard Waller, Neville Hartnell, Mark Hutton, Emma Craigie, Annette Hobhouse, Mark Groom and Rob Shylan. County Councillor Lucy Trimnell. (Later)

2025.31 Apologies, Anne Tuck, Lucie Reader and Tom Power (County Councillor)

In attendance One member of the public.

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

Mark Tilley informed the meeting that he is in the process of selling some land to Hadspen Village Hall and anticipates it will conclude in the next month or so.

2025.32 Declaration of Interests. Cllr Hobhouse declared that her husband is on the board of Bruton School for Girls.

2025.33 Minutes of the Last Meeting – Amendments required as follows ;

Cllr Craigie

Drains and resurfacing should be bend on A371 Hadspen Barn to Grove Farm (not Grove Cross)

Yarlington - not as written

Planning applications should contain structural mitigation e.g flooding (planning i)

Nicky Bolton rather than Mrs Hutton (Council Matters a)

Lime Kiln Lane - not as written (iv Footpaths)

Selling correction required on Finance c. allowed?

2025.34 Matters Arising. Still no contact from Nathan at Keir.

Richard has arranged a meeting with a PCSO on April 23rd at 15.15. Meet at Elm field to discuss inappropriate parking and traffic concerns around Sexeys School. Annette and Neville will also attend. Richard has also written to the headteacher to raise the issue.

To receive Reports. None Raised, as no County Councillors in attendance at that time.

2025.35 i. Planning. No new applications. It appears that Somerset Council has responded (on the planning portal) to comments made by the parish council regarding application 25/00384/FUL – Shatwell Yard

iv. Footpaths. Rob Shylan still plans to inspect Lancombe Lane and give feedback. PC not aware of any other issues (in Susan Fones' absence)

v. Temporary Road Closures. None to discuss

2025.36 Correspondence. Somerset Day. It was noted that all activities are too far away geographically for anyone in the parish to participate.

2025.37 Finance. Cheque to the amount of £170.87, as affiliation fee to SALC (Somerset Association of Local Councils) agreed.

Invoice from SALC to the amount of £25.00(for councillor training, to be contested (it is understood it was for scheduled training for Emma Craigie, but she never received the link to join the online meeting)

Brief discussion of financial report took place. The clerk is currently on leave and this month's report had not been able to be updated before their leave.

Councillors still need to know the outcome of the clerks contact with PKF Littlejohn, as discussed at the meeting in March. Richard will consider approaching Ewan Jones at SALC for advice.

2025.38

a)Flooding. Report received from Lucie Reader prior to the meeting, which was much appreciated. We need to continue to raise the risks around Pitcombe with the relevant authorities. Annette has heard nothing back from the LLFA, despite numerous attempts to engage them, and the support of Tom Power. She now has the direct contact details of Mike Stanstead, whom she will approach. A discussion took place which included responsibilities to maintain, riparian responsibilities etc. Identifying full ownership of the flood relief pond in Hadspen. Somerset County Council were owners of initial and original documents, so must have an interest.

Rob had briefly met with the new owners of the land where the flood relief pond is and a brief discussion was held about the pond. Perhaps the Environment Agency need to be consulted, and a permit sought before attending to it.

Annette wondered, if over time it could be taken on as a community asset, through due process.

Annette has sent an article to Pitcombe News about Natural Flood Management.

2025.39 County Councillors report. Lucy informed us that the LCN was circulating an email, requested by Horsington Parish Council who were seeking to understand their responsibilities and share contractors for the maintenance of their village pond/streams.

Lucy had previously circulated an email regarding additional money which may be available for road surfacing, and she encouraged us to inform her of local issues. She understood from Somerset Council that there are no roads in Bruton and Wincanton area which are scheduled for major maintenance work in the coming financial year.

A discussion took place regarding the road surface just below Manor Farm in Cole, which had been reported and briefly attended to recently by Somerset Highways recently. The outcome of decision making is unknown at this time.

Lucy informed us that John Nicholson is moving areas within Somerset Council. From the 1st May 2025 Tracy Harris will become the Assistant Highways Manager who covers our area.

Pitcombe Bridge. Lucy has not been contacted by anyone at Somerset Council regarding progress on the bridge. Residents report seeing "officials "looking at the bridge. Lucy will chase for information.

Finger Post – Stutters Hill. Damaged by contractors some months ago (whilst undertaking hedge trimming), who (via John Nicolson) have agreed to repair, but not yet started the work. Lucy will chase and ask Anne Tuck clerk to follow up as well.

Those present asked Lucy if she could follow up why the repairs to the road between Hadspen and Cole are still not concluded, despite being ongoing for at least 5 years. Residents observe that the site is visited/inspected, usually weekly by highways, who appear to check and ensure road signs are

in place, but nothing else happens. It is understood that there is an issue about a badger crossing constructed under the road. Lucy will contact John Nicholson and wondered if what three words location was available.

2025. 40 Council Matters.

a) Bleed Kits. Following an article in a recent Neighbourhood Watch newsletter, a wide-ranging discussion took place as to if these would be useful to obtain for the use of the community in an emergency. After discussing the pros and cons, it was decided not to pursue the matter at this time.

b) Caravan – Stutters Hill. The caravan in the field, just beyond mill lane appears to be deteriorating, with no indication of activity on the site by the owners of the land following the refusal of a planning application in October 2018. This will need reporting to an enforcement officer at Somerset Council, to address. Anne Tuck to be asked to do this, with reference back to the original planning notice, which is likely to be 18/01820/OUT

c) Online banking with Barclays. SALC had given feedback regarding procedures which should be followed. This is in line with the process of the Parish Council, so it was agreed to proceed.

d) Meeting with Public – Parish Plan. Very well attended, with up to 6 people expressing an interest in meeting again to formulate a process to refresh the Parish Plan, as almost those who attended believed there was a need to do so, to preserve the identity of the Parish and community. Richard will approach those who expressed interest in proceeding to identify how they might wish to progress. Mark Hutton has offered to be a point of contact, if this group would find it useful. Currently there is no money set aside by the parish council for the development of this project, but this doesn't mean the PC can't be approached if relevant in the future.

e) Phone box in Pitcombe – Jess Bell, who lives opposite the phone box has agreed to paint and refresh it. Cost for materials and delivery approximately £153.00. PC agreed to fund. Emma will contact Anne Tuck to arrange order and delivery (as VAT can be claimed back if PC orders it)

f) The Parish Council meeting in May needs to be preceded by the Annual Parish Council Meeting. At least 7 days' notice needs to be given to the community.

Richard announced his intention to stand down as chair and as a councillor at the next parish meeting. He has served on the parish council for over 12 years and feels it is time for someone else to have a chance. The process for a new chair and a vice chair will have to commence at the May parish council meeting. Richard will write an article for Pitcombe News.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Date of the next meeting Annual Parish Meeting 13th May 2026 at 7.30pm followed by the Parish Council Meeting