

# BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

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## You are Summoned to the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council to be held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7.30pm in the Old School, Batcombe

*Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.*

### Agenda

**1. Apologies and Acceptance of Reasons for Absence**

*This is necessary as any member who is absent for six months, without the Council accepting their reasons for absence, automatically loses their seat on the Council.*

**2. Declarations of Interest**

*It is the Councillors' responsibility to declare any interests they may have in any item on the Agenda. If you are uncertain, please ask the Clerk before the meeting.*

**3. Public Participation – Open village meeting for fifteen minutes for any member of the public to raise any issue relevant to Batcombe Parish**

*The Chair can invite members of the public to speak at this or at any other appropriate point in the meeting.*

**4. Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023** to be agreed and signed.  
*Enclosed/attached.*

**5. Matters Arising** – information updates only.

*Allotments – There has been no response from two allotment holders, renting three allotments. A reminder will be sent in the New Year, but is likely that there will be at least one vacancy to add to the one already existing. Gary Butler who used to cut the allotment hedge for us has retired so we need an alternative hedge cutter for the inside of the hedge.*

**6. Somerset Councillors' Reports**

*An opportunity for the Somerset Councillors to report in person or in writing.*

**7. Shepton Local Community Network Meeting**

*The next meeting of the Shepton Local Community Network will take place on Thursday January 11<sup>th</sup> at Shape Mendip. Clare Kingston has volunteered to attend the next meeting and Jayne Cox the following one. Although members of the public can attend the meeting, it should be noted that the core membership of the LCN consists of one representative from each parish council. The Agenda for the LCN meeting has been distributed to Councillors and this is an opportunity to consider the Parish Council's view on items to be discussed at that meeting. The main items for this meeting are the Somerset Council's financial position and Highways and Transport issues.*

## 8. Footpaths and Highways

*Nothing to report.*

## 9. Playground - Maintenance Report

*As authorised at the last meeting the contract for the supply of electricity to the Playing Field has been renewed with SSE for a year from February 1<sup>st</sup> 2024. The unit price has been reduced further below the value quoted to 26.591 p/kWh. Unfortunately, the quarterly charge remains as quoted at £57.58.*

*Kevin Gale did not make any cuts of the grass in November due to a combination of wet weather and a broken foot. He has offered to make any extra cut during the winter if it is required and has quoted the same price as last year to cut the grass in the Playing Field and around the War Memorial - £90 a cut once a fortnight.*

*There is an issue with the litter bin outside the Playing Field. The problem appears to be someone dumping rubbish in the bin which means it is regularly overflowing – rather than a problem with the weekly collection.*

## 10. Planning Applications

Planning Application No: 2023/2342/FUL Conversion of agricultural building to residential dwellinghouse, conversion of agricultural building to ancillary accommodation, conversion and minor works to redundant agricultural buildings to form incidental outbuildings (garaging, garden store, home office and utility), extension of the approved residential curtilage and formation of new access track to link existing access provision to an existing residential entrance.

Barns at Valley View Farm, Hincombe Hill, Batcombe. Full Application.

*The barns concerned are those around a courtyard at the end of the track from Hincombe Hill (i.e. not the ones by the Hincombe Hill entrance to Valley View Farm). It should be noted that the applicant already has prior approval for the conversion of the southern barn to a two storey dwelling house granted in January 2022 (Ref: 2021/2806/PAA). The Parish Council is not consulted on applications for prior approval for a proposed change of use of an agricultural building to a dwelling house (Class C3) under The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), Part 3, Class Q and there are only a limited number of reasons for which the Local Planning Authority can refuse permission.*

*The new application seeks permission to convert the northern barn to ancillary accommodation with two additional bedrooms and bathrooms and to convert the eastern barns to a utility room, garage, store and home office. It is also proposed to extend the residential curtilage and provide a new access track. The current residential curtilage is the immediate area around the southern barn only. It is proposed to extend this to cover all the courtyard and a garden to the southwest of the main dwelling. The new access track would run to the northwest of the bungalow and barns at the entrance to Valley View Farm (the current access track runs to the southeast of these buildings). Other changes are the demolition of a “modern” building between the proposed garage and ancillary accommodation and changes to the design for the main dwelling.*

*Full details of the application can be found on the planning website at [2023/2342/FUL | Conversion of agricultural building to residential dwellinghouse, conversion of agricultural building to ancillary accommodation, conversion and minor works to redundant agricultural buildings to form incidental outbuildings \(garaging, garden store, home office and utility\), extension of the approved residential curtilage and formation of new access track to link existing access provision to an existing residential entrance. | Barn At Valley View Farm Hincombe Hill To Linch Lane Batcombe Shepton Mallet Somerset \(mendip.gov.uk\)](#) Those with a paper copy of these notes can go to the planning website at <https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/> and enter the application reference in the search engine.*

*The Parish Council has an extension to consider the application at its January meeting but local residents should be aware that the closing date for comments is January 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

## **Planning Appeal –**

Application No: 2023/0123/PAA Prior Approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3) and for associated operational development.

Land at 367699 137338 Copplesbury Lane, Milton Clevedon.

*The appeal will be decided on the basis of an exchange of written statements. If the Parish Council wishes to make a representation to the Planning Inspector, we have until January 15<sup>th</sup> to do so.*

*As noted above the Parish Council is not consulted on applications for prior approval for a proposed change of use of an agricultural building to a dwelling house (Class C3) under The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), Part 3, Class Q. The application for prior approval was made in January last year and the agricultural building in question is a barn located at the far end of the field opposite the entrance to Higher Greenscombe off the lane that runs from the Hedgestocks crossroads to Creech Hill. Copplesbury Lane is the lane the other side of the Hedgestocks crossroads. While Higher Greenscombe is in Milton Clevedon the field on the opposite side of the lane is in Batcombe and so we have been informed of the appeal against the decision made by Mendip District Council in March last year to refuse the prior approval.*

*The following reasons were given for refusing prior approval by Mendip District Council which was the Local Planning Authority at the time: In the view of the Local Planning Authority the application for the conversion of the existing agricultural building is not considered to represent permitted development under Class Q as the proposed schedule of works to convert the existing building would exceed the allowable operations as set out at part Q1(i). Furthermore, as a fall back the applicant is relying on the works to the building as approved under LPA case ref: 2021/2377/FUL. However, in the view of the LPA this would mean that the application would not be permitted development as it would not comply with the requirements of part Q1 A (iii). As such the development proposed does not comply with The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), Part 3, Class Q, Q.1, (a) and (i). As such, the proposal would not be permitted development and would require planning permission.*

*The appeal is being made on the basis that the proposal is permitted development under the legislation mentioned above. The main issue would seem to be whether the proposed works are a conversion or a rebuild. Extensive works are allowed to convert an agricultural building to a dwelling house but the District Council's view was that the state of the barn means that the works are essentially a rebuild which is not permitted development. The District Council also felt that the applicant was relying on the planning permission granted in 2021 for a concrete pad and cladding to the barn but this could not be considered as it had not been in place for at least ten years.*

*Full details of the original application, the case officer's report, the District Council's decision and the appeal papers can be found on the planning website at [2023/0123/PAA | Prior Approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse \(Class C3\) and for associated operational development. | Land At 367699 137338 Copplesbury Lane Milton Clevedon Shepton Mallet Somerset \(mendip.gov.uk\)](https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/) Those with a paper copy of these notes can go to the planning website at <https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/> and enter the application reference in the search engine.*

**Planning Application Updates.** *Nothing to report.*

## **11. Budget and Precept for Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

*A budget for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 was enclosed with November's Agenda. See November's Agenda notes for details of the budget. An amended budget was enclosed with the December Agenda taking into account the increase in the Clerk's salary, a revised estimate of the cost of the electricity supply to the Playing Field, increased grants and the refurbishment of the Westcombe notice board. The Council approved the budget in principle at the December meeting with an unchanged precept of £9,925.*

*A final decision on the precept was deferred in the hope that the tax base for 2024/25 would be known at this meeting so that the impact of the precept on Council Tax could be taken into account – and if necessary the precept could be adjusted so that there would be no increase to the Council Tax resulting from the precept. [The tax base is the number of Band D equivalent properties in Batcombe when taking into account the number of empty properties, various discounts (including 25% for single people) and the weighting of the different bands above and below Band D.]*

*Batcombe's tax base for 2024/25 is 212.78 which is slightly higher than the tax base for 2023/24 which is 209.60. A higher tax base means each household pays less Council Tax for the same precept (assuming any discounts have not changed). If the Parish Council keeps the precept unchanged at £9,925 the Council Tax for a Band D property (with no discounts) resulting from the Parish Council's precept will be reduced from £47.35 to £46.64 – a reduction of 71p or 1.5%.*

**12. Authorisation of Payment**

None.

**13. Other Business** – matters of information only.

*Nothing to report.*

**14. Date of Next Meeting** - Wednesday February 7<sup>th</sup> 2024 at 7.30pm in the Old School.

*Rob Sage*

Rob Sage – Clerk

4<sup>th</sup> January 2024