

BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council held on Wednesday 5th August 2026 in the Old School, Batcombe, commencing at 8.00pm.

Present - Councillors: Janet Jones – Chair, Peter Glaisher, Clare Kingston, Tom Price and Ian Sage.

Also Present: The Clerk – Rob Sage; Somerset Councillor Rob Reed; and ten members of the public.

6013 – Apologies for Absence: Jayne Cox and Bryony Harling.

6014 – Declarations of Interest: None.

6015 – Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 1st July 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6014 – Matters Arising: Village Fete – The Clerk reported that the Village Fete Committee had requested the use of the Playing Field for the Village Fete on Sunday August 30th and as authorised at the previous meeting he had agreed to the request subject to the usual conditions: a 50% contribution to the cost of providing electricity; confirmation of public liability insurance; provision of adequate litter bins; and the Playing Field to be handed back on the Monday in a condition fit for children to use. The Chair would inspect the Playing Field on the Monday as the Clerk was unavailable. It was noted that the Playing Field would be closed on the Saturday for the Fete Committee to set up. Peter Glaisher reported that Alexander Russell from the PCC was still a member of the Fete Committee which would satisfy the requirements for the Fete to be covered by the PCC's insurance. Peter also reported that he had cut back the inside of the Playing Field hedge in readiness for the Fete. The top of the hedge would be cut back in the autumn when the outside of the hedge was cut.

6015 – Planning Applications:

Planning Application No: 2026/1389/HSE Demolition of existing single storey extensions with the erection of side & rear extensions. Proposal also includes internal works & erection of greenhouse. Boxbush Farm, Batcombe – Householder Application.

Planning Application No: 2026/1390/LBC Demolition of existing single storey extensions with the erection of side & rear extensions. Proposal also includes internal reconfiguration works, addition of skylights, glazed link to connect extension & erection of greenhouse. Boxbush Farm, Batcombe – Listed Building Consent.

Given the significant interest in the applications, the Chair asked that members of the public only speak once and direct any comments through the Chair. The Clerk then read out the details of the applications (as given above).

The applicant, Mr Ben Boyce, stated that Boxbush farmhouse was in need of renovation; it had suffered badly from alterations made in the 1970s. The current relatively modern extensions were poorly built and the building was not fit for modern living. This was the fourth listed building they had restored and they had always followed planning permission. They had worked with the architect and the heritage officer on the design of the extensions and had taken

pre-application advice from the planning department which had resulted in the increased width of the glass link between the rear extension and the original house.

Mr Ray Clark of Boxbush Barn noted that he had been associated with the village his whole life and had worked at Boxbush Farm when it was a farm. He respected the need to modernise the farmhouse but objected to the size of the rear extension and felt that the glass link created privacy issues for the occupants of Boxbush Barn and the farmhouse. He would encourage the applicant to consider a more sympathetic single story extension. He also noted that the former farmyard between the farmhouse and Boxbush Barn was divided between the properties and the proposed walls may restrict access as both properties relied on the areas either side of the boundary for manoeuvring.

Mr Chris Okleton did not object to the updating of the farmhouse but to the size of the rear extension and the impact this would have on the occupants of Boxbush Barn, including privacy issues from the glass link. He questioned whether a second storey was necessary or were there other ways to achieve the desired extra space. He also noted that the construction phase would have severe impacts on the occupants of Boxbush Barn given the limited space in the yard between the buildings.

Mrs Sally Clarke noted that presently the farmhouse was the dominant building in the historic farmyard. She felt that the extension was unnecessarily high and would not be subordinate to the farmhouse and as a result the balance between the needs of modern living and the listed period building had not been achieved. There was a duty to preserve the historic character of the listed building which meant the extension should be secondary to the main building. She felt the applicants had failed to show why a two storey extension was necessary given its impact on the listed building, the Conservation Area and on Boxbush Barn.

Mrs Karen Slocombe stated that she was concerned that the extension would obscure the view of the farmhouse from Back Lane.

In response to the objections raised, Mr Boyce noted that he had fought for a more traditional extension but that it was the planners who wanted a contrast between the old and the new – hence the glass link. The size of the extension was driven by the need for storage, although he felt the rear extension was 1½ storeys rather than 2. He also stated that there was no intention to end the shared use of the yard. It was noted by Mrs Clarke that the entrance to the yard was owned by Boxbush Barn with the farmhouse having a right of access.

Parish Councillors then discussed the application. While there was concern over the glass link, it was recognised that the planners saw this as a good thing. Given previous applications in the parish that had been approved, it was felt unlikely that the planners would refuse this application. The majority of Councillors felt that there were no strong reasons for recommending refusal, although one felt that the extension was too big and obscured the farmhouse. The Parish Council agreed to recommend approval with four votes in favour and one against. The Clerk was asked to add a comment about the need for a working agreement during the construction phase. The Chair thanked everyone who had contributed to the discussion.

Planning Application No: 2026/1290/FUL Formation of new field access and stopping up of existing field access at Beeches Farm. Beeches Farm, Batcombe – Full Application. Access to the field next to the housing development at Beeches Farm was currently shared with the access to the development. The application would block up this access to the field and create a new access to the field further up the lane. The Parish Council recommended approval as there were no objections to the proposed new field access.

The Chair raised a concern over the replacement of the conservatory at Boords Farm without Listed Building Consent. The Clerk to report this to planning enforcement. It was also

suspected that the bungalow on Kale Street was being extended without the planning permission that would be required as it was within the Conservation Area.

6016 - Authorisation of Payments: Councillors authorised the following payments:

Kevin Gale - £200.00 – Grass cutting in July. (Two cuts.)

water2business – £46.59 – Water supply to the Playing Field (six months).

The payments to be made online.

6017 – Other Business – matters of information only. Clare Kingston reported that the Cricket Club had left a set of stumps in the Playing Field which children had been waving around.

6018 - Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 2nd September at 8.00pm in the Old School.

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