

BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Rob Sage Tel: 01749 850934 e-mail: clerk@batcombe-parish-council-somerset.org.uk

You are Summoned to the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council to be held on Wednesday 1st October 2025 at 8.00pm 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 Chairman 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 3rd September 2025 to be agreed and signed.
Enclosed/attached.

5. Matters Arising – information updates only.

Action Table – A copy of the Action Table from the meeting on September 3rd is attached/enclosed.

6. Somerset Councillors' Reports and the Shepton Local Community Network

An opportunity for the Somerset Councillors to report on matters relevant to the parish, either in person or in writing.

7. Footpaths and Highways

Tom Price to update on any progress on the Spargrove footpath.

Tom has investigated what is required for volunteers to undertake strimming near a public highway. This can be found at [Apply for a licence to do minor works on or near the road – Section 171](#) - scroll down the page until you come to Parish Council highway works. Essentially volunteers have to register for the online Highway Safety Course and read the online Highway Volunteer Manual. The Parish Council has to apply for a licence to undertake minor works and ensure that all volunteers are trained, have read the Highway Volunteer Manual and have informed their insurers of what is being undertaken. There are no fees or charges for either the training or the licence and the licence can be for any period up to a year. We have to inform Somerset of who the volunteers are and if any new volunteers join we have to apply for a new licence. I suggest we apply for a licence for Tom and Peter to undertake minor works near the highway.

8. Community Review

Tom Price to report on progress with the Community Review. The survey closed on Monday 15th September. The Community Council for Somerset, now called Thrive, has invoiced us for 50% of the cost of the survey, £1,675.

9. Allotments

The Parish Council to make a decision on the future of the allotments at this meeting. If the decision is to cease providing allotments, the existing allotment holders need to be given 12 months' notice by November 1st. Since the last meeting, we have had someone moving into Kale Street who would like an allotment if they are continuing, but not just for one year. One of the existing allotment holders would like an additional allotment, so assuming no one else gives up their allotment (apart from the allotment holder with three allotments who has already indicated that he wishes to give up) if we continue to provide allotments we will have seven allotments taken next year (S and Y with two each; R, V and N with one each).

I have informed the allotment holders of the decision to be taken at this meeting and invited them to come to the meeting if they wish. I have also asked them to let me know before October 1st whether they plan to continue with their allotment(s).

10. Playground - Maintenance Report

I have contacted Sutcliffe Play about the dismantling inspection of the cableway and am awaiting a response.

Tom Price spoke to the Cricket Club about using their roller on the Playing Field and they suggested hiring a roller as they felt theirs would be too small for the Playing Field. It was felt that we should hire the roller without waiting for this meeting as the work needed doing. I therefore authorised Tom and/or Ian Sage to hire the roller suggested by the Cricket Club for 24 hours under Financial Regulation 5.15, by which the Clerk can authorise expenditure up to £500 on items within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure. The roller should cost £120 + VAT.

11. Planning Applications

None at present.

Planning Application Updates. *The application for the crown reduction of the Holm Oak at Batcombe House has been approved. The Parish Council has been informed of a Prior Approval application for the change of use of the Dutch barn on Cockpit Lane to a dwelling house. This is a notification only as the Parish Council is not consulted on Prior Approval applications. If you wish to view the plans the application number is 2025/1606/PAA and the application can be viewed at [2025/1606/PAA | Prior Approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to Ino. dwellinghouse \(Class C3\) with associated operational development. | Land At 368648 139426 Cockpit Lane Batcombe Shepton Mallet Somerset](#)*

12. Licensing Application – Gilcombe Farm Festival in May

The Parish Council has been informed of a licensing application for a new annual Festival at Gilcombe Farm to be called the Show of Hands festival and to be held on the second bank holiday weekend in May. The Parish Council has until October 13th to make a representation to the Licensing Authority if it decides to do so. The application (enclosed/attached) states that live music will be played until 1.00am and recorded music until 3.00am across the weekend, Thursday evening to Monday morning. If we decide to make a representation, we must ensure it is relevant by describing the likely effect of the granting of a licence on one or more of the following licensing objectives: prevention of crime and disorder; prevention of public nuisance; public safety; and protection of children from harm.

With regard to noise management, the application states that “relevant staff will be briefed on sound level limits and timing restrictions, and will be trained to respond promptly to any complaints from attendees or local residents. A clear communication channel will be in place for local residents to

raise concerns.” The Parish Council may wish to considering asking for the adoption of a Noise Management Plan similar to that produced by the Shindig Weekender. It should be noted that the licence application is for an ongoing festival for the same weekend each year so once the licence is granted there will be limited opportunities for further representations.

13. Review of the Parish Emergency Plan

The list of volunteers in the Parish Emergency Plan was updated by the Chair and Bryony Harling three years ago. The Plan was then updated to reflect the replacement of the District and County Councils by the new Somerset Council. The Plan is confidential, as it contains personal details of volunteers. The Parish Council should consider whether the Plan needs updating again.

14. Clerk’s Salary for 2025/26

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services has reached agreement on new pay scales for 2025/26. The agreement consists of an increase of 3.2% across all pay scales up SCP 43 (pro rata for part time employees). This will mean the Clerk’s salary (on SCP 12) increasing from £14.36 an hour to £14.82 an hour backdated to April 2025. The National Association of Local Councils recommends that these salary scales are paid to all Clerks with the standard contract of employment. The Parish Council should formally agree the increase in the Clerk’s salary, which is in line with the Clerk’s Contract of Employment.

15. Online Banking

Online banking with NatWest, known as Bankline for Communities, requires a maximum of four signatories on the account. Currently we have five signatories. Clare Kingston has volunteered to cease being a signatory so we need to pass a resolution removing Clare as a signatory. We can then pass a resolution to adopt online banking with Bankline for Communities but need to update our mandate first.

16. Authorisation of Payment

£??0.00 Kevin Gale – Grass cutting in September. (Invoice not yet received.)

£1,486.89 The Clerk – Salary and expenses for 2nd Quarter (see attached sheet).

£11.31 HMRC – Income tax (£2.80) and Employer’s NIC (£8.51) for 1st Quarter.

Councillors should also authorise the following payment retrospectively as the Community Council/Thrive asked for payment of the invoice by September 23rd.

£1,675.00 Thrive – 50% of Community Review survey cost.

17. Other Business – matters of information only.

Nothing at present.

18. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 5th November 2025 at 7.30pm in the Old School.

Rob Sage

Rob Sage – Clerk

24th September 2025