

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 7th October 2026 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.

*Publication of Councillors' home addresses – Just a reminder that the legislation on Councillors' Registration of Interests declaration forms has changed and while you still have to include your home address it will no longer be published on the Somerset Council website or the Parish Council website unless you request that it is. **I do need to know if you want your home address published so that I can pass this information onto the Somerset Council.***

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 2nd September 2026 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 2nd 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. Community Review

The grant for the Community Review was £4,650. £3,500 was spent on the Community Review survey last year and £299.49 on the evening meeting this year, leaving £850.51 in remaining funds. SALC have said that this money needs to be spent by mid/late October. The Friends of the River Alham (FoRA), who are a subcommittee of the Environment Group set up follow the Community Review, would like to spend this money on river testing kits. Tom Price indicates that SALC are happy with the money being spent on this and a report from FoRA is attached/enclosed. Brue Crew, the

equivalent of FoRA for the River Brue have provided an invoice/quote for providing 4 river testing kits at a cost of £808.46. SALC have informed Tom that the remaining £42.05 be retained by the Parish Council to be allocated for community engagement by minuted agreement of the Council.

8. Voluntary Accommodation Levy

Tom Price reports that the Three Horseshoes will shortly be paying a further £295 collected from the voluntary contributions made by people staying there. This is in addition to the £142.50 received last year and brings the total to £437.50.

Tom has made the following proposal: "I would propose that the PC advertise the source of funds and invite submissions for consideration. We would need to draft some sort of guidance/information/policy on what projects might be supported. The funds from the pub are donated on the proviso that they support community improvement for parishioners and visitors to the parish." Attached is a draft form that Tom feels could be use for applications to the funds.

9. Footpaths and Highways

Tom Price reports that the Rights of Way Officer is able to support and fund improvements to the Rights of Way network in the parish. Do let Tom know of any stiles, gates, etc that need attention.

10. Playground - Maintenance Report

Nothing to report.

11. Planning Applications

Planning Application No: 2026/1807/HSE

Retrospective application for works to repair and re-waterproof the existing slate roof.

Jackdaw Cottage, Kale Street, Batcombe – Householder Application.

Details on the planning website at

[2026/1807/HSE | Retrospective application for works to repair and re-waterproof the existing slate roof. | Jackdaw Cottage Kale Street Batcombe Shepton Mallet Somerset BA4 6AB](#)

Planning Application No: 2026/1808/LBC

Retrospective application for works to repair and re-waterproof the existing slate roof,

removal of non-original ground floor slabs & partial internal render removal.

Jackdaw Cottage, Kale Street, Batcombe – Listed Building Consent.

Details on the planning website at

[2026/1808/LBC | Retrospective application for works to repair and re-waterproof the existing slate roof, removal of non-original ground floor slabs & partial internal render removal. | Jackdaw Cottage Kale Street Batcombe Shepton Mallet Somerset BA4 6AB](#)

If the links above do not work go to the planning website at [Simple Search](#) or

<https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/> and enter the application number in the search engine.

These are retrospective applications for works already undertaken – which is why they had to be applied for separately from the applications considered at the last meeting. There had been water ingress into the property and the applicants had intended to do like for like repairs to the roof but when it was opened up more significant repairs were required. Some internal works had also been undertaken to determine what was under the ground flooring.

Planning Application Updates. *Two tree applications were received since the last meeting. One to fell a Blue Cedar at Elm House on Kale Street and replace by a Lime tree. The other to crown thin by 15% a Lebanese Cedar at Batcombe House. Parish Councillors were consulted on both applications and as no comments were received the Clerk recommended approval of both applications under his delegated authority to respond to tree applications.*

12. Review of the Parish Emergency Plan

An updated version of the Parish Emergency Plan is attached with updated e-mails, website addresses and telephone numbers. Councillors need to confirm whether they have set up their dedicated Parish Council e-mails. The list of volunteers was updated by the Chair and Bryony Harling four years ago and may need updating again this year or next.

13. Clerk's Salary for 2026/27

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services has reached agreement on new pay scales for 2026/27. The agreement consists of an increase of 3.3% 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 £14.82 an hour to £15.31 an hour backdated to April 2026. 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.

14. Authorisation of Payment

Kevin Gale – £700.00 – Grass cutting in September. (*Invoice not yet received.*)

BrueCREW – £808.46 – 4 river testing kits (*from Community Review grant*).

The Clerk – £1,507.69 – The Clerk – Salary and expenses for 2nd Quarter (*see attached sheet*).

HMRC – £6.99 – Employer's NIC (£14.79) less Credits (£7.80) for 2nd Quarter. (*Credits resulting from change in tax code.*)

Financial Regulations require payments made online to be reported to the Parish Council at the next meeting. The online payments following the September meeting were:

Kevin Gale - £100.00 – Grass cutting in August. (*One cuts.*)

Playsafety Limited - £118.80 – Playing Field Safety Inspection.

For some reason the July payment to HMRC was not made and this was not discovered until the HMRC website was checked to determine the October payment. The Parish Council has been charged 34p interest for the overdue payment, which has now been made online:

HMRC – £23.53 – Employer's NIC plus Income Tax for 1st Quarter plus 34p interest.

15. Other Business – matters of information only.

Volunteer - Tom Price has received a request from a Batcombe resident. His son is doing his Gold Duke of Edinburgh award and as part of this he is "looking to do volunteering involving litter picking around the village but also gardening the memorial and other bits. This involves 12 months of 1 hour a week and [he] will keep a log. Would you [Tom] be ok to sign off at the end to accept this and write a short statement on the positive impact or other as a member of the PC." Tom would like the Parish Council to consider this request. One issue would be insurance. Volunteers are covered by the Parish Council's Employer's Liability Insurance. A previous insurer would not cover volunteers under 16, but anyone doing the Gold award has to be 16 and our current insurer does not have an age limit for volunteers – they just require a risk assessment of the tasks being undertaken by the volunteer to ensure they are not beyond their capabilities. The other issue with litter picking is where it involves working on the highway and this would need to be checked with our current insurers.

Noise complaint - The Parish Council has been copied into a complaint from a Westcombe resident about the noise and problems with parking resulting from events in the taproom at Westcombe Dairy at weekends. The owner and brewmaster has responded apologising to the resident who complained.

16. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 4th November 2026 at 7.30pm in the Old School.