

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 2nd September 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 5th August 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 July 1st is attached/enclosed.

Audit – There was no request to examine the Parish Council's accounting records during the period we were required to make these available.

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.

No Councillor was able to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Shepton Local Community Network (LCN) held on July 6th in the Council Chamber at Shepton Mallet.

7. Community Resilience Action Calendar and Parish Preparedness Survey

The Community Resilience Action Calendar produced by our Somerset Councillor, Claire Sully, has been sent to Councillors. The idea behind the Calendar is to bring together useful information about

resilience, flooding, extreme weather, grants, training opportunities and community initiatives. The Calendar sets out key dates and opportunities throughout the year, along with a simple action for Councillors and communities to consider.

The first item on the Calendar is the Community Preparedness Survey that was sent to parishes in July 2025 with a deadline of September last year to complete. We are not the only parish council to have overlooked this – 249 out of 328 town and parish councils have yet to complete it. Attached is a copy of the survey that we are asked to complete. We are asked to state when a list of 13 hazards last occurred in the parish and evaluate the risk of these happening again on a score of 0 (none) to 4 (very likely). We are then asked to evaluate the parish's preparedness to deal with these risks again using a score of 0-4. As a starting point, I have added some suggested responses to the questions but feel free to disagree.

8. Footpaths and Highways

Nothing to report.

9. Playground - Maintenance Report

Annual Safety Inspection – An electronic copy of the report of the RoSPA safety inspection has previously been distributed to Parish Councillors. If anyone wishes to have a paper copy please ask the Clerk.

As in previous years, most items are of low/medium risk with the actual risk of items being the same or slightly higher than the innate risk for that type of item. However, there are some new concerns raised this year and some items given a higher risk score.

The gate is low risk but the inspector notes the decay in the old gateposts. Seating is also low risk but the inspector recommends regular inspection for bird fouling and removal with a disinfectant solution. The picnic table is low risk but the inspector notes loose or missing fixtures and decayed timber. The shelter is low risk but the inspector recommends that a competent person inspects the electrical equipment.

The overhead rings have slightly higher innate risk but still in the low category. The inspector notes loose bolts that need tightening and trimmer damage to the posts. There are also some natural splits in the timber that should be monitored. The goalposts are low risk but the inspector found some corrosion at the bottom of one of the posts that needs treating. He also noted a hole in the surface that is a trip hazard and needs filling.

The swings are given a medium risk rating, higher than the innate risk. The inspector states this is because he is unable to gauge the structural integrity of the unit and recommends an internal inspection of all parts. I assume he means removing the brackets attaching the swings to the frame to see if there is any damage to the frame hidden by the brackets as there aren't any other internal parts. He also notes some chain link wear and chain connector notching which is low risk but should be monitored.

The cricket net is medium risk which is its innate risk level. The inspector recommends monitoring and routinely checking the security of the key clamp fixings (which hold the frame together). He also noted that one stump was missing from the fixed stumps and recommends their replacement. (The Cricket Club state that they replaced the stump as requested but the replacement has been removed.)

The risk rating for the roundabout has increased from low last year to medium this year. This is because of gaps between the carousel and its surround that exceed the permitted 8mm. The inspector recommends this is modified to meet the standard. It's not clear how we do this or why the gap has increased from last year. The inspector also notes separation between the roundabout surround and the safety surfacing which may represent a trip hazard, but is low risk.

The multiplay is low risk, while the basketball stand is medium risk because of its innate risk. The cableway is rated as medium risk as the inspector is unable to inspect the cable attachments on the cableway because they are covered. The inspector recommends an annual inspection of the cable

attachments, which would involve dismantling the cableway. We are seeking someone competent to undertake a dismantling inspection.

Thanks to Peter Glaisher who has cut back the inside of the Playing Field hedge in preparation for the Fete. This was done before the safety inspection so wasn't one of the recommendations this year.

The Chair to report on the state of the Playing Field after the Fete at the meeting.

10. Planning Applications

Planning Application No: 2026/1606/HSE

Application for the erection of a rear single-storey extension and the refurbishment of the principal building, to include repair and upgrade of existing windows, installation of conservation rooflights, reinstatement of traditional materials, conversion of outbuilding to ancillary accommodation, drainage improvements, and minor landscaping.

Jackdaw Cottage, Kale Street, Batcombe – Householder Application.

Details on the planning website at

2026/1606/HSE | Application for the erection of a rear single-storey extension and the refurbishment of the principal building, to include repair and upgrade of existing windows, installation of conservation rooflights, reinstatement of traditional materials, conversion of outbuilding to ancillary accommodation, drainage improvements, and minor landscaping. | Jackdaw Cottage Kale Street Batcombe Shepton Mallet Somerset BA4 6AB

Planning Application No: 2026/1607/LBC

Details of proposal as 2026/1606/HSE above.

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

Planning Application No: 2026/1389/HSE *(Reconsultation after amended plans submitted)*

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.

Details on the planning website at

2026/1389/HSE | Demolition of existing single storey extensions with the erection of side & rear extensions. Internal works & erection of greenhouse. | Boxbush Farm Frys Lane To Mill Lane Batcombe Shepton Mallet Somerset BA4 6HD

Planning Application No: 2026/1390/LBC *(Reconsultation after amended plans submitted)*

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.

Details on the planning website at

2026/1390/LBC | Demolition of existing single storey extensions with the erection of side & rear extensions. Internal reconfiguration works, addition of skylights, glazed link to connect extension & erection of greenhouse. | Boxbush Farm Frys Lane To Mill Lane Batcombe Shepton Mallet Somerset BA4 6HD

Revised plans were submitted after the applicant was made aware of a restrictive covenant on the former farmyard between Boxbush Farm and Boxbush Barn which prevents the building of any walls, enclosures or other structures on the former farmyard. The revised plans show the removal of two walls that would have been built on the farmyard and a reduction in size of the single storey side extension. The question for the Parish Council is whether we wish to comment on the revised plans.

Planning Application Updates. *The application for the removal of the bough from the Cherry tree at Netherlea has been approved. As has the application for a new field access at Beeches Farm.*

11. Review of the Parish Council's Complaints Procedure

The Parish Council's Code of Practice for handling complaints can be downloaded from the Parish Council website on the Parish Council Documents page. This was adopted on 3rd September 2003, last amended on 6th July 2011, and is based on a model produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). This procedure is only for complaints about the actions of the Parish Council as a body. Complaints about the Clerk should be dealt with by the Staffing Committee in accordance with the Clerk's Contract of Employment; and complaints against individual Councillors for breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct should be made to the Somerset Council's Monitoring Officer. We have only had one complaint since the Code of Practice was adopted. I am not aware of any need to amend the current Complaints Procedure.

12. Bank Reconciliation and Budget Update

Financial Regulations require that each quarter a bank reconciliation is produced by the Clerk, checked by a member of the Council, and reported to the Council as soon as possible after the end of the quarter.

Financial Regulations also require an update on the budget each quarter (attached/enclosed). This consists of a comparison between the budget for period being considered and actual payments and receipts with a calculation of the variance between them. I have omitted the second comparison for the year to date as for the first period in the year the figures are the same. The period is actually up to July 31st which is four months rather than a quarter as we don't have a budget report in August.

As noted previously, the budget comparison requires entering which month or months the budgeted figures will be paid/received, which means some variances are just because amounts were paid/received in a different month to that expected.

The report shows that the final precept agreed was £500 more than the original figure proposed and as it is now paid in two instalments there is a variance of £250. The VAT repayment was £314 more than expected when the budget was produced because VAT was added on the second half of the payment to Thrive for the Community Review – they registered for VAT between the time the first and second instalments were due. The bank interest was £6.31 more than expected because online banking meant we were able to transfer money from the current to the reserve account more easily.

The Playing Field grass cutting is exactly on budget, but we have not spent any of the Playing Field maintenance budget. The cost of the electricity supply is £23 less than budgeted to date and we have not yet paid the Somerset Playing Fields Association subscription of £15.

The Clerk's salary is £25 less than budgeted to date but there will be a back dated increase to come. The Clerk's expenses are £7.42 less than budgeted and the insurance premium was £1.75 less than budgeted. Nothing has been spent on training and the Affiliation Fees were £13 less than budgeted (as increased fees have been weighted towards larger councils). The additional photocopying of £34.70 was for the Community Review and was paid from the grant received. The website fee appears more than budgeted because the budget has a monthly figure but the fees are actually paid quarterly. The annual fee for the accounting software of £84 was omitted from the budget. (We weren't charged for using the software for our first year last year.)

The Grants were exactly as budgeted at £720 which was the amount donated. Other Payments includes refreshments for the Community Review evening which were paid from the Community Review grant.

13. Authorisation of Payment

Kevin Gale – £200.00 – Grass cutting in August. (Invoice not yet received.)

Playsafety Limited – £118.80 – Playing Field Safety Inspection.

Financial Regulations require payments made online to be reported to the Parish Council at the next meeting (not done at the August meeting). The online payments following the July meeting were:

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

HMRC - £23.19 – Income Tax and Employer's National Insurance Contribution (April)

And those following the August meeting were:

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

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

£2,500 was also transferred from the reserve bank account to the current bank account in August so that there were sufficient funds to make the payments in August and September.

14. Other Business – matters of information only.

Crime – The crime report for July shows no reported crime in Batcombe. There was one attempted burglary of a home reported in June.

15. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 7th October 2026 at 8.00pm in the Old School.

Rob Sage

Rob Sage – Clerk

27th August 2026