



WELLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Regular Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm
on Thursday 3rd April 2025 in the Community Centre**

ITEM		ACTION
	Present	
	Parish Councillors:	
	Cllr. S Crane (Chair), Cllr. B Prince, Cllr. A Churcher, Cllr. K Parker, Cllr. C Williams	
	Also in attendance:	
	Ward Cllr Pauline Crockett, Emyr Saer (Parish Clerk) and 15 members of the public including Viv Quinn (Wildlife Group), Jen Jarrett (CLP Group) and Jenni Gowan (Flooding and Infrastructure).	
	Cllr. Crane opening statement: The first thing I just wanted to share with you, we did mention this at previous meetings. We will be discussing it and formalising it this evening, but the meeting will be recorded again for note taking purposes and we will discuss whether or not the recordings will be then shared or available on the website, but that will be discussed later.	
1.0	To accept apologies for absence:	
	Cllr. S Marron & Shirley Edgar (Tree Warden).	
2.0	To Receive Declarations of Interest:	
	There were no declarations of Interest	
2.1	To Consider Written Requests for Dispensations:	
	There were no requests for dispensation	
3.0	To Adopt the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 6th February 2024 and Annual Parish Meeting 19th March 2025	
	Resolved: The Minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chair.	
	KP to provide a brief summary of panel discussion	KP
4.0	Receive reports	
4.1	Ward Cllr Pauline Crockett	
	<u>Herefordshire Council</u> New Youth Employment Hub officially opens in Herefordshire- A new hub offering education, employment and training information and advice to young people aged 16 – 24 years was opened on Tuesday 11 February. The 'Herefordshire YEH' Youth Employment Hub is a partnership between Herefordshire Council and the Department for Work and Pensions. Working in partnership with a range of existing agency and community partners, the hub offers support and advice to young people aged 16 to 24 years on education, training, apprenticeships, volunteering and work opportunities.	

ITEM		ACTION
	• Herefordshire Council's school holidays Easter activity programme is open for bookings. Herefordshire children receiving free school meals can enjoy a wide range of activities this Easter. Eligible children will be able to try out new and exciting activities, from trampolining to horse riding, cheerleading, circus school, soccer schools, parkour, Jam Coding, outdoor activities and a farm day for families. • Herefordshire Council has welcomed the announcement of new government funding which will help households stay warm and lower their energy bills. The council will receive a share of the £6.717 million Warm Homes funding allocated to Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin councils. This latest funding will support a range of energy efficiency measures across the county over the next three years. At a time when many are experiencing high energy bills driven by the UK's reliance on international gas markets, this funding through the Warm Homes: Local Grant scheme could now help households save hundreds of pounds a year. Low-income and poor energy efficiency rated households could benefit from energy saving measures and upgrades such as insulation, single glazing replacement, solar panels and heat pumps. For more information on the above topics go to the Herefordshire Council Website. <u>Locally</u> Still supporting:- Play Area project, flooding issues, highway maintenance and the footpath closure.	
4.2	Update from Local Policing Team:	
	An update was requested but none received.	
5.0	Local Policing team 3-month priorities	
	Discussed previous charter, which has speeding ASB and mud on road. Road mud to be replaced with theft and burglaries in locality.	Clerk ✓
6.0	Communications and Updates:	
6.1	Recording of PC meetings:	
	Recording of normal meetings covered by Chair introduction. Discussion on the reward/time input for the APM. The review and segmenting of the audio/visual is a significant investment of time.	
	Resolved: Cllr. Churcher to complete work on editing (no content to be redacted), once published to PC website, monitor view count and review next meeting. The availability to be publicised on social media etc.	AC

6.2	Locking of Parish room after use:			
	Julia Ashton (JA, shop proprietor) has raised the issue of locking after late meetings. She has to return to the premises to undertake and ensure alarms are set.			
	Resolved: The parish room can only be booked for use during shop opening hours. JA is to provide a list to PC so regular users may be informed by clerk. JA is happy to continue for April.			JA Clerk
	Further resolved: A full register of keys to be prepared			Clerk ✓
	Cabinet in parish room to be opened and contents returned to hall or destroyed.			Clerk
6.3	Review insurance documentation for Parish Rooms and Shop			
	Resolved: to pass to Cllr Marron for review and report next time.			Clerk ✓
6.4	Follow up from APM 2025			
	Mainly covered in 6.1 with resolutions held there.			
	Speaker to speak at a regular meeting – KP to invite. Clerk to check if time to start can be amended.			KP Clerk ✓
	Date for next year – KP to choose 11 th or 18 th March. ES not available 11 th . Subsequent to meeting, hall is already booked for 18 th March 2026.			KP
7.0	Open Time – to Note Matters Raised by Residents Relevant to the Parish:			
	No questions/comments received.			
8.0	Financial Matters:			
8.1	To Receive a Report from the RFO:			
	Bank Balances: Treasurer's Account £18,757.50 Business Instant Access £64,144.67 Income since the March Meeting March Shop Rent - £700; Interest - £49.21			
8.2	To Approve Invoices Paid Since February Meeting:			
	Payment	Expenditure	Amount £	
	BACS	Clerks Expenses Qtr 3 and 4	110.62	
	BACS	Clerks Net Salary Qtr 4	1,447.60	
	BACS	HMRC Payment related to Clerks Qtr 4 salary	362.00	
	BACS	Service charges	4.25	
	BACS	BeSecure invoice SI14575 call out for smoke alarm in shop £101.50 + VAT	121.80	
	BACS	WCA invoice 2025-332 Hire of Community Room for February and March PC Meetings	33.00	
	Resolved: All Payments Noted and Approved.			Clerk ✓

8.3	To Agree Payments of Outstanding Invoices:																							
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8.4	Discuss donation for Chris Bucknell:																							
	Discussion on letter and increased voucher gift. Resolved: BP to prepare letter and clerk to seek advice on amount allowed as voucher gift			BP clerk ✓																				
9.0	To Consider Planning Matters:																							
9.1	The planning process:																							
	A point for Ward Cllr. Pauline Crockett: We have mentioned this in passing around the planning process and I've raised some concerns around what appears to be a disregard for views and comments from the Parish Council, and it really was emphasised at the meeting at the APM when the Chairman of Canon Pyon and his colleague, who was a water engineer, stood up and advised that the recommendations on water disbursement are not checked. The point, it was suggested it be raised with Kelly Collins-Thomas, Head of Planning, but it is not a Central Government edict to have enforcement officers verify the works on flood alleviation.																							
	Resolved: Cllr. Marron to put a paper together to forward to Kelly Collins-Thomas at Herefordshire Council			SM																				
9.2	To Note Planning Applications Commented on Between Meetings:																							
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	Submitted Comment: Following on from concerns expressed during Wellington's Annual Parish Meeting held on 19 th March 2025, Wellington Parish Council, WPC, wishes to supplement the comments it has previously submitted in regard to this application. The WPC requests that for this development, and any future developments where flood risk either within the development or to the wider community is a significant feature, as well as any planning approval being made conditional upon the development including appropriate measures to alleviate those risks, approval is also made conditional upon a formal verification process for those measures to be submitted by the developer to the planning authority post development.																							

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9.5	To Consider any other Planning Issues Herefordshire Local Plan and implications for NDP and future development:																
	Cllr Sean Marron attended (virtually) the session on 26th March with the following comments received: I followed the online session for this. It was headed by Siobhan Riddle and Emily Barker who are responsible within HFC for, respectively, the strategy and the actuality of the new Local Plan. The presentation largely confirmed the position I set out to you all but added a likely timeframe and some details. At the end of 2024, HFC was still in the process of getting approval for its Draft Local Plan from central government. In Dec 2024, the target housing supply for Herefordshire																

was increased by central government from 16,100 to 27,260. That increase meant HFC were unable to demonstrate that the Draft Local Plan meets the 5 year housing supply requirement. The identified housing supply must also be integrated with appropriate plans for economic and infrastructure development. HFC were unable to demonstrate that it did so.

- HFC have decided to abandon the existing draft Local Plan and to repeat the whole process. HFC's target date to submit the new Local Plan is January 2028.
- In the interim, whilst HFC do not have an approved or even a proposed Local Plan in place, the situation with regard to planning applications, evaluations and approvals is uncertain and vulnerable to speculative, opportunistic and windfall applications. At a Parish level, an applicant for development can challenge whether an NDP is a material factor to be taken into account if the NDP is more than 5 years old and/or if it does not align with the Local Development Plan and/or if there is no approved Local Development Plan. Wellington's NDP would now fail on all 3 counts.
- Until and unless a Local Plan is in place which allocates housing numbers on a different basis, targets for housing numbers within the County may be assumed to be set proportionately, ie as a percentage of the existing housing stock. Siobhan Riddle mentioned a figure of 0.8% annually. No "credit" will be given for previous recent development. Housing stock numbers will be taken annually.
- In forming the new Local Plan, HFC said they will not take up the opportunity of a central government funded new town which would have offered about 10,000 sites. Siobhan Riddle also explicitly said HFC would not be using compulsory purchase. The remaining main opportunity identified for significant additional housing numbers, which would not be centred on rural communities, is development land arising from the western bypass. The decision on this scheme has not been finalised.
- It is likely that HFC will repeat the evaluation of settlement hierarchies as part of the new Local Plan.
- HFC's resources which it previously made available to assist Parishes with NDPs will instead be focussed on development of the new Local Plan. Parishes will have to put together or revise NDP's without that help. Parishes may need to use Consultants instead.
- The present central government funding arrangement for supporting NDP's is limited and expires this year. It is not known whether it will be renewed.

My view is that, for now, there is very little the PC can do until HFC's position becomes much clearer. The Local Plan will require HFC to decide how to apportion development across the County, including housing numbers, economic development and infrastructure. In particular whether to focus the majority of housing and development around Hereford and the major towns or to spread it more widely across the rural Parishes.

Until this is done we have no basis on which to revise our NDP. However, we should prepare for what we need to do in the medium term so that we end up as soon as possible with an NDP which is aligned with the new Local Plan. That will require us to revise our present NDP but this cannot be done until HFC have a clear Local Plan in place.

A further presentation is likely to be offered later this year.

10.0	To Consider Highway Matters:	
10.1	A49 issues:	
	Major works over next 5 months with night closures for various portions. Be mindful from 20:00 to 06:00 over this period. Closures will be advertised. Cllr. Churcher has meeting with National Highways and will raise the issue of debris in the culvert	AC
	Road Closure for C1121:	
	Cllr. Marron is still working on this but not yet resolved.	
	Community Speedwatch:	
	Nothing, still to discuss with other schemes.	
10.2	Update on Section 106 Funding for Highways:	
	Cllr. Prince and Ward Cllr. Crockett discuss and prepare a list.	BP PC
10.3	Update on Drainage Grant Works:	
	Work has been completed but Cllr. Prince to meet with Phil Pankhurst of Balfour Beatty to undertake a drive-around review.	BP
10.4	Identification of Work to be Carried out and any other Updates:	
	Ongoing discussion with access to land, where landowner is non-responding to access request.	
	Road from Vinery Corner to Cannon Pyon Road (south road) is very cracked and is eroding. This adds to the blocked drainage problem. Resolved: Ward Cllr. Crockett, Cllr. Prince and BB to have a review	PC BP
11.0	Report on Footpaths	
11.1	Update on Footpath Maintenance:	
	Cllr. Crane has commenced spring review with some finger posts to be replaced. Badger Dingle has now been officially closed by HC	
	Cllr. Prince noted he had seen 15 bags of dog excrement thrown into the hedge at the commencement of Mill Lane.	
12.0	Flooding Issues	
12.1	Debris and hedge cuttings at Mill:	
	Nothing can be done other than maintain the drains when the rain washes the debris there.	
12.2	Email from JG re Eardisland:	
	Eardisland is held up as having a strong flood group. Resolved: JG to get in contact with their group leaders to see if their success can be replicated in Wellington	JG
12.3	Update re Flood meeting 26th March 2025:	
	Report from Jenni Gowan and Cllr. Williams: Tree at Causeway has been inspected by RLIDBs engineer and not found to require any action regarding any danger to the brook. Should anything fall into the brook in future, now it has been established as having no ownership, RLIDB would assist. Bridge Farm bund – chased 25 th March, no response yet	

Kingcup – chased 25th March, no response yet

Topo/feasibility study – non-technical extract from report has been circulated.

Meeting arranged for 9th April (venue tbc) with Steve Hodges and WSP. I have requested a full unexpurgated copy for our review not yet received. Chris Nugent is prepared to explain anything technical that we don't understand without cost to us.

As reported at APM all options such as a flood channel, meanders upstream and increasing height of bank have been discounted on a cost-benefit basis and it is likely that anything done will be related to the EAs property resilience fund. How have they established that is cost-effective and how many properties will benefit is one of the questions!

Vinery replacement fence to allow access for RLIDB – Cllr. Churcher dealing, update next time, although gate has been reinstated.

Road closure scheme – no further forward.

Flood marker – the sign that came down has been put onto the existing one making it two sided until such time that it can be properly reinstated. It is clearly visible from the Church side. We have a formal job number.

Wellington Marsh – on-going work in hand, thanks to Welsh Water. Anyone from Marsh wish to comment further – blocked drain opposite Box Tree Cottage reported on 13th and Mark Watkins instructed to look. Update from anyone at the Marsh?

A49 drain clearance – appealed for help in getting this moving from SH and Pauline. This is crucial and we must get it done.

BBLP and ditch in field at end of Marsh Lane – nothing heard – Barrie to follow up with Phil P Following the meeting and in the time since another volunteer has come forward for the road closure scheme but there has been no interest expressed by anyone else in the idea of a flood group but Cllr. Parker has expressed interest in approaching it differently.

Actions following APM

Hopefully the APM made it clear to residents that there is no magic wand to wave to solve the issues but that a degree of self-help is going to be required. Tenants of Housing Association properties that flood re urged to put pressure on the HA for flood defence measures.

Blocked drain at Brookside –actioned.

Been in touch with the Wildlife Trust and asked them to keep us informed of work they are doing in the Parish and asked for a list of what they have been working on so we can at least be aware of their efforts which clearly had gone under the radar. List needs following up, I will do that. Following a request from a parishioner at the meeting I followed up with Anne Clare regarding the culverts under the railway line which I was told were blocked. I was already aware that one of them had been but knew it was cleared in 2023 – Anne Clare confirmed that she walked the section with Colin Stratford from Tarmac just before the APM and everything was clear including the culverts.

A parishioner's report of gravel build up by the bridge downstream of the A49 has been raised with Anne Clare but we know she inspected it recently. We have asked her to explain at what level it would cause concern to avoid concern.

The APM had a long submission from a Marsh resident about planning at Kingcup and also regarding farm buildings and a weighbridge at an unknown location (possibly Little Parks). We have passed the question of Kingcup back to a neighbour at the Marsh to discuss regarding Planning Enforcement taking a look and to get more information on the other question. Work at Kingcup may have an impact on flooding at the Marsh but it is not clear about the other point raised so need more information.

Report on second HC flood group meeting.

Both attended the online second flood groups meeting chaired by Nick Mason the Flood Tsar for Herefordshire Council. Very well attended by parish councils.

We have since established that HC is assisting Brimfield, Orleton and Little Hereford with a property flood resilience scheme and we are trying to establish the criteria to qualify for this.

Mary Dhonau (known as Flood Mary) spoke at the meeting with helpful information and hopefully residents with issues visited the Flood Pod when it was in Leominster last week which we advertised at the APM.

	HC has £2m allocated to the flood team it has established and is recruiting more staff to help Steve. Cllr. Williams has submitted PC expression of interest. Jenni asked a question asking what HC was doing regarding the increase in housing expected as a result of National Government and whether there was a lobby to get some exception for the county, especially for villages with a history of flooding. The response was that the cabinet is looking at this as it is a complex issue given the aggressive targets and they intend to work with Government and won't ignore flood risks. We will have to reply on Cllr Crockett to keep us up to date on this and maybe report on progress at each PC meeting. Hopefully these reports at PC meetings indicates to parishioners that as much work as possible is being done to follow up on flood issues.	
13.0	Community Led Planning Group:	
13.1	Update on Projects and Activities	
	A formal combined report to be provided going forward to ensure the parish is aware of all the activities. Coffee morning was covered, where regularly 40 people attend and 50% of profits are donated to chosen charities.	
13.2	Report from Green Team:	
	Shirley Edgar not present, no report available.	
13.3	Report from Wildlife Group	
	Walk to gravel pits at 05:20 for dawn chorus, followed by bacon sandwiches prepared by Mrs. Viv Quinn.	
13.4	To approve any expenditure	
	None requested.	
14.0	Community Hub:	
14.1	To consider Proposals for Flood Defences	
	Not progressed yet.	
15.0	To Note the Information Sheet (April 2025) and any other updates:	
15.1	Update from BB (Phil Pankhurst) on wall between Corner End and The Old House	
	From Cllr. Prince - I have spoken to Phil Pankhurst he looked at the wall could not see a safety issue but will keep monitoring it ,he said the cement is not the best of condition but not a problem.	
16.0	To Raise Issues for the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (no discussion).	
	None	

17.0	To Note Date and Time of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council:	
	Thursday 1st May 2025 at 7.30pm in the Community Centre	Clerk
	The meeting ended at 21:25	
	 Signed (Councillor C. Williams): Chair, Wellington Parish Council 1st May 2025	