

2025 Priston Annual Parish Meeting Priston Village Hall

15th March 2025

Minutes

Present: Peter Hopwood, Bruce Clarke, Helen Burns, Robert Davies, Fiona Gourley (B&NES Ward Councillor), Jocelyn Nichols (clerk), and 16 villagers

1. **Apologies**

John Lippiatt, Guy Davies, Nick Keppel-Palmer.

2. **Previous Minutes 16th March 2024** – accepted as a true record

3. **Matters Arising** – none

4. **Chair's Report** The Chair welcomed Fiona, who introduced herself to the meeting.

The Chair thanked all for coming to the meeting. All are also welcome to attend any or all the Ordinary or Extraordinary meetings we hold throughout the year. He thanked Peter for Chairing the Council for the previous year, and Helen, Vice Chair, and all Councillors for their contributions to improving our community.

He also thanked all those villagers who volunteer for all the different village activities that make this such a great place to live, This includes those who are involved with:

1. PAGE for all the work they do on environmental issues
2. Our Flood Warden who also manages the Link and Loop
3. The Education Trust
4. The Village Hall Committee
5. The Saturday Cafe
6. The Church and the bellringers
7. The Festival organisers
8. The Cricket Club
9. The Book Club
10. The Gardening Club

~~11.~~ The Priston Emergency Group including Defibrillators and first aid training

Our new auditor, Patrick Dawson, conducted a thorough audit of our accounts and procedures, and suggested that our admin costs were taking almost the total precept, and we need to build in about 6 months cash to carry forward to be secure. So we have made savings such as stopping Green Thumb from servicing our green, and cutting the water

supply from the tap at the green. You will have seen an increase in your council tax bill, and for Priston PC as we increased the precept

Thanks were also given Farah, who has recently had to resign as Councillor due to other commitments, as she introduced a WhatsApp lifts group to help parishioners share journeys as we have no buses.

We have used Community Infrastructure Levy money to purchase a new festival tent and four bleed kits for the 4 village defibrillator boxes and these are being installed shortly.

We requested that B&NES replace the white lines where the road through the village narrows near the pub. They also managed to refill a large number of potholes (though recent wet and cold weather has created more).

We are actively trying to get the Marksbury road fixed at the crossing with Conygre brook, but this is proving difficult while the water runs across the road.

At our request B&NES has also removed several fallen trees and vegetation in the lanes where they have fallen.

The parking review in Radstock and Midsomer Norton was suggesting higher parking charge rises than they are going to actually instigate, partly due to our response and that of other parishes.

We congratulated Somerset Morris on 50 years of dancing.

Helen walked our footpaths with the B&NES footpaths officer, resulting in various improvements including Wood Lodge footpath.

We have liaised with those responsible for shooting parties, to try to reduce inconsiderate parking which obstructs access, with a modicum of success.

Thanks to Guy we have a new Planning Procedure document.

Planning applications we have considered include:

1. Wilmington Farm
2. Mead Cottage
3. Fonthill Cottage
4. Old Byre
5. 2 Hill View
6. Church Farm 2 houses
7. 120 houses pre planning in Timsbury
8. Glamping Pods on Pressbarrow farm

We are also still pursuing the lighting issues in the valley which is proving difficult to resolve.

Richard Bottle was thanked for maintaining and updating our website, and all his IT assistance, and Jocelyn, our Parish clerk for managing our administration and keeping us all in order.

5. Parish Council Financial Report

The year end is 31st March, and with some outstanding invoices to be paid, we will finish the year with £3,529 and £2409 Community Infrastructure Levy money in the bank.

6. Matters Raised by the Residents

A parishioner thanked all those in the village who helped him in various ways.

A parishioner asked about Ash Die Back and danger of trees falling onto footpaths, especially near the sewage works. **Action: Helen will ask Eddie Proctor, B&NES footpaths officer, to check the footpath.**

Priston Festival were thankful for the new tent, and it is available to all villagers for events for free, including erection.

A disabled parking bay is being created at 3 Hill View. **Action: Clerk to chase the new sign for Hill View.**

7. Emergency Plan 2025

Peter and Helen introduced the updated plan which can be viewed on the website.

John Cameron, who has had a long career in incident management, has agreed to be the Emergency Coordinator, with Peter and Helen as his deputies. We can reduce the impact of threats if we are prepared, and we need trained volunteers to commit to 12 months to help in different roles. This plan will be dynamic and regularly reviewed so that we are prepared for widespread emergencies.

Potential threats facing Priston include: a) Severe weather, which is increasing due to climate change, b) Pandemics, such as the recent Coronavirus, c) Malicious Incidents, e.g. affecting the National Grid or other infrastructures, and d) Poor response times by emergency services, as it would take an ambulance at least 20 minutes to get to Priston.

Volunteers are needed for four teams: 1) First Response, 2) Rescue and Road Clearance, 3) Evacuation Point, and 4) Care for the elderly and vulnerable.

Contact any member of the Council to volunteer.

A list of suggestions for a home emergency kit was circulated.

If mains water became unavailable there are 5 houses on spring water which could be useful.

The villagers demonstrated their resilience during the Covid19 pandemic, and we should not panic, but be prepared in the event of an emergency.

Chew Magna have an exemplary plan which helped them through flooding and Covid emergencies, and we have referred to their plan and the B&NES toolkit in writing ours. Fiona was impressed with our plan and would like to share it with other parishes.

Signed:Date: