

Beckford Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on
17th March 2025 in Beckford Village Hall

Present

Diane Colvin (Chairman), Alison Cort (Vice Chairman), Mike Wing, Anne Worrall, Jo Bell, Pam Bailey and Robert McCarthy.

In Attendance

David Roscoe (Parish Clerk) and Councillors A Hardman and Mrs B Hardman.

1992 Apologies for absence.

1992.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Dieter Cotterell

1993 Declarations of interest.

1993.1 Councillors J Bell and P Bailey declared an interest in agenda item 20 To consider applications for the lease for Land at Little Beckford and took no further part in that particular discussion.

1994 Requests for Dispensation.

1994.1 None submitted.

1995 Minutes.

1995.1 The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th January 2025 and the Planning Meeting 8th January 2025 were approved and were signed by the Chairman.

1996 County Councillor's Report

1996.1 Cllr A Hardman attended the meeting and answered questions. No decisions were required of the Parish Council.

1996.2 He confirmed that the use of "Quiet Lane" was not official County policy and could therefore not be used. He did confirm that they would be reinforcing signage along Court Farm Lane.

1996.3 He mentioned that the forthcoming County Council elections were the last following the government's plan.

1996.4 He also confirmed that he was pleased with the bench opposite the Village Hall and thanks was expressed for the help he gave the Parish Council in providing funding for the bench

1997 District Councillor's Report

1997.1 Cllr B Hardman informed Council that some water testing kits had been distributed and Councillor Worrall confirmed that she was carrying out testing every Monday.

1997.2 Councillor Cort enquired as to why the Flood Map at Little Beckford had disappeared from the official online sources.

1998 Clerk's Report

1998.1 The clerk's report was reviewed and updated.

1999 Finance

1999.1 The Bank Reconciliation & Receipts & payments information had been circulated by David Roscoe (RFO) and were accepted. Proposed: Cllr McCarthy seconded: Cllr Worrall. Unanimous

1999.2 **It was resolved that** the following payments be approved. Proposed: Cllr McCarthy seconded: Cllr Worrall. Unanimous

Date	Payee	Chq No	Amount incl VAT	VAT	Reason
08/01/2025	BCVH Grant	OB472	5000.00	0.00	Grant
07/01/2025	Signs of Cheshire Ltd	OB473	504.00	80.00	Noticeboards

12/02/2025	D Roscoe (Clerks Salary)	DD	575.57	0.00	Clerks Salary
12/01/2025	BCVH	OB474	49.00	0.00	Hall Hire
13/01/2025	Npower	OB475	54.33	2.59	Electricity
15/02/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB476	103.00	0.00	Playground Maintenance
15/02/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB477	60.00	0.00	Lengthsman
15/02/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB478	97.50	0.00	Lengthsman
15/02/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB479	144.00	0.00	Hedge Maintenance
15/02/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB480	64.00	0.00	Lengthsman
15/02/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB481	320.00	0.00	Lengthsman
23/12/2024	ICO	DD	35.00	0.00	Information Commissioner
17/02/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB482	70.00	0.00	Repairs and Maintenance
12/03/2025	D Roscoe (Clerks Salary)	DD	575.57	ASS	Clerks Salary
06/03/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB483	240.00	0.00	Lengthsman
06/03/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB484	64.00	0.00	Lengthsman
06/03/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB485	57.28	0.00	Playground Maintenance
10/02/2025	Geosphere (Parish Online)	OB486	64.80	10.80	Parish Online
18/03/2025	D Roscoe (Clerks Expenses)	OB487	153.52	0.00	Clerks Expenses
18/03/2025	BCVH	OB488	28.00	0.00	Hall Hire
19/03/2025	Goodmusic Publishing	OB489	52.50	0.00	Printing
21/03/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB490	136.00	0.00	Grass Cutting
21/03/2025	MW Property & Garden Maintenance	OB491	80.00	0.00	Lengthsman

1999.3 The Clerks Expenses were reviewed and approved. Proposed Councillor Cort, seconded Councillor Bailey. Unanimous.

1999.4 The budget for 2024/25 was reviewed and approved.

1999.5 The Asset Register was reviewed and agreed. There was a query regarding ownership of the outside lamp in Little Beckford. Councillor Wing informed Council that Rooftop was going to do the repair work and therefore the clerk will investigate who is liable to pay the electricity bill.

2000 Planning

2000.1 The following applications were considered.

Appl. Number	Application	Details	Result
W/24/02226/CLE	Dalton House Main Street Beckford Tewkesbury GL20 7AD	Certificate of lawfulness for the continued use of building(s) and associated land as a dwelling (C3 Use Class).	Pending
W/25/00266/CLE (Revised)	Dalton House Main Street Beckford Tewkesbury GL20 7AD	Application for a Certificate of lawfulness of existing use of buildings and associated land as dwelling (C3 Use Class)	Pending
W/24/02600/GPDQ	Land At (Os 9757 3541) Back Lane Beckford	Notification for Prior Approval for the proposed change of use of an Agricultural Building to one Dwellinghouse (Class C3), and for building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion	Application Refused

2001 To consider a Neighbourhood Plan proposal from Cllr Cort.

2001.1 Councillor Cort confirmed she had contacted Wychavon who confirmed that we may still progress with a Neighbourhood Plan.

2002 To review the Risk Register including Little Beckford Playground

2002.1 No issues reported.

2003 To update the position regarding the A46.

2003.1 Councillor Cort gave her report which is appended to these minutes.

2003.2 It was recognised that in order to progress the desire for traffic alleviation and speed restrictions on the A 46, more statistics and traffic figures would be required.

2003.3 Councillor McCarthy agreed to liaise with Councillor B Hardman in order to approach Harriet Baldwin MP. The aim was for the MP to table a question to the Minister.

2004 To discuss Little Beckford Flood Alleviation.

2004.1 Report from Councillor Cort:

One of our residents has brought to my attention that the Environment Agency maps of river and surface flooding (the former used for assessing flood risk in Planning) have been updated, and now bear little resemblance to the reality experienced.

Of particular concern is that the revised surface water map has changed the flood risk for certain parts of Cheltenham Road from Very High to Very Low.

The old surface water map shows a pattern of surface water flooding problems that will be immediately recognisable to residents of Blacksmiths Lane and Cheltenham Road in Little Beckford, accompanied by an assessment of certain addresses on Cheltenham Road as being at Very High risk from this type of flooding.

However, the updated map has completely disappeared any evidence of surface water problems.

There is now seemingly a Very Low risk of surface water flooding at this location, with the long term assessment also being Very Low.

Although it would be nice if this assessment were true, it bears no resemblance to the lived experiences of our residents - some of whom have punitively high home insurance and live in fear that any sustained period of rainfall will result in their homes being deluged. Again.

The four Parish Councillors who live on Blacksmiths Lane are all extremely familiar with the sight of broad expanses of waterlogged fields surrounding an overflowing Alstone Brook after any period of even moderately sustained rainfall. Yet the new map has completely disappeared this issue. If not corrected this is problematic for many reasons, including:

- Unnecessary upset and mental/physical health implications for affected residents, for whom this must feel like a form of gaslighting
- Planning assessments will not include any awareness of the surface water risk
- With the risk of surface water flooding incorrectly reduced to negligible, the opportunity for flood alleviation funding must inevitably be impacted
- Misleading information being presented in the searches conducted by potential home buyers

Councillors agreed that the new map is substantively inaccurate. These were also shown to A Hardman and B Hardman who concurred that the maps appear to reflect an alternative reality.

Per their captions, the updated maps have been generated using AI, which raises questions regarding the accuracy of the input data. This is perhaps a reasonable basis on which to raise an enquiry with the EA.

The resident who brought the revised, inaccurate, maps to my attention has themselves been in contact with the EA to query the revised flood risk assessments. It appears incumbent upon us to do likewise given the long standing Agenda item of Little Beckford flood alleviation - ideally with support from District/County.

2005 To report on the meeting with Severn Trent representatives on March 6th to discuss extensive works to improve the wastewater treatment works in Beckford.

2005.1 Councillors Colvin and Cort gave their report which is appended to these minutes

2006 To discuss how the Flood Management Budget should be spent.

2006.1 It was agreed that a budget of £1000 to provide equipment, grit and sandbags be approved subject to location and access. Proposed Councillor Worrall, seconded Councillor McCarthy. Unanimous.

2007 To confirm the position regarding the installation of the bench by the Village Hall.

2007.1 It was confirmed that the bench was now in situ and looking good. Thanks was expressed to Barry Barnes and his team.

2008 To consider the "Quiet Lane" proposal for Court Farm Lane.

2008.1 A Hardman confirmed that the use of "Quiet Lane" was not official County policy and could therefore not be used. He did confirm that they would be reinforcing signage along Court Farm Lane.

2009 To agree the lease for Land at Little Beckford

- 2009.1 Following receipt of two applications, the Parish Council was eager to demonstrate impartiality towards all parties.
- 2009.2 It was therefore agreed that a list of questions would be drafted and presented to the applicants to elicit further information regarding the land management and particularly the enclosure railings and protection of the Play Area.
- 2009.3 The answers received would be considered at the Parish Council meeting in May and a decision made.

2010 To discuss progress with supporting the SafeAvon initiative.

- 2010.1 Councillor Worrall confirmed that she was carrying out testing every Monday.

2011 To discuss an update to the Community Speedwatch project.

- 1986.1 Currently there was no further update as vetting was still ongoing. This could take up to 6 months

2012 To discuss designing a logo for the PC.

- 2012.1 It was agreed that an alternative logo will no longer be progressed at this point in time.

2013 To discuss production of the next newsletter.

- 2013.1 Councillor Cort confirmed that she would be willing to continue to produce the newsletter.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

The date of the next meeting 19th May 2025 at 7:00 PM. This will also be the AGM and Annual Parish Meeting.

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Report from Councillor Cort with regard to agenda item 13 To update the position regarding the A46.

As a Statutory Consultee the Cotswolds National Landscape Board (CNLB) has provided feedback on the proposed M5 J9A and A46 transport scheme, including offering up a revised path for Route B. National Landscapes is the updated terminology for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

On the face of it, this revised route doesn't appear to have much of a different impact for Beckford Parish as, in common with all of the other routes suggestions, the scheme brings all traffic in to the Teddington Hands Roundabout.

However, there is an additional element to this proposal which potentially has significant knock on effects.

Unlike other proposals the Cotswold National Landscapes Board's one suggests that the new route, which would bring traffic in to join the existing A435 at the current B4079 Pamington turning, is accompanied by a change of use of the section of the current A435 between the Teddington turnoff and the Pamington turning. The Board's suggestion is that this section of road should be closed and repurposed as a leisure route, accompanied by a downgrading of the remaining section of the road between Teddington Hands and Teddington.

This could have very significant consequences for the interaction of the A46 and Beckford Parish. There is currently a problem with traffic, sometimes from the M5 and, more frequently, the Aston Cross traffic lights causing tailbacks that gridlock traffic along the A46 right through/past the villages. At present, some of the traffic splits away from the A46 at the Teddington Hands roundabout and heads along the A435 towards Gotherington, Bishops Cleeve and Cheltenham. With this proposed revision all traffic bound towards Cheltenham, etc would also be using the existing A46 turning from Teddington Hands.

The CNLB believes that "[...] the Board's Option B route could also be single carriageway as the traffic movements on this route would not exceed the traffic movements on the A435/A46 single carriageway in Option A" (CNLB response, p.8). This assessment does not seem to take into

account that the revised proposal would condense all of these traffic movements onto a single section of road which already experiences significant delays. All of the other suggested routes keep both of the existing roads open.

The Board's suggested path of the revised route would also increase the level of interaction between the route and the Ashchurch Garden Communities project versus the original Route B, which will presumably include a number of pedestrian crossings and traffic lights, that must inevitably impact traffic flow.

As it's Cheltenham Festival week, it occurs to me that the interaction of regular traffic with the addition of Race Meet traffic, additional traffic accessing the designer outlet and Ashchurch Garden Communities, all filtered through this single route past our Parish would be quite something!

The alternative Route B, combined with closure of a section of the existing A435 is the CNLB's preferred option and they have asked that the alternative Option B route (plus the proposed 2km closure of the existing A435) be considered in all future assessments.



To report on the meeting with Severn Trent representatives on March 6th to discuss extensive works to improve the wastewater treatment works in Beckford.

In response to the Parish Council following up on complaints from residents, councillors were invited to attend a meeting with Severn Trent Water regarding the closure of the public Bridleway past the sewage plant in Beckford. On 6th March 2025 six members of the Parish Council met with representatives from Severn Trent and their construction contractor Avoxe.

During a positive, helpful meeting, it was explained that the expansion will increase the plant's treatment capability from 9L of wastewater/second to 19L/s.

It was also explained that the closure of the Public Right of Way (PROW) had become necessary due to unanticipated issues affecting the interaction between work on the scheme and public access.

Severn Trent and Avoxe would prefer not to impact public access, but have to address safety concerns and at present believe closure is unavoidable.

Access to the works is via land owned by Overbury Estates and when surveyed an old culvert beneath the bridleway was found to be collapsing and unable to withstand the additional heavy traffic usage planned. Severn Trent/Avoxe brought in a temporary bridge to prevent further damage to the culvert and continue full bridleway access. Unfortunately, the shared access use of the bridge has presented safety concerns. Notably for horses, with a number of riders reporting that their horses spooked on going over the bridge structure - which is metal and extremely noisy when in contact with horseshoes.

In response to these concerns Severn Trent/Avoxe have tried to find alternative solutions, including using rubber mats over the bridge to dampen the noise and loaning ear defenders for riders to use with their horses. Unfortunately, no fully workable solution could be found. For mats to be thick and heavy enough to be effective without slipping when driven on, when combined with plant machinery they would add too much mass for the load bearing capacity of the bridge, and whilst horse ear defenders could be loaned at one end of the bridleway and returned at the other there was no practical way to ensure such a system was operational outside of working hours.

It was also noted that some of the large vehicles accessing the site have blind spots that prevent their drivers from seeing all of the users of the bridleway - particularly young children.

Other routes to access the site were considered, but there was nothing viable as all were significantly harder to access and more intrusive onto private land.

It is ultimately planned that as part of the ongoing works the culvert will be repaired, but when this will happen is outside the control of the team on location. At present there is no timescale for the repairs to be carried out.

The only remaining option for safety was to seek closure of the PROW. This was a reluctant decision and one that Severn Trent have indicated they are open to re-evaluating, should a safe, viable alternative solution come to light.

The current closure has been authorised by the Secretary of State for Transport via Worcestershire County Council.

There seems to be some confusion from residents regarding the scope of the closure, with several

comments indicating the belief that bridleway closure means that access is closed only to horses. This is not the case.

A bridleway is a shared use right of way, not one exclusive to horses. Per gov.uk, bridleways are "for walking, horse riding, bicycles, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs". The closure of the bridleway applies to *all* categories of users, including walkers and cyclists as well as horses.

We have asked Severn Trent whether there might be capacity to vary this and introduce restricted categories of users rather than a wholesale ban. They have indicated that they are willing to explore doing so, as long as relevant law and public safety allow.

The closure permit currently in force is for up to six months from issue. This is the standard duration for which such permits are issued. ***However, this does not necessarily mean that the bridleway will be reopened in or before August. There can be applications to have the permit for closure renewed.***

The works to the plant are currently estimated to continue until mid-way through 2026.

Severn Trent are mindful of the impact on public users, including walkers, riders, and cyclists who use the path to commute avoiding the A46, and would prefer not to close the access - but public safety makes it currently unavoidable.

We have discussed future plans and all parties have agreed to try and keep lines of communication open so that residents can be kept up to date regarding the works.

Post-meeting Parish Councillor and local Footpath Warden Mike Wing contacted Worcestershire County Council's PROW department to discuss whether restrictions could be modified. He was advised that this may be possible, but it would be the responsibility of Severn Trent to investigate, progress, and ensure they have all risk controls and prevention measures in place.