



Marden Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 7.30 pm on 21st October 2025 at
Marden Community Centre.

Minutes

Present:

Cllr David Bennett (Chair), Cllr Kate Ryan, Cllr Lesley Hayward, Cllr Rod Lees Cllr Chris Morgan and Cllr Paula Barrett & Cllr Richard Paske.

In Attendance:

Ward Member – Cllr Peter Hamblin
22 x Members of the Public.

1. To receive Apologies.

To Note – There were no Apologies

2. To receive declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.

To Note – There were no declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 21.09.25.

Resolution – *The draft minutes of the 21.09.25 were adopted and duly signed by the Chair.*

4. Open Session.

Before opening the session to questions the Chair wished, on behalf of the Parish, to congratulate Jess Tidball upon receipt of the Order of St Ethelbert 2025. Jess has been part of Marden Parish life for over 30 years; Jess's energy and compassion is an inspiration to us all. The award is well deserved.

(Ward member)

The Ward Member said the Herefordshire Council is carrying on work as normal, the road resurfacing programme is starting to pay dividends.

To Note – *The Ward Member report was noted by Councillors*

(Members of Public)

The following questions were raised

Q1. I wrote to the chair asking for the omissions in the draft minutes to be included.

A1. The Chair said that, of the two points made, one has been actioned and the draft on the website updated. The second has not been updated and relates to the second question.

Q2. Will the draft budget be a secret.

A2. No, as has been done in previous years the budget summary will be distributed to all households

with the December N&V as part of the Parish Council Christmas Newsletter. This will give parishioners an opportunity to scrutinise the budget and precept proposal prior to Parish Council approval at the January 2026 meeting.

Q3. Why is the Asset Register not on the Website.

A3. The latest Asset Register is now on the Website.

5. Footpaths Officer Report & to Consider actions.

No report this month.

Resolution – The Council asked the Clerk to contact both the footpaths officer and tree warden for quarterly written reports or attend the meetings with reports.

6. Finance Matters.

6.1 - Accounts – September 25

To Note – Council noted the financial summary.

6.2 - Bank Accounts – 30.09.25.

a) - Unity Main – September 25- £5,349.29

b) - Unity Reserve – September 25 - £615,761.54

To Note – Council noted the Bank Statements.

6.3 - HUB Accounts - September 25

To Note – Council noted the HUB accounts

6.4 - Parish Hall Project – Cash Flow

To Note – Council noted the New Parish Hall cash flow.

6.5 - VAT Reclaim - £5,827.61.

To Note – Council noted the VAT claim and thanked the Clerk for commencing monthly VAT reclaims.

6.5 - 3-year Budget

a) Summary

b) Detailed

To Note – Council noted the 3-year budget, and it will be scrutinised in detail by the Finance and Administration Working Group before it comes back to Council in November.

7. Payments.

	Payments	Net	Vat	Total
7.1	Clerks Salary - September 25	As per Contract		
7.2	D C Gardening Services - SI-2271	760.00	152.00	912.00
7.3	D C Gardening Services - SI-2337	760.00	152.00	912.00
7.4	S Lewis – Sept Electric	24.17	0.00	24.17
7.5	Signworx - 9266	252.00	0.00	252.00
7.6	Ben Woodcock	115.00	0.00	115.00

Resolution – Marden Parish Council agreed to pay all the invoices.

8. Payment made under emergency policy and regular payments.

		Payment	Net	Vat	Total
8.1	D/D	BT – Broadband & Phone - Sept 25	45.87	9.17	55.04
8.2	S/O	HUB Rent - Oct 25	450.00	0.00	450.00
8.3	S/O	Community Garden - Rent - Oct 25	15.00	0.00	15.00
8.4	DD	Unity Trust - Service Charge	6.00	0.00	6.00
8.5	BACS	W Architecture – 1600-253	11983.33	2396.66	14379.99
8.6	BACS	W Architecture – 1600-254	1710.00	342.00	2052.00

Resolution – *Marden Parish Council agreed all the payments made under emergency policy and regular payments.*

9. Planning.

	Application No	Address	Permission sought
9.1	252547	Land adjacent to Drakely Cottage Marden Herefordshire HR1 3ES	Outline application with all matters bar access reserved for the erection of a self-build dwelling with garage.

Resolution – *Marden Parish Council OBJECTS to this planning application on the following grounds.*

- *This development is outside the settlement boundary.*
- *Does not comply with the Marden NDP.*

	Application No	Address	Permission sought
9.2	252481	Land at The Farm Marden Herefordshire HR1 3EW,	Proposed erection of 9 dwellings and associated landscaping.

The Chair said before opening this up to the public, he wanted to make it clear that the recent press release was incorrect and not factually correct. The Chair opened this part of the meeting to the public, as there were concerns about this application. The Chair read out a letter from a nearby resident.

Following concerns were raised by the public.

- Loss of views.
- Concerns about flooding on this site.
- There will be loss of privacy.
- Existing properties will be overlooked.
- There will be no extra infrastructure put in place to accommodate this development.
- Why is there only 9 dwelling being built, because if there was 10 then S106 monies would have to be paid for local amenities.
- Concerns about more traffic using the local roads.

The Developer was present and asked the Chair if he could answer some of these questions.

The following arguments were raised by the developer.

- The whole design and layout was under planner officer advice.
- Herefordshire Council don't want large developments.

- The development was carefully design not to be a high-density development.
- Extensive landscaping will take place to protect current and future views.
- The new properties will be Eco friendly and have high green credentials.
- The NDP is only guidance especially as it is out of date.
- Small local development supports local trades and reduce travel omissions.
- Herefordshire is suffering from low population with only 26% birth rates and has a 28% death rate.
- More housing is required within Herefordshire.
- Small developments are sympathetic to the Parish.
- Small developments are sustainable in the long-term.
- The Development is of a mixed design with a bungalow and detached houses there will be 4 x 2 beds – 4 x 3 beds – 1 x 4 beds.
- The Developer wants to work with the residents to make the best development possible.

Resolution – *Marden Parish Council strongly objects to this application for the following reasons:*

1. Location Outside the Settlement Boundary

The proposed site lies outside the current defined settlement boundary, and its development would move the village in an unsustainable and undesirable direction.

This conflicts with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SS2 (Delivering New Homes) and Policy RA2 (Housing in Settlements Outside Hereford and the Market Towns), which restrict open countryside development except in exceptional circumstances.

The proposal therefore represents encroachment into open countryside, contrary to the Council's spatial strategy and NPPF paragraph 80, which seeks to avoid isolated rural housing unless justified by special circumstances.

2. Unsustainable Growth and Infrastructure Capacity

The village's existing infrastructure—particularly drainage, road access, and community facilities—is insufficient to support sustainable growth, and further development will intensify these issues.

This is inconsistent with Core Strategy Policies SS6 (Environmental Quality and Local Distinctiveness) and SD1 (Sustainable Design and Energy Efficiency), which require that development creates safe, sustainable, well-integrated environments and makes efficient use of land and resources.

It also fails to meet the overarching aim of the NPPF (paragraphs 7–11), which require development to contribute positively to the economic, social, and environmental objectives of sustainability.

3. Flood Risk / Drainage / Foul Water

Concerns over the impact of the site on flooding especially as it takes no account of climate change in the Water Management Strategy. In the Land Drainage comments under representation it states 'Review of the EA's Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map indicates that the site is not located within an area at risk of surface water flooding. However, there is a relatively large area of high-risk surface water ponding which appears to be directly adjacent to the north and northwest of the site. This must be considered within the required Flood Risk Assessment'. Our own observations are that through the village and off Walkers Green there is significant water accumulation after heavy rain and the likelihood is that this development will make this worse.

It appears that the infiltration tests on surface water drainage and infiltration were carried out in 2021 and the land Drainage document states that they will need to be done again which hasn't happened.

On the foul water system, we would refer you to the Welsh Water representation. They make it clear that the sewage system will not support the new development and a system to support the foul water discharge needs to be signed off by the local authority. Furthermore, the solution put forward by the developer of shared drainage fields is not endorsed.

Overall, it is clear that there is a risk of surface water flooding impacting the surrounding area and currently there is no robust agreed foul water disposal system in place.

4. Overall Sustainability and Climate Resilience.

Taken together, these issues demonstrate that the proposed development fails to achieve sustainable development as required by NPPF paragraph 8.

It does not demonstrate environmental resilience to flooding, does not address local infrastructure limitations, and does not align with the Parish's settlement pattern or housing strategy.

Therefore, the proposal is contrary to both the National Planning Policy Framework and the Herefordshire Core Strategy 2011–2031.

5. Request for Comprehensive Local Review.

The Parish Council requests that all potential development opportunities in Marden be considered together, independently evaluated, and collectively agreed upon to determine how best to meet the Parish housing target in a sustainable manner.

This approach would be consistent with Core Strategy Policy SS1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) and would enable a plan-led and community-supported approach to future growth.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, Marden Parish Council objects in the strongest possible terms to this application.

The development is premature, unsustainable, and contrary to local and national planning policy, particularly in relation to settlement boundaries, flood risk, drainage, infrastructure capacity, and sustainable growth principles.

	Application No	Address	Permission sought
9.3	252723	Drakeley Farm Marden Herefordshire	Prior approval for irrigation reservoir and proposed deposition excavated material.

The general public made a number of comments regarding this application but as it had been withdrawn a revised application is anticipated to be available for discussion at the November Parish Council meeting.

To Note – Marden Parish Council noted this application had been withdrawn.

9.4 - Planning Enforcement

- a) Farmer Johns Signage
- b) Small Ashes – development needs completed as per approved plans and the footpath needs to be reinstated.

To Note – The Council noted that there was an ongoing enforcement case with regards to the Farmer Johns Signage. Council asked the Clerk to enquire the status of the Small Ashes enforcement.

10. New Parish Hall.

10.1- Update.

The Chair reported that a groundbreaking ceremony had taken place, which has been long overdue and was a culmination of much hard work.

Although the site has been cleared fenced and levelled the contractor is hoping to start works on the base in the week commencing 17th of November and have a watertight build around Christmas / early new year.

10.2 - Bridging loan / Resident Loans

The Chair said that an article has already gone into the New & Views newsletter and there will be a follow up article.

If the MVT can get the money for the relinquished lease earlier, then a loan may not be required.

10.3 - Newsletter

The Chair reported that the Parish Hall Newsletter No.8 will be out in the next couple of days.

To Note – *This update was noted by the Council.*

11. Working Group Reports.

11.1 – Marden Links

- a) Hub activity update
- b) Repair Café Update
- c) Community Garden

Cllr K Ryan reported that Marden Links has had a volunteer event to say a thank you to all the Marden Links Volunteers.

The paths in the Community Garden have been stoned; they just need to be compacted down now.

Donations are still coming in, which are a huge help, and thanks to all those who have given.

The Winter Warmer will restart in December following the great success last year.

It would be lovely if we could find a few more volunteers to lessen the workload of others.

To Note – *This was noted by the Council.*

11.2 - Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) update

The chair said that a lot had been said about the NDP but the council is always watching and waiting for the Herefordshire Council housing target. It is hoped that the results of the ongoing “Call For Sites” will be available by the end on March 2026.

To Note – *This was noted by the Council.*

11.3 - Finance & Administration Working Group

The Chair said the Finance & Administration Working Group will be holding a meeting at the beginning of November where they will scrutinise the accounts and present a budget back to Council for the November meeting.

To Note – *This was noted by the Council.*

11.4 - Events

The Chair said the Events team have been busy, there is the Quiz Night on the 24.10.25 with the Christmas Cracker event on the 19.12.25.

To Note – *This was noted by the Council.*

12. Herefordshire Council Summit.

The Chair & the Vice Chair attended the summit. It seemed that it was run better and on time, but the scope of the new Charter did not really go far enough. More detail should have gone into the better interaction between the Herefordshire Council and the Parish Council's.

The Chair proposed that the Council should adopt this, Charter.

Resolution – *Council unanimously agreed to adopt the Herefordshire charter.*

13. Community.

- a) Christmas Newsletter & Delivery.
Council discussed the Christmas newsletter

Resolution – *Council asked the clerk to contact News & Views about the delivery dates and help in delivering. The printers need to be contacted. Cllr's K Ryan and D Bennett said they would write the Christmas newsletter.*

- b) Christmas Tree & Date.
The Clerk asked if the Council would be having a Christmas tree this year, if so when would Council like it to be delivered before and the size.

Resolution – *Council agreed to purchase a 16' Christmas tree to be delivered. It is hoped to install with lights switched on the 06.12.25.*

- c) Remembrance Day Wreath.
The Clerk asked if the Council would be laying a Remembrance Day Wreath this year.

Resolution – *Council agreed that the Clerk should purchase a wreath making the amount up to £50 donation to the Royal British Legion. It was agreed that the Chair would lay the wreath and Cllr C Morgan would do the reading.*

- d) New Network Plus Poles.
Cllr C Morgan reported that he and some neighbours had received letters from Network Plus indicating they were going to update the wooden electricity poles in their gardens which have been there since 1954. Cllr C Morgan has concerns, about the lack of electricity supply for several hours, leaving these elderly residents vulnerable with no heating, warm food or even the ability to make a hot drink.

Resolution – *Council agreed that the Clerk should write to Network Plus and see if there is anything which can be done.*

14. Action Log.

New items

- Christmas Newsletter - Chair & Vice Chair.
- Unsuitable for Large vehicle signs - Clerk & Ward Member.
- MVT Lease relinquishment response from Herefordshire Council – Ward Member

To Note – *This was noted by the Council.*

15. Future Agenda Items.

- *Develop an NDP plan for 2026/27*
- *Develop a Transport plan to use the S106 monies from the New House Farm development.*
- *Bridleway – MR12 issues.*

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.40pm.

Signed:
Chair of the Council
18th November 2025