



## Minutes of the Meeting of Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025,  
At Croome National Trust SOQ meeting room

*The meeting commenced at 7.30pm*

**Parish Councillors:** (# absent with apologies, ## absent without apologies)

Cllr Richard Hill (Chair) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward)  
Cllr Laurence Freeman (Deputy Chair) (rep for Croome parish ward) #  
Cllr Ian Daly (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward)  
Cllr Royston Garrard (rep for Croome parish ward) #  
Cllr Laura McEwan-Hill (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward)  
Cllr Pat Preston (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward)  
Cllr Ray Williams (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward)  
Responsible Financial Officer, Proper Officer and Parish Clerk Lisa Stevens

**Other community representatives:**

National Trust Michelle Fullard, General Manager South Worcs  
National Trust Katherine Alker, Grounds Manager Croome  
Worcestershire County Councillor Martin Allen  
Malvern Hills District Councillor John Michael  
Malvern Hills District Councillor David Harrison #  
Volunteer Footpath Officer Richard Humphries  
Parish Lengthsman Simon Bott # (and by later appointment within this meeting Tim Hughes #)  
PC Jon Hand/Safer Neighbourhood Off. Dee Stanley/Police Comm. Support Officer Ashley Smith #  
Friends of St. Denys' Committee John Henderson #  
Tarmac Colin Stratford (Clifton Liaison Committee Chair Martin Allen) #

**Residents in attendance:** 6

**59/25 Welcome, introductions and points of order**

- i. Declarations of interest (nil new). Members were reminded always be mindful of whether attendance at other meetings and events was as a parish councillor or as a resident and always to consider any declarations arising from that.
- ii. Points of order. The Chair read out a reminder of the Nolan Principles as a courtesy and at the recommendation of Worcestershire CALC – our advisory body.  
"Before we begin this evening, I'd like to take a brief moment to remind everyone of a few important points that help ensure our meeting runs smoothly and in the spirit of good governance. First, I'd like to remind all Councillors of the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life, which underpin the standards expected from those in public office. These principles should guide our conduct throughout the meeting and in all our roles as public servants. Secondly, I'd like to remind everyone present — Councillors and members of the public — that all questions should be directed through the Chair. This helps maintain order and ensures that discussions remain respectful and productive. Finally, please be aware that not all questions need to be answered immediately during the meeting. In some cases, it may be more appropriate — or necessary — to submit a considered response at a later date. This is to ensure accuracy and to avoid putting individuals on the spot without the opportunity to reflect or gather the appropriate information. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation."
- iii. Resolved. Motion to accept apologies for absence (as above). Prps: LMH. Scnd: RH.
- iv. Adjustments required to facilitate participation. CCllr Allen had noted to the Clerk before meeting commencement that in future he considered it best practice for his section and reports to be included in public open forum, so that he can respond to resident queries efficiently. The Clerk had responded that this request can be easily accommodated in future agenda.
- v. To note the resignation of Sue Faulkner and that the vacancy was advertised with no electors stepping forward to request an election. Duly noted. **Resolved. Motion** of thanks to Sue as former Chair and Cllr. Prps: RH. Scnd: ID. There remain five vacancies on this parish council.
- vi. To determine any items on this agenda that should be considered of a private nature. **Resolved. Motion** to exclude members of the press and public during consideration of agenda item 7 (64/25 in these Minutes) (Contracts and Staffing Matters) by reason of the confidential nature of



**Minutes of the Meeting of Severn Stoke  
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the items of business to be transacted, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960. Prps: LMH. Scnd: ID. **Duly approved.**

## 60/25 Minutes of the previous meeting.

- i. Some amendments and clarifications had been suggested by the National Trust, but it had been mutually agreed that those amendments would be read out and appended to the minutes of this meeting instead for simplicity. See 62/25iv below.
- ii. **Resolved. Motion** to accept and approve the minutes of the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025. Prps: LMH. Scnd: ID. Duly **approved**.

**61/25** The meeting was adjourned for **Open Forum** (public question time). Residents noted the guidance provided for information on their seats.

- i. TR - addressed the parish council on matters relating to the Old Village Hall Site.  
Cllrs: The resident was thanked for attending and was requested once again to submit in writing their reasoning, as correspondence received from the resident after the July meeting had only reiterated previous statements rather than providing any supporting evidence.
- ii. GC – addressed the parish council on matters relating to the Old Village Hall Site. Resident stated that he has been continuing to enter the site in order to access Ham Lane, acknowledging that he has received notice in writing from the parish council that the area is closed to the public. He stated that he has been forcing a way through the hedge at the vehicular gated end, acknowledged that he has been placing himself at risk of minor harm from the hedge taking these actions and also offered to provide video evidence of this.  
Cllrs: The resident was thanked for attending, reminded of the reasons for any remaining security fencing on site and the locked gate, reminded of the public road-side pavements giving access to Ham Lane representing little to no diversion for any resident and, agreed to accept anything in writing that was offered. Cllrs confirmed that the parish council is taking legal advice in respect of the lease of the land and that the land agents had reminded the parish council of its duties therein. The Cllrs confirmed that they continue to keep the site tidy with regular mowing and that the most recent hedge cut had been delayed due to contractor illness. The side gate remains securely blocked off with a heras fence – this has been in place since before the hall was demolished.
- iii. *Noted later in the meeting (62/25 iv) but reported here for consistency: Some sections on the old hall building footprint had been left for summer pollinating flowers and grasses. A farmer volunteer had offered to cut the hedge. **Resolved. Motion** to request quotations and appoint a contractor to trim any remaining untidy sections. Prps PP. Scnd ID. **Duly approved**. Signage remains in place advising that this land is private property. The site remains secure with robust locks, is flat, clear, traversable and without other obstructions likely to harm trespassers. The requirements within the lease continue to be referred to a solicitor and the parish hall committee had been made aware of this and so for the time being the site will remain locked and closed to the public until legal advice is obtained.*
- iv. *Residents from Croome were welcomed and thanked for information relating to wear and tear on the highway. This has been reported to Highways.*

*Residents were thanked for their input and Standing Orders were reinstated.*

## 62/25 Community and Committee Representatives

- i. **County Councillor Martin Allen.** See App 3 for the full written report.
  - a) Further information on Devolution proposals may be forthcoming in November once the unitary options have been debated by the county council.
  - b) 8 houses have been added to a roll out plan for improving broadband provision at Croome. Residents at Croome confirmed that they had been informed of this.
  - c) An update on the flood bund will be given to county cllrs around the 6<sup>th</sup> November.
- ii. **District Councillor John Michael.**
  - a) Coordination of order of remembrance wreaths was duly noted with thanks.
  - b) Ref the SWDP further Hearing Sessions were held on Thursday 4th September 2025 to discuss outstanding issues and updates in relation to provision for housing (Matter 4) and housing land supply (Matter 5). The Inspectors have now written to the Council's and

provided their Post Hearing Letter, which is available via this link:

<https://www.localplanservices.co.uk/swdpreview>

- iii. **Severn Bank, the sharp bend alert sign (VAS) and speed limits. Ref Appendix 4**
- a) **Resolved. Motion** for the parish council to adopt the VAS in principle subject to Westcotec investigations, and in order to prevent the VAS from being removed prematurely by the County Council: Nb. The cost for Westcotec to attend and assess the unit would be £295.00 + VAT. (A replacement device: £4,442.00 + VAT including solar kit and then a new 6 year warranty). Prps: PP. Scnd: RW. **Duly approved.**
  - b) The Clerk was **instructed** to apply to the CCllr for a £300 grant towards this project. (Note post meeting – completed 14/10.2025. Westcotec will now be contacted).
  - c) The Clerk was **instructed** to apply for a licence for this VAS from Highways. (Note post meeting – completed and received 13/10.2025)
  - d) **Resolved. Motion** to pursue the matter of road traffic collision definitions and use in policy making. See Appendix 4. Prps: RH. Scnd: PP. Duly approved. The Clerk was **instructed** to send these details to CCllr Karl Perks (Reform, Head of Highways), Rachel Benson (WCC Officer heading up Highways) and John Campion (Police and Crime Commissioner). (Note post meeting – completed 05/11/2025)
- iv. **The National Trust.**
- a) A correction was welcomed and read out. *“Discussion on Running Events and Previous Commitments. It was explained during the July 2025 meeting that the annual Black Pear Joggers 10km race is scheduled to take place this November, with a 9:00am start. This falls within the venue’s approved opening hours of 8:00am–6:00pm. In addition, it was noted that one of the venue’s allocated 10 out-of-hours events (permitted for groups over 30 and up to 1,000 people) would be used for a small club run involving approximately ticketed 75 participants. Councillors raised a concern, recalling that it had previously been stated that there would only ever be one running event held at the venue. In response, it was clarified that the additional event is not comparable in scale to the main race, is not open to the general public, and falls within the permitted allocation for out-of-hours activities. Following this, reference was made to a local residents’ meeting held in November 2024, where the Black Pear Joggers 10km race (350 runners, 9:00am start) was discussed. At that time, concerns had been raised by residents about the possibility of regular large events, such as ParkRun, being introduced if opening hours were extended. It was clearly stated in that meeting that there were no plans to host a series of large running events, and that reassurance was provided to residents on that point. It is emphasised that this position remains unchanged, and that there has been no turning back on any commitments made during prior discussions”.*
  - b) Representatives of the National Trust also noted that; many customers are using the dial a bus service; that the outdoor theatre event has been cancelled and that the remaining quota of late night openings might be added to the Christmas Lights events. Cllrs noted that WCC will be working on the ditch/headwall on the corner at London Arch 10th - 12th December 2025. Baileys Civils will conduct work. Unclear if road closures will be required due to the depth of the excavations planned.
- v. **Parish Hall Committee**
- a) Request to Charity Commission to amend charitable objects: The request has been outstanding since 22nd May 2025. An escalation was raised by the hall committee on 16th September, and a response received two days later from the charity commission assigning a case officer (Marie Killen) who committed to address the request as soon as possible. However, no firm timeline was indicated. As a reminder, the hall committee submitted a request to amend the charitable objective following legal advice and are seeking the charity commission’s approval in principle to the changes before following due process and seeking a vote of the parish on the go-forward options for the charity. Given the case now has an assigned person looking at it, we are still hopeful that an AGM (voting process) could be held before the end of the year.
  - b) Herras Fencing: The fencing has now been removed from site.
- vi. **The Friends of St Denys’ Committee.**  
Reminder: Carols at The Nash - Chase Brass Band -5th December 2025.

- vii. **Volunteer Footpaths Warden (VFW)**
- a) 31 issues have been reported and raised by the VFW, including the style at the Old Boars Head Car park, which is missing its plate. The Clerk was **instructed** to write to Savills to ask them to remind their tenants to reinstate routes across ploughed fields.
  - b) **Resolved. Motion** to purchase replacement roundels for public rights of way and for VFW to install. Prps: PP. Scnd: RH. **Duly approved.** (Note post meeting – completed 25/10/2025)
  - c) **Outstanding action** – to put VFW in touch with Savills once the parish council has met with the new representative.
  - d) **Outstanding action** – to seek county councillor assistance regarding the blocked right of way (fence/gate structure) at Clifton adjacent to The Maltings/Roseland. – Delayed pending outcome of Footpaths Consultation.
  - e) The Clerk was **instructed** to put VFW in contact with the National Trust. (Note post meeting – completed 25/10/2025)
- viii. **Tarmac.** Emailed report from Cllr Freeman. The next meeting is 05/03/2026
- a) The western site at Clifton is now exhausted and all work has now ceased and all stock sold so there is no stockpiling of materials.
  - b) Environmental restoration is now well underway although tree planting has been restricted due to the adverse summer conditions. Anticipated completion is Sept/ October 2025.
  - c) The existing processing plant and equipment on the site will now be mothballed until the possible opening of the eastern site on the other side of the A38. Est. 18 months to 2 years.
  - d) Planning for the opening of the eastern site: environment/ hydrographic surveys remain to be done and although it has now been decided that material will be transferred across the surface of the A38 rather than through a tunnel, there remains much discussion and approval as to how that will be accomplished.
  - e) The eastern site will be for the extract of sand and it was mentioned that initial material surveys suggest works may be closer to Clifton village than originally thought. Assurance was given that before any decisions are made and work started a full and transparent public consultation will be conducted. When operational the eastern site is expected to have enough product to operate for 8-10 years.
- ix. **Phone Box High Green.**
- f) Duly noted that the appointed contractor has pulled out due to health. **Resolved. Motion** to approach others who submitted tenders with a view to reviewing their quotations once again. Prps: ID. Scnd: RH. **Duly approved.** (Note post meeting – Copes Home Maintenance contacted by Cllr Williams and appointed to continue QU-0034 for GBP 955.00. Clerk liaising. Work underway as of 05/11/2025. Grant for £1000 received from WCC Cllr Martin Allen).

### 63/25 Planning and enforcement.

- i. Standing Item: To consider (and as required, arrange an extra ordinary parish council meeting) planning applications received after date of publication of this agenda.
  - a) Enforcement action against caravans Severn Bank. Alleged Breach – change of use to Caravan Site. **M/ENF/25/0204**. Officer M. Croxford has visited the site twice to progress.
  - b) Application for the three-story houses **M/24/01651/OUT** still to be decided. Planning permission has already been granted for the two-story properties.
- ii. **West Mercia PCC Town and Parish Council Survey** – Responded 28/08/2025. Speeding, traffic crimes and rural crime. Duly noted.

- iii. **WCC Local Nature Recovery Strategy Public Consultation** – Responded 28/08/2025..  
**Resolved. Motion** to submit latest resident concerns about potential loss of farmland to WCC.  
Prps: PP. Scnd: ID. **Duly approved.** (Note post meeting – completed 06/10/2025).
- iv. **WCC development of Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plans** – Responded 28/08/2025.  
That route D to St Peters be extended to include Kempsey and beyond to Severn Stoke.
- v. **WCC Rights of Way Improvement Plan Consultation** – Motion to formulate a response and approve submission – deadline 26th October. Thoughts from VFW in Appendix 5. **Resolved. Motion** to submit concerns to WCC. Prps: PP. Scnd: RH. **Duly approved.** (Note post meeting – completed 06/10/2025).
- vi. **Survey on Local Government Re-organisation** Response submitted by the Clerk 06/10/2025 raising concerns about the exclusion of parish councils from Devolution Plans, given only 10 days to respond to a WCC consultation.
- vii. **WCC Enforcement Plan has been adopted. Duly noted.** The Enforcement Plan sets out how the county council will operate its planning enforcement function, has been reviewed to take account of the updated guidance contained in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024.
- viii. **WCC Statement of Licensing Policy Review – Consultation from Regulatory Service.** No response required.

#### **64/25 Contracts and staffing matters (listed as item 7 in the agenda).**

**Motion** to exclude members of the press and public as per Resolution 59/25 above now in place. All public, district and county councillors left the meeting.

- i. **Site of Parish Hall Lease and contracts. Resolved. Motion** in relation to appointment of Solicitor. **Instructions** given to the Clerk in respect of budgeting and keeping the Hall Committee informed.
- ii. **Staffing Committee recommendations** and Parish Clerk contract. The Clerk left the meeting to allow the Staffing Committee recommendations to be debated and Motions as appropriate.  
**Resolved. Motions** to:
  1. Increase the Clerk's pay to £13.90 per hour, aligning with Spinal Column Point 8 (SCP 8) on the NJC 2025/26 pay scales, with the increase to be backdated to 1st April 2025.
  2. Increase working hours from 6 to 8 per week, to take effect from 1st April 2026.
  3. Staffing Committee to undertake a review of the contract of employment.**Prps and Scnd** recorded by the Staffing Committee and 1, 2 & 3 **duly approved.**
- iii. **Lengthsman contracts. Resolved. Motion** to appoint Mr T. Hughes as temporary interim Lengthsman until 30 March 2026 under same contract conditions as current Lengthsman. Prps: PP. Scnd: RH. **Duly approved.** Cllrs wished Simon Bott a speedy recovery. The Clerk was **instructed** to let Highways know and obtain Lantra training confirmation. (Note post meeting – completed October 2025).
- iv. **Online Banking and changes to terms and conditions. Resolved. Motion** to amend Standing Orders as required by the changes being instigated by the bank, to ensure all Councillors and the Clerk as RFO are listed against the bank account and online banking and for the current requirement for two signatories to remain in place. The other option, which was rejected by Cllrs, would only allow the Clerk to view the bank statements and Cllrs would become responsible for inputting and approving all payments. Prps: ID. Scnd: RH. **Duly approved.** Deadline 2<sup>nd</sup> week in November 2025. Cllr Freeman to assist and Internal Auditor to be kept informed of progress.

**65/25 Finance, admin and training**

- i. **Resolved. Motion** to consider/motion to approve payment of accounts for this month and the previous month. Prps: PP. Scnd: RH. Duly **approved**. Appendix 1.
- ii. **Resolved. Motion** to receive and approve the latest bank reconciliation/quarterly report (as applicable). Prps: RH. Scnd: LMH. Duly **approved**. Q2 report approved. Cllrs noted a reimbursement from Grimley Parish Council ref item 38 and noted the timely intervention of the Clerk in this matter. The Clerk was instructed to look into Sharepoint as a means of disseminating invoices for inspection by Cllrs. The PC Microsoft package may already include access to this.
- iii. **Resolved. Motion** to receive the Clerk's timesheet. Prps: RH. Scnd: PP. Duly **approved**.
- iv. Press and social media policy. Annual Audit requirements in 2026 will require further consideration of a general IT policy. Cllr McEwan-Hill assisting. Update post meeting: Clerk has finalised this document and provided to Cllr McEwan-Hill.
- v. **Risk Assessment review progress update** – To note that the bank has made changes to online banking and the Clerk, who is a signatory for two parish councils, has made procedural changes to prevent accidental toggling between payees for differing accounts. Duly noted with no concerns.
- vi. **Annual Audit 2024/2025**. To note correspondence from auditors – acknowledgement of receipt.
- vii. Grants application form has been sent to St Denys'. Clerk is assisting with completion.

**66/25 Correspondence, dates for diary, items for future agenda.**

- i. Cllrs may use this opportunity to report minor matters of info not included elsewhere on the agenda. WCALC AGM 13<sup>th</sup> November 5.15pm at Kidderminster or online.
- ii. Items for future agendas:
  - a) Resident request for a reduced speed limit at Croome to 30mph. Scoping request to Highways has suggested that any amendment to speed limit should wait until results of yellow line trial.
  - b) Flooding at Kinnersley – Highways have declined involvement and have asked the PC to refer the enquiry to the land drainage team at the district council to investigate and action.
  - c) War memorial, progress with valuation.
  - d) New VAS battery required to be purchased – clarify which VAS is experiencing difficulty.... Westcotec or Elan City.

**58/25 Date of the next meeting.** Wed 26<sup>th</sup> November 7.30pm. Croome NT SOQ meeting room.

Signed ..... Chairman .....Date

**Contact the parish clerk if you would like to receive agendas or minutes by email.**

Proper Officer, RFO & Parish Clerk: Mrs Lisa Stevens, 9 The Limes, Kempsey, WR5 3LG.  
Tel: 01905 820956 / 07950256363 [parishclerk@severnstokeandcroomedabitot-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@severnstokeandcroomedabitot-pc.gov.uk)

New website: <http://severnstokeandcroomedabitot-pc.gov.uk>

**Notes to minutes – Terms**

- Once approved, the Motion/decision is called a "resolution"
- Resolved – Where a decision is made about a Motion.
- Duly Approved – Motions where a formal vote took place, accepting the Motion.
- Duly Accepted/Agreed – Motions where no formal vote took place but the action/recommendation within the Motion or debate is to proceed. Usually for non-financial matters or for items already agreed as part of an existing budget.
- Declined – Motion where a formal vote took place, with the Motion rejected.
- Duly Noted – Information not requiring a vote.
- Abstentions or votes against a Motion will be noted but the minutes will NOT always show individual names, unless Councillors have declared an interest and the transparency of that interest must be maintained.

Requests for this information in other languages/audio/large print will be reasonably considered.

Please take a moment read the council's privacy notice, which explains how we use and look after your information and your rights. This document is available via the website above.

**Appendix 1. Items already paid since last PC meeting** (*Approved under previous agenda or required payment under contract monthly*) **And Appendix 2. Items for payment outstanding:**

36	Aug, Q2 HMRC period 5	Mr S. Bott	Lengthsman invoice July 2025	£380.25
37		Mr S. Bott	Parish Hall Mowing July 2024.	£40.00
38		J J Bowdige	Tree Survey	£500.00
39		HMRC Shipley	EmployEE Income tax payment.	£5.20
40		Mrs L. Stevens	Expenses & HMA (£26) August 2025	£55.98
41		Mrs L. Stevens	Clerk wage July paid in Aug 2025	redacted
42		Bank account service charge	Bank monthly fee	£4.25
43	Sept, Q2 HMRC period 6	Mr S. Bott	Lengthsman invoice Aug 2025	£234.40
44		Mr S. Bott	Parish Hall Mowing Aug 2024	£0.00
45		Society of Merchant Venturers as Endowment Trustee for St Monica Trust	c/o Savills (UK) Ltd. Ref 55299 Parish Hall lease.	£453.60
46		National Trust (Reimbursement to Lisa Stevens who paid on debit card)	Hire of the S.O.Q Building. Clerk to pay by card and to be reimbursed.	Likely to be waived
47		WJP Software Limited	Annual service charge website hosting and gov.email accounts. Assertion 10 AGAR	£417.60
48		Glasdon	021/0013 Bin for BirchGreen layby	£582.00
49		EON	Street lighting Stonnall Close and Knights Hill. Invoice period: 1 Apr 2024 to 31 Mar 2025. Invoice date: 28 Aug 2025.	£165.58
50		HMRC Shipley	EmployEE Income tax payment. Reimbursement to Clerk £25.60 due to tax code change issued by HMRC	£30.80 to parish clerk at end of tax year
51		Mrs L. Stevens	Expenses & HMA (£26) September 2025	£29.20
52		Mrs L. Stevens	Clerk wage Aug paid in Sept 2025	redacted
53	Mrs L. Stevens	Backdated pay rise. Readjusted payscales.	Staffing Committee	
54	Bank account service charge	Bank monthly fee	£4.25	
55	Mrs L. Stevens	Land Registry Charges 22/09/2025	£35.00	
56		DCllr David Harrison	Royal legion poppy wreath and donation	£30.00

**Appendix 3 – County Councillor Martin Allen report to parish council September 2025**

UNITARY AUTHORITY'S - At the September County Councils full meeting a motion was passed to instruct Officers to continue with the One Unitary Worcestershire option. MHDC voted for the two unitary option.

BROADBAND UPDATE CROOME - Agreement has been reached with Openreach, the 8 houses have been added into a rollout plan, with Openreach targeting completion by the end of March 2026.

FLOOD BUND MEETING - I have a question laid down for the 6th of November full County Council meeting asking for an update. Following the answer, I will have the option of a supplementary question.

SHARP CORNER WARNING SIGN SEVERN BANK - I am very willing to support your motion as appearing in Appendix and to supply a grant if you apply for it. £300.

COUNTY COUNCIL CABINET MEETING - The second Cabinet meeting took place on 15/07/25, the new administration is going to look again if building a new school or instead expanding places in existing High Schools to get us over the bulge which will occur in 2029, after which school numbers will fall.

WORCESTERSHIRE ON DEMAND BUS DATA - 1st of Jan 2025 - 27th of July 2025 there have been 7208 passengers.

GRIFFITHS HGVS COMING THROUGH KERSWELL GREEN AND KINNERSLEY - Following a complaint of Griffiths HGV's going through Kerswell Green and Kinnersley, I have been informed that WCC Highways believe this is lawful and will not be taking any action. There maybe a problem with planning for use of the site, but this matter is for MHDC.

KNIGHTS HILL PARKING ISSUES - WCC does not support waiting restrictions in residential cul-de-sacs. The problem is that double yellow lines apply equally to all types and sizes of vehicle and apply at all times. This removes all flexibility for residents to cooperate and flexibly use the limited parking space available. If drivers are actually, physically blocking other people's driveways then this is a Police matter. *End of update. Some items redacted as containing contact details.*

#### **Appendix 4 - Motion to Police Crime Commissioner and Highways Worcestershire County Council.**

This Parish Council acknowledges the importance of public safety and the effective use of infrastructure and budgetary resources by West Mercia Police and Worcestershire County Council. However, it is with concern that we have noted the current definition of "road traffic collisions" which only includes those accidents where injury is caused. The data derived from this existing term could be said to give rise to decisions that do not fully consider or represent the realities of road safety and traffic-related incidents in our parish and the wider region. We hereby resolve to:

**1. Question the Definition:**

The Parish Council requests that Worcestershire County Council and West Mercia Police review and clarify its definition of "road traffic collisions" to ensure it accurately captures all relevant incidents, including near-misses, incidents involving non-motorised road users (such as cyclists and pedestrians), and other factors that may be overlooked in the current categorisation.

**2. Evaluate the Impacts on Infrastructure Planning:**

We request that Worcestershire County Council re-assess how the definition of "road traffic collisions" influences their decision-making processes regarding infrastructure investments and priorities, particularly in regard to speed restrictions, pedestrian safety, cycle lanes, and road improvements that benefit non-motorised users.

**3. Re-evaluation of Speed Limits Along the A38, Especially at Severn Bank:**

The Parish Council formally requests that Worcestershire County Council and West Mercia Police work together to reevaluate the current speed limits along the A38, with particular emphasis on the section near Severn Bank. The Parish Council expresses concern that the current speed limits at Severn Bank may not adequately reflect the safety needs of local residents and road users. Given the historical residential experiences and recollections of accidents and near-misses in this area, the Parish Council believes that a reduction in speed limits, along with enhanced signage and road safety measures, may significantly improve safety for all road users, particularly vulnerable groups such as pedestrians and cyclists.

**4. The Parish Council respectfully requests that Worcestershire County Council and West Mercia Police responds to this motion within a reasonable timeframe, regardless of Devolution timetables.**

**End of Motion.** *Sent to: Police and Crime Commissioner Mr John Campion, Dame Harriet Baldwin MP*

*Karl Perks, Highways. WCC, Rachael Benson, Highways. WCC, Tanya Crake, Highways, WCC. Cllr and DCllrs.*

#### **Appendix 5 – Volunteer thoughts and ideas for responding to WCC consultation on rights of way**

- Rights of way are left to land owners to keep clear, but with no enforcement and certainly no encouragement or guidance given to them. Farmers are encouraged to keep crops clear along routes but often are reluctant to do so, because they receive little cooperation from walkers who do not pick up dog mess. Ploughed fields are a particular hazard to walkers. Electric fencing often has a walker-assist rubber clip and hook to allow access but there is little to no publicity or guidance of this - resulting in vandalism by walkers who believe that their access is being hindered when it isn't.
- The fact that reports site for decades unattended to on the WCC website.
- That reported problems get allocated an arbitrary number of importance, that never has any bearing on whether the issue get sorted or not.
- That enforcement action is never taken against those that block access to rights of way (Eg 576(c) Clifton)
- That parish councils are not permitted to repair right of way infrastructure themselves, and yet WCC will readily acknowledge that they only ever repair right of way infrastructure if there is nothing else going on and in the winter when it is quiet and only if they have the budget.
- That farmers are encouraged to repair gates for pedestrians only but not to installed gates that allow a wheelchair, pushchair etc.
- Rights of way that this parish council and the county councillor have applied to get officially recognised and adopted are stuck in a loop of paperwork and will soon pass the deadline for being added to the official register of rights of way. Eg Old Hills Footpath in Severn Stoke which has been on the list for a DMMO since 1997.
- Process for recruiting volunteer footpath officers and the barrier of interview and assessment of competence for those who are volunteers. Very off putting.
- That the post of county footpath officer at WCC was such low priority and so underfunded that it went unfilled for a year in 2024 and 2025.
- That one of the most important recreational footpaths in the county - the Severn Way - is almost total neglected, with repairs passed between the canal trust and the county council and with no acknowledgement that there should be facilitate public access, including recommended places to park, litter bins and with a long term plan to tackle Himalayan Balsam.-END-