



Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Preston on Stour Parish Council

Held on: Thursday 20th March 2025 at 7:30pm
Place: The Three Parishes Millennium Hall, Preston on Stour

Present: Cllrs Will Spencer (Chair), Anna Corser (Vice-Chair), James Seccombe

In attendance: Laura Callow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the public: 1

71/24 WELCOME and APOLOGIES - Apologies accepted from Paddy Hoare

72/24 Declaration of Interest - There were none to receive

73/24 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting from 16th January 2025 were **confirmed** and **signed**.

Proposed: Cllr Spencer

Seconded: Cllr Seccombe

All in favour

74/24 Open Forum - None received

75/24 Alscot Estate - Report was emailed and read out by the Chair. The report is attached to minutes (Appendix A)

76/24 DC Dominic Skinner - No report received

77/24 CC Izzi Seccombe - CC Izzi Seccombe gave update an update. Elections will be going ahead on 1st May as Warwickshire weren't chosen for phase 1 of the white paper. 21st March was a key date for submission of proposals. Two proposals are being put forward, first is a single unity and second is a north & south unity. A more detailed case is being put together ready for the deadline of 28th November. Road surfaces in the local area are scheduled for renewal but this will be once the solar farm has been completed. Temporary fill-ins will be done to any dangerous areas in the meantime.

78/24 ST, Mary's Church - No report received

79/24 Grants for approval

- i. It was unanimously agreed to grant £100 to PEG for materials for water testing.
- ii. It was unanimously agreed to grant £500 to ST, Marys Church towards the mowing of churchyard.

80/24 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- i. The financial report was discussed and agreed
- ii. Bank Reconciliation was approved
- iii. 6 invoices were approved for payment

Inv 18	SLCC	£85.50	CiLCA training
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Inv 19	Laura Callow	£428.10	Clerks Wage
Inv 20	HMRC	£5.80	Tax
Inv 21	Village Hall	£108.00	Hall hire
Inv 22	St Marys Church	£500.00	Grant
Inv 23	PEG	£100.00	Grant

iv. It was unanimously agreed to use Mr Kenneth Dunn for the Internal Audit.

v. It was unanimously agreed to change the bank mandate.

Proposed Cllr Spencer

Seconded Cllr Seccombe

All in favour

81/24 Planning

- i. **25/00522/COUR - Whitehill buildings, Alderminster - No Objection** - clerk will submit comment by 7th April 25.

82/24 Councillors Reports and items for future agendas

- i. **Website-** Cllr Seccombe gave update on the website and will look into a new website provider for the next meeting.
- ii. **Defibrillator Contract** - Cllr Spencer informed the current guardian is soon giving it up. The first responders have said they can take it over for a cost. This will be added to next agenda.
- iii. **Dog Fouling** - Clerk will put a notice onto the noticeboard.

83/24 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

- o Thursday 15th May 2025 at 7:00pm

84/24 TO CONSIDER CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

The meeting was closed at **08.30pm**

Proposed: Cllr Spencer Seconded: Cllr Corser

All in favour

85/24 PERSONNEL and CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

SIGNED:

Appendix A

Alscot Estate Report March 2025

Forestry

As part of the Estate wide Hazard Tree Survey, health and safety inspections of the roadside trees and trees within public areas continue. This year we will focus on trees identified as priority, however, there are no high priority trees within Preston, and so the survey this year does not extend to the village.

There are some planned woodland thinning and clearing works due to take place over the next few months, to then be followed with the planting of around 8,000 new trees later in the year, in line with the Woodland Management Plan. There are also plans in place to plant 1,250 metres of new hedging, replacing fencing in the Atherstone and Clifford area, later this year.

Following essential works to vulnerable river side trees in Atherstone (willow and poplar), a new Cricket bat willow nursery for an initial 800 tods (cut from the felled timber) has been created along a riverside location in Atherstone. This is a new and exciting project for Alscot to provide its own supply of new Sets (young cricket bat willow trees) every 4 years, that can be planted in favourable locations across the Estate. Once planted, these Sets will take around 15 years to reach maturity before they are harvested for cricket bat clefts. Each harvested tree will then be replaced with another Set grown from the nursery bed on the Estate.

Flooding

It is apparent there is a flooding issue within the village, and we have done some investigation into this with more to follow. The water is starting as run off from the field to the rear of the church, running through the graveyard, past Silvestor Cottages and down to the bank (opposite the shop). At this point, it then reaches a damaged culvert by the entrance to the Old Manor House, causing an overflow issue during periods of high rainfall. The issues with the culvert have been reported to the Council by the Estate.

To help alleviate this, the Estate will take some measures to clear the ditch, starting at Top Lodge and working down past Silvester Cottages, all the way to the bottom of the field entrance (opposite the shop) together with trenching in a new ditch along the boundary of the graveyard and the old orchard, to better channel and assist in picking up the runoff. The roadside culverts will require further action once the issue has been ascertained and we no more from the Council. We would welcome support from the Parish Council in leaning on the Council to address this.

Land Adjacent to the Village Shop

Last year we granted a lease over land within the village to allow for a Wilder Communities Project with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WWT). We are delighted that after some hard work, Preston Environmental Group (PEG) and WWT have now brought this project to fruition by mowing, raking and sowing wildflower seeds provided by the Trust. We now eagerly anticipate a vibrant display of flourishing wildflowers at the entrance to the village.

Regenerative Farming

As part of our sustainable land management practices, we are conducting baseline surveys and carefully monitor improvements in soil health, plant life, and wildlife diversity. Surveys across the arable fields, permanent pastures, woodlands and water bodies are now well underway, helping us to build a valuable baseline dataset as the regenerative farming system develops. Some warmer weather over the next few weeks will hopefully see the crops, planted in the autumn with a view to improving soil health/structure, begin to take off.

A recent bird survey, carried out on the 5th and 6th of March, yielded encouraging results even at this early stage.

We would encourage people to follow Alscot on social media, and for those that do not have access, please check in with our website periodically where all information will be made available. Additionally, Wild About Clifford have invited Alscot to talk about our regenerative farming efforts at their next community meeting at 7pm on the 2nd April at Clifford Village Hall. PEG are working with Wild About Clifford and will generate a flyer/poster to advertise their event.

Community Cricket - Alscot v Warwick CC - 29th May 6pm

We have set a date of Thursday 29th May for the next Alscot friendly, and we would love to see support from the village for the Cricket Club, and to be involved in the community social evening. Warwick Cricket Club, based at Alscot Park, is a friendly and inclusive club that warmly welcomes new members. As a self-sufficient organisation, they work tirelessly to maintain their grounds and foster a thriving cricketing community. With the sport's growing popularity, the addition of a fourth team to their Saturday fixtures is a testament to both their success and their welcoming spirit.