Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 18 March 2026

In Birlingham Village Hall

Councillors:

Paula Aston (PA), Steve Byrne (SB), David Glover (DG) and Ian Yates (IY).

In attendance: District Councillor Paul Middlebrough (PM) and Clerk June Hiden (JH).

Carl Brassington, Jayne Brassington, Karen Crowther (Art & Craft group), Sue Hermon (Cuppa & Chat), Carly Mills (I.W.), Adam Kent and Becca Garle.

Welcome – The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Councillor Rupert Day (RD) due to business commitments. The apologies were accepted. Apologies were received from Footpath Warden Bruce Hayward.

2. Declaration of Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2026, a copy of which has been circulated to all Councillors, was agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

Corrections were made to the November 2025 minutes. Clerk's pay and expenses are reading as October, November and December. It is July, August and September.

Democratic Opening

The meeting was adjourned for public question time. There was nothing to report.

4. A Few Thank-you's

Carl Brassington

The Chairman thanked Carl Brassington for his fifteen years working as the parish Lengthsman. The village is extremely grateful for everything Carl has done. A small gift in the form of a voucher was presented as a token of appreciation. Carl was wished a happy retirement.

County Councillor Divisional Grant Funding

County Councillor Adrian Hardman was thanked for his ongoing support with his Divisional Grant funding given to the village groups. Thank-you's were given by representatives of the community groups as funding provides important contributions towards their running costs.

Cuppa & Chat - Sue Hermon. Sue said that the group meet monthly. There are 20 attendees on average and the grant will assist in the group being able to retain their current prices. The group are very grateful. Sue said anyone is welcome to come along and enjoy drinks and homemade cake.

Art and Craft Group – Karen Crowther said the group started after Covid for a weekly social gathering, as much for a chat as crafting. The numbers are now quite low but the grant will make a huge difference to not increasing prices. It is £2.50 including coffee and cake and takes place on Tuesday mornings. Karen said, 'Thank you Adrian.'

I.W. – Caryl Mills. The group has been running independently for 18 years following the increase in membership charges for W.I. The numbers are lower in the winter months and some meetings are now in the day rather than an evening. The grant will mean that the group can continue its monthly meetings rather than reduce sessions due to costs. New members are needed. The average cost is £4 a month. Caryl said, 'Thank Adrian very much.'

5. Notification of Vacancies for Co-option of 6th and 7th Councillor

Michael Porter resigned after the last meeting as he thought there would be future conflicts of interest. Michael was thanked for his time and contribution as a Councillor.

There are two vacancies for Councillor's. Anyone that is interested can be co-opted onto the Parish Council.

6. Government Consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Worcestershire

A letter from Councillor Richard Morris, Leader of the local authority has been circulated and published in the Birlingham News.

There are two options for reorganisation in Worcestershire:

The first option is One Worcestershire, which would create a single unitary council running all services across the county and is preferred by Worcestershire County Council and Wyre Forest District Council.

The second option is Transforming Worcestershire. This would create a North Worcestershire Council and a South Worcestershire Council to run services in their respective parts of the county, with collaboration between the two when beneficial. This option is preferred by Bromsgrove District, Malvern Hills District, Redditch Borough, Worcester City and Wychavon District Councils.

Under both options, the County Council and the six borough, city and district councils will be abolished by 1 April 2028.

Councillor Morris' letter advised that the government did not include the parish councils in their consultation, but he felt this was not the right thing to do. The Parish Council members thought it would be good to understand more and which is the right choice.

An understanding to the arguments for and against One Worcestershire versus Transforming Worcestershire was given.

Presentation by District Councillor Paul Middlebrough. Councillor Middlebrough has sent slides of the WDC preferred option for a split Worcestershire. This is Transforming Worcestershire – two authorities one in the North and one in the South of Worcestershire currently supported by District Councils in Bromsgrove, Malvern, Redditch, Wychavon and Worcester City Council.

The essence of Transforming is to keep local identification. Councillor Middlebrough said that reorganisation can be up to 25 years and current organisation has been 48 years. It is felt that smaller is better than bigger. The local identity would remain.

Councillor Middlebrough was asked if the geographical line for a split had been drawn? This has not been done at this time.

The consultation can be for individuals as well as councils. WDC will be notified of the decision late June/July.

The Parish Council thanked Councillor Middlebrough for his talk.

County Councillor Adam Kent, Conservative Group Leader at WCC and a Birlingham resident gave a short presentation for One Worcestershire – a single unitary authority currently supported by Worcester County Council and Wyre Forest District Council. Councillor Kent was an advocate for unitary. He said that a split would put a line through Worcestershire. Fundamentally One Worcestershire would be a cost saving. The town and parish councils would have more say.

Councillor Kent was asked if the Lord Lieutenant and High Sheriff would remain. It is believed this will be the case.

The County Council and the district councils were at loggerheads. The Police and Crime commissioners are to be dissolved.

The question was asked if the Government has already decided on a single unitary authority. Is this just a technicality?

Councillor Adam Kent was thanked for his time in the discussion and for his attendance.

District Councillor Middlebrough will keep the Parish Council informed of any updates.

CALC have sent a survey of views however the Parish Council do not intend to respond.

7. Progress Reports

a) Footpath Warden:

i. In February I sent details (including photographs) of finger posts I believe need to be replaced to my contact at WCC. I await a response.

b) Tree Warden, Rupert Day: Nothing to report.

c) Lengthsman – Three people have been approached. Kevin LeMarechal has agreed to be the Lengthsman. Kevin studied Horticulture at Pershore College and before becoming self-employed he managed a nursery for RA Meredith and Sons. He lives in Overbury and knows Birlingham well having done gardening work for several residents. Kevin must undertake statutory training, scheduled during late March and early April so should be able to commence shortly afterwards.

Lengthsman training. Worcestershire County Council have no planned training dates at this time however details have been sent of online training which the Parish Council can arrange so they train their Lengthsman. The courses required are NHSS 12 Temporary Traffic Management Basic Course (TTMBC) and then the NHSS 12D T1 element Static Works on Single Carriageways.

The cost is in the region of £360 including VAT. The cost of the course needs to be paid for by the Parish Council; it cannot be reclaimed from the Lengthsman Scheme.

Once the training is complete the Lengthsman will receive an E-card from the County Council.

Members agreed to pay for the training.

Kevin will need to send a copy of his public liability insurance to the Clerk.

d) District Councillor. A report has been received by Councillor Paul Middlebrough.

"Key issues for Birlingham Residents:-

WYCHAVON BUDGET

On 25th February 2026 Wychavon completed its budget for 2026/2027.Total revenue spending is £18.5 million and £16.1 million on capital projects.

The key points are

- *Freezing our share of the Council Tax for two years*
- *A £5 million support package offering a mixture of grants, free and discounted council services over the next two years. £400,000 for a new community grants scheme which will provide smaller grants to help community groups improve their local area.*
- *Up to £4 million to decarbonise Pershore and Evesham Leisure Centres (Energy efficiency measures are being installed at Droitwich Spa Leisure Centre as part of the current upgrade).*
- *£872,000 to support Wychavon's economy including an extra £412,000 in a new Wychavon Growth Grant and Wychavon Rural Grant to continue to support small and medium-sized businesses across the district with expansion projects.*
- *£100,000 in grants to support energy efficiency schemes for community buildings and biodiversity improvements for communities.*

These are on top of multi-million-pound commitments already made by Wychavon for major regeneration and wellbeing projects, including Evesham Town Centre through redevelopment of the Riverside Shopping Centre site and upgrades to the lido and leisure centre in Droitwich Spa.
Council Tax Bills will be sent out during March. The bills show the following differences since last year

	% Change
Wychavon	*0.0*
Worcestershire County Council	*9.0*
West Mercia Police	*5.2*
Fire Authority	*4.9*
Defford & Besford	*10.9*
Birlingham	*2.3*
Eckington	*4.9*
Strensham	*9.2*

PLANNING

South Worcestershire Development Plan (Review)
It is expected that the SWDP(R) will be approved at the end of the month. This should in the short term reduce the need for more housing, though probably not in the medium term as the
Government are revising national planning policy to support their wider objectives of building 1.5 million houses.

Throckmorton New Settlement Master planning
The South Worcestershire Councils (SWC), supported by Homes England, wish to undertake further work to produce an innovative, ambitious, and deliverable Framework Masterplan that is accompanied by a detailed phasing and delivery plan for Throckmorton New Settlement, building upon the work undertaken to date for the imminent Review of the Plan.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Government's consultation on local government reorganisation in Worcestershire is underway with a closing date of 26th March 2026.

Although the Government for some reason left parish councils off the list of consultees you can of course fill in the forms, Local government reorganisation in Worcestershire - GOV.UK

Parish council insight matters to us, and we want to ensure your voice is heard during this critical phase of the reorganisation process and that is why in our Transforming Worcestershire recommendation we promoted the voice of Town and Parish Councils being essential part of democracy in the South Worcestershire unitary authority.

The Government will probably announce which approach Two Unitaries or One Unitary before their summer recess.

At the same time the government is moving forward with its powers for devolved arrangements, introducing an elected mayor to oversee local transport and skills, as well as being responsible for delivering other services. Firmly committed to mayoral devolution, the government is advancing its agenda through the devolution priority programme. However, it has emphasised that the model is most successful when based on robust foundations, such as the strong unitary structures being established through local government reorganisation. These reforms are scheduled to be delivered within this parliamentary session."

Councillor Middlebrough can be contacted on paul.middlebrough@wychavon.net

e) County Councillor: no report.

f) Clerk - See ***Appendix 1***

8. Planning

a) Planning applications:

i. W/26/00163/PIP – Permission in principle for the erection of between 5-9 dwellings

Land at (OS 9284 4361) Eckington Road

Parish Council comment:

"Birlingham Parish Council unanimously object to the Permission in Principle (PIP) application for the erection of five to nine dwellings on a greenfield site. Whilst PIP applications consider only the matters of location, land use and amount of development, these matters must still be assessed against the statutory development plan and relevant planning legislation, including, but not exclusively, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) adopted 2016. In addition, the Birlingham Village Design Statement (VDS) should also be considered to give context to this application as it was adopted by Wychavon District Council.

We would like to comment as follow:

General comments:

1. *Policy within SWDP directs new housing development to sustainable locations within defined settlement boundaries. Birlingham is an established category 4 development; it does not have surplus existing services, has limited public transport,*

2. *limited to poor access to education or healthcare and limited to negligible access to safe and convenient employment opportunities. The increased dependency on car usage, which would therefore be required, would in turn result in a significant environmental impact. The proposed site, conflicts with SWDP in that the site is not demonstrated to be a sustainable location.*
3. *Both SWDP policy and the objectives of the NPPF, seek to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and protect it.*
4. *SWDP seeks to protect and enhance the character of the South Worcestershire landscape. Even at this early PIP stage, the location of this site raises serious concerns regarding harm to local landscape character and visual amenity through the introduction of built form into a sparsely developed rural area.*
5. *SWDP policies require development to conserve and enhance green infrastructure and biodiversity. Development on greenfield land has the potential to adversely affect habitats and ecological networks. Development on this site risks conflict with these policies before detailed matters are even considered.*
6. *The development site is currently a productive agricultural asset.*

Highway concerns:
Cars travel at great speed along the Eckington Road from its intersection with Bakers Hill, around a sharp blind bend, moving down towards Eckington Bridge. The upper part of the Eckington Road, already contends with the weekday drop off and pick up of children by parents from Busy Bees, which is adjacent to the application site. A further number of access points from new driveways would add to this already congested road which could lead to additional safety issues.

Public Transport/availability of footpaths and or cycle paths:
The application is misleading in several respects, firstly inferring that there are regular buses. From our local knowledge buses run along this road infrequently and irregularly. These stop in an area with no lighting and no footpath (especially problematic in the winter).
Further, during the period 23/24 Eckington Bridge suffered closures totalling c70 days, with the majority of these being due to flooding. When this happens, buses must reroute and do not come near the village. This is also the case with School buses. If they can't get over the bridge from the Bredon direction they have to go through the Combertons, leading to children from the village having to seek alternative ways to get to school. Overall, this limited and often compromised service would continue the existing pressure on residents to use their own vehicular mode of transport.
There are very limited and in places no public paths or dedicated cycle ways from the subject site along the Eckington Road into Eckington or along Defford Road into Pershore. There are also very limited and in places no public paths or dedicated cycle ways from the subject site along the Eckington Road, Defford Road, with its steep inclines, with dangerous corners/junctions to Defford; the suggestion in the application that young children or even adults will use it on bicycles is absurd.

Lack of Infrastructure support for the application site:
Again, the application is misleading, it states limited but not insignificant local services are available, but Birlingham has no shop or school. Birlingham only has a church with minimal fortnightly services, a small village hall (only opened by appointment) and a small pub.
Alluding to a population infrastructure imbalance, the application suggests that without this development "Birlingham will decline due to its ageing population" without any supporting data. The Parish Council has noted that over the last ten years, but especially since the end of Covid c 5 years ago, there are significantly more children/young families within the existing Birlingham Village.

5-year housing land supply:
The applicate infers to the Local Authority having not proved in public it has a 5-year housing land supply. This does not align with Councillor Paul Middlebrough's recorded statement at the last Parish Council meeting in January 2026, when Paul stated that as part of the recent but unadopted SWDP, Wychavon would have a sufficient 5-year housing land supply, under the current government.

The Birlingham Village Design statement (VDS):
As you will note, Birlingham is a working village, with most uninhabited land farmed by the local farm (including this land) or left as wetlands. The application site is prime agricultural land. If you refer to the VDS, there is a consensus that "in fill" housing comprising one or two units, in appropriate locations, within the village could be supported. Especially if they are smaller units for young family's starter homes or smaller units to allow older residents in the area to remain after downsizing. There were general concerns that any small-scale infill development should not change the current nature and openness of the village. So, as a Parish Council we are certainly supportive of an evolving village, provided the correct site application and supporting criteria are met."

There was further discussion on the application. Is the application to go to committee? The application is still pending.

The members felt more clarification was needed. Councillors briefly reviewed the status with District Councillor Paul Middlebrough and Becca Garle who heads up the Birlingham resident's planning group. The South Worcestershire Development Plan has now been formally signed off by the Planning Inspector. This plan demonstrates a 5-year housing land supply plus an additional 5% surplus/margin. This Plan should be adopted by the local authority during the week commencing 23 March 2026. As a result, the Parish Council agreed to submit a supplementary comment as members consider this to be a substantive material consideration, and that the applicant's assertion that "*the Local Authority having not proved in public that it has a 5-year housing land supply*" is now incorrect.

b) Applications determined:

i. W/26/02793/AGR - Woodfield Farm, Broadway Road WR10 3AG

Prior notification for the erection of a new agricultural building

Applicant - Revill

Birlingham Parish Council comment:

"The building proposed appears to be c 1/3 larger than the one it replaces. It is our understanding that the building equating to c 1417sqm comes in just below the 1500sqm limit for an agricultural unit on a site greater than 5 hectares, so it qualifies as permitted development and doesn't require planning permission. We have no objection therefore to the building being used for the storage of farm machinery, as indeed shown on the applicant's submission, but formally request that you as the planning authority state this as a condition in your determination:

Formal Condition:

"That the premises are not to be used for other than the storage of farm machinery and equipment"

Notes in determination to be included to the applicant:

We would also ask you in your formal determination, to inform the applicant that any future change of use to an industrial/commercial activity, would require a new planning application.
We would also ask you to inform the applicant that the processing and packaging of produce is deemed to be an industrial/commercial activity and would require a new planning application."

The Clerk's correspondence to the Planning Officer assigned to the agricultural application, acknowledged both the formal and informal notes sent to them on 4 January 2026.

The members have made Councillor Middlebrough aware of the businesses operating at Woodfield Farm. It was felt that some parts of the 18/01442/FUL planning application comments were ignored and there were ongoing concerns regarding the use of the site, the volume of traffic and, HGV's. The conditions of the application gave no formal planning constraints and yet the farm gave several understandings at the time. The Parish Council are trying to ensure that planning conditions are applied to the agricultural application. Councillor Middlebrough will progress and bring back to the next meeting.

Agricultural determination - Dated 2 February 2026

1. Thank you for your notification of the proposal to carry out the agricultural development described above. I note that you intend to use the development in connection with the agricultural unit.

   Provided the development is carried out in accordance with the details submitted with your notification application, I write to confirm the Council determine prior approval is not required for the proposal as indicated upon your completed forms and no further details are required.

   In accordance with the regulations referred to above, this approval is given subject to the following conditions:

   a. The development shall be carried out within a period of five years from the date when your notification application was submitted
   b. Where the development involves a new building an extension or alteration to existing building, if the use of the building for the purposes of agriculture ceases within ten years from the date on which the development was substantially completed, and planning permission has not been granted for a use other than agriculture, then the building must be removed from the land, and the land be restored to its condition before the development took place. This shall take place within three years from the date on which the use of the building has permanently ceased for agricultural purposes.
   c. You must notify the local planning authority, in writing and within seven days, of the date on which the development is substantially completed.
   This determination is made upon the basis that the development proposed would be sited upon agricultural land and would be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture. If these circumstances do not apply, then planning permission would be required.

ii. W/25/02072/W/25// 25/02611/LB – The Row, Lower End

Re-roofing of outbuildings, to include insertion of ridge beam and additional internal brick gables

Parish Council comment:

"*Birlingham Parish Council have no objection to the application and rely on the appointed planning officer ensuring that where existing materials cannot be reused appropriate "reclaimed" materials are sourced and utilised*."

APPROVED – 12 March 2026

c) Enforcement: - none.

9. Financial Matters

a) The Accounts for 2025/2026

i) Bank balances - current is £4,233.03 as at end of February 2026 and Business saving balance is £18,649.12 as at end of February 2026. The CIL balance is noted on the spreadsheet and currently there are no further updates.

ii) Receipts

i. £250.00 – Worcestershire County Council – Grant
ii. £160.00 – Worcestershire County Council Lengthsman

iii) Payments agreed: –

i. £22.00 – Village Hall hire for January 2026
ii. £120.00 – Lengthsman for November 2025
iii. £160.00 – Lengthsman for December 2025
iv. £690.10 - Clerk's pay October, November, December
v. £112.50 - Clerk's expenses October, November, December
vi. £4.25 – bank charges November
vii. £4.25 – bank charges December
viii. £350.00 - Litter bins annual charge (budget £300)
ix. £250.00 – Councillor Hardman Divisional Fund – Grant for Cuppa & Chat
x. £250.00 – Councillor Hardman Divisional Fund – Grant for IW

Note:

Bench maintenance - An invoice was due from Clarian for the bench maintenance for £250.00. Ian from Clarian has said there will be no charge for 2025. Ian said, "*During 2025 I inspected the bench on a regular basis when passing Birlingham and touched up the treatment where needed (a few minutes here and there), so there is no charge for 2025. This coming May/June I will be spending a couple of days sanding and applying treatment (top & bottom) so there will be an invoice @£250. I also have the brass plaque for polishing which I'll re-attach after the maintenance is complete*."

Clerk has sent a message of thanks.

Royal British Legion - Waiting bank details for £70.00 – Royal British Legion poppy wreaths. Clerk has communicated with local contact. Try another Clerk for contact and information.
JH

b) Future payments for consideration

i. £22. 00 – Village Hall hire for January 2026
ii. £120.00 – Lengthsman for November 2025
iii. £160.00 – Lengthsman for December 2025
iv. £690.10 - Clerk's pay January, February, March
v. £112.50 - Clerk's expenses January, February, March
vi. £4.25 – bank charges January
vii. £4.25 – bank charges February
viii. £4.25 – bank charges March
ix. £350.00 - Litter bins annual charge (budget £300 noted that this is underbudgeted)

Note: Clerk's pay and expenses to be set up as standing orders.
PA

ICO - £47.00 (Annual renewal – fee amount is £52.00, minus £5 fee reduction for paying by direct debit). A receipt has been received 5 March 2026 giving an expiry date of 9 March 2027.

c) Explanation of the next financial years tax base due to the increase of 2.3% has been given by Wychavon District Council:-

A reduction in the tax base can occur for several reasons. Additional exemptions—such as single person discounts, other exempt categories, or an increase in empty properties—will
reduce the overall tax base. Conversely, the tax base will increase if more chargeable properties are added to the area or if fewer exemptions are applied.

When exemptions rise, the tax base becomes smaller. A lower tax base means your precept is spread across fewer Band D equivalent properties. As a result, even if the total precept stays the same, the amount each property must contribute increases in order to fund that unchanged precept.

The Band D Levy in 2025/26 was £41.29 and if you follow the calculation in the tax base figure (I've completed one for you below), the Band D Levy in 2026/27 will be £42.24 which is an increase of 2.3%."

a	Budget requirement		£7,304
b	Less Grant		- £179.00
c	= Precept	c = a-b	= £7,125
d	Divide by tax base 26-27		/ 168.68
e	BAND D LEVY 2026-27	e = c/d	= £42.24
f	Band D levy 2025-26		£41.29
g	Percentage increase	(e-f)/f x 100	2.3

10. Email Address for Parish Council

The new practitioners guide has set out that there will be a new assertion on the AGAR for the financial year (2025/26). This is around Digital and Data Compliance. One of the requirements for this is that: "*Every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain, for example clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov.uk or clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk rather than abcparishclerk@gmail.com*"

New email domain registered. Councillor David Glover will assist with the information on the domain.

New email address. Clerk@birlinghampc.org.uk

I.T. Data Policy has been circulated and Councillors in agreement.

11. Discuss actions from previous meeting

Community Initiatives / Community Project Funding Community Infrastructure Projects (CIL)

Following feedback from the questionnaire that was sent out at the end of 2025 several ideas have been discussed for the £1543.93 CIL funding that is available. Some have been eliminated as not required at this time (replacement marquee), others were impractical (restoration of village signpost, pickleball equipment) and some need further costings (village hall sign and formal permission and speed retention sign). Community funding is set aside currently and is available until 2029.

Speeding/signage/other

Worcester County Council Highways Department have agreed to repaint the roundels in Upper End and on New Barn Road, as soon as the weather improves sufficiently. Councillor Rupert Day is giving ongoing updates.
RD

New Barn Road

New Barn Road was walked by Highways. There is no update from Barry Barnes. Councillor David Glover will liaise with Councillor Rupert Day and update.
DG/RD

Public Rights of Way

No further comments from John Sansome regarding Footpath 510 (The Avenue to Withy Walk) and Footpath 506 (The Avenue/below the memorial/The Old Rectory).

12. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

Nothing to report.

13. Closure and date of next ordinary meeting - with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

The next **Parish Council** Meeting is the annual meeting and scheduled for Wednesday 20 May 2026 at 7.30pm.

It was agreed that the Annual **Parish** Meeting will take place before the Council Meeting at 7.00pm.

The meetings will be held in Birlingham Village Hall.

Signed: ..... Councillor Ian Yates, Chairman

Date: ……..……..……

Appendix 1 – Clerk's Report

i. Highway Issues

Drainage near the church

13 February

Contact from resident

> *"I've just been down to church and noticed that the drain next to the lychgate is blocked and water is puddling quite badly - not really surprising with all this rain."*

Clerk replied saying that when the water has subsided, then the area will be checked.

Carl Brassington assisted with checking the area and cleared other grids in the village, except the flooded ones at Lower End.

15 February 2026 clerk reports drains to WCC - reference 103848

24 February 2026 reply: "*Thank you for your enquiry. We investigated the mapped location on Rectory Lane on 24/02/26 and have arranged for the drains to be cleansed within the next four weeks. We will continue to monitor through our routine inspection regime*.



Blockage at Woodfield Farm

On Saturday 14 February 2026 a pole and wires came down opposite the entrance to Woodfield Farm blocking the highway with the alternative route at Lower End blocked due to flooding.

With the assistance of James Revill and the farm manager barriers were erected as the road was unsafe and an alternative route was temporarily permitted through the farm premises.

ii. Fly tipping – New Barn Road

<u>Defford Road</u>

15 February 2026 - Fly tipping report, reference: ZLg-9938470

> "Your report has now fallen into a queue of service requests, we anticipate that an officer will respond to your report within 5 working days. Please note this does not mean that action is not being taken in the interim period."

Community and Environmental Protection Team



17 February 2026

Reply: Good afternoon and thank you for your recent report. I have attended the site this morning and I have subsequently asked our contractor to remove the waste. Regards Dave

Eckington Bridge

15 February 2026 reports of fly tipping on the bridge despite the road closure in place.



Chairman advises:-

16 February 2026. "I have spoken with West Mercia police and offered to send them the photos but they were not interested and told me to report it to Wychavon. This has already been done ref XBp-150983. I have also spoken to Paul Middlebrough and sent him pictures to ensure that Wychavon escalate it to the police. He will update me."

To be brought up with the Neighbourhood Police Team.

iii. 5-Year land supply

1 February 2026 from Clerk to the Local Authority

Dear Ian

Please would you confirm and clarify the following points:

1) That the LA can prove they have identified and can defend a 5-year residential land supply?

2) Confirm exactly at what stage the overall plan including the 5-year residential land supply in getting it adopted? Ie has it been submitted for approval? Has it had feedback or is in in the public domain as having been approved. What is its legal status

The above is a very important element in how the Parish Council make their comment.

Many thanks

REPLY

Good afternoon Ms. Hiden,

Thank you for your email.

Please find the most up to date five year housing land supply (5YHLS) report, which was published January 2026 at the following link - South Worcestershire councils: five year housing land supply report

The report shows that presently Wychavon District can demonstrate 1.28 years housing land supply.
The South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) was submitted for Examination in September 2023. There have been a number of Hearings held in March, April and September 2025 and the SWDPR is currently out for consultation on the Proposed Main Modifications. This consultation is open until 17 February 2026.
Following the close of consultation, the Inspectors will consider all responses before issuing their Final Report. It is expected that the SWDPR will be adopted by the end of March 2026.
Until the Final Report is received, no- to limited-weight is being attributed to the SWDPR, due to the quantum of main modifications. Once the Final Report is received, greater weight can be attributed to the SWDPR, with full weight on adoption of the SWDPR.
In their 7 October 2025 post-hearing letter (017f5b_dd4d87096d04462abe782555216367a0.pdf) the Inspectors confirmed that, without prejudice to their final conclusions on the plan, on adoption of the SWDPR the Council would be able to demonstrate a 5YHLS with a 5% buffer.
Please let me know if you need any further information.

Isabel Roberts
Head of Planning Policy
Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils
Civic Centre

iv. HGV Route for deliveries

2 February – Chairman to Red Star

"Dear James

Further to my email last week, we had another Spanish lorry enter the village via New Barn Road at midday yesterday. The Parish Council Clerk and other residents had to redirect the non-English speaking driver back towards Shorthill. The verge by the war memorial and by the Old Post Office have both been damaged which I trust you will now re-instate.

I hope this can be addressed quickly as we have bulb teas during this month."

2 February 2026 from Red Star

"Good afternoon

Thank you for your email which has been forwarded to me.

Having looked into this, the driver of the lorry on Sunday had already visited our site. It was unfortunate that he turned left instead of right at the end of road, which is why he arrived by the church.

As always, as a gesture of goodwill, I will arrange for one of our team to attend to the verges."

3 February 2026 – Red Star reply

"Good afternoon again
Stewart has been to look at the verges.
In his opinion, if he tries to carry out any sort of repair in this weather more mud will not help the situation. As soon as the rain stops, he will do the repair then.
Regards
Teresa"

Further HGVs

4 February 2026 – Red Star response

"Hello

Thank you for your email. I was aware of 2 other incidents regarding HGV's. Without wishing to appear to be 'passing the buck' unfortunately, we do not have any control over the drivers as they are employed by independent hauliers who are just making deliveries to our site. However, over recent years we have installed our own signs directing traffic to our site and also worked with the Parish Council in setting advisory speed limits.

We believe there are two main problems with New Barn Road:

(i) that the Sat Nav is directing the drivers along New Barn Road.

(ii) that the signs at the entrance to New Barn is advisory not mandatory.

Perhaps this is something the Highways department might be able to consider by changing the status of the signage to mandatory?

In the meantime, as I type this email two members of our team are installing the temporary signs we had made a couple of years ago during the period of the road closures. This is to direct drivers away from New Barn, continue along the Eckington Road, turn right onto the main road and then right again into the village past the nurseries. From there, there is ample signage to direct the drivers to our yard.

However just to let you know that on the last occasion we installed these signs, the Council/Highways dept was not particularly happy and at least one of them was removed.

We do have limited options available as to what we can do but we hope that the above actions might help during the period of the church activity.

Kind regards

Teresa"

5 February 2026 from Red Star Growers

"Good morning All

As requested, we have now spoken to the hauliers and have also sent a map and written instructions regarding the route into the village. A copy of our email to them is below for your information.

I hope this helps the situation.

Regards
Teresa"

From: Teresa
Sent: 05 February 2026
To: 'eguimiento.salidas@primafrio.com' <eguimiento.salidas@primafrio.com>;
'seguimiento.fresa@primafrio.com' seguimiento.fresa@primafrio.com
Cc: 'aduanas@primatransit.com' <aduanas@primatransit.com

Subject: ROUTE FOR HGV'S FOR DELIVERIES

Good Morning
Please find a map showing the correct route to Red Star Growers Ltd.

If arriving on the B4080 – the Sat Nav is directing you along New Barn Road. ***PLEASE IGNORE THE SAT NAV ROUTE*** *as this is a very narrow lane and is completely unsuitable for HGV's.* ***There is danger the vehicle will get stuck as he will not be able to turn round****. If this happens the consequences could be quite serious.*

Please follow the dark blue line on the attached map (if arriving on the A4104) and if following the B4080 then follow the black line with the arrows.
This will take you to Red Star on the main route through the village.

There are temporary signs also giving directions so please inform your drivers they must use this route.

WHEN TURNING INTO THE VILLAGE FROM THE MAIN ROAD, PLEASE OBEY ALL SPEED LIMITS AND FOLLOW THE SIGNS WHICH GIVE CLEAR DIRECTIONS TO RED STAR GROWERS.

We thank you for your cooperation on this. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards
Teresa









v. Correspondence

Comments on the PIP application near Eckington

Resident comments and communications have been received.

Barncroft

3 February 2026 resident to Chairman

Hi Ian
I have just received this response.
I must admit being disappointed, I would have at least expected an inspection of the site.
I'm not sure what course of action to take now.
Regards

Worcestershire County Council

Drainage Report - Reference #99276

3/2/26 – "thank you for your enquiry. Our previous works would not have had any direct impact in affecting the water table. The highway drainage scheme was installed to alleviate highway flooding and replace an older system. Any flows coming into this system are pluvial (water from rain falling on to the highway). No infrastructure was installed that may draw water from the land (e.g. land drains) As such, unfortunately, we are unable not be able to assist you in this matter at this time."

Chairman's response.

"Hi

Unfortunately, I don't think the parish council can be of any more assistance. As mentioned previously we were not responsible for installing the drains.

A couple of observations, however.

The subsidence report you commissioned from the Davis Group stated that 'We are pleased to confirm that we could not detect any evidence of current or ongoing subsidence damage to the buildings. -- There is no evidence of subsidence, landslip, or heave of the site upon which the buildings stand. There is no external damage'. That confirms that there has been no shrinkage to the land due to drainage.
The photographs of the pipes you sent show that they are of the non-perforated type which means they carry water, but don't extract water from their surroundings as a perforated French drain would do. The WCC reply confirms this.
Best wishes

Ian"

Circulated to all Councillors

- 24 February 2024 - County Council Budget Engagement Meeting 2026 - Presentation Slides

  Presentation slides as discussed at the Budget meeting 23 February 2026. They are in the public domain.

- 25 February 2026 - Worcestershire Waste Local Plan: Early baselining and engagement consultation

  Worcestershire County Council is preparing evidence to inform a new Waste Plan. We are now consulting on our evidence and approach to plan-making so far.

  We are writing to you to:

  - invite your parish council's response to the consultation; and
  - ask for your help in raising awareness of the consultation among your parishioners.

  The PID, WNA, accompanying waste sites web map, and questionnaire can be viewed online at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/wasteplanningpolicy. Please respond to the consultation by 15th April. All responses must be in writing and will be in the public domain.

- 27 February 2026 – PCC newsletter - February 2026 - John Campion, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

  The February edition includes information around central funding from the Government and how that will impact the council tax precept and police officer numbers, my thoughts for future legislation around E-Scooters, details about a refurbished Sexual Assault Referral Centre, opportunities for you to have your say on accessing police stations and anti-social behaviour, and much more.

- 9 March – Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy Publication

  Received due to information about Environmental Policy topics.

  Worcestershire County Council has published a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) according to the provisions within the Environment Act 2021 and related regulations. The Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Worcestershire Local Habitat Map can be found on the Council's website at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lnrs.

Birlingham News - Extracts of interest

All News can be found online at birlingham.org

Birlingham News – 28 January 2026 News **371**

The online edition contains:

Parish Council Report from 21st January

Local Policing Changes

Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan

Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity Team Newsletter

Planning Applications – Land Adjacent to Eckington Road

Birlingham News – 4 February 2026 News **371 update**

Planning Application – Eckington Road

Update requested by some residents to circulate a flyer relating to the recent application to build between five and nine houses on a plot of land adjacent to Eckington Road.

Birlingham News – 11 February 2026 News **372**

The online edition contains:

West Mercia Police: Flooding

Safer Neighbourhood Team Drop-in Sessions

Planning Applications – Woodfield Farm (No objection)

Birlingham News – 25 February 2026 News **373**

The online edition contains:

Local Government Reorganisation in Worcestershire

Safer Neighbourhood Team Drop-in Sessions