

Monthly Meeting of Severn Stoke & Croome D'Abitot Parish Council

A grouped parish council of the two Parish Areas of Severn Stoke and of Croome d'Abitot

Wed 24th September 2025, 7.30pm

Croome National Trust Visitor Centre, SOQ room

Date of publication of this notice: 18th September 2025

This page is the cover sheet to the agenda, Summons and meeting guidelines.

Parish Councillors, Notice is hereby given that a meeting of Severn Stoke and Croome d'Abitot Parish Council will be held on Wednesday **24th September 2025, 7.30pm** at the SOQ room at Croome National Trust Visitor Centre, High Green, Croome d'Abitot, WR8 9DW. What3 words location:///alleyway.rescuer.perfect



Mrs Lisa Stevens, CilCA, Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer. 9 The Limes, Kempsey, WR5 3LG. 07950256363. parishclerk@severnstokeandcroomedabitot-pc.gov.uk



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Scan with your phone to directly access the information provided at the beginning of each parish council meeting.

- The press and public may attend to address councillors on matters concerning the parish (allotted point in the agenda), observe the meeting or inspect draft documents. Comments MUST be made through the Chair and not aimed at individuals. District and County Councillors are invited to participate in this meeting at the discretion of the Chair. Public comments and questions to them must be directed to the parish council Chair or should be handled at the respective higher authority meetings.
- If this meeting is an extra ordinary meeting, these summons have been issued by the Chair.
- Occasional safety considerations may mean that we close and reschedule the meeting.
- The Register of Electors may be inspected by the Clerk to ascertain attendee residency.
- Names are recorded in the meeting minutes, unless individuals ask for this not to occur.
- With some restrictions, meetings may be filmed or recorded by the public. We are happy to provide guidance on what is permitted. Advice should be sought in advance to avoid disruption. The parish council may live stream those persons sitting at the council table on social media. The parish council may record audio information at this meeting. However, there is no legal requirement for the parish council to live stream a meeting in order to allow virtual public or councillor participation.
- **Please note 'Information provided at the beginning of each parish council meeting' (QR code above to the right).**
- Each agenda item below includes the resolution to discuss and formulate Motions not requiring written notice. New items raised for formal vote will be included in the next agenda unless covered by St.Orders/Financ.Reggs/Delegation to Clerk policies.
- If there are any adjustments required to encourage/allow public participation please bring these to the attend of the Clerk or Chair before or at the meeting. We will make all reasonable adjustments where possible.
- Please check fire exits arrangements upon arrival and check against your personal requirements. Please bring any difficulties to the immediate attention of any member of the parish council. In the event of an emergency, 'muster' is in the car park but, since attendees are only encouraged (not required) to sign in, no register will be taken.
- To our knowledge, there are no hearing/audio induction loops installed at this venue.
- The parish council does not hold or manage the wifi codes for this venue.
- Dogs may be permitted depending on the venue hire restrictions. Please enquire beforehand.
- Children are permitted but must not be allowed to disrupt proceedings please. Filming or recording of children is not permitted without written consent of parents/legal guardians - The council and public must take absolute care to meet this restriction.
- Councillors/the public are individually responsible for keeping their own language/phrasing to an acceptable level.
- The parish council has a risk assessment for public meetings. Please ask if you require a copy

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

Please take a moment read the council's privacy notice on our website, which explains how we use and look after your information.

1	Welcome. a. Points of order and any adjustments required to facilitate public participation. b. Apologies. Motion to accept and approve and for Clerk to enter these on the records. c. Declarations of interest. i. To note updates received to Register of Interests/dispensations. Cllrs are reminded to update their register of interests. ii. To declare Disclosable Pecuniary Interests relevant to agenda. Cllrs who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest/ other Disclosable Interest (para 12(4)(b) Code of Conduct) must leave for the relevant items only, unless a dispensation has been granted. iii. To declare any Other Disclosable Interests relevant to the agenda. iv. To declare any additions to the Register of Gifts & Hospitality. v. To consider written requests for the granting of a Dispensation (S33 Localism Act 2011). Motion to approve requests. d. To note the resignation of Sue Faulkner and that the vacancy was advertised with no electors stepping forward to request an election. Motion of thanks to Sue as former Chair and Cllr. e. In the event of applicant/s stepping forward prior to the meeting*, co-option to fill up to 5 existing vacancies as per the adopted parish council co-option policy. *to allow qualifying criteria to be checked
2	a. To determine any items on this agenda that should be considered of a private nature and Motion to exclude members of the press and public during consideration of the said agenda items by reason of the confidential nature of the items of business to be transacted, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960. The Parish Council is recommended to apply this to all items in section 7 of this agenda below.
3	Minutes of the parish council meeting 16th July 2025 – to consider and approve.
4	The meeting will be adjourned for Open Forum (Public Question Time) Residents may raise any matter without notice. Please refer to the notes on your seat for further information.
5	Community and Committee Representatives - to receive any updates or reports available a. County Councillor Martin Allen. Including obtaining an update on: - Standing Item – Devolution, update if any. - Report from Broadband & Connectivity Team at Worcs County Council ref progress with broadband provision at Croome. - Flood bund. Update on contractor appointments and thoughts on how to keep the project moving throughout the Devolution process. - Severn Bank, the sharp bend alert sign (VAS) and speed limits. 1) Motion for the parish council to adopt the VAS in principle <u>subject</u> 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). 2) Motion to pursue the matter of road traffic collision definitions and use in policy making. See Appendix 2 b. District Councillors John Michael and David Harrison - To note coordination of order of remembrance wreaths, thank you. - Final decision and closure of project for yellow lines at Knights Hill. - Standing item – Devolution, update if any. c. National Trust Note 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. d. Parish Hall Committee e. Lengthsman – see item below in section 7. f. Volunteer Footpaths Warden g. Friends of St Denys' Committee Reminder: Carols at The Nash - Chase Brass Band -5th December, 2025.

5 cont	Community and Committee Representatives continued h. Tarmac - Clifton Liaison Meeting 4th September report. i. High Green VAS stats report and report on all VAS units. - To include an assessment of the current life span of all VAS batteries and whether replacements need to be ordered. - To note that an advert requesting additional volunteers has been placed in the parish magazine Kempsey Times. j. Police k. Phone Box High Green restoration contract. - To note that contractor has pulled out due to health. Motion to approach others who submitted tenders with a view to reviewing their quotations once again.
6	Planning and Enforcement - to consider and resolve to respond to applications or enforcement matters. a. Standing Item: To consider (and as required, arrange an extra ordinary parish council meeting) planning applications received after date of publication of this agenda. Nil at time of publication. b. West Mercia PCC - Town and Parish Council Survey – Responded 28/08/2025. Speeding, traffic crimes and rural crime. c. WCC Local Nature Recovery Strategy Public Consultation – Responded 28/08/2025. To support the Habitat Map PM02 Create Riparian Buffer Zones & PM03 Revert Land to Wet Grassland and Floodplain Meadow on both sides of the River Severn at Severn Stoke village up to Clifton and ask for the expansion to include areas to the north of our parish into Kempsey. d. 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. e. WCC Rights of Way Improvement Plan Consultation – Motion to formulate a response and approve submission – deadline 26th October. Thoughts from VFW in Appendix 3.
7	Contracts and Staffing Matters – subject to recommendation in item 2 above a. Site of Parish Hall Lease and contracts b. Staffing Committee recommendations and Parish Clerk contract c. Lengthsman contracts d. Online Banking and changes to terms and conditions.
8	General Finance, Admin & Training – the public and press may be readmitted at this point. a. To consider/Motion to approve payment of accounts made in the previous month. App1. b. To consider/Motion to approve payment of outstanding accounts this month 2025 incl. Clerk expenses. App 1. c. To receive the latest bank reconciliation and quarterly report Q1 as necessary. d. To receive Clerk monthly timesheet. E e. Press and social media policy. Next steps. Annual Audit requirements in 2026 will require further consideration of a general IT policy. Cllr Hill assisting. f. Risk Assessment review progress update. g. Annual Audit 2024/2025. To note correspondence from auditors – acknowledgement of receipt. h. Grants application form has been sent to St Denys' Clerk is assisting with completion.
9	Correspondence, dates for diary, items for future agenda. Cllrs may use this opportunity to report minor matters of info not included elsewhere on the agenda i. Item for future agenda – War Memorial. ownership, maintenance, lease of land/ownership of verge, progress with valuation.
10. Date of next scheduled meeting: Wed 26th November 2025, 7.30pm Croome SOQ National Trust	

Appendix 1. Items for payment or already paid this month and the previous

Aug, Q2 HMRC period 5	Mr Simon Bott	Lengthsman invoice July 2024 received 1st Aug.
	Mr Simon Bott	Parish Hall Mowing July 2025
	David Harrison	Poppy wreath reimbursement
	HMRC Shipley	EmployEE Income tax payment.
	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Expenses & HMA (£26) August 2025
	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Clerk wage July paid in Aug 2025
	Bank account service charge	Lloyds Bank monthly fee taking automatically from account.
Sept, Q2 HMRC period 6	Mr Simon Bott	Lengthsman invoice Aug 2025
	Mr Simon Bott	Parish Hall Mowing Aug 2025
	Society of Merchant Venturers as Endowment Trustee for St Monica Trust	c/o Savills (UK) Ltd. Ref 55299 Parish Hall lease.
	National Trust (Reimbursement to Lisa Stevens who pays on debit card)	Hire of the S.O.Q Building
	WJP Software Limited	Annual service charge website hosting and gov.email accounts as per assertion 10 in the AGAR
	EON	Street lighting stonnal close and knigths hill.
	HMRC Shipley	EmployEE Income tax payment.
	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Expenses & HMA (£26) September 2025
	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Clerk wage Aug paid in Sept 2025
	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Backdated pay rise. Readjusted payscales. Awaiting Staffing Com confirmation
	Bank account service charge	Lloyds Bank monthly fee taking automatically from account.

Appendix 2

Motion:

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. Reevaluation 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

Appendix 3 – 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 sit 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 gets 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 install 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.