

Wednesday 21st May 2025,
At Croome National Trust SOQ meeting room
The meeting commenced at 7.30pm

Parish Councillors: (# marks as 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 Susan Faulkner	(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)

Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer Lisa Stevens

Other community representatives: (all receive agenda)

National Trust Michelle Fullard, General Manager South Worcs #
Worcestershire County Councillor Martin Allen #
Malvern Hills District Councillor David Harrison #
Malvern Hills District Councillor John Michael
Volunteer Footpath Officer Richard Humphries #
Parish Lengthsman Simon Bott #
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: 1. SW.

19/25 Election of a Chair 2025/2026

- i. Cllr Faulkner had previous given notice of her intention to step down as Chair but to remain as a parish councillor. Councillors gave a **motion** of thanks to Susan as outgoing Chair. Prps: PP. Scnd: RH
- ii. **Resolved. Motion** for the nomination of Richard Hill as Chair. Prps: LF. Scnd: RW. Duly **approved**. Unanimous.
- iii. **Resolved. Motion** for the nomination of Larry Freeman as Deputy Chair. Prps: RH. Scnd: PP.
- iv. Signatures applied to declarations of acceptance of office.

20/25 Co-option of a new councillor, as per the co-option policy.

- i. **Resolved. Motion** for co-option of Laura McEwan-Hill. Prps: LF. Scnd: RG. Duly **approved**. Unanimous.
- ii. Signature on acceptance of office and receipt of welcome pac, standing orders, code of conduct and contacts list.
- iii. Cllr McEwan-Hill was welcomed to the parish council and invited to the table.

21/25 Welcome and introductions.

- i. Declarations of interest. Cllr Ian Daly in respect of his membership of The Friends of St. Denys' Committee. **Resolved. Motion** to agree a dispensation for Cllr Daly to discuss matters relating to St Denys' Church. Prps: PP. Scnd: LF. Duly **approved**.
- ii. Points of order (nil).
- iii. Resolved. Motion to accept apologies for absence (as above). Prps: LF. Scnd: PP.
- iv. Adjustments required to facilitate participation (nil).
- v. There remain four vacancies on this parish council (duly noted).

22/25 Minutes of the previous meeting.

- i. **Resolved. Motion** to accept and approve the minutes of the meeting of 26th March 2025. Prps: LF. Scnd: RW. Duly **approved**.

23/25 General Power of Competence

- i. It was noted that this parish council cannot adopt the 'General Power of Competence for 2025/2026 (criteria apply).

- Cllr Larry Freeman	- elected May 2023	Croome d'Abitot Parish Area
- Cllr Royston Garrard	- elected May 2023	Croome d'Abitot Parish Area
- Vacancy	- unfilled at May 2023 election	Croome d'Abitot Parish Area
- Cllr Sue Faulkner	- elected May 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Area
- Cllr Pat Preston	- elected May 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Area
- Cllr Ray Williams	- elected May 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Area
- Cllr Richard Hill	- coopted September 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Area
- Cllr Ian Daly	- coopted March 2025	Severn Stoke Parish Area
- Cllr Laura McEwan-Hill	- coopted May 2025	Severn Stoke Parish Area
- Vacancy	- unfilled at May 2023 election.	Severn Stoke Parish Area
- Vacancy	- unfilled at May 2023 election.	Severn Stoke Parish Area
- Vacancy	- unfilled at May 2023 election.	Severn Stoke Parish Area

24/25 Insurance and risk assessments

- ii. **Resolved. Motion** to renew the current insurance policy. As of June 25 we will be in the 2nd year of a 3 year long term undertaking. Quotation now received from current insurer for £694.55 (no increase) including cover of war memorial up to £50k. Prps: RG. Scnd: PP. Duly **approved**.
- iii. **Resolved. Motion** to accept all existing risk assessment. (Review under way by Clerk March 2025), subject to the note that all risk assessments are being reviewed to consider Martyn's Law. Prps: PP. Scnd: RG. Duly **approved**.

25/25 Asset Register

- i. **Resolved. Motion** to accept existing asset register (reviewed by Clerk March 2025). Prps: PP. Scnd: RG. Duly **approved**.

26/25 Policy documents

- i. **Resolved. Motion** to accept and roll over all existing policy documents, subject to setting a date for review as required. Prps: LF. Scnd PP. Duly **approved**. Clerk to provide 2 policy documents to each Cllr for review by September 2025.
- ii. **Resolved. Motion** to roll over all existing declarations of interest and dispensations agreed by the parish council. Prps: LF. Scnd PP. Duly **approved**.
- iii. Clerk is drafting a website/email and social media policy (nb. .gov account requirement) and was **instructed** to distribute to cllrs for comment once ready.
- iv. End of year bank statements inspected and noted.
- v. End of year financial position read out by the Clerk in readiness for annual audit. Duly noted.
- vi. The Clerk will attend the bank and ask for the paperwork to add new parish councillors as signatories. The facility to 'begin procedure to add new signatories' is no longer available to the Clerk online due to changes applied by the bank to terms and conditions. The parish council was not consulted on these changes.

27/25 Committee representatives – a tabulated copy is available on our website.

- i. **Resolved. Motion** to approve membership and appointments as follows (overleaf). Prps: LF. Scnd: PP. Duly **approved**.
- **Finance/Audit Committee** x 3 members: RG, LF, RH, with terms of ref as per Financial Regs.
 - **Staffing Working Party** x 4 members: LF, PP, RH, LMEH with terms of ref in place.
 - **Complaints and Grievance Committee** x 3 members: RH, ID, LF with terms of ref as per the Grievance Policy (Staff) & Complaints Policy (MoP)
 - **Appeals Panel Committee** x 3 members: allocate as needed. Different Cllrs to those in the Complaints and Grievance Committee, with terms of ref as per the Grievance Policy (Staff) & Complaints Policy (MoP).

- **Parish Hall Representatives** x 2 reps: SF, ID & Clerk attends when she is able. Membership of this committee is as a Non-voting position ,with terms of ref as per the Hall Committee terms of ref and Constitution. Lease of land held by Parish Council.
- **Planning and Enforcement Advisory Working Party** All parish cllrs at all times, with terms of ref as per planning response guidance.
- **Friends of St Denys' Committee** x 1 member: Clerk is appointed a trustee of St.Denys'. ID is an existing member prior to his appointment on the parish council. Attendance is for public relations only. Not a working party or committee.
- **Tarmac Liaison Committee** x 1 member: LF, plus Clerk invited. Meetings are online. Externally organised Committee. Terms of Ref with County Cllr.
- **CALC Representative** x up to 2 members, normally including the Chair: RH, LF. Clerk attends annual meetings when she is able. Advisory only. Not a working party or committee.
- **National Trust resident meetings.** RG attends as a resident and not as a parish council appointment. Non PC meetings. Declaration of interest in place.
- **Vehicle Activated Sign** (VAS) volunteers working party: RG, LF and SB (non Cllr). Location permits received from WCC.
- **Footpaths Officer Volunteer:** RH (non Cllr)
- **Biodiversity Working Party:** created in mid 2024. Open to the public. Ref to parish council biodiversity policy
- **Lengthsman support** x 1 member normally the Chair but deferred to LF. Not a working party or committee.
- **Parish magazine** monthly report x 2 persons: LF and the Clerk. Public relations only. Not a working party or committee. Ref to Community Engagement Strategy

28/25 **AOB for the annual meeting of the parish council.**

- i. The Chair gave thanks to all present, all community reps and to all Councillors for their continued public service and we look forward to 2025/2026.
- ii. The Clerk passed on the congratulations and thanks from the County and District Councillors for another year of cooperative and successful close working.

29/25 **Close** of the annual meeting of the parish council at 7.45pm.

Opening of the monthly meeting of the parish council. 7.52pm

30/25 **attendance** as above. No new declarations.

31/25 The meeting was adjourned for **Open Forum** (public question time). Residents noted the guidance provided for information on their seats.

- Nil questions at the time of this item.
- A question was asked by the resident at the end of this meeting and it is reported here for consistency. In reference to the businesses in the vicinity of Croome Composting, it was noted that customers are using the Rebecca road entrance and are being directed to do so by company signage. The Clerk was **instructed** to refer this matter to the District Council.

32/25 **Reports from the County and District Councillors**

- i. To note the results of the May 2025 election. Duly noted as below with congratulations.

Name/Party	Votes	%
Martin John ALLEN Green Party	2027	63.52
Russ VARLEY Reform UK	575	18.02
Sarah Caroline MCDERMOTT Conservative	497	15.58
John DRAGE Liberal Democrat	54	1.69
Juma BEGUM Labour	38	1.19

- ii. Report of the County Councillor Martin Allen – not present with apologies.
- iii. Report of the District Councillor David Harrison – not present with apologies.
- iv. Report of the District Councillor John Michael.

- Report on district council committee appointments. Please see the Malvern Hills District Council website for further details.
- It is anticipated that all district councillors will be required to stay in post for an extra year due to the Unitary merger.

v. Standing Item: Update on Devolution where available – no information at this time.

33/25 Planning - to consider and resolve to respond to applications or enforcement matters

- Standing Item:** To consider (and as required, arrange an extra ordinary parish council meeting) planning applications received after date of publication of this agenda. 1 item received pm 20/05/25: **M/25/00529/HP: Glebeland Farm**, Church Lane, Severn Stoke, WR8 9JQ: Proposed domestic storage outbuilding. **Resolved. Motion** to request additional information, including location plans and likely impact on visual amenity. Prps: LF. Scnd: RG. Duly **carried**.
- To note that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Neighbourhood Fund was received 18th April 2025 for £7800. Guidance letter provided to Parish Cllrs by email (document entitled 'advance warning'). Duly noted. The Clerk was **instructed** to double check how long this money is available to the parish council. *Subsequent to meeting, here is an extract of the letter from MHDC answering this question....*

“What can the CIL Neighbourhood Fund be spent on?”

In accordance with regulatory requirements, this money must be spent by the parish council within **5 years** of receipt, or if not, returned to Malvern Hills District Council.

In line with the regulations, monies received must be used to support development by funding:

- The provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure or
- Anything else concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

Achieving maximum impact

In order to maximise the impact that the Neighbourhood Fund has on the parish, Malvern Hills District Council recommends that consideration be given to the type of infrastructure the Neighbourhood Fund can support, and in particular, this should be informed by discussions about infrastructure priorities with the local community, neighbouring parishes and the district council. This can be based around the following types of consideration:-

- Listing of priorities of community infrastructure needs;
- Identified infrastructure linked to development;
- Identify infrastructure (local and strategic) that could be delivered cumulatively or
- Specific forms of infrastructure identified in a Neighbourhood Plan, or town or parish plan.”

CIL fund continued. The Clerk also notes year end reporting requirements, in order to ensure transparency, CIL Regulations state that if a town or parish is in receipt of a Neighbourhood Fund it must publish a report containing some specific information regarding its Fund on its website (or if it has no website, then Malvern Hills District Council’s website). This will be actioned in June 2025 by the Clerk.

34/25 Updates on projects and from parish representatives

- Flood Bund** – the parish continues to wait and see what financial solutions are presented by the County Council in respect of contractors.
- The Friends of St Denys’ Committee**
 - To note that the clerk has been informed by Land Agents for Brown & Co that wildlife hibernacula and refugia are to be installed on the meadow adjacent to St Denys’ as part of flood bund planning permissions. See green box and thick grey line. To note correspondence from J. Henderson. Duly noted.



- b. **Resolved. Motion** to confirm grant towards portaloos for church event September 2025: £300 max including VAT. Prps: PP. Scnd: RW. Duly **approved**.

iii. **The National Trust** – report provided by email.

- Dry, sunny weather has helped us to have a very busy spring with all our car parks functioning. We hope this has meant minimal disturbance to local residents.
- We are working on the detail of the car park and welcome project after local consultation meetings - we hope the planning will be in by the end of June.
- We opened Croome car park, visitor buildings, the garden and parkland from 9am from 7 April. This is going well - less build-up of visitors waiting to go in/queuing at café first thing.
- We launched a new offer to incentivise use of the Worcester On Demand bus – all those who arrive on the bus now receive a hot drink.

iv. **The Parish Hall Committee**

- a. Update from the Committee. No progress on updating the Charitable Objectives, as the Charity Commission (CC) has not responded to correspondence. The CC do need to approve changes in principle at least. The Hall Committee continues to chase.
- b. **Motion** for permission for use of car park for family event. No resolution was made.
- c. **Motion** to create a policy for such purposes. A draft policy distributed to Cllrs and Hall Committee for consideration 3rd week in May. No resolution was made as both the parish council and the parish hall committee require clarification of the legal position. The Clerk was **instructed** to approach the usual solicitors for a quote based on a set of list of questions – to be drafted by the Clerk and Cllr McEwan-Hill.
- d. To note that Pip Webster, Land Agent for Savills, will be retiring June. **Resolved. Motion** for a letter of thanks. Prps: LF. Scnd: PP. Duly **approved**.

v. **Phone box working party**

- a. to note that maintenance to the phone box is likely to start mid July 2025. The Clerk was **instructed** to ask the lengthsman to remove undergrowth from around the phone box.

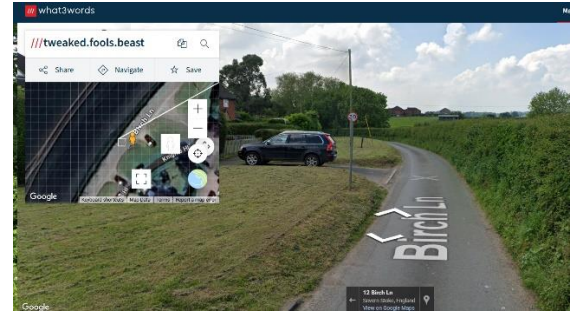
35/25 **Speeding and signage in the parish**

- i. WCC judge the existing Severn Stoke village roundels to be of sufficient visibility and that the criteria for additional roundels mid village in Severn Stoke A38 cannot be met.
- ii. Clerk had clarifying possibility of additional roundels in Kinnersley and Birch Lane. *WCC: The roundels should only be used to compliment the upright speed limit signage. As long as you have some repeater signs or if you want them laid where the speed limit changes then we can do this. Estimate £300 per pair.*

Resolved. Motion to fund one pair at Kinnersley: ///gained.soonest.frock Prps: PP. Scnd: RG. Duly **carried**.

Resolved. Motion to fund one pair at Birch Lane, Knights Hill. ///tweaked.fools.beast Prps: PP. Scnd: RG. Duly **carried**.

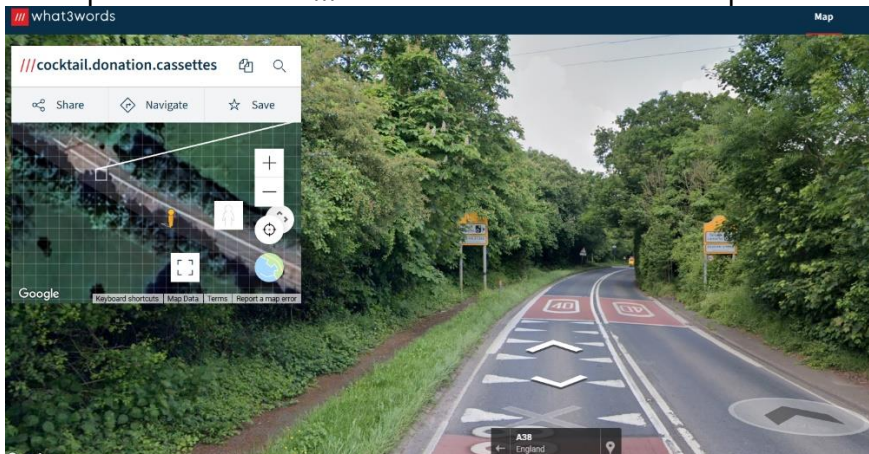
The Clerk was **instructed** to allocate CIL money towards the above road painted roundels and to place the necessary submission declaring use of CIL funds on the parish website once the project is completed.



- iii. Request for additional 30mph signs along Birch Lane has been submitted.
- iv. Request for replacement bollards/verge markers Severn Bank has been submitted. WCC have responded to say that they will conduct repairs.
- v. Request for parish council to repair footpath finger posts has been turned down by Highways due to insurance considerations. Repair of finger posts will take place in the winter if Highways have capacity. Spare signage cannot be provided to the parish council by WCC for the same reason.
- vi. Clerk to collect **dog fouling signs** from District Council and arrange for installation at Birch Lane, Knights Hill and High Green Westfield Lane. *Note post meeting: JM DCllr has chased with thanks. These have been received by the Clerk and will be installed asap.*
- vii. Thank you to DCllrs for grant towards **Knight's Hill parking signage**. Thank you to Cllr Williams for installing. Residents have written to Highways who gave the following response: *"It is clear that this issue has been going on even when you have had a different colour of tarmac. It is illegal to park across a dropped kerb in the UK unless you have the permission of the property owner who uses it. Parking in such a way is considered a parking contravention and can result in a Penalty Charge Notice, therefore you are correct to report this to the Police and District for enforcement."* The Clerk was **instructed** to request enforcement from MHDC. No further action from the Parish Council other than requesting enforcement.

36/25 M5 diversions through the parish.

- i. **Resolved. Motion** to write to the Police Crime Commissioner to request additional night-time speed monitoring in the parish when the motorway is closed, to try to reduce noise and vibration damage to homes from diverted traffic. Prps: LF. Scnd: PP. Duly **carried**.
- ii. **Resolved. Motion** to write to West Mercia police to ask for spot check enforcement. Prps: PP. Scnd: RG. Duly **carried**.
- iii. **Resolved. Motion** to write to WCC to ask for the 30mph to be moved back up Severn Bank to the previous location [cocktail.donation.cassettes](#) Prps: PP. Scnd: LMEH. Duly **carried**.



- iv. **Motion** to remind Dame Harriet Baldwin MP of the previous commitment to review all speed limits along the A38. No motion. The Clerk was simply **instructed**.
- v. Cllrs noted that the VAS at this location (sharp bend alert VAS) does not belong to the Parish Council and does not appear to have been working for a number of years.

37/25 Bin Layby A38

- i. **Resolved. Motion** to accept quotation from Glasdon for a large capacity Jubilee 110. Cllrs **agreed** to install **1 (one)** new bin at present and monitor results (quote below is for 2 bins). Cllrs **agreed** to use the CIL grant for this purpose and **instructed** the Clerk to make the necessary declaration on the website once the project is complete. Prps: RW. Scnd: ID. Duly **carried**.



Glasdon Jubilee™ 110 Litter Bin

A traditionally designed, aesthetically pleasing litter bin. Glasdon Jubilee 110 litter bin offers exceptional features.

Complete with dark green body, 4 open apertures, metal liner, gold banding, 'bin it' graphic in gold x 4, keyless entry, and concrete-in-anchors fixings.

Product Information

Product News

Product Videos

Product Warranty

2 £450.00 £900.00

Carriage to WORCESTERSHIRE	£0.00
Total (excluding VAT)	£900.00

- ii. Decision as to existing lidless bin. Cllrs **agreed** to leave the existing bin in place. Cllrs noted that the design of the bin does not allow for purchase of a lid.

38/25 Croome corner drains

- i. Debated: "Down the hill from Croome Corner - the exit drain from the storm drain half way down the hill is half filled with water, as is the section of ditch that residents cleaned out in the autumn. The ditch needs a severe digging to get the water away."
- ii. The Clerk was **instructed** to ask the CCllr to assistance in obtaining clearance works and/or a site visit as required from Highways.

39/25 Finance and admin

- i. **Resolved. Motion** to consider/motion to approve payment of accounts for this month and the previous month. Prps: PP. Scnd: LF. Duly **approved**. Appendix 1.
- ii. **Resolved. Motion** to receive and approve the latest bank reconciliation/quarterly report (as applicable). Prps: LF. Scnd: PP. Duly **approved**.
- iii. **Resolved. Motion** to receive and note the Clerk's monthly timesheet. Prps: PP. Scnd: RW. Duly **approved**.
- iv. To note that the accounts and audit paperwork for 24/25 are with the internal auditor for assessment. Duly **noted**.

40/25 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.
- ii. Items for future agendas:
- 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.
 - Improving Broadband for the parish – resident enquiry. Clerk had begun making enquiries.
 - 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 as necessary. Clerk yet to progress.

41/25 **Date of the next meeting.** Wed 11th June, 7.30pm. Apologies were received in advance from RG, RH and LMEH.

Signed ChairmanDate

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

#Clerk & RFO: Mrs Lisa Stevens, 9 The Limes, Kempsey, WR5 3LG.
Tel: 01905 820956 / 07950256363 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 May 2025 (*Approved under previous agenda or required payment under contract monthly*) **And Appendix 2. Items for payment June 2025 outstanding:**

1	Mr S Bott	Lengthsman invoice March 2025. Claimed from WCC 13/05/2025	£393.30
2	Mr S Bott	Parish Hall Mowing March 2025	£45.00
3	Worcestershire CALC	Annual Subscription	£529.04
4	Mrs L Stevens	1 x Multipack of High Capacity HP 953XL Ink Cartridges	£174.91
5	EON	Street lighting Stonnall close and Knights hill.	£0.00
6	Mrs L Stevens	Expenses April 2025	£61.04
	NEST Pension	Nil - pension held with Grimley PC	£0.00
	HMRC Shipley	EmployER Income tax payment	£0.00
7	HMRC Shipley	EmployEE Income tax payment. Clerk reimbursed PC 090425, as wage is automatically paid via standing order.	£5.00
8	Mrs L Stevens	Clerk wage March 2025 paid in April 2025	£308.16
9	Bank account service charge	Lloyds Bank monthly fee taking automatically from account.	£4.25
10	Mr S Bott	Lengthsman invoice April 2025.	requested
11	Mr S Bott	Mowing parish hall	£140.00
12	Andysloos	Toilet for church fete	requested
13	Clear Councils (formerly BHIB)	Annual Parish Council Insurance package 24/25 (reduced premium due to sign up to long term undertaking 3 yrs)	requested
14	Malvern Hills District Council	Garden Waste Collection Service 24/25 Renewal for Parish Hall x 2 bins. Direct Debit to be taken on or around 1 June 2024	£155.00
15	Mrs L Stevens	Expenses & HMA (£26) May 2025	£51.00
16	HMRC Shipley	EmployEE Income tax payment. Clerk reimbursed PC 13/05/2025, as wage is automatically paid via standing order.	£5.20
17	Mrs L Stevens	Clerk wage April 2025 paid in March 2025	£308.16
18	Bank account service charge	Lloyds Bank monthly fee taking automatically from account.	£4.25