

SELLACK PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** HELD ON TUESDAY 12TH MAY AT 7.00pm IN SELLACK PARISH HALL

Present: Cllrs Sarah Aitken, Mark Robinson, Emma Crowe and John Marshall.

In attendance: Claire Vaughan (Clerk) and 7 residents

1. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF SELLACK PARISH COUNCIL

2. TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTE THE REASON

None noted.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last meeting, held on Thursday 20th March 2025 were read, agreed and signed as correct.

Matters Arising:

- **We Don't Buy Crime** – The Parish Council Chairperson, Cllr Aitken, advised that, following the presentation from West Mercia Police, at last year's Annual Parish meeting, the Parish Council consulted residents in their newsletter, delivered to every household. There was not enough interest to warrant progress on the scheme in Sellack.
- **Participatory Budgeting** – this scheme remains open to residents, to come forward with ideas on how to allocate up to £250 of the Parish Council budget, for the benefit of the Sellack community.

4. ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL 2025-26

4.1. Chairman's Report (Cllr Sarah Aitken)

'First and foremost, I would like to thank our Volunteers, who do so much for our parish and support in a range of ways, from painting benches, planting trees, maintaining the picnic site and memorial and also becoming councillors. I would like to thank my fellow councillors for the time they give in and out of our council meetings.

The administering of our affairs and finances is completed by our Clerk, who brings much enthusiasm to the role.

On the agenda of every meeting, there is time for residents to raise views on agenda items or submit something for discussion at a future meeting. I am pleased to report that at most of our meetings we have residents attend.

Our Memorial Trail is moving along and we now have the plaques installed on gates and the route is available to download from our website.

Our biggest asset is the picnic site, and Cllr Marshall will talk more about the progress we have made with that this year.

We were successful with securing drainage and PROW grant funding (from Herefordshire Council) over the last year, for a number of works to take place. Our Ward Member has advised us that we are likely to be the first parish in Herefordshire to become stile free, as we work closely with landowners to replace stiles with more accessible gates wherever possible.

Our Coronation bench, which was located at Caradoc, has been taken away and restored and galvanised and we hope to relocate this bench soon.

We continue to strive to develop our emergency plans. In the event of an emergency arising within the parish, we would look to make contact with residents through our channels, including our

newsletter subscription (sign up via our webpage) and Facebook page. If you aren't already signed up to these channels, please consider doing so.

We will continue with our Remembrance event, held each year in November and thank you to everyone who continues to attend and support these events

I also wanted to briefly mention that we have applied for a Speed Limit Order on the road that runs from Pict Cross down to the Lough Pool, which will be assessed by Herefordshire Council but has been delayed due to the road works that have been taken place in Hoarwithy, as part of the assessment will include speed checks'.

4.2. Parish Footpath Officer's Report (Cllr Mark Robinson)

'I have been the Parish Footpath Officer for approximately four years now. I ensure all the public rights of way (PROW), which include the bridleway leading from the Church to Pengethley and the A49), are not obstructed e.g. by vegetation, crops or fallen trees. I rectify some of these issues myself or I report them to Herefordshire Council's PROW team.

As Sarah has mentioned, via Herefordshire grant monies and also a contribution from Parish Council funds, we have managed to replace most of the main stiles in the parish with more user friendly footpath gates. We think there are only three stiles remaining in the parish.

I should mention that there is a length of well used footpath that leads from the Church up to the Loughpool, which has an uneven surface in places (through the woods). The landowner is aware and has agreed to carry out works to rectify this, later this year but, in the meantime has kindly agreed to an alternative permissive path and I have placed signs at the site to show walkers where to go. My thanks to the landowner for arranging this.

Finally, any issues you encounter with our PROW network, please do get in touch with our Clerk'.

4.3. Backney Bridge Picnic Site Update from the Working Group Chairperson (Cllr John Marshall)

'For all those I have yet to meet, I am John, Vice Chair of the Parish Council and also Chair of the BBPS and Flood Action Working Group and I am delighted to say that our Vice Chair, one of our local residents, is also here this evening.

We have made a lot of progress at the site. We have paid for some spring clearance work to take place at the site this month, grass cutting and cutting back brambles, and we hope to encourage wildflowers to now come through.

We have been gifted three Japanese cherry trees (Sakura Project). Two have now been planted down at the picnic site, with some protective structures placed around them. I am particularly keen to thank the resident who helped me with planting these trees, which took us a number of hours to do. We have not yet settled on a location for our third tree.

In the last year, you will be aware that we have repaired and replaced the car park barriers, again with the support of local volunteers.

In addition, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust have carried out a survey on Backney Common in the last year, noting that it is an important wildlife habitat. We have a BBPS volunteer day on Saturday but because we have now contracted out some of the maintenance work, we are able to provide our hard-working volunteers with an exciting walk and talk with a noted local ornithologist, taking in the neighbouring commonland.

Our volunteer days will still include some maintenance work going forward, including watering our new trees, some painting, litterpicking etc.

So again, I must thank all of our volunteers, who are taking such good care of this key local asset'.

4.4. An update on other Parish assets including War Memorial, benches and defibrillator (Cllr Sarah Aitken)

Councillor Aitken advised that she had picked up on some of the key Parish assets within the previous reports.

5. TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM OTHER LOCAL CHARITIES AND ORGANISATIONS (IF SUBMITTED)

None submitted.

6. TO RECEIVE VIEWS FROM SELLACK PARISHIONERS ON PARISH MATTERS

One resident asked about one of the drainage works carried out in 2025-26 and a temporary cover that had been placed at Sellack Marsh, which the Chairperson of the Parish Council advised they would follow up on with the contractor.

Another resident asked about the SLO being applied for and raised the proliferation of road signs would need to be controlled. The Chairperson of the Parish Council advised that the signage, if approved, would be decided by the Highways authority and be subject to specific legal requirements.

There being no further business the Chairperson closed the meeting at 7.40pm

Signed.....

Date.....

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