



Clerk: Ann Lee, 3 Sparkford Road, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7FA
Tel: 07841392242 or 07702667083 **e-mail:**
clerk@henstridgeparishcouncil.org.uk
www.henstridgeparishcouncil.org.uk

Open Spaces Committee Meeting MINUTES

21 October 2025 at 6pm The Bird in Hand Skittle Alley

1. **Present:** Cllr Scard, Cllr Courtenay, Cllr Finch, Cllr Graham, Cllr Steel, Cllr Smith
2. **In attendance:** Mr Frazer Cooke, Ann Lee Clerk
3. **Apologies for Absence:** To receive and approve apologies for absence including reasons given (Local Government Act 1972 s85 (1)). **None received**
4. **Absent:** Peter Thompson
5. **Declarations of Interest.** (Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any Pecuniary or Other interests they may have under the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct). **None declared**
6. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the minutes of the Open Spaces Meeting held on the 22 July 2025.** (Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12). Proposed as accurate Cllr, seconded by Cllr and unanimously agreed.
7. **To note the Actions from the 22 July 2025 Meeting and discuss any matters arising.**

Minute Reference	Item	Action	Outcome
30 April 2024	Oak Vale wood scheme of works.	PC awarded contract to Jamie Wright conditional on public liability insurance to be submitted prior to work commencing. Clerk reported no response from Mr wright and no quotes provided by Cllr Thompson. Clerk to send Cllr Finch the previous quotes. Cllr Finch to approach the companies to establish price increases and establish who is able to proceed in time for the November PC meeting.	ACTION ON GOING Cllr Finch
24 July 2024	Burial Ground mapping pathway	1. Grave records and site mapping to be investigated and quotes provided by Cllr Finch in preparation for consideration by the PC in the autumn budget rounds. 2. Clerk to provide Cllr Finch with the number of graves in the cemetery. Clerk 3. to contact grave digger to place spoil as close to the hedge as possible and provide a quote to remove "ant hill mounds" on graves scattered at the cemetery ground. Clerk	Cllr Finch Clerk Clerk

24 July 2024 Cllr Howlett	Allotment Committee	a) Existing allotment annual fees equate to £30 a full plot and £15 for a half plot. Revised fee recommendations for 26/27 to be considered in October in time for budget preparation.	ACTION:- Cllr Scard On going
		b) Clerk to revise the tenancy contact list and liaise with the RFO to invoice each tenant for 25/26 payment asap c) Meeting with the Allotment Chair Richard Jones, Peter Nast, Cllr Howlett, Cllr Scard, Cllr Smith in the presence of the Clerk asap to resolved concerns on tenancy agreement, status of the tenants application and progress on site in line with FODO grant. Action Cllr Scard to arrange.	Clerk/RFO to submit invoices for 25/26 Cllr Scard.
22 July 25 Cllr Steel	Co-Mingle bins	Bins ordered, base provision completed. Quote accepted at a total cost of £608.40. Recent invoice disputed and not authorised for payment. Cllr Steel following this up.	Cllr Steel
22 July 25 Cllr Graham	Pump Track	Update of repeated repair to pump tract. Work all completed.	Cllr Graham. Complete

8. Committee Matters

- a) Footpath issues largely relate to overgrowth blocking the following paths: 12/28, 12/39, 12/33, 12/27, 12/38, 12/9, and flooding issues on pathway 12,46. Proposal to compile a recommendation to support the clearance of overgrowth to pathways using reserve provision from the already allocated £2,500 budget to the PC meeting in November. **Eve Wynn** from Somerset Council has suggested that the PC use the Lengths man Scheme and is something the parish council could explore independently of Somerset Council. It's a community-based initiative used in several UK counties that enables parish councils to manage minor highway maintenance tasks locally. The concept dates to the early 1900s, when a "lengths man" was responsible for maintaining a stretch of road. The modern version allows parish councils to:

- Employ a local contractor (the lengths man)
- Use delegated budgets from the county council
- Prioritise and carry out minor highway maintenance tasks

Somerset Council doesn't hold a stock of tools and wouldn't be able to supply these to the parish council. However, they have a small stock of gates, including pedestrian gates and Bristol gates, and I'd be happy to arrange delivery of these items to the parish council if needed.

Cllrs resolved to recommend to the PC that vegetation clearance should take place using the allocated reserves in accordance with the paper provided by Frazer Cooke for prime routes that lead to the countryside for the November PC meeting.

Action Cllr Steel to contact the Ranger to seek their availability and capacity to undertake footway vegetation overgrowth.

- b) To **agree** to recommend investment in burial ground mapping with mapping to scale to ensure grave marking is accurate to maximise burial spaces and support legislative record keeping at the November PC meeting. **Cllrs Finch to make recommendations to the PC in November 2025 for financial consideration in time for budget rounds. Clerk to provide Cllr Finch with the number of grave plots currently occupied and plot purchases and free capacity.**
- c) To **agree** to recommend to the PC work to remove ant hills on top of graves in the cemetery to enhance the ease of groundwork maintenance and aesthetics of the site. **Cllr Smith. Action Clerk to seek quote from the local grave digger in preparation for budget planning.**
- d) To **receive a quote from Paul Pauley** to rectify drainage at the Village Hall carpark causing health and safety concerns in freezing conditions and make recommendation for action to the PC. **Cllr Graham. Cllrs resolved to recommend the quote to rectify the drainage issues at the November PC meeting.**
- e) To **receive an update** on Flowers in bloom Competition. **Cllr Steel. Cllr Steel announced that the Parish has won a Silver awarded in the Cocks Cup.** Cllr Steel commended the work of the volunteers who have dedicated their time and energy to enhance the Parish. Costs amount to £192.27. **Cllr Steel stated she had enjoyed leading this activity but was now retiring from this activity. Cllr Smith thanked her for her significant contribution and reminded Cllrs that this was not a PC responsibility and that a parishioner might want to take this activity forward in the future.**
- f) To **agree a preferred supplier list. Cllr Steel and Cllr Graham.** Cllrs Steel and Graham recommended that Tom Paulley and Austin Herd (AR Landscapes) be added to the preferred supplier list. Cllr Finch indicated that a policy existed to facilitate this. This will be an agenda item at the next PC meeting.
- g) To **receive a further update** on drainage issues at Old Station Gardens since Somerset Council replaced fencing. **Cllr Finch** Concerns were raised about the ditches, and the lack of clearance post an initial inspection. Cllr Finch reported that he had made several complaints to Somerset Council. **Action Cllr Finch to forward emails previously sent to Somerset Council and the Clerk will write an official follow up letter for action to clear the ditch and storm drains.**
- h) To **receive an update** on the overhanging Cooper Beech tree at the Children's Play Park. **Cllr Steel.** Cllr Steel explained that this follows a complaint from a resident that the overhanging limb on the tree attracts birds which are making a mess on a nearby bench. In tandem, the playground inspection report recommended the overhanging limb to be removed. Cllr Steel stated that the loss of the limb may unbalance the tree canopy. **Cllrs resolved to keep this matter under review but not act at this stage.**
- i) To **receive** a quote of £500 from AR Landscapes to address gravel spill at the new entrance at the recreational ground and make recommendation to the PC to authorise the work. **Cllr**

Steel. Cllr Graham proposed that the work should be undertaken under the financial regulations policy limit, this was seconded by Cllr Courtenay and unanimously carried.

- j) To receive proposed scheduled plan** to undertake maintenance repairs to the recreational ground equipment and playground following the annual inspection. **Cllrs Finch and Graham. Cllrs Finch and Graham reported that all audited recommendations were low risk and that remedial work would take place over the next fiscal year. Quotes for next year's inspection will be sought by Cllr Graham.**
- k) To receive** an update on the application by allotment tenants to become an Allotment Association. **Cllr Scard. (Minuted in matters arising)**
- l) To make a recommendation** to the PC to resolve the allotment insurance gap for equipment purchased from grant. **Cllr Scard. Cllrs collectively recommended a separate meeting to discuss the matters of concern in the proposed meeting with the tenants Allotment committee members as detailed in matters arising.**
- m) To receive an update** of flooding matters at Marsh Lane. **Cllr Steel. Cllr Steel asked if Cllr Scard could follow this up and he agreed. Action Cllr Scard to resolve.**
- n) To receive quotes** and make recommendation to the PC to address Ash Dye back tree felling at Oak Vale Wood in the interests of public safety and make proposal for the November PC meeting. **Cllr Steel and Cllr Scard proposed to recommend the quote provided by Toomer Tree Services at the November PC meeting.**
- o) To receive quotes** to resolve drainage work at Oak Vale wood to ensure work commenced by the end of November. **Cllr Thompson. In Cllr Thompsons absence and without receiving the quotes for the work, Cllrs resolved to go back to parties who had previously quoted to seek their availability and establish any revisions regarding inflationary costs. Action Clerk**
- p) Budget considerations: Cllrs considered the budget and recommend provision for:- Oak vale Wood Dye back c£2000
Cemetery - Grave mapping, grave mapping and grave marking c£5,000**

Next meeting 20 January 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall Lounge

Reports and agenda items for submission to the Clerk by the 10 January 26.

Ann Lee Parish Clerk

Signed and dated