

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES

These minutes will be agreed at the Parish Council meeting on 29th September and might be subject to slight amendments

The minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 25th August 2026 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall.

Present: Cllr's C Silverlight (Chair), Ms S Drury, R Deer and A Paul.

In attendance: Somerset Cllr S Wakefield, two members of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

53/08/26. To receive apologies for absence. Apologies were accepted from Cllr's S Bellamy, Mrs N Francis-Bellamy and Mrs B Moore.

54/08/26. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. No interests disclosed.

55/08/26. To agree the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28/07/26 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed by the Chair.

56/08/26. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda (for information only).

57/08/26. Reports - Somerset Council. A written report from Cllr Wakefield was circulated by email in early August. The Big Conversation on Care, a national engagement exercise inviting the public to help shape what a National Care Service in England could look like, and how it is paid for, has been launched. Somerset Council (SC) has published its own new Adult Social Care Strategy for 2026 to 2029, which confirms that adult social care alone accounted for 38% of Somerset Council's budget in 2025/26 (£230.867m). SC is paying towards the care of about 8,000 people.

The scoping consultation for the new Somerset Local Plan has closed. The sites put forward for development can be seen and more can be added. There have been initial comments from SC and some sites have been turned down. There is a right to appeal this decision.

The broken drain cover reported at previous meetings has been replaced by someone, but not Highways. Cllr Wakefield was thanked for looking at this.

She reported that she hadn't had time to follow up the alleged planning breach by West Buckland Motors who are believed to be operating without a change of use. They have a website and vehicles can be seen from a nearby footpath. The Parish Council were alerted to a possible planning breach by a resident who saw a car transporter travelling in the direction of the racing stables. The enforcement team has a long list of alleged planning breaches and cannot pursue them all. Providing photos can help. Cllr Silverlight will provide information to Cllr Wakefield so that she can follow this up. It was suggested that the Parish Council could speak to people thought to be breaching planning regulations.

The issue of parking on the junction of France Lane during the school day was brought up and Cllr Wakefield agreed to speak to Kate Brown, SC Traffic Engineer. A new petting zoo has opened at Higher Ruggin Farm and is offering corporate days, cream teas etc. Neighbours are concerned as it does not appear to have

a license. Cllr Ms Drury said it didn't affect her apart from creating more traffic.

58/08/26. Democratic Period. A member of the public commented on planning application 46/26/002, an outline application for a large development on the edge of West Buckland. They were concerned that the medical centre in Wellington is already struggling to cope. Cllr Wakefield said the developer will have to work closely with the NHS and give funding towards health service provision. SC are receiving speculative applications because housing targets are not being met. There will be more housing built going towards Wellington Station. The member of the public was urged to send in a response to the planning application. Determining the application will not be a quick thing and it will not be rushed through. The applicant for planning appeal 6013951 commented on the reasons SC gave for not giving permission for his application, which included the size of the proposed extensions. He said the planning officer did not even visit the site. He needs to build another bedroom onto the property for his growing family. There were two objections from neighbours but he didn't feel that the plans affected anyone.

59/08/26. To continue to discuss broadband issues in the parish. The notes from the meeting in July, organised by Gideon Amos MP, have been received and circulated. The best thing to come out of the meeting is clear information about what people should do. There are people in the village who are having problems. Cllr Ms Drury has gone to Starlink. It is concerning that the various parties involved in delivering superfast broadband are not talking to each other. Cllr Wakefield is talking to Amanda Williams, Connecting Devon and Somerset. The whole of Ruggin will have not have a phone service when analogue phone lines are closed down. Electric gates and garage doors will no longer open from phone keypads as they don't work on VOIP or digital voice. Openreach should be stopped from removing connection by copper wire. Rural communities have had their mobile phone signal made worse when the aerial was moved to improve the signal for people who already have broadband.

Cllr Wakefield left the meeting.

60/08/26. Planning:

a) To consider any planning applications received by the Parish Council prior to the meeting.

46/26/0021 Outline application for up to 225 dwellings, including associated open space and landscaping, with all matters reserved except for access at Land North of Taunton Road, Wellington (Departure from Local Plan). Comment: West Buckland Parish Council recommend that permission for this application is refused and object for the following reasons:

1. This site is not included in the site allocations in the adopted Taunton Deane Local Plan and approval of any departure from the local plan without clear justification might set a precedent for future edge of settlement development on an unallocated site.
2. This development would be next to a former landfill site and there could be a risk of contamination. Owners could find it difficult to obtain property insurance if appropriate mitigation measures are not in place.
3. The impact of increased pressure on local facilities and services which have already been stretched by recent developments and no longer meet the needs of the current population.

4. The impact on infrastructure and traffic and the risk of increased traffic congestion, particularly at peak times.

b) To note the following planning appeal: 6013951 Orchard View, Silver Street, West Buckland, Wellington, TA21 9JZ. Proposal: Erection of a part two storey and part single storey extension to the rear of Orchard View, Silver Street, West Buckland. The appeal will be determined on the basis of written representations. The Parish Council did not object to this application..

c) To receive decisions from planning applications determined by Somerset Council. No decisions received.

d) Any other planning matters. No other planning matters.

60/08/26. Highways.

a) To note any required work to be reported to SC. A temporary road closure in place at Hockholler for Openreach to remove blockages. Potholes are being repaired.

b) Update from Highways Officer re outstanding highways work (Kerb at Dyers Close and drainage in Silver Street. No update. The Clerk will find previous emails and use them to remind Gwyn Hughes, Traffic Engineer, what was promised.

c) Update on missing drain cover and confusion about who is responsible. Earlier in the meeting Cllr Wakefield reported the drain cover had been replaced. It is believed that someone other than highways replaced it.

d) To discuss replacing the bollards on the verge in front of the play area. The Clerk suggested using flexible verge markers to replace the existing bollards. She will check whether Highways will permit this and, if they will, get a quote. It was suggested that just the rotten wooden bollards could be replaced but if this is to be done by councillors someone would need to have up to date Chapter 8 training.

e) To approve Chapter 8 training for Cllr Paul. It was agreed that the Parish Council will pay for Cllr Paul to attend a suitable training course. The Clerk will make enquiries.

f) Any other highways matters. None.

61/08/26. Finance:

a) To agree and authorise any payments. It was resolved to make the following payments:

Countrywide	£149.02	Grass cutting contract for playing field	2627/27
Jill Larcombe	£371.01	Clerk's salary & expenses for August	2627/28
HM Revenue & Customs	£83.20	PAYE for August	2627/29
West Buckland Village Hall Trust	£14.00	Hall hire 25th August 2026	2627/30

Since the last meeting a payment of £487.31 has been made to Darren Greenslade Landscaping Ltd as a 50% deposit on playground repairs (Payment ref: 2627/26)

A bank service charge of £7.00 was taken on 31st July and the next one will be taken from the current account on 31st August 2026.

Transfers were made from the Instant Access Account to the current Account. An internal transfer will be made to bring the Current Account balance to £1,00

- b) To note any receipts since the last meeting and the bank accounts balance.** Since the last meeting £2.59 has been received from Hydra EVC Ltd The current account balance is £1,009.59 and the Instant Access Account balance is £18852.02.
- c) Bank reconciliation for 31.07.26.** The reconciliation was checked and signed by Cllr Paul.

62/08/26. Playing Field:

- a) Any points to note from the regular inspection.** Cllr Bellamy will send the August Inspection report to the Clerk when he returns. Cllr Mrs Francis Bellamy has reported the far football net needs pegs but the ground is too hard to put them in.
- b) Update on obtaining quotes to remove dead trees on the playing field hedge.** Two quotes have been received but it needs to be established exactly what parts of the hedge the Parish Council is responsible for.
- c) To discuss the quote to cut the inside of the play area hedge.** It was agreed to accept the quote. It was noted there are some brambles growing out of the hedge which are a hazard. Cllr Deer will look at the brambles and will remove any that are a hazard.
- d) Any other playing field matters.** The goal post damaged by the contractor cutting the grass has been repaired and replaced in the playing field. It has a new net.

63/08/26. Any footpath matters. Attempts are being made to contact the owner of the field below the playing field to ask her to cut back the vegetation.

64/08/26. Update on the marking of the vehicle space for the EV Charging Point. No quotes obtained at this point. Only £2.59 income was received in July. Cllr Silverlight and Cllr Ms Drury have been looking at what other people are charging for using their EV Charging points. It has always been the Council's intention to provide a service rather than to make a profit. It was agreed to reduce the 60p/Kwh charge to 52p/Kwh. Cllr Silverlight will try to get the EV Charger added to the ZapMap app.

65/08/26. Correspondence. The following correspondence was noted:
Medequip Somerset – a request to return medical equipment when it is no longer needed.
Somerset Rural Active Toolkit.
Somerset Rivers Authority Annual report 2025-26.

66/08/26. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion (Not for Decisions). None.

67/08/26. To note the date of the next meeting. 29th September 2026.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Signed:
Chair

Date:

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