

GUARLFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 12th MAY 2025

Present

Councillor	Mr M Huskinson	Chairman
Councillor	Mr M Simpson	
Councillor	Mr D Fellows	
Councillor	Mr A Medcalf	
Councillor	Rvd P Hughes	
Councillor	Mrs M Newport	
Councillor	Mrs A Johnson	
	Mrs G Hollick	Clerk & RFO

County Council Footpath Liaison Officer Mr David Furlong

District and County Councillor Mr Tom Wells

1. Apologies

Councillor Rvd. Peter Hughes

2. Public Question and Answer

There were no members of the public present

3. Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interest

3.1 Parish Councillors were reminded that, as required by the Parish Council Code of Conduct Order 2001, revised 2020, they should notify the MHDC Monitoring Officer of any changes to their Register of Interests or the receipt of any unrecorded gifts or hospitality. They should also declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any of the items of this meeting.

3.2 There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.

4. The Race Relations and Crime and Disorder Acts

Parish Councillors were reminded that all the business carried out and decisions made at this meeting and the following Parish Council Annual Meeting, must observe the requirements of the above Acts.

5. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13th May 2024

These minutes having been circulated beforehand, had been approved and signed by the Chairman at the meeting of the Parish Council on 16th September 2024

6. Chairman's Report

GUARLFORD PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2024/2025 (1/4/2024 – 31/3/2025)

The Parish Council met on six occasions during the year, two of which were Extraordinary Meetings, one of which took place on 19/7/24 to consider and respond to the consultation by Malvern Hills Trust (“MHT”) on the Private Bill proposed to be lodged in Parliament altering its governance arrangements and the other of which took place on 13/1/25 to consider whether to lodge a Petition against the Private Bill which had been lodged.

I am pleased to say that throughout the year the Council comprised 7 members (its full complement).

At our meetings we have generally received reports as necessary and appropriate from:-

Our Public Path Warden: Councillor David Fellows

Our Tree Warden: Councillor Revd Peter Hughes

Our Local Police Community Support Officer:

The Chair of the Village Hall Committee: Mrs Jenny Cameron and her successor
Mr Phil Thomas

Our County and District Councillor: Mr Tom Wells

Our District Councillor: Mrs Kathy Wells

Our elected Trustee on the Board of Malvern Hills Trust: Councillor David Fellows

Our thanks go to all the above for their many and varied contributions to our proceedings.

AUDITING

Mr Peter Hughes of Madresfield kindly agreed to be our Internal Auditor for the year. Councillor Andrew Medcalf has supplied regular reports as our Internal Financial Monitor. We are extremely grateful to both of them for their work and diligence.

PRECEPT

The precept for the year was £6,500.

PARISH FOOTPATHS

Mr David Furlong is our WCC Footpaths Liaison Officer and as such is of considerable assistance to our Public Path Warden and regularly attends our meetings. We are very grateful to him for his work.

PLANNING

During the year some 5 planning applications for development within or close to the Parish boundaries were considered by the Council's Planning Committee and where appropriate comments passed to Malvern Hills District Council Planning Department. I would like to thank the members of the Planning Committee for the way in which they have gone about their business during the year

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

GUARLFORD PARISH COUNCIL

The Council received regular reports on various items of importance either personally or by means of newsletters from our County and District Councillor Tom Wells and our District Councillor Kathy Wells. Our grateful thanks go to them for their valuable contributions.

MALVERN ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION GROUP (“MEPG”)

During the year the Council engaged as necessary with MEPG and its representatives. The lodging by the Trustees of MHT of the aforesaid Private Bill in Parliament remains of considerable concern to the Council as if passed it would have the effect not only of consolidating the 5 Acts of Parliament which currently govern the activities of MHT but also amending them substantially.

PARISH ENVIRONMENT

- (i) speeding traffic through the village and down Clevelode Lane, the appropriate control of speeding vehicles and the passage of unduly heavy vehicles down Clevelode Lane remained of considerable concern to the Council during the year.
- (ii) the Parish Lengthsman scheme continues to work well and the Council is being regularly reimbursed the fees of Mr Jeremy Moore. During the year minor works to the public footpaths in the Parish continued to be carried out by Jeremy with the approval of the County Council. The Council is most grateful to Jeremy for his work.

ADMINISTRATION

Mrs Gill Hollick has been our Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer for the year and we are enormously grateful to her for all the time she has devoted to the job and for her boundless energy and enthusiasm on all fronts.

GUARLFORD PARISH WEBSITE

The Website is a great asset but very sadly Mr Angus McCulloch (who kept it up to date) died in September 2024. The Council is most grateful to Angus for all his hard work over many years and extends its sympathy to his widow Rosemary for her sad loss

GENERAL

Finally may I thank Tom and Kathy Wells, all Councillors and Mr David Furlong for their attendance, varied contributions and support throughout the year.

M G Huskinson

Chairman

Guarlford Parish Council

Approval of the Chairman's report was proposed by Councillor Simpson, Seconded by Councillor Fellows and it was approved unanimously.

7. Clerk's Report

CLERKS REPORT 2024/2025 (1/4/2024 – 31/3/2025)

GUARLFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Over the past year I have continued to support the work of Guarlford Parish Council to carry out the wishes of the residents of the Parish and helping to ensure Guarlford remains a pleasant place to live.

As responsible financial officer. I have managed the Parish budget and prepared all relevant documentation for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. With careful management, the precept for the past year was maintained without increase. In November 2024, with the authorisation of Parish Councillors, I transferred the Parish accounts to an on-line account which has simplified financial processes. I have maintained a strong audit trail of authorisation with full financial reporting at each meeting of the Parish Council.

Throughout the year I have monitored the lists of planning applications from MHDC and kept Councillors informed of any applications relevant to the Guarlford Parish.

I have liaised with members of the local community throughout the year who continue to voice concerns over speeding traffic through the village. Unfortunately, my application to the Police Commissioners Community Fund for the cost of a Vehicle Activated Speed camera, was declined although I have been granted a permit from Worcestershire County Council for a camera post in certain locations in the village. I will continue to pursue this throughout the coming year.

I have liaised with the Safer Neighbourhood Team to identify their policing priorities for Guarlford and this continues to be speeding traffic.

I have overseen the work of the Lengthsman, Jeremy Moore, who has kept the Parish tidy over the year by keeping the verges clear, cutting gully grips as requested and ensuring that there have not been any major issues with flooding.

I have worked with the Trustees of the Village Hall to oversee the completion of a renovation project which has resulted in a very much improved community facility which is also more appropriate for Parish Council meetings and events. All Parish Councils are being urged to consider how they can support their communities to promote good health. With this in mind I co-ordinated another community event in June 2024 to bring people together in Penny Close to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings. In November, in response to requests from residents, I organised a second training session on resuscitation and the use of the defibrillator.

I have been in regular contact with CALC attending meetings in person and on-line as appropriate and I am grateful to Christopher Wayman, Chief Executive Officer, for sharing his knowledge and information and always offering his support.

I have attended an information session on obtaining a .gov domain for Guarlford and obtained quotes for further consideration by Councillors.

In February 2025, at the request of Councillors I submitted a Petition to The House of Lords in response to the proposed Malvern Hills Trust Private Bill.

The next three years will bring new challenges for all Parish Councils as Worcestershire moves from its current two-tier system to a unitary authority. I have attended an initial information sharing session about the likely progress of this transfer and will continue to monitor and inform Councillors of progress.

Guarlford is a very rewarding community to work for and even though there will inevitably be challenges ahead I am grateful for the continuing support of Parish Councillors and the wider community.

Gill Hollick

GUARLFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Approval of the Clerk's report was proposed by Councillor Huskinson, seconded by Councillor Johnson and it was approved unanimously.

Signed **Date**.....
Cllr Mr M Huskinson
Chairman