

NEWLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN NEWLAND VILLAGE ROOM ON 31ST MARCH 2026 AT 19:00

[These minutes remain in draft form until approved at a subsequent meeting of the Council]

Abbreviations used

CAP Coleford Area Partnership. **CRG** Clearwell Recreation Ground Management Committee. **CMH** Clearwell Memorial Hall
CWVC Consortium of Wye Valley Councils. **FOIA** Freedom of Information Act. **FODDC** Forest of Dean District Council. **GAPTC**
Gloucestershire Association of Parish & Town Councils **GCC (RoW)** Gloucestershire County Council (Rights of Way). **GH**
Gloucestershire Highways. **GRCC** Gloucestershire Rural Community Council **ICO** Information Commissioners Office **NALC**
National Association of Local Council Clerks. **NWWTW** Newland Waste Water Treatment Works **SLCC** Society of Local Council
Clerks **WVNL** Wye Valley National Landscape **WW** Welsh Water

PRESENT

Cllr Davies (Chair), Evans, Henson, Wheeler, Purvis, Norris, Powell and Ms C Owens, Clerk.
3 members of the public.

6810 APOLOGIES

None

6811 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

6811.1 Cllr Wheeler declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Planning applications P1060/25/FUL due to being a neighbour to the property (Item 6821.1.1)
As a result he did not participate in the discussion or vote.

6811.2 Cllr Davies declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Redbrook Church Kitchen Grant Application due to being invited to perform a role as an independent consultant to the evaluate the associated heritage lottery grant application, if successful. (Item 6828)
As a result she did not participate in the discussion or vote.

6811.3 Cllr Evans and Henson declared an other disclosable pecuniary interest in Clearwell Memorial Hall Grant Application due to being members of the Memorial Hall governing committee...(Item 6829)
As a result they did not participate in the discussion or vote.

6812 DISPENSATION REQUESTS

6812.1 The standing dispensation was renewed for Cllr. Wheeler to remain in the meeting but not vote on planning matters impacted by his other interest as Chair FODCC Management Development Committee.

6813 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 24 FEBRUARY 2026

It was resolved to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting following an amendment re minute 6798.2. They were signed by the Chair.

6814 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

6814.1 Re Minute 6788 FODDC HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

It was noted that no sites had yet been identified

6814.2 Re Minute 6789 FODDC REVISED DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

It was reported that member discussions during the working group of 10th March were collated and submitted to FODDC by the Clerk

It was a meeting specially convened just to discuss the local plan -separate to the biodiversity/heritage meeting

6814.3 Re minute 6790 LGR CONSULTATION SURVEY

It was reported that the responses by councillors were minimal so the Clerk submitted the survey with the information that was provided

6814.4 Re minute 6798.3 and 6778.3 ENOVERT GRANT APPLICATION

It was reported that there are no updates on works. The transfer of the balance of matched funds was to be made on 1st April 2026

6814.4 Re Minute 6798.4 CLEARWELL CHAPEL RESTORATION

It was noted by Cllr Henson that there were no further updates on transfer of ownership to Forest of Dean Buildings Preservation Trust. Discussions between the Diocese and the Trust are ongoing.

6815 TO RECEIVE CLERK'S REPORT

It was reported that the Clerk has completed the Internal Audit and is preparing for the External Audit.

Devolution training is being offered by GAPTC which she plans on attending along with any councillors that feel that this may be beneficial.

6816 TO RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

It was reported that geotechnical surveys are taking place on the A466 with permanent repairs expected in 2027

It was reported that a motion was considered at the Full Council Meeting to use public land for community renewables. It was reported that a motion was passed to support farmers

Cllr. Evans raised a question regarding the Biosphere's benefits. It was reported that there have been more consultations. More information is available online (FODCC website)

Cllr Chris McFarling has provided a report which is available on the website

6817 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Wheeler reported that internal Local Draft Plan and LGR discussions are ongoing on its response to the public consultation stage.

6818 TO RECEIVE PARISH COUNCILLORS' & COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

6818.1 It was reported by Cllr Purvis that the Halls Charity has allocated more grants, expanded its beneficiaries and posters have been posted locally

6818.2 It was reported by Cllr. Evans that he has become aware of public concerns about the proposed Biosphere.

6818.3 It was reported that Cllr Wheeler had attended a meeting regarding the roadworks between Staunton Monmouth. Large cavities have been found underneath the road which require more investigations

6819 NOTICE OF CASUAL VACANCY

6819.1 It was noted that The Notice of Casual Vacancy expired on 20th March 2026 and that the Clerk has received no requests by FODCC for a by-election.

6819.2 It was proposed that advertisement for a new councillor should be circulated using various media and the item kept on the Agenda until the vacancies have been filled

6820 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

6820.1 Question/Comment – A member of the public who is a guide at Clearwell Caves raised concerns re minute 6798.2 as if there are issues found this could see job losses at the Mill who employ approximately 40 People. These employees are all local and within a 40-minute commute. The Mill uses the produce of 3 local farms.

The road structure liability is with the mines (below ground landowner) and the landowner (above ground landowner) is not responsible

Answer – This can be revisited at a future meeting after the complaint submitted by a member of the public to highways has been dealt with

6820.2 Question – A member of the public asked for an update on the DBS checks for Cllrs.

Answer – The item will be on next months agenda, and a decision will be made on whether to implement

6820.3 Question – A member of the public raised concerns about some of the footpaths in the Parish being inaccessible

Answer – It was proposed that Cllrs walked the footpaths to identify the ones that need maintenance. Findings to be reported to Public Rights Of Way Officer Jeff Wheeler by the Clerk

6821 PLANNING

6821.1 FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL – APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

	Ref	Location	Details	Decision
6821.1.1	P1060/25/FUL	Old.Crow Cottage Redbrook	Erection of a two -storey rear extension with single -story side extension	Retain-No Objection
6821.1.2	P0326/26/TCA	CastleFarm, Clearwell	Felling of end of life Ash tree to allow for access to repair works	No Objection
6821.1.3	P0167/26/FUL	Cherry Orchard Farm, Newland	Self Build conversion of a redundant barn into a dwelling	No Objection subject to recommendations Landscaping officer

6821.2 FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL- DECISIONS

	Ref	Location	Details	Decision
6821.2.1	P0075/26/COU	Kennel.Farm, Clearwell	Change of use of two-room residential annex to form a self contained holiday let	Permission Granted
6821.2.2	P0183/26/TCA	Tudor Farmhouse, Clearwell	Reduction of Leylandii hedge	Approved

6821.3 WELSH GOVERNMENT PLANNING INSPECTORATE

	Ref	Location	Details	Decision
6821.3	Appeal Correspondence 2025/00319	Land at Puddingstone Wood Redbrook	Retention of a forestry building	Response submitted by the Clerk, Awaiting hearing date

6822 FINANCE

6822.1 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

It was resolved to authorise the following payments. Authority Localism Act 2011, s.1(1).
Cllrs Davies & Henson to authorise at the bank

Ref	To	For	Amount	VAT	Payment
26/13	C Owens	Salary Jan	CONFIDENTIAL		
26/13		Travel	£11.70		
26/13		Allowance	£116.04		CONFIDENTIAL
26/14	HMRC	PAYE	CONFIDENTIAL		CONFIDENTIAL
26/15	Clearwell Village Hall	Room Hire	£264.60	£52.92	£317.52
26/16	Clearwell Rec Mgmt Enover	Balance of funds	£957.00		£957.00
26/17	Tracey Pennington	Clearwell Blooms Project	£642.00		£642.00
26/18	Stocksigns	VAS replacement battery	£107.95	£21.59	£129.54
26/19	GALC	Membership	£355.47		£355.47
26/20	GAPTC	CiLCA Course	£500.00		£500.00
26/21	SLCC	CiLCA Course	£495.00		£495.00
26/22	PJ PD Adams	Grass Cutting	£1010.50	£202.10	£1212.60

6822.2 INCOME RECEIVED: noted

Reported at last meeting	32557.45
Changes (VAT)	862.20
Current figure	33419.65

6822.3 IN-HOUSE FINANCIAL CHECKS

It was noted that these are to be undertaken on a quarterly basis. To be completed by Cllr Purvis and Cllr Davies in April 2026

6822.4 UNITY TRUST BANK

It was noted that some Cllrs have had some issues logging onto the bank. The Clerk will contact Unity Bank and add users again.

6823 GOVERNANCE POLICIES

It was noted that the revisions/approval for policies will be discussed in May 2026

6824 HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY

6824.1 The road works closures log including implications of A466 Redbrook to Bigsweir closures was noted and discussed

6824.2 The Highways and Rights of Way Actions Log was discussed and amendments noted

6824.3 It was noted that the battery of the VAS in Clearwell needed to be replaced so a quote was obtained by Cllr Henson and approved for payment. A suggestion was made for acquiring solar panels. Downloading of the data and system use information to be investigated and provided to the Clerk by Cllr Henson/VAS supplier

6825 PARISH COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS

6825.1 It was reported by Cllr Henson that a newsletter feature has been created by the Climate Action Working Group to replace the community questionnaire

It was reported that the delivery of the polytunnel ref Greener Gloucestershire Grant had been received but has not been situated yet

6825.2 It was reported that the notes for the inaugural meeting of the Biodiversity and Heritage Working Group on 5th February were circulated to other councillors. Councillors to review draft register of heritage assets by the next working group meeting

6826 WYE RESTORATION & CONSORTIUM OF WYE VALLEY COUNCILS (CWVC)

It was reported by Cllr Davies that activities are being planned in the next CWVC meeting on 14th April 2026

6827 STAFFING COMMITTEE

It was noted the next meeting would be on 14th April at 16.00 in Redbrook Village Hall

6828 REDBROOK CHURCH KITCHEN GRANT APPLICATION

It was agreed that the grant consideration be deferred until further information was provided. There were concerns about who was taking over as the Vicar after Mark Bick has left/continuity of projects. Concerns were also raised about the use of the school carpark for customers as there are no parking facilities at the church

6829 CLEARWELL MEMORIAL HALL GRANT APPLICATION

It was voted that the grant for £500 be awarded. One councillor abstained

6830 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

It was noted that the date of the meeting is 12th May at 19.00 in Redbrook Village Hall. Final arrangements to be made at April meeting.

6831 CORRESPONDENCE

It was noted that a grant application was received by Newland Village Room. This will be discussed in the next meeting in April 2026

6832 MINOR MATTERS

6832.1 It was reported by Cllr Norris that he has contacted Gigaclear to try and obtain free Wifi for Clearwell Memorial Hall and Redbrook Village Hall

6832.2 It was reported by Cllr Davies that she had contacted the police about the illegal rave that occurred near Redbrook

6832.3 It was reported by Cllr Norris that there was a dangerous tree in Rookery Lane, Newland. The Clerk to report to Highways

6833 PUBLIC COMMENT

6833.1 A member of the public asked if anyone had been consulted regarding the location of the Polytunnel. They also enquired about it being insured and should it be placed in a more accessible place. It was suggested that this be discussed in more detail

6833.2 A member of the public commented re Grant application for the Redbrook Church Kitchen and suggested that an ex display might be able to be sourced free of charge

6833.3 A member of the public thanked the council for the grant application that was awarded for Clearwell Memorial Hall

6834 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS to note

April 2026 – Newsletter for publication in May

May 2026 – Annual Parish Meeting

May 2026 – Revision/Approval of Governance Policies

6835 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND ASSOCIATED TIMETABLE

Date	Time	Meeting	Venue
2026			
14 Apr	1600	Staffing Committee	Redbrook
28 Apr	1900	Council Meeting	Redbrook
12 May	1900	Annual Parish Meeting	Redbrook
26 May	1900	Annual Parish Council Meeting	Clearwell
30 June	1900	Council Meeting	Newland
28 July	1900	Council Meeting	Redbrook
29 Sept	1900	Council Meeting	Clearwell
27 Oct	1900	Council Meeting	Newland
24 Nov	1900	Council Meeting	Redbrook

The meeting was closed at 22.00