

Churt Parish Council

Clerk to the Council
Mrs Dawn Barrow

Minutes of the meeting of Churt Parish Council held on Wednesday 19 February 2025 at 7.30 pm.

Present

Churt Councillors: Sally Shorthose, Mike Shorthose, Stephen Wright, Julian Spence, Dominic Raeside, Myra Johnson, Pippa Harrison, Roddy Barrow

Surrey County Council: 1 (David Harmer, part)

Waverley Borough Council: 1 (David Munro, part)

Clerk to the Council: Dawn Barrow

Members of the Public: 5 - Ben Hapgood SWT, Richard Bourne, Keith Buchanan, Oli Plaistowe and Jan Macavoy (CHCC)

25/16 Chairman's Welcome

Cllr S Shorthose welcomed all to the meeting.

25/17 Presentation from Ben Hapgood, Surrey Wildlife Trust

Looking into landowner engagement. Visited Wicket Wood to assess plans and opportunities for the environment and biodiversity. Focus on landscape scale and connectivity. 7 landowners already engaged in Churt, could be sizeable future funding.

'Land App' is a free software package which shows statutory designations. Wicket Wood is designated as common land meaning the public can walk across the whole area.

Funding considerations for Surrey Hills AONB. SSSI plus SAC and SPA on doorstep of Wicket Wood.

Most valuable habitat from a diversity perspective is lowland heathland. 3 main species to consider in relation to connectivity are adders, nightingales and grayling butterflies. Long term vision is therefore not to lose heathland as a priority habitat.

Enhancing woodland habitats ticks boxes for the Forestry Commission.

Consider how climate adaptive the environment is? Broadleaf species provide a fire break.

Therefore a reduction of conifers could lead to an increase in broadleaf species.

Ideal is to have 63% heathland habitat. Grants available to restore lowland heathland which costs £311 per hectare.

No stewardship funding available until the Summer.

We should consider a 10 year woodland management plan.

Cllrs Spence and Johnson to apply for some grant monies.

25/18 5 minute presentation by SCC

Central government determined to reorganise local government. SCC to submit a response in the next 10 days to the latest suggestions. SCC have said no to adding in part of another County authority. Waverley should sit with Guildford and Mole Valley. Electorate need to be protected when their Council is not in debt, as per Waverley Vs Woking. Cllr Spence asked when would parishes be approached?

Elections will now be in 2026. Important to look after the local environment, there are 17 separate commons alone in the Western Villages.

25/19 5 minute presentation by WBC

Cllr Munro advised that the leaders of all Boroughs and Districts were getting together each week. Preferred option is for 2 or 3 unitaries. Decision will be made in Whitehall. Aim to be in place by 2027?

Regarding planning WBC have to apply the new NPPF guidelines, to date there have been no test cases for large scale development .

Cllr Harrison thanked Cllr Munro for the swift removal by WBC of fly tipped bins and a dead deer.

25/20 Apologies for absence

Cllr Martin

25/21 Disclosure of Pecuniary and other Interests

Cllr Spence confirmed he must stay neutral when discussing planning applications as he sits on the WBC planning committee.

25/22 Minutes of the meeting of 15 January 2025

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025 were **AGREED** by all. **Proposed** by Cllr M Shorthose, **seconded** by Cllr Wright.

Ref Crosswater Lane, the owner has been told to remove the fence he put up.

25/23 Report of the Clerk to the Council

- 1) WBC will hopefully relocate waste bin by Quinettes to Spar in April
- 2) Roddy Barrow to attend new councillor course in the Spring.
- 3) Cllr S Shorthose attended SALC Chairman's course 18 Feb, 1 to 1.
- 4) 2 x 'No Fire' signs erected in Wicket Wood

25/24 Report from the Environment Committee incl. Farnborough (JS/MJ)

Farnborough Noise update in papers. Application still with Rushmoor. WBC will object again in March.

We have a management plan for Wicket Wood, propose to thin out pines and create glades. James Gray charges £650 per day for 2 men. Cllrs Spence and Johnson will apply for a grant of £4000 from SWT towards equipment. Need to submit application before the end of March. Will inform locals when works start.

Main herbicide for bracken can no longer be used.

Some local residents have been dumping cuttings in Wicket Wood. Clerk to request this practice stops.

Cllr Johnson advised that the Church have formed an eco church group to engage more widely in the community on environment matters.

The hedge between Old Kiln Close and Redhearn Fields has now been cleared.

The Environment Agency were advised about the diggers at Lowicks.

25/25 Village strategy 2035 (MS)

Should we do a presentation on this at the Annual Assembly?

25/26 Village centre incl.fete (PH)

Cllr Harrison asked for ideas as to who might open the fete?

CPC will retain their stall at the fete.

Need more parking marshals.

25/27 Roads and Transport

Nothing to report

25/28 Crime and Disorder (DR)

Nothing to report.

25/29 Financial Matters (RB)

25/29.1 Payments for authorisation – Jan 2025

Jan's accounts were **proposed** by Cllr M Shorthose, **Seconded** by Cllr Spence and **agreed** by all.

25/29.2 Budget Update and Income report – Jan 2025

Noted.

25/29.3 To note individual monthly costs in excess of £500

10 Jan – Surrey Pension Fund, £566.27, Clerk's Dec pension plus back dated amount.

14 Jan – HMRC, £1456, employer's tax and NI

23 Jan – Dawn Barrow, £1570.92, Clerk's Jan salary

25/30 –To note and comment on current planning applications (MJ)

Report circulated in advance of meeting by Cllr Johnson.

PIP/2025/00207, Land on Green Lane, CPC maintains its objection to the proposed development and does not agree that the site is on Grey Belt land.

WA/2025/00185 Pendle Barn, Hale House Lane, No objection to retention of open barn/shelter. Woodbury House application has been approved, as has Borrow House.

West Pines, Green Lane, 4 metre extension, no objection.

Felt not the time at the moment to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan

25/31 Grass Protector on Redhearn Green

Cllr Raeside and Clerk to meet Grasstex on site.

25/32 Resume of Western Village meeting of 23 Jan (Clerk)

Clerk gave a brief resume of meeting, all local Clerks feel it is almost impossible for smaller parishes to secure funding for capital road and transport improvements.

25/33 Councillors' portfolio responsibilities

Cllr Barrow to join finance sub- committee, plus pavilion refurb and rec inspections.

Other matters

There being no other business the meeting of the Churt Parish Council closed at 9.55pm . There then followed a meeting of the Churt Recreation Ground Trust (See separate Minutes).

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Signed:

Date:

Chairman

The next meetings of the Churt Parish Council and Churt Recreation Ground Trust will be held on **Wednesday 26 March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Churt pavilion.**