

NORTON ST PHILIP PARISH COUNCIL

www.nortonstphilipparishcouncil.co.uk

Clerk Nicola Duke, April Rise, 81 Studland Park, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3HN, clerk@nortonstphilipparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on
Wednesday 9th September 2026 at 7.00 pm in the Palaiet Hall, Norton St Philip.

Present: Cllr Murfitt (Chair), Cllr Fox, Cllr Curwen, Cllr Molian and Cllr Brooks (from agenda item 9275).

In attendance: Nicola Duke (Parish Clerk).

Public Participation

Members of the public were invited to make representations to the Council on any matters relating to the work of the Council or to raise any issues of concern: There were no members of the public present.

	AGENDA ITEM
9272	Apologies for Absence Cllr Hitchins and Cllr Lund due to prior engagements, accepted.
9273	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Participate Cllr Curwen declared a pecuniary interest in planning application 2026/1519/FUL - Wick Farm Trowbridge Road Farleigh Hungerford Frome Somerset – as his spouse rented land from the applicant.
9274	Minutes a) The minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on 8th July 2026 were approved for accuracy and adopted (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Fox). b) To consider any matters arising from the above meetings (if any): None.
9275	Co-option of a Parish Councillor In accordance with the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules 1986 SI 1986/2215 r 8 (3) Members considered the co-option of a Parish Councillor. Having heard from an interested resident, Mr Dave Brooks, it was proposed by Cllr Murfitt, seconded by Cllr Fox and resolved to co-opt Mr Brooks as a member of the Parish Council. Cllr Brooks duly signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the table.
9276	Council Reports • The Chair reported the following:

	○ The PC had been contacted by Cotswold Homes, the developers promoting land off Chatley Furlong, who had requested an informal meeting for an update from the PC on the NP and to provide one on the land off Chatley Furlong . The Clerk would liaise with them to set a date. ○ An email had been received from David Lockley regarding payment for the works to install the automatic doors at the Palairret Hall, which would be referred to the October meeting. ○ The PC had been approached by an organiser of the planned Monmouth Skirmish re-enactment event scheduled for 2027. It was noted that the PC had no role or remit in this matter however, the organisers were welcome to provide information on the event if they wished. ○ An email from SC regarding listed heritage assets had been circulated to members and the Clerk confirmed that this was listed as an agenda item for the October meeting. ● Parish Clerk – No report. ● County Councillors; Dawn Denton had provided a report which had been circulated to members. Adam Boyden was absent. ● Other Reports: ○ Palairret Hall – Members considered the appointment of a Council representative to the PH Management Committee and resolved to elect Cllr Molian to the role (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Fox). ○ Church Mead Committee – Cllr Hitchins had provided a report, which was noted and is appended to the minutes. ○ Sustainable Norton St Philip – Cllr Lund had provided the below report, which was noted and appended to the minutes. Cllr Fox emphasised the importance of the People’s Emergency Briefing on 9 October 2026 and encouraged members to attend if possible.
9277	Planning Applications, Enforcements and Consultations 2026/1519/FUL - Wick Farm Trowbridge Road Farleigh Hungerford Frome Somerset - The erection of 6 no. glamping pods (Sui Generis) and associated infrastructure – extension granted until 10th September 2026 – Support with conditions (proposed Cllr Fox, seconded Cllr Molian – Cllr Brooks abstained and Cllr Curwen did not take part in the debate or vote due to a declared interest). A copy of the full comment is appended to the minutes. 2026/1337/LBC - The Cottage Church Street Norton St Philip Bath Somerset - Treatment for Common Furniture Beetle and Death Watch Beetle infestation in oak ceiling beams on first and second floors – Members retrospectively approved the Support comment lodged in the summer recess (proposed Cllr Fox, seconded Cllr Murfitt). 2026/1654/FUL - Bath Rugby Club Farleigh House Church Farm Lane Farleigh Hungerford - Temporary erection of a training marquee for a period of five years – It was resolved to submit a holding objection and request an extension to enable consideration at the October

	PC meeting (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Fox). The holding objection would read as follows: Norton St Philip Parish Council wishes to register a holding objection to the above application pending receipt of further information without which it cannot fully comment. The Parish Council considers that a number of material matters require clarification and further consideration before the application can be determined, including: ●Heritage, landscape and visual impact: The Parish Council notes that, so far as it is aware, neither the Conservation Officer nor Landscape Officer has been consulted. Given the sensitive setting of Farleigh House and the potential effect on heritage assets and the Green Belt, the Parish Council considers that both should be consulted. Further clarification is also requested regarding visibility of the marquee from Church Street, particularly the important view towards the entrance to Farleigh House opposite East Lodge, which does not appear to be addressed by the submitted viewpoints. ●Noise and residential amenity: The applicant's conclusion that the marquee will provide significant acoustic containment and have no material noise impact requires further evidence. The Parish Council considers that potential noise from training activities, including amplified music, whistles, loudhailers, hooters etc, should be properly assessed. If the LPA is minded to grant permission, conditions preventing amplified sound and other uses likely to cause disturbance to neighbouring properties unless specifically authorised would be appropriate. ●The proposed five-year temporary period: The application describes the marquee as a key facility providing a "year-round indoor all-weather training facility", yet it is proposed as a temporary facility for five years. The Parish Council considers that the reason for the temporary nature of the proposal, and the justification for a five-year period, should be explained. Any temporary permission should require removal of the marquee and reinstatement of the site at the end of the permission unless further planning permission is obtained. ●Nature and operation of the facility: Further clarification is requested regarding the proposed training surface, given that the existing surface is stated to be tarmac, and how this will provide a suitable year-round training facility for professional players. The statement at paragraph 5.15 that the building requires no utilities connections also requires clarification, particularly regarding electricity and internal lighting. The statement that no flood lighting is proposed does not appear to address the need for lighting within the marquee or how the facility will be powered. ●Restriction on use: The Parish Council supports the applicant's statement that there would be no commercial hire or events use. Any permission should therefore contain a clear and enforceable condition restricting the marquee to the Bath Rugby training use described in the application and preventing commercial hire, weddings,
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	private functions, conferences, business events or other open-market events. This is also important because the applicant's conclusions regarding traffic and parking depend upon the facility being used by personnel already present on the estate. The Parish Council reserves the right to make further representations following the submission of further information. In the meantime, it wishes to register a holding objection. To receive and consider planning applications received after the issue of the agenda (<i>where the response time falls outside of the meeting schedule and an extension cannot be obtained</i>) - None																																	
9278	Financials a) Council payments due as listed were approved (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Fox). b) The Bank Reconciliation Statements July and August 2026 had been circulated to members and were noted. c) The list of Council Reserves and Budget Report as at 31st August 2026 had been circulated to members, were noted and adopted. d) The Clerk updated members on the agreed transfer of funds in the amount of £66,000 to the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund (previous minutes refer), informing members that due to expenditure incurred after the resolution the transfer of funds had been postponed until receipt of the second half of the annual precept (£30,175). The funds had now been received and the Clerk would process the deposit.																																	
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9279	Neighbourhood Plan Members noted that the Parish Council had been copied into correspondence from Lochailort Investments Ltd addressed to Somerset Council, objecting to both the Examiner's Report and the identification within the Plan of the Fortescue Fields West site and Laverton Triangle as Important Green Spaces.
9280	Somerset Council Local Plan No updates.
9281	Traffic Action Group, Highways and Footpaths Members received available updates and reports, including: a) Consideration of the purchase of a village mower for use on footpaths and Church Mead – Members noted the report from the Church Mead Committee and considered the purchase of a mower in the amount of £7,995 plus vat for parish use. It was further noted that the CMC had offered the PC a grant in support of this purchase in the amount of £7,195. Members resolved to proceed with the purchase, noting that the cost to the PC therefore stood at £800 (proposed Cllr Fox, seconded Cllr Molian). It was noted that the cost would be funded from the in year revenue budget for parish maintenance and the asset duly insured and added to the Asset Register. b) Consideration of the purchase of an Air Pollution monitor – Cllr Fox reported that she had investigated available resources however, the issue was complex and assistance was required. It was agreed that Cllr Fox would prepare an article seeking such assistance for publication in the next edition of Parish News. c) Consideration of the purchase of a new Speed Indicator Device for Bath Road (previous minutes refer) – Cllr Fox reported that TAG would be considering the final proposals for the new devices at its upcoming meeting and report would be submitted to the October PC meeting; she expected that the recommendation would be for the purchase of new devices from Elan City. d) Update on the progress for the footpath route inside Castle Wall in Farleigh Hungerford – The Clerk reported that Paul Greatwood of IMA Transport Planning, who had previously worked with the PC, was liaising with Somerset Council to assist with the plans for the footpath and identify the measures SC would require in order for this project to advance. Members would be updated in due course.
9282	Norton St Philip Water Recycling Centre, Wellow Lane, BA2 7NB Members noted that information on proposals for essential improvements to the Norton St Philip Sewage Treatment Works, off Wellow Lane, BA2 7NB was awaited from the contractor, YTL Construction. Information would be circulated upon receipt and the Clerk

	reported that YTL had advised the submission of the associated planning application was not now expected until early 2027.
9283	Correspondence None.
9284	Parish News Members agreed the below listed items for inclusion in the next edition of Parish News: • General meeting update • Introduction to new councillor • Air Pollution monitoring assistance
9285	Meeting schedule Wednesday 14 th October 2026 – The Old School Room, Farleigh Hungerford.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.20 pm.

APPENDICES

Church Mead Committee Report – September 2026

Tree in playground.

As PCllrs will know there is a large acer tree in the CM playground. It is not only visually significant but, having a wide spread, provides shade for users of the playground. This tree, together with others on the Mead were inspected by the Council's Tree Officer in approximately 2021. He recommended that no works to any of the trees be proposed.

In August 2025 it was noted that one of the two main stems of the acer in the playground appeared to be drooping. Tree surgeon Joe Thomas inspected it and recommended attaching a brace between the two main stems so that if one failed, the other would take the strain. This brace was installed. In June 2026 there was a major storm and the brace came loose.

Soon after this CMC was forwarded an email from a neighbouring resident to the Parish Clerk. This expressed serious concerns about the tree's safety and requesting that the PC:

- a) Commission an urgent independent arborist's report to formally assess the risk
- b) Take immediate interim safety measures to restrict access to the area around the tree
- c) Appeal the tree officer's decision if a formal refusal has been issued

d) Provide residents with a clear timeline for resolution

When this was received by CMC, Joe Thomas had already attended to inspect the tree. He advised reattaching the strap and that the tree's condition remained good.

Nevertheless, CMC contacted the SC Tree Officer who inspected the tree (and others on the Mead – these were all given a clean bill of health) on 13th July. He agreed with Joe that the strap was a better option than pruning. He wrote to the neighbouring resident on 22nd July stating that:

"The tree has clearly suffered from limb failure in the past and the main stem has some historical damage, but with good reaction growth. It has been proposed that either dynamic bracing will be installed or a reduction of the crown to lessen wind load. I stated I would prefer the bracing option, as pruning is damage. Unless there is a major storm event, I don't think the tree will fail – it is growing in a relatively sheltered spot. A major storm has a likelihood of occurrence. However, it is not a reasonably foreseeable event in the legal sense. There is no expectation that tree owners should manage trees to withstand these conditions.

I don't believe the tree currently poses any threat to the neighbouring properties. It is unfortunate that the tree is suffering some root compaction from children using the neighbouring slide and rope swing (I have recommended removal of the rope swing in the tree)."

The resident wrote to CMC on 17th and 27th July asking whether it could "confirm whether the Parish Council or the Church Mead Committee has public liability insurance that covers damage to neighbouring properties should an incident involving the tree ever occur?"

Confirmation that the PL insurance extended to cover such an eventuality was received from the broker soon after, together with clarification that should damage to Church Mead result from an event on a neighbouring property this would be a liability for the owners of that property.

In order to minimise the chance of the strap coming loose again Joe Thomas has reinstalled the original strap together with an additional one which includes a shock absorbing device.

Boules Court

CMC have yet to finalise details of the precise location and size of the proposed Boules Court. Building the court is a commitment made by CMC. This will be an Agenda item for the next committee meeting.

Mower

The grass on CM is currently cut with a gang mower owned by the Cricket Club. Being 20+ years old it has not proved the most reliable of machines over the past two years. CMC would like to replace it over the autumn in order to have a newer and more reliable mower. This could also be used to mow some of the parish paths and thus a contribution towards its purchase would seem appropriate.

CMC have sourced a machine with low hours and in seemingly excellent condition. This can be brought to NSP for CMC and PC to inspect in mid to late September. If approved the purchase price is £7995+VAT. CMC considers that a contribution of no more than 10% would be welcome and not inappropriate.

Weed Control

PCllrs and residents have probably noticed the increase in quantity of weeds on the Mead this summer. This is because the very high temperatures over the summer have weakened the grass, causing it to go dormant or die back. This has left bare patches which have been colonised by weeds-in particular dandelion. Although the grass is beginning to grow again, it will not be able to compete with the weeds which will continue to spread and dominate.

It is therefore necessary to do something in order to bring the grass back to where it was before this summer. The choices are manual weeding or using an herbicide. CMC have contacted Complete Weed Control Ltd who are a national organisation who treat recreation/playgrounds across the country. They recommend treating the grass in early October. Details of their proposed herbicide (Relay Turf Elite-which does not contain glyphosate) are attached. It is authorised for use on amenity grassland by the Health and Safety Executive. See <https://secure.pesticides.gov.uk/pestreg/getfullproduct.asp?productid=39393&pageno=1&origin=prodsearch>

There is no intention that this is anything other than a “one-off” treatment necessitated as a reaction to the damage caused by the hot weather.

A weeks’ notice will be given by fixing laminated signs to the gates, posting on Facebook etc. The advice is to keep dogs off the grass for 2-3 hours after application.

Sustainable Norton St Philip Report – September 2026

People’s Emergency Briefing, 7.00 pm 9th October 2026

There will be a free screening of a 50-minute documentary which brings together nine leading UK scientists and experts to look at the latest evidence around climate change and nature.

The documentary explores how climate change is already impacting everyday life in the UK including things like food security, health, cost of living and extreme weather events. The evening will allow us to consider what these issues may mean in our local area and globally, what we can do and how we can call for stronger action.

The free screening and discussion event will take place at the church, with doors opening at 7pm. Refreshments will be provided.

Repair Café

The next Repair Café will take place from 10:00 – 12:00 on Saturday 24th October at the Palairret Hall. Residents are invited to bring along items that need mending and have a cup of tea/ coffee and a slice of cake. The Repair Café is run by volunteers and is supported solely by donations.