

**Minutes of the Kempsey PACT meeting held at the Community Centre on Tuesday
25th August 2026 at 7.30pm**

PRESENT: (27) Ann Smith(Chairman), Cllr Martin Allen (County Council), Cllr David Harrison (MHDC), Cllr Chris Waller (Chairman Parish Council), Cllr Rob Gardener (Parish Council), Cllr Mike Biddle (Parish Council), Cllr John White (Parish Council), Cllr Neil Stevens (Parish Council), Pete Meredith (Police Rural & Business Crime Officer), PC Molly-Ann Smith, (Police), Nick Richardson (Platform Housing), Denise White (WI), Rev Kat Mephram (Vicar), Sally Linsey (Cornflower Club), Brian Norfolk, Kathleen Padden, Peter Benham, Brian Hewlett, Jan Harrison, Trevor Geens, Gary Jacobs, Steven Jacobs, Melody Baker-Joyce, Alison Willis, Lesley Cox (Parish Paths warden), Mal Holland, Marian Walters.

1.Welcome and Introductions: Ann Smith welcomed everyone to the Community Centre and thanked them for attending. Everybody then introduced themselves.

2.Apologies: Joy Clee (Churchwarden), Simon Bott (CIC), Susan Bott, Bryony Baynes (Headteacher KPS), Maxine Hemming, Penny Warren (WI), Ian Fenton, Helen Fenton, Karen Jones.

3.Minutes: Copies of the minutes of 19th May meeting had been circulated prior to this meeting, distributed at the meeting and were approved.

4.Reports from County, District and Parish Councils:

COUNTY COUNCIL

County Councillor Martin Allen gave the following report.

OLD VICARAGE CLOSE FOOTWAY

This is now to be refurbished; the work is due to commence on 24/09/26.

BOLLARD DEMOLISHED

#12323 Reflective central refuge bollard knocked on the A38 to the south of Kempsey. It is on the list to be fixed.

PLANNING APPEAL 8TH SEPTEMBER

I have requested permission to attend and talk at the planning appeal for Bannut Hill.

CHANGES TO PLANNING POLICY

The government is requiring both county and district councils to change their planning policies. For the County Council there will be little change, however, for MHDC there will be significant changes. In the future, Officers will determine most applications and

Councillors will not be able to challenge that decision. Planning Committees will be reduced to 13 members.

CHANGE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Cllr Karl Perks has left Reform and has now joined the Conservatives.

Also, I have now left the Greens and joined the LibDems. I did consider standing down for a By-Election, however, as the next elections are at the start of May next year, I felt I could not impose such a large expenditure on the taxpayers of Worcestershire. I refuse to support a leader of a party who does not condemn the striking of a woman with a sledgehammer.

Martin was thanked for his report.

DISTRICT COUNCIL.

David Harrison.

The flood defence work at Severn Stoke is on track and 67412 tons of clay had been delivered by 14th August. It is hope that work will be completed by the end of November. A hearing regarding the proposed development at Bannut Hill will take place on Tuesday 8th September at the Abbey Hotel in Malvern starting at 10.00am. Many interesting artefacts have been discovered at the Misters site. In reply to a question regarding work at the quarries in Clifton, the county council are waiting for a planning application from Tarmac.

PARISH COUNCIL

Chris Waller, Chairman, gave the following report.

The Parish Council has recently lost another two councillors bringing their number down to seven. This is worrying, as Parish Councils have to have a minimum number of five members in order to operate or they have to close. All councillors now have to sit on every committee in order to ensure each meeting is quorate. Chris encouraged everyone to consider joining the Parish Council and it is hoped there will be more interest before the council year ends in April 2027. The Community Café is proving popular although numbers have dropped during the very hot spell, and thanks were sent to Chloe who is managing it. Fifty solar panels on the Youth Centre are working and will improve energy efficiency. 80% (£40K) of the funding for these came from MHDC with the Parish Council contributing £10K. Work is due to start on the installation of the new IT and Youth Hub, a stand alone modular building next to the Youth Centre. This will provide a space for computer games etc for young people and Platform Housing kindly provided the funding for the equipment. The Hub will also provide digital support sessions for residents to help them navigate IT. Archaeology have now asked that planning for the sports centre at Pixham Ferry Lane is put on hold for further investigations to be made. The pump track agreement has been signed and has to be up and running by the end of March 2027. Further negotiations will take place later this week.

Rob Gardener, Chair of the parish council's Planning Committee gave an update on a number of planning matters.

The Napleton Lane Appeal

Rob had reported to the previous PACT meeting that the newly adopted SWDP Review will 'significantly help to resist further housing applications on sites not allocated for development'. Whether or not that is so is about to be tested by the appeal for up to 99 dwellings off Bannut Hill/Napleton Lane. There is nothing particular about the site, it is typical of any field next to the village boundary so to lose this appeal could set a precedent for other similar sites.

The Hearing is being held at the Abbey Hotel, Malvern on 8 September 2026 starting at 10:00am and is scheduled to last 1 day although Inspector has reserved the following day just in case. It is important that as many people as possible attend although it is unlikely that all will be allowed to speak.

Having received statements and representations, the Inspector has asked for further information from the main parties, who are the Appellant (Hallam Land) and MHDC. Others, including the parish council, are 'Interested Parties'. He has also identified what he considers to be the main issues on which the outcome is likely to depend as well as other matters to be explored at the hearing.

The main issues are:

- Whether the appeal site would be a suitable location for the proposed development having regard to the local spatial strategy;
- The effect of the proposal on the character of the area; and
- Whether the proposal would be acceptable in terms of loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

The other Matters are:

- Whether provision for safe access can be made during the construction phase of the development;
- Planning Obligation matters;
- Other matters raised by interested parties; and
- Matters that weigh in favour of the proposal.

There is disagreement on whether there is a 5-Year Housing Land Supply, as claimed by the Council in a June 2026 report. The appellant says there is only 3.52 years' supply. The parties had agreed that this was not to be a determinative issue in the appeal but it remains to be seen how the dispute will now be dealt with. Without a 5YHLS the SWDPR would be considered out of date despite only being adopted in March this year.

There had been much concern and criticism that the Council was not going to defend the SWDPR since it has accepted that, on balance, the appeal proposal is acceptable. A letter from the Chief Planner has explained that the Inspector will be told that the application

does not conform to the SWDPR development strategy and that best and most versatile agricultural land will be lost. However, it feels that the 'benefits' of more market housing and, particularly, affordable housing, outweigh this 'technical' policy breach.

The parish council does not accept this stance and will attend the hearing to give evidence. It is likely to be several months before a decision is known.

In response to a question, Rob confirmed that a social housing provider had not been found to take on the 11 affordable houses included in the Brookend Lane housing development (Mill Meadows). However, that may not be the case for the 40 affordable dwellings which could come from the Napleton Lane scheme. Not only would this larger number be more worthwhile for management purposes but also access to the site has only been possible by the adjoining Housing Association releasing land. It would not be a surprise if the same housing provider was already involved.

The Hopfields development

Hopfields is the name given to the largest portion of the Worcester South Urban Extension in the north of the parish. As well as the Councils' own June housing land assessment, the SWDPR Inspectors had also concluded that when the 'Plan was adopted the 3 Councils could collectively show a 5YHLS. This was in part because the Hopfields developers had supplied evidence that they intended to get on with it and build a significant number of dwellings during the next 5 years.

Outline permission was granted several years ago. More recently the developers had submitted an application for the distributor roads to connect to the new local centre and primary school from the A38 and Norton Road, as well as advanced woodland planting to create some of the green infrastructure required. The roads have now been withdrawn from the application. It is not clear why but it is hoped that this will not cause delay in the roads coming forward since without them the housing sites cannot be accessed, nor can their inclusion in the 5YHLS.

The Community and Sports Centre

Rob added a little further information to Chris Waller's outline of the current situation with the application for planning permission. Despite the late intervention of the Archaeological Officer, and continued requests for information from the Flood Authority and Ecological Officer, it is believed that we are still hopefully on track to receive planning permission before the end of September.

On archaeology, a 2016 geophysical survey had confirmed the probability of 2 late prehistoric enclosures only previously seen from crop marks in aerial surveys. These are not affected by proposed building works since they are under the proposed pitches and will be undisturbed. For instance, drainage pipes are not required. It is expected that agreement can be reached on the best approach once permission is granted.

5. Reports from School, Police and Church.

School. No report was received from Bryony Baynes, Headteacher of Kempsey Primary School.

Police. PC Molly Smith gave a report which is attached as a separate document. She was asked if the police could give information on what has been done to tackle the issues, and she replied that care has to be taken with regard to GDPR. She re-iterated that it was very important that people report an incident straight away giving as much information as possible. It was suggested that the police could ask the shop to stop parking at the front of the shop to prevent cars and vans blocking the pavement.

Pete Meredith along with other officers, look at crimes all over Worcestershire and neighbouring counties. Recent raids in Herefordshire resulted in the recovery of half a million pounds worth of plant machinery and other property and several people were arrested. The police are often aware of people committing multiple crimes, but because these people don't have a permanent address, it is very difficult to catch them.

Church. Rev Kat Mephram thanked all the people involved in the setting up and running of the Summer Fete which was a wonderful success raising over £6000 for the upkeep of St Mary's church. There is an on-going problem with dog fouling in the churchyard and she asked everyone to be vigilant in order to try and reduce this upsetting matter. Bishop Paterson consecrated the field at the bottom of the churchyard in July and Bishop Godfrey from Morogoru will be preaching in St Mary's on Sunday 27th September. September is to be a Giving Month and Rev Kat encouraged everyone to give towards the upkeep of our lovely church. A choir concert is taking place on Saturday 10th October in church and the Christmas Fayre will be held on Saturday 28th November.

6. Update from Cathy Garner. Marian had not heard from Cathy but will contact her before our next meeting in November

7. Kempsey CIC report from Simon Bott.

Oral History Project – since the last PACT meeting our interviewer, Michelle Abbey has secured another two interviews with two local 'greybeards' and the content is added to the resource we continue to build. The support and involvement of our County Councillor and two District Councillors has been vital in the continuation of this project and we thank them. A very useful development arising from May's PACT meeting is that we have recruited a second volunteer interviewer and have been able to fund training from the Oral History Society in order to maintain the high standards set by Michelle.

Summer Fete – while not a CIC event, the Lovely Jubbly team were happy to man the Barbecue for this annual blockbuster and make a worthwhile contribution to the overall profit total.

Value the Volunteer – a significant part of making a success of the CIC is ongoing networking. This includes staying in touch with the community staff at Malvern Hills Council, and also the Volunteer Manager at Community Action. Community Action organised an exclusive screening of BACK TO THE FUTURE at Malvern Theatres in July.

It was attended by Cllr. Beverley Nielsen who took the opportunity to present some Connected Community awards.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Golden Mile – Friday 16th. October is Daffodil Bulb Planting Day and we are looking for available, able and willing volunteers to plant bulbs particularly along the A38 within verges where the speed limit is 40 mph or less. We plan on supporting volunteers with some refreshments at the Community Café on Plovers Rise Playing Fields. Both Kempsey Parish Council and Severn Stoke Parish Council have purchased bulbs, mostly Carlton variety.

Cyber Fraud Education – training is on offer from the Safer Neighbourhood Team and West Mercia Police. We are in discussion with West Mercia Police to arrange a date in early Autumn.

Lovely Jubbly at the Fireworks – this is scheduled for Saturday 7th November this year, and the PTFA have kindly invited Susan and the team to offer hot drinks and bakes in the Youth Centre (as featured at the Community Café.) We understand that Chloe's Community Café team will be offering hot food at the Fireworks – the more, the merrier.

Daffodowndilly Day – following the success of the inaugural event this year, we have set the date for 13th. March 2027 to establish a one-day annual event. Martin Allen, our County Councillor has kindly funded three large banners to publicise the date and we hope to expand the offering to reflect the arrival of Spring.

Family Fun Day 2027 – we think there is space in the Kempsey Calendar for an additional Summer event and we are looking at staging a Family Fun Day in August next year.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

CIC Board – Kempsey Promotions CIC was incredibly fortunate to secure the services of Joy Clee as a founding member of the Board when the not for profit company was registered in August 2022. We are now looking at facilitating Joy stepping back from Director's responsibilities and some careful Succession Planning has found a promising replacement. The CIC is looking to say thank you to Joy with an event in October.

7. Litter Pick. The gentleman who has been litter picking along the A38 for a long time, is no longer able to do so. Grateful thanks were paid to him for the huge difference his work has made to the tidiness of Kempsey. Ann asked if PACT members would prefer to go back to holding a litter pick on a specific day or maybe join the Adopt a Street project. Several people have already signed up for this via MHDC, and others litter pick in the area near their houses. Nick Richardson will ask the Platform Housing staff if any of them are willing to take part in litter picking and let us know. It was decided that there will be no formal Litter Pick Day at the present time.

9. Any Other Business.

* Jan was thanked for providing tea and coffee.

10.Date of next meeting. Tuesday 3rd November 2026 at **12.30pm.**

The meeting closed at 9.12pm.