

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton
PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21ST JULY 2025
HELD AT EAST RADNORSHIRE DAY CENTRE, SCOTTLETON STREET, PRESTEIGNE
AND ALSO VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllrs. D. Edwards, (Mayor), C. Ross (Deputy Mayor), B. Baynham, T. Owens, A. Van Huls, L. Harling-Bowen, A. Ramsay, C. Kirkby MBE and J. Ramsay.

Apologies: Cllr. F. Preece, M. Price.

Absent: Cllr. N. Rogers.

In Attendance: Mrs T. Price, Town Clerk. Members of the public.

Declarations of Interest: Members were requested to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests they may have in matters to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the terms of the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct Order) (Wales) Order 2008.

Personal: None.

Personal and Prejudicial: None.

MIN 4506 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th June, 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record subject to the addition of the following sentence as part of Minute 4495(2) '*He also highlighted the recent development at the Rockbridge Country Park with a dedicated 'retreat' created for dark sky stargazing etc.*' and the Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th June, 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record and the Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 4507 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS AND CLERKS REPORT

(1) Missing Litter Bin by Spar Shop: Cllr. Baynham confirmed that this was due to be replaced.

(2) Wall/Stones, Mill Lane: Cllr. Baynham had met the highways officer on site. Cllr. Kirkby explained that the main problem was the stones on the grass which caused a problem when the grass was cut. Members would visit as part of the town walk and review the matter then.

(3) Letter to Police and recent crime in Presteigne: The Clerk advised that the police had responded asking for more details such as crime numbers etc. She had passed the email on to Cllr. Van Huls who had raised the original concern and he was looking into what additional information could be provided.

(4) Hedge Management Review: Cllr. J. Ramsay advised that he hoped this would take place in August.

(5) Printed/Posted Copies of Meeting Papers: Following the decision at the May meeting I contacted the Library and Rhiannon was happy to show people the papers on the website and was very happy to no longer receive printed copies particularly as she says she is short of space.

(6) Recent Welsh Government Review on the Town and Community Council Sector: The committee recommendations included – a new bespoke audit system; mandatory code of conduct training; to explore options to facilitate greater use of local resolutions to disputes; to explore opportunities for clustering and to encourage the sharing of good practice; finally to make the necessary legislative changes to allow Councils eligible for the general power of competence to only be required to affirm their eligibility once per electoral term. It was also noted that in Ceredigion the recent review of Town and Community Councils made quite a number of changes, the main one being that the number of Community Councillors was considerably reduced.

MIN 4508 FINANCE

(1) Donations: The following donations were approved from the Mayor's Fund for 2024/25 –
Presteigne Young Farmers Club £240.00

Presteigne St Andrews FC's Junior footballers	£240.00
Presteigne Scouts	£240.00
Presteigne Guides	£240.00
Papyrus - in memory of Tom Hooper and Elsa Layton-Jones	£240.00

Balance of £14 to be returned to free reserves.

(2) Payments: The following payments were approved –

Mrs T.A. Price (pay)	£1622.20
HM Revenue & Customs	£703.97
NEST	£150.64
Highground Maintenance Ltd	£469.96 MEADOW ACC
T. Lloyd-John	£735.23
N. Close	£308.00
N. Close	£392.00 MEADOW ACC
HSBC (bank charges)	£8.00
HSBC (bank charges)	£8.00 MEADOW ACC
Edmundson Electrical Ltd (storage building)	£2168.39 MEADOW ACC
RB Landscaping (work at allotments)	£54.00 MEADOW ACC
Post Office (refund T. Price – audit postage)	£19.55
Leo Pest Control (removal of wasp nest)	£84.00 MEADOW ACC
British Gas Lite (Wilson Terrace)	£14.71
CleanMy (toilet cleaning materials)	£61.13
KBS (storage project)	£245.29 MEADOW ACC
KBS (paint – toilets)	£44.99
Presteigne Building Supplies (paint, toilets)	£268.46
Presteigne Building Supplies (storage building/allotments)	£332.71 MEADOW ACC
Rotom Cargo Pak (storage building)	£890.57 MEADOW ACC
Fastbuild Supplies (storage building)	£126.96 MEADOW ACC
Festive Lights Ltd (storage building)	£993.17 MEADOW ACC
CEF (storage building)	£465.46 MEADOW ACC
Amazon Uk (sign – toilets)	£6.48
Amazon UK (signs – toilets)	£6.85
EDF Energy Ltd (Hereford Street Toilets)	£37.72
AJ Gallagher (insurance new building)	£23.11
Leo Pest Control (Wasp nest 2 Meadow)	£84.00 MEADOW ACC
Austen Group (Ladders Direct)	£728.86 MEADOW ACC
EDF Energy (Barn)	£106.02 MEADOW ACC
Bwp Creative Ltd (deposit – new website)	£784.98

(3) Budget Update to end of June 2025: Noted as circulated. Cllr. Ross asked questions about several amounts showing as over budget and the clerk explained that these were one off payments and that the amounts were not known in advance of the budget setting. Cllr. Kirkby suggested that where grant funded spending was noted that the amount of grant received was also noted. The Clerk would look at doing this.

d) Notification from HSBC re. bank charges: The Clerk advised that HSBC was shortly to cease bank charges on the Council accounts.

e) Offer of pre-recorded code of conduct training from County Council: Agreed to accept the offer at a cost of £30.00 per Council.

MIN 4509 PLANNING

(1) The following application was considered –

25/0911/HH Grid Reference: E:331398 N: 264386 Proposal: Installation of roof mounted Solar PV panels
Site Address: 1 Albert Square, Presteigne, LD8 2BD. Resolved to support the application.

(2) Planning Decisions: The following decisions were noted –

25/0420/FUL Plot 5, Broadaxe Business Park, Presteigne: Refused 10th June.

25/0806/TRE 1 Church View, Broad Street, Presteigne: Approved 26th June.

(3) Trees and TPOs: Cllr. Baynham reminded Members of trees currently subject to TPOs in Presteigne and Norton. She then listed a number of trees that she proposed should be the subject of new TPOs. She felt it would be sensible to notify the landowners of the Council's intention to apply for these Orders and asked that she and the Clerk identify landowners over the Summer and write to them advising them of the situation and that the Council was looking to put forward a tree on their ground for protection. Cllr. Kirkby

felt it would be wise to submit the list to the County Council at the same time and it was agreed that this should be done.

MIN 4510 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Dark Skies Project: Cllr. Harling-Bowen provided the following updates –

- Talk on 29th June at Elan Valley Visitor Centre. Donation for talk given to the PACDG Dark Skies Fund.
- 18th June: Meeting with Nathan Richards of Visit Wales on promoting Presteigne and Norton.
- Request for Members interested in being part of Visit Wales Forum. He confirmed there would be no charge for this.
- Dark Sky Signs: Fittings now purchased. Welsh version of sign now ready and Clerk would arrange printing and laminating.
- Article on Presteigne and Norton Dark Skies now published on the Xterra Website. The Clerk would circulate the link to all Members.

(2) Climate and Environment Matters: Cllr. J. Ramsay had nothing to report this month but hoped the working group would meet in the coming weeks.

(3) Fold Farm DMMO Application: Agreed to defer until the formal order was made.

(4) Car Parking: Members noted that charges were changing from 1st August. Cllr. Baynham explained the changes and advised that blue badge holders would now have to pay to park. Parking permits could now be purchased for individual car parks. It was agreed to write to the Portfolio Holder welcoming the changes but pressing for a twelve month trial of first hour free parking. It was also noted that the proposed development on the former factory site could lead to a review of highways and traffic in the town and that free resident's parking might be requested as part of this. It was agreed that this be held back at present and possibly put forward when the formal planning application was made.

(5) Lost Rights of Way – Radnorshire, Request by Ramblers and Open Spaces Society for priority routes for DMMO applications: Agreed to submit the following list –

Priority 1

POW-0157 and POW-0156 Wern Hill

POW-0090 and POW-0126 Observatory lane

POW-0177 The Firs (SW of Knighton, continuation of Offa's Dyke, and improves road safety for trail, if implemented)

POW-0166 St Mary's Mill (links well-trodden path below St Mary's mill with ford crossing pass over N side of Lugg)

POW-0167 Ackhill to Gumma over Lugg

POW-0121 and POW-0122 Links from Evenjobb to The Hymns where footpath is not prescribed via existing tracks

POW-0139 Northwood to Barlands

POW-0220 Womaston to Nobely (link to road past Nobely unnecessary as path exists below Burfa Bog to Burfa Bank, but linking from this two at Nobely would be beneficial)

POW-0091 Ackwood Lane to Twiscob (essential link from one existing path to another up onto Radnor Forest)

Priority 2

POW-0172 Pentre to Ackwood Lane

Priority 3

POW-0154 Colony/Cook's House

The Clerk was also instructed to advise Knighton and Whitton Councils of the routes chosen that were all or part in their areas.

(6) Bench, Bottom of Station Road: Cllr. Kirkby advised that he had spoke to the resident who had funded the refurbishments and replacements of the town benches initially and he was willing to fund the cleaning/re-treating of the bench subject to agreement on the cost. The Clerk would get an approximate cost and advise Cllr. Kirkby who would then get agreement to proceed.

(7) Water Quality of the River Lugg: Cllr. Kirkby raised this following an article describing the Lugg as one of the worst polluted rivers in the UK following testing by Environmental groups Wildlife and Countryside Link (WCL) and the Rivers Trust. These bodies had examined official water quality data from English rivers for seven key biocides including fungicides, a herbicide and insecticides. It was agreed that the Clerk write to the Health and Safety Executive, copied to the local Member of Parliament, expressing deep concern at

these findings and at the potential de-regulation consultation currently underway regarding hazardous chemicals. Cllr. Kirkby would provide the Clerk with links to the reports and supporting information.

MIN 4511 NORTON

- (1) Cutting of Ditch at the bottom of Hare's Green: Cllr. Owens praised the work done this time.
- (2) Norton Community Hub: Events ongoing.
- (3) Norton Show – 3rd August.
- (4) Young Farmers Club to clear weeds etc from pavements prior to Show.
- (5) Defibrillator Kiosk: Agreed that volunteers could use the remaining red paint to paint the three sides of the kiosk following the door repair and re-paint.
- (6) Recent Damage to Trees/Branches: Following the passage of a very large vehicle several had broken off and had hung dangerously at the roadside. Cllr. Baynham had reported for the County Council to attend to. Clerk also to report a problem just past Warden Close on the way out of the town, overgrown branches from the hedge were catching tractors/trailers and this was leading to them having to pull into the centre of the road to get past.
- (7) Caring for God's Acre to cut Norton Churchyard on 5th August.

MIN 4512 SITES AND BUILDINGS

- (1) Public Conveniences: The painting of Wilson Terrace was now largely complete but the community payback team would be back to complete the work in the coming weeks. Mr. Close had painted the woodwork/glossed sections.
- (2) Allotments: The following matters were discussed –
 - New water pump now in place with a new base. The Clerk advised that the other bases needed re-doing in order to make repairs/replacement much easier. Members to look as part of the town walk.
 - Plot 36: Raised beds now covered and remainder of the plot strimmed. None of existing tenants wanted to move to the plot. The possibility of offering the plot to a community group was discussed but it was agreed to get the rest of the plot covered for now and to review the situation at the end of the year when there might be new applicants for plots.
 - Plot 32: Tenant had given notice. Agreed that the Clerk try to get the plot dug over and then re-offer to the one remaining applicant on the waiting list. Agreed that the Clerk contact Mr. Preece to see if he would do the work and approximate cost.
 - Future Plot Vacancies: Clerk authorised to get any future plots dug over if not left in a good condition. Maximum cost £150 per plot. If quote was for more than this then the Clerk was asked to refer back to Council.
 - Untidy Plots: Clerk asked to write again to the plots identified during the recent inspection and advise them that the Council would re-inspect on 18th August and if there was no improvement then notice to quit would be given.
 - Report of Giant Hogweed: This had been investigated and the plant found to be common hogweed. Nevertheless the Clerk, Cllr. Edwards and Cllr. Preece had been on site and removed all seed heads. These had then been incinerated as a precaution. The tenant would be advised of the need to remove all roots and dispose of them safely.
 - Rabbit Proofing of Fencing: The Allotment Association had tried to get quotes for fully rabbit proofing the whole site and digging in of chicken wire to one metre depth rather just for the repair of the holes in the current fencing. The cost of doing the whole site was prohibitive and the Clerk reminded Members that tenants had the right to fence off their own plots and that it was not the responsibility of the Council to protect against pests. The Allotment Association had asked if the Council would consider providing discounted materials to tenants and Members did not agree to this at this point. The site would be visited as part of the Town Walk when the situation could be reviewed.
- (3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed -
 - Update - café bar/storage: Cllr. Kirkby reported that the building had been used at the carnival and was nearly complete. He had requested the donations pledged by the Carnival Committee (£1000) and Sheep Music (£1000 less the planning permission fee already donated of £115). The total project budget was £30,000 including the donations raised by Sheep Music. Sheep Music were planning an event in August to celebrate the completion of the project.
 - Update – Brilliant Basics Grant (paths): None given due to the absence of Cllr. Preece. The Clerk reported that Cllrs. Preece and Price and Mr. Graham had met the contractor on site.
 - Use by Pop Choir on 17th July: Noted.

(4) Nature Reserve Matters: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported the following –

- Large number of butterflies/ladybirds seen on site.
- Ponds still holding water although levels had dropped.
- Weeding work carried out by volunteers.
- Hay/Seeding event on 5th August using seed provided by Caring for God's Acre.
- Paths still needing upgrading, possibly in the Autumn. Details would be put to Council before any work commenced.
- Excess Bentonite Clay currently stored at old depot site under a tarpaulin.
- Cllr. Harling-Bowen reminded Cllr. J. Ramsay that a recent bat survey had been done.
- It was also suggested that Cllr. J. Ramsay consider looking for grants to provide a hide/storage on the reserve.

(5) Offer of Gala Tent: Cllrs. Edwards and Ross to look at the tent and see if it was suitable for the Council to accept.

MIN 4513 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Leisure Services Review: Update: Cllr. Baynham reported that she was waiting for a further meeting with the Portfolio Holder and that the questions submitted by the Town Council some months ago were still being considered.

(2) .gov Emails for Members: The Clerk advised that in England these were expected to soon be compulsory and suggested that these could be set up as part of the new website arrangements. It was agreed that the Clerk proceed to get the emails set up (providing there was still no cost) and she would report further in due course.

(3) New Website: Well underway and a meeting with the developer was due on 29th July.

(4) Town Walk: Members were reminded to let the Clerk have any items for visits as part of the town walk after the August meeting.

MIN 4514 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr. Baynham reported the following –

- £5000 grant from the anti-poverty fund allocated to East Radnor Home Support for help with completing benefit forms etc.
- Housing Department purchasing a flat on Lugg View.
- Attendance at a John Beddoes Campus Catchment meeting. Only twenty-three pupils due to start in September. Members were concerned at the low numbers and the Clerk was asked to write to the Chair of the School Governors and Head of Campus asking for the current situation and what could be done to improve this.

Cllr. Edwards reported the following –

Attended highways meeting for briefing and reported local issues. Offer made to attend Town and Community Council meetings. It was agreed to invite an officer to attend a future meeting.

Extra Bus Services to start including a direct bus to Leominster twice a week.

20mph review now complete. No changes for Presteigne but some on the entrances to Norton village with a 30mph zone at each end dropping down to 20mph.

MIN 4515 CO-OPTION

Agreed unanimously to co-opt Mr. F.H. Fleming as a Councillor for the Norton Ward.

MIN 4516 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Poor Condition of road from Presteigne to the Cemetery: Clerk to report to Herefordshire Council.

(2) Annual Carnival: Clerk asked to write a letter of thanks to the Committee.

(3) Bridge Work, Broad Street: Cllr. Baynham reported that this had now been deferred until 2026.

(4) Recent Sponsored 'Wheel Across Wales' by Gwilym Davies: Clerk to write a letter of congratulations.

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.