

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE SITES AND BUILDINGS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 27TH OCTOBER 2025 AT THE EAST RADNORSHIRE DAY CENTRE, SCOTTLETON STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllrs. Edwards (Mayor), Preece (Committee Chairman), Price (Committee Vice-Chairman, Ramsay, Baynham, Kirkby (via video link).

Outside Representatives: Mr. R. Rimington, Mr. G. Graham, Ms M. Galliers, Ms K. Van Den Ende.

Apologies: None.

In Attendance: Mrs T. Price, Town Clerk.

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 and the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016.

Personal: None.

Personal and Prejudicial: None

MIN SB8/25 ALLOTMENTS

(1) Report by PNAA Representative: Mrs Galliers gave a verbal report on the year so far as follows-

- 2025 Growing Season This had been quite a challenge. Plot holders reported setbacks with several failures of early-planted crops, partly weather-related but also due to rabbits eating emergent seedlings. The hot, dry summer was difficult as watering daily was often needed. Plot holders at the southern end of the site were grateful for the repair of that pump, said to be much more efficient and easier to operate. Tenants look forward to having the other two pumps repaired in due course.
- Fencing of Plots: Plot holders have been made aware that they may fence in their plots and are asked to look out for evidence of rabbit burrows on the perimeter of the site.
- Weed-infested and neglected plots were discussed at a helpful meeting with the Clerk, the Mayor, Cllr. Edwards and Cllr Fiona Preece on October 6th. As a result the Allotment Association now felt the Council appreciated its concerns, and would now leave the matter in their hands. Plot holders had been reminded to contact the Clerk direct if they had matters to raise about the site.
- New Plot Numbers: This has improved identification and was welcomed.
- PNAA would also like to record that it was pleased that plot 36 has now been adopted by the Little People's nursery.
- Community Payback Team: The continued strimming of the paths and area around the site entrance by the Payback team had been much appreciated.
- Hedge-Cutting: The recent cutting of the hedges around the allotment carpark had been noted with dismay.
- Main Gatepost: It was understood that a replacement was in hand.
- Membership of NSALG: Reported as twenty-five current members. Negotiations to make the subscription year coincide with the plot rental year were underway. As well as the benefit of insurance for members, the order of Kings' seeds at discounted rates was noted and confirmed as being promoted to plot holders.

- PNAA Committee: Currently eight members and was formed following a meeting on 9th March 2025, to which all plot holders were invited. The next AGM would be scheduled for some time in early March 2026.
 - Looking ahead, plans will include small repairs and improvements to the large shed, and, possibly, a renewal of plans for an open day and informal social gatherings, sharing of plants and produce. An update of the Allotment Handbook to inform and advise all members, based on the last updated version in 2017 is being considered.
 - Manure: The Association is currently seeking a source of well-rotted manure for the site for sharing with everyone for a small donation.
 - Summary: It had not been an easy year, but to counter-act the difficulties, it was very pleasing to note that there were some excellent allotment plots, in variously tended styles, and tenants who enjoyed growing their own produce of vegetables, fruit and flowers.
- (2) PNAA Raised Matters: The Clerk confirmed the following –
- Replacement Gatepost – quote requested and work to be done asap.
- (3) Untidy Plots: These had been the subject of much discussion and communications over the year and a number had been resolved. There was one plot remaining of great concern and the Clerk had been asked by Full Council to proceed with eviction.
- (4) Review of Work/Maintenance Plan for 2026-27: The following items were noted –
- Community Payback to continue next year.
 - New bases to be installed for the remaining two pumps.
 - Hedge-cutting: The disappointment at the recent hedge-cutting was noted. The Council had a hedge management policy which currently ran on a three year cycle.
- (5) Expenditure 2025-26: Members noted the expenditure to date for the year which exceeded the current years rental income. Expenditure was still due for the Clerk's hours, the digging of plot 24 and the new gatepost. There was however an allocated reserve for the site which could cover additional spending but at the expense of future planned costs such as the replacement of the perimeter fence. This would need to be borne in mind when considering the next item.
- (6) Rent Review w.e.f. from March 2026: Given the higher expenditure in the current year and the holding of the rent charged for the previous four years it was agreed to increase the annual rental charge to £30 per year. The Clerk would serve notice on all current tenants once Full Council had reviewed the recommendation.

MIN SB9/25 NATURE RESERVE

(1) Current Situation re Ponds: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported that the two ponds were filling again after a very dry year. Both ponds had retained some water throughout the dry Summer which was very pleasing. In places the clay had cracked but this should re-liquefy and seal in due course. Cllr. Ramsay had laid more bentonite. The amount of algae was now greatly reduced. It was hoped to raise the level of the ponds in due course.

(2) Update: Ms. Van Den Ende reported on matters generally including –

- Weekly butterfly recording.
- Insect species increased and larger numbers of birds attracted.
- Over Summer watering of the newest trees and grass at the bases had proved to be helpful in the dry weather.
- Recording (Via Audio) on site by Cllr. Harling-Bowen: Rare species of bat and hazel dormice identified.
- Consideration being given to future developments such as moon meadows to attract moths.
- Work parties had removed thistle and docks.
- Accessible path had been weeded prior to remedial work.
- Winter Jobs: guards to remove from young trees, gate to be re-painted, pond levels to be raised, benches still needed slabs underneath, one back poplar tree to be replaced, further costs to be obtained for mower servicing.

Mrs Galliers left the meeting at this point. Cllr. Baynham joined the meeting.

(3) Draft Budget for 2026-27: Cllr. J. Ramsay put forward a draft budget which was circulated to all. It was noted that potential larger projects for the future included a storage shed, hides, a dipping platform and further specialist plants. It was noted that the current storage for the mower would not continue indefinitely. There was a short discussion on potential grant options and Ms Van Den Ende would get in touch with the Clerk early on in 2026 to discuss a possible grant application by the Council to Awards for All. This could be made at any time from April onwards.

A draft budget of £700 was agreed subject to the bioblitz day being funded from the Councils Climate Crisis Grant fund. The Clerk would add a request for that funding to the next Full Council agenda.

Draft Budget for 2026-27	Nature Reserve	
	2025-26	Draft 2026-27
	900	700

MIN SB10/25 WENT'S AND EDDIE'S MEADOWS, MUGA, FOOTBALL PITCH

(1) Grass Cutting/Weed Killing - Review of work during current year: No problems reported. The Clerk confirmed that weed killing was only carried out on request.

Quote for various strimming works: Quote accepted. Mr. Rimington asked that the small areas near to the storage shed be added to the areas to be strimmed. It was agreed that the Clerk ask for an updated quote to include these areas and report to the next Council meeting.

(2) Review of Items from June meeting:- Items raised were -

- Sweeping of MUGA: Stil problematic. No contractor had been found to do this monthly. Payback team doing occasionally
- Ligne Garden Bench : Repair not done as soon as planned but would be done in due course.
- Entrance to New Nature Reserve: Cllr. Ramsay reported that one further complaint had been made regarding access for mobility scooters. He would consider how best to improve the access.

(3) Maintenance Plan for 2026-27: Items agreed were -

- Mowing of back/car park field 2026: Clerk to check with the previous volunteer to see if he was willing to continue.
- Movement of the mowing line in Lower Went's Meadow to be closer to the hedge: The Clerk would repeat this request to the contractor for 2026.
- Plan for mowing on Eddie's Meadow: Cllr. Kirkby would review the mowing of the four sections suggested in the management plan. The Clerk would ask if the payback team could strim the paths.
- Work day 2026: Agreed to hold a further work day in Spring 2026. Date to be agreed nearer the time.
- Repairs to Stone Bridge: Clerk to see if the Brilliant Basics grant officer would permit works to be done to the bridge. Mr. Graham would obtain quotes for the work.
- Brilliant Basics Paths Project: Work was progressing and the contractor would be back on site any day. Mr. Rimington raised concerns that the work carried out by the County Council on its section at the Old Mill end of the path was not compliant with current regulations. There was also no rail to the edge of the path. The Clerk would speak to the Officer to see what was happening. Mr. Graham asked if the intention was definitely to install a rail on the section of path that led up through the newly created gap in the hedge and it was confirmed that yes this should go ahead.

(4) 2025 Tree Survey: Recommendations from the tree survey were discussed in detail with five main recommendations. Three related to crown cleans of trees on the nature reserve. The possibility of obtaining a further opinion was discussed but it was agreed that it would be difficult to justify not acting on the professional opinion received. It was agreed that the Clerk seek quotes for the work for consideration by Full Council. The other recommendations involved creating a weed free spot around the bases of trees and it was felt this was not necessary at present and removing the stakes from the trees in the orchard area on the

Meadow. It was agreed to ask the person who carried out the regular pruning for his opinion and if necessary the stakes could be removed as part of the work day in the Spring. Although not included in the recommendations the damage to the roots of the lime trees was discussed. Consideration was given to leaving that area uncut but Mr. Graham felt it should be done. It was agreed that the contractor be asked to raise the cutting level slightly on that strip of grass.

(5) Rospa Inspection Report: Yet to take place.

(6) Community Barns: No maintenance felt to be needed.

(7) Report on work of Community Payback Team: Agreed that the work was very useful. Clerk to ask if they could avoid strimming right under the hedges.

(8) Bike Track and works by young people – Update: Mr. Graham reported that the contractor had been concentrating on the paths project and was still to be done. Cllr. Kirkby had been approached by a company providing quotes for pump tracks. Previously this had been a charged service but was now offered free of any cost and it was agreed that he proceed to arrange this.

(9) Hedge Management: Cllr. J. Ramsay stated this had been discussed at Full Council and there was nothing to add.

(10) Completion of Storage Building: Cllr. Kirkby confirmed that this was almost complete.

(11) Budget Consideration for 2026-27: Members considered the budget needs for the coming financial year and agreed to submit the following draft budget to Full Council –

Draft Budget 2026-27

Went's and Eddie's Meadow	2025-26	Draft 2026-27
Weekly Inspections (inc defib checks)	1500	1500
General Maintenance	1500	1600
Dog Bags	2000	2250
Grass Cutting/weed killing	4700	4700
Professional Inspections (Rospa & Tree Survey)(240 & 1125 in 25-26)	1365	300
MUGA / New Barn Reserve	2000	2000
Allotments (funded via rental income)	0	0
Utilities	350	500
Misc. (to include bank charges)	200	200
Projects (£3000 paths, £3000 storage building)	From reserves	-
	13,615.00	13,050.00

MIN SB11/25 TOILET BLOCKS

(1) Report on Year to Date: No major problems this year. Toilet roll thefts had reduced.

Painting of Hereford Street block still to commence. Painting of Wilson Terrace block almost completed by Community Payback team.

(2) Review of Cleaning Arrangements: No change to current hours or length of opening season at Wilson Terrace.

(3) Further maintenance work for 2026-27: None.

(4) Budget Consideration for 2026-27:

Draft Budget 2026-27	Toilets	
	2025-26	Draft 2026-27
Expected expenditure 2025-26 inc £5000 from toilet reserve	5,000	7,000
Expected expenditure 2026-27 inc £5000 from toilet reserve.	-	-

MIN SB12/25 URGENT INFORMATION.

(1) Proposed Lockable Bench Seat for Plot 36: Members considered this request and recommended that it be approved.

(2) Loss of Trees: Cllr. J. Ramsay expressed concern at the number of tree reductions and removals over recent weeks and felt concerns might be raised by some residents. He suggested options for more tree planting might be considered. Cllr. Edwards felt that the Council had planted a large number of trees and that there were no further places appropriate. Cllr. Kirkby suggested planting of further trees at the cemetery or along the by-pass. Cllr. Baynham stated that the County Council would not allow any new trees to be planted along the edge of the highway. The Clerk would ask if additional trees could be planted at the cemetery and also investigate if the Wales Tree Giveaway was likely to happen again.

Summary of Full Council Decisions Required -

Allotments: *The following items were recommended -*

Community Payback Team to be asked to continue work in 2026.

Outstanding Maintenance Items to be completed – new gate post, 2 x new pump bases.

Rent Review increase to £30.

Approval be given for lockable seat/bench on Plot 36.

Nature Reserve: *The following items were recommended -*

Potential Grant Funding to be explored in 2026 for items such as dipping platform, hides, storage.

Entrance to Reserve: Cllr. J. Ramsay to review accessibility.

Budget of £700 for 2026-27.

Meadows: *The following items were recommended -*

Quote for Various Strimming Works to be accepted.

Quote/additional cost to be sought for additional strimming near to new storage building.

Mowing of Back Field: Clerk to check if current volunteer was still willing to continue.

Mowing of Eddie's Meadow: Cllr. Kirkby to review main mowing areas, Clerk to ask

Community Payback Team to strim paths in 2026.

Repairs to Stone Bridge to be investigated/quotes obtained.

Work Day 2026: Cllr. Preece and Mr. Graham to arrange. Date to be set in due course.

Orchard tree stakes to be removed as part of the day if still recommended.

Tree Survey Recommended Works: Clerk to seek quotes for work.

Tree Survey: Clerk to consult with regular orchard pruner on need to remove stakes.

Quote to be obtained for Pump Track.

Budget for 2026-27: £13,050.00

Toilets:

Budget for 2026-27: £12,000. £7000 to be precepted, £5000 to be taken from the allocated toilets reserve.

General:

County Council to be approached about planting additional trees in Presteigne Cemetery.

Clerk to investigate possible future Wales Tree Giveaway.

The meeting closed at 9.01 pm.