

**Minutes of the Meeting of Holt Parish Council**  
**20<sup>th</sup> August 2025 at 7pm**  
**HOLT PARISH HALL**

<b>406</b>	<p><b>Attendance &amp; Apologies</b></p> <p>Cllr Sue Barnes  Cllr Jackie Egan  Cllr Peter Finney  Cllr Guy Reynolds (Chairman)  Cllr Sarah Weaver  Cllr Jane White</p> <p>Cllr Will Chakawhata (Dorset Councillor Stour &amp; Allen Vale Ward)  Lisa Goodwin (Clerk)</p> <p>38 members of public present</p> <p>Apologies received:</p> <p>Cllr Geoff Chopping  Cllr Jonathan Cutts  Cllr Wrettham Ladbroke-Chartres (Vice-Chairman)  Cllr Geoff Pike  Cllr Janet Wallace</p>
<b>407</b>	<p><b>Declaration of Interests &amp; Requests for Dispensation</b></p> <p>None received.</p>
<b>408</b>	<p><b>Confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held <u>9<sup>th</sup> July 2025</u> were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.</p>
<b>409</b>	<p><b>Public Open Session</b></p> <p>A resident attended to raise concerns with the road surface at Furzehill and explained they have been chasing this since 2002. They questioned why the road through Broomhill was recently surface dressed and why Furzehill has still not been repaired. <i>Cllr Will Chakawhata will take this action and raise with Officers at Dorset Council. The Parish Council will also report.</i></p> <p>A resident reported their concerns with speeding traffic at Whitemoor as there are blind bends which are particularly hazardous for horse-riders accessing the Heath and asked if it would be possible to introduce a speed limit. <i>The Chairman responded sympathising with the resident as this is a route used as a rat-run. The Parish Council has a good relationship with Dorset Council and continues to pursue road safety throughout the Parish. Members can consider operating the Community Speed Watch here or a Speed Indicator Device subject to the location meeting criteria.</i></p>

	<p>Two residents attended to raise their concerns with anti-social behaviour at the former East Dorset District Council Offices at Furzehill. They have had difficulty contacting Dorset Council out-of-hours and request the site is maintained, fenced and patrolled to protect it and the neighbours. <i>Cllr Will Chakawhata invited the residents to write to him directly with details and agreed to action with Dorset Council Officers.</i></p> <p>Two residents of Furzehill are interested in the Local Plan Consultation and how they access the information. <i>The Clerk will circulate details on HOLT Together and put on the Parish Council website.</i></p> <p>A resident provided information regarding the Certificate of Lawfulness application for Candlewick Cottage; the property has been there for over 30 years (without enforcement) and was built as a farm-workers cottage.</p> <p>It was also reported that Forest England have written to residents at Clayford who have encroached on to land in their ownership requesting they vacate within 3 months; cut wood is being stored in the forest; no further progress with The Old Sawmills applications.</p>
410	<p><b>Holt Heath Fire Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2025</b></p>  <p><b>Statement of the Parish Council by Cllr Guy Reynolds (Chairman)</b></p> <p><i>The fire the parish had the misfortune to experience on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> was dramatic and damaging in equal measure. Some 180 acres of heathland was burnt, as well as damage to property, although the latter was mercifully light considering the scale of the blaze.</i></p> <p><i>We understand that emotions are running high and parishioners rightly have attended this evening to voice their concerns and opinions in the aftermath. We would ask you to listen to the following statement and respond in the light of what is said. There will be an opportunity to ask further questions at the end.</i></p> <p><i>First and foremost, we would seek to remind all present that there is only one party to blame for the fire, and that is the person that started it. There are several factors that many of us believe would have mitigated the impact, but ultimately an individual made the choice to start the fire, in extremely dry and windy conditions. That is outside of our control, no matter what actions were or were not taken previously</i></p>

or subsequently. The fire service were very clear that the 30:30:30 conditions experience were perfect for wildfires, and very little can stop them under these circumstances.

Many of you here this evening, both parishioner and councillor, will join me in expressing considerable frustration at the lack of fire breaks cut onto the heath. They have been a feature in the past, and there is undoubtedly a powerful feeling that they have been disastrously absent this Summer. The parish council had requested only a few weeks ago that the significant levels of tall gorse on the Common was controlled, particularly in close proximity to properties adjacent to the heath. We had also asked the fire service, in the wake of the smaller fires, to add their weight to that request. In fairness to the National Trust, the local rangers were aware of the risks and had agreed to develop a cutting plan for the coming year, but there was no action taken in the short term.

There are a number of factors that are at work in this situation, but many of you may not be aware of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act. This Act gave protected legal status to heathland, amongst other environments, and this means every action taken has to be considered through this lens. Any landowner, including the National Trust, has a legal obligation to consider the impact of any work undertaken on the natural environment before any other consideration, including people and property. This means any action taken, even gorse clearance or firebreaks, has to be submitted to Natural England for approval prior to being undertaken, and Natural England are legally bound to refer to the Act before granting permission and issuing a licence. Written in 1981, there is no mention of climate change or wildfires in the Act. Whether or not you see this as idiocy or lunacy, it is the law as it stands at the moment. Given the restrictions on funding, people and resources by the National Trust for the Commons areas, it is unsurprising that the local rangers were unable to achieve more.

Like me, many will have been dismayed to see the National Trust then spring into action on Sunday and Monday, cutting several new firebreaks and reinstating older ones. I suspect, like me, it seemed a case of too little, too late. The explanation for this action lies in the fire service declaring a major incident, which meant they had the legal right to override legislation, including the 1981 Act, to request the work was undertaken immediately to aid their efforts. As the fire service predicted, that authority ceased this Saturday, as soon as the incident had been downgraded. These are quirks of the law, but I hope it clarifies the actions taken. It was not, as some have expressed to me, because the Trust felt guilty or wanted to make themselves look less responsible. What I do hope, in view of the scale of the damage, is that in future years the Trust are able to make the case more strongly that firebreaks not only help the fire service in the event of a fire to protect lives and property, but that they actually improve the chances of survival for rare flora and fauna at the same time.

Another factor early on in the fire that has been noted was the lack of knowledge of the whereabouts of hydrants, and the lack of serviceability of hydrants when they were located. Some of this is related to out of area crews being in attendance, but the information should still have been available. The parish council will be requesting that there is an accurate map made available to both the fire service and the parish council, if it hasn't already, but also that considering the hydrants and their essential role tackling the fires, they are maintained despite their rural locations. We do know that all hydrants the fire service wished to use were made serviceable in very quick order once faulty ones had been identified, and for that we are grateful.

There has been mention of the lack of information available during the wildfire as to the nature and timing of evacuations. The parish council has previously had two meetings with members of the fire service, and the Firewise scheme in attendance, which parishioners were able to attend. We distributed appropriate literature locally to public venues, emailed out the recommendations and made all the requested situation updates we were asked to by the fire service. We have previously outlined the recommendations to have a 'grab bag' of essentials ready when we are aware of fires in the local area, and that the fire service are in charge of evacuations. We continuously offered appropriate administrative support where appropriate.

We have also recognised the usefulness of a 'Whatsapp' information group, not for debate but purely for information dissemination, not only for fires but for any other hazardous events that we can help keep

*parishioners up to date and well advised. I hope that will be adopted at this meeting, and I would urge parishioners to submit their mobile numbers to the Clerk if they would like to be included in the future.*

*The fire service have already stated that a full report will be produced in the aftermath of a declaration of this major incident, and the parish council have already requested that we discuss this report, together with the National Trust as the primary land owner, to better develop future management to mitigate the risks of wildfires. We sadly cannot control all the variables, but I think we can improve on the current situation. With that in mind, we hope to call a future additional meeting with fire service and National Trust representatives in attendance, where parishioners can engage in that process and offer insight.*

*Three lesser points have been raised, which I will briefly address. One is the cutting of the meadow at Broadlawn. This is dictated, again, by the restrictions placed upon the meadow on account of the flowers found there, which prevents early cuts to allow for the conclusion of the flowering and seeding season. The cut is therefore very late, often in the last week of August or later. The Holt Commoners have previously expressed frustration with this in the past, but there is no circumnavigating the legislation. Secondly, the low hanging branches along Paradise Road and the resultant restrictions placed upon fire engines navigating the road: the road is in private ownership, and as such the parish council can only politely request that the trees are cut back. We believe the fire service are likely to do the same, but the jurisdiction to act lies with the owner. Given the proximity of the fire, one hopes we will see a speedy response.*

*Thirdly, the matter of storm run-off had been pointed out by the fire service in view of the dramatic reduction in vegetation on the Common. The parish council will request that ditches and gulches in the vicinity are re-inspected prior to Winter weather, but any parishioner can report a blocked ditch adjacent to a road via the Dorset County Council website, and we would urge them to do so to make the Highways Department aware of any problems.*

*Finally, and on a much more positive note, I had already on last Monday morning requested from the Clerk a stack of headed paper and plan to write to all attending stations to thank fire crews on behalf of our parish for their extraordinary efforts in limiting the fire as much as they did. I personally had crews from Cheshire, Lancashire, Norfolk, Essex, Devon, Glamorgan, Somerset, Isle of Wight and Hampshire, as well as our own Dorset and Wiltshire fire service. All present at different times, they were unendingly helpful and friendly, as well as committed to protecting our parish. Many houses, including my own, are only unscathed because of their efforts. We should all be extremely grateful, and I will convey that gratitude to them.*

*In addition to that, I would like to thank all parishioners who did what they could to help others and supplied refreshments to fire crews, at times, I understand, including full roast dinners! We are very lucky to live in this little community, and I would like to finish with our minds on that thought.*

Those present were able to ask questions and raise their concerns which were discussed by members.  
Actions for the Parish Council:

- To organise a meeting with the Fire Service, the National Trust and other organisations to discuss the way forward once they have their reports.
- Form a Parish Council WhatsApp Info Group in the event of an emergency.
- To report overhanging branches at Paradise.
- To establish locations of Fire Hydrants across the Parish.
- Ask Dorset Council to clear roadside ditches before winter rain as residents concerned with storm run off and to ensure deep enough to prevent vehicles accessing the open heathland [1294299]
- The Chairman will write letter of thanks to all attending Fire Crews.

The resident who set up the extremely helpful Holt Fire Emergency WhatsApp group during the incident which was thanked by everyone present.

411	<p><b>Planning &amp; Tree Applications/Planning Enforcement Matters</b></p> <p>Please see Appendix A.</p>
412	<p><b>Traffic Regulation Order for proposed 30/40mph speed restrictions</b></p> <p>Members considered representations by residents and resolved unanimously to respond:  <i>With the development of several new dwellings at Framptons Yard BH21 7DX we are concerned the drivers line of sight is impaired at this point on the highway (in both directions) and in view of the number of incidents noted by local residents here, we ask that Dorset Council considers extending the proposed 30mph to the junction at Pheasants Rise BH21 7DX.</i></p>
413	<p><b>Highways</b></p> <p>Members considered the data from the recent traffic survey in Lodge Road which has identified the location does meet the criteria for a Speed Indicator Device in each direction. A second pole is required @ £550.00 + VAT. <i>It was resolved to proceed with this and Dorset Council will incorporate this site into the deployment schedule using the existing units.</i></p> <p>Dorset Council have surveyed Smugglers Lane for a SID and identified an appropriate location opposite Dogdean Farm for vehicles heading southbound. <i>Members approved expenditure for a survey @ £295.00 + VAT to ensure the location meets the required speed criteria.</i></p> <p>Dorset Police have agreed a location for a Community Speed Watch in Smugglers Lane. Once the site is authorised by Dorset Police, a session can be arranged by the Holt CSW team.</p> <p>A resident has asked the Parish Council to consider extending the 30mph at Colehill Lane, Broomhill for the entire length to Colehill or at least to The Barley Mow. It is also suggested a permanent speed camera and Police Speed Checks.  <i>Members agreed this is a high-volume route within Holt Parish and therefore appropriate for extending the 30mph limit to the parish boundary at The Barley Mow. The Parish Council currently deploy a Speed Indicator Device (SID) at Broomhill and operate a Community Speed Watch (CSW) as part of the ongoing commitment to traffic monitoring and road safety for residents. Colehill Lane is a recognised rat-run to and from Wimborne by commuters and also on the school bus route. Extending the 30mph zone would demonstrate that this area is part of the residential community of Broomhill. The Barley Mow attracts visitors locally and from further afield on foot, bicycle and car; there is also the obscured junction here with Long Lane. The extension would provide safer access for school buses, those commuting for work and local residents, particularly at busier times of day. The clerk will also request the Dorset Police Camera van visits.</i></p> <p>Members agreed the Clerk will request Dorset Council re-assess the road at Furzehill for resurfacing [1294298] and Gaunts Common [1294297] which has been raised by another member of public in writing to Cllr Sue Barnes.</p> <p>Members wished to thank the resident of Furzehill who has kindly worked very hard on refurbishing the BT Box at Furzehill and placed a plaque inside recognising the efforts of all involved.</p> <p>Dorset Council have notified the Parish Council of a proposed temporary closure of Holt Road near Bowers Cottage from 6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> October to allow South-West Water to carry out disconnection works. SWW will publicise the road closure and carry out a letter drop to local residents directly affected.</p>

414	<p><b>DAPTC Smaller Parish Council Survey</b></p> <p>Members agreed to discuss at the September meeting.</p>									
415	<p><b>Dorset Local Plan Options Consultation</b></p> <p>This consultation document sets out opportunities for meeting the development needs of the Dorset Council area. It will help form the Dorset Council Local Plan which will be used when making planning decisions in Dorset.</p> <p>The Local Plan will be Dorset Council’s response to the Government’s commitment to addressing the shortage of housing, to enable economic growth and deliver essential infrastructure to enable this growth. It will also set out how planning decisions will seek to conserve and enhance the environment, including measures to address climate change.</p> <p>The consultation documents can be found online at <a href="http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-is-changing">www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-is-changing</a> and at County Hall, Dorchester during normal opening hours. The options consultation document (though not the appendices) will also be available in Dorset libraries.</p> <p><i>The Clerk will share the Consultation on HOLT Together and the Parish Council website.</i></p> <p><i>Members agreed to form a Working Group to prepare a draft response for next meeting.</i></p>									
416	<p><b>Inspection Holt Village Green &amp; Woodland at Queens Copse Lane</b></p> <p>Members agreed to complete the Village Green Inspection at <u>6:30pm on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September</u>, prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk will ask Cllr Jonathan Cutts (Tree Officer) to suggest dates to inspect the Woodland at Queens Copse (GR/JW to attend if possible).</p>									
417	<p><b>Financial Matters &amp; Expenditure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Clerk provided members with up-to-date bank account balances.</li><li>• The Parish Council has been asked to accept and hold fund-raised money (for an information board in the Furzehill BT Box) by a resident of Furzehill. <i>Members felt that incorporating these funds within the Parish Council accounts would present some challenges with administration, particularly in regard to the end of year audit process.</i></li><li>• Members approved the following items for payment and the Clerk’s salary:</li></ul> <table><tr><td>ONLINE VISION ICT</td><td>Registration .gov domain/email</td><td>£234.00</td></tr><tr><td>ONLINE DORSET COUNCIL</td><td>SID Deployment Apr 25 – Mar 26</td><td>£1071.00</td></tr><tr><td>ONLINE SOURCE FOR BUSINESS</td><td>Water supply Holt Cemetery Jan – July 25</td><td>£36.69</td></tr></table>	ONLINE VISION ICT	Registration .gov domain/email	£234.00	ONLINE DORSET COUNCIL	SID Deployment Apr 25 – Mar 26	£1071.00	ONLINE SOURCE FOR BUSINESS	Water supply Holt Cemetery Jan – July 25	£36.69
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	<p>The next meeting of the Parish Council will be in Holt Parish Hall, <u>17<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 7pm</u></p>									

Meeting closed 21:50

**These minutes are to be signed by the Chairman after approval at the next meeting of the Parish Council.**

**Signed: ..... 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

[https://d.docs.live.net/F73CC56549DE8C09/Holt Parish Council/Minutes/2025/Minutes Holt PC 20 08 25.docx](https://d.docs.live.net/F73CC56549DE8C09/Holt%20Parish%20Council/Minutes/2025/Minutes%20Holt%20PC%2008%2025.docx)

## Appendix A

Application Number	Location	Description	Parish Council Comment
<a href="#">P/FUL/2025/04098</a> & P/FUL/LBC/04097	Barley Mow, Long Lane, BH21 7AH	Forming an aperture within an internal structural wall creating a small, pitched roof single storey extension and erect a stretch tent.	NO OBJECTION
<a href="#">P/HOU/2025/04021</a>	Homeland, Holtwood, BH21 7DX	Erect single storey side extension	OBJECTION: The proposed extension is disproportionate in relation to the existing dwelling. Members request this application is considered by the Planning Committee if the Officers recommendation is at variance to the above.
<a href="#">P/HOU/2025/03999</a>	Whispering Pines, Pilmoor Bottom, BH21 7EA	Erect single storey extension and roof extension with replaced front and rear dormers.	NO COMMENT
<a href="#">P/HOU/2025/04163</a>	White Barn, Anchor Paddock, Batchelors Lane, Holtwood, BH21 7DS	Erection of outbuilding to house renewable energy equipment.	NO OBJECTION provided the demolition of Building 16 is undertaken prior to construction of the proposed building.
<a href="#">P/FUL/2025/04518</a>	The Tree House, Anchor Paddock, Batchelors Lane, Holtwood, BH21 7DS	Re-use of the existing building (known as The Tree House) for holiday let purposes.	NO COMMENT
<a href="#">P/VOC/2025/04682</a>	Oak Tree Paddock, Batchelors Lane, Holtwood.	Convert existing building into dwelling house (variation to condition 2 of planning permission P/FUL/2024/00324 to make alterations to create a 4 bedroom house)	APPLICATION WITHDRAWN 20/08/2025
<a href="#">P/FUL/2025/04096</a>	Agricultural Building, Burts Lane.	Demolition of existing agricultural building and erection of new dwelling utilising the Class Q fallback position and associated works.	OBJECTION to the proposal which has moved away from the original barn site and the curtilage shown is very large in comparison to the limits of the original Class Q barn.
<a href="#">P/CLE/2025/04238</a>	Candlewick Cottage, Clayford, BH21 7BJ	Retention of a detached dwelling. (Certificate of Lawfulness requesting evidence the claimed use or development has or has not existed continuously for either 4 or 10 years)	This building has existed to our knowledge in excess of 10 years but specifically for agricultural workers.
<a href="#">P/CLE/2025/04160</a>	Emmers Farm, Lower Mannington, BH21 7JY	Use of land for the storage, grading and recycling of demolition waste. Use of buildings for vehicle repairs and the storage of demolition machinery and equipment. (Certificate of Lawfulness requesting evidence the claimed use or development has or has not existed continuously for either 4 or 10 years)	We are aware of the existence of the site for 10 years but not at its current scale of level of activity.



<a href="#">P/CLE/2025/04484</a>	Horseshoes, Holt Lane, Holt, BH21 7DQ	Certificate of Lawfulness in relation to the lawful implementation of PA 3/21/1521/FUL (demolish existing dwelling and erect replacement dwelling and that the application remains extant. (Certificate of Lawfulness requesting evidence the claimed use or development has or has not existed continuously for either 4 or 10 years)	NO EVIDENCE
P/STA/2025/02791	The Barn, Gods Blessing Lane, Holt, BH21 7DE	Notification of works under the Electricity Act 1990: change of an existing overhead line currently supplying a single user to now supply multiple users to enable a new electricity supply.	NO COMMENT

**Other items for report:**

P/FUL/2023/00104	Jubilee Farm, Burts Lane, BH21 7JX	Notification of Appeal against the refusal by Dorset Council to retain use of outbuildings for mixed B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage) use classes.
P/HOU/2025/01828	Pilford Cottage, Pilford Lane, BH21 7AR	Notification of Appeal against the refusal by Dorset Council for: Raise roof of garage, garage conversion to create first floor level with linked extension to main dwelling, removal of conservatory, erection of flat roof rear/side extension with block paving to driveway and upgrade and enlarge patio.
P/PALH/2025/04045	Whitesheet Lodge, BH21 7D	Erection of permanent gazebo to extend 4.45m beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling. Max height 4m, height to eaves 2.3m.
P/NMA/2025/04517	2 Harriets Gift, Grange, BH21 4HS	Non-material amendment to planning approval P/HOU/2024/06038 enclosure of existing dog pen to form dog room and small rear porch.
P/FUL/2024/04777	Brooklands Farm, Burts Lane, BH21 7JU	Notification of Appeal against the refusal by Dorset Council for change of use of land from Agricultural to dwelling and retention of 1 residential dwelling (C3), the demolition of two outbuildings and installation of a bat box.