

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

held on Wednesday 7th May 2025 at Breinton Village Hall

Present: Cllr J Hull (Chair), Cllr E Morfett (Vice Chair), Cllr L Lewis, Cllr L Morawiecka, Cllr T Prosser and Cllr J Morris.

Officers Present: L Law, Clerk.

Others in attendance: Footpath Officer, John Wade. One member of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence.** No apologies received all members were in attendance.
2. **Chairman's Report. A summary of the Chairman's Report presented by: John Hull, Parish Council Chair**
 - **Council Stability & Operations:** The council remained stable with six active councillors and a capable clerk. No increase in the parish precept due to strong financial management and effective use of grants.
 - **Drainage & Flood Management:** Key drainage issues were addressed with support from Herefordshire Council grants. Notable work occurred at Lower Breinton, Pigeon Barn Development, and Wyecliff Court Farm. Manor Farm also independently contributed to drainage maintenance.
 - **Footpaths & PROW Work:** Improvements included repairing a gate near Upper Wood and replacing four footpath signs, supported by the Public Rights of Way (PROW) grant scheme.
 - **Planning Matters:**
 - Several developments under **Class Q** (agricultural to residential conversion) were considered, with mixed responses from the council.
 - Concerns were raised over a large 45-house development at Breinton Lee due to potential surface water flooding.
 - **Loss of Councillor Bob Matthews:** His passing was noted with sadness. Charlotte Taylor was elected as the new Ward Councillor and has actively represented the parish since.
 - **Major Concerns Ahead:**
 - **Western Bypass & Housing:** The proposed bypass is linked with a major housing development of 10,000 homes. The parish views this as a significant threat due to flood, pollution, and congestion risks.

- **Planning Policy Changes:** The national government's revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework require Herefordshire Council to restart its Core Development Plan. Implications for Breinton may include increased housing pressures.
- **Neighbourhood Development Plan:** Plans are underway to revise this once the new Core Plan is released (expected 2026), with community consultation anticipated.
- **Community Farewell:** The council bid farewell to Tony and Nicky Geeson, long-time contributors to parish life and planning, who have relocated to Leeds.

3. **Presentation on activities of the Museum of Cider by Chairman**

Dave Marshall. The Museum is the largest Cider Museum in the UK. It currently owns around 100 acres of orchards in Breinton parish and is developing management plans in conjunction with their neighbour, the Natural Trust. There is no open access to the land currently, although controlled access or permissive paths may be considered in the future. Mr Marshall then informed the meeting of the land it currently owns including:

Pippin, North, South and Old. North and South land planted with cider fruit trees 10 years old.

The Museum is in the process of applying for National Collection status for 164 different varieties of cider fruit types. Pippin Old is to replanted with predominantly Brambley Apples.

Becketts Orchard, the largest orchard at 25 acres, features a historically significant bush orchard planted in the 1930s and 1940s, and is also notable for its biodiversity. A fungus found in the orchard represents a significant discovery, as it potentially kills mistletoe and is currently being studied at Kew Gardens.

Phillips Orchard is the most productive commercial orchard currently owned by the museum, with all apples going to Weston's Cider.

Phillip New and Cow Meadows. Keeping for community use and planning to improve the site for wildflowers with advice from the National Trust.

Cottage Orchard and 17 Acres Orchard. Recently acquired by the museum from the Bulmer Trust. Affected by wind and mistletoe.

Breinton Fruit Farm is planning to take part in the Landscape Recovery Scheme, an environmental land management scheme. It is designed to **support long-term, large-scale projects that restore natural habitats, enhance biodiversity, and improve landscape resilience,** often across multiple farms or landholdings.

Cllr Hull thanked Dave Marshall for his presentation.

4. Open discussion comments from members of the public. No comments or questions were received.

5. Approve the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 15th May 2024. The minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2024 were **approved** and the Chairman signed a copy.

Meeting Ended at 7.42pm

Signed:

Dated: