

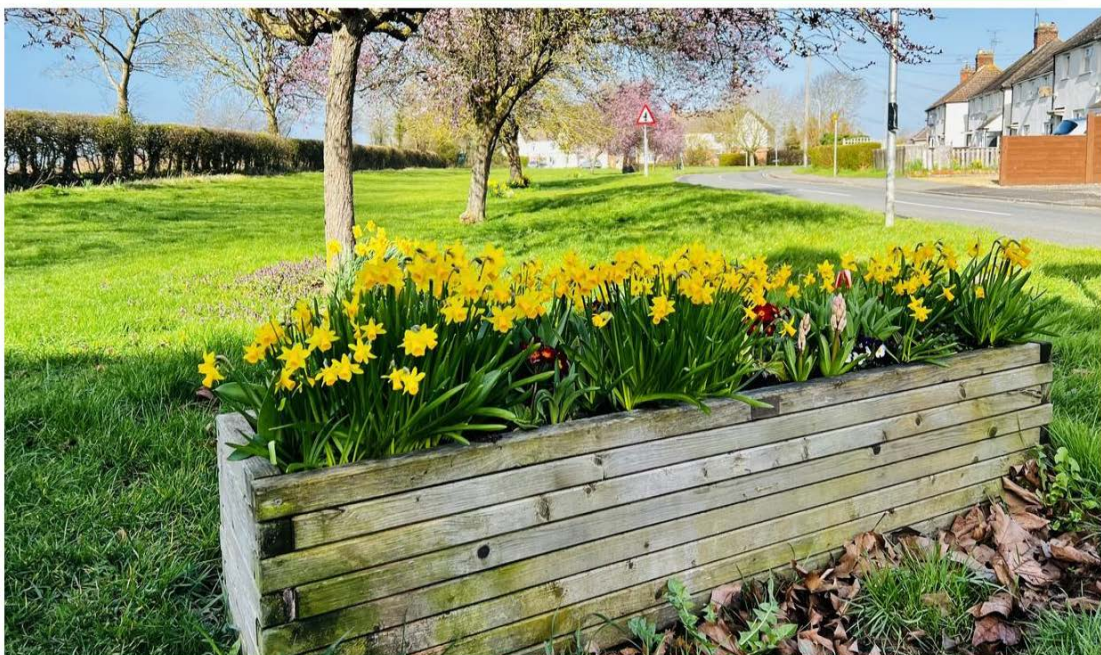
Honeybourne
parish council



Annual Parish Meeting

2026

Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 6:30pm
Honeybourne Village Hall, Harvest Close, WR11 7RH



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www.honeybourne-pc.gov.uk

What's in tonight's booklet

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What is the Annual Parish Meeting?

The Annual Parish Meeting is the meeting where the Parish Council reports to its electorate on what it has accomplished during the preceding year. It is also known as the Annual Parish Assembly — all the same thing.

Electors, members of the public and press are invited to hear reports from the Chairman, District and County Councillors, community groups, and any organisation that the Parish Council has funded during the year.

The Annual Parish Meeting is a **SEPARATE** meeting from the Parish Council Annual Meeting. This is a relatively informal community event, whereas the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council is a formal council meeting.

When must it be held?

The Annual Parish Meeting must be held between 1st March and 1st June each year and may not start before 6:00pm (Local Government Act 1972, s.14).

Who chairs the meeting?

The meeting is chaired by the Parish Council Chairman, or in their absence the Vice Chairman (LGA 1972, s.17(1)). If neither is present, those electors attending may appoint a chairman for the meeting (LGA 1972, s.17(3)).

Who attends?

Anyone is welcome to attend and listen. Parish Councillors are entitled to attend and normally do so, but there is no legal requirement for them to attend — they have no special status at this meeting beyond being registered electors (LGA 1972, s.16). Similarly, the Parish Clerk is not required to attend the Annual Parish Meeting by statute, unless their contract of employment requires it, although in practice the Clerk attends to assist with the administration of the meeting.

Who can vote?

Only registered electors for the parish may vote on any question at this meeting (LGA 1972, s.18(1)).* **This is a meeting of the parish electors, not a meeting of the Parish Council.** Parish Councillors who are also registered electors may vote, but only in their capacity as electors — they have no additional voting rights by virtue of being councillors. Any member of the public who is not a registered elector for Honeybourne may attend and speak if invited to do so, but may not vote.

Voting is by a show of hands and the decision of the person chairing the meeting is final, unless a poll is demanded. No decisions taken at this meeting are binding on the Parish Council, although the Council should consider them.

Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting are kept separately from the minutes of the Parish Council. They are signed by the person who chaired the meeting at which they are approved — not necessarily the council Chairman, though in Honeybourne's case this is the same person. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 6th May 2025 will be presented for adoption at tonight's meeting.

Your opportunity to speak

There is an Open Forum at the end of the meeting where all attendees are welcome to raise questions or matters of concern. This is your opportunity as a resident to have your say on any matter affecting the parish.

What is the Annual Parish Council Meeting?

The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council is the formal meeting of the elected council, which must be held in May each year. At this meeting the Council elects the Chairman and Vice Chairman for the coming year, makes other annual appointments and transacts formal council business. Unlike the Annual Parish Meeting, this is a meeting of the council — members of the public are welcome to attend and observe but may not speak unless invited to do so by the Chairman.

In an election year, the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council must be held between 4 and 14 days after the day of the election, to allow newly elected councillors to take their seats.

Tonight, the Annual Parish Council Meeting will follow this meeting — you are welcome to attend either or both.

* *If you are unsure whether you are a registered elector for Honeybourne, you can check the electoral register by contacting Wychavon District Council.*

Honeybourne Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting — Agenda

Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 6:30pm
Honeybourne Village Hall, Harvest Close, WR11 7RH

1. Chairman's welcome.
2. To receive apologies for absence.
3. To receive and adopt the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 6th May 2025.
4. Reports from local Council Representatives — may include:
 - Chairman's report
 - County Councillor's report
 - District Councillors' reports
 - South Worcestershire Policing Team
 - Friends of St Ecgwin's Church
 - Honeybourne Village News
 - Honeybourne Village Hall
 - Friends of Honeybourne Station
 - Community Speed Watch (CSW)
 - Honeybourne Public Right of Way Working Group
 - Honeybourne Allotment Gardens Association
 - Honeybourne Village Fete
 - Honeybourne Christmas Working Group
5. Open Forum.
6. Close of business.

Please note: *The Annual Parish Council Meeting will follow and you are welcome to attend either or both.*

Heath Jones

Chairman, Honeybourne Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 6th May 2025 at 6:30pm at Honeybourne Village Hall, Harvest Close, WR11 7RH

The Meeting was chaired by Cllr Heath Jobes, Honeybourne Parish Council Chairman.

In attendance	26 members of public
District Councillors	Hannah Robson & Judith Ciotti
County Councillor	Hannah Robson
Parish Councillors	A Attridge, T Askew, C Clear, G Clelland, B Dubb and A Mathias
Parish Clerk	L Stanton

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all present.

2. Apologies

Apologies have been received from Cllrs S Sidwell, S Walsh, Mr Steve Attridge (Chair of Honeybourne Hawks FC) Mrs C Bates (Secretary of Honeybourne Wednesday Club)

3. To receive and approve the minutes of the previous annual meeting held on 14th May 2024.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 14th May 2024 be approved as true record of the meeting.

4. Chairman's report from Parish Council.

a. Chairman's report:

"Good evening, everyone and welcome to our Annual Parish Meeting. I would also like to welcome our newly elected County Councillor Hannah Robson.

The purpose of this meeting is to update you on what the Parish Council has been up to over the past 12 months. It is also an opportunity for the various voluntary organisations within the village to report on all their activities over the past year.

We hope residents would agree we have listened to their feedback or concerns, and where it has been in our gift to be able to resolve, action has been taken. Over the course of this year, we have purchased another new VAS sign to try and help reduce speeding in the village, continued with the programme of enhancing the sports field by improving the soil drainage and additional seeding, welcoming a new football team to the sports field (Honeybourne Hawks), improving our public footpaths accessibility with pedestrian gates instead of stiles, thanks to our volunteer PROW group and purchasing a fourth defibrillator for the village which is located on the exterior wall of Ludify Automotive, retail units on Sycamore Drive and purchasing an additional grit bin for Brickwalk. Some members of the Parish Council along with a number of local residents and allotment plot holders planted a community orchard at the allotment, with trees consisting of a mix of local apple and plum varieties, provided by the Coronation Living Heritage Fund through Worcestershire County Council Countryside Services. The PC also awarded grants to Friends of Honeybourne Station, Honeybourne Village Hall, Honeybourne Village News, Honeybourne Hawks and Honeybourne Wednesday Club to help support these groups with their activities.

One of last year's most significant events was the 80th commemoration of the D-Day landing. We marked the event by lighting a Beacon of Peace at the Village Hall, whilst a live silver band played popular 1940's music and schoolchildren read out their poetry from the village school.

In November GWR ran a Poppy Train, which passed through Honeybourne on its way to the war memorial at Paddington Station. I was invited to present a wreath, on behalf of the Council and residents, to the GWR staff on the train to be laid at the war memorial. I also attended the annual Remembrance Service at St Egwin's church.



The annual Christmas Switch On and Fayre took place on 29th November with a live band, fairground ride and Santa was on hand to meet the children. The lights were switched on by our local MP, Nigel Huddleston. The event was well attended as usual.

Before moving on to planning matters, I would like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their support over the past 12 months. I'd also like to welcome our newly co-opted Parish Councillor, Cllr Sandra Walsh. Thanks also go to District Councillors Hannah Robson and Judith Ciotti for their continued assistance and support.



Planning Matters

In the past year, the Parish Council has reviewed 14 planning applications covering various projects from simple drop kerbs to industrial developments and home extensions.

For one notable case, we appointed Brodie Planning to help us formally object to plans for converting a garage into a 2-bedroom bungalow. Wychavon District Council (WDC) agreed with our concerns and refused the application.

We've had mixed results with other significant applications. Most recently, at the Wychavon planning committee meeting, our planning consultant spoke to object to the outline planning permission for 24 dwellings on Bretforton Road. I'm pleased to report that the planning committee upheld our objection.

The WDC planning committee also supported our objections to both a self-build house in Westbourne and a proposed 40-home development on Stratford Road. When the applicants appealed these decisions, we won one case but lost the other. The planning inspector refused permission for the Westbourne self-build, which was good news.

However, unfortunately, the planning inspector did approve the 40-home development on Stratford Road. This may have been due to Wychavon District Council withdrawing their objections to this development during the course of the appeal, due to a housing supply shortage in the district. As stated in the planning inspectors Appeal Decision: The Council confirmed that "following a change to the Council's latest Housing Land Supply position they withdraw the reasons for refusal and objections to the proposed development." Put simply, WDC can only demonstrate that they have enough land for 1.1 years of new housing, far below the 5-year supply they're required to maintain. The Parish Council was very disappointed with this outcome and this was first we (Parish Council) knew that our District Council had withdrawn their objection to this application. When I approached our District Council Planning Department, I asked if our District Councillors and planning committee members knew that WDC had withdrawn their objection, I received no clear answer from the WDC Head of Planning.

Other Ongoing Projects

We recognise the ongoing parking issues around the Honeybourne Railway Station and the surrounding residential areas, namely Stephenson Way and the Bovis Estate. Discussions are still ongoing with Wychavon District Council and Network Rail, which is namely around passengers being able to access the platform from the car park safely and quickly. The WDC officer is currently awaiting detailed design and costings and information from Network Rail, which meets Network Rail's safety requirements, which is for a level crossing from the car park to the platform. The WDC Officer be presenting a report to the WDC Executive Board in the next couple of months and has assured me, she will keep us up to date on progress as she is well aware of the current parking issues and the concerns residents have raised.

We're also working to improve local Public Right Way footpaths. We've been discussing with Worcester County Council footpath officer about restarting the project to resurface the western section of the path leading to the Leys. The officer is hoping to restart the project this financial year, as she still needs to obtain quotes and obtain permission from the landowner. The Parish Council will continue to liaise with the footpath officer on the project.

Before I end my report on behalf of the Council, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Alastair Adams who decided not to stand for County Councillor at the recently held elections. Alastair has been an exceptional advocate for our community, consistently going above and beyond in his service to Honeybourne. His tireless efforts, dedication, and unwavering support have made a significant difference to both the Council and residents alike. His guidance on numerous projects and his ability to navigate county-level challenges on our behalf have been invaluable. On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to present a token of appreciation for all his outstanding help, commitment and support to the Council and to all the residents in Honeybourne over the years. Alastair's contributions will be remembered fondly, and he will be greatly missed.

Finally, I would also like to remind everyone about the upcoming 80th VE Day commemoration which will be taking place at the Village Hall on 8th May starting at 6:30 pm with a live Silver

Band and lighting of the beacon at 9:30 pm. Food and drink can be purchased on the night. We hope to see many of you there to commemorate this important anniversary.

Thank you all for attending tonight's Annual Parish Meeting. Your continued interest and involvement in our community affairs are what make Honeybourne such a special place to live. If you have any questions or concerns about anything covered in this report or about other parish matters, please don't hesitate to approach myself or any of the Parish Councillors after the meeting. We're here to serve the community and value your input."

b) District Councillors Judith Ciotti and Hannah Robson Report

The Chair welcomed the District Cllrs Ciotti and Robson and asked if they would like to present their report to council and members of the public.

Report presented by Cllr Robson

"Thank you for inviting us to this 2025 Parish Meeting. It's nice to see you all this evening and we are encouraged throughout the year to see the involvement of residents in their villages through attending Parish Council Meetings or by taking an active part in local events, volunteering and also by contacting us individually by phone or email with questions or problems.

To start with some positive news Wychavon is on track to cut carbon emissions. Thinking first about Wychavon's Council Services considerable progress is being made by achieving funding for low carbon heating systems with solar panels at the Leisure Centres which account for 66% of the council's carbon footprint.

Over the district Renewable Electricity Generation has more than doubled since 2014 and decarbonisation of the grid has also cut emissions. The low carbon industry now employs more than 2,100 people. Travel remains a challenge and the lack of active walking/cycling routes discourages us from leaving the car at home. Our ward was chosen to be part of a pilot study on sustainable local travel e.g. bus, train and community transport and the results are being analysed. Meanwhile some bus services have improved and the Wychavon website now has an excellent page on all the public transport information in the area in one place.

Our commitment for capturing greenhouse emissions by 2025 is 500 tonnes and the further development of Avon Meadows in Pershore, improvements to Coney Meadows in Droitwich and the planting of 13,472 trees through the Trees Call to Action Project with Heart of England Forest have all helped towards this.

Now is your chance to win prizes for taking simple everyday actions to help tackle climate change- see the Wychavon website for details of WYCHRewards.

In April last year Wychavon celebrated its 50th anniversary with a service in Pershore where those present re dedicated themselves to serving their communities. Soon after, at the General Election there was a change of government followed by a White Paper in December setting out a plan for Local Government reorganisation and Devolution. The six district councils and the county council will be abolished and replaced by a single tier of local government. Wychavon has agreed to request 2 options for consideration : a One Worcestershire authority and a South / North two authority option. Negotiations have begun and a final proposal to the Minister is due in November with the new structure in place by April 2028. This compulsory reorganisation is taking up a good deal of time particularly for council employees but the outcome will also impact Parish Councils.

The SWDPR is currently being examined by the planning inspectorate with public examination sessions taken place in February and March 2025. The report is anticipated to be released in autumn of this year. In the meantime there have been massive implications for Wychavon from the National Planning Policy framework update that was issued in December 2024. This saw the requirement for local authorities to calculate their Five year land housing supply figure differently once more and crushed Wychavon's figure, even though Wychavon have been providing housing continuously , through no fault of their own the figure fell. Which has had a

major impact on any appeals in the system and new speculative planning applications which are rife at the moment. This is truly frustrating for elected councillors and officers alike, planning law is dynamic so it can change rapidly with the changes being applied even to applications made under previous legislation. What makes the central government push for 1.5 million homes to be built in 5 years a really bitter pill to swallow, is that, not only are they targeting green fields sites rather than brownfields as should be, there are 1.5 million empty homes in this country and 1.4million houses that have had planning permission granted but not built out in the last 18 years. If these two areas were tackled, we wouldn't be being forced to desecrate our land

Planning matters take up a large proportion of Hannah's time, in Honeybourne she has worked hard, fighting applications alongside the parish council. The extremely frustrating and disappointing appeal dismissal along Stratford road, saddens me, yet again central government is dictating how our local landscape will like and disregarding democracy by disregarding the local communities view. The more recent refusal at planning committee for 24 houses along Bretforton road, was more welcome after a site visit and lengthy discussion the committee went against officer recommendations after hearing from the parish council and myself. I will continue to oppose with the parish council any speculative applications outside of the local neighbourhood plan and I can't stress how important it now is to get that plan updated as soon as possible now it is just over 5 years old to protect the planning aspect within it.

Along with monthly long planning committee meetings and casework that comes in from residents in the parish. Judith attends both Licensing and /Member Conduct committee, which are both interesting and essential. She also deals with most of the housing enquiries and any bin issues.

We attend Full Council meetings in Pershore and these are a list of motions passed Motions passed by Wychavon DC May 2024 to April 2025

1. Creation of staff capacity for Domestic Abuse Coordinator and funding support for the Dawn project
2. Creation of a banking hub for Droitwich.
3. Continue to seek to influence all aspects of government planning policy to include a proper consideration of/provision for infrastructure needed eg Road, active travel, drainage, sewage, schools, GPs, community facilities
4. Lobby government to increase Property Flood Resilience grant
5. Lobby government to halt changes to Winter Fuel payments eligibility. And work to ensure maximum uptake of Pension Credit.
6. Lobby the Secretary of State for Housing and Communities to amend law so that the "Lest we forget " flag can be flown.
7. Motion to reject all forms of racism and condemn any type of antisemitic or Islamophobic abuse in the UK

Our casework which is made up of requests, enquiries and concerns from local residents within our ward covers a variety of areas such as housing concerns, planning issues support with applications or concerns with them, dealing with refuse collection and public bin issues, speeding and road safety where we work with both the police and local highway authority, conservation area protection, and involvement with community projects such as tree planting, litter picking and celebratory events

We're always present and available to talk in person, be emailed or call."

c) South Worcestershire Policing Team

The Chair welcomed PC Trowman and asked if he would like to address the council and members of the public. PC Ben Trowman provided a verbal update on crime statistics for Honeybourne. However, he departed immediately following his presentation, which prevented

residents and councillors from raising questions or expressing any concerns they may have had.

d) St. Ecgwins Church Fabric Team

The Chair welcomed Mrs Paula Staples and asked if she would like to address council and members of the public.

“We started the year with no Team Vicar, limited funds and a long list of repair work that needed to be done on the church.

We have been well-supported by Rev Craig Bishop from Campden who provides regular contributions to the Village News and who performed the village Christmas Tree Light switch on. We are grateful to all who come to Honeybourne to lead services for us. Everyone is always made welcome at church.



Our services for special events (Christmas, Easter, Remembrance) were all well attended, with the Christingle and Crib Services proving popular with youngsters in the village. We were grateful for the excellent participation at the Carol Service at the Village Hall, with readers representing the school and our various village groups.

It has been heartening to welcome families to church for several baptisms recently. Our Children and Youth Team host RE lessons at the school and run Experience Easter and Experience Church sessions for the school children at St Ecgwin's. We are limited with the fundraising we can do, but with the help of the Fabric Team, we held a popular Plant Sale and an enjoyable music evening with 'Give Peace a Chance'. We also engaged with village crafters who came along to produce and assemble a stunning 'swoosh' of poppies from the church porch to the War Memorial for Remembrance.

The Fabric Team continued to meet fortnightly to work with contractors as well as completing various tasks themselves to work through the repairs job list -under the direction of our architect and Diocese.

We have started an initiative to become a recognised Eco Church, looking at our carbon footprint and how we can engage more with nature.

We recognize that people of different faiths (or none) may wish to donate to conserve the mediaeval building, so in August 2024 we created a non-religious charity, the Friends of St Ecgwin's Church who are busy raising funds and applying for grants to support the repair projects. We thank the Parish Council for their kind support for the Friends in the form of a grant.

Each month in the Village News, we publish times of services, a clergy article as well as a spotlight on various features of the church.

Although we ended the year without a Team Vicar, the post is being re-advertised in May. We still have limited funds, but we are actively applying for grants and we have completed a number of jobs from the list.

We have hope for a great future and we would love you to be part of it.”

e) Honeybourne Village News

The Chair welcomed Mrs Judith Mellor and asked if she would like to address the council and members of the public. Mrs Mellor presented her report, highlighting the following:

- The magazine is in its fifth year of being run by a team of five volunteers who all live in Honeybourne. Between us, we write the content, seek and invoice advertisers, do the layout, arrange printing, and handle a large part of the distribution to every home in Honeybourne.
- Our team meets regularly to discuss ideas for content and to review our finances.
- We strive to find a balance between the necessary advertisements that provide our income and interesting content.
- We aim to involve our readers by asking them for ideas for content and by inviting them to join the team. We plan to conduct a survey again this year and act on all feedback that we receive.
- We are very grateful for the support the Parish Council has given to date.

f) Honeybourne Village Hall Trustee.

The Chair of the Village Hall Trustees was not available to attend the Annual Parish Meeting but sent his apologies. His report was read out by Mr Jobes, who is another member of the board of trustees.

Report :

“As chairman of the trustees’, it gives me great pleasure to present the annual report for Honeybourne Village Hall.

This past year has been one of steady progress, renewed community engagement, and forward-looking planning. As trustees, our duty is to safeguard the future of the Village Hall, ensuring it remains a welcoming, inclusive, and functional space for all members of the local community.

We’re pleased to report that bookings over the year increased in comparison to previous years. Regular user groups continue to thrive, and we’ve also welcomed new groups.

The hall hosted several key community events this year, all of which were well-attended and widely appreciated. I am sure many of you will have attended these events. These gatherings continue to remind us how vital the hall is as a social and cultural hub.

I’m happy to report that the Village Hall remains in a stable financial position. We ended the year with a modest surplus, which allows us to maintain a reserve for future capital projects and unexpected repairs. We are conscious of the increasing costs of utilities and general maintenance, and we remain committed to prudent financial management while keeping hall hire rates fair and accessible.

Looking ahead, the trustees are exploring a refresh of our online presence to improve bookings and communication with the local community. We also hope to strengthen our volunteer base and would encourage anyone interested in helping with events, maintenance, or administration to get in touch.

On behalf of the Trustees, I would like to extend sincere thanks to all who have support the Village Hall, our user groups, volunteers, and local authorities. Their time, effort, and generosity are what keep this vital resource running. A special thanks go to our local Parish Council, and to each trustee for their hard work throughout the year.

Let us all continue to work together to ensure the Village Hall remains at the heart of our community for many years to come.

Tim Wild”

Chairman of Trustees

Honeybourne Village Hall

5th May 2025.

g) Friends of Honeybourne Station

The Chair welcomed Mrs Lucia Cuttle and asked if she would like to address the council and members of the public. Mrs Cuttle presented her report, "Over the past 12 months the Friends of Honeybourne Station, an inaugural group of 7 volunteers, have made good progress on establishing the foundations to enable this group to flourish. This includes creating a constitution, appointing committee chair, treasurer, secretary roles, opening a bank account, completing the GWR required Health & Safety training and developing a 12-month plan in conjunction with GWR to enable fund raising. We have 2 key projects to deliver in the next 12 months:

1. Improve the aesthetics of the station
2. Deliver a Honeybourne Heritage Rail Tales & Trails project, as part of the Nationwide Railway 200 celebrations.

The first project will see the installation of 5 planters at the station, which are currently being built in the workshop at HMP Long Lartin; We have a water butt installed and have an agreement with Pebworth Fire station to top up as required. We will be installing a storage unit with equipment that will help to keep the station tidy with regular litter picks. This is in addition to the work already in place by the GWR approved suppliers. In the autumn we will plant spring bulbs along the embankment leading up to the station and will plant seasonal displays in the new planters. We will use one of the existing noticeboards to communicate details of the Friends of Honeybourne station with information on our projects and how to get involved as a volunteer. You may have noticed also that the Station Sign is now much cleaner thanks to this group! We have raised over £4,000 in grants from Honeybourne Parish Council, Worcestershire County Council and GWR to support this effort. We will be exploring additional funding sources over the next 12 months to ensure we can continue to refresh the station with attractive plants, that are bee and wildlife friendly. We welcome donations from local businesses interested in sponsoring one of the planters.

Last week we received the fantastic news that our proposal for a GWR funded Heritage project was successful. This means we will be receiving £10,000 to deliver a creative project to bring Honeybourne's history with the railway back to life, celebrating its rich heritage and influence on our community.

This funding will enable the creation of a Heritage Trail from the station, complemented with heritage story boards to be installed at the station, so that visitors to the village and the wider Honeybourne community can enjoy learning about the history of the railways whilst benefiting from an outdoor walk activity, enriching their mental and physical wellbeing. The proposed points of interest along the Heritage Trail will include the Railway Club, the Railway houses along Stratford Road, Honeybourne Railway workers gravestones at St Egwin's Church, and the start of the old railway line connecting Broadway and onwards to Cheltenham Races.

The Honeybourne Heritage Rail Tales and Trails will enrich the Nationwide Railway 200 celebrations and can be enjoyed more widely through national, regional and local publicity, bringing new visitors to the village and passengers to the railways.

We welcome new volunteers to the group and are particularly keen to hear from individuals who can add content or is keen to be involved with the Heritage project. Anyone interested in being part of the Friends of Honeybourne Station should email the parish clerk (clerk@honeybourne-pc.gov.uk) or luciacuttle@yahoo.com"

h) Community Speed Watch (CSW)

The Chair welcomed Cllr C Clear the leader of CSW and asked if he would like to present his report to Council and members of the public.

Cllr Clear gave a verbal report on the current status;

- The Community Speed Watch initiative is currently in a preparatory phase, with operations temporarily suspended pending completion of essential administrative requirements.

Key Issues

- **Police Vetting Delays:** The Community Speed Watch leader has reported ongoing delays in the police vetting process for volunteer members. A backlog within the police system is preventing the timely completion of required background checks for several volunteers.
- **Training Requirements:** All volunteers, including the group leader, must complete mandatory training with the West Mercia Community Speed Watch coordinator before any speed monitoring activities can commence. This training session cannot be scheduled until all members have successfully completed the vetting process.
- **Operational Impact:** The group remains unable to conduct any Community Speed Watch activities due to these outstanding requirements. Both police vetting and formal training are prerequisites for operational approval.

The Community Speed Watch leader will coordinate with the West Mercia Community Speed Watch coordinator to arrange the required training session once all volunteers vetting has been completed by the police.

i) Honeybourne Hawks Football Club

The Chair of Honeybourne Hawks FC gave his apologies for being unable to attend the Annual Parish Meeting. A report was submitted to the Parish Council prior to the meeting, which was presented by Councillor A. Attridge.

Honeybourne Hawks FC Report :

“Honeybourne Hawks go into next season moving from U10s to U11s in the Ambassador League. Next season will be our 6th season as a team.

There will be significant changes as we move from 7-a-side to 9-a-side with higher regulation in matches. The funding we have received, with thanks to the Parish Council, will enable us to buy bigger goals, more kit for increased squad sizes and bigger footballs. All of these items are essential to comply with FA league rules.

We are currently collecting player registration forms from parents as registration has to be completed with minimum squad sizes by 30th June. We will most likely have at least 2 new players for next season.

The season, as usual, will start in September. In the meantime, we will take part in 2 tournaments in the summer in Crowle and Alcester, and train, on occasion, on a Saturday morning.

Last season we were promoted to Pool 1 after getting to Christmas without losing a game in the league. The second half was more of a struggle for our mixed ability team in the higher pool, but we picked up respectable wins against the likes of Bredon, West Worcester and Alcester Town.

We look forward to the season ahead.”

k) Over 60's Wednesday Club Honeybourne

The Treasurer of the Wednesday Club gave her apologies due to last-minute illness and was unable to attend.

l) Honeybourne Village Fete

The Chair welcomed Mr Mike Wiggett- Jones and asked if he would like to present his report to the Council and members of the public.

“Since last year’s parish meeting we completed the planning and implementation of the second village fete.

Thankfully we were blessed with much better weather and thankfully we were widely supported by the community.

We had a number of local business supporters and we are very thankful for their enabling us to get the project off the ground.

Following the success of last year’s event plans are well underway for this years fete to be held on 19th July.

We have confirmed some attendees and have completed the licensing necessary for the event to go ahead.

We are in the hugely fortunate position thanks to the incredible support from the village that we are able to proceed with this years event without it being necessary to bring in public funds from the Parish council. We have begun finalising the local business sponsors for this years event and would like to thank everyone who has been able to support us as well as the Parish council for their ongoing support.

We have also received another grant from the divisional fund which has secured temporary toilet facilities for the event.

We are always looking to keep the village up to date and will continue to place information in the village magazine, as well as keeping people up to date using our social media channels.

As with all community groups we are always looking for more volunteers to help with the organisation and running of the event as we are a small group of increasingly busy members of the community.

As a not for profit organisation, hopefully with a little good fortune from the weather gods this year we will be able to continue to build on our initial financial base to ensure the future of the event without the need to return to request council support. We also hope to be able to build towards being able to increasingly donate any excess funds to charitable causes.

We were able to give some small donations to our volunteer partners last year including the local adventure scout group and the WI. We were also able to work alongside the local Lions club.

We are thrilled to be able to report that we will be working with more local groups this year and will be working alongside, as well as supporting the Friends of Honeybourne school.

As we have not found it necessary to apply for parish council funding this year, I have attached a copy of our most recent financial report to be attached to the minutes of this meeting.”

m) Honeybourne Public Right of Way Working Group (PROW)

The Chair welcomed Cllr T Askew, leader of the PROW and asked if he would like to present his report to the Council and members of the public.

PROW access

- Continue to tidy PROWs for access
- Members of the group have now completed training on safe use of strimmers and hedge cutters
- Installed footbridge to path adjacent to Maple Close
- Installed metal gate – access to the Leys Playing Field.
- Installed way markers to PROW’s on Weston Road and Station Road
- Took part in Keep Britain Tidy community Litter pick.

Future Work

We need to work closely with WCC for materials and consent to carry out work, particularly with Fiona Argyle, the footpath officer. However, the WCC PRoW team is currently experiencing challenging times with their priorities and resources.

n) Honeybourne Parish Council Christmas Event Working Group

The Chair of the Christmas Working Group has taken a leave of absence due to personal reasons. Cllr B Dubb, the other member of the working group, presented his report to update the Council and members of the public on last year's Christmas event hosted by the Parish Council.

The Annual Christmas Tree Light Switch On event was successfully held on 29th November 2024. This beloved community tradition, organised by the Parish Council for many years, officially marked the beginning of the holiday season for local residents. The event featured a live band creating a festive atmosphere, fairground rides popular with families, Santa Claus walking around greeting children and distributing chocolates, and a children's entertainer dressed as an elf who delighted younger attendees by creating balloon animals and objects like swords. Additionally, the event included a craft fair and a Christmas raffle with prizes donated by local businesses. The weather conditions were favourable, contributing to strong attendance and an enjoyable atmosphere throughout.

The highlight of the evening was the Christmas tree lighting ceremony. Reverend Craig from the local church blessed the Christmas tree, followed by our MP Nigel Huddleston officially switching on the lights. This ceremonial moment brought the community together and set a festive tone for the upcoming holiday season.

A Christmas raffle was held featuring prizes generously donated by local businesses. Residents were particularly pleased with the high-quality prizes, which included generous vouchers for retail outlets and Christmas food hampers. The raffle added extra excitement to the event and showcased the strong support from local businesses for this community celebration.

The craft fair proved to be a significant attraction, with traders reporting brisk business throughout the event. Local residents and visitors browsed and purchased unique Christmas gifts, supporting local artisans and businesses. The variety of handcrafted items available gave shoppers excellent options for distinctive holiday presents.

Food and drink vendors experienced steady business throughout the event. The availability of refreshments enhanced the visitor experience and encouraged people to stay longer, creating a convivial community atmosphere.

The Annual Christmas Tree Light Switch On event continues to be a cherished community tradition that successfully brings residents together to celebrate the beginning of the holiday season. The combination of ceremonial aspects, entertainment, shopping opportunities, and refreshments created a well-rounded experience for attendees of all ages. The Parish Council's continued organisation of this event demonstrates its commitment to fostering community spirit and creating memorable experiences for residents.

o. Honeybees WI

The Chair welcomed Mrs Alison Baumber, secretary of Honeybees WI and asked if she would like to present her report to the Council and members of the public.

“Thank you for inviting us to your Annual Meeting and big thank you from our members for awarding the Grant. A bit about the WI;

The WI in the UK was formed in 1915 to support the production of food during the First World War hence the “Jam and Jerusalem” image.

It has now grown to be the largest voluntary organization in the UK with 180,000 members, and approximately 5,500 WIs. It is open to all adult women to Support, Connect and Empower by providing education opportunities, building new skills, to take part in a wide variety of activities, and campaign on issues important to them and their community. Most importantly it is a warm social setting where friendships are made.

Each year the WI nationally, votes for a “Resolution” to take forward and lobby Parliament. This year it is “Bystanders can be Lifesavers”
The WI framework breaks down into County and local groups and Honeybees is part of the Worcestershire Federation and the Evesham Group. This enables us to meet and build relationships with our local WIs. We meet and take part in Skittles, social meetings and invite other WIs to our monthly meeting.”

The Chair welcomed recently retired County Councillor Alastair Adams and invited him to address members of the Council and the public.

“Dear All

This is my last report to you as County Councillor. I am standing down after 12 years of service. It has been a pleasure working with so many of you over the years.



Here are a few examples of what has been achieved in those 12 years:-

Broadband

When I first stood for election Honeybourne had terribly slow Broadband – most of us were getting 2-4 Mbps – and my first election promise was to improve Broadband. With the County Council’s help and funding, we managed to get Superfast Broadband (minimum 30Mbps) by installing fibre to the cabinet in Honeybourne which gave speeds up to 10 times faster. But although residents in the village were getting Superfast, those on the outskirts in were still struggling with low speeds. Again, with the help and funding from County Council, Gigafast overhead cabling was installed to Broad Marston and Ullington giving these houses up to 100Mbps. And the latest news is BT/Openreach have plans to bring Gigafast to the whole of the area in the next 3 years, including Stratford Rd/Buckle St.

Fighting unwanted planning

We fought the planning application on Sheep Sales field (now David Wilson) and won at Planning Committee. The same happened at Station Rd (Now Bovis Site). Unfortunately both developers went to the Planning Inspector and won at Appeal. However, we did then manage to negotiate with the developers to get better designed houses built that did mirror the style of other houses in the village , and also the village received substantial section 106 money that helped buy the recreational ground and build the sports facilities.

New village hall

We talked with Taylor Wimpey when they wanted to build a new development of 75 houses in Honeybourne to see if they would also build us a new village hall. Although they would not build one, they did give the land free of charge for the new village hall, and they also agreed to install all the services to the hall free. The village hall committee then sold the old village hall and with the proceeds and some wonderful grants the new village hall was built costing over £1million. A fantastic asset and legacy for the residents which will be used for many years as the centre of the village.

Roads and Pavements & kerbs

One of the first issues when I was first elected was Bretforton Rd which was in a horrendous state. After getting the Cabinet member for Highways to attend a Parish Council meeting, and after a lot of chasing, this road was patched, kerbed in places and resurfaced. New pavements have been laid or patched in Stratford Rd, High Street, Harvard Avenue, Westbourne and Dudley Rd. Most of the roads have been either patched, re-surfaced or surfaced dressed, and potholes when they do occur have been repaired promptly.

Speeding

Working with Safer Road Partnerships, mobile speed camera vans now visit the wider area to enforce the speed limits. Also the 30mph speed limits have been extended along Weston Rd, Stratford Rd and Bretforton Rd, and traffic lights fitted on Buckle Street at the entrance to the village. Also entrance gates and VAS (vehicle activated signs) have been installed on the Weston Rd. The Highways engineers have also installed improved signage and some traffic calming measures such as dragon teeth on some entrances. All these have helped reduce speeding.

Zebra Crossing

A new Zebra crossing was installed last year making it safer for pedestrians to cross the Station Rd. Also helps to reduce speeding

New Flashing School Warning lights installed last year

New School warning lights were installed in the High Street to warn drivers of children going to and from school

Drainage & Flooding

Flooding was a frequent event in our area and I have spent considerable time in the last 12 years trying to improve the situation. The biggest success was working with the farmer Ted Mansfield to build a huge upstream flood plain that holds back water coming into the village. This has stopped the regular flooding we experienced several times a year by the Gate Inn – sometimes 3 foot deep. A HUGE “Thank You” to the farmer and local resident, Ted Mansfield who has also written in his will that this huge flood plain must be maintained and kept for the benefit of the village forever.

Also a lot of drainage works has occurred under the Honeybourne bridges on Stratford Rd to try and prevent the deep flood waters that caused 10’s of cars to be written off over the last few years.

PROW Volunteers &

I am a great believer on communities helping themselves, and I have supported the forming of the Honeybourne PROW volunteers that keep the public rights of ways around the village clear and in good condition. It is a never ending task, and I thank everyone one of those volunteers.

Friends of Honeybourne Station

Likewise I have supported the formation of the Friends of Honeybourne Railway Station to keep our railway station looking beautiful and well kept. The station is the first thing visitors coming to our village on the train see, and we want to make them feel “WOW, what a great village”! . First impressions count. So I am immensely pleased to see Honeybourne now has a group of volunteers that help achieve this, once again a HUGE thank you to these volunteers.

Honeybourne Railway Station Parking

Simply there is not enough parking at the station, so over 7 years ago, I persuaded Wychavon to buy some land opposite the station to build a 280 car park. The land was bought, the chicken sheds removed, and the plans drawn up and the money allocated. BUT there was a problem as Great Western Railway wanted £4million to connect some steps to their existing

pedestrian bridge. After 7 years of fighting with GWR to see commonsense, I do see light at the end of the tunnel, and I am hopeful this car park will be built in the near future.

Adopted Roads

Stephenson Way estate was built over 30 years ago and the roads, pavements and sewers are not yet adopted. I have been fighting for the last 12 years to get them adopted, and I do believe the major hurdles have not been overcome, and only last week John Hobbs head of Highways was in discussion with Richard Beech of Taylor Wimpey to agree a commutable sum towards the maintenance of the roads and pavements which hopefully will resolve this issue.

Honeybourne School – Academy and a Primary School

I was really pleased to see Honeybourne school become a Primary School during my time as a County Councillor. I supported them through what was a difficult time when the idea was first suggested by the Head teacher. Worcestershire is one of the few councils that still has some 3-tier schools (First School, Middle School, and High School). When 95% of children in this country are taught in a 2-tier schools (Primary and secondary schools), it seems to me that Worcestershire should also adopt the same 2-tier system; it will bring our schools in line with our neighbouring Warwickshire and Gloucestershire schools and help our schools attract the best teachers.

Divisional Fund

As a County Councillor I have a small amount of money each year to help community groups and Honeybourne has benefitted from this fund; here are few examples;

Honeybourne Bowls Club – new mat and bowls

Old and New Village Hall – various including new tables

Honeybourne Fete Park – flags & signage

Honeybourne School – books

Honeybourne PROW volunteers – tools and some kissing gates

County Council organisation

I was the chairman of Environment Overview & Scrutiny, and the committee looked at ways to improve the efficiency of the council and there were several major recommendations that have been adopted. Here are some behind the scenes improvements; 1. the highway drainage map that is on the WCC website which helps report blocked highways drains, 2. the frequency of gullies cleansing, 3. the ways the public can report issues with the highways network and receive better feedback, 4. improved flood alleviation schemes and traffic calming, and 5. faster building of highways infrastructure like roundabouts, zebra crossings and junctions under section 278.

So a lot has happened, but it is time to hand over the baton to a new County Councillor. It has been a pleasure working with so many of you over the 12 years.

DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER / LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING

On 16th December 2024 the Labour Government published their Devolution White Paper, alongside their National Planning Policy Framework changes. This will be the biggest change to local government and democracy we have seen in our life time.

The elections on 1st May elected the county councillors that will ultimately dissolve the County Council and design the new unitary body.

From my prospective, I think abolishing the county council and the 6 District councils is crazy especially when you consider what else is going on in the world; why throw something else into to chaos? However, I wish them the best.

Update on flood alleviation work

1. Gullies under Honeybourne Bridges - Further jetting has been organised to clear outflow pipes to further improve the situation. Still awaiting confirmation this has been completed
2. Now the dry weather is here the bund in farmers field by the Honeybourne bridges can be extended and completed.

3. Tom Furness has agreed to fit a wide ACO drain at the bottom of Grove Farm drive to prevent run off from the farm onto Stratford Rd which will also help prevent flooding under the bridges.

Highways

1. Also can I remind everyone to try and keep the road gullies outside their houses free of debris so the drains work effectively. Simply remove any leaves or mud with a brush or spade or even with your wellie! By doing this one minute task, it will help minimise road flooding. Thank you.
2. Also can I remind the village lengthsman to spray weed kill on the weeds and grass growing along the pavements and kerbs around the village.

As always, if you have any issues on any Highways matters, please report it on the WCC website http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/homepage/98/report_it

Also remember a photo of the Highways problem is as good as “a thousand words” so always take a photo where possible.

County Council Divisional Fund

The following grants have been paid in 2024/25:-

1. Pebworth School – Grant for some more books
2. Honeybourne Hawks Football Club – new line marker
3. Offenham Rovers FC – Grant for new nets
4. Honeybourne Village Hall – grant requested for some new tables
5. Offenham Village Hall – Sound-proofing panels
6. Pebworth Village Hall – grant for new signage/flags
7. Littletons Tennis Club – grant towards the Pickleball Courts
8. Honeybourne News – grant for trolleys to deliver village newsletter to all houses
9. Honeybourne School – grant for help to use of the village hall for their Christmas play
10. Littletons Tennis Club – grant for Pickleball bats and paint for new courts
11. Cleeve Prior Heritage Trust – grant for some more volunteers’ tools
12. Cleeve Prior Memorial Hall – grant for a new projector screen
13. St Peter’s Church – grant towards the replacement of a notice board
14. Coffee on the Close – grant requested for help with the coach cost
15. Broad Marston – grant towards a defibrillator
16. Littletons Football Club – new goal posts & nets
17. Badsey Belles WI – new branded clothing
18. Friends of Honeybourne Railway Station – tools and new notice board
19. Pebworth in Bloom – New mower
20. Pebworth Rural Cinema/Village Hall – new fridge

So farewell as your County Councillor, but I will see you around the village and in the pub!

Your new County Councillor is Hannah Robson, and her contact details are

hannah.robson@wychavon.net

Tel 07730 262031

County Councillor Hannah Robson mentioned that she will undergo a handover process with Alastair Adams to ensure continuity of service.

Representatives from Downing gave a verbal presentation of their proposal for a solar farm development at Shinehill, Honeybourne. The Chair advised the Downing representative that members of the Parish Council will not be making any comment on their presentation and will only comment on the planning application when received from Wychavon District Council.

Open Forum

Following the reports presented by various groups and the Parish Council, the Chair invited questions from members of the public.

A resident raised concerns about potholes at Weston Sub Edge. The Chair advised the resident that Weston Sub-Edge falls under Gloucestershire County Council and she would need to report any concerns to them.

The resident also raised concerns about an unofficial footpath that has been created between Owl Homes estate and the Bovis estate. She explained to the Council that when she purchased her property, she was led to believe that the two estates would be joined together with a footpath. She also raised concerns that Owl Homes have now left their site and the communal grounds on her estate have not been maintained, requiring residents to cut the grass in the communal areas themselves.

A Councillor responded that the unofficial footpath was created by walkers and was never an official footpath. The Chair advised the resident that the Parish Council has no remit over private land and if she has concerns, all residents on her estate need to write directly to Owl Homes to address their concerns.

The attendees at the meeting asked Downing when the consultation would be taking place in Honeybourne regarding the proposed Shinehill Solar Farm. The representative from Downing advised that the consultation will be taking place at the Village Hall on 28th May 2025 from 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm.

As there were no other questions, the Chair concluded the meeting at 19:30.

Honeybourne Parish Council

Chairman's Annual Report 2025/2026

Presented to the Annual Parish Meeting — 12 May 2026

Good evening, everyone and welcome to our Annual Parish Meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to update you on what the Parish Council has been doing over the past twelve months. It is also an opportunity for voluntary organisations within the village to report on their own activities.

It has been another active and rewarding year for Honeybourne Parish Council, made possible by the continued support and involvement of our community. It is a pleasure to report on the range of projects, improvements and initiatives delivered this year on behalf of residents.

It has been a year rich in events that have brought the community together, and I was privileged to represent the parish at a number of them.

2025 marked the 80th anniversary of VE Day, which was commemorated with a memorable community event featuring a Silver Band concert and poetry readings by local schoolchildren — a fitting and moving tribute that brought generations together in remembrance and celebration.

In July, I was delighted to officially open the Village Fete, which the volunteers once again organised beautifully. Fortunately, the weather this year was on our side, the day included a popular dog show and activities for all ages. My thanks go to every volunteer who put in so much work to make it such an enjoyable and successful day and look forward to this year's Fete.

During November, I attended the Remembrance Service at St Ecgwin's Church and laid a wreath at the War Memorial on behalf of the Parish Council. I was also honoured to represent Honeybourne in Poppies to Paddington, the Armistice Day initiative run by Great Western Railway in partnership with The Veterans Charity. The initiative began during the Covid pandemic so that communities and veterans unable to attend traditional remembrance ceremonies could still take part in a meaningful act of remembrance. It proved so popular that GWR continued it and it has now become a feature in the calendar each November. Communities along the GWR network are invited to place poppy wreaths on early morning services on Armistice Day, which are then carried to the War Memorial at London Paddington Station in time for the 11am service of reflection. Honeybourne has been pleased to take part for the past three years and, invited by GWR, I presented our parish wreath at Honeybourne Station, along with a number of supportive Honeybourne residents as the train passed through, from where it continued its journey to Paddington.

The Christmas Lights Switch-On on 28 November was once again a highlight of the village calendar and was very well attended. A full report on the Christmas events is being provided separately by the Christmas Working Group.

This year the Parish Council was delighted to recognise the exceptional service of two members of our Royal Mail team. Both Sarah Layton and Andy Clear have each dedicated 25 years of service to Honeybourne — a combined 50 years of reliable mail delivery to our community. Through all weathers, they have been familiar and cheerful presences in the village. It was a pleasure to present them with certificates of recognition and letters of appreciation on behalf of the Council and all residents.

The Council is pleased to support residents' participation in the Wychavon Parish Games by funding entry fees for anyone wishing to compete throughout the year.

Huge congratulations to Honeybourne's darts team, who won the Wychavon Parish Games darts competition in October! Our five-strong team secured first place and maximum points — a wonderful achievement and a great moment for the whole parish.

The Friends of Honeybourne Station volunteers continue their dedicated work to make our station a welcoming gateway to the village. This year the volunteers installed planters on the platforms, bringing colour and interest for passengers and visitors through the seasons ahead and I am aware more projects

are in progress, so look out for more changes coming. Their efforts are greatly appreciated by the Council and the whole community.

The Council is pleased to report that Vice Chair Cllr Bal Dubb, along with Sue Henson, Mandy Wigget-Jones and Jaime Owen, successfully completed wellbeing training through Wychavon District Council and were awarded certificates for their achievement. This reflects our community's commitment to health, wellbeing and engagement with district-wide initiatives.

The Parish Council responds to residents' concerns about vehicle speeds in the village. Concerns raised by residents on Weston Road led the Council to arrange with Worcestershire County Council Highways for a data box to be installed to collect speed data. On the basis of that data, Worcestershire County Council Highways coordinated with West Mercia Police, which has resulted in the mobile speed enforcement van attending in the area on a periodic basis.

The Council is also pleased to report that a number of residents came forward to volunteer for the Community Speed Watch scheme. The volunteers have completed their training and vetting with West Mercia Police and the team will be out in the village during the summer months, monitoring speeds on approved roads. This is a real community effort and the Council is grateful to everyone who has given their time to take part. The Council will continue to work with the relevant authorities on road safety matters affecting the parish.

The growth in rail usage at Honeybourne has created significant parking pressures in the surrounding area, with commuter vehicles increasingly parking on residential roads, including the main access road into the Bovis development, causing safety concerns and frustration for local residents.

The Parish Council has been actively pursuing this matter with Wychavon District Council on behalf of the community, and I have been in regular correspondence with Wychavon to progress the issue. Wychavon has been working with Network Rail to explore options for a new car park with safe pedestrian access to the station. A level crossing option was assessed but ruled out by Network Rail on safety grounds. A bridge over the railway line is now being explored and Wychavon's Executive Board agreed in April 2026 to consider funding a feasibility study at their June meeting.

The Council is mindful that the Local Government Reorganisation timetable may have an impact on the funding decision and will continue to press this with Wychavon and the successor authority to ensure it is not lost in the transition. Residents can be assured this remains a priority for the Council.

A resident on Stephenson Way raised concerns about the station car park lighting remaining on throughout the night. The Parish Council wrote formally to GWR requesting investigation and received a detailed response from GWR's Head of Public Affairs.

GWR confirmed that station lighting is controlled by digital lux sensors responding to ambient light levels, rather than a fixed timer. Platform 2 lighting is reduced by over 50% during night-time hours and Platform 1 and car park lighting to 75%. In January 2026, GWR installed lighting shields on 15 lighting columns, including along the approach road, within the car park and on the rear of Platform 1 lights facing the car park. GWR conducted a further review and confirmed that no additional measures are currently required, with ongoing monitoring in place. The Council will continue to monitor the position on behalf of residents.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan Review continues to be one of the most significant pieces of work the Council undertakes on behalf of residents. A Neighbourhood Plan is a positive planning tool — not a mechanism to block housing, but to ensure that any future development in the parish is planned positively, in the right locations, and genuinely meets the needs of our community.

Residents may be aware that the Government has introduced mandatory housing targets for local councils through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - December 2024), with a national ambition to deliver 1.5 million new homes over this Parliament. This makes it more important than ever that Honeybourne has a robust and up-to-date Neighbourhood Plan. A strong plan gives the community a real

voice in shaping where and how any development takes place, rather than leaving those decisions entirely to national planning policy, but I emphasise again it does not block housing.

A community survey was carried out during the year and a good number of responses were received. I would like to thank every resident who took the time to complete the survey — your responses have been carefully analysed and will be central to writing the policies that form the revised plan. My thanks also go to the members of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group, who give their time voluntarily to oversee this complex and important work.

The South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) was formally adopted in March 2026 and the Council is working with its planning consultants to ensure the revised Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the SWDPR and consistent with the NPPF (December 2024), so that our plan is robust and up to date. Further community engagement will take place as the review progresses and I encourage all residents to stay involved — your views matter and will help shape the future of Honeybourne.

The Council was successful in securing a grant from Wychavon District Council to help fund this important work.

The Council considered a number of planning applications during the year, covering domestic extensions, commercial proposals and larger development applications, ensuring that the views of the parish are represented to the relevant planning authorities. It is important to note that the Parish Council is only a consultee on planning applications. We may make observations on applications and highlight where proposals conflict with our Neighbourhood Development Plan, but all decisions rest with Wychavon District Council. The Parish Council has no power to approve or refuse planning applications.

Bretforton Road, Honeybourne — Reserved Matters (W/26/00521/RM)

This site has a significant planning history. The Council objected to an earlier full planning application for residential development at this location, engaging a professional planning consultant to prepare a formal objection. The full application was refused at Wychavon District Council's Planning Committee. The applicant appealed that decision. At the same time, the applicant submitted an outline planning application (W/25/01580/OUT), to which the Council also objected. The outline application was approved by Wychavon District Council on 10 November 2025, at which point the appeal on the full application was withdrawn. The Council is now limited to commenting on the reserved matters — the detailed design, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.

The Council submitted a formal objection to the reserved matters application, again with professional planning consultant support, raising concerns that included: the level of bungalow provision, which falls significantly below the 20% required by Neighbourhood Plan Policy H3; the omission of the community orchard committed to at outline stage and which would have reflected Honeybourne's historic orchard character; insufficient street tree provision; potential amenity and privacy impacts on the neighbouring property at No. 26 Bretforton Road; and the absence of a pedestrian and cycle connection to the public footpath network. The Council has asked to be kept informed of the determination of the application.

Arrow Valley Solar Farm — Scoping Consultation (EN0110033)

The Council received a statutory consultation from the Planning Inspectorate, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, in respect of the scoping process for the Arrow Valley Solar Farm — a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008. Residents should be reassured that the proposed solar panel sites are located in south Warwickshire and east Worcestershire, in the area of Bidford, Wixford, Salford Priors and Cleeve Prior — none of the proposed sites are within Honeybourne parish, and the developer has confirmed that no final decisions have yet been made about the precise location of any infrastructure within those areas.

The Council was consulted because of the potential impact of construction traffic on rural roads passing through or near the parish, and because the underground cable route linking the solar sites to the national grid at Feckenham substation may pass through the wider area. The Council submitted a detailed response in April 2026, requesting that the Environmental Statement address construction traffic impacts — particularly in light of cumulative development at Meon Vale and Long Marston Airfield Garden Village — together with agricultural land classification, landscape and visual impact, ecology, heritage assets, public

rights of way, and the impact on local tourism. The Council has reserved the right to make further representations once a full application is submitted.

Meon Vale — Removal of Planning Condition (26/00622/VARY)

The Council was consulted as a neighbouring parish on an application by Miller Homes to remove a planning condition attached to the Meon Vale development at Long Marston in Warwickshire concerning offsite highway mitigation works on routes that pass through Honeybourne. The Council is considering this matter at its Full Council meeting this evening.

Street Naming — Texel Close

Wychavon District Council consults the Parish Council on street naming for new developments within the parish. The Council was consulted on the name for the new road at the Corner Farm Drive development and chose the name Texel Close. The Texel is a pedigree sheep breed long associated with farming in Honeybourne and the surrounding area, and the name was felt to reflect that local agricultural heritage. The name was ratified by the Full Council at the April 2026 meeting.

The formation of the new allotment association prompted the Council to put the governance of the allotments on a proper formal footing. A Data Sharing Agreement has been put in place with the association to ensure full compliance with data protection legislation, and a revised Plot Holder Licence has been prepared for adoption by the Full Council. The allotments continue to be well used and are a valued community asset. We thank all plot holders and association members for their continued support.

The Council invited contractors to submit quotations for the grounds maintenance contract. Following a robust assessment process in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, the contract was awarded to Limebridge Rural Services. Limebridge are the Council's contractor responsible for the maintenance and mowing of the open spaces for which the Council is responsible.

The Council continues to maintain the Sports Field, which it owns, and The Leys playing field, which it manages under a long lease from Worcestershire County Council — both are important community assets, well used by residents of all ages.

Phase 2 drainage works at the Sports Field were completed in April 2026, taking advantage of a period of good weather. These works were identified as necessary through a study of playing facilities commissioned by Wychavon District Council. Good drainage is essential to keeping the facility accessible during the winter months when poor conditions would otherwise render it unfit for use.

The Parish Council liaised with Worcestershire County Council's Public Rights of Way team regarding pedestrian access to The Leys and a new surface was installed on the relevant footpath, improving access particularly during the winter months.

The Parish Council is pleased to support local voluntary organisations through its grants programme. Grants were awarded during the year to:

- Honeybourne Village Hall
- Friends of St Ecgwin's Church
- South Worcestershire Citizens Advice Bureau
- Honeybourne Hawks U11s Football Club

Particular congratulations to Honeybourne Hawks U11s, who had an exceptional season in the Ambassador League, remaining unbeaten in all competitions and progressing to the semi-final of the league cup. A wonderful achievement for a club that has become one of the most respected in the local area.

The Council warmly welcomed one new co-opted councillor during the year — Judith Mellor — who has already made valuable contributions to the work of the Council.

We said farewell to Councillor Trevor Askew, who stepped down from the Council — though anyone who thinks Trevor is disappearing from village life would be very much mistaken. He continues to lead the

volunteer team maintaining our public rights of way, serves as Chair of the new allotment association, and chairs the Village News. The parish is fortunate to have someone who gives so much to the community.

The Parish Clerk achieved the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) in June 2025, the nationally recognised professional qualification for parish council clerks. This qualification opened an important door for the Council: the adoption of the General Power of Competence.

The General Power of Competence, conferred by the Localism Act 2011, gives eligible parish councils the power to do anything that an individual person may lawfully do, unless specifically prohibited by legislation. This is a significant step beyond the more limited statutory powers otherwise available and enables the Council to be more innovative, flexible and entrepreneurial in how it delivers services and benefits to the community, without needing to identify a specific legal authority for each activity. To be eligible, a council must have a CiLCA-qualified clerk and a sufficient proportion of elected members — both conditions Honeybourne Parish Council now satisfies.

The Council also intends to apply for the Local Council Award Scheme Silver Award, run by the National Association of Local Councils, which recognises councils that demonstrate high standards of governance, accountability and community engagement. Achieving Silver status will be an important milestone for the Council.

The Government has directed all two-tier council areas in England to reorganise into unitary authorities. In Worcestershire, two proposals were put forward for consideration: One Worcestershire, a single unitary council covering the entire county with a population of approximately 600,000 people; and Transforming Worcestershire, which proposed two unitary councils — a North Worcestershire Council and a South Worcestershire Council covering Malvern Hills, Worcester and Wychavon. Under the Transforming Worcestershire proposal, Honeybourne would fall within the South Worcestershire authority.

Cllr Richard Morris, Leader of Wychavon District Council, wrote to all parish and town councils urging support for the Transforming Worcestershire proposal, noting that it is the only model developed with genuine resident engagement. The Shape Worcestershire consultation showed that 62.5% of residents who expressed a preference supported the two-council model.

The Council considered the proposals carefully and submitted a formal response to the Government consultation on 11 March 2026, approved unanimously at the Full Council meeting on 10 March 2026. The Council strongly disagreed with the One Worcestershire proposal, on the grounds that a single authority covering 600,000 people would be too remote, too large and would leave small rural parishes like Honeybourne with little meaningful voice in decisions affecting their community. The Council strongly agreed with the Transforming Worcestershire proposal, which it considered would keep decision-making closer to residents, better reflect the geography and character of south Worcestershire, and strike the right balance between operational scale and local accountability.

The situation continues to evolve and the Government's decision on which model to adopt has not yet been announced. It is therefore not yet known whether Worcestershire will have one or two unitary councils. What is clear is that parish councils will continue to exist under either model. The Council will ensure that residents are kept informed as the position becomes clearer and will continue to represent the interests of Honeybourne throughout this process.

The Parish Council approved the budget and precept for 2025/26 at a Full Council meeting on 13 January 2026, after careful consideration of a detailed report prepared by the Clerk in her capacity as Responsible Financial Officer. The precept funds essential local services including grounds maintenance, footway lighting, upkeep of Council assets and the community grants programme.

The increase in the precept reflects a change in how services are funded. In recent years the Council used earmarked reserves and one-off funding, including S106 developer contributions, to help keep the precept lower. As those funds have now largely been applied and reserve levels have returned to more typical levels, a greater proportion of ongoing costs is met through the precept. The Council took a considered and responsible decision to ensure services can continue to be delivered sustainably. A summary of the approved budget and precept is available on the Parish Council website.

The Council is also pleased to confirm that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2024/25 received a clean opinion from the external auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP. Their review, completed in July 2025, confirmed that the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no matters came to their

attention giving cause for concern — a positive outcome reflecting the sound financial management and governance of the Council.

None of what the Council achieves would be possible without the dedication of my fellow councillors and the extraordinary contribution of the many volunteers and community groups who give their time and energy to making Honeybourne such a wonderful place to live. I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their commitment and hard work throughout the year.

My thanks go to all the voluntary organisations, groups and individuals who contribute so much to village life — whether organising events, maintaining our footpaths and open spaces, running community clubs and societies, or quietly supporting their neighbours. Your efforts, seen and unseen, make an enormous difference.

My thanks also go to County and District Cllr Hannah Robson and District Cllr Judith Ciotti for their support during the year.

I and my fellow councillors would like to thank the clerk for her commitment, hard work and for her support not just for the parish councillors, but the residents of Honeybourne, who often see the clerk as the first point of call for any council matter, be it Parish, District or County. More often than not, the matters raised are generally for the District to County to resolve, but the clerk always remains involved to ensure the residents issue is resolved.

Finally, As we look forward to the year ahead, the Parish Council remains committed to enhancing our village and continuing to serve the whole community.

Cllr Heath Jobes

Chairman- Honeybourne Parish Council

Report from Cllr Judith Ciotti, Wychavon District Council for Annual Parish Meeting

It's nice to see everyone this evening and to recognise once again the involvement and hard work of so many groups and individuals in making our villages excellent places and communities to live in.

It's also somewhat of a relief to still be here - a year ago we had little inkling about Local Government Reorganisation and the fact that District Councils were to be abolished in preparation for a Unitary authority or authorities by 2028!

However, we are now clear that this will happen but still unsure whether we will be given our first choice of 2 unitaries: one North and one South. The Council passed the proposal at a Special Council Meeting in September 2025. We know that there will be big changes starting in 2027 with the election of shadow unitary councillors for each ward who will be primed to take control in 2028. Planning for the reality of unitary councils continues.

Another significant milestone has been reached as in March 2026 we officially adopted the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review, long in the making. Crucially the councils can now show that they have enough land for housing over the next 5 years. A long-term plan for growth is now in place in order to deliver new homes, as well as key infrastructure and opportunities for job creation.

I'll run through (in no particular order) other achievements or proposals agreed over the year. Do please get in touch with myself or Hannah if you would like more detail.

- Wychavon have introduced a new licensing fee structure for Primate Keeping. Did you know that up to 5000 marmosets, tamarins and squirrel monkeys are kept in private homes in this country?
- Demand Response Travel (DRT): accessible minibuses now roam the district transporting the public around mainly rural areas where bus services are sparse. We are working on securing more bus stops. Meanwhile some scheduled bus services have increased frequency.
- The purchase of accommodation in Droitwich for young homeless people has been secured.
- Parish Councils now have the option to adopt Open Spaces on new developments under a new Section 106 clause.
- Solar panels will be installed on roofs at the Civic Centre in Pershore.
- Waste collection and Street Cleaning services are to be brought 'in house' when the current contract ends. The Food waste collection service has been postponed.
- The Wychavon element of your Council Tax has been frozen
- Four million pounds have been agreed for upgrades to the energy systems at Evesham and Pershore Leisure Centres in order to make them energy efficient and sustainable. The three leisure centres are a significant part of Wychavon's contribution to our area; they also account for 66% of the carbon footprint. In Droitwich the Lido and surrounding park have received grants for a significant upgrade and new facilities such as a pump track and skate park.
- Our village Parish Councils held their first Networking Event in 2025 which was very successful and another is planned in May.
- Funding (up to ten thousand pounds) is available upon application for Parish Councils to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- There was concern over a possible reduction or restriction in evening hours for Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). It's been confirmed that there will be no reduction and we have requested that the Chief Constable is flexible over restriction which can be seasonal or location dependent.
- The Council agreed to work with all schools in Wychavon to overcome barriers to walking or cycling to school in collaboration with the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans). In Droitwich a Bike Bus scheme has been trialed.
- I enjoyed taking part in Local Democracy Day in December where Upper School students come to the Civic Centre to learn about local government and engage with councillors and staff. Two of their presentations were on the subject of getting to and from the school premises safely and easily.
- The need for, but also the drawbacks of solar farms are very relevant in this area and the topic often arises in parish and district meetings. We asked the Climate and Nature panel to assess the use of solar panels on council car parks. But this is an expensive option and it may be quicker/more economical to put them on all council building roofs. New solar projects must improve site biodiversity by 10% and maintain this over 30 years.
- New funding Growth programmes from Wychavon - there are several so I will just mention the £1.74 million to be invested over the next 2 years focussing on strengthening the economies of Broadway, Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore as well as rural enterprises.
- Switch Together is the name to remember if you wish to take advantage of the newest Worcestershire offer to make solar panels and battery storage installation simpler and more affordable. Get in touch straightaway to register.

Finally, there are many ways of making your voice heard in your parish or district. There are also several online consultations if you delve into the Wychavon DC website - from Design Codes to Homelessness Strategies. I hope you'll agree that responding when and if you can is worthwhile and so much better than relying on social media!

Thank you for your support Judith Ciotti – District Cllr Honeybourne, Pebworth & The Littletons

Friends of St Egwins Church, Honeybourne

Report presented by Paula Staples

Annual Report

The Friends Charity was formed in August 2024 and raises funds exclusively for the conservation and repair of the fabric of the village's Grade 1 Listed mediaeval church to provide it with a sustainable future.

It is not a religious charity.

Last May, we were lucky enough to receive a grant from the Parish Council which we used to buy various cleaning solutions, paints and cloths.

We were also grateful to the Parish Council for the new sign from Stratford Road directing people to the church.

In addition to our group of four Trustees, we are very grateful to our multi-talented and willing Fabric Team of 7 Honeybourne residents – none of whom are churchgoing, who support the charity by working throughout the year to maintain the church.

As well as managing the routine maintenance in the year we:

- Had the broken slates on the chancel roof repaired
- Removed the rubber carpet underlay as directed by the architect
- Made and fitted a new curtain over the Priest's Door in the chancel and covered the draught excluder with matching material
- Cleaned the tapestry kneelers and created a photo inventory of them
- Cleared the debris left by birds in the tower
- Cleaned the tiled floor; deep cleaned and waxed the wooden pulpit, applied two coats of linseed oil to the oak doors

We want to church to be used and enjoyed by the community, so as well as our monthly features in the Village News, we organised three village events:

First, as part of the national Royal College of Organists 'Play the Organ in 2025', we had a two-part concert for the school and then the local community.

In May, we ran a well-attended fundraising Plant Sale

Later in the year we created an Avenue of Remembrance in the churchyard with poppy bands around the trees. This featured in the Diocese News, bringing visitors to the church.

In the coming months the charity will be working with our architect on a big project to repair the roof of the nave.

Thank you

The following reports are presented by Trevor Askew — PROW Volunteer Group Leader, Chair of Honeybourne Village News and Chair of Honeybourne Allotment Gardens Association.

Honeybourne Village News.

920 magazines are delivered to all households in the village each month mostly by volunteers. Articles of local interest are published including 'spotlight on', Honey wildbourne, gardening tips, Parish Council news, church news. The editorial team are keen to carefully balance news with advertisements. Advertisement income is needed to ensure financial viability. Thanks to the Parish Council for providing an annual grant to support production. Distribution of leaflets publicising events run by the Parish Council are carried out upon request. Advertising for charities and not for profit organisations are free of charge.

Public rights of way volunteers.

Working on behalf of Worcestershire County Council a team of volunteers meet monthly during spring and summer to ensure users have access along pathways. A balance of ensuring vegetation is cut back whilst not adversely affecting wildlife or impacting on nesting birds is paramount.

Should any repairs of stiles, gates etc be required contact will be made with County Council officers with a request for materials.

Risk assessments have to be provided to the County Council prior to work being carried out to ensure volunteers are protected by insurance.

Thanks to the Parish Council and the county Councils community fund for providing strimmers and equipment and enabling storage of items.

Honeybourne Allotments and Gardens Association (HAGA)

This association came into being in March this year following the resignation of the site administrator. A committee of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and two members has been introduced. A constitution exists along with the association having a bank account. A service level agreement has been signed by the Chair and Parish Clerk. The organisation is registered with the information commissioner and has public liability insurance.

The Parish Council has provided a grant for the purchase of a battery powered strimmer and an application has been made to the county Councillor community fund for a battery powered mower. The committee is keen to ensure that any vacant plots are maintained ready for occupation.

The association is keen to work with Parish Council in line with the proposed new licence agreement for plot holders and service level agreement.

Friends of Honeybourne Station

Annual Report to Honeybourne Parish Council – 2026

Over the past 12 months, the Friends of Honeybourne Station have made strong progress in delivering our two core objectives: improving the appearance of the station and celebrating Honeybourne's railway heritage through our *Rail, Tales & Trails* project.

1. Improving the Station Environment

A key focus this year has been enhancing the visual appeal of the station for passengers and visitors.

- Two bespoke planters have been installed on Platform 1
- Over 1,000 spring bulbs have been planted along the station entrance, creating a colourful and welcoming approach for passengers.
- Regular volunteer activity has continued, including litter picking and general upkeep of the station.
- A new shed and 2 water butts are installed

The improvements in place have already made a noticeable difference to the station environment and we are delighted with the positive feedback received from residents.

2. Honeybourne Heritage Rail Tales & Trails

Significant focus has also been on the delivery of our Heritage project, supported by a £10,000 grant from GWR Community Rail as part of the Railway 200 celebrations.

This project has included:

- The creation of a series of professionally designed posters and heritage boards to be installed at the station, telling the story of Honeybourne's railway history
 - The development of a circular village heritage trail, linking key historical sites across Honeybourne
 - The production of supporting materials, including a leaflet and online content via our Facebook page
- The project will be officially launched at the station on **6th June 2026**. Everyone is welcome to attend.

This work provides a lasting educational resource for residents and visitors, while helping to position the station as a gateway to the village and the wider Cotswolds. We will refresh the displays in 12 months and would like to connect with residents who have stories from the station or the railway that they would be willing to share.

We are very grateful for the local engagement with this project. A particular mention to Michelle Shields who has designed the posters, heritage boards and the trail banner and leaflet; and Sue Allen who has created the village map.

Plans for the Next 12 Months

Looking ahead, our focus will be on building on the success of the past year:

- Maintaining and enhancing the station planting, including 2 additional planters to be built and installed on Platform 2
 - Promoting the new Heritage Trail, and adding further walks starting from the station to encourage wider community and visitor engagement
 - Supporting local events and activities linked to the station
 - Continuing to recruit and involve local volunteers
 - Exploring further funding opportunities to sustain and develop our work
-

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank Honeybourne Parish Council for its financial support over the past year. Your contribution has helped deliver tangible improvements to the station environment which we very much appreciate.

Get Involved

We continue to welcome new volunteers. Anyone interested in getting involved can contact us via our Facebook page or by email to luciacuttle@yahoo.com

Honeybourne Parish Council Christmas Event 2025

The annual Christmas Tree Light Switch-On took place on 28th November 2025 and was once again a highlight of the village calendar, very well attended by residents of all ages. The event was free to attend, reflecting the Parish Council's commitment to bringing the whole community together to celebrate the festive season.

The excitement began in the days before the event itself, when the local contractor arrived to erect the Christmas tree — a familiar sight that signals to the village that the festive season is underway and that never fails to generate a buzz of anticipation amongst residents.

On the night, Kevin Ward added a wonderful touch of traditional ceremony as town crier, drawing the crowd together and setting the tone for a memorable evening ahead. The lights were officially switched on by Reverend Jon Bowood, the newly appointed Team Vicar for the Parish, who also blessed the Christmas tree before the switch-on. It was a pleasure to welcome Reverend Bowood to one of the village's most cherished community events and the Council looks forward to working with him in the years ahead.

Entertainment was provided throughout the evening by a Silver Band and by pupils from Honeybourne Primary Academy, who delighted the crowd with Christmas carols — a reminder of how much the school contributes to community life in Honeybourne. Children were kept entertained with merry-go-round rides, a balloon modeller and a visit from Father Christmas, who was on hand to greet the younger residents.

A pop-up bar serving drinks and mince pies was run by volunteers from Honeybourne Village Hall, and a mobile food van and craft fayre added to the festive atmosphere. The weather was kind to us, which helped make for a truly enjoyable evening.

A very special element of the evening was led by Doug Rushton, who read out the names of those remembered through the memorial Christmas tree light sponsorship scheme — a touching tribute that means a great deal to many families in the village. This initiative is organised each year by Sylvia Matthews, whose dedication to this tradition is greatly appreciated by the Council and the whole community.

The proceeds from both the memorial lights scheme and the Christmas raffle — with prizes generously donated by local businesses, councillors and Village Hall trustees — go towards funding the following year's event, ensuring this much-loved tradition continues for years to come.

The Parish Council would like to thank everyone who contributed to making this such a memorable evening — the volunteers, sponsors, performers, and all who came along and made it the success it was.

Cllr Steve Sidwell

Chair, Christmas Event Working Group
Honeybourne Parish Council

Your Parish Councillors

Councillor	Role
Clr Heath Jobes	Chairman
Clr Bal Dubb	Vice-Chairman
Clr Andy Attridge	
Clr Colin Clear	
Clr Graham Clelland	
Clr Judith Mellor	
Clr Amy Mathias	
Clr Steve Sidwell	
Clr Sandra Walsh	

Your County Councillor

Councillor	Email
Clr Hannah Robson	hrobson@worcestershire.gov.uk

Your District Councillors

Councillor	Email
Clr Judith Ciotti	judith.ciotti@wychavon.net
Clr Hannah Robson	hannah.robson@wychavon.net

To contact the Parish Council please email: clerk@honeybourne-pc.gov.uk