

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF CULWORTH PARISH COUNCIL GENERAL
MEETING held on Thursday 4th September 2025 at 7pm pm in the Village Hall**

Present: Andrew Wilby (AW) Chairman
Andrew Field (AF) Councillor
Jose Rowling (JR) Councillor
Rob Stewart (RS) Councillor
Amy Harrison (AH) Councillor
Gary Denby (GD) Clerk

Public: Cllr Alison Eastwood West Northamptonshire Council (WNC)
John & Christine Emmett
Jim Gibbs
Shaun Oxley
(Total 12) Martin Rowling

Welcome to members by AW.

1. Apologies received:- Clive Waller (CW) Councillor (holiday)
Catherine Ruffley (CR) Councillor (holiday)
2. Councillor declarations of interest & dispensations in the following agenda items: None.
3. Receive minutes of the meeting held on **14th July 2025** as an accurate record of the Parish Council official acts and decisions, including the in camera section 18 which is now available for distribution:-
Motion: "That the Council welcome and agree to the strategy and action plan provided by the CHFT for the provision of the new Village Hall/Pavilion on the Hill Field."
Proposed by RS, seconded by CR and agreed by all councillors present.
Proposed by AF, seconded by RS and agreed by all Councillors present, signed by AW.
4. Receive reports and minutes from the **Annual Parish Meeting** held on 3rd April 2025. Carried Forward **GD**.
5. **Public Concerns** (prior notice the the Chair or the Parish Clerk is recommended)
 - 5.1 AE noted a couple of WNC reports were distributed over the summer, with the council about to lose its CEO (cover is in place). The WNC Planning department is in disarray, but measures are in place to recruit and properly train new officers. WNC's Highways Portfolio holder has agreed to chair meetings (26 Sept) with regards the HS/2 roll-out. Local HS/2 road closures are likely to continue for the next two years. WNC is operating about £56 million above its budget, which may force the sale of the Guild Hall extension with a commensurate loss of council parking spaces.
 - 5.2 There was discussion on the overgrown hedge on Banbury Lane. Cutting it back would aid pedestrians, who are unable to walk on the pavement. RS will discuss this with the residents
 - 5.3 Residents reported upon the misuse of the Play Park area by youths, with foul language and damage to their new fence. There is video evidence of this. Reinvigoration of the Neighbourhood watch volunteers may be able to assist, as might locking the entrance gate in the evenings **AH AF**. The hedge will be examined for through-growth (Clive).

6. **Matters Arising** from previous Parish Council minutes

6.1 Ref 5.1: Update on updating the Parish Council web site
Carried forward, some biography and head-shots awaited: to Joanne Wilby please.

6.2 Ref 5.2: Update on the reported footpath issue
RS raised six FixMyStreet reports in June, with a 17% success rate (continuing to monitor):-

7973417: style in poor repair – CLOSED does not meet levels for a repair!
7718793: overgrown shrub blocking path – CLOSED: responsibility of land owner
7714128: fallen tree on footpath – CLOSED does not meet intervention criteria
7714127: another faded footpath sign – CLOSED does not meet levels for repair
7714126: footpath sign unreadable – FIXED replaced
7714125: footpath sign completely faded – CLOSED does not meet levels for a repair

6.3 Ref 5.3: Soliciting ideas for new village signs?

This requires three quotations for suitable signs. **AH** will have a search. A suitable village logo?

Eydon village has those supplied by sott.co.uk at £700 for the first including artwork; £500 for each additional one (using existing poles) in 2024, cast in a solid, rigid polyurethane with lettering in relief and hand-painted:- 20+ years life. Cleaned well when recently vandalised.



6.4 Ref 6.1: Update on Steve Smith repairs to the cricket ground wall (invoice below)
Completed using lime mortar: supplying labour and materials replacing loose and damaged stonework to full length of both sides of cricket pitch ground wall.

6.5 Ref 7: Progress on advertising for a replacement Parish Clerk
See APPENDIX A. No applicants to date, being advertised by N-CALC on their weekly posting to all current Clerks since Friday 29th August. **GD** will contact a recommended Clerk at Aston le Walls; **AW** has another contact for a suitably experienced Clerk.

6.6 Ref 11: Progress with new web site and migration of Clerk's email account
A task for the new Clerk, once settled-in **TBA**.

6.7 Ref 14.1: Update on Tree Works by Joshua Robbins (invoice below)
The invoice is for the whole works. Whilst appreciated that the urgent work for the Burial Ground is already completed, Councillors agreed this should not be paid until all works are completed.

RS reported that the previous village survey by TreeTops in 2022 listed 24 trees (only 8 on a sketch map from 2013) at a cost of £740. TreeTops no longer trade. Thus RS has obtained a quotation for £700 + VAT from **Coltman Forestry and Tree Care** on FaceBook with two positive reviews, based in Daventry (Ref 0043 dated 26 Aug 25) to carry out a tree health survey with a written report, located in Culworth. This will assist in updating the village mapping of all trees for which it has deemed responsibility.

Whilst usual to seek several quotations, obtaining these from a local contractor is difficult. It was therefore proposed to accept this single quotation: proposed by RS, seconded by AH and agreed by all Councillors present. The Clerk is to advise the contractor (and seek sight of his professional indemnity cover) **GD**.

6.8 Ref 16.1: Update on requesting a new safety report for the Play Park

The equipment should properly be surveyed annually, alongside more regular checking for loose nuts and bolts kindly performed by AF. The first such annual report was by the The Play Inspection Company Ltd in November 2024 for £175 + VAT, based in Poole. Thirty pages in total, including digital photos. There was a little (low risk) confusion about the grass mats being silted up (the grass is supposed to grow through them), also the risk of finger entrapment around the self-closing gate (children are supposed to be supervised).

On 30th July GD forwarded a quotation of £180 + VAT to repeat the inspection this year (crm@mg.inspectonline.co.uk). RS proposed that this year's quotation be accepted, since virtually the same as previously, agreed by all Councillors present **GD**.

7. Report from first Finance Committee Meeting: Terms of Reference; Community fund; Additional online account signatories; Clerk interview panel; Simpler summary report?

The Finance Committee met in a private home on 28 Aug 2025 and included AW, JR, AH, AF and GD. A formal report has yet to be produced by the Clerk **GD**.

8. Report back on Parish Online training: suitability for Play Equipment and Village Trees

CW and RS met at the Clerk's home (a large PC screen) to have some informal training and discussion of data entry layers. Both were given data Manager user IDs (the Clerk remains as Admin).

9. Culworth Burial Ground: £409 received for burial of Katya Gross nee Ryzhkova 24 July

10. Community Hill Field Trust (CHFT) update: agreement of all parties AW.
Clerk to publish the current proposals as the section 18 write-up of the July meeting **GD**

11. Utilisation of new Clerk and Chair email addresses – awaiting the new Parish Clerk **TBA**

12. Update on Culworth Christmas Paper Trail and its budget

The organiser was unable to attend this September meeting. However, the following email update was received instead, APPENDIX B having a report from 2nd Sept:-

On Sun, Aug 31, 2025 at 11:33 PM ginny staniford wrote:

Hello Gary

The finances are so straightforward and transparent that on reflection, I decided not to bother Dick Winter regarding them.

*Attached is a statement showing how the account stands this evening.
There are just 4 different types of transaction*

- 1. Multiples of £30 which are the refundable deposits made by stall holders who have committed to the event*
- 2. £200 gifted to the Culworth Christmas Shopping Trail on 9/06/25 by EKFB (HS2)*
- 3. £276 on 18/06/25. This is proceeds raised from the Summer Fun Day which I have previously given you information about and can be seen below. Andrew agreed for this to be paid into this account.*

4. £1.66 charged for the cash deposit by on 18/06/25.

Unfortunately I cannot attend in person on Thursday. I will be in Portugal. For that reason I would like the following points to be known:

- at the beginning of the year when I started rallying stallholders for the event, I waited for several months to be told what account the refundable deposits could be paid into. I couldn't keep potential stall holders waiting any longer so I resorted to opening a Barclays Business Introductory account on 28/04/25. My husband Philip and I are the signatories and the cheque book remains unused. There are no fees charged on this account for the first year and the intention is to close it once the Parish Council has something to replace it.

- I have committed to repaying deposits to stall holders within 4 days of the event. (I have only taken deposits to limit no-shows). These payments must be made within the time frame. Please can this be a top priority. I am determined this event is run professionally so that stall holders want to return next year when there is potential for it to be a good fund raiser for the village.

Finally, I am really hopeful that the village gets behind this and everybody has a great day. It promises to be a unique event with an award winning poet attending, Martin Rowling doing some demonstrations, a mulled wine gazebo, a BBQ and mince pies served in the village hall. There are now 30 committed stall holders plus Church Lane Gallery attending and I am hopeful Nancy Cadogan may come up trumps. It should be a busy day for Forge Coffee, the units behind and the Red Lion too. But there is still a lot to be done!

*All the best
Ginny*

AH has met with Ginny and has overviewed the bank account. Food vans are to be invited, rather than using BBQs. The brass band is likely to be four members playing Saturday lunchtime and would not require seating or cover (presuming reasonable winter weather). Hoping for a good success, such future events should be self funding and retained in the Parish Council 'pot', within a Community Events account?

Councillors concurred that they do need to be sure that their public funds and grants are not being used to fund a private event. Who is under-writing any shortfall, should bad weather or other circumstance scupper the anticipated attendance? All deposits are to be returned!

The Parish Council insurance covers only its Councillors, employees and volunteers, acting upon its behalf (also the public using its Play Park facility). It does not extend to public events in general, for which separate short term insurance must be sought (and whether the premium covers cancellation due to bad weather etc), as happens for the Woodford Halse annual summer Regatta (a TENS licence too from WNC, if alcohol is to be sold).

An expenses grant was made by the Parish Council towards the successful Summer Fun Day, ~~whose proceeds and raffle are towards this event~~. There is an additional request for £100 to assist with advertising signage and £300 towards the band members? AH proposed that the Parish Council will under-write a further £100 grant application towards the signage, seconded by RS and agreed by all Councillors present **GD**.

13. Developing a Social Media & Communications Policy for the Parish Council

An updated proposal was reportedly circulated to Councillors a few days ago by AH, where WhatsApp can generally improve responsiveness and collaboration between members (while keeping formal business where it belongs — in official meetings and documents). It concludes with six clear objectives ([meeting discussion points in green](#)):-

1. Organise an away day to build knowledge and relationships, particularly given the new composition of the council. *Maybe a couple of hours with tea and biscuits as an opportunity to share between old and new Councillors*
2. Create a policy for the use of WhatsApp and add the new clerk. *Supplied by N-CALC.*
3. Update the Parish Council website (and share this with the village- eg on social media) *A work in progress, with the assistance of Mrs Joanne Wilby.*
4. Agree on whether any additional sub committees are required (e.g., for events), and if not, how to ensure transparency around unofficial meetings which may be necessary for BAU or planning activity. *Ginny, Angie and others have held unofficial events on The Green for years – invaluable experience. RS is happy to be involved.*
5. Invite residents to a meet and greet with council members. This provides an opportunity to: explain our role, share information on what we're working on and ascertain the views of villagers. It also presents an opportunity to challenge any misinformation. *Freshen up the village directory?*
6. Ascertain the preferred communication methods of villagers (and consider whether a Facebook page would be worthwhile). *A push mechanism favoured by social media, rather than them looking for items on a web site.*

14. Correspondence received by Councillors

- 14.1 30 Jul: Quotation for next Play Park Inspection (Nov 2025): £180 by Play Inspections
- 14.2 31 Jul: WNC Summer Report from Cllr Alison Eastwood
- 14.3 31 Jul: WNC Parish Path Warden scheme
- 14.4 31 Jul: Office of National Statistics – July Newsletter
- 14.5 31 Jul: N-CALC mini eUpdate 2507 – Local Government Pay backdated to 1 April 2025
- 14.6 31 Jul: WNC Town & Parish Briefing - 21 July newsletter
- 14.7 31 Jul: N-CALC mini eUpdate 1807 – National 2 min silence VJ Day 80 on 15 August
- 14.8 31 Jul: Rural Service Network weekly news 16 July
- 14.9 31 Jul: Parish Online Newsletter #60 – free gov.uk email addresses for Clerks
- 14.10 31 Jul: N-CALC mini eUpdate 1107 – Person sought for Standards Committee
- 14.11 31 Jul: N-CALC 78th Annual Conf on 4th Oct – 2 CPC delegates can go
- 14.12 31 Jul: N-CALC mini eUpdate 0407 – Highways Maintenance Transparency reports
- 14.13 31 Jul: WNC seeks feedback on engagement with communities on its planning services
- 14.14 31 Jul: WNC temporary accommodation plans go out for consultation
- 14.15 31 Jul: WNC Libraries launch their 2025 Summer Reading Challenge (age 4 to 11)
- 14.16 31 Jul: N-CALC Training Newsletter July 2025 edition
- 14.17 31 Jul: Cuttlefish new website service (used by Moreton Pinkney & Preston Capes)
- 14.18 31 Jul: N-CALC mini eUpdate 2706 – 4) Return of Election Expenses
- 14.19 31 Jul: N-CALC mini eUpdate 1306 – example Clerk advertisements
- 14.20 31 Jul: WNC Annual Parish Council Conference now postponed to 23rd October
- 14.21 31 Jul: Parish Online newsletter #59 – Cloud Office for document store & share
- 14.22 31 Jul: WNC June Report from Cllr Alison Eastwood
- 14.23 31 Jul: N-CALC eUpdate May/Jun 2025 link – local elections...
- 14.24 31 Jul: Data Protection Officer – using social media: considerations
- 14.25 7 Aug: WNC Summer report from Cllr Alison Eastwood
- 14.26 11 Aug: Simon Turner offer to add virtual tour videos to enhance PC web sites
- 14.27 14 Aug: WNC seeks feedback on community engagement with its planning services
- 14.28 14 Aug: WNC draft local cycling and walking infrastructure plan: consultation
- 14.29 14 Aug: WNC Women's Safety Event in Silverstone 18th September
- 14.30 14 Aug: N-CALC mini eUpdate 0808 – Vacancy for a Director; Registers of Interest
- 14.31 14 Aug: WNC Leader statement on local hotels used for asylum accommodation

- 14.32 14 Aug: WNC offers new funding for local youth groups
- 14.33 14 Aug: PFCC newsletter – Aug 2025
- 14.34 14 Aug: Sparkx contractor in Aylesbury offering Street Lighting maintenance
- 14.35 14 Aug: N-CALC eUpdate Jul/Aug link – using a 'Council' signature

- 14.36 18 Aug: N-CALC mini eUpdate 1508 – Pre-Application Developer Contact
- 14.37 21 Aug: Outstanding Declarations of Interest (from 3rd June)
- 14.38 21 Aug: WNC takes action following Epping Forest High Court ruling
- 14.39 21 Aug: WNC Sustainability refocus set to progress after scrutiny meeting 19 August
- 14.40 21 Aug: N-CALC mini eUpdate 2208 – Ten Years On; CAN Champions 19 Nov
- 14.41 22 Aug: WNC Town & Parish Briefing 37

- 14.42 27 Aug: WNC meeting to debate asylum accommodation issues on 16 September
- 14.43 27 Aug: WNC Flying the flag with pride and safety
- 14.44 28 Aug: WNC public testing of Emergency Alerts system 4G/5g phones 7 Sep 3pm
- 14.45 29 Aug: WNC Notice of road closures Banbury Lane 18-19; 22-26 Sept
- 14.46 29 Aug: N-CALC mini eUpdate 2908 – Summer Hols; Clerk vacancy included
- 14.47 29 Aug: WNC Join September emergency planning campaign – survey 1 Sept

15. Planning (items available at wnc.planning-register.co.uk + Advanced Planning + Parish)

- 15.1 2025/3453/TPO: Works to 1x Oak and 1x Beech subject to TPOs at Graveyard St Marys Church High Street Culworth by 19 Sep. Councillors have No Objections. Maybe we can ask AE to expedite this on behalf of the Parish Council **GD**?

- 15.2 2025/3488/TCA: T1 Scots Pine - Section fell to ground level T2 Scots Pine - Section fell to ground level T3 Lawson Cypress - Section fell to ground level T4 Yew - Section fell to ground level due to interference with the oil tank at Culworth House Queens Street Culworth OX17 2AT by 19 Sep. Councillors considered these to be an iconic boundary on entry to the village, on the boundary of the former nursing home. **RS** agreed to make further enquiries about the oil tank.

- 15.3 2025/2686/TCA: Notification of tree work at Puzzle Cottage, Queens Street OX17 2AT for intended tree works including: Remove 1x Ash tree and work to 1x Oak tree in the Conservation. No Objections 24 Jul.

16. Audit and Accounts

- 16.1 Receive update on Parish Accounts to 31 August 2025; updated budget summary

These were presented to the Finance Committee for consideration. See APPENDIX C
On 30 June 2025 the T2 Current account held **£13,942.99**; the Saver Account held **£56,105.46**; the CHFT Account **£4,436.56** (some monies still within the T2 account?). These reconcile against the Parish Council's cash spreadsheet (version f), producing total cash assets of **£71,485.01**.

- 16.2 Receive Clerk hours expended to end of August 2025. See APPENDIX D.
The Clerk will have worked 47.9 hours above his half day per week availability, by the end of August. Thus 20 hours have been reclaimed in the September Salary payment.

- 16.3 Ref 15.2: First DD taken 21st July by Valda Energy for £219.62 for street light power
- 16.4 Ref 15.3: Update on bank mandate to add two new signatories

- 16.5 Consider and approve the Parish Council payments listed below. Proposed by AF, seconded by JR and agreed by all Councillors present (EXCLUDE payment to Rural Works).

Description / Power	Amount	VAT	Total
Roger Smith mowing of Burial Ground & Play Park June 4 th , 13 th , 19 th	£172.00	-	£172.00
and Play Park x2 Inv 882; Burial Ground 16, 23 July, Play park 16, 31	£90.00	-	£96.00
July Inv 887; Strim Burial Ground 8 Aug inv 895.	£16.00	-	£16.00

<i>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10</i>			
Cartwright Landscapes mowing of Greens and other areas July – August? <i>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10</i>			???
Rural Works (Joshua Robbins) urgent pollarding, crown lift, removal of overhanging and dead wood at Burial ground in July 2025 <i>Local Government Act 1972, s.137</i>	£830.00	£166.00	£996.00
Steven Smith Construction labour & materials replacing loose and damaged stonework to full length of both sides of cricket pitch wall. <i>Local Government Act 1972, s.137</i>	£380.00	£76.00	£456.00
Parish Online subscription for mapping facility, discounted to Aug 2026 <i>Local Govern't Act 1972, Section 111 Subsidiary powers, discharge of functions</i>	£40.00	£8.00	£48.00
N-CALC training course for A Hall July 2025: Flying Start and Finance for Councillors <i>Local Government Act 1972, s175 allowances.</i>	£88.00	£17.60	£105.60
Texprep Newsletters ?? + July. Inv27422, 27532	£47.00	-	£47.00
Wave (Anglian Water) for Cricket field 2m3 16 May to 31 Aug <i>Local Government Act 1972, Section 133 Parish and Community Buildings</i>	£24.48	-	£24.48
Gary Denby Parish Clerk gross remuneration and expenses (8 weeks) including home office expenses 14 July – 3 Sept 2025 + 20 additional hours reimbursement <i>Local Government Act 1972 Appointment of Staff s.112</i>	£517.44 £57.20 £323.40	-	£898.04
Cllr Clive Weller expenses for Play Park fencing repairs: 24 palings and screws from Main Line Timber. Retrospective <i>Local Government Act 1972, s.137</i>	£47.55	£9.51	£57.06
Valda Energy Street Lighting charges 01 – 31 July 2025 (DD 19/07) 481.5 kWh @ 37 p/kWh and 31 days at 100 p/day 24 month contract. REVISED July usage, over-charge credited to August. <i>Highways Act 1980, lighting functions s.98</i>	Elect £94.24 Stand £31.00	£6.26	£219.62
Valda Energy Street Lighting charges 01 – 31 August 2025 (DD 19/07) 481.5 kWh @ 37 p/kWh and 31 days at 100 p/day to Jun 27 <i>Highways Act 1980, lighting functions s.98</i>	Elect £96.83 Stand £31.00	£6.39	£46.10
Transfer of PC T2 Funds to make CHFT saver account 20425869 reconcile with report 24 July 2024 having a surplus £14,118. <i>Subsequent draw-downs under CHFT instruction.</i>			TBA

16. Items for the next Parish Council agenda:

16.1 AW reminded the Parish Council that the new LED street light beside the church entrance gate is on an decommissioned telephone pole, which is hollow with rot throughout its core. Additional steel strapping beneath the lamp might deter its falling to the ground **GD**? The pole needs replacing, probably at the Parish Council's expense (budget for it in 2026-27?). However, with its unmetered supply connection beneath ground level, this needs the support of the Electricity board or National Grid to dig a hole in the pathway to reconnect it (Jim Leading may be an appropriate contact) **GD**.

17. Date of next meeting: **Thursday 2nd October, 7pm** in the village hall.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

APPENDIX A: Advertisement for the Paris Clerk Vacancy Sept 2025

Name of Council	Culworth Parish Council culworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
Job Title	Parish Clerk & RFO
Vacancy Statement	Culworth Parish Council has a vacancy for a Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. This is a rural village in South Northamptonshire, close to Sulgrave Manor with its George Washington (USA) connections, on the old 'Banbury Lane' between Banbury and Northampton. The council set a 2025-26 Precept of £38,000 for its 322 electorate (accumulating reserves to assist with match-funding for the replacement village hall grants). The village has diverse low energy street lighting (26 items), with ownership responsibilities for the village cricket field, a play park and a burial ground, benefiting from nearby HS/2 activities. It has a mix of newly elected and established councillors (seven total), supporting the replacement of the Village Hall over the next year.
Requirements	Applications are invited from persons with an accounting or analytical background, with training offered. The parish clerk is responsible for the administration and finances of the council; its minutes and auditing process, also its burial ground, play park and contractors. The post includes meetings on <u>first Thursday evenings</u> for nine months of the year. The successful applicant is expected to have, or be prepared to obtain CiLCA (the Certificate in Local Council Administration). He or she must be computer literate, with good communication skills. Friendly and positive outlooks are essential.
Salary	Salary £7,500 pa on Local Government pay scale LC2: 24-27, £33,000 - £35,700 pa pro rata, suiting an experienced or CiLCA-qualified Clerk.
Hours	34 hours per month, including a pro-rata holiday provision of 4 hours per month (30 hours worked, averaging out at about a day per week), subject to negotiation.
Place of work	Work from home.
Please apply in writing with your CV or contact:-	
Contact	Cllr Andrew Wilby
Position	Chair, Culworth Parish Council
Address	wilbyawr@gmail.com Old Walls Cottage, The Green, Culworth. OX17 2BB
Telephone	0780 329 5042
Closing date for applications:	5pm on Mon 29 September 2025

To find out about the role of the Clerk download an introductory booklet from the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) entitled ["The Essential Clerk"](#)

APPENDIX B: Ginny Staniford 2 Sept report on Culworth Christmas Shopping Trail

10am – 4pm 6th December 2025

Concept

As a textile artist, I've travelled to distant Christmas markets and felt the Culworth community deserved a fun, festive event of its own. The village's compact size makes it ideal for a trail, inspired by those on the continent. With past experience running a large, successful craft fair in Dorset, many years in retail and leisure, and strong links through the Banbury art cooperative, I felt ready to launch Culworth's first Christmas Trail. This year, stallholders are kindly putting their faith in me and the idea on a key pre-Christmas weekend, so no fee is being charged. In future, the trail could become a valuable fundraiser for the village's much-needed projects.

Plan

The trail currently features around 30 stalls and a pop-up by Church Lane Gallery, spread across the village. Visitors will receive printed maps and follow numbered arrows marking the trail. Locations are the Village Hall, Church, School Hall, Red Lion Barn (now slightly in doubt), and local homes or studios. Current village participants are Suzy Cubitt (From Garden to Vase, Queens Street and social media expert), Niki Miles (Allium Threads, Banbury Lane), and myself (Singe and Salvage, Concrete Road), and three more potential participants

Stalls and Attractions

As things currently stand, visitors will find a wide variety of art and craft including:

- Pet portraits and wildlife art
- Painting, drawing, printmaking, collagraphy, gelli prints and mixed media art
- Textile art, sewing, naturally dyed yarn, and fabric gifts
- Jewellery, silverwork, accessories, and sea glass pieces
- Pottery and clay sculpture,
- Home cooked Christmas puddings, cakes and mince pies, artisan jams, marmalades, and chutneys
- Flowers, wreaths, bulbs, and garden-related items
- Christmas cards, gifts and decorations
- Candles, wax melts, and table decorations
- Macrame, crochet and knitwear
- Kids' bug houses, teapot birdhouses, painted pebbles, mushroom houses, and gonk figures

Attractions along the trail will include:

- Tea and mince pies
- Mulled wine
- Demonstrations by Martin Rowling in his forge
- Children's Christmas decoration workshop
- Children's treasure hunt
- Food vans (replacing the BBQ to make this initial event easier but it could become a significant fundraiser for the village in the future)

Possible addition

- Brackley Brass Band in a gazebo on the green playing from 1300 – 13:45 and 14:15 – 15:00

And by default

- Forge Coffee, including: Keith (Glass Garden Forge), Paul Wharton (Art), Gathered Home (Vintage Collectibles)
- Red Lion

Parking

Signposted parking will be available at Hill Field, the concrete road and other local roadsides

Culworth Christmas Shopping Trail Team

I have been working on this event alone since January, and as we near the launch, I've now recruited Jane Green, Angie Clayton, and Suzy Cubitt to help. Our first team meeting is scheduled for 25th September. Nearer the time, we will recruit more volunteers to help us set up, run the day and clear up.

Acknowledgements & Funding

Thanks go to Culworth Parish Council for committing £255 towards trail maps, signage, bunting, Village Hall hire and raffle tickets, and most significantly their public indemnity insurance. And to EKFB for donating £200 to cover heating of the church and additional signage. Additional funds would be welcomed for more extensive signage (inspired by the displays at Eydon Summer Fete) and Brackley Brass Band. That would be £100 and £300 respectively. Mulled wine/cider ingredients, mince pies, tea, coffee, milk and sugar will need purchasing should local supermarket donations not be forthcoming, but the revenue received should cover this.

Ginny Staniford
2nd September 2025

APPENDIX C: Parish Council Budget 2025-26 against income and expenditures to 30 June

Culworth Parish Council Expenditures for 2021-2025, budget 2025-26 against expenditures for 2025-26 to date

Expenditure Item		Expenditure 2022-23 Audited	Expenditure 2023-24 Audited	Expenditure 2024-25 Audited	Budget 2025-26	Expenditure 2025-26 To 30/06
1	Grass Verge & Greens Mowing S96	£3,946	£1,499	£1,030	£1,500	£350.00
2	Tree / Footpath Maintenance	£880	-	£122	£2,000	-
3	Subscription NCALC, SLCC + PoL	£456	£329	£307	£1,600	-
4a	Electricity supply un-metered	£2,232	£1,021	£2,062	£1,100	£564.11
4b	Street light maintain & upgrade	£1,278	£1,361	-	£1,600	£1,440.00
5	Parish Council Insurance	£834	£885	£957	£1,100	£962.42
6a	Clerk salary 3.5 hrs / week + hols	£6,472	£2,774	£4,722	£3,436	£646.72
6b	Clerk / Office Expenses / Other	£969	£778	£471	£500	£94.00
6c	Clerk & Councillor Conf / Training	£282	-	£42	£500	-
7a	Audit Int+Ext – N-CALC + LJ	£200	£707	£924	£500	-
7b	N-CALC acting as DPO	£10	£10	£12	£10	-
8	Village Hall rental	£117	£171	-	£300	£126.00
9	Burial Ground Maintenance	£643	£1,105	£1,599	£1,600	£533.00
10	Dog and litter bin maintenance	£1,274	£1,274	£1,383	£1,500	-
11	Village Newsletter– Sec 142	£400	£303	£280	£300	£74.20
12	Village web site & maintenance – S142 Gov't Info	£220	£102	£239	£1,100	-
13	Jubilee / Coronation RBL–Sec 137	£1,769	£0	£25	£25	£30.00
14	Miscellaneous contingency	-	-	£13	£1,000	-
15	Citizens Advice Bureau	£100	-	-	£100	-
16a	Cricket Field CHFT support	£114,288	£106	£392	£500	£126.83
16b	Cricket Field CHFT funding	-	£3,429	£17,892	-	-
17	Community Play Park fund-support	-	£75,000	£3,131	£8,000	£250.00
18	Rebuild reserves for new assets	-	-	-	£15,000	-
19	VAT as a refundable expense	£25,307	£16,650	£3,256	-	£1,016.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (inc VAT):		£161,677	£107,503	£38,858	£43,271	£6,213.28
20	Precept request	£25,000	£37,000	£38,000	£38,000	£19,000.00
21	Burials & Monuments	£331	£1,376	£985	£500	-
21	Bank Interest: CHFT & Ppark	£152	£426	£919	£500	-
22	Community Infrastructure Levy	-	-	-	-	-
23	Play Park grants	-	£62,615	-	-	-
24	Donations / awards	£130,681	£130	£5	£160	-
25	Recovered VAT	£16,428	£10,793	£15,723	£3,516	-
TOTAL INCOME		£172,592	£112,341	£55,632	£42,676	£19,000.00
Excess income over expenditure		£10,915	£4,838	£16,774	-£595	£12,786.72

APPENDIX D: Clerk hours expended in August 2025 and the year to date

		Aug25						
Date	Description Target 3 hrs per week, Or 12-15 hours per month	Miscellaneous	Correspondence	Accounts & Budget	Audit	Agendas & Minutes	Meetings	Burial Ground
7.8.25	Telecon write-up Christmas Train Ginny		1					
14.8.25	Draft and forward Clerk Advert to councillors	1.5						
14.8.25	Review and forward Councillor emails		1					
21.8.25	Forward Clerk vacancy to N-CALC		0.5					
21.8.25	Chasing missing Declarations	0.5						
21.8.25	Chasing missing Acceptance of Office	0.5						
28.8.25	Drafting Finance Committee Terms of Ref	2						
28.8.25	Updating finances spreadsheet for FC meet			0.5				
28.8.25	Initial Finance Committee meeting						2	
29.8.25	Review and forward emails, revise minutes		0.5			0.5		
29.8.25	Draft agenda, chase missing bill					0.5		
30.8.25	Drafting September Agenda						2	
30.8.25	Emails JR AH addressing issues raised		2					
31/08/25	Draftin Sept Agenda – adding correspondence					2		
31/08/25	Reimbursement of added hours 3.5+/week	-20						
TOTALS	-3.00	-15.5	5	0.5	0	5	2	0

YTD

<u>Month</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Target Hours</u>	<u>Actual Hours</u>	<u>Difference</u>
3.5 hours per week contracted (4 hour paid), equates to a target of 0.5 hours per day				
January (Precept, tenders) *	31	13.3	32.0	18.7
February (no meeting)	28	12.0	8.0	-4.0
March (draft end of year accounts) **	31	13.3	10.0	-3.3
April (Annual Parish Meeting, Accts)	30	12.9	11.0	-1.9
May (Annual General Meeting, Procs)	31	13.3	25.5	12.2
June (Accounts meeting)	30	12.9	21.0	8.1
July	31	13.3	27.5	14.2
August (no meeting) ***	31	13.3	-3.0	-16.3
September	30			0.0
October (no meeting)	31			0.0
November (budgeting)	30			0.0
December (contracts renewals)	31			0.0
Accumulated over / under hours worked		104.1	132	27.9

Hours reimbursed, beyond 4 hours weekly***: 20.0
 Total extra Hours reimbursed 60.0
 (LEL 2024-25 permits £123 pw or £6,396 pa; 180 hrs at £16.17 per hour is only £2,910)