

2025/2026 Holcombe Rogus Parish Council's Chairman's Report

All our Councillors have their own area of responsibility. However all of our Councillors serve on our Planning Committee. This helps to ensure that our Planning Committee meetings can be quorate even when Notice of the meeting is not generous.

My areas of responsibility are; Planning, the Grand Western Canal and Risk Management.

I am grateful to have been elected as Chairman for the past eight years and have been a Parish Councillor for twelve years. During this time, Councillors have come and gone due to changes in personal circumstances rather than conflict within the Council. This could only have come about because we have all worked together quite harmoniously even when expressing different opinions on matters for discussion.

My role as Chairman has been relatively easy as a result of the good relationships that exist between Councillors and their pleasant interactions during our meetings. Our District and County Councillors who find time to attend some of our meetings have often told me that our Parish Council is one of the most pleasant to visit. Consequently, we often have useful updates from them about their deliberations that we might otherwise overlook.

My part in Risk Management requires examining the Clerk's management of the Council's Governance and finances each year.

Our Planning Committee has had some interesting matters to consider during the past year. Mostly they have been straightforward issues about appropriate tree management where we have been guided by the tree surgeons working for the Applicants. One Application related to what was effectively retrospective permission for some dwellings. Fortunately, that was resolved without controversy but was surprisingly tricky to understand initially. We were surprised by an Application for a new dwelling in Fore Street (following previously Refused Applications) that didn't seem to address the shortfalls that led to those Refusals. We await the District Council's Decision!

My Canal responsibility has been very easy. The Grand Western Canal Manager, Mark Baker, looks after the Canal extraordinarily well and, in spite of our section being remote from his office, we're certainly not neglected. All I have to do is report the important items from the Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee's meeting in March and October. I am pleased that our Parish Council has asked me to continue representing Holcombe Rogus on that Committee even after I retire from the Parish Council at the end of May this year.

Of course, the Chairman's job wouldn't be possible without a Parish Clerk. I've been extremely well helped by two; Leslie Findlay and more recently Jackie Lyons. They look after the "mechanics" of the Parish Council so that we operate within our proper frameworks and ensure that our financial management is correct. It's a complicated job that requires considerable multi-tasking. I couldn't possibly do my job without the Clerk's expertise.

I'm confident that Holcombe Rogus will enter 2026/2027 with a valuable Council providing an approachable connection to the rest of our Local Government – however that is rearranged!

Adam Pilgrim

HOLCOMBE ROGUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
CLERK REPORT APRIL 2025 – MARCH 2026

FINANCE

1. Mary Fewings Playpark:

We have monthly inspections carried out on the playpark and once a year an annual inspection carried out by an independent ROSPA inspector. I am pleased to report we received no adverse comments.

Costs for the playpark include insurance for the playpark which covers all the equipment and public liability. In addition, we have the grass cut and twice a year the hedges are trimmed. Apart from any small miscellaneous charges the other major cost is for the litter bin to be emptied weekly.

The total costs for the playpark in this financial year are:

ITEM	COST (- vat)	COMMENT
Insurance	617.55	This also covers our general insurance
Monthly & Annual inspections	1008.00	
Litter bin emptying	260.00	
Grass cutting	604.05	
Hedge trimming	362.67	
Playpark maintenance	0.00	
Miscellaneous	0.00	
TOTAL	2852.27	A reduction of £727.08 on PY

2. Income

The Parish Council received the following income in this financial year

Receipt	£	Comments
Precept	12289.17	
Interest	257.87	
Solar Fund	7851.36	Annual grant from Redhill Solar Farm
VAT reclaim	1649.77	
Miscellaneous	100.00	
TOTAL	22,148.17	

3. Grants

The Parish Council awarded the following grants: -

- a. Village Hall Trust - £1500 this is an annual grant to assist with the running costs of the Hall. In addition to this we donated a further £4000 for the purchase of 2 fire doors.

4. Donations

The Council made 2 donations in this financial year:

- a. £300 to Devon ambulance
- b. £4000 to Village Hall for fire doors.

5. Expenditure

The Council spent a total of £16,849 in this financial year. We are likely to see an increase in the general spend on the annual parish maintenance and insurance, subscriptions etc. The Precept was raised from £12254 to £12289 in this financial year.

6. Internal Audit

The annual internal audit has been completed and several policies have been updated. All documents are available to view on the website.

7. External Audit

All the documents from the external audit are available to view on the website.
www.holcomberogus-pc.gov.uk

COUNCILLORS

Cllr Polly Page and Andy Gregory joined our Parish Council in 25/26

Jackie Lyons

Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer/Proper Officer

clerk@holcomberogus-pc.gov.uk

Holcombe Rogus Parish Council PUBLIC Rights of Way Report

2024 – 2025

At the beginning of the year (April 2025) the Parish Council received a report of a pedestrian gate on a public footpath which was hung the wrong way, so that it could not be opened. I contacted the landowner who said that he would hang it correctly, but by the end of the year (March 2026) it was still impossible to open the gate so I have reported the issue to Devon County Council using the same type of web site as the “report a pothole”. It is possible for any member of the public to use the page on the Devon County Council website, but in the first instance, if there is a problem with a Public Right of Way, please contact any member of the Parish Council.

In August 2025, a member of the public alerted me to the danger of a dead tree adjacent to Footpath 15. The landowner is aware of the tree and will keep a careful eye on its condition. At the moment the tree seems sturdy but it is possible that a limb may fall off in strong winds and therefore the public are asked to be vigilant.

The Parish of Holcombe Rogus has some well-used footpaths and some less well used ones. The Parish is fortunate to have tolerant landowners who allow users to access their land and who keep the paths open and easily accessible. This year, due to the extremely long dry spell during the summer months, it has not been necessary to employ a contractor to trim the overgrowth.

During the checks carried out on the footpaths, I have become aware of several waymarkers that are missing or damaged. I have requested replacement ones from the Council but they have not yet arrived.

I have some stickers requesting dog owners to pick up after their dogs, please let me know if you would like one.

Cllr Frances Freeman

Holcombe Rogus Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting April 2026
End of year report Councillor Sally Barker

Ayshford Education Foundation Trust

I was only able to attend one Trustee meeting in 2025. Eight students were awarded grants in the summer – two did not claim. At the winter meeting, four students had requested application forms, but only one was received.

Media

There was no contact with the media in 2025/6 apart from the Chairman's letter to BBC Spotlight in April 2026.

Cllr Sally Barker

Highways Report April 2026

The Wiseburrow section of the road out to Wellington, probably the most used section of our parish roads, is currently average and drainage and flooding problems we have had all through the winter, seem to be now under control.

Hopefully after a visit from our County Councillor Simon Clyst, we will have our concerns over the poor state of all our local roads addressed to the councillor responsible for Devon Roads. Now nothing much seems to be happening despite the promise ages ago that there would be major government additional funding for country roads. We can but hope.

However please continue to use the Devon County Road Repairs web page to report your concerns over dangerous hazards on our roads.

I continue to plea for safe and steady driving around our parish. We have a heavy agricultural and quarry traffic. Please drive sensibly and when you see a passing place do use it to avoid the opposing car having to reverse miles. Please drive with consideration for others.

Rupert Snook, Parish Councillor