

Vale of Montgomery Rural Cluster



Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 14th April, 2026, 7.30pm. Churchstoke Community Centre, Churchstoke.

Present: Cllr. Carmen Seal (Chair- Kerry), Cllr. Susan Robertson (Kerry), Cllr. Mike Whittall (Churchstoke), Cllr, Peter Williams (Montgomery)

Members of the public: Cllr. Veronica Wildish

1. **WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR:** The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting
2. **MEET THE NEW CLERK:** Sarah Reast has begun her role as the Clerk for the VMRC Group
3. **APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Phil. Bettley (Berriew), Cllr. Debbie Kent (Berriew)
4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were **NO** declarations of interest.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 8TH OCTOBER, 2025 AND 14TH JANUARY 2026**
Both approved by all
6. **MATTERS ARISING** – N/A
7. **FOOTPATH UPDATE** - Brett Kibble not present to discuss any footpath issues in depth. Clerk to forward Kerry Ridgeway report (compiled on behalf of Kerry Community Council) for Brett's consideration. The Ridgeway from Cider House Farm to Block Wood has some track degradation and the visitor car park at Cider House end is very neglected
8. **NATURE DAY (FORMERLY KNOWN AS BEE EVENT)**
Chair and Cllr. Susan Robertson presented update on arrangements so far:
 - Kerry is holding a nature day on the 6th of June. Cllr. Mike Whittall suggested that Churchstoke combine efforts with Kerry rather than have their own separate day. Berriew will hold an event on the 7th of June. Montgomery are not yet sure of their

plans – Cllr. Peter Williams to check and report back following the next Town Council meeting. Hurdley Hall are having an open meadow day on the 6th also but the Nature Days are considered to be very local activities with visitors being able to walk to them so competition with events in other areas should not be a concern.

The Nature Days also coincide with Wales Green week starting on the 6th of June

- The Kerry Nature Day will be held in the field behind the school but the Village Hall is available in the event of bad weather and gazebos can also be borrowed from other local organisations. Insurance to cover the day is to be discussed at Kerry Community Council
- Chair presented list of possible participants such as Curlew Connections, Havenmore Hedgehog Rescue, Welshpool Beekeepers, Wild Welsh Wool, RSPB Woodland Trust, Montgonery Wildlife Trust, Wormery etc. Not all have confirmed so some to be chased up. Stagecraft (Newtown) have offered to donate 2 outdoor planters for the school children to fill
- Cllr. Susan Robertson has a list of forums/sites for advertising the event. She has also liaised with Kerry School to design a free bag for visitors (funded by Kerry Community Council). It is believed that the participating children and their families will be motivated to visit to see their bags in circulation and to have them to take home along with the messages and experiences from the day
- There was no discussion about a person to open the event although that did arise on previous minutes
- It was agreed to allocate a maximum spend of £1000 across all Nature Days (for consumable materials, posters, flyers etc)

Next sub-committee meeting will be in Kerry, venue and date tbc.

8 FINANCES, BANKING UPDATE.

- £4070 across both accounts. Charges are going up from £6 to £7 which is partially mitigated by interest earned in the Instant Access account
- The RFO's invoice and pay rise were approved
- The Bank reconciliation, Statement of Accounts and Budget were approved

9 REPORTS FROM EACH COUNCIL:

Churchstoke

Camlad Valley Wildlife Group are trying to help MMCLT (Middle Marches Community Land Trust) to buy marsh land (SSSI) near White Grit to be maintained as a nature reserve for £45K.

Kerry

Coed Cefn Craig reservoir has been re-instated by NRW to encourage biodiversity and to offer some flood attenuation. Clerk to enquire if it is accessible by the public.

The Council are engaged in renewing the lease for the football field and have completed the renewal of the lease for the playground behind St Michael's School.

Montgomery (report from Peter Williams at this meeting with additional detail provided by Claire Weston following this meeting)

- Montgomery Town Council will be replacing the current playground at Gaol Road.
- Welsh-Hungarian Friendship Day is celebrated annually (14th May) across Wales. This year in Montgomery, relating to this, there will be a "May Music" concert and

surrounding Welsh-Hungarian events on Saturday 9th May, organised by Monty Folk and WHCA/MAOSz.

- The 800th anniversary of the town's Charter will be in 2027 (noting that Welsh-Hungarian Friendship Day / May Music and the Charter 800 celebrations aren't connected as such though our Hungarian friends may contribute to the community arts project and any celebration event and Monty Folk have been asked to polish up their medieval repertoire for the occasion! 🎵)
- Monty Lit Fest (Montgomeryshire Literary Festival) and the children's festival, Jill Kibble Monty Mini Fest are also in preparation - full info here: <http://montylitfest.com/>
- Montgomery Open Gardens will be on Sunday 12th July. <https://fb.me/e/49qlWqlZz> (This event is 50-50 MTC and Montgomery Show this time around, in terms of organisation and fundraising.)
- The Rotary Across Wales Walk will be finishing in Montgomery again this year, on 20th June. <https://www.rotaryacrosswaleswalk.org/>

10 FUTURE SPEAKERS

It was suggested that Adrian Osborne of the Powys Teaching Health Board be invited to speak about the new proposed Health Hub in Newtown

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING, venue and agenda items for future meetings.

Next meeting (inc. AGM) Tuesday, 30th June, 2026.7.30pm in Berriew, venue tbc.

Chair suggested that Zoom be employed for a remote meeting in the event of a significant number of last minute apologies – AGREED

Email and Whatsapp list need adjusting to reflect current member changes.

Signed by the Chair:

Carmen Seal

Date: 30th June 2026