

**Minutes of the meeting of Whitworth Town Council's Environment and Wildlife Committee
held on Monday 13th October 2025, 7pm, Council Chamber**

1. Welcome

Attendees were welcomed by Councillor Rhodes to the meeting of this committee, and each attendee introduced themselves with their specific areas of interests and responsibilities.

2. In attendance

WTC Councillor Sarah Rhodes (SR)(Chair)
WTC Councillor Gareth Baron (GB)
WTC Councillor Janet Whitehead (JW)
WTC Councillor Michael Whitworth (MW)
Karen Cowley (KC), Rochdale Field
Naturalists' Society (RFNS)
4 members of the public.

Steve Haigh (SH) E&WC member
Kim Olaolu (KO) E&WC member
Andrew Thorpe (AT) Farmer, Landowner and
Chair of the Commoners Association
Ian Wright (IW) (LCC Treescapes)

Apologies: Councillor Steve Butterworth and Sue Neilson (SN)

Minutes taken by Rachel Hodson (RH), Town Clerk and Abbie Luxton, Business Admin Apprentice.

3. To consider the minutes of the EWC meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025, and to approve them by the chairman as a correct record.

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025, copies of which had been circulated to each member, were correct and should be approved by the signature of the chair of the committee. This was moved by Councillor Baron and seconded by Councillor Whitworth.

4. To consider the minutes of the EWC meeting held on Monday 11th August 2025, and to approve them by the chairman as a correct record.

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11th August 2025, copies of which had been circulated to each member, were correct and should be approved by the signature of the chair of the committee. This was moved by Councillor Whitworth and seconded by Councillor Whitehead.

5. Updates from members:

(i) Updates on local building works.

JW reported that she had sent the proposed plans for Jubilee Gardens to the members of the committee.

(ii) Tree planting plans at Waingap.

IW reported that the grant funding he mentioned at the last meeting has been approved and a conclusion has been made to plant a micro forest at Waingap due to it being a suitable area with a large treeless space. IW reported that the deadline for planting is the 1st March 2026, however it would be ideal to be done before Christmas. IW reported on the method used to create an instant woodland forest using different species of native trees. IW reported that the Town Council would need to provide a contribution of £100 as part of the grant funding requirements. IW reported that he is optimistic regarding funding for another grant application enabling more trees to be planted in Whitworth. It was resolved that the members of the EWC committee were in agreement for the above plans regarding a micro forest at Waingap woods. This was moved by Councillor Rhodes and seconded by Councillor Whitworth.

(iii) Update on tree felling and replanting at Britannia.

IW reported that the senior woodland officer at Lancashire County Council is still awaiting quotes from two contractors to remove the diseased trees. IW reported that the trees can only be removed to an approved site through an approved contractor, approved by the Forestry Commission which is contributing to the delay. IW reported that the Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) states the trees should be felled by the end of March in a controlled way. Specialist contractors have also been contacted regarding trees that are less than two tree lengths away from property and roads etc. JW asked how long the replanting would take after the felling and for a estimated number of new trees. IW reported that a grant has been applied to for a full restock that is fully compliant with the habitat, however the number of trees is dependant on the density and species. A member of the committee asked if the fencing would be renewed, IW reported that he is not aware of the plans regarding fencing, however he will contact Tim Blythe and contact members of the committee when he has more information.

(iv) Whitworth Quarry Liaison Committee.

JW suggested that this agenda item be deferred to a later meeting so that SN can update members regarding this.

(v) Picnic area and pond at back of Cowm Reservoir.

KO reported that she had been in contact with United Utilities regarding this area and is still awaiting an update.

(vi) Any other updates.

GB reported on Albert Mill and presented videos regarding concerns about activity in this area. JW reported that she is working to secure the site.

6. To discuss an EWC logo.

SR shared the options she created for a new logo in the previous meeting. It was resolved that the committee approved an EWC logo. This was moved by Councillor Whitworth and seconded by Councillor Whitehead.

7. To discuss creating an EWC social media profile on Facebook.

SR discussed wanting an EWC social media profile on Facebook to share and spread word to the people of Whitworth. She suggested having three councillors to monitor the profile. SR, GB and MW agreed to moderate. It was resolved that the EWC create a Facebook page. This was moved by Councillor Rhodes and seconded by Councillor Whitworth.

8. To discuss future educational presentations in local schools.

SR suggested creating a working group to meet each year to discuss school visits. SR, KO, MW and JW agreed to meet to plan the next school visits.

9. Any other business.

KO asked about the picnic area at Waingap regarding the fencing, JW reported that the fence will be taken away and is not being replaced. SR discussed an app called iNaturalist and encouraged members to use it to survey for waxcap mushrooms. SH reported that bird and bat boxes, prepared by Men in Sheds and put together by Cubs, will be going up in the Memorial Gardens.

10. Date and time for next meeting.

Monday 12th January at 7pm, Whitworth Town Council Chamber.

11. Thanks for attendance and close of meeting.

Attendees were thanked and the meeting closed at 8:15pm