

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held in Church House, Widecombe

on Thursday 6 November 2025 at 7.30pm

Members present: Councillor Elliott (Chair), D Edwards, A Fitpatrick T Guest, M Jonas (from item 5183), C Partridge, and S Raynor

Also attending: District Cllr Rogers, District Cllr Major & District Cllr Nutley

Members of the Public: Four

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

5182 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr Bibby
- County Cllr Morgan

5183 CASUAL VACANCY

Members received an application from Michael Jonas to join the Parish Council as a co-opted member. Having confirmed his eligibility, Michael signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and immediately joined the meeting.

5184 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Members were reminded of their responsibility to continually update their Notice of Registerable Interests and invited to state whether they have any interest in the items to be discussed during this meeting in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

Unforeseen requests for a Dispensation to be considered at this point only if there was no way a Councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting.

Cllr Jonas declared an interest in item 8(a)(ii).

5185 OPEN FORUM

No comments.

5186 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2 October 2025 which were approved

as a true and correct record.

5187 REPORTS

(a) County Councillor

No report. Cllr Morgan has briefly spoken to Cllr Partridge about the pre-school and is happy to help where she can.

(b) District Councillors

Cllr Nutley

- Advised that he had attended a meeting regarding the A383. More details can be found here:

<https://news.teignbridge.gov.uk/series-of-measures-agreed-to-minimise-impact-of-utility-work-on-a383>

- The Broadmeadow Leisure Centre membership has increased now that refurbishment has been completed. He referenced discussions about the possible closure of the cardiac unit in Torbay which he and others are strongly opposing.

Cllr Major

- The new 'One Teignbridge' action plan has been approved outlining priorities for the next five years.

<https://teignmouth-devon.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s3439/Our%20One%20Teignbridge%20story%20final.pdf>

- Approval has been granted for 13 one-bed flats on the Sherborne Road car park, Newton Abbot. The Newton Abbot Community Transport Association is actively seeking new trustees should anyone be interested in being involved.

<https://www.themoorlander.co.uk/news/local-news/1936182/new-trustees-needed-to-keep-newton-abbot-community-transport-on-the-road.html>

<https://www.newtonabbotcta.org>

Cllr Rogers

- Concerns have been raised about the suitability of the Ashburton fire appliance. Proposals have been put forward for a better solution whilst the A383 is closed.
- DCC has voiced concern with One Devon about the proposed closure of the Torbay cardiac unit. With regard to One Teignbridge, Cllr Rogers has asked how DNPA is recognised in the Teignbridge plan.
- With regard to the transition from copper to fibre broadband, there is a Working Group at DCC to hold Open Reach to account. They have a legal obligation to serve every property with a fibre solution.
- A consultation opens on 1 December asking residents for their views on shaping the future of the county's libraries. The consultation closes on 22 February 2026.

[Devon residents invited to have their say on future of libraries](#)

- The Household Support Fund is still active. Government is also committed to continuing to support vulnerable people.
- The Renters' Rights Bill has been passed. TDC is writing to all private landlords on their register to advise them of their duties.

(c) **DNPA Representative**

No report

(d) **Police Report**

During the period 1 – 31 October 2025, there were no crimes. There were 3 non-crime incidents. It was also noted that PCSO Campbell-Mosley is leaving her post on 18 November.

(e) **Delegate Reports**

- Cllr Partridge advised that she had attended a Church House Management Committee meeting. This was also attended by a National Trust representative. There are new heaters upstairs which cost £3.5k. As far as it is able, the National Trust is trying to promote Church House and the shop next door. Pre-school representatives were also present at the meeting. They are currently running at a loss as the cost of running a pre-school far exceeds the level of government funding. To help support the pre-school, the Church House Committee has agreed to waive their rent over the winter (except for heating), and the Widecombe Educational Foundation has been able to support the cost of some additional training. Cllr Partridge has spoken to County Cllr Morgan to find out whether any other grants are available. The fire alarm sensors are going to be changed following some recent problems. There was also a discussion about the broadband though there are some difficulties tracking who the current account holder is.
- The Chair attended an online meeting with the Dartmoor Futures charity. They are looking ahead to the next 75 years, focusing on collaboration. At this stage, they are trying to spread the word but ultimately they are looking to make a really strong impact to make Dartmoor a sustainable and resilient area for the future.
- The Chair advised that following their successful £75k bid to the Rural England Prosperity Fund, Widecombe Community Hall CIC will be proceeding to build the hall. To comply with the requirements of the grant, a water-tight building needs to be erected by the end of March.

5188 PROJECTS AND ESTATES

(Cllrs Raynor, Edwards and Fitzpatrick)

(a) **Parish Council Logo**

Members approved the final version of the Parish Council logo.

(c) **Defibrillator Training**

Training is being provided by Jay's Aim and has been arranged for 17 November, 5-6pm at Leusdon Memorial Hall. There are 25 places and it has been advertised as £10 per person voluntary donation with funding available for anyone who would struggle with that. A grant has been received from District Cllr Rogers' locality budget with any surplus funds going towards the cost of new defibrillator pads in either Widecombe or Leusdon.

(d) **Parish Field**

Cllr Bibby circulated the following update:

‘We had a meeting with Charles to look at all the trees. Apart from one, which has been removed due to disease, the others are doing very well. We have a planned maintenance and pruning day on November 29th (volunteers very welcome)

On that day, we will be cutting back hedges, large overhanging branches and the dead Ash tree on the bank in the pre-school area. We will also be pruning all the trees, clearing the area at the base of each tree and applying lots of well-rotted manure.

On Tuesday 9th December, we are planning a ‘Carols around the Bonfire’ evening in the orchard, courtesy of the Widecombe singers. The clerk will be checking the insurance position.’

(e) **Tree survey**

Geoff Partridge will provide a quote to survey the trees which are the responsibility of the Parish Council.

5189 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Cllrs Bibby, Partridge, Guest & Welby)

- **New planning applications/appeals**
- 0350/25 & 0351/25 – Higher Tor Farm, Poundsgate, Newton Abbot

Refurbishment of the cottage including replacement windows, external doors, porch, rainwater goods and chimney flue. PV slates on roof. New underfloor heating and floor finishes throughout.

It was unanimously agreed to support this application.

- 0361/25 – Shop on the Green, Widecombe

Extension of a residential dwelling through the change of use of part commercial ground floor (Class E) to residential use (C3)

It was agreed by majority to support this application.

- **Planning Decisions/Withdrawals**

None

5190 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

(Cllrs Bibby, Partridge, Guest & Welby)

- **Data and Digital Compliance**

The clerk advised that there is a new requirement for Parish Councils, introduced in the 2025

Practitioners Guide, that requires them to demonstrate robust governance over digital presence and

data management to ensure compliance with UK GDPR and data protection laws. This includes

having proper IT policies, using secure council-owned email domains, meeting website accessibility

standards and managing personal data lawfully, safely and securely. The clerk advised that she

would be working through the requirements in time for the end of this financial year.

Currently, the Parish Council does not have a generic email address hosted on an authority-owned domain. Having researched various options the clerk recommended that the Council purchases a domain (www.widecombeaparishcouncil.gov.uk). It was also recommended that the Parish Council purchases a new website on which to host its documents and for each Councillor to have a dedicated council-owned email address for professionalism, security and compliance with GDPR. This was agreed. In order to achieve this most cost effectively, it was agreed to purchase a new .gov.uk domain from 20i at a cost of £25 + VAT and to instruct JKE Web Design to build a new .gov.uk website for £450 which would include a year's free hosting and email accounts for all Councillors.

- **Cash Book & Parish Field**

Members noted the income and expenditure to date. It was agreed that the monies obtained through County Cllr Morgan's locality budget for community projects including the Road Warden scheme should be shown separately.

(c) **Payments**

Members approved the following payments:

- Clerk's salary & disbursements (Nov & Dec) – £579.84
- Cllr Raynor – reimbursement for wheelbarrow – £59.83

(d) **Small Grants Scheme**

Members agreed that the scheme is advertised for consideration of applications in March's meeting.

- **Budget 2026-27**

Members received and considered draft budget proposals for 2026/27. A final decision on this will be made in January's meeting.

(f) **Meeting Dates 2026**

Members considered dates and venues for 2026. The following was agreed:

8 January – Widecombe Church House

5 February – Widecombe Church House

5 March – Widecombe Church House

2 April – Leusdon Memorial Hall

7 May – Leusdon Memorial Hall

21 May (Annual Parish Meeting) – Leusdon Memorial Hall

4 June – Leusdon Memorial Hall

2 July – Leusdon Memorial Hall

3 September – Widecombe Church House

1 October – Widecombe Church House

5 November – Widecombe Church House

5191 HIGHWAYS

(a) Road Warden Scheme:

Cllr Raynor advised that the team is still working its way up passed Shilstone Rocks. They will then start looking further afield.

A request has been made to repair part of the path that goes next to Church House Cottages where it joins the highway.

(b) It was noted that there is a damaged grit bin on Cockingford hill. The Chair would inform the Snow Warden.

Potholes and other highways maintenance issues can be reported direct to DCC:

Online: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

Telephone: 0345 155 1004

Email: customer@devon.gov.uk

5192 CORRESPONDENCE

None

5193 MEMBERS' ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR GENERAL DISCUSSION, FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS AND/OR ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

Members are reminded that they have not received the statutory notice of this business to be transacted and should therefore recognise that any decision made may be taken to be unlawful if challenged in the future

A request has been made by a parishioner for the Parish Council to consider a Beating of the Bounds event. It was noted that the parish has a very large boundary and such an event would take a lot of organising. It was agreed to speak to Rob Steemson, who has had a lot of experience with these events, for advice about the practicalities etc.

5194 NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting will be held on 8 January 2026 in Church House, Widecombe.

Signed Dated