

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Bridford Monday 2nd June 2025 at 6.30pm in Bridford Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Topley (Chair), Cllr. Purser (Vice Chair), Cllr. Marriott, Cllr. Gallagher, Cllr. Symons, Tamsin Mowat (Clerk) and 12 members of the public. Refreshments were served.

Apologies: Stephen Sim, Lyn Bridford Inn, Lorraine Hart, Anne Cronin, Ray Spurr, Lucy Smerdon, Matt Jones and Pip Morrison, Police Community Support Officer Tina Jordan

Summary of presentations and discussion:

All Councillors, the Clerk and all members of the public introduced themselves

Cllr. Symons arrived 6.38pm

Speeding in the village

Clare Ashenden spoke about speeding in the village, particularly on the corner of New Park. Clare has complained to Devon County Council and local police. SCARF assessment has been carried out. County Council think the speed limit is 30mph in the village and are looking into signs for the village. Argument to push for 20mph speed limit in the village. Discussion about speeding on the hill (Pound Lane) and towards the village which is an issue. Blind corner nearest the top of the hill is very tricky if people are speeding down. People seem generally keen to slow the traffic but also some resistance to too many signs. Could consider some more 20's plenty signs (c.£40 each). Parking is an issue but tricky to resolve as not much space available at all. Junction of New Park Road and Neadon Lane is extremely difficult to navigate as visibility is poor. One of the solutions could be to look at the priority of the junction and/or a roundabout potentially. Clare would like to set up a Community speed watch group – Veda keen to support. Police will support. Chair happy to speak to individuals. Speed activated signs were mentioned but are very expensive.

Action: Clerk to contact Town Clerk for Ashburton to ask how they got their 20mph limit signs.

Snow warden update

Anne Mayes updated on the gritter which has gone in for service. Not yet been returned. Problem with the company Glasdon were using for transporting it so we will wait to hear further. Pound Lane visibility affected by growth on the banks. Farrants Cross to Weir View – turning left and view to the right is very poor. Cyclists are often not visible at these junctions. Used to be slow signs painted on the road but no longer.

Actions: Clerk to report visibility issues to Highways – Pound Lane and Farrants Cross to Weir View. Suggest that the Valley Road near the junction with Pound Lane ought to be 30mph instead of 40mph due to be poor visibility at the junction.

Fete

Nige Skelton reported on the Bridford Fete – Saturday 12th July – preparations in full swing. 18 side shows plus music. Lots of volunteers needed. New to you stall; nice items of clothing on racks to look through. Face painting. Homemade stall including cakes. Chair thanked the Fete contribution to Brilliant Bridford.

Twining

Trudy Cronin reported on the trip to Saint Vaast sur Seullles France in May which was very successful. One of the longest surviving twinning relationships. In 2027 it will be 50 years – Bridford will visit France that year. Something very special about the twinning programme. Would like to consider something in the village to mark the 50th Anniversary – perhaps a twinning sign? Need to think about funding for a sign. Could rename the village garden? Need to look at the budget for it in the Autumn to plan ahead. Meeting in the pub to discuss further. Date for the visit of French to Bridford: 14th-17th May 2026.

Footpaths

Dan Tidball reported that DNPA have a map of all the footpaths that have been reported. Very poor state at the moment and issues are very slow to be resolved unfortunately. Continue to report. Landowner responsible for base of path and DNPA responsible for hedges. Hedgemoor path is very overgrown but not allowed to cut back until end of August due to nesting birds.

Action: Clerk to follow up with Pete Rich, DNPA Ranger re. path below Corbyn

Dark skies

Joseph reported he has had several emails about dark skies with Dunsford following the Three Parish Meeting but nothing has come of it yet.

Timing of lights is still not right when we were told it was going to be resolved.

Swifts – local project with 60-70 nest boxes for swifts but swift caller wasn't working so has been repaired and is working again between April and end August so swifts may come next year to nest. Three phases to look out for: birds flying past, then birds looking in to find the caller and then third phase is nesting. Can report to Joseph.

Action: Clerk to raise lighting again with DCC

National Grid

Recent power issues - low voltage is dangerous as can damage equipment

Action: Clerk to follow up with National Grid and raise the issue

Church

Kathy Fitzjohn reported about the meeting about the future of the church. Two new church wardens – Sean and Mike and a new Church Council member and new friends group which is giving support to run the church.

Jayne Lockwood leading the friends of the church – early stages and a lot to do. New committee members still needed. Need to form a constitution and looking at other local churches to see how they've done it. Need more enthusiasm and involvement with events. Next event June 19th 2025 - quiz night at the Bridford Inn, £1 per person, teams of up to 6 – raffle and roll the £1 coin. September – second hand clothes sale – vintage clothes – details to follow. Really need to drum up support for the church. Friends group is independent of the PCC but there to support. June 16th Mining Exhibition coming to the church in Bridford.

District Councillor Swain arrived at 7.15pm

Chair's Annual Report

The Chair reminded parishioners of the role of the Parish Council and what the precept money is spent on. She went on to cover all the activities that the Parish Council has supported in the past year and to thank all the volunteers in the parish.

At the end of the meeting, a parishioner thanked the PC for the success of the Brilliant Bridford celebration.

Meeting closed at 7.30pm

CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT TO PARISHIONERS – JUNE 2ND 2025

This is the part of the meeting where the Chair is meant to let you know what the Parish Council does for our community: how we spend your precept. Bridford Parish Council is an elected body and as such is responsible for spending public money, your precept, which is taken from every household eligible to pay council tax. If you haven't already found it, you'll find it as a separate line on your Council Tax Bill. The total amount of precept available to us last financial year as a parish council was £12220. You will appreciate this is not a lot of money. It is clear that if you as parishioners want more or extra services then your precept has to go up: this is an annual conundrum for us as parish councillors to debate and agree on; we always take account where we can of parishioner feedback which we seek formally and informally throughout the year.

Our actual responsibilities are: managing the allotments, the village garden and the play park; keeping the hill open by maintaining the gritter; facilitating the Book Exchange and Clothing Bank and maintaining two defibrillators. We have one paid employee, the Clerk. All other roles are voluntary.

Every year as parish councillors we work hard to build on good working relationships with District and County councillors and highways, as well as local businesses, the church, the Village Hall, in addition to local groups, such as the fete, Twinning and Teign Unity volunteers. We met with Dunsford and Christow parish councillors to share ideas and expertise (an annual event). We worked with our County Councillor to source a grant to allow ACORN to improve its Carers offer across the area, having identified a particular need in Bridford. We also sourced locality grant funding from Devon County Council to allow us to put on our Brilliant Bridford Day to which about 90 parishioners came and at which many people volunteered. Music was provided by our very own Wayward Pynes and The Teign Singers, with children's activities being offered by Lucy and the Fete Committee.

We have been, and continue to be, committed to providing opportunities to listen to parishioners and to bring parishioners together: our stall at the fete is well embedded and we were also able to put on a VE Day party in the Village Garden to which about 60 parishioners came.

I want to say that, in my opinion, the Parish Council is only as good as the wealth of goodwill expertise and experience freely offered by those of you here and others in our community (only 530 inhabitants in total). As councillors we depend on these skills to enhance our work and keep Bridford a safe and happy place. Those of you who are here and those sending apologies may not be parish councillors but without you I think Bridford would be a poorer place. After Brilliant Bridford we had feedback that our Parish Council is a most visible and approachable Parish Council.

Thank you all for coming. You know where we are if you want to be in touch and don't forget we are currently in need of two new co – opted councillors to take us through until the next elections in 2027.

Thank you,
Judy