

Minutes of the meeting of Bridford Parish Council held on Monday 3rd November 2025 at 7pm in Bridford Village Hall.

Present: Cllr. Topley, Cllr. Purser, Cllr. Marriott, Cllr. Gallagher, Cllr. Symons, Cllr. Hollingsworth, Clerk: Tamsin Mowat, 2 members of the public

Meeting started at 19.00

| Agenda item | Action | Owner |
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| <p>1) Public Discussion: Anne Mayes raised the continuing issue of the size of vehicles coming up Pound Lane and through the village; flatbed lorries carrying concrete sleepers. The concern is for ageing water pipes that are laid just below the road surface. Concerns acknowledged but it seems we might need to bear with it although it was felt wherever possible it would be helpful if smaller vehicles could be used.</p> <p>Anne also mentioned food caddy postcards from TDC; if you don't put food caddy out for 3 weeks in a row you might get a reminder postcard.</p> <p>First responders: potential changes to the way they are organised – Anne Mayes will keep an eye out for any further information</p> <p>Pound Lane hedge cutting discussed. Alex Weaving booked to do the cut at the bottom of the hill. Southwood section? Seven Views section? Seven Acres usually do the top of Coombehead Farm section.</p> <p>Footpath Warden has checked grit bins and all full but need stirring to ensure not crusted over and usable</p> <p>Cllr Marriott arrived 19.03 and Cllr. Symons arrived 19.08</p> | <p>Ask Southwood residents if hedge cutting in hand</p> <p>Remind all parishioners whose properties border Pound Lane about hedge cutting</p> | <p>Cllr. Topley</p> <p>Cllrs</p> |
| <p>2) Apologies For Absence: to vote and agree on apologies received: Cllr. Acheson (work commitment), District Councillor Swain and County Councillor Keeling – all in agreement and apologies accepted</p> | | |
| <p>3) Declarations Of Interest: None</p> | | |
| <p>4) Minutes – to approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on the 13th October 2025 – all agreed and approved and signed.</p> <p>It was noted that the new system for draft minutes worked fine in October.</p> | | |
| <p>5) Review action points from previous meeting</p> <p>Clerk's action points: Ask DCC when drain clearance is due to take place, put Code of Conduct for Cllr. Hollingsworth to sign on November agenda, find out costings for bids to TDC and DCC funds and email all three Councillors to request support for specific amounts, Speeding campaign: put on November draft agenda, Put comment in Unity about speed reading results, Ask DCC Highways what we should use to remove graffiti from road signs, Make payments in Unity Trust Bank, Update PAYE Tools with back pay payment, Update NEST Pension</p> | <p>Put play park costings on agenda for March 2026</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |

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| <p>with Pension back payments and new amount from November, Update Standing orders to show adopted October 2025, Follow new procedure for draft and approved minutes, Find out cost of replacing play park equipment so we can budget for replacement, Put ditches back on agenda for July 2026, Check Unity Trust Bank signatories, Reminder in Unity magazine re. dog poo and bags available. All in hand.</p> <p>Councillors' action points: SP and EG: Monitor drain clearance and photograph; JT: Ask Anne Mayes to keep an eye on first responders situation, PM: go back to Pip Morrison and look into decorative plaque for display in the village garden, SS: Paint fort in play park, All: Follow new procedure for draft and approved minutes. All completed except for fort painting.</p> | <p>Carry over painting of fort in play park</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |
| <p>6) District and County Councillors' Reports - summarised here and full text available at end of minutes</p> <p>County Cllr. Keeling reported on local roadworks, local government reorganisation and the impact on services, women's health, the Devon dementia strategy, vaccinations, children's homes and Citizens Advice.</p> <p>District Cllr. Purser reported that the majority of the time at the last TDC council meeting was taken up by discussion of the migrant situation in Teignbridge. He explained that District Councils have no knowledge or control over the migrant situation in their districts: control sits with the Home Office. There are concerns about the traffic situation in Newton Abbot over the next two years in the context of the planned £7 million new housing proposals.</p> <p>Cllr. Swain also reported on the proposed social housing in Newton Abbot, the migrant situation in Teignbridge and human rights issues.</p> <p>Discussion around the purpose of District and County Councillor reports. The Parish Council include TDC and DCC reports in the minutes for information but are not taking any particular stance as all views are welcome.</p> | | |
| <p>7) Chair's Report (for information only) to be summarised at the meeting; full report available at end of minutes and on the website</p> <p>Chair covered finance training and Pound Lane repairs and related complaints received from parishioners</p> | | |
| <p>8) PLANNING</p> <p>Planning Applications - Dartmoor National Park has asked for observations from the Parish Council on the following planning applications:</p> <p><u>Applications</u></p> <p>0258/25 – Appeal against refusal of planning permission under Section 78 - Field off Lane from Bridford to Commons Hill, Bridford: Retrospective planning application for the retention of 2 stables, a feed/bedding store and covered manure storage area</p> | | |

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| <p>0338/25 – Listed building consent - regularisation works for alterations to an internal wall and change of use of internal rooms as previously approved under planning ref: 5/36/278/97/07 at Higher Neadon, Bridford</p> <p>0070/25 – Appeal against refusal of full planning permission for conversion of redundant agricultural building to form ancillary accommodation at Lower Lowton Farm, Bridford</p> <p>0349/25 - Replacement and enlargement of existing and construction of additional roof dormer at Barnstone, Bridford – all agreed in support</p> <p><u>Decisions</u> None</p> | | |
| <p>9) FINANCES</p> <p><u>Income</u> £269.03 VAT reclaim from HMRC by BACS £30 outstanding allotment rent by BACS £3 from Clerk for income tax paid to HMRC as not taken off salary due to new calculation needed on PAYE tools for back pay and new salary from October</p> <p><u>Expenditure</u> Clerk’s salary for November £599.44 as Salary £666 minus employee pension contribution of £64.56 and income tax for November c.£2 (confirmed exact amount on PAYE Tools was £5) by BACS Monthly employer pension contribution to NEST £4.38 for November by DD Employer’s NI to HMRC c. £36.41 for November by BACS (updated amount £42.35 on PAYE tools) For information: Tax and NI for October and for back pay April-Sept, exact figure after running PAYE Tools was £58.71 Allotment cup engraving from Timpsons to Ian Lucraft (invoice and receipt supplied) £15.00 by BACS</p> <p>Bank reconciliation and statement Unity Trust Bank and CC statement Council to resolve to accept the accounts – all in agreement and accepted</p> | <p>Set up payments in Unity Trust Bank</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |
| <p>10) Budget – (draft budget shared before meeting) the budget was discussed in detail, line by line. Discussion around cost of living, future financial health of the Parish Council and where any savings could be made. The Clerk’s salary was discussed as it is the greatest expense, but it’s in line with national salary rates and legally contracted with two appraisal meetings a year. Chair noted that this is the case for all small parish councils and that the Clerk is valued by the Council. There was a clear wish not to set a deficit budget this year as the Parish Council will have to budget for election expenses next year. Budget set and all agreed.</p> | <p>Add piece to Unity magazine article about budget setting and considerations</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |
| <p>11) Precept – resolve to agree amount and notify TDC (or move to January agenda if can’t be agreed immediately). Cllr. Symons proposed and all agreed to set the Precept at a 16% increase on last year to set a balanced budget. Precept amount to request from TDC for 2026/7 £15 379.</p> | <p>Request Precept from TDC</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |
| <p>12) Code of conduct – Cllr. Hollingsworth to agree to and sign code of conduct. Cllr. Acheson to sign printed page too. Clerk to scan in signatures and save. Signed by Cllr. Hollingsworth and Cllr Acheson’s signature to be scanned in from previous meeting.</p> | <p>Scan in signatures</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |

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| 13) Speeding campaign – discuss progress and resolve to agree next steps – to be carried over to next meeting | Carry over to January agenda | Clerk |
| Clerk's report (for information only) Updates on Churchyard closure, Highways repairs, Westcott HGVs signs, allotments, VAT claim and DCC Locality Funding and TDC community funding | | |
| Councillor's reports (for information only) and Out and About in the Community Cllr. Symons – Westcott signs – check once work started and bring up again if needed. Stones at Westcott – Cllr. Symons to send Clerk photos. Roadworks – signs left lying around and up well after work finished and traffic going down back lanes and causing issues. | Send photos to Clerk Report Westcott stones to DCC Highways Ask DCC to remove superfluous signs | Cllr. Symons Clerk Clerk |
| Email information DALC bulletins - up to #46 and NALC bulletins DNPA Planning applications DCC Highways updates Village Hall registration updates Churchyard closure updates Budget 2026/7 documents | | |
| Meeting closed 21.02 Items for Information - The next council meeting will be on Monday 5th January 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall. Note that there is no meeting in December. | | |

Signed:

Date:

Chair of Bridford Parish Council

CHAIR'S REPORT NOVEMBER 2025

This report was kept purposely short to allow maximum agenda time to discuss and set the budget for the next financial year and to debate the precept following this.

Finance Training

I recently attended Finance Training. I was very reassured to have confirmed that all advice/suggestions/ways of working, and legal requirements are already in place within Bridford Parish Council. Thanks go to our Responsible Finance Officer (RFO), who is also our Clerk, for her vigilance in this regard.

Pound Lane Repairs

Complaints have been received from several parishioners about the quality of work on Pound Lane; value for money for taxpayers; inconvenience of the road being closed for a day and a half. Individual parishioners and the Parish Council have contacted Highways and our County Councillor about this matter.

County Councillor Keeling's report November 2025

Thank you to all Town and Parishes Clerks and Councillors that I visited either at council meetings or teams and I will continue to go around to all councils in rotation.

The main concern in all areas of Chudleigh & Teign Valley is road works, I have been talking with Head of Highways on how we can do things differently given we have services requiring upgrades and road repairs constantly. Under the permit scheme that Highways run, they approve 50,000 road works a year on 8,000 miles of road. The latest round of the Highways funding from government left Devon with ten million pounds less this financial year, we are challenging this at present and I will keep you informed. At Chudleigh I have authorised free parking on the 31st October and the 4th December from 4pm to support late night shopping as well as other measures to support businesses. You will have seen me sharing information about events in our Town & Parishes, please share this and promote shop local. I have attended today a webinar on the road works on the Newton Abbot A383 and 382, this is going to have an impact on Newton Abbot and those residents that work/shop there. I will keep you updated as I have asked for regular briefings with timelines.

Devon County Council welcomes national report supporting protection of vital care services

Senior councillors at Devon County Council have welcomed a major new report from the County Councils Network (CCN), which warns that breaking up county councils into smaller unitary authorities could seriously harm the delivery of essential care services. The report, Local Government Reorganisation: Analysing the Impact on People Services, provides strong evidence that larger councils are better equipped to deliver high

quality adult social care, children's services, and support for people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It highlights risks including increased costs, reduced service quality, and challenges in recruiting senior care staff. Devon's lead option for reorganisation proposes replacing all eight district, city and borough councils, along with Devon County Council, with a single new unitary authority covering the current county footprint – avoiding fragmentation of care services.

Key findings from the report include:

- Councils with populations below 500,000 could face up to £270 million in extra annual care costs.
- Smaller councils may need up to 1,100 additional senior care staff, costing £95 million.
- Larger councils are more likely to receive 'Good' or 'Outstanding' Ofsted ratings.
- Fragmentation could lead to legal disputes over care responsibilities.

I have reported as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Services, that; “Smaller councils are more vulnerable to demand pressures and financial instability. Devon’s preferred model keeps services together and protects quality.”

Women’s health Strategy

The government recently announced to Councils a renewed Women’s Health Strategy, set to be published next year, following an acknowledgment that the current system is "failing women" on issues like gynaecology waiting lists and care for conditions such as endometriosis. Our national partner Healthwatch England’s research team is currently analysing local Healthwatch reports and data on women’s health to identify persistent gaps in care. They will be publishing and sharing this comprehensive analysis with the government in the New Year to help shape the refreshed strategy and drive improvements.

Key points on the strategy refresh:

- The renewed strategy will replace the initial plan, which lost momentum after dedicated funding and a mandate for local women’s health hubs were dropped.
- The Health and Social Care Secretary stated the refreshed strategy will set out a "longer-term vision" to ensure women receive the healthcare they need.
- In a separate announcement this week, the government confirmed that menopause questions will be added to the five-yearly NHS Health Check offered to adults aged 40–74

Devon Dementia Strategy

A number of organisations in Devon, including Devon County Council, the NHS and charitable organisations, have co-produced this strategy to make the pathway for dementia care clearer for all involved. See the full document here: <https://bridfordvillage.co.uk/devon-dementia-strategy-2025/>

Changing attitudes to vaccination in Devon, Plymouth & Torbay

I sit as a Governor on the Torbay and South Devon NHS Trust and have seen a report on changing attitudes to vaccination in Devon, Plymouth & Torbay, this investigates the reasons behind the declining uptake of vaccination among at risk groups across the area. Their findings, based on local resident experiences, highlight that the issue goes beyond simple access, and provides insights that NHS Devon said they will be using to refine future public health campaigns.

Key points from the report:

- Reasons for Refusal:** The main factors cited by the public for declining a vaccine were vaccine fatigue, concerns about side effects, and, in some cases, mistrust of the programmes.
- Service Delivery is Good:** The report confirmed high levels of procedure satisfaction and widespread praise for the healthcare staff delivering the vaccinations, indicating the challenge lies in public perception and communication, not service quality.
- Healthwatch Recommendations:** We recommend NHS Devon adopt a more segmented approach to campaigns, focusing on tailoring messages to address specific demographic hesitancy, and engaging in transparent, two-way dialogue to rebuild public trust.
- NHS Devon Response:** NHS Devon has acknowledged the findings and committed to integrating the report’s key themes - such as directly addressing vaccine fatigue and side effects - into its planning for upcoming vaccination seasons. They continue to actively encourage uptake through GPs, vaccination centres, pharmacies, and local outreach clinics.

New Children’s Home, Atkinson secure children’s home in Exeter

The current home is reaching the end of its useful life and is no longer suitable for meeting the diverse therapeutic needs of the vulnerable young people placed there. The new proposal would allow the provision to expand to meet the needs of more vulnerable young people in Devon and nationally. DCC are working with specialist surveyors to decide whether the proposed site is feasible for the new-build. If the site is deemed feasible, a full planning application would follow and the public would have opportunity to have their say about the application as part of that planning process. Cabinet Member with responsibility for children's services, Cllr Richard Jefferies, said: 'We need to take action now to ensure the future of this much needed service here in Devon.'

Citizen Advice (CA) Devon

Please find attached the Citizen Advice (CA) Devon quarterly report (Quarter 2 – 2025/26) .

I hope you find the report informing and a useful reference. If time is in short supply, here are some highlights to note for the quarter:

- 7,657 Devon residents received help from Citizens Advice Devon.
- Top 5 issues advised upon: benefits, debt issues, followed by utilities, housing and consumer matters.
- The trend of clients presenting with greater complexity of circumstances continues. 33,354 issues were resolved this quarter.
- Income gains for clients amounted to £7.84mn for this quarter
- £1.48mn of debt has been written off in the period.

Those coming to Citizen Advice Devon for advice in this quarter were estimated to hold £1.68mn of debt. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations 'Road Ahead' report states that 2025 will be the year of the 'big squeeze' for charities as they face the perfect storm of rising costs (including employer's national insurance increases) and soaring demand.

Citizens Advice Devon has continued to experience reduced non-council funding so far this year, with an 18% reduction in non-council funding compared to the same quarter of the previous year (£493,283 of additional funding was secured by CA Devon this quarter).

The quarter saw a 16% reduction in full-time paid staff (CA Devon employees 61.4 full time employees) , such as specialist caseworkers. 18 additional volunteers have been recruited this quarter; 339 volunteers support the Devon service overall. Demand for CA Devon support continues to outstrip supply.

District Councillor Swain's report November 2025

At full council 23 October, there were details of the Sherbourne house project which will deliver 23 new social housing units on a brownfield site in Newton Abbot, to passive house+ standards. A good result. I do think that more council housing not only provides housing but also provides a baseline quality that all landlords can be measured against. It is hard to justify unfit properties and sky-high rents if the market also contains good quality offerings at reasonable rents.

However, the meeting was dominated by a motion from the one reform councillor "Safeguarding Local Communities from Unconsulted Migrant Placements". I found the language extremely misleading, discriminatory and dangerous. A lot of people contacted me with their concerns about the motion, and I thank them. Their support really helps. I opposed the motion which was lost by 34 to 1 with 2 abstentions.

Our group brought a counter motion "Celebrating the Contribution of Overseas-Born and Asylum-Seeking Residents" which was won.

Nationally there are cost of living, housing and climate crises. We need real solutions, but some just blame migrants or human rights. Migrants are people who move. Asylum seekers, fleeing for their lives are a tiny part of immigration, but Brexit has meant more small boats risking lives. I think we must target the criminal gangs that profit and the political actions that people are fleeing. Migrants don't overload our systems, migrants support them.

Violence against women and girls is a huge problem, but is not primarily from migrants, asylum seekers or trans people, it is usually in the home and is from - abusers. Scapegoating vulnerable groups, does harm to those groups but it also does harm to women and girls by undermining positive action to prevent abuse.

Teignbridge does excellent work under Rebecca Hewitt and the Teignbridge community safety partnership. Becca is now a finalist for an award for her work Combatting Violence Against women and Girls delivering policies based on reality that target abusers.

Bringing people together is hard, tolerance is crucial, and we can help each other. Making things worse for other people, does not make them better for us.

I was very disappointed to get a letter from Mel Stride this week saying that "a future Conservative Government will leave the ECHR and repeal the Human Rights Act on immigration-related matters." He argues human rights have been weaponised and concludes we must therefore all lose those rights. I disagree most strongly with that position, and I believe rights such as freedom from torture, a fair trial, no punishment without law, are fundamental and should apply to all humans.

I will continue to protect our rights and will work for everyone in our community.

Details of the recent council meeting are

here: <https://democracy.teignbridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx...>

and if you would like to see my contributions they are here : https://teignbridge.public-i.tv/.../start_time/2215000 and : https://teignbridge.public-i.tv/.../start_time/3910000