

Minutes from Bridford Parish Council meeting on Monday 13th April 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Topley (Chair), Cllr. Purser (Vice Chair), Cllr. Acheson, Cllr. Marriott, Cllr. Hollingsworth and Cllr. Symons, Tamsin Mowat (Clerk)

Meeting opened at: 7pm

Agenda item	Action	Owner
<p>1) Public Discussion: An opportunity for members of the public to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business on the agenda, or any matter of interest to the parish. The period of time designated for public participation shall not exceed 30 minutes. (Standing Orders 3e and 3f). Reminder that members of the public are not allowed to raise issues when Council is in committee. None.</p>		
<p>2) Apologies For Absence: to vote and agree whether to approve apologies received: Cllr. Gallagher (work commitments) – apologies accepted and approved</p> <p>Cllr. Hollingsworth arrived 19.02</p>		
<p>3) Declarations Of Interest: None</p>		
<p>4) Minutes – to approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd March 2026. Please note an amendment was made to the draft minutes for March in the Public Discussion agenda point for the Police Community meeting and Pound Lane passing issue at the parishioner’s request. Minutes approved and signed.</p> <p>Cllr Symons arrived 19.04</p>	<p>Post approved March minutes to website</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>5) Review action points from previous meeting</p> <p>a) Clerk’s: Ask Rally organisers to let Unity magazine know and give them contact details, continue to monitor bus service, liaise with Chair over contacting agents if needs be, post approved minutes to website, carry over painting fort in play park to April agenda, make payments in Unity Trust Bank, send comments to DNPA, inform Legal department at TDC and PCC, put Play Park consultation opportunities on April agenda, find out if development funding from Oxenpark is still available, check progress and timescale on back lane repairs with Highways and report Swanaford Road again, reorganise training for Cllr. Acheson with DALC.</p> <p>Updates for the above: Churchyard closure responsibility for maintenance - BPC informed TDC Legal team in March. Cllr. Purser and Clerk chasing and having trouble contacting legal team; ask Cllr. Richard Keeling to help us. Invoice received from PCC for grass cutting – check legal position and dates.</p>	<p>Request help from Cllr. Keeling at TDC re. no contact from legal team re. churchyard closure.</p> <p>Check legal position and reply to PCC</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

<p>Councillors' EG: QR code for consultation on park gate, PM: Hedgehog signs to be trialled (carry over), SS: paint fort in play park (carry over)</p>		
<p>6) District and County Councillors' (reports summarised here and full reports available at the end of minutes and on the website) County Cllr. Keeling – covered a new Town and Parish Council handbook that TDC are creating to support councils, the new and outgoing CEOs for Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA), Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), Crisis and Resilience Fund (CaRF) which offers help for people in sudden financial difficulties, fostering information sessions and reporting potholes District Cllr. Purser – tetra pack can put in black box now as trial. Lido at Teignmouth to be kept open for this year and community trust being set up to take it over next year. Inspector has agreed the Local Plan – Tedburn application for 40 houses because Local Plan had those houses in and approved the location. Doddiscombsleigh – 10 houses also in plan and signed off by inspector but needs to go through planning etc. A lot of hard work has gone in at TDC to the Local Plan.</p>	<p>Put Councillors' full reports at end of minutes and on website</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>7) Chair's Report (for information only) summarised here and full report available at end of minutes and on website Chair covered the Parish Plan meeting, priorities for the parish for the next five years, consultation of parishioners over the use of the play park, grant applications to supplement funding, the need for affordable housing in the parish, the ownership of the Village Hall and the verges plan.</p>	<p>Put Chair's full report at end of minutes and on website</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>8) FINANCES <u>Income</u> £250 donation from Bridford Fete (ringfenced for the play park) £45 allotment rent (6 months from 1st April) and refundable deposit for full plot <u>Expenditure</u> <u>Clerk's salary, pension and other expenses</u> <u>Paid</u> Salary update: Adjusted Clerk's Salary for March of £666 minus income tax £8.60 (due to tax code change) and Pension £64.53 so £592.87 HMRC NI and Tax March £45.95 <u>To be paid</u> Clerk's salary April corrected as annual leave should have been paid rather than unpaid so £666 minus tax (£0) and employee's Pension contribution to NEST (£64.53) £601.47 HMRC tax and NI for April c.£37.35 BACS (after running PAYE Tools) Clerk's Pension employer contribution to NEST April £4.35 DD <u>Other items to be paid</u> DALC (including NALC) membership renewal due 1st May 2026 DALC - £223.16 (inc. VAT) - BACS ROSPA Play park inspection £133.20 (incl. VAT) – BACS Website hosting (October 2025-2026) and registration (June 2025-2026) fees £199.05 to be paid by Jarrod Poynton on behalf of BPC – BACS</p>	<p>Make payments in Unity Trust Bank</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

<p><u>Other items paid</u></p> <p>Anti-dog fouling replacement signs x5 Amazon £20.44 (incl £3.45 VAT) (authorised and paid by Clerk as replacement assets) - CC</p> <p>Norton Antivirus subscription renewal offer of £34.99 for two years and then £89 annually thereafter from April 2028 – CC (Clerk renewed as previously agreed and in budget line)</p> <p>Alex Weaving trimming allotment hedge £60 (£50 plus VAT) (authorised and paid by Clerk as due 4th April on 30-day term and under £200 and in an existing budget line in accordance with the Financial Regulations)</p> <p><u>Recurring payments</u></p> <p>Clerk’s homeworking expenses - £6 per week SO</p> <p>Clerk’s SIM and data plan - £3.99 per month recurring payment on BPC CC</p> <p>HP Instant Ink £4.49 - BPC CC</p> <p>CC monthly fee £3 by DD to Lloyds Bank (for Unity Trust)</p> <p>Unity Trust Bank service charge £6 per month by DD</p> <p>Bank reconciliation and statement and Unity Trust Bank and CC statement for March 2026 supplied and Q4 and end of year totals supplied</p> <p>Council to resolve to accept the accounts – all agreed and resolved to accept accounts</p>		
<p>9) 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>None this month</p> <p><u>Decisions</u></p> <p>DOC/0308/25 4 - Retention of field shelter, tape fencing, use of land and building in connection with horse training including hard surface area for horse walker, manure trailer, welfare caravan and parking for vehicle/horse trailer or box - Barn at Swanaford House, Bridford - Discharged</p> <p>0052/25 - New farm tracks - Westcott Dairy, Bridford - No Decision</p> <p>0035/26 – Excavation of field to create agricultural storage area and infill two pits, Barytes, Bridford - refusal</p>		
<p>10) Policy updates and new policies (circulated before the meeting):</p> <p>Financial Regulations (for annual review), Privacy Notice (updated), Retention and Disposal Policy (updated and appendix added), Complaints Policy (new) and Safeguarding policy (new) - to be adopted and posted to website along with Data Protection policy (previously approved) – all agreed and adopted</p>	<p>Post policies to website</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

<p>11) Play park action plan (notes circulated before the meeting) – to be discussed and agreed. Following ROSPA annual Safety inspection - nothing high risk noted, an Action Plan was discussed and agreed. It identified the need for some maintenance work to be carried out. Cllr Symons and Cllr Topley will visit the Playpark to prioritise the work required and bring information back to the next PC meeting. The need for fencing was discussed; this may require some further short-term safety work to secure the perimeter; this will be assessed by Cllrs Symons and Topley at their visit</p>	<p>Paint fort in play park (carry over to May's agenda)</p> <p>Play park visit to be carried out and report to May meeting</p>	<p>Cllr. Symons</p> <p>Cllrs. Topley and Symons</p>
<p>12) Play park consultation opportunities – to be discussed and agreed – QR code, School Council, door to door, APM, Fete (11th July), survey at certain days and times (first week of July and summer holidays), Unity (June) – survey card on gate – fill in and hand in to BPC stand to get a sweet and raffle ticket team and ask about play park and beyond – future: do you use the play park, how often, who, which equipment? Revisit at May meeting</p>	<p>Carry over play park consultation to May meeting</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>13) APM arrangements and budget - to be discussed and agreed – Thursday 7th May 6pm – specific invites to go out (check last year's list) – nibbles and refreshments – Cllr. Topley to purchase from Chair's budget and events budget</p> <p>Cllr. Acheson left the meeting at 8.30pm due to work commitments</p>	<p>Send APM invites out</p> <p>Purchase APM nibbles and refreshments</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr. Topley</p>
<p>14) Highways as standing item - discuss latest issues and agree actions – Pound Lane still rough at the bottom and Neadon not great. Cossick Cross; large potholes – Cllr. Hollingsworth to send to Clerk to report to DCC</p>	<p>Send What Three Words to Clerk for Cossick Cross potholes</p> <p>Report potholes to DCC</p>	<p>Cllr. Hollingsworth</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>Clerk's report (for information only) Primrose Rally update – apology received, Road Warden scheme, DCC Highways, ROSPA play park inspection, Churchyard closure update</p>		
<p>Councillor's reports/training/Out and About in the Community (for information only) – none</p>		
<p>Items for Information - The next council meeting will be on Monday 11th May 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall (due to Bank Holiday).</p> <p>The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 7th May at 6pm in the Village Hall; refreshments and nibbles will be served, and all parishioners are very welcome to attend.</p>	<p>Post agenda for APM to website</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

<p>Email information DALC bulletins - up to #17 and NALC bulletins DNPA Planning applications DCC Highways updates Churchyard closure updates</p> <p>Meeting closed at 20.47</p>		

Signed:

Date:

Chair of Bridford Parish Council

CHAIRS REPORT APRIL 2026

PARISH PLAN

Cllrs Gallagher, Hollingsworth, Marriott and I had a productive meeting thinking about the Parish Council's roles and responsibilities over the next few years.

Key points:

Although we have some reserves we can use to make up any budget deficit, eventually, if we don't run a balanced budget, the precept will need to be even higher. We expect that from year to year going forward, the Parish Council will ensure a financially stable balanced budget.

It's therefore clear we have to look for funding in addition to the precept to successfully deliver our current responsibilities, as well as any future commitments. We took the very difficult decision to put up the precept this year by 16% in order to ensure we have an almost balanced budget.

·We need more rigorous consultation especially with regard to the play park to decide on priorities for our 5-year financial plan. We know that the bus shelter, telephone box and Village Garden seats also need attention

·We agreed to look to use of A1 to enable various tasks to be quicker (admin; policy writing; consultation for example) and therefore free up more time for grant applications – to this end the Clerk and myself are attending AI training in the coming months and Cllr Gallagher providing advice moving forward

·We need to identify what we want to apply for grants for and this should be informed by what we know needs attention as well as consultation results

I will share these ideas with parishioners when I make my report at the Annual Parish Meeting.

PLAYPARK

TDC invited the Parish Council to a very productive meeting to discuss the future of the Playpark. Cllr Purser and I attended, together with the Housing Enabling and Development Team: Chris Trowell,

Manager and Mary Ridgeway who works on village and rural schemes

TDC has identified two things:

1. Playpark land is a TDC asset, currently on an annual lease to Bridford Parish Council
2. There is an identified need at the moment for five affordable houses in the village (taken from sign-ups to the Devon Home Register)

Key points at this early stage:

1. There is no desire to take away the Playpark altogether – at the moment TDC is only looking at part of our Playpark site to develop five affordable homes
2. it's a long time before any definite plans are likely to be in place
3. TDC asked if the parish council could quantify the degree of use of the Playpark, which equipment is preferred and the ages of those using it. Cllr Gallagher and I will discuss this as she develops the imminent Playpark QR consult we are planning to do.

I will share these ideas with parishioners when I make my report at the Annual Parish Meeting.

VILLAGE HALL

The Chair of the Village Hall Committee, Ray Spurr convened a meeting with Cllr Purser and myself to discuss ownership of the VH. No decisions were made and the conversation was amicable. The Village Hall intends to be in contact with the parish council in due course.

VERGES

Lucy Smerdon our Wildlife Warden has messaged to say that she is hoping to get to Butts Close verge soon to give it a light strim, knock back the grass and hopefully encourage the flowers. Many thanks to her.

Lucy has advised that the trees/ bushy parts/along the hedge of Pound Lane could do with a strim to knock back the nettles and docks before they go to seed. The foliage debris would need to be raked up and taken away to avoid over fertilisation. I have asked her to contact Graham Dicker for a timeframe for when he can do the work. This would be a good piece of work to do to indicate to the community that the hedges are being thoughtfully well managed.

Councillor Richard Keeling's Report April 2026, to Chudleigh, Hennock, Ashton, Bridford, Christow, Doddiscomleigh, Dunsford, Mortonhamstead, Tedburn St Mary & Trusham.

Thank you to all Councillors and Residents I have spoken to over the last month with their concerns in their areas. I will be at the Hennock Parish Council AGM on Monday 30th March and Mortonhamstead Parish Council AGM on Saturday the 4th April and various full council meetings throughout the month.

Town and Parish Council Handbook

We have been working on a handbook that can help Towns and Parishes Councillors and the wider partners understand how District Councils, County Council work and how to unlock access to schemes including to mention just two, the road warden scheme and 20mph schemes. We hope to have a copy out to you by the end of April.

New Chief Executive Officer for Dartmoor National Park

Tom Surrey has been appointed as the new Chief Executive of the Dartmoor National Park Authority, scheduled to take up the role this month. He brings over 20 years of public service experience, including leading policy for National Parks at Defra. Dr. Kevin Bishop is the outgoing Chief Executive who held the post for over 18 years. Kevin has been a good partner for both Teignbridge District Council and the wider Devon County Council and will be missed.

Local Government Reorganisation Update.

Thank you to all of you who completed the survey for the Government's consultation on local government reorganisation (LGR) in Devon. The survey has now closed, and the Government will now consider all responses from staff, residents and partners, with a final decision expected in July 2026. It is a privilege to be part of the team leading the South West peninsula. You can read more about this work here (link opens new page): <https://www.devon.gov.uk/devolution-and-lgr/>

Crisis and Resilience Fund (CaRF)

We have published a report setting out our approach to implementing the Government's new national Crisis and Resilience Fund (CaRF) in Devon. The new fund will replace the current Household Support Fund,

which is due to end in March 2026. CaRF is designed to offer more targeted help to people facing sudden financial difficulties, while also supporting longer term financial resilience. To deliver CaRF, we will receive £8.4 million a year for three years, from 2026/27 to 2028/29. The funding will be used to help people on low incomes who experience an unexpected financial shock, such as a sudden loss of income or an essential cost they cannot afford.

The support will focus on four main areas:

- Crisis payments to help people in immediate financial difficulty
- Housing support provided by District Councils, replacing existing discretionary housing payments
- Wraparound financial resilience services, such as advice and support to help people manage their money and avoid future crises
- Community funding to strengthen local advice and support networks across Devon

The approach builds on our experience of delivering previous cost of living support, working closely with district councils and voluntary and community organisations. A partnership board will be created to oversee delivery and to review and refine the approach over the life of the programme. The new fund is not a direct replacement for the Household Support Fund. Rather than broad or automatic payments, the emphasis would be on targeted, needs based support for people facing genuine financial crisis.

Fostering

Our Fostering Devon service is part of Fostering South West, a group of local councils working together to make sure children and young people can stay close to their communities, schools and support networks. They're inviting anyone who's ever wondered whether fostering could be right for them to join an upcoming virtual information session.

The sessions are relaxed and informal, giving people the chance to learn more about fostering in Devon, hear from those with real experience and ask questions about the support available from the council.

There's no obligation, just an opportunity to find out more. For more details see (link opens new page) <https://inside.devon.gov.uk/news/find-out-more-about-fostering/>

Potholes

Please note that you can report potholes and other highways problems online and track your issue quickly, link here: (link opens new page) <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/>

Please contact me if you have any questions on Devon County Council or Teignbridge District Council.