

HOLNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held in Holne Village Hall on Tuesday 7 February 2023 at 7.30pm

Present

Cllr B Owen (Chairman), R Applegarth and M Fairman

Also present

Suzanna Hughes (Clerk), County Cllr Thomas, District Cllr Smerdon and four members of the public

The meeting was opened by Cllr Owen at 7.30pm.

The Chairman requested everyone to stand and observe a minute's silence in memory of the late Councillor John Bellamy.

070223.01	Apologies for Absence <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Crook• Cllr McLean• District Cllr Pannell
070223.02	Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest and requests for dispensation.</p>
070223.03	Open Forum <p>A resident questioned why the parish doesn't have a bottle bank. The parish still has a mixed system where some bottles are collected by SHDC whereas residents of other properties still have to take them to the bottle bank in Ashburton or Buckfastleigh. It is not yet known when everyone will be on the same system. It was suggested that the Parish Council requests a bottle bank; the preferred site would be in Scoriton and it was agreed to contact Buckfastleigh West Parish Council to ask whether they knew of a possible site which could be used.</p> <p>A resident reported a pothole between Gallant Le Bower and Stoodley – Cllr Applegarth offered to report it to DCC.</p> <p>Ross Gray commented on the new management plan for Holne Woods. In general, he considered that it looks very sensible and balanced but suggested that the Parish Council asks to be consulted after 5 years (the review date).</p> <p>Moles – a resident expressed concern about the moles and offered support to help flatten the mole hills before the contractor cuts the grass.</p>
070223.04	County & District Councillors' Reports <p>District Councillors' report was circulated to members (copy attached).</p> <p>District Cllr Smerdon also circulated a DNPA report (copy attached).</p> <p>County Cllr Thomas' report was circulated to members (copy attached). Cllr Thomas also reminded members that he still had some funds available in his locality budget should a project in the parish benefit from some funding.</p>

070223.05	<p>Ratification of Minutes Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3 January 2023. It was agreed unanimously that they be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>
070223.06	<p>Finance and Governance 6.1 The following payments were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £405 - AED Cabinets (defibrillator cabinet) • £34 - asap-locks.co.uk (locksmith to unlock defibrillator cabinet) • £160 - Ross Adams/Abundant Gardens (trimming of willow structure)
070223.07	<p>Planning</p> <p>7.1 New applications/appeals</p> <p>7.1.1 0039/23 – Glebe House, Holne Proposed re-thatching of existing roof including repairs to fascias and soffits (listed building consent)</p> <p>Members had no objections to this application.</p> <p>It was noted that there has been a significant amount of groundworks at the property and it was queried whether listed building consent was required. It was agreed to ask DNPA to look into this.</p> <p>7.1.2 0027/23 – Sky Garden, Holne Amendments to previously approved scheme under planning ref 0395/21 including changes to replacement dwelling, outbuildings, pool and landscaping</p> <p>Members had no objections to this application.</p> <p>7.1.3 0023/23 – Stoodley, Holne Retrospective application for erection of replacement fence to boundary. A vertical hit and miss style timber fence to 3m tall to provide security and privacy for properties both side of the fence following request by neighbours to erect a taller fence</p> <p>Members had no objections to this application.</p> <p>The Parish Council has been made aware of further development at this location (possible extension into the garage) which does not appear to have planning consent. It was agreed to check with DNPA whether consent is required.</p> <p>7.2 Decisions None</p>
070223.08	<p>Highways and Footpaths Cllr Applegarth was not aware of any issues on the footpaths. He will report any obvious potholes to Devon County Council.</p> <p>A resident has trimmed the branch overhanging the sign at the end of the footpath near Church Park Cottages.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that a sign at the bottom of the footpath between Michelcombe Lane and Bearwood has broken and fallen into the hedge. It was agreed to report this to DNPA.</p>
070223.09	<p>Playpark 9.1 Members received quotations to fell the ash in Playpark. It was agreed to accept a quotation from Geoff Partridge of £500. It was agreed that the wood will be cut into metre lengths and the brash would be chipped and left on site to be spread by members of the Playpark Committee underneath the willow structure.</p>

	<p>9.2 Wildflower management plan – members had not had chance to read this and it was therefore agreed to defer this item until March’s meeting.</p> <p>9.3 Mole hills - after discussion it was agreed to ask the contractor whether he can give the Parish Council some notice as to when he will be cutting. Residents are prepared to help flatten the molehills and Cllr Applegarth is willing to chain harrow the park to reduce any impact on the contractor’s machinery.</p> <p>9.4 Members discussed the picket fence around the play equipment. The clerk advised that she had written to SHDC to find out whether it was a requirement to keep the fence but had not received a response. Regardless of this, members were in favour of keeping the area fenced so as to maintain a safe environment for small children. It was agreed to look at the fence and assess the extent of the necessary repairs. It was also agreed to ask County Cllr Thomas for some funding.</p> <p>9.5 Members received the latest Playpark Committee minutes. It was noted that dog fouling is a problem. New signs are required and the Committee has suggested that the local children might design something appropriate. If new signs need to be purchased, this will come back to the Parish Council for approval. The Committee discussed the installation of some hardstanding around the basketball hoop. It was confirmed that Cllr Fairman had already looked into the cost of this which was in excess of £1000. Cllr Fairman confirmed that he will continue to clear the leat.</p>
070223.10	<p>Devon Air Ambulance Lighting Mast Cllr Applegarth advised that Holne Books are happy to continue to help with the cost of the electricity. It was agreed that, for the time being, the cost will be shared equally between Holne Books and the Parish Council.</p> <p>DAAT’s Landing Site Manager has spoken to MAT Electrics about a quote to convert to solar power. A cost is awaited.</p>
070223.11	<p>Leats Cllr Applegarth reported that he and Cllr Crook has been checking them. A resident had contacted him about a blockage but it is hoped that this has now been rectified.</p>
070223.12	<p>Clerk’s or Councillors reports on matters authorised by the Council at previous meetings not otherwise on this agenda None</p>
070223.13	<p>Chairman’s urgent business for action by the clerk if covered by delegated powers or for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting None</p>
070223.14	<p>Correspondence None</p>
070223.15	<p>Meeting Dates 15.1 It was confirmed that the date of the next Parish Council meeting will be 7 March 2023. 15.2 It was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on 4th April at 7pm. 15.3 It was agreed that the Annual Meeting of the Council (following the parish elections) will be held on 23 May.</p>

.....
Cllr B Owen
Chairman

County Councillor's Report

Council Awarded £1m to Support Community Net Zero Targets

Some positives, but not enough progress say Ofsted Inspectors. Ofsted has published its latest monitoring report after inspectors visited our Children's Services. There has not been enough progress made in key areas since Ofsted's full inspection and some serious issues remain, but there are some positives highlighted in today's report. You can read more about Ofsted's report, and our reaction to it, in the story on our news centre at www.devon.gov.uk/news/some-positives-but-not-enough-progress-for-children-in-devon-and-serious-issues-remain-say-inspectors/.

Levelling up funding announced for projects in Devon

Multi-million pound schemes to improve transport links in Exmouth and Okehampton are among more than 100 projects receiving a share of £2.1 billion through the Government's latest round of Levelling Up funding. We've been awarded £15.7 million to complete the Dinan Way link in Exmouth, and West Devon Borough Council has successfully received £13.4 million to develop a new railway station on the eastern edge of Okehampton. The funding for the Destination Exmouth project will enable the completion of Dinan Way link road, helping to tackle congestion and remove traffic from the town centre. The project, which is also supported by East Devon District Council, will improve walking and cycling routes as well as enhancing the town's transport hub. The West Devon Transport Hub will build on the successful reinstatement of the Dartmoor Line in November 2021. As well as a new station on the outskirts of Okehampton, the scheme will also include cycle facilities and electric vehicle charging points to promote active travel and green travel.

Support for families as food poverty rises

The number of households in Devon unable to access or afford the food that they need to ensure that they and their families stay healthy has increased by 70 per cent in 18 months. And more than a third of households say that they plan to switch off their heating altogether this winter to help make ends meet. We're working with local partners, including local councils, the NHS and the voluntary and community sector, on ways to support communities, and there are a variety of schemes on offer depending on people's circumstances. These include the Household Support Fund, Free School Meals and Free School Meals Holiday Voucher scheme, The Holiday Activity and Food Programme and Citizens Advice Devon. For more information you can read the full story on the news page of our website, or visit our dedicated Cost of Living webpages at www.devon.gov.uk/cost-of-living/.

District Councillors' report

Council Awarded £1m to Support Community Net Zero Targets

South Hams District Council has been granted funding of over £1m to help reduce carbon emissions in the District. The money will allow the Council to deliver targeted business and community support programmes.

The award comes from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The Council is using the money to achieve the most sustainable outcomes possible to support its Climate Change and Biodiversity promise to become net-zero by 2050.

By working closely with specialist organisations, businesses and community groups, the Council can improve sustainable travel infrastructure, begin to decarbonise our marine sector, and help our farming community to adopt innovative approaches to farming that are better for our climate and ecology. The first step towards improvements is **Active and Inclusive Travel** through:

- programmes of activities to encourage people to use sustainable travel for their work and leisure activities, particularly making our tourism sites accessible through low carbon transport
- the development of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, setting out and prioritising interventions to improve the local cycling and walking networks

Agriculture and Regenerative Farming improvements will support the rural economy by:

- bringing research and development to our agricultural communities, turning them into a test bed for new technologies and processes so that they can lead the way in improving the national agricultural sector.
- supporting farms to transition to regenerative farming processes. Focusing on improving soil quality, moving away from pesticides and fertilisers, and improving biodiversity on their sites.
- supporting farms and food producers to get their products into local market places.
- As a coastal district it is important also important to consider the **Decarbonisation of the Marine Economy**. Therefore, the District Council will be using their funds to:
- decarbonise the Lower Dart Ferry and Salcombe water taxis.
- establish the carbon footprint of Salcombe Harbour and develop a strategy to decarbonise the site.
- deliver innovative pilot projects to bring new technologies and processes to the marine sector.

Across the District, the Council's specialist officers will be offering **Wider Business Decarbonisation Support and Consultancy** with:

- support for Community Energy Groups to help them bring projects forward and access funds to support their goals.
- support for village halls to strengthen the role they play in our most rural communities.
- delivery of decarbonisation plans for businesses, which will then be used to help them access grant support.
- work with the local construction sector and its supply chain to strengthen its ability to deliver decarbonised building projects.
- Some activities will begin delivery in January, but the bulk of our programme will run from April 2023 until the end of March 2025.

Council Tax

At the December Full Council meeting SHDC members voted to adopt the aim of limiting any rise in our element of the Council Tax for the coming financial year to a maximum of £5 a year for the average Band D property.

Garden Waste Service Update

We are encouraging residents to continue to sign up to the new garden waste collection service. You are still able to join in, a commencement date has been proposed for early March. Our waste team are currently creating the most robust and efficient rounds they can, with as much data to hand as possible. The waste team have put together a "fact sheet" with the key messages for residents over the next month.

If you want more information on the Garden Waste Service:-

Go to SHDC website->Residents>Waste and Recycling>Garden Waste Service

Waste Recycling Centres in the South Hams

Owners of a private van wanting to use the Ivybridge, Totnes or Kingsbridge Recycling Centres will need a permit from Wednesday 1 March.

Devon County Council has introduced the measure to help stop commercial waste from being deposited at their sites at public expense.

It will also help make it easier for users to access the sites by reducing queues and congestion.

Applications for the permits, which are free, are [available online here](#).

Find out more on the [Devon County Council website here](#).

Coronation Street Party Applications Now Open

Devon County Council is inviting communities to apply for a free street party licence to mark the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty The Queen Consort.

If your community wants to hold a street party, the County Council is asking that you apply using their online basic street party application to close off your street available on their [website](#).

The cut-off date is **26 March**.

Plymouth and South Devon Freeport Approval

The Plymouth and South Devon Freeport was the first of eight Freeports to be given the full green light along with two others. The approval unlocks millions of pounds of grant seed funding and enables applicable businesses to join and take advantage of the Freeport status.

The Freeport will:

- Enable new employment land to be bought forward at the three sites of South Yard, Langage and Sherford
- Accelerate the formation of advanced manufacturing clusters in marine, defence and space sectors with low carbon applications at the forefront
- Leverage £250m private sector investment
- Ensure seed capital grant from Government of £25m for essential infrastructure
- Include £29m investment from local councils

- Support a new £30m Innovation Centre at Oceansgate
- Provide a major expansion plan for Princess Yachts
- Deliver over 3,500 jobs

Support for Homelessness

South Hams and West Devon Councils work with all rough sleepers across the area to ensure they have access to appropriate services should they wish to engage and work with us to enable them to access accommodation. With the weather getting colder we have now activated the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol until 1 March 2023. We would be grateful if you could let us know of anyone sleeping rough and advise them to contact a member of the Housing team on 01803 861234. Outside of office hours, the number is 01803 867034. SHDC will arrange for an outreach worker to make contact with them. This is particularly important during periods of severe weather.

The Local Authority is required to complete an Annual Rough Sleeper Count. For 2022, the count was conducted on the night of 14 November. This year's count identified five rough sleepers within the South Hams. This is an increase from last year's count of two. Our understanding from our verification meeting with Homeless Link is that this sadly is a trend across the country. We are pleased to advise that subsequent to the count, two of the five identified have accepted accommodation offers and are no longer rough sleeping. There will always be some people who choose this lifestyle and don't wish to have bricks or mortar.

Over the past 12 months, our team have engaged with 12 rough sleepers, with seven of these being successfully supported into long term housing. This has been made possible by the hard work of our Outreach Navigators, who work with some very challenging individuals often at a point of crisis in their lives and seek to improve their outcomes and opportunities. The two Housing First properties purchased in our area are now in use, and providing a valuable opportunity to learn how to sustain and maintain a tenancy, improve health and wellbeing outcomes and enable them to move forward positively.

Let's talk pre-teens

The South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership has been working with a wide range of partners to produce a toolkit to support parents of pre-teens (9-12 year olds). This has been developed as a result of the resounding success of the Let's Talk Teenagers programme, which has seen 2,497 engagements with parents and carers so far. Free online sessions through the Let's Talk programme for parents and carers of pre-teens are available this month. The Let's Talk programme is designed to increase parent and carers' knowledge around the key risks young people face, while giving simple tools and techniques to help them support their child. The partnership acknowledges that parenting can be really difficult, especially in such challenging times.

Tickets are free and available at [Let's Talk Pre-Teens](#).

The event runs from 17th January and topics covered include:

Biology, difficult emotions, substance misuse, relationships, exploitation, pornography, societal stereotypes, physical risks and mental health.

Dartmoor National Park Report

Wild/backpack camping: latest news

[Dartmoor National Park Authority](#) met on Friday 27 January to agree key decisions on backpack camping.

High Court Claim and Judgment

Mr and Mrs Darwall (the owners of Blatchford Estate near Cornwood and part of Stall Moor) issued a High Court claim seeking a declaration that there was no legal right to backpack camp on Stall Moor. DNP contested this claim.

The High Court judgment issued on 13 January 2023 states that Section 10(1) of the Dartmoor Commons Act does **not** confer on the public any right to pitch tents or otherwise camp overnight on the Dartmoor commons.

The effect of this judgment is to render the previous system of backpack camping 'by right' obsolete; persons wishing to backpack camp on the commons of Dartmoor now need to seek the permission of the landowner.

Following the High Court judgment in the case of [Darwall vs Dartmoor National Park Authority](#), Members have agreed to:

- Seek permission to appeal the High Court judgment
- Endorse the new permissive system, agreed in principle with the Dartmoor Commons' Owners Association
- Investigate which areas of common land owned by the Authority could be opened up to backpack camping
- Pause work on the byelaw review so the implications of High Court judgment can be fully considered.

Commenting after the meeting, Dartmoor National Park Authority Chief Executive Dr Kevin Bishop said: "We are grateful to the common landowners, including Mr and Mrs Darwall, who moved at speed to positively support the permissive system for backpack camping.

"The High Court judgment raises important issues of public interest that are central to the purpose of our National Parks. For this reason, the Authority has determined to seek permission to appeal the judgment.

"Our National Parks are largely owned by private individuals, and we respect their rights. However, our National Parks were designated by Parliament for their national importance. They have twin purposes: to protect and conserve and to provide opportunities for all parts of society to responsibly enjoy them.

"When the legislation to establish National Parks was introduced it was described as a people's charter - a people's charter for the open air, for the hikers and the ramblers, for everyone who lives to get out into the open air and enjoy the countryside. The High Court judgment potentially fetters that charter and seems contrary to the wishes of Parliament.

"Whilst we await determination of the application to appeal, and any subsequent appeal, we remain committed to working in partnership with landowners and other partners to ensure the new permissive system is successful."

Backpack camping on Dartmoor commons

Within days of the High Court judgment, a permissive approach to backpack/wild camping was agreed in principle with the Dartmoor Commons Owners' Association. Backpack camping is the term used by the Authority to emphasise the small scale, leave no trace ethos of this activity. "Fly

camping” is what we saw during the restrictions of 2020 and 2021 when people erected large family size tents in sensitive areas.

The new system enables people to continue backpack/wild camping on identified common land without needing to secure landowner permission first. It has also provided much-needed reassurance to the schools and young people preparing for Ten Tors/Duke of Edinburgh.

The [report to Friday 27ths Authority meeting](#) contained more details of how that system will work. It involves landowners entering into a legal agreement with DNPA with up to £300 paid annually to landowners who opt-in. We are still in discussions with landowners who have not decided whether to join in, so the area currently available for wild camping may change. Currently we estimate the area available has decreased by 14% but we hope with negotiation more landowners will join.

The fee acts as a ‘seal’ for the agreement. Landowners are able to retain the fee but several have already indicated that they may donate it back to the National Park via the Donate for Dartmoor fund. This is something the Authority welcomes because Donate for Dartmoor supports the vital conservation work that keeps Dartmoor special for everyone.

Areas where people can backpack/wild camp are [publicly available on the National Park Authority’s website](#). People planning a backpack/wild camp should check the map before they head off and leave no trace of their visit.

Appealing the High Court judgment

Once the High Court has issued a decision there’s limited time to appeal which is why the Authority acted quickly and convened its meeting on Friday 27th.

First, the Authority appealed for permission directly to the Chancellor of the High Court. This application was declined on 13 January 2023.

The next step involves filing an appeal notice to the Court of Appeal. This has to be done by 3 February. The court will then decide to grant permission to appeal or refuse permission to appeal, this process could take 3-6 months.

Because Authority Members were considering information relating to legal proceedings, local government laws allow for certain matters to be discussed privately. For this reason, the item was discussed in the ‘exempt information’ section of the meeting.

In reaching their decision, Members are aware of the resources and costs involved but agreed there was merit in the grounds for filing an appeal notice. Because this case has attracted widespread national interest various organisations and individuals have indicated that they are prepared to financially support DNP in this appeal, and the suggestion of Crowdfunding has arisen, The Authority will take time to consider the legal and organisational issues that this may raise.

Byelaw review

Dartmoor’s existing [byelaws](#) have been under review for some time with the Authority due to publish a revised set for public consultation. However, Members agreed that this work should be paused for the time being as there is the possibility that the recent judgement may have implications on other byelaws and this position must be clarified.