



# Dartmoor Forest Parish Council

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9<sup>th</sup> September 2025

## Minutes for the Council Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025 in Postbridge Village Hall

Present:

Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward:		Princetown Ward:	* Chair	** Vice Chair
Cllr Alison Geen**				Cllr Martin Grover
<b>Postbridge Ward:</b>		Cllr Brenda Cotterill		Cllr Hazel Williams
Cllr Elaine Smerdon				Cllr Mark Williams*
Cllr Wendy Watson		Cllr Lian Edis		

Abbreviations used: **DFPC**: Dartmoor Forest Parish Council, **DCC**: Devon County Council,  
**DNPA**: Dartmoor National Park Authority, **DoC**: Duchy of Cornwall, **WDBC**: West Devon Borough Council,  
**PBN**: Princetown Business Network

**Cllr Mark Williams chaired the meeting**

Members of the public in attendance: Cllr Michael Fife Cook (DCC) Cllr Mark Renders (WDBC)

1. **Apologies** – Cllr Easton, Cllr Byrom (resigned from Council due to moving jobs)
2. **Declarations of interest** - none
3. **Urgent decisions since last meeting** – none
4. **Acceptance of minutes** - As previously circulated for meeting on 26th July Council approved minutes which were then signed by Cllr Mark Williams.
5. **'Vision for Princetown'** – Cllr Mark Williams gave an update from the last meeting explaining that we are waiting for Duchy to release communications to the general public explaining the process and the vision as it currently stands. Duchy has been very keen to support village endeavours eg. Youth club, The Plot, Sensory Garden funding application and is working to secure a future for the Duchy Hotel building. Next meeting is on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2025 – Cllr Mark Williams and Cllr Cotterill will attend.
6. **Residents' issues or concerns** –
  - a) Road markings on the B3357 Hexworthy Junction towards Dunnabridge- Cllr Geen explained that recent resurfacing of the road has been completed, but the white lines at the side have been painted well in from the hedge, resulting in the narrowing of the road. Contractors stated there was no intention to replace the cats eyes/central white line due to the road being deemed too narrow for two cars to pass safely. Cllr Geen requested that Council write to DCC Highways and DNPA to request the cats eyes are replaced, the road markings widened and the central line replaced. Action: Cllr Geen offered to draft a letter for Clerk to send.
  - b) Damage to Bus shelter - notice board & graffiti – Council was made aware of damage to notice board, which is not repairable. Lengthsman was tasked to paint over the graffiti. After doing so he reported to the Clerk that he had found faeces and blood smeared on the walls which he had also painted over. Cllr Mark Williams also reported that damage had occurred to St Michaels Church recently. Cllr Mark Renders offered to fund a

Signed by Chair:

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025

replacement notice board from WDBC Localities budget. Action: Clerk to apply for funding.

- c) Dirt bikes on moor near Wistmans Wood 10/08/25 report received from local resident about 3 dirt bikes riding on the track and open moorland. Council expressed concern for resident and felt
  - d) it was a matter for DNPA, Duchy and Police should respond. Cllr Geen asked that Council thank the resident for keeping up informed of incidents, and to encourage her to report to Police so that it is also logged with them. Cllr Cotterill reported she had also seen 3 bikes on Hameldown and on the old railway track Princetown recently. Council agreed that if anyone saw dirt bikes on the moor, to try to get evidence, video, pictures, number plates and to report to Police, but only if safe to do so.
  - e) Coach stopping on single yellow lines opposite Sunnyside (Two Bridges Road), offloading passengers to take photos of prison, causing traffic to have to 'overtake' coach, resulting in damage to front porch. 20/08/25. Council noted incident. No further action to be taken as resident has dealt with the incident and reported to Police.
7. **Policy Review** – Council to consider and adopt revised documents (See Briefing Notes Appendix 2 for schedule)
- a) Financial Regulations see email sent prior to meeting. Cllr Geen has reviewed some of the document. Finance Committee to review document before next meeting.
  - b) Burials Procedure – Clerk reported no progress on this matter due to workload/lack of time. To be looked at again when time allows.
8. **1<sup>st</sup> PUBLIC SESSION** – Cllr Mark Renders (WDBC) updated on the Local Government Restructure, information event due to take place in Princetown Community Centre on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, and encouraged Councillors to attend if possible. He stressed that any restructure will take years to come into effect, but may have implications for Parish Councils funding and service provision in the future.
- Cllr Michael Fife-Cook (DCC) – agreed with Cllr Renders that it will take years to restructure, if it goes ahead at all. He then gave brief update on DCC, DNPA.
9. **Planning** – Council considered and discussed the application listed below
- a) [0279/25](#) Consultation Request Letter - Application at Assycombe Hill, South of Fernworthy Forest. Cllr Cotterill proposed that Council recommend approval, seconded by Cllr Edis, voted 5 in agreement, with 3 abstentions. Action: Clerk to respond to DNPA.
10. **Princetown Sensory Garden** – Cllr Hazel Williams updated on the National Lottery Funding Application. The application has gone through to the second round, with a very positive meeting with funding officer. The area proposed is now the green area at the top of Bellever Close, rather than the Play Park, as this will offer a more multi-generational space, is more central, and has better accessibility. Duchy (as owners of the land) are supportive of the project, although we need to get this in writing for the funding application. Further information and budget/costings are required by 25<sup>th</sup> September. Cllr Hazel Williams requested that a working party is formed to take the application forwards, and share the workload. Cllrs Edis and Cotterill agreed to join the working party. Action: Clerk to complete financial information and budget. Working party to provide additional information as requested by 25<sup>th</sup> September.
11. **Princetown Calendar** – Cllr Cotterill updated on idea she proposed at July meeting to promote and celebrate Princetown and the Parish. A local photographer has kindly offered to donate images for use this year. It was agreed that the images should be selected by the public, to get their involvement and engagement in the project. Local outlets will need to be identified to sell the calendar. Cllr Cotterill acquired a few quotes for printing and

shared a sample calendar. Council agreed to use Dartprint to produce this edition with a run of 200 calendars. Duchy has been approached to assist with funding. Cllr Renders also agreed to fund £100 towards printing costs. Action: Cllr Cotterill to liaise with photographer to select 20 images. Clerk to share images on FB page and invite public to vote for their favourites. Aim to print by end of October. Proposed by Cllr Geen, seconded by Cllr Martin agreed by all.

## 12. **Play Park –**

- a) Update on Weekly Inspections - see-saw nylon bushes have been replaced. Six posts are needed to repair the fence. Letter picking is working well.
- b) Action Plan – the rubber matting under the rocking horse has not been lifted and re-glued. Wet weather will now prevent this happening.

## 13. **Financial management** - see Financial Report for details

- a) Payments approved by Cllr Grover and Cllr Geen, to be authorised by Cllr Geen and M Williams.
- b) Clerk reported that Cllr Byrom has now been removed from the bank mandate, Cllr Grover has been added as full signatory and has online access to the account.
- c) Clerk Salary – Council was asked to approved National Pay Award on 3.2% confirmed, to be back dated to April 2025. Precept budget was set with anticipated 3% increase, so this will affect budget by additional £14.02 over the year. Proposed by Cllr Geen, seconded by Cllr Hazel Williams, agreed by all.

## 14. **Updates on correspondence/ actions from previous meetings**

- a) Drainage issue on track near Postbridge Cemetery – update from DNPA Ranger 19/08 'I am waiting to hear back regards the specifics of the path agreement. It will soon have its annual trim, and I will investigate the ditch at the same time, and clear as necessary, to enhance drainage off the path. As expected after a prolonged dry spell, the surface is currently fine. All I can say at this point, is that I will keep a close eye and if there is a simple/ cost effective solution to mud issues, if/ when they arise, I will endeavour to sort them out. However, the overall budget for the definitive path network is usually under pressure, let alone for non-definitive routes, so I am unable to make grand promises.
- b) Bellever Notice Board –Cllr Easton has repaired and will put it back in situ. Clerk to supply new notices.
- c) DNPA – Partnership Plan Consultation [Your Dartmoor Click here](#) deadline 14/09 Individuals to respond, but also consider if Council want to make an official response. Council agreed not to respond.
- d) Traffic Order Consultation–Double Yellow Lines Princetown <https://devon.cc/alwrp> deadline 29/08 need to make residents aware and encourage them to submit response either for or against. Cllr Grover declared an interest in this, as he lives on one of the junctions concerned, but made the point that he feels the DYL's are useless unless there is more enforcement of the existing parking restrictions, and the new ones proposed. Cllr Geen stated that Council can request enforcement to attend more frequently through DCC Highways. Cllr Mark Williams reminded Council that the DYL's were initiated originally by Council in response to requests from residents to improve road safety and visibility on junctions within the village.
- e) Postbridge Cemetery – interment of ashes booked for 20<sup>th</sup> September 2025 – so we need to ensure it is looking at its best. Grave digger contacted. Action: Clerk to task Lengthsman to spend some time in cemetery before 20<sup>th</sup>.

Cllrs Mark Renders and Cllr Michael Fife-Cook left the meeting.

## 15. **Reports and Updates from Committees, Sub Groups and Special Interests:**

- a) **CCTV System Check & any requests** – CCTV Working Group –
- System Checks completed: 01/08 HW, 15/08 HW, 22/08 JB – all working
  - Cllr Edis still having difficulties accessing the system.
  - Request for footage received 07/08, uploaded to GoodSam 14/08
  - Request for footage received 21/08,
  - Issue with the fan overheating on the unit 22/07 within Visitor Centre required visit from contractor 25/08 to replace fan to prevent further overheating. CCTV was offline for 5 days as a result. Cost £160 plus vat.
- Cllr Geen questioned if it was clear on the website who to contact with CCTV enquiries.  
Action: Clerk to update webpage
- Unsure if CCTV system will be supported when Visitor Centre is closed at end Oct. Have been unable to speak to DNPA IT Manager, left several messages over recent weeks.
- Cllr Mark Williams offered to chase DNPA IT to ascertain when access to the system will stop, and power and broadband connection ceases.
- b) **LOVE** (Love Our Village Enthusiasts) Project– Cllr Hazel Williams – Nothing to update.
- c) **Tidy Princetown Sessions** – Cllr Edis reported that 5 people attended last session. Next session to take place 6<sup>th</sup> September.
- d) **The Plot** - Community Garden - Cllr Hazel Williams - Shortlisted to final 5 out of 82 community gardens across the country for RHS Growing Together Award 2025. Film crew from The One Show filmed for 3 hours and interviewed lots of Plotters. Final result due late September.
- e) **Litter Picking Play Park** – Cllrs Grover, M Williams, Easton – is working well.
- f) **Defibs** – Cllrs Geen, Watson, Grover – Report of possible use Princetown 16/08, checked by Cllr M Williams, unused, Clerk updated Circuit – defib back in service
- g) **Speedwatch** - Greg Manning – no report – meeting to be arranged to discuss the way forward.
- h) **Primary School and PTA** – Cllr Byrom – no report
- i) **Youth Club** – Cllr Byrom – no report
- j) **Gardening The Grounds** – Cllr Hazel Williams - Community Payback team now back with us. They have begun cutting back the meadow grass.  
Complaint received from neighbouring resident regarding the invasive Himalayan Balsam. Advised not to touch it at the moment. Parochial Church Council who own the land are looking into how to deal with it. DNPA have also offered to deal with it next season.

16. **2<sup>nd</sup> PUBLIC SESSION** – nothing raised.

17. **Exchange of information** – Around the table discussion for any matters to be shared for information or to request they are put on agenda for next meeting

- a) **Cllr Edis** – queried who manages the Community Centre as there is a local resident who is keen to get involved. Resident to be encouraged to contact one of the Trustees.
- b) **Cllr Smerdon** – reported that she had made contact with Tavistock Men's Shed – who could mend/repair noticeboards etc in the future – costs to cover materials only.
- c) **Cllr Grover** – queried who was responsible for the management of the Community Centre, as he had reports of events/bookings not being accepted or confirmed. He expressed concern that events may be lost, as they bring revenue into the village.

18. **Date of next meeting -**

**Council Meeting**

1930 on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025

Princetown Community Centre

Meeting Closed 2130

Signed by Chair:

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025