



Dartmoor Forest Parish Council

Procedure

Lengthsman & Grounds Maintenance

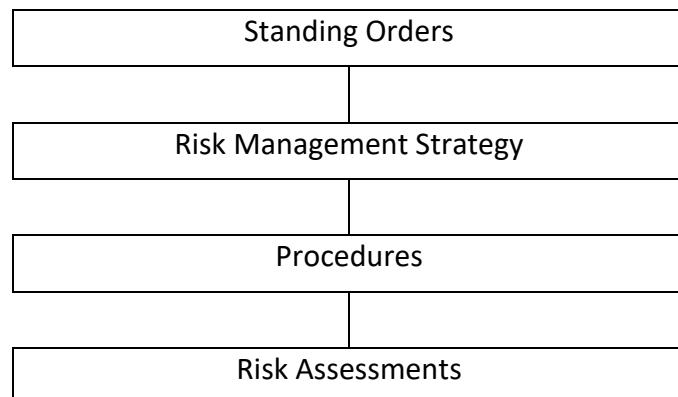
Record of Amendments and Reviews

<u>Version</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Date of Adoption</u>
1	New procedure	1 January 2016
2	Revised to combine Lengthsman and Grounds Maintenance tasking, incorporating text from several semi-formal documents.	23 March 2021
2	Reviewed and readopted.	28 June 2022
2	Removed Princetown Churchyard	27 June 2023
2	Updated	March 2025

Next review required by:	April 2026
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Document Hierarchy

In the event of any discrepancy between Dartmoor Forest Parish Council Codes, Regulations, Policies, Strategies, Procedures and other documentation, the version contained in the higher level document detailed below will apply, unless changed by a resolution of the council.



Introduction

- 1.1 DFPC's Lengthsman role was developed under the DCC Highways Parish Lengthsman scheme. Subsequently, much of the DCC support has been removed for the scheme, including some insurance cover and free-in-aid training. Consequently, the scope of work of the DFPC Lengthsman has reduced but the role still provides key services to the community.
- 1.2 Conversely, the role of the DFPC Groundsman has increased over the years since the Council procured its own grass cutting equipment and has reduced reliance on independent contractors.
- 1.3 The council undertakes grass cutting on its own ground and that of other public sector and private organisations under commercial agreements or free-in-aid. The Groundsman tasking makes no distinction between these. In 2026, these comprise:
 - i. The Duchy of Cornwall - commercial;
 - ii. Devon County Council Highways – commercial;
 - iii. Princetown Community Centre;
 - iv. Princetown Football Club- commercial;
 - v. Princetown Churchyard Maintenance Fund/Group (Gardening the Grounds)- commercial
- 1.4 The Lengthsman and Groundsman roles are designed to be fulfilled by a council employee. Under some circumstances they may be performed by a Councillor or volunteer.
- 1.5 The procedures and requirements of the Lengthsman and Groundsman roles overlap to a large extent, and are now combined in this single procedure.
- 1.6 The Duties are further outlined in the Lengthsman and Groundsman Job Description.

Risk

- 2.1 Many Lengthsman tasks take place on the highways curtilage which presents specific dangers. The following high level risk reduction measures are mandatory:
 - a. A formal risk assessment of all tasking must be undertaken. This is to draw on DCC Highways' expertise, and local knowledge. The mitigations identified in the Risk Assessment must be used in the development of working practices under this procedure.
 - b. The Lengthsman and Groundsman must have appropriate training for the tasks.
 - c. The Lengthsman and Groundsman will frequently work alone. It is essential they carry a sufficiently charged mobile phone at all times, and tell a responsible person (family, friend or the Clerk) where they will be working and when they expect to return home.

Qualifications/Experience Required

- 3.1 All Lengthsman and Groundsman tasks are to be undertaken by suitably qualified and/or experienced person approved by the Council. This is usually an employee, but under certain circumstances may be a Councillor or volunteer approved by the council. The minimum qualifications and/or experience required are:
 - a. **Lengthsman Highways Tasking.** Anyone working on the highways curtilage for the council must be trained and qualified, or supervised by someone trained and qualified, to Chapter 8 C&G Unit 2 Assessment of the Traffic Signs Manual. This qualification lasts for 5 years, after which retraining is required. This qualification is a requirement for DCC Highways insurance cover. This training was formerly provided free-in-aid by DCC Highways.

b. **Other Lengthsman and Groundsman Tasking.** A person considered by the Council to have good common sense, a sense of responsibility and sufficient technical awareness to operate powered grass-cutting equipment in accordance with manufacturers' operating instructions. For some tasking, the person will also require a Driving Licence and the use of a road vehicle capable of towing the council's trailer with equipment loaded.

Lengthsman Highways Temporary Road Signs Procedure

4.1 Prior to undertaking any works on the Highways curtilage appropriate temporary road signs and cones must be in place to warn drivers of the work in progress. This is a legal and insurance requirement. The following diagrams are at Appendix A to show where road signs and cones are to be placed at locations in the Parish:

- i. B3212 and B3357 (40mph) – less than 15 minutes.
- ii. B3212 and B3357 (40mph) - more than 15 minutes.
- iii. Unclassified roads (40mph) – less than 15 minutes.
- iv. Unclassified roads (40mph) – more than 15 minutes.
- v. Roads in Princetown (30mph) – less than 15 minutes.
- vi. Roads in Princetown (30mph) – more than 15 minutes.
- vii. Junctions between B3212/B3357 and unclassified roads (40 mph).

4.2 Prior to planning any works that will require traffic signs to be in place for more than 15 minutes, the road must be 'booked' by notifying DCC Highways.

Tasks That Might Reasonably Be Expected Of The Lengthsman

Note: This tasking list was provided by DCC Highways and may be subject to change as the DCC Highways arrangements in force may change from time to time.

5.1 Drainage (See Appendix C)

- a. Clear leaves and other debris from gully grid tops and drainage grips.
- b. Cleaning channels and vegetation from the entrances and exits of highway culverts.
- c. Rodding of pipes and culverts.
- d. Localised ditching works.
- e. Assisting in land drainage affecting the highway (working with landowner).

5.2 Signs (unlit)

- a. Cleaning, straightening and removing vegetation to ensure legibility and visibility of traffic signs.
- b. Repaint traditional finger and mileposts.

Note: The Lengthsman shall not undertake any cleaning, repair or work on street lights, illuminated signs, bollards or attend emergency call outs to highway incidents.

5.3 Highway minor works

- a. Removal of soils and detritus build up.
- b. Clear minor storm debris discharged onto the highway.
- c. Cutting back vegetation overhanging the road or footway, siding out footways.
- d. Removing vegetation from structures and fences.
- e. Verge cutting and strimming of visibility splays.
- f. Paint and repair fences.
- g. Pothole filling (no excavation) of minor cat 2b defects.

5.4 Environmental

- a. Sweeping footways and public realm spaces.
- b. Removal of fly posting, graffiti and unauthorised signs.
- c. Street name plates cleaning and repair.
- d. Repair of street furniture including litter bins, benches and bus stops.

5.5 Community

- a. Assist in emergency response to events such as flooding, gritting and snow clearance.
- b. General upkeep within the Parish.
- c. Nominated tasks for the benefit of the parish as agreed with the Parish Clerk.

Tasks That Might Reasonably Be Expected Of The Groundsman

- 6.1 Grass Cutting. The diagrams at Appendix B show the areas of grass that are to be cut by the Groundsman. Those shown on the highway curtilage are subject to the requirements above.
- 6.2 Hedge Cutting. As directed by the council.
- 6.3 Other Tasks. From time-to-time, Parishioners may identify a need for grounds maintenance in the Parish and bring it to the council's notice. The council will invariably contact the landowner or person/organisation responsible and request they undertake the work. In

exceptional circumstances, usually when there is an urgent requirement and the person/organisation responsible is uncontactable, the council may task the Parish Groundsman to undertake urgent remedial work. The council only does this on the strict understanding that no precedent is set by any such action. Under no circumstances will the council accept any liability for ongoing maintenance of grounds not under its control unless this is subject to a commercial arrangement.

Equipment

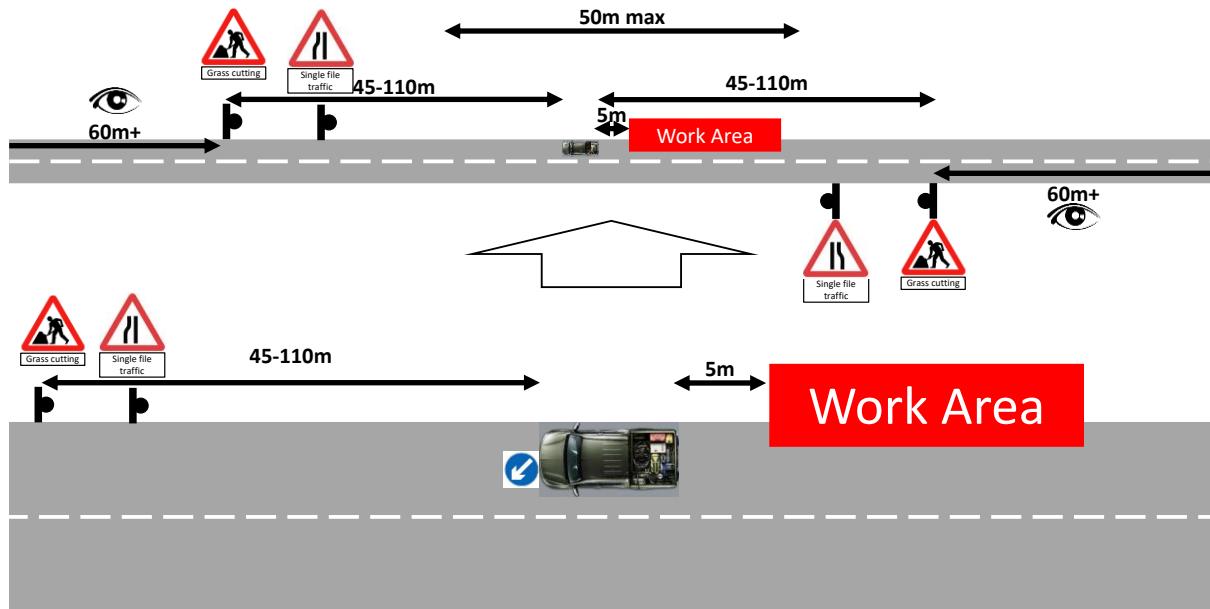
- 7.1 The equipment owned by the council for use by the Lengthsman and Groundsman (which includes a trailer, powered grass cutting machines, various roadwork signs, road cones and personal protective equipment) is listed in the Asset Register maintained by the Clerk as part of the financial records.
- 7.2 Additionally, as a member of the West Devon Southern Parish Link Committee, the council may borrow communal equipment purchased by a Town and Parish Grant and held and administered by Bere Ferrers Parish Council.

Appendix A - Highways Temporary Roadwork Signs Diagrams

A1 – For work on the B3212 & B3357 road and curtilage outside Princetown

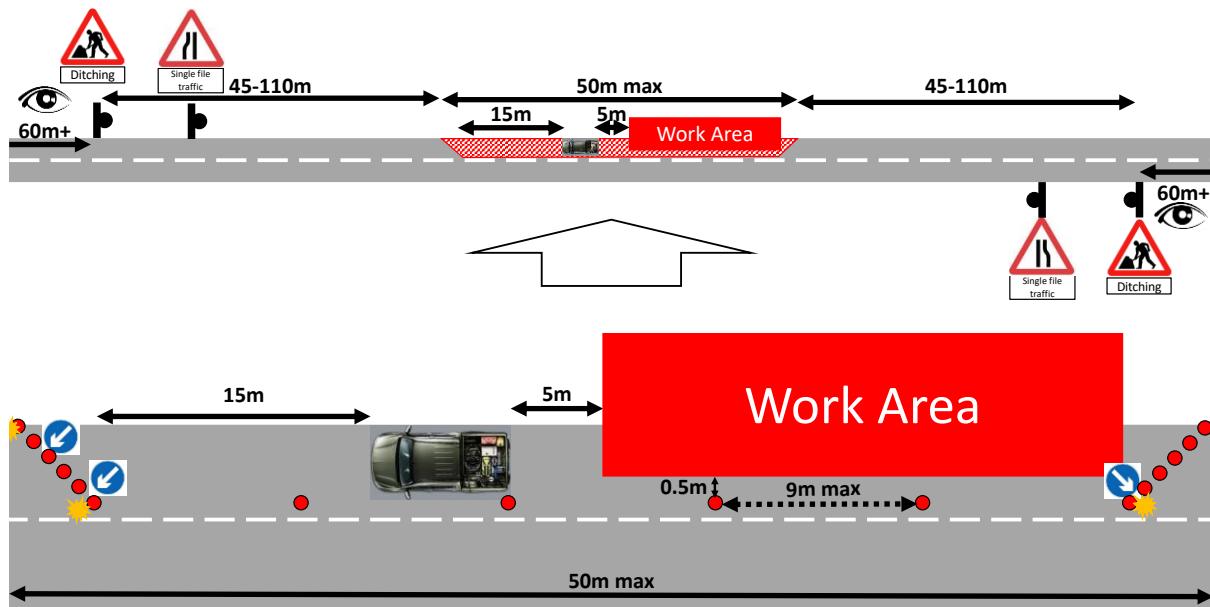
Under 15 Minutes:

B3212 & B3357 – 40mph <15 mins



Over 15 minutes:

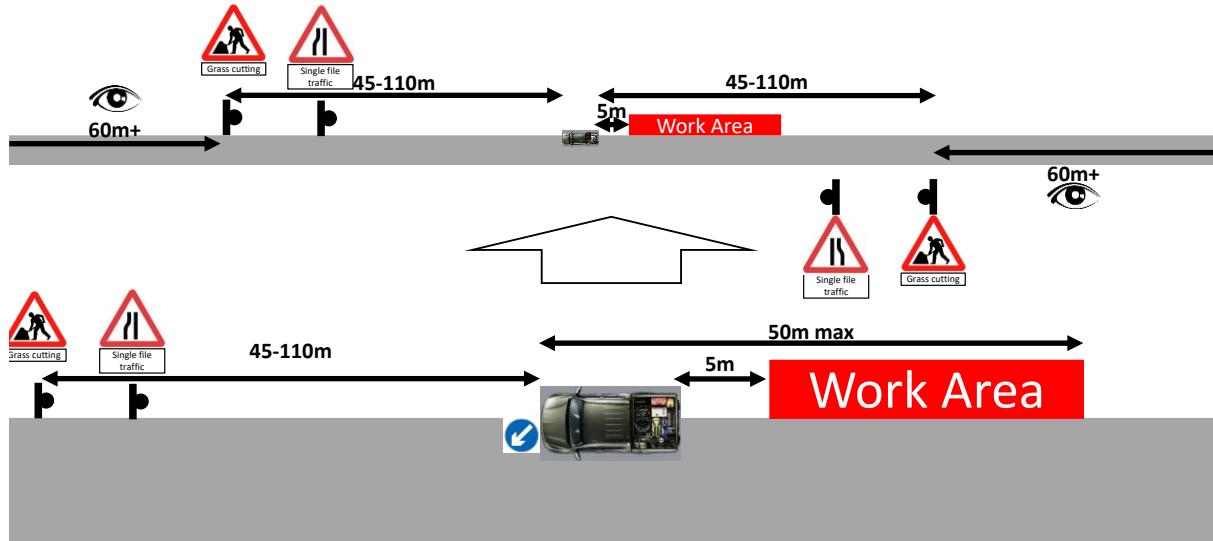
B3212 & B3357 – 40mph >15 mins



A2 – For work on minor roads and curtilage within the Parish outside Princetown

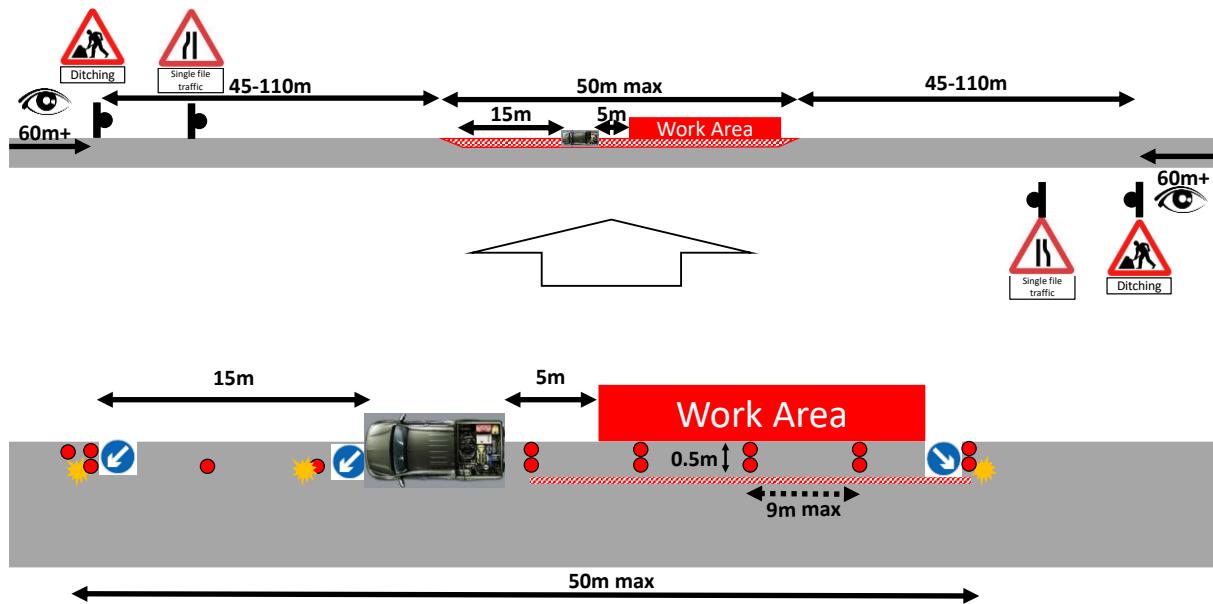
Under 15 minutes:

Minor Roads – 40mph <15 mins



Over 15 minutes:

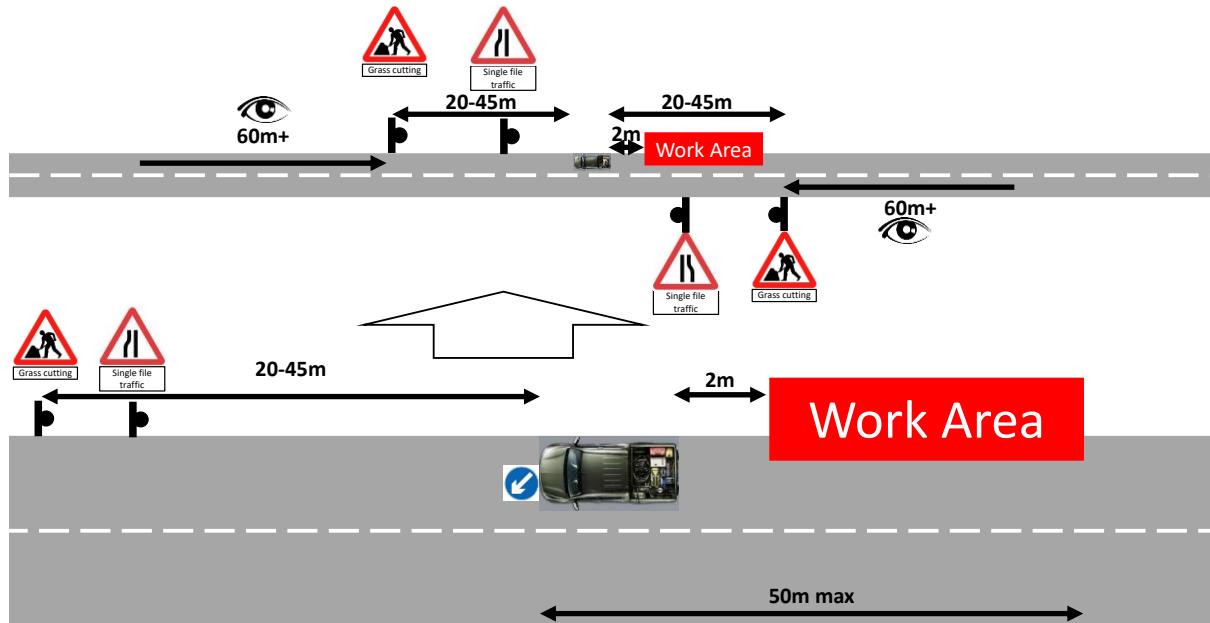
Minor Roads – 40mph >15 mins



A3 – For work on roads and curtilage in Princetown

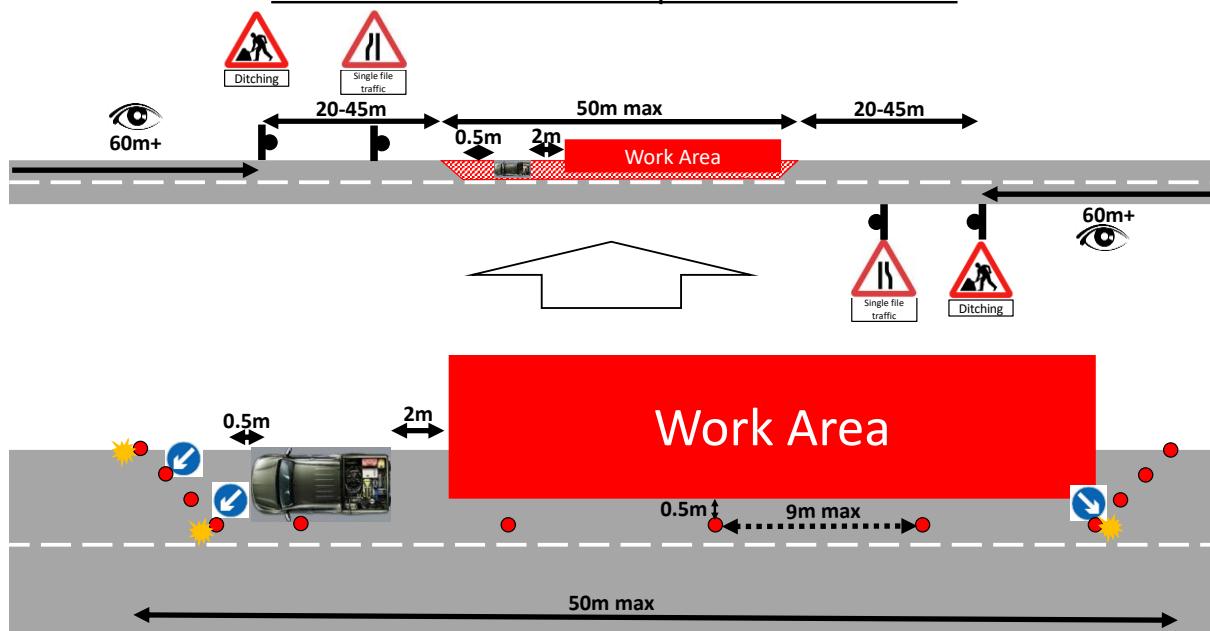
Under 15 minutes:

Princetown - 30mph <15 mins



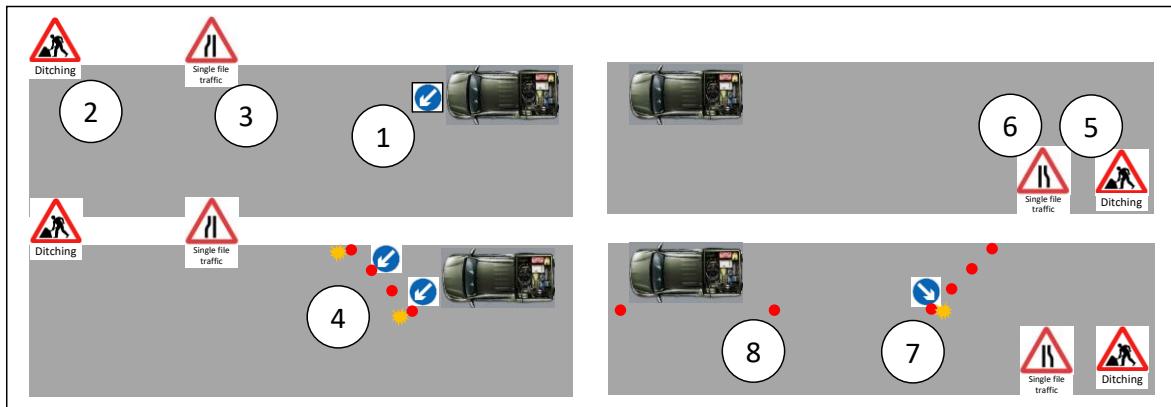
Over 15 minutes:

Princetown - 30mph >15 mins

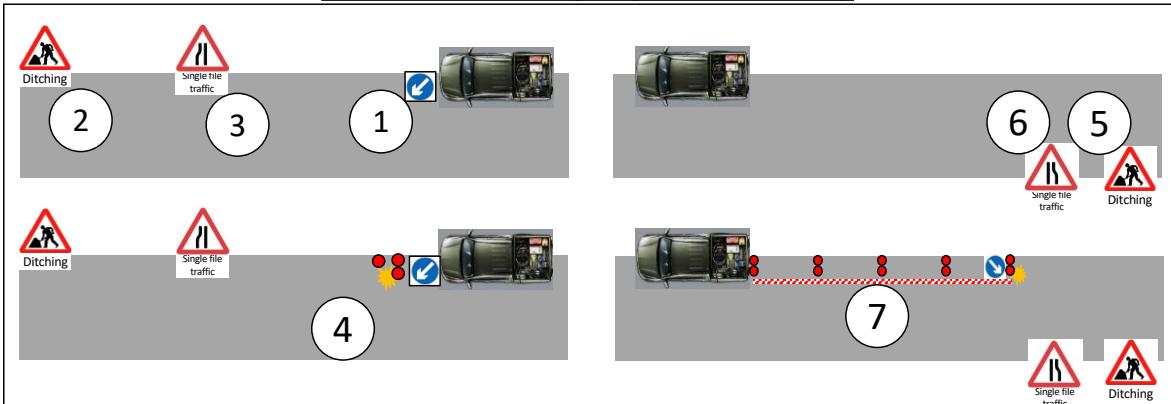


A4 – To minimise road traffic hazards, regulations require road signs and cones to be put in place in a specific order. This is shown below for the various layouts above.

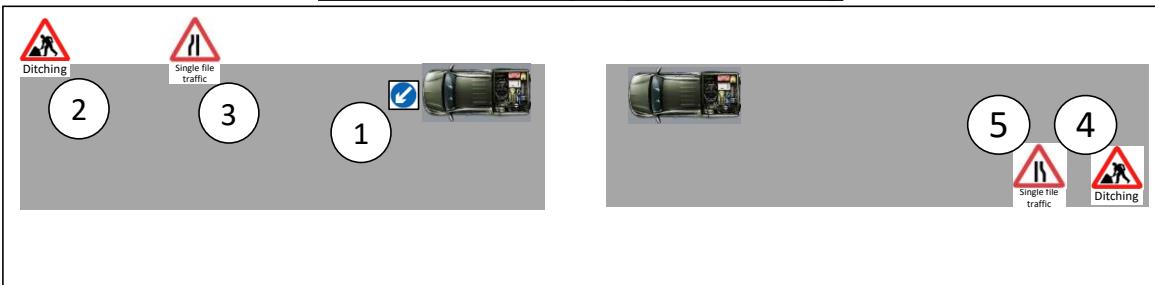
Order of Placing Signs for Safety



Order of Placing Signs for Safety

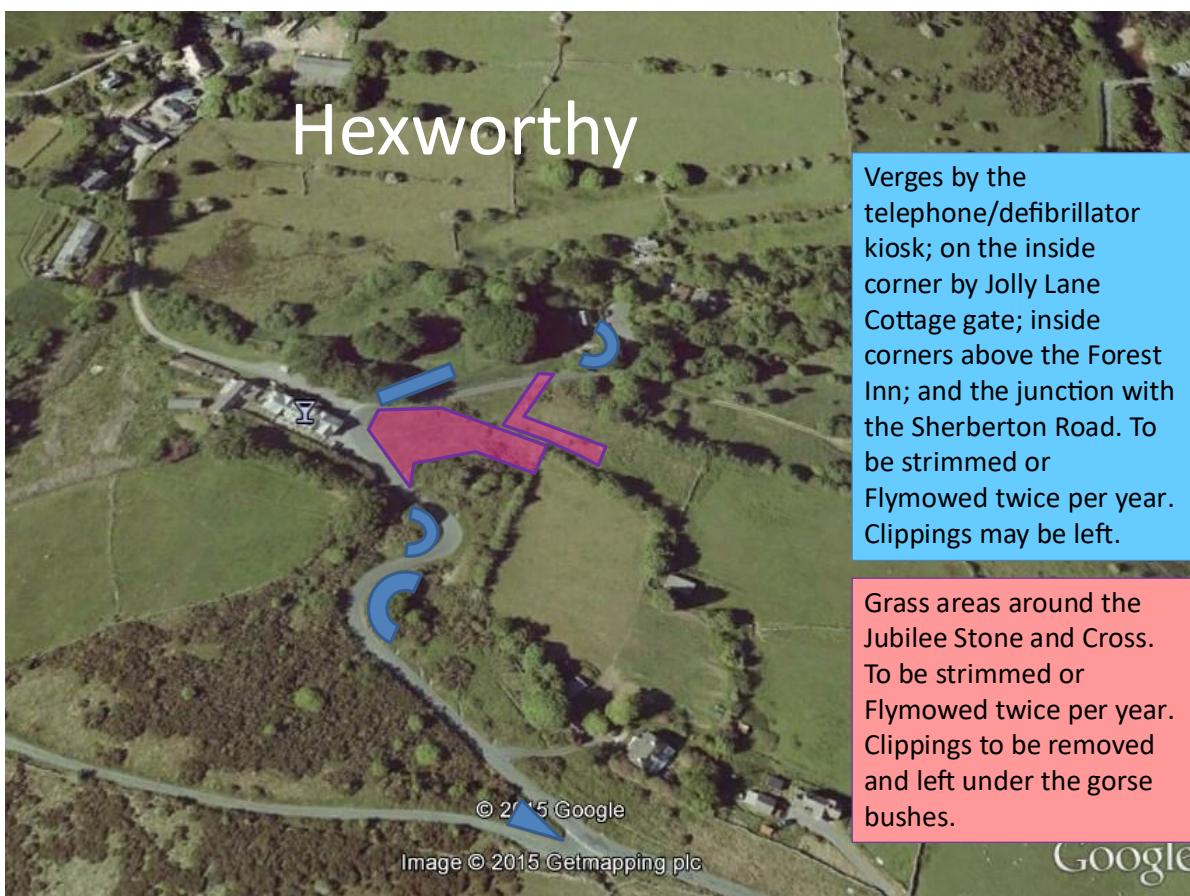
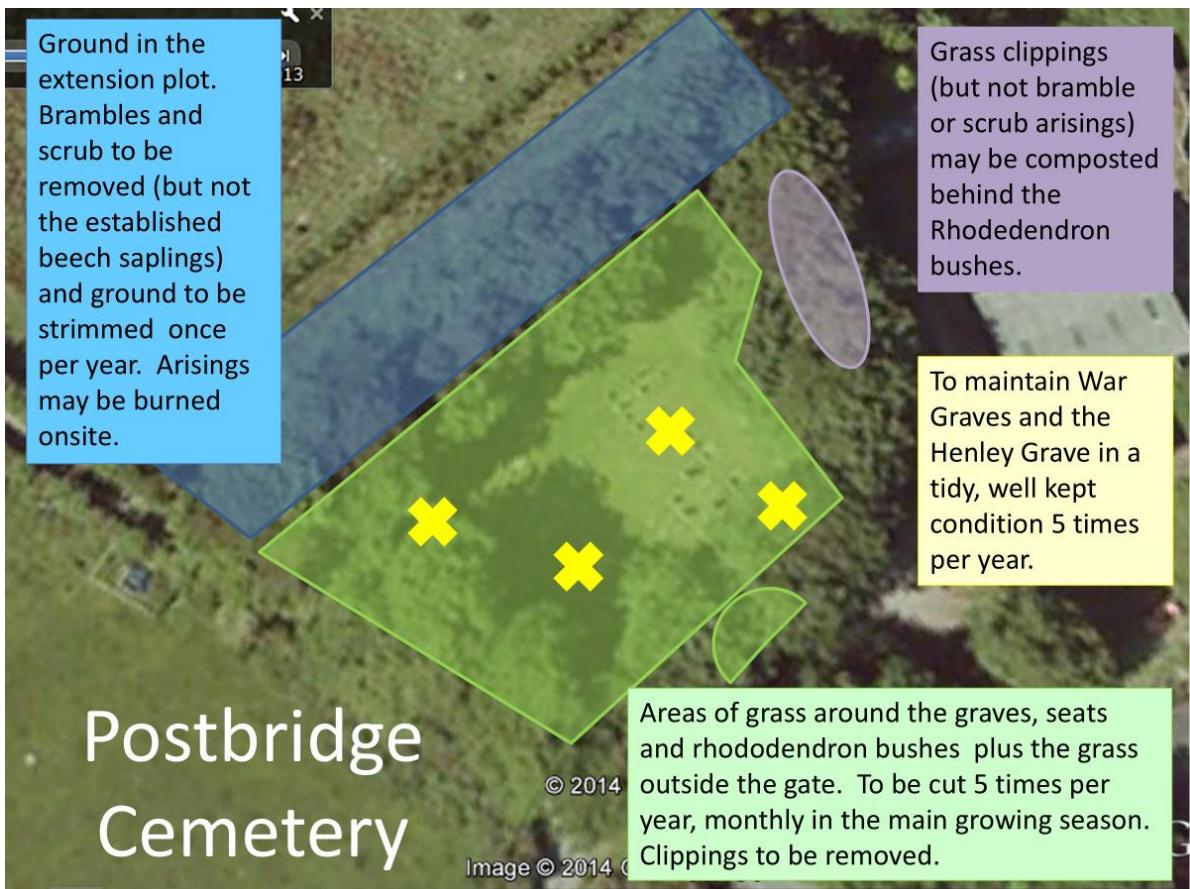


Order of Placing Signs for Safety



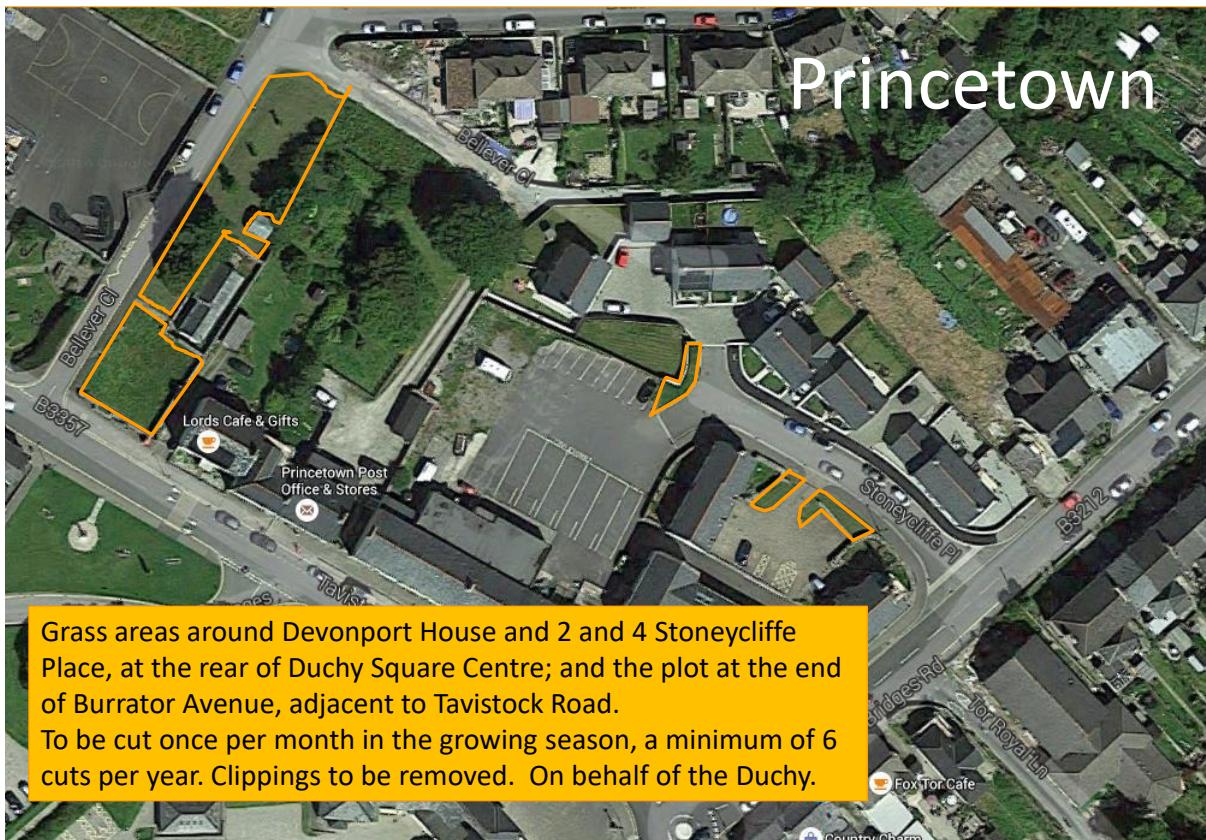
Appendix B – Grass Cutting Area Diagrams

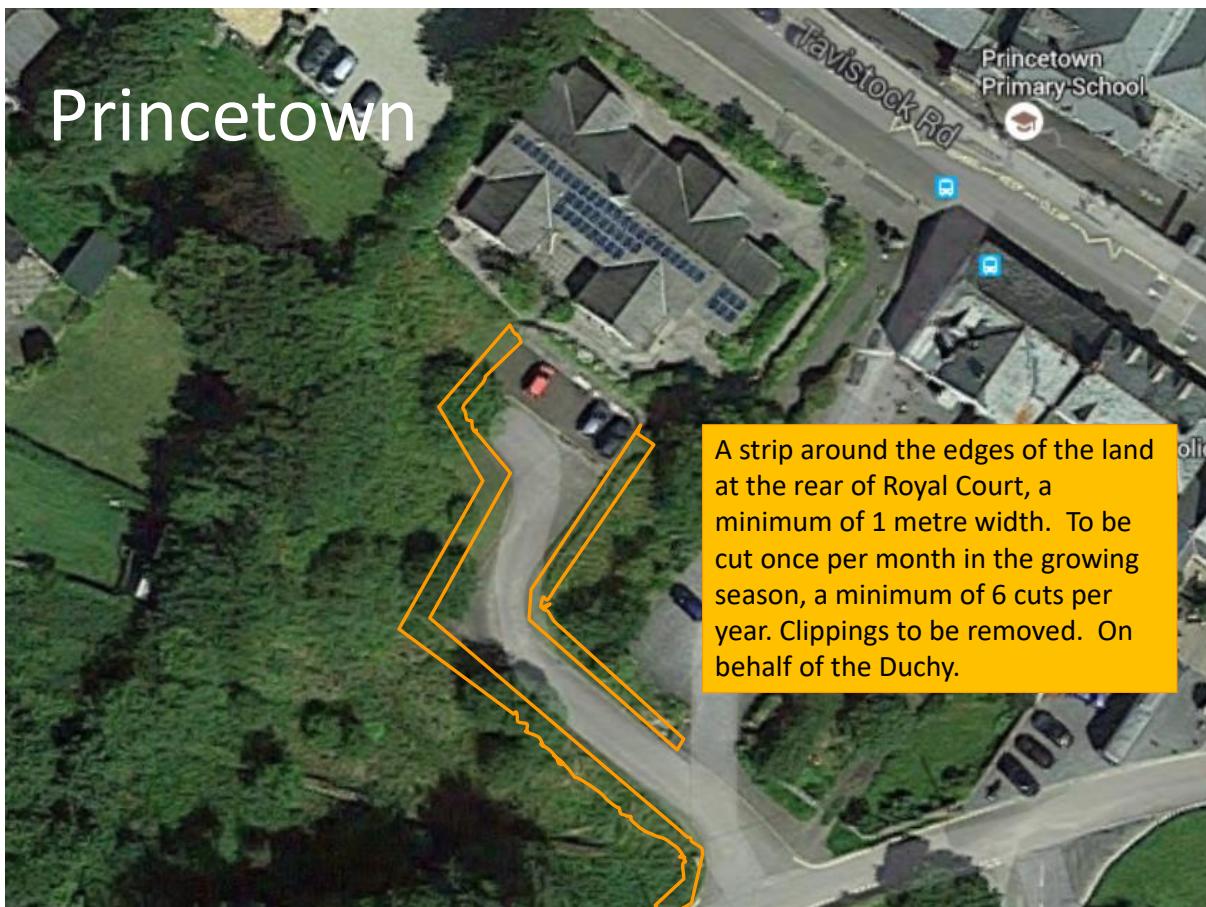




Princetown – Duchy Areas Grass Cutting 2024/2025



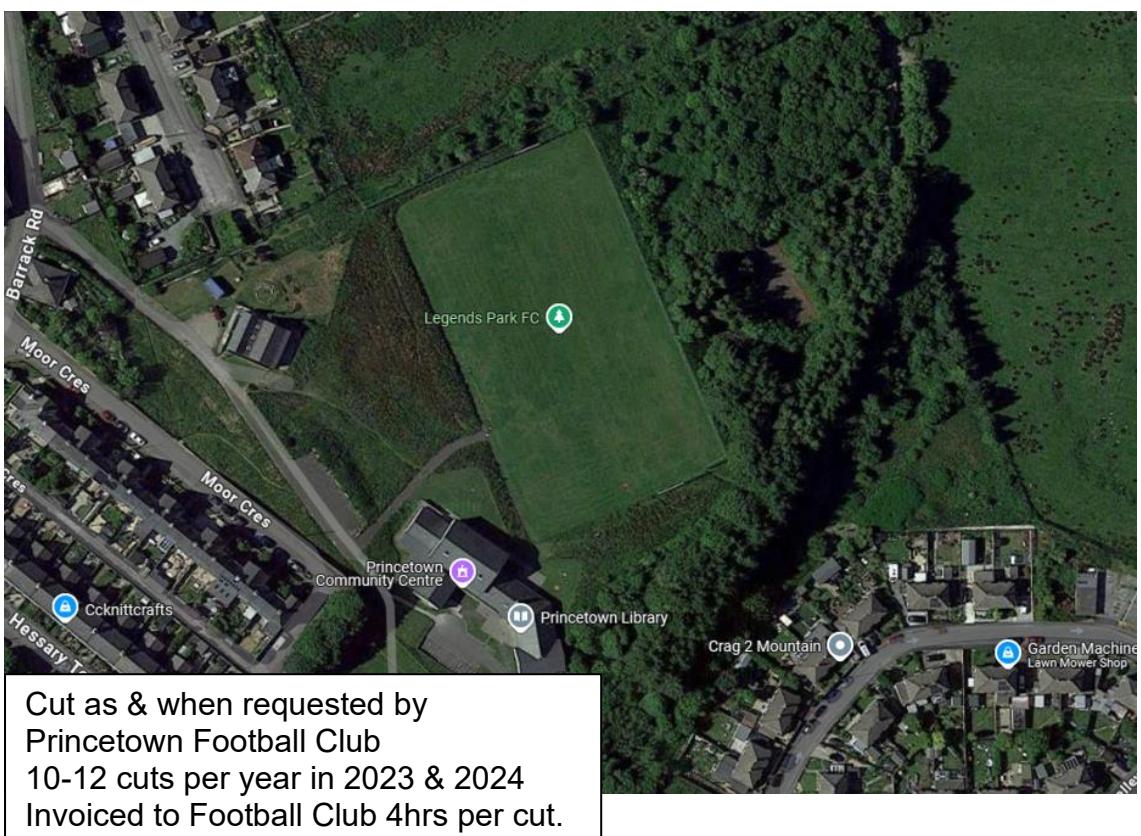




Princetown Churchyard Maintenance Group - (2025 – as and when requested)

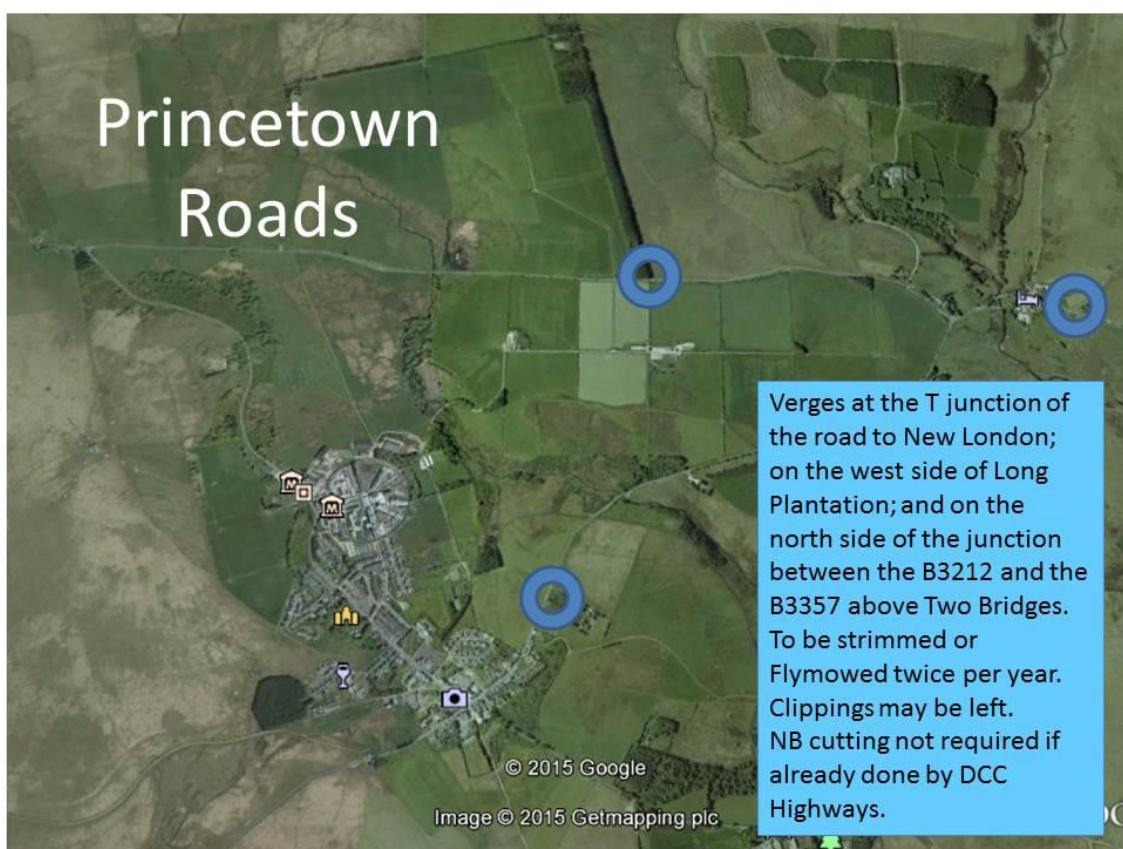


Princetown Football Club (2025 as and when requested)



Devon County Council Highways -

Verges and splay areas to be monitored through growing season. Cutting not required if already done by DCC Highways.



Postbridge Roads



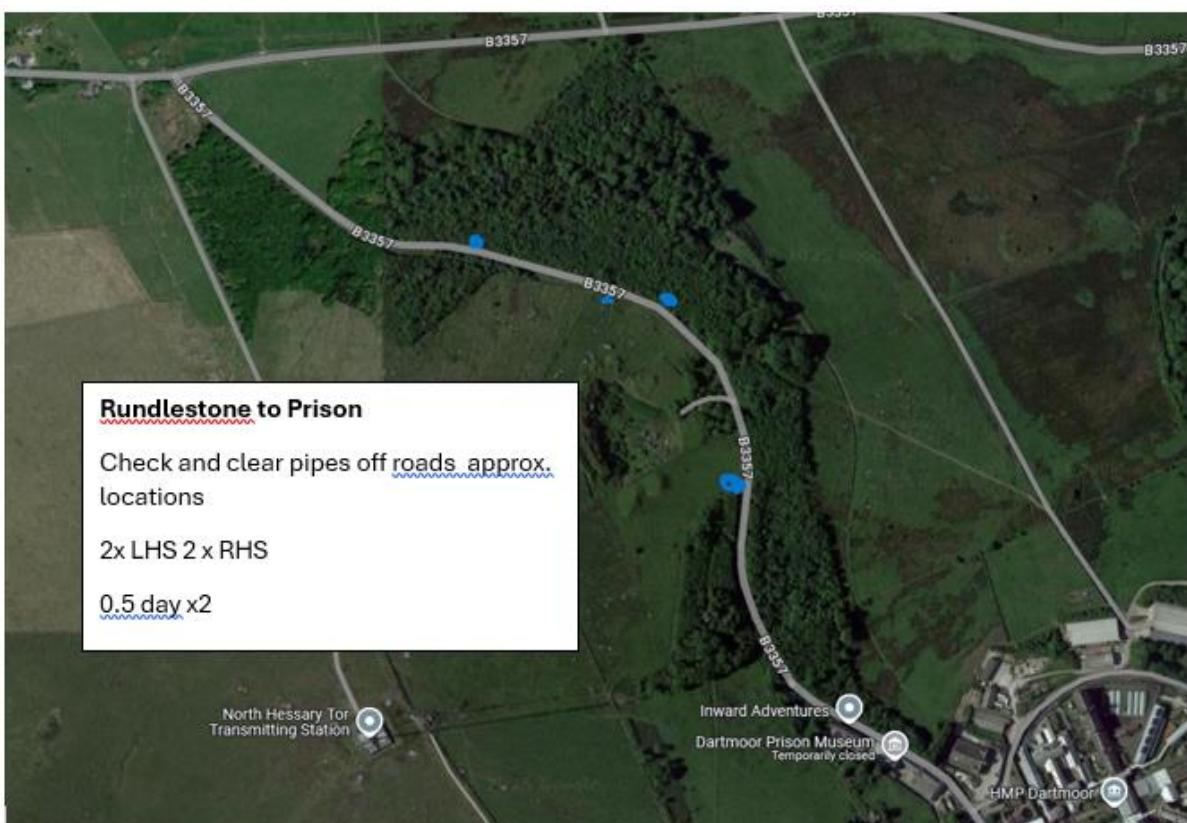
Prince Hall Road





Appendix C – Ditches and Gullies March 2025







Princetown to Tor Royal

LHS & RHS from Fox Tor gate to cattle grid

RHS from cattle grid to South Hessary House

RHS from left junction to just past South Hessary House

RHS south Hessary House to junction

3 days



Hexworthy – Sherberton (considered a one-off in 2025)



Hexworthy to ~~Sherberton~~

LHS (mainly) ditching (yellow)

1 day to support contractor in 2025