



# Dartmoor Forest Parish Council

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30th May 2022

## Minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting and Council Meeting at 1900 on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022 in Princetown Community Centre

Present:

<b>Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward:</b>	<b>Princetown Ward:</b>	
Cllr Alison Geen*	Cllr Phil Henson	
	Cllr Wendy Stones	
<b>Postbridge Ward:</b>	Cllr Gregg Manning*	* Chair
Cllr Julian Greatrex	Cllr Mark Williams	** Vice Chair
	Cllr Emma Byroms **	

Abbreviations used: **DFPC**: Dartmoor Forest Parish Council, **DCC**: Devon County Council, **WDBC**: West Devon Borough Council, **DNPA**: Dartmoor National Park Authority, **DoC**: Duchy of Cornwall, **PCSO**: Police Community Support Officer, **PCC**: Parochial Church Council

### Annual Parish Meeting 2022

Cllr Geen chaired the Annual Parish Meeting.

There were 6 members of the public present, including Cllr Mark Renders WDBC.

- 1. Apologies** Cllr Tigwell (Ill Health) Cllr Watson
- 2. Matters arising from Annual Parish Meeting 2021 – none**
- 3. Chair's Report - Cllr Geen presented the report below.**

It has been a busy year for us with many issues facing the Council. Following the resignation of our clerk, Steve Cox, at the beginning of last year we were once again faced with a period of time with no clerk. I want to pass on my huge thanks to Nigel Tigwell for dealing with all financial matters and David Worth for covering the minutes and Agendas as they had during Steve's period of ill health. Council could not have continued without their vital input.

There is a long list of matters we have tried to cover this year which I've tried to condense in my report. Most importantly we have tried to act for residents in various matters e.g. Station Cottages and signage/parking issues, the Prison Officers club security fencing after it had failed, PO Club roof when it had started to shed slates in high wind and Blackabrook Ave where we are involved in ongoing investigation into abandoned cars in conjunction with HM Dartmoor. Perhaps the matter which created the largest public concern was the proposed clear felling of the Sitka Spruce behind Bellever Close. On request from residents we organised a public meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March and invited Tom Stratton, DoC Land Agent to put forward the Duchy's position. He then answered questions and outlined a strategy going forward for felling. He promised to make a plan and get back to the residents.



This year the Council adopted a Climate Change Declaration and will be trying to make changes or promote cleaner ways of carrying on business in the future. As a start Council have requested that DNPA put in electric car charging points at Princetown and Postbridge. They are considering this. We will be planting a tree in the Play Area as part of the Queen's Green Canopy scheme. The Duchy of Cornwall has offered to donate a tree.

We have welcomed Mark Williams onto Council this year and immediately he has leapt into managing the VZSW project. We were awarded a grant after Nigel Tigwell applied to Vision Zero SW towards a road safety initiative. Items include collars for cattle and ponies, a new VAS sign and new Highways signage. Due to Nigel's continued ill health Mark stepped in to manage the project which is continuing on apace. Thank you very much to both Councillors for their efforts in this regard. Hopefully the animals along the road from Princetown to Dousland will be safer and also less people will be hurt in collisions.

Other events this year included the installation of CCTV in Princetown with the sole objective of identifying anti-social driving in the village, Council responded to the DNPA consultation of proposed changes to their Byelaws and we asked for and were given a donation from Walkhampton PCC towards the upkeep of St. Michael's Churchyard for which we have thanked them.

Dave Cole remains our lengthsman, many thanks to him for his fine work around Princetown and for his reports when anything out of place is noticed. He has been able, finally, to update the necessary training so he is legal to work on roads.

The Council regularly inspect and maintain the Play Park. The litter is picked up every week for which we thank Josh.

### **The Future**

The Housing Needs Survey which Alex Rehaag talked to us about at January's meeting will soon be available and we are considering how to get this to all Parish Council residents.

Jubilee celebrations – DFPC have put some money into the fund to supply mugs to all children Benches on village green – we are looking at refurbishing these and have developed a standard for the work going forward.

Defibrillators continue to be monitored for upkeep, Postbridge defib has been taken out on emergency and new pads bought.

New Clerk – Jackie Bennetts joined DFPC as clerk in January this year, has successfully completed her probationary period, done 4 courses and we wish her well going forward.

### **Thanks to David Worth and Wendy Stones**

David – steady influence beside me as my vice chair. His vast knowledge of Princetown has been very useful and we wish him well for the future. He hasn't ruled out returning so let's keep our fingers crossed.

Wendy – well what can I say but huge thanks for 31 years of service. Again Wendy's local knowledge has made a big difference to how the council has worked. Her willingness to give up time to get involved with activities such as the Community Centre, Youth Club and school as a small selection has kept the DFPC up to date with happenings around the village. You will be much missed from Council, good luck for the future.

## **4. Matters raised by Elector's – none**

Meeting Closed 1915

## Monthly Council Meeting

**Cllr Geen chaired the meeting.**

There were 5 members of the public present, plus Cllr Mark Renders (WDBC). Cllr Philip Sanders (DCC) joined part way through the meeting.

1. **Apologies** Cllr Tigwell (Ill Health) Cllr Watson
2. **Declarations of Interest** - None declared
3. **Acceptance of Minutes meeting 26<sup>th</sup> April and 3<sup>rd</sup> May** - Council resolved to approve the minutes, signed by Cllr. Geen.
4. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair** – Cllr Stones proposed Cllr Manning. Cllrs Manning and Byroms put themselves forward as Chair. Cllr Manning was duly elected. Cllr Byroms put herself forward as Vice Chair and was accepted by Council. Cllrs completed Acceptance of Office forms. **Action:** Clerk to notify WDBC.

**Cllr Manning chaired the rest of the meeting.**

### 5. Representation of Councillors on Committees, Sub Groups and Special Interests.

Cllrs put themselves forward for the following positions and were accepted by Council.

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| a) Finance sub-committee:            | Clerk, Cllrs. Geen, Tigwell  |
| b) Employment Committee              | Cllr. Geen, Cllr Manning (plus a new councillor)   |
| c) Parking Committee                 | Cllr Manning (plus a new councillor)   |
| d) CCTV:                             | Clerk, Cllr. Manning (plus a new councillor)   |
| e) Postbridge Cemetery:              | Clerk, Cllr. Greatrex  |
| f) Princetown Play Area:             | Cllrs. Henson, Byrom, Williams, (Cllr Greatrex agreed to help out until new councillors are in post) |
| g) Snow Tourism:                     | Clerk, Cllrs. Geen, Manning.   |
| (To include Snow Warden)             | Cllr. Henson   |
| h) Fundraising:                      | Cllrs. Manning, Byrom  |
| i) Princetown Youth Club:            | Cllr. Byrom  |
| j) Southern Link:                    | Cllrs. Tigwell, Manning  |
| k) Devon & Cornwall Police Advocate: | Cllr. Manning  |
| l) Speedwatch                        | Cllr. Manning  |
| m) Princetown Primary PTFA           | Cllr. Byrom  |
| n) Princetown Skate Park             | Cllr. Manning (plus a new Councillor)  |

It was noted that as there are currently two vacancies to be filled, new Councillors would be invited to take up posts. Cllr Stones pointed out that training is required for Princetown Play Area Inspections, which is part of the role (f) **Action:** Clerk to revisit this once new councillors have been identified.

6. **Vision Zero SW Grant** - Cllr. Williams held a meeting on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May. See [Appendix 1](#) for notes of the meeting. A launch date has been agreed – June 24<sup>th</sup> at 1000 in front of the Visitor Centre Princetown. The cattle and pony collars have been



distributed to farmers, VAS sign due to be delivered 27<sup>th</sup> May and other signage has been agreed with DNPA and Devon Highways. **Action:** Clerk to write press release regarding launch and circulate.

Cllr Mark Renders left the room

## 7. Planning - 0103/22 Forest Inn Hexworthy - Granted Conditionally 12/5/22

0159/22 Railway Inn, Princetown-

A member of the public requested permission to address Council on behalf of Fox Tor Café in relation to the planning application. Council agreed to hear the representation before taking a vote. Council resolved to **OBJECT** to the application, primarily on the grounds that the proposed structures would not be in-keeping with the visual aesthetics of Princetown and that they would be visible from the public highway, footpath and bridleway. **Action:** Clerk to respond to DNPA on behalf of Council

0165/22 Furziemead Farm Bungalow, Postbridge – Cllr’s Watson and Greatrex visited the site on 23 May 2022 and Cllr Greatrex presented a verbal report, recommending that Council support the application. Council voted and resolved to **SUPPORT** the application. **Action:** Clerk to respond to DNPA on behalf of Council

Applications can be viewed on [Search for an application | Dartmoor](#)

Cllr Mark Renders returned the room

8. **Play Park** – Update from Cllr Henson regarding actions taken so far to address the issues raised in the report and to identify further actions necessary. Cllr Henson confirmed that remedial action has been taken by Dave Cole. The rope bridge is approaching the end of its life and will need to be removed and replaced in time. The most pressing need is to replace the damaged matting. Council to approve next course of action. **Action:** Clerk to chase RoSPA to clarify the height requirements for the A frame matting or grass.

## 9. Residents’ Concerns-

- a) Rebuilding of wall – ongoing concerns raised that the wall on Tavistock Road (nr Prison) is not being rebuilt, in their opinion, to look as it should/as approved by Planning. Council have raised the issue, via Cllr Renders, with DNPA Planning following the last meeting. There does not appear to be a breach of planning regulations and therefore Council is unable to take the matter further. Individuals who are concerned can raise the matter themselves with the DNPA Planning. Documents can be viewed <https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/planning/db-links/search-planning-applications> using the application number 0027/21.
- b) Hessary Terrace (Listed as Heather Terrace in error on the Agenda) – Cllr Stones – residents have raised concerns regarding the state of some of the gardens. **Action:** Clerk to write to LiveWest to request they contact residents to remove the rubbish and tidy the gardens.
- c) Litter on the Football field –following on from concern raised by Cllr Stones at April meeting regarding bottles being left. Youth Club cleared the area prior to the last meeting. Cllr Williams has also recently cleared a bin bag full of rubbish, he also stated that the Community centre was also keeping an eye on the situation. Cllr Stones offered to contact the PCSO and to copy the e-mail to Cllr Byroms as the contact going forwards.

- d) Council doing more to engage young people – Cllr Byroms advised that she had been contacted over the Easter Holidays by a resident asking why the Council didn't do more to engage young people. Cllr Byroms is keen to gain a better understanding of what young people want from the Council, and would like to propose a survey is undertaken alongside setting up a Youth Council, to feed ideas into Parish Council meetings. Council were largely in favour of both proposals, and encouraged Emma to set up an initial meeting with young people before the June meeting. Engaging young people will be on the June agenda for a full discussion, informed by the views of young residents to decide how to proceed. **Action:** Cllr Byroms to hold initial meeting and Clerk to add to agenda for June meeting.

#### 10.1<sup>st</sup> Public Session –

- a. Resident raised concerns about the bottle bank and the ongoing issue of young people causing a mess by removing and smashing bottles. **Action:** Cllr Stones said she would mention it to the PCSO.
- b. Resident asked who was responsible for maintaining the War Memorial as it is looking a little tired. It is the responsibility of Council. Resident sought permission to give it a bit of a spruce up, to which Council agreed.
- c. Resident raised concerns regarding an ice cream kiosk which has appeared at the East Dart Hotel Postbridge. Cllr Greatrex reported that the DoC are already involved in that matter.
- d. Resident expressed support for Electric Charging points to be installed at visitor centres at Princetown and Postbridge. Cllr Geen reported that they are planned, but the timescale had not been confirmed, but that it was something that Council were fully supportive of as part of the Climate Change Declaration.

Cllr Philip Sanders (DCC) joined the meeting.

**11. 2021/22 Accounts-** Council resolved to approve the 2021/22 Bank Reconciliation and Variance Analysis.

**12. 2021/22 Annual Governance Statements -** Council resolved to approve 2021/22 Annual Governance Statements which was duly signed by Cllr Manning and Clerk.

**13. 2021/22 Accounting Statements** Council resolved to approve 2021/22 Accounting Statements and which was duly signed by Cllr Manning and Clerk. There is a discrepancy of £23.95 which the Clerk has been unable to reconcile, but hopes that the Internal Auditor will resolve this.

**14. Financial management.** – [See Financial Report](#) for details

Payments approved by Council and cheques signed by Cllr Henson and Stones

Ref	Chq No	Date	Payee & Details	Amount
1527	1752	24/05/22	David Cole pay and expenses	£ 528.00
1528	1753	24/05/22	Litter Picker fee - Josh Cook	£ 40.00
1529	1754	24/05/22	J Bennetts pay	£ 328.35
1530	1755	24/05/22	HMRC	£ 82.20
1531	1755	24/05/22	J Bennetts - Clerk Expenses	£ 144.68
1532	1755	24/05/22	DALC membership and AGAR training for Clerk	£ 36.00
1533	1755	24/05/22	Messagemaker Displays - VZSW VAS	£ 3,401.70
1534	1755	24/05/22	Dartmoor Garden Machinery - strimmer repair	£ 52.16
1535	DD	24/05/22	West Devon Borough Council - Dog Bin Emptying (6 months)	£ 190.94

Clerk reported:

The monthly bank reconciliation has been completed and is correct. Statement date 20/04/22.

Direct debit has been set up for payment to WDBC for Dog bin emptying.

VAT Claim to be submitted for 2021/22 for £999.39 **Action:** Clerk to submit by end May

Accounts documents are ready to go to Internal Auditor at end of the month. **Action:** Clerk to deliver documents.

Cllrs Henson and Stones signed the Online Banking Form authorising the Clerk to have internet access to the bank account. The Clerk will then arrange for cheque signatories to have internet access for the purpose of authorising BACs payments **Action:** Clerk to post form.

**15. DNPA National Lottery Heritage Fund Grant** –Cllr Byroms provided an update following the meeting with Jen Manning and the proposed application. [See appendix 2 Latest Information from Jen Manning - Princetown NLHF Proposals 23/05/22](#)

Development Phase – if successful with the application we will move into an 18-month development phase, this will allow us to plan the projects within the programme in more detail, we would then submit a phase 2 application to access the full funding for the bid for the delivery phase. The development phase would start late 2022 or early 2023.

Development Phase proposals

- Princetown Community Consultation – we will work with the community of Princetown to identify the key issues face by the community, how connected they feel to the National Park and identify how we can help connect people the landscape to improve mental and physical wellbeing, rural isolation and create a sense of place among the community.

Delivery Phase Proposals

- Offer the John Muir award in schools within the bid area
- Princetown community projects based on the outcomes of the consultation
- Moorland arts engagement festival to help people connect to and learn about the catchment and the moor and develop Princetown as a visitor destination (this will be delivered as a series of arts engagement workshops and a celebratory event)

I think it's important to note when sharing these proposals that these are subject to change and the development phase will allow us to understand the feasibility of the projects.

**16. Parking issues (Princetown)** – Cllr Manning provided a [report](#) regarding inconsiderate / illegal parking which occurred in early May, but was again an issue early that day. Vehicles are parking on the pavements or blocking dropped curbs thus making it difficult or impossible for people to pass them if using a mobility vehicle, children's push chair etc. Cllr Manning requested that Council write to the three businesses concerned to request they ask visitors/contractors to those businesses park in a more considerate manner. Council approved his request. **Action:** Clerk to write to Prince of Wales Pub, Venville House and Duchy House.

Cllr Byroms reported that there are often cars parked on the double yellow lines by the Old Police Station/Prince of Wales Pub, which causes safety issues when moving school children to and from the school.

Cllr Geen reminded Council that individuals can report incidents of illegal parking to [WDBC on the website](#)

Clerk reported on the response from DoC regarding the request made following the last meeting for additional visitor parking to be considered at the Old Officers Club. (email received 17/5/22) DoC want to avoid a situation where any parking in the site becomes habitual and it then causes problems managing it when the site is redeveloped, so this is not possible.

**17. Housing Needs Survey** – Alex Rehaag (WDBC) has forwarded a [paper version of the survey](#) which will be circulated to all residents, through the school and available at the post office. Cllr Geen asked for clarification about whether the survey only applies to Princetown. Cllr Mark Renders confirmed that the available land for additional housing would be in Princetown, but that anyone can respond to the survey from within or outside of the Parish or Princetown. Council agreed to encourage residents to complete it. **Action:** Clerk to include links to the survey on FB page and website when it is live.

**18. Zoom renewal** – Council was asked to consider and decide whether to renew the licence (due in June) at a cost of £120 per year. Council agreed that it had been useful during the pandemic, but that it was no longer needed and therefore the licence should be left to lapse, recognising that it could be re-instated quickly should the need arise. Zoom can be used for shorter meetings, (less than 40 mins) using the free zoom option.

**19. Employment Matters** – Cllr Geen advised Council that following an end of probation meeting, the Clerk had successfully completed the 3 month probation period, and confirmed her ongoing employment.

## **20. Updates on correspondence/actions from the last meeting**

a) Climate Change Declaration – Tree planting – nothing further. Cllr Williams reported that the Community Centre has 15 trees to plant in an around the Centre. **Action:** Cllr Geen to email Centre Manager to see if one of the trees could be used in the Play Park.

- b) Memorial Benches – Two quotes from local joinery/carpentry companies have been received, both at well over £1000 for the refurbishment of one bench on Princetown Green. Both have stated that the high costs are due to massive increases in the cost of raw materials. Council felt that they were unable to authorise work given the costs. A member of the public requested permission to address Council on this matter. Resident (AS) suggested that Council approach the Governor HMP Dartmoor as they have a workshop and have in the past made benches for the village, and could be more cost effective. Council agreed this could be a potential solution. **Action:** Clerk to contact the Governor, to explore this potential opportunity.
- c) Road Works and Diversions – Clerk reported another road closure is planned 10-14 June 0900 – 1500hrs each day from Dartmeet Bridge to Hexworthy Cross, with a lengthy diversion through Bovey Tracey and Mortonhampstead or vice versa. This is a good opportunity to raise the issue with DCC Highways regarding inadequate signage, lengthy diversions and a lack of detail about where the road is actually closed. **Action:** Clerk to contact DCC Highways
- d) St Michael's Churchyard – Clerk has sent a letter to the Secretary Walkhampton Parochial Church Council (16 May 2022) to make them aware that Council is no longer able to undertake maintenance of the churchyard and to open a dialogue to find a solution which is mutually acceptable to all concerned. **Action:** none until response received from PCC.
- e) Equipment Storage – David Cole now has keys to No2 Garage Bellever as a temporary store for grass cutting equipment. Long term solution to storage of Council equipment is still required. **Action:** Councillors to consider long term options/solution
- f) Online banking – form signed by Cllrs, Stones and Henson to enable Clerk to gain online access to bank account. **Action:** Clerk to send form to Lloyds bank.
- g) Policy and Procedure Review – Due to the number of items on the May agenda, sign off of the document review has been deferred until the June meeting. **Action:** Councillors are asked to look at [Appendix 3](#) to check which documents they have agreed to review.

## 21. Urgent decisions since last meeting – none

Cllr Manning left the room, Cllr Byroms took over as Chair

## 22. Reports from Committees, Sub Groups and Special Interests

- a) PTFA –Cllr Stones provided a brief report from the meeting held on April 26<sup>th</sup>. See [Briefing notes](#) for details. Next meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> June.
- b) Jubilee Committee –Cllr Stones provided a brief report from the meeting held on May 16<sup>th</sup>. See [Briefing notes](#) for details. Cllr Stones asked Cllr Manning if he, as Chair of Council, would open the Jubilee celebrations at 1200. Cllr Manning agreed to.
- c) Youth Club - Cllr Stones provided a brief report from the meeting held on May 16<sup>th</sup>. See [Briefing notes](#) for details. Cllr Byroms asked if any Councillors would like to become Trustees of the Youth Club. Cllr Geen suggested that this be put off until the vacancies are filled.

Cllr Manning returned and resumed as Chair



- d) Speedwatch – Cllr Manning provided a brief verbal report. Speeding seems to have returned to pre covid levels with 8-10% of vehicles speeding. Weather has prevented session taking place.

### 23. Exchange of Information

- a) Cllr Stones raised a concern that the 'No Parking' signage on the Prison wall is no longer visible. Resident (AS) said he would report back to the Governor.
- b) Cllr Stones handed over £6 cash to the Clerk for the purchase of a Jubilee mug. Cllr Renders said he has a DFPC paying in book at the Post Office.
- c) Cllr Williams returned to the issue of the bottle bank (raised in 1<sup>st</sup> Public Session) He asked if the bottle bank was really necessary, if it was causing an issue. **Action:** Clerk to put on agenda for June meeting
- d) Cllr Greatrex requested that Postbridge cemetery is put on the agenda for June **Action:** Clerk
- e) Cllr Manning reported an issue raised by two residents concerning the lights (Prison Wall). While they were on the pavement, putting their bins out the lights changed to green, a car moved off in the direction of Tavistock, but had to stop as two cars came through the lights from the Prison direction at speed, with two wheels on the pavement, narrowly missing the resident and the car. A resident attending the meeting stated this was not the first incident. A lack of evidence makes it difficult to report to police (no car reg no). **Action:** Cllr Manning will discuss informally with the Police and report back to next meeting.
- f) Cllr Manning showed pictures of posters advertising events in the village, and another sticker which had been put over a safety notice on an electricity pole. Cllr Manning suggested that such stickers should be removed. He also reported that a number of posters had also appeared selling motorcycles. Cllr Sanders reminded all that any posters on telegraph poles were in fact fly posting and illegal.

### 24. 2<sup>nd</sup> PUBLIC SESSION

- a) Cllr Sanders advised Council that DCC is facing a significant reduction in funding in the coming years, and is legally obliged to provide statutory services, which means there is less money available for other services going forwards. DNPA is also facing similar financial constraints. Cllr Sanders encouraged all to lobby their local MP. Cllr Manning requested more information to enable effective lobbying. Cllr Sanders agreed to send through information to Clerk.
- b) Resident raised ongoing concerns regarding the rebuilding of the Prison Wall. Cllr Manning stated that Council raised the issue with DNPA Planning Officer after the last meeting. There is nothing more that Council can do at this stage, as Planning was not deemed to have been breached at this point. Council will revisit the issue as necessary.
- c) Dave Cole asked about cutting the grass in St Michaels Churchyard as it's getting long, and residents are mentioning it to him. Cllr Geen explained that Council is unable to cut the grass as it falls outside of its powers as the churchyard is the property and therefore the responsibility of Walkhampton PCC. Council has written to the PCC and will engage with them in the hope of reaching a solution.

### 25. Date of next meeting – at 1930 on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022, Princetown Community Centre

The meeting closed at 2140.