

Dartmoor Forest Parish Council



Parish Clerk: Jackie Bennetts,
Applegarth, Walkhampton, Yelverton, PL20 6JP
Telephone: 01822 859104

Email: clerk@dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk

6th June 2023

Minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Council Meeting on 23rd May 2023 in Princetown Community Centre

Present:

Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward:	Princetown Ward:	
Cllr Alison Geen	Cllr Stephen Butterworth	3 Vacancies
Postbridge Ward:	Cllr Gregg Manning *	* Chair
Cllr Julian Greatrex		** Vice Chair
	Cllr Mark Williams	

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 **PCMF**: Princetown Churchyard Maintenance Fund

Cllr Manning chaired the meeting

Annual Parish Meeting 2023 at 7pm

Cllr Manning chaired the meeting

There were 4 members of the public present, including DNPA Ranger Serena

- 1. Apologies** – Cllr Byrom, Cllr Watson
- 2. Annual Parish Meeting 2022 – Matters arising from last meeting** - none
- 3. Chair's Report** – Cllr Manning gave the following [report](#).

Good evening Ladies and Gentleman I would like to welcome you all to tonight's Annual Parish Meeting. For anyone who does not know me my name is Gregg Manning, I have lived in the village for 17 years and the village matters to me a lot. I am currently chair of the council but will be stepping down this evening.

I shall be presenting to you a summary of things that the Parish Council have been involved in over the last 12 months.

The parish council is made up of 10 councillors which is 7 for Princetown 1 for Hexworthy and two for Postbridge. During the last 12 months for a variety of reasons we have lost three Princetown Councillors so are looking for 3 people who would like to be on the council. Anyone interested please see my Clerk after the meeting.

All councillors are unpaid volunteers but we do as a council employ three people one is our clerk who keeps us all in order and most importantly legal. By this I mean that she ensures that council business is conducted correctly and within the law. She also organises all the paperwork for meetings and deals with letters etc. Without our clerk we could not really function.

I also wanted to thank Jake Cook our litter picker. He keeps the playpark tidy which is most important as our park gets many visitors from outside the village. Jake replaced his brother Josh so thank you to both of them for the work they do and have done.

27th June 2023

Signature of Chair



Another employee is our Lengthsman – He works around the parish and we as residents accept what he does without blinking an eye. So, I wanted to share with you what it is he does.

Lengthsmans Duties: Grass Cutting throughout the Parish:

- DCC Highways pay us for cutting back roadside verges at junctions
- Duchy pay us for cutting the grass around the Play Park, and around PCC, War Memorial
- Postbridge Cemetery (4 days in Feb) 1 day a month from May 2023
- Princetown Football Club pay us for pitch cutting through season

Clearing roadside ditches and culverts to prevent surface water flooding roads (mainly in Jan/Feb)

General Maintenance: putting up signs such as the 5mph speed signs and no dogs allowed around Play Park.

Play Park – removing faulty elements, repairs to some fencing and cleaning

Tree Guards - for memorial trees

Removing Benches for refurbishment by Prison

Of course, even if he worked 80 hours a week he could not do everything that is needed which is where the others come in.

Tidy Princetown Sessions (Monthly from August 22). A small group of villagers who meet every first Sunday of the month. We meet at 10 outside the post office and we spend an hour around the village. It might be removing the weeds along the edge of the pavement or litter picking around the village. We need more to help so all volunteers welcome.

The Parish Council was instrumental in setting up **Churchyard Maintenance Fund/Group** to look after St Michael's Churchyard. We have some councillors on the group but as individuals not councillors. No longer a Parish Council project but a very important one. We as a group meet up once a month to do some work tidying the Churchyard. Cutting the grass around the stones and with the environment in mind we are setting up wild flower gardens on unused ground to enhance the look of the churchyard. If we had not set up this group, the churchyard would have been closed to future burials.

So now the council itself.

Planning Applications Considered and Responded to:

11x applications (including 2 for Works to trees in a Conservation Area) 9 voted In Support, 2 Objections We do not have the final say on planning but if we object to a planning application then it can no longer be dealt with just by a planning officer but needs the full planning council.

At least two councillors will have visited the site and considered all aspects of the application and whether it fits within the criteria laid down in the planning regulations. They then prepare a report and present to the council where it will be debated.

Vision Zero SW – A plan and funding bid was put forward and was successful. This allowed for the purchase of reflective collars for cattle and ponies, A VAS sign to reduce incidents involving animals on B3212, We received £6300 from VZSW.

So, working in collaboration with Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society, DNPA, DCC Highways a launch event was held 24 June 2022. Initiative picked up by DALC and used as a case study demonstrating good stakeholder involvement. This again was a Parish Council Initiative.

Pots and Plants – A council initiative which was supported by WDBC Cllr Mark Renders who used his Locality Fund to fund us the £180 needed to enhance look of village. The idea is to get a little colour into the village and brighten it up a bit. You may have already noticed some very large black pots that have appeared around the village all planted up and ready to start to brighten up the village.

Speedwatch Sessions - This was my initiative as a resident but has now been adopted by the council. Nothing has changed but I believe it now sits where it should have sat in the first place. I know this is not a favourite with everyone but just like the collars I mentioned we are just trying to keep the animals safe. I also need more volunteers for this so anyone interested please contact me directly.

Responsible for Community Assets:

- Postbridge Cemetery – We are the Burial Authority and are responsible for the grounds, burials, memorials and plots. We also commissioned tree works to remove dead trees and reduce shading April 22.
- Defibrillators – We maintain these in Hexworthy and Postbridge.
 - We installed new batteries and cabinet door at Postbridge. Feb 22
 - We re-instated electrical supply to heat pad and light Hexworthy and also replaced signs. Mar 22
- Bus Shelter (Princetown) – new seating and window sills installed, to be re painted when weather permits
- Princetown Play Park – maintenance and repair of all elements. We have a weekly inspection by Councillors. Action plan has to be agreed to respond to issues identified by annual RoSPA inspection in March 22.
- Noticeboards – This was refurbished in Postbridge April 22
- CCTV Princetown- Requires annual maintenance/servicing and monitoring as required (This is for Crime Prevention)
- Provide and decorate Christmas Tree in Princetown Dec 22
- Telephone Box – We ensure this is kept clean and tidy and is a great WW1 Memorial Princetown
- Refurbishment of Hexworthy Telephone Box, lighting and electrical supply to defib heat pad

Events Organised:

- Jubilee Celebrations June 2022 (in collaboration with other local organisations)
- Books of Condolence Princetown/Postbridge upon Queen's Death Sept 2022
- Kings Proclamation – This was read by me on the steps of the Visitor Centre Sept 2022
- Kings Coronation Celebration May 2023 (in collaboration with other local organisations)
- Planting of two memorial trees in Play Park – Queen Elizabeth II and King Charles III
- Remembrance Service Nov 2022 (attended and organised collection raising £208 for Royal British Legion)

Lobbying

- Potential Closure of Princetown Visitor Centre – wrote to DNPA, Duchy, local Councillors, MP's, Secretary of State DEFRA. We ensured we got newspaper coverage and applied as much pressure as we could.
- DCC Highways – to improve notification and signage of proposed road closures and diversions
- Encouraged and supported Housing Needs Assessment – resulting in identification of the need for 16 affordable homes in Princetown.

Responded to a number of issues raised by local residents – including:

Untidy gardens, abandoned vehicles, rebuilding of the Prison wall, litter and dog mess in and around the village, improved signage around play park, repainting yellow lines on road near play park, safer pavements posters, cutting back hedges (Hexworthy), safety issues regarding the fencing around the Old Officers Mess, surface water flooding on roads, BT phone boxes out of order/in need of refurbishment.

Finally, there are some things we have to pay for

- WDBC – for emptying of 4 dog poo bins fortnightly
- WDBC Cemetery Rates – Postbridge Cemetery
- Insurance cover – all activities, Play Park, CCTV, assets, public liability
- Rent – to Duchy for Play Park
- NALC/DALC – subscriptions for training, advice and information – All councillors have to attend training to help them understand what it means to be a councillor. Training is also undertaken by our Clerk which benefits the council in everything we do.

4. **Review of the past year and a look to the future** – a general discussion looking at what has worked well in past year, what improvements could be made and an opportunity to consider what Council may do in the coming year.
5. **Matters raised by Electors** – Opportunity for members of the Public to raise matters of concern, or suggest actions for the coming year.
 - a. Resident raised the issue of the dog poo bins often being full/overflowing and questioned if collections could be more frequent during the summer months.
 - b. Resident queried why the Parish Council cannot maintain St Michael's Churchyard. Clerk explained it falls outside of Council legal powers to do so, as the churchyard remains the property and responsibility of Walkhampton Parochial Church Council. DFPC is not permitted to use public funds to provide a service to the Church, which is why the Churchyard Maintenance Fund Group was set up to look after the churchyard. The group can raise funds to contract the Parish Lengthsman to undertake work.

Meeting closed at 7.25pm

Annual Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm

Cllr Manning chaired the meeting

There were 4 members of the public present, including DNPA Ranger - Serina

1. **Apologies** – Cllr Byrom, Cllr Watson
2. **Declarations of interest** - none
3. **Acceptance of minutes** - As previously circulated for meeting on 25th April 2023 Council resolved to approve the minutes which were signed by Cllr Manning.
4. **Urgent decisions since last meeting** – none
5. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair** – Election of officers for the year May 2023–April 2024.
 Cllr Geen proposed Cllr Manning as Chair, this was seconded by Cllr Williams and agreed by all members present. Cllr Manning was elected as Chair for the forthcoming year.
 Cllr Geen proposed Cllr Williams as Vice Chair, seconded by Cllr Butterworth and agreed by all members present. Cllr Williams was elected vice chair for the forthcoming year.
 Cllr Manning and Cllr Williams both signed Acceptance of Office forms, also signed by the Clerk.
6. **Co-option of Councillors to fill three vacancies in Princetown Ward** – Two candidates were present at the meeting and each of them was asked to introduce themselves to Council. Council then agreed to co-opt both Gary Easton and Hannah Wood to Council.
 Cllr Easton and Cllr Wood signed the Acceptance of Office forms, also signed by Clerk.
Action: Clerk to email Notification of Interest forms for completion prior to the next meeting.
7. **Policy Review** – Review of progress to date. See Appendix 1. Councillors were reminded that policies need to be reviewed prior to the June meeting. New Councillors were included on the list to review documents.

8. **DNPA Parish Members Election** – Council to consider ballot for members. Council agreed to vote for Cllr Mark Williams, and Mrs Susan Hill of Chagford Parish Council. **Action:** Clerk to return ballot paper to DALC by the deadline 2pm 31st May 2023. *Subsequent to meeting: On the 1st June it was confirmed in email form DALC that, subject to approval by the Home Secretary, both Cllr Williams and Susan Hill had been elected.*
9. **Proposal to hold Pony Sale in Princetown** – Council to discuss the proposal and decide if any action is to be taken. Clerk contacted Charlotte Faulkner (Dartmoor Hill Pony Association) on 15/5/23 to request further information and invite her to attend a meeting but has not received a response. Council agreed item to be forwarded to June meeting for further discussion.
10. **Natural England plans to reduce levels of stock on Dartmoor** – See [Briefing Notes](#) Appendix 2 for latest update from Cllr Geen. Council agreed no further action to be taken at this stage but Cllr Geen to keep Council updated with any future developments.
11. **1st PUBLIC SESSION** - Residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on agenda items, or raise issues for future consideration
12. **Parking issues (Princetown)**- Standing item to cover issues arising since last meeting
 - a) Residents Parking – As raised at the April meeting by Cllr Williams, Council to discuss and consider options for resolving the issue of visitors parking in residential streets rather than in the car park. See email sent 19/05/23 for information from DCC Highways regarding Resident Permit Parking Schemes. Cllr Williams proposed that this matter be put forward to June meeting to allow more time for investigation of the options and a longer discussion. Council agreed. **Action:** Clerk to contact DALC to see if any other Parish Councils had undertaken this. Item to be put on agenda for June 2023.
13. **Residents' issues or concerns** – Standing item to cover issues raised at or since the last meeting – none raised prior to meeting
14. **Bellever Garages** – Council approved the move to No 18, as proposed in the letter received from DoC 11/5/23. See email sent 19/05/23. Action: Clerk to respond to DoC. Lengthsman to be ready to move equipment into No 18 from the middle of June.
15. **Litter Picker** – Council approved the request for a trolley to remove bin bags from play park, Hi-Viz Vest and ID Lanyard. See [Briefing Notes](#) Appendix 3 for details and costs. Action: Clerk to order equipment for delivery to Jake (Litter Picker)
16. **Planning** –

[0120/23](#) - Electric Vehicle Charging Points at Two Bridges Hotel Two Bridges, PL20 6SW Council to consider application and decide on response. **Granted Conditionally 12/05/23**

Council to discuss the following applications and agree on response to DNPA
All Councillors should look at these applications online prior to the meeting.

[0195/23](#) at 1 Hessary View, PL20 6RA - Cllrs Greatrex and Williams reviewed the application, visited the site on the 18th May and submitted the following report:

'We have examined the proposed site at land adjacent to 1a Hessary View. We are of the opinion that to the best of our knowledge there are no grounds for objecting to this development, as per planning regulations.

We would however raise a potential concern as to the management of surface water drainage. The site is at the base of North Hessary Tor, a very steep hill which attracts an exceptional amount of rainfall. A large culvert runs across one edge of the site, and a large drainage ditch along another edge. There appears to be brick paving planned to be built

over part of the culvert. There are also storm drains gathering water from North Hessary Tor which appear to run underneath the site.

Therefore, we would request further investigation into the management of surface water and drainage on site, to ensure the risk of flooding is effectively controlled.

This seems particularly pertinent bearing in mind the recent government advice regarding preventing flooding.' Council agreed to OBJECT to the application in light of this concern regarding the management of surface water, but were in support increasing the number of homes for local people.

Action: Clerk to respond to DNPA

[23/0031](#) at Chaplains House, Tavistock Road, PL20 6RE Works to trees in a Conservation area. Council expressed concerns about the felling of mature trees and asked for more information regarding the reasons for the felling. Action: Clerk to obtain additional information.

[23/0028](#) at 6, Grosvenor House, Barrack Road, PL20 6RQ Works to trees in a Conservation area. Council agreed to support the removal of the Leylandi. Action: Clerk to respond to DNPA

17. Financial management - see [Financial Report](#) for details

a) Payments approved;

Ref	Chq No	Payee & Details	Amount
1641	0	Jackie Bennetts - Clerk Pay	£ 363.15
1642	0	Jackie Bennetts - Clerks Expenses -Plaques, plates, cups, gloves	£ 130.97
1643	0	David Cole - Lengthsman Pay	£ 528.00
1644	0	David Cole - Expenses - fuel and post/rails/netting for Tree Guards	£ 179.54
1645	0	Josh Cook - Litter Picker fee	£ 44.00
1646	0	HMRC - Clerk tax	£ 90.80
1647	0	Dartmoor Garden Machinery - Strimmer Repair	£ 107.16
1648	0	Postbridge Village Hall - Coronation Celebrations	£ 50.00
1649	0	Sheila Manning - reimbursing for plants and rosettes	£ 119.14
1650	0	Zurich Municipal Town & Parish , Insurer Trust Account	£ 485.27
			£ 2,098.03

b) Bank reconciliation; correct to 22/5/23

c) Online banking registration now complete for Cllr Geen and Cllr Manning, so payments will be made by BAC's transfer this month and going forwards. Action: Clerk to ensure Cllr Byrom is registered for online banking access to account.

18. 2022/23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return –

a) Council to receive Bank Reconciliation and Variance Analysis

b) Council to approve the Annual Governance Statement, to be signed by Chair & Clerk.

c) Council to approve the Accounting Statements to be signed by Chair

Due to workload Clerk has been unable to complete the work necessary so item put forward to June meeting. Action: Clerk to complete accounts year end, submit to internal auditor for presentation at June meeting.

19. Updates on correspondence/ actions from previous meetings -

- a) Noticeboards – Hexworthy and Postbridge – Clerk has e-mailed DNPA to seek their views on the notice board chosen by Council at March meeting (Aluminium frame) – awaiting response. Council is keen to proceed with the Aluminium frame. Cllr Geen is canvassing locals in Hexworthy to see if they are willing to make a small financial donation to cover the cost of replacing the notice board. Action: Clerk to chase response from DNPA, send dimensions to Cllr Geen to check existing posts can be used.

20. Reports from Committees, Sub Groups and Special Interests:

- a) Youth Club & Princetown Primary School PTA – Cllr Byrom – no update available
- b) Play Park Action Plan – See [Briefing Notes](#) Appendix 4 for progress to date Clerk to update the spreadsheet with actions taken to date. Lengthsman to continue to address issues identified. He made suggestion that a concrete slab be put in front of the bench rather than slabs which was accepted by Council.
- c) Speedwatch – Cllr Manning See [Briefing Notes](#) Appendix 5
- d) Princetown Churchyard Maintenance Fund – Cllr Williams reported that each session is being supported by 6 or 7 volunteers, the same people most of the time and it would be good to get more people involved. The next session is planned for Thursday 25th 10am, with sessions taking place every three weeks.
- e) Last Tidy Princetown Session – the last session 8th May was not well supported, possibly due to the weather and it was on the Bank Holiday Monday after the Coronation, to tie in with 'The Big Help Out'. It is felt that progress is being made but the weeds pose a constant battle.

- 21. 2nd PUBLIC SESSION** - Residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on agenda items, or raise issues for future consideration – none

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

Cllr Manning will be representing Council at a Southern Links meeting on 24th May, to discuss how the local Parish Councils can use the remaining training money, in the region of £2000, to best effect.

Cllr Geen has seen a recent post of FB regarding the state of the Prison Officers Mess. Clerk has previously contacted Tom Stratton DoC and he has stated that once the development plans are agreed he will attend a meeting to update Council.

Cllr Geen reported that a volunteer (TP) was continuing the refurbishment of the Hexworthy Phone Box, and had repainted the ceiling, replaced the light and was replacing the 'Telephone' signs with 'Defibrillator'

Cllr Williams reported that a bench at the top of Bellever Close had two slats missing/damaged. It was suggested that this is not a DFPC bench but is owned by the Duchy. Action: Clerk to contact DoC to request repair.

Cllr Williams asked that we contact the Prison re the return of the refurbished benches. Clerk reported she has been in contact with Dan Worth (Industries Manager) she is expecting a call back on Thursday 25th with an update on when they can be collected. Dan Worth has also confirmed the prison would be providing the threaded bolts and the adhesive to secure the fixing bolts. Clerk to update Cllr Williams and the Lengthsman as necessary.

Cllr Williams commented that at a previous meeting Council had approved the purchase of metal tree guards to protect the two commemorative trees in the Play Park. Due to the difficulties and costs getting them delivered in time, the Lengthsman has built suitable wooden/wire tree guards. Cllr Williams asked for Council to agree to retain the wooden/wire tree guards instead of the metal ones. Council agreed.

Cllr Williams asked Council to write a letter of thanks to Barry Williams who has been involved in the refurbishment of the Bus Shelter, making the new window sill and also the stakes/mounts for the plaques for the trees in the play park. Action: Clerk to write with thanks.

23. **Date of next 'Tidy Princetown' -** 10am until 11am - Sunday 4th June 2023.
Meet outside Post Office.
24. **Date of next meeting -** 1930 on 27th June 2023
Princetown Community Centre

Meeting closed at 9.15pm