



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council
held in Holne Village Hall on
Tuesday 7 July 2026 at 8.00pm**

Present

Cllr B Owen, R Applegarth, D Fisher and L Grun

Also present

Suzanna Hughes (Clerk), District Cllr Hancock and two members of the public

The meeting was opened by Cllr Owen at 7.30pm.

070726.01	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from: • Cllr McLean • County Cllr Thomas • District Cllr Pannell • Rob Steemson (DNPA)
070726.02	Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.
070726.03	Open Forum A resident expressed concern about the leat running through Playpark which has become narrow and is barely visible with the encroachment of grass and vegetation. She wondered whether she could borrow some equipment to cut down the sides to widen it. The Chair knew of a parishioner who might have the necessary equipment for this. Over the summer, Cllr Fisher will also collect some of the stones from the sump and under the clapper bridge and spread them over the path. It was suggested that the swing cross bars at Playpark are taken down completely. Cllrs Applegarth and Fisher will have a look to see if it's feasible to cut them down. Ross Gray (Tree Warden) is very concerned about the ancient yew tree in the churchyard. He has sought opinion from various sources and different/contrary advice has been given. It does not appear to be suffering from disease, but could be dying from old age. Ross will continue to liaise with experts to try and do all he can to keep the tree alive. He requested that, if finance is required to obtain the necessary advice and treatment, the Parish Council might offer some support. District Cllr Hancock reminded Ross that funding could be accessed through the district councillors' locality budget. There is also funding available through the Climate Change and Biodiversity fund.

	Ross also raised the ongoing problems at Holne Bridge and the necessity for investment in order to protect the bridge. This will be discussed at item 8.
070726.04	Minutes 4.1 Members received the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 5 May 2026. It was agreed unanimously that they be signed by the Chair as a true and correct record of the meeting. 4.2 Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5 May 2026. It was agreed unanimously that they be signed by the Chair as a true and correct record of the meeting.
070726.05	Reports 5.1 County Council Cllr Thomas was unable to attend the meeting. 5.2 District Council Cllrs Hancock and Pannell circulated a written report (attached) and the meeting was attended by Cllr Hancock. 5.3 DNPA (District Cllr Pannell) Nothing to add from DNPA except that we will also be affected by the changes to the way planning works. Details still to be confirmed but be reassured Town and Parish Councils will remain Statutory Consultees, even if Officers make the majority of decisions. Cllr Pannell circulated details of the timetable for the review of the Dartmoor Local Plan. The scoping consultation – covering broadly what issues the community wishes to see included – runs from 13th July to 23rd August. Parish Councils will have an opportunity to comment. The main consultation on the proposed content of the new plan will take place next summer. The timings for these consultations are set by the Government - not DNPA. 5.4 DNPA (Rob Steemson) Rob sent a brief update advising that, as required by DCC on whose behalf DNPA manage the public rights of way, he has undertaken the various surveys that they are required to do within the delegated agreement. He will now start clearing vegetation, as per his local knowledge work programme, on various pieces of key infrastructure and main routes.
070726.06	Finance and Governance 6.1 Payments for Approval The following payments were approved: • EDF (DAAT mast - invoices 24 & 25) - £38.32
070726.07	Planning 7.1 New applications/appeals None 7.2 Decisions None
070726.08	Holne Bridge The clerk advised that DCC's Structures team are aware of the latest damage and are looking at a road closure to carry out the works. They will also be looking at implementing something during that road closure to minimise future damage. No further details were provided. After a discussion,

	it was agreed that the clerk would write to County Cllr Thomas advising that the temporary cones that were placed as a test were knocked over pretty much as soon as they were erected. All that remains is some tatty bits of plastic which need to be removed. There is also a pothole which vehicles are trying to avoid and could be an explanation for why the cones were knocked down so quickly. The area around the bridge is now extremely busy and further damage to the bridge is highly likely. It was noted that it is almost 12 months since the onsite meeting, and not a lot appears to have happened since then in terms of providing a long-term solution.
070726.09	Church Park Gate Repairs and Village Strimming It has been noted that the gates on either end of the footpath need repair. The clerk will inform Rob Steemson as they are the responsibility of DNPA. It was noted that Malcolm Fairman has been voluntarily carrying out some strimming around the village and around the village signs, for which the Parish Council was most grateful.
070726.10	Playpark Having written to DNPA about whether planning permission for an upgraded playpark would be required, they have advised that local authorities (including Parish Councils) have certain permitted development rights to enable the carrying out of some development without the need for express planning permission. These are set out in Part 12 of the General Permitted Development Order : https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/596/schedule/2/part/12. They have suggested that in the first instance an application for planning advice is submitted (https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/planning/planning-advice) setting out with approximate dimensions and a site plan what it is that the Parish Council would like to achieve. A DNPA officer will then be able to check this against the regulations and confirm if planning permission is required. If it is, they will then be able to provide some commentary regarding the likely acceptability of the proposals, set against the policies of the Dartmoor Local Plan, (https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0034/193759/Dartmoor-Local-Plan-20182036.pdf.pdf) of which Strategic Policy 4.1 will be particularly relevant. They have also confirmed that there is no charge for this for Parish Councils. After a discussion, it was agreed that the clerk would write to DNPA and request whether an officer would meet on site in advance of an application for planning advice being submitted.
070726.11	Climate and Biodiversity Emergency No report
070725.12	Highways, Footpaths & Leats <i>Residents are encouraged to report all potholes:</i> https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/report-a-pothole/ The following issues were raised for action by DNPA: - The fallen tree at O'Brook has still not been cleared - Wobbly stile on the path on the right-hand side of Michelcombe Lane - Wobbly step along the path (over the stile) to the river towards Holne Woods
070725.13	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

070726.14	Correspondence None
070726.15	Frequency of meetings & date of next meeting After discussion, it was agreed to revert to monthly Parish Council meetings (except August and December). The next meeting will be on Tuesday 1 st September at 7.30pm.

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Cllr B Owen
Chair

Parish report from your District Councillors

6th July 2026

Local Government Reorganisation

The Government intends to announce its decision on the shape of Local Government Reform in Devon **before the Summer Parliamentary Recess**, which begins on 17th July. We wait with interest.

It seems likely that the Town and Parish Councillors elected in May next year will hold their seats **for five years**. This is so future elections can continue to be synchronised with elections for the Unitary Councils. This will save Officer time and considerable expenditure. The Unitaries will also sit for five years for their first term, as for the first year (2027-28) they will be Shadow Authorities, setting up the new bodies ready to take over in April 2028. From 2032 elections for these and for Town and Parish Councils will revert to a four-yearly pattern.

Planning changes

The Government is making changes to the way in which planning applications are to be determined after 31 October. After that date Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 introduce a national scheme of delegation for all planning decisions.

The Government's objective is to introduce greater clarity and consistency in the role of planning committees in development management decision-taking. The intended effect is that there will be fewer applications decided by planning committees and more delegated to officers.

The 2026 Regulations adopt a two-schedule structure. Schedule 1 applications must be delegated to officers unless the application is one that is being made by the Council, or by an officer or member of the Council. Schedule 2 applications, which are the more significant applications, are subject to a presumption of officer determination but may be referred to committee where the nominated officer and nominated member agree that the statutory criteria for referral are met.

The Council is taking time to work through the regulations and how it should adopt its processes to comply with them.

We will then have all member briefing sessions to ensure that members are fully up to speed with their role in the new decision-making process. This is a fundamental change to how planning operates which we have no choice but to implement.

Town and parish councils remain consultees and their comments on applications will remain relevant considerations.

Crisis and Resilience Fund

Councillors are encouraged to help raise awareness of the Crisis and Resilience Fund with residents who may be struggling financially.

The fund is designed to support low-income households in the South Hams who are facing an unexpected financial shock, such as a sudden loss of income, the breakdown of an essential household item, or another urgent cost they cannot afford.

- The fund can also provide housing support, financial advice and wider services to help people avoid future crises and build longer-term resilience.

- Residents must be aged 16 or over and live in the South Hams as their main home.
- If councillors are contacted by residents in need of support, they can encourage them to check the eligibility criteria and apply online using this link southhams.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/other-available-support/crisis-and-resilience-fund

The team understands that not all residents are able to complete online applications. We can provide support by telephone and, longer term, we hope to develop a face-to-face offering.

If Members have any general questions or queries, please email the team on CrisisandResilienceFund@swdevon.gov.uk

Land transfer - Hope Wood

We have approved the freehold transfer of a seven-acre field at Hope Wood in South Brent to Sustainable South Brent. This will help to secure the long-term future of community food growing and orchard management at the site.

The decision builds on the success of Hope Wood since we bought the 65-acre site in 2024. Since then, nearly 25,000 trees have been planted, with grassland restoration under way, a habitat bank has been established, new public access has been created and a community orchard has taken shape with strong local involvement.

Volunteers from the South Brent community have played a major role in shaping the site, with more than 1,000 people of all ages getting involved.

The transfer will allow Sustainable South Brent to develop its plans for a thriving market garden and orchard within the field, building on work already under way and supporting local food production, biodiversity and community wellbeing.

The project is part of the wider vision for Hope Wood as a place where community wellbeing, nature and environmental improvements come together.

Community Engagement Round-Up

Local Plan - 16 July to 24 September 2026: Scoping consultation to understand the challenges and opportunities that the next local plan will need to consider.