

Burlescombe Parish Council

DRAFT MINUTES

Annual Meeting of Burlescombe Parish Council
on Wednesday, 20 May 2026 at Burlescombe Village Hall

Present: Councillors Forward (Chair), Downing, Elliss-Brookes, McDonald, Smith and Walker together with MDDC District Councillor Westcott, and the Clerk, Mrs S McGeever.

Councillor Forward opened the meeting at 7.45pm and welcomed the councillors present and members of the public. The first item on the agenda was to elect a Chair.

012/2627/1 To elect the Chair and receive declaration of acceptance of office for 2026/27

Councillor Elliss-Brookes nominated Councillor Forward to be re-elected as Chair. There were no other nominations.

PROPOSER: Councillor Elliss-Brookes

SECONDER: Councillor Smith

DECISION: All in favour

Councillor Forward accepted the position of Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance.

012/2627/2 To elect the Vice-Chair and receive declaration of acceptance of office for 2026/27

Councillor Forward nominated Councillor Elliss-Brookes to be re-elected as Chair. There were no other nominations.

PROPOSER: Councillor Forward

SECONDER: Councillor McDonald

DECISION: All in favour

Councillor Elliss-Brookes accepted the position of Vice-Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance.

012/2627/3 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillor Box and her absence was duly authorised. MDDC District Councillor Lock and DCC County Councillor Clist had given their apologies.

Councillor Forward noted that DCC County Councillor Clist had given his report to the Annual Parish Meeting.

012/2627/4 Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

Councillor Forward advised that whilst she had no pecuniary interest in the planning applications to be discussed, she did live in South View (26/00604/FULL) and knew the applicants at Appledore (26/00607/FULL).

012/2627/5 Minutes of Previous meetings

The draft minutes of the meeting on 21 April 2026 had been circulated to all councillors and published on the website and noticeboards. These minutes were approved then duly initialled and signed by the Chair.

Note: The agenda wrongly reflected Matters Arising twice (6 and 8) and Item numbers have been adjusted to reflect this.

012/2627/6 Public Participation

Members of the public spoke on application 26/00604/FULL:

- The residents who owned/rented the adjacent garages had not received written notification of the application
- The planning application referred to ad hoc parking at the site. Residents had used the area for parking for the past 30 plus years. A disabled parking space had recently been marked by MDDC in the turning circle for the close.
- The planning application referred to public transport being available. There was one bus once a week to Tiverton.
- How would the site accommodate works traffic during the build.

Given the public interest in this application, the Chair brought forward Item 17. Planning but for the sake of good order, the discussion is recorded in its correct place.

012/2627/7 Matters arising from the last minutes

Updates on matters arising from the last minutes will be raised under the appropriate agenda item.

012/2627/8 Annual Return

The annual return will be prepared for the June 2026 meeting following the completion of the internal audit and submitted to the External Auditor in accordance with the timescales provided.

012/2627/9 General Power of Competence

The Parish Council is not eligible to adopt the General Power of Competence as the current Clerk is not CILCA qualified. The Clerk is undertaking the qualification.

012/2627/10 Policies and Procedures

The Parish Council reviewed its policies and procedures:

- Code of Conduct (no change)
- Standing Orders (updated and approved 2025)
- Financial Regulations (updated and approved 2025)
- Publication Scheme (no change)
- Privacy Notice (no change)
- Equality and Diversity Policy (no change)
- Contract of Employment (no change)
- Health & Safety Policy (no change)
- Website Accessibility Statement (no change)
- Grant policy (no change)
- Protocol for Filming (no change)
- Co-option policy (no change)
- NALC staff policies (no change)
- Complaints Policy and Procedure (no change)
- Vexatious Policy (no change)
- Westleigh Play Park Risk Assessment (no change)

Councillor Forward proposed that the Parish Council adopt the above policies.

PROPOSER: Councillor Forward

SECONDER: Councillor Walker

DECISION: All in favour

- IT Policy (amended version to be approved)

Councillor Forward proposed that the Parish Council adopt the amended version of the IT Policy which, whilst based on the National Association of Local Council's template, reflected the Clerk's 'work from home' modus operandi.

PROPOSER: Councillor Forward

SECONDER: Councillor Elliss-Brookes

DECISION: All in favour

- Risk Management Scheme (under review)
- Asset Register (being updated)

The Parish Council noted that the Risk Management Scheme was under review and the Asset Register was being updated for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

012/2627/11 Review of Committees, Working Group and Individual Roles of Parish Councillors

The Parish reviewed current committees, working groups and individual roles, including arrangements for reporting back.

Planning

Councillor Forward

Terms of Reference in place

The Parish Council RESOLVED to add Councillors, Elliss-Brookes, Smith and Walker to the Planning Committee.

Asset and Responsibilities Working Group

All parish councillors

Terms of Reference in place

The Parish Council RESOLVED that this committee would adopt the status quo.

Amenities Working Group

Councillor Downing

Councillor Forward

Councillor Elliss-Brookes

Councillor Walker

Terms of Reference in place

The Parish Council RESOLVED that this working group would adopt the status quo.

It was noted that the Parish Council had a Neighbourhood Priority Statement Working Group to put together the initial statement made up of Councillors Elliss-Brookes and Smith and the Clerk.

Highways	Councillor McDonald
Road Warden	Councillor McDonald
Snow Warden	Councillor McDonald
Flood Warden	Councillor McDonald

Police Matters	Councillor McDonald
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Emergency Plan Lead	Councillor McDonald
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Councillor McDonald confirmed that he was content to carry on in these roles.

Footpaths	Councillor Smith
Communications	Councillor Smith

Communications Plan in place
Councillor Smith confirmed that she was content to carry on in these roles.

Fast Fibre delivery

Councillor Box

In the absence of Councillor Box, Councillor Forward confirmed that Councillor Box was content to carry on in this role.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that these roles would adopt status quo.

012/2627/12 Review of Parish Councillor roles on External Committees and Individual Roles of Parish Councillors

Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee

Councillor Box

In the absence of Councillor Box, Councillor Forward confirmed that Councillor Box was content to carry on in this role.

Westleigh Quarry Liaison Group

Councillor Downing/
Councillor Elliss-Brookes

Councillors Downing and Elliss-Brookes confirmed that they were content to carry on in this role.

Councillor Advocate Scheme

Councillor McDonald

Councillor McDonald confirmed that he was content to carry on in this role.

School Liaison

Councillor Walker

Councillor Walker confirmed that she was content to carry on in this role.

St Mary's Church/Westleigh URC

Councillor Forward

Councillor Forward confirmed that she was content to carry on in this role.

The Clerk liaises with Devon County Council and Mid Devon District Council.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that these roles would adopt status quo.

Councillor Forward raised the possibility of having a nominated councillor to liaise with the Burlescombe & Westleigh Village Hall committee.

Action: Bring forward to the next meeting.

012/2627/13 Emergency Planning

The Emergency Plan meeting would take place in September.

Action: Clerk to re-circulate draft and Parish Councils to submit any additions

012/2627/14 Community Mapping

Discussions on Community Mapping were ongoing.

Action: Bring forward to the next meeting.

Review of risk register

See Item 10.

012/2627/15 Training

Given time constraints, a training policy document would be reviewed at the June meeting.

012/2627/16 To receive a report from the Chair

Delivery of fast fibre

Further information was awaited.

Neighbourhood Plan / Housing Needs Survey

The Housing Needs Survey had closed on 19 May and results were awaited.

Neighbourhood Priority Statement

A meeting of the working group was required once Councillors Elliss-Brookes and Smith had undertaken a gap analysis of the Housing Needs Survey and engaged with residents through a survey. The document would form part of the Parish Council's response to planning applications.

Business Continuity Plan

The Clerk advised that the Business Continuity Plan was almost completed but it would be an ongoing project.

Registering assets of community value

The Chair advised that discussions were ongoing.

Spring Clean Up Day

Councillor Forward advised that the Spring Clean Up Day had been very successful and a good way of engaging with residents and hearing their views. Three 'Clean Up' days would be scheduled per year and it was noted that combining it with a litter-pick was difficult so they could be separate events in future. It was also noted that not knowing in advance what attendance would be like on the day made it tricky to plan activities. Two empty canisters of nitrous oxide had been found by the Lime Kilns and it was noted that these should be reported to MDDC to remove.

Going forward consideration needed to be given to the Parish Council having its own equipment to use and the days should be more widely advertised although it was noted that storage of any such items would need to be resolved. The July day would focus on Westleigh play park and the ORL.

Action: Clerk – could funding be available.

Councillor Forward expressed the Parish Council's thanks to all who had been involved and to Holcim who had provided the refreshments.

Meetings

Councillor Forward felt that there was insufficient time between full Parish Council meetings to follow up on all matters raised, particularly if working group meetings were required and suggested moving to trial a 5-6 week schedule with a review at the January 2027 meeting.

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council to trial a 5-6 week gap between meeting. Dependent on the Clerk's availability meetings would be held on a Monday at Westleigh URC or a Wednesday at Burlescombe Village Hall.

PROPOSER: Councillor Forward

SECONDER: Councillor Elliss-Brookes

DECISION: All in favour

Action: Councillor Forward to liaise with the Clerk on dates.

012/2627/17 To consider the Parish Council's response to the following planning applications and receive decision notices:

Planning applications:

26/00580/MFUL

Proposal: Variation of Condition 17 of planning permission 22/02374/MFUL (Construction and operation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) farm together with associated works, equipment and infrastructure) to allow the development to commence prior to the provision of off-site highway passing places, with the works to be completed within 12 months of the development first being operational

Location: Land at NGR 301974 110937 Dean Hill Road Willand

Grid Ref: 301974 / 110937

Parish: Halberton 25

The Parish Council noted the extended deadline for comments to 22 May 2026 and RESOLVED not to comment on this application given its location.

26/00604/FULL

Proposal: Erection of one dwelling and associated works
Location: Former Garages and Forecourt South View Westleigh
Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 306041 / 116837
Parish: Burlescombe 06

The Parish Council noted the extended deadline for comments to 22 May 2026.

The Parish Council noted the comments of residents and Parish Councillors felt there were anomalies in the planning application and acknowledged the number of registered objections.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that clarification needed to be sought on the ownership of the land as it understood areas fell into MDDC HSA land and private land. The area had long been used as a car parking area for residents of South View and not 'ad hoc' parking for residents. For this reason, the Parish Council did not believe there would be a net gain of 7 car parking spaces.

Furthermore, the application referred to public transport which consisted of one return bus a week to Tiverton.

The Parish Council was also concerned about any overflow of parking out onto the main route through the village which had the potential to cause obstruction and impact road safety. It was noted this road was also regularly used by dairy tankers.

Following further discussion a proposal was made:
PROPOSAL: The Parish Council object to the application.
PROPOSER: Councillor Forward
SECONDER: Councillor Smith
DECISION: Agreed with one abstention

26/00607/FULL

Proposal: Erection of a farm produce shed with associated parking and picnic area
Location: Land at NGR 306566 114419 (Appledore Farm) Appledore
Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 306329 / 114436
Parish: Burlescombe 06

Councillor Forward noted the actions being taken to increase biodiversity including an orchard.

Following a brief discussion, the following proposal was made:
PROPOSAL: The Parish Council support the application.
PROPOSER: Councillor Elliss-Brookes
SECONDER: Councillor Walker
DECISION: All in favour

Councillor Smith noted that the safety of pedestrians on the public footpath should be taken into consideration during construction.

Decision notices:

26/00368/TELCOM – APPROVED – 1 May 2026

Proposal: Prior notification for the installation of 1 20m monopole, 3 antennas, 1 600mm dish and 1 equipment cabinet and associated ancillary works following removal of 1 17.7m monopole, 3 antennas and 2 cabinets
Location: Telecommunications Mast at NGR 307009 115761 Pound Farm Burlescombe Devon

012/2627/18 Highways Matters/Footpaths

18.1 Roads

Councillor Forward had spoken to Councillor Clist but was still awaiting a meeting date.

18.2 Speed Limits / Speeding

The Clerk was still awaiting a response from DCC regarding self-funded 20mph areas.

20 is plenty signs

Councillor Forward advised that she had not had an opportunity to check on the condition of the signs.

18.3 Potholes and other matters

The matters below have all been followed up again with DCC Highways and MDDC.

The importance of residents reporting potholes, white lines etc online could not be stressed enough.

Brimstone Lane potholes

Parish Council and public to continue reporting potholes online:

[Report a problem - Roads and transport](#)

White lines / slow sign - Primary School, Burlescombe

This is with the white line team – no update received.

Water from the garages, Burlescombe

Ongoing investigations - further update awaited from MDDC.

Electronic signs on the A38

Update awaited

Drains at Cracker Corner

Update awaited

18.4 Footpaths

P3 2026/27

The purchase order had been received.

PROW funding

The Clerk was awaiting the paperwork to cover 2025/26 path maintenance of £900.00.

18.5 Road Warden Scheme/Snow Warden Scheme/Flood Warden Scheme

Councillor McDonald advised that there was nothing to report on the above schemes.

However, he had put information together on the sewage spills that had occurred which went from the Lyner to the Culm. Connecting the Culm would be contacted and this report would be appended to these minutes. Also agreed to share information with MDDC District Councillor Gill Westcott so any issues could be raised at the next opportunity for a meeting with South West Water.

Councillor Forward noted that the National Association of Local Councils was holding a free Flood Resilience event and Councillor McDonald would look to attend.

012/2627/19 Financial matters:

The Parish Council noted the following:

19.1 Financial Report 2025-26 (Year End)

The accounts are with the internal auditor. Report awaited.

19.2 Financial Report 2026-27

Computer bag	£ 12.94
Burlescombe VH (Meeting room)	£ 36.00
Four Seasons (ORL tree works)	£408.00

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council pay the above invoices

PROPOSER: Councillor Forward

SECONDER: Councillor Elliss-Brookes

DECISION: All in favour

19.3 Review of Asset Register

The review was ongoing due to queries on assets.

19.4 Computer

The computer had been purchased and delivery was awaited.

Other matters:

Jackalope Grant and Confirmation of Outcomes

and

Historic website / emails

Due to confidentiality, these items were discussed in Part 2.

Defibrillators

The Clerk advised that she was awaiting the invoice for spare defibrillator pads.

The handover of the defibrillators to the Parish Council was underway.

Contact with Lloyds Bank/Financial Ombudsman

The case is ongoing – further information awaited from Lloyds Bank.

- Noticeboards and their upkeep

Work was ongoing on the noticeboards.

- Grants and sponsorship

Next steps would be discussed at the June meeting.

- Repairs to Westleigh Telephone Box

The Clerk had received the necessary glass to repair the telephone box.

012/2627/20 To receive a report a report on Parish Council Communications

Councillor Smith had provided a report with the main items being the Housing Needs Survey, the Annual Parish Meeting and MDDC's Oil Support Scheme.

Forty-three residents had signed up to the newsletter and a further 15 had registered but not clicked the confirmation link.

Information on the 'Visit Mid Devon' website had been updated.

As indicated in the Annual Parish Meeting, the Parish Council would look to support local organisations through its communication channels.

012/2627/21 To receive a report on the Councillor Advocate Scheme/local crime

Councillor McDonald advised there was nothing specific to report but the focus was on rural crime and the recruitment of horse riders to identify possible areas of concern.

012/2627/22 To receive a report on the Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee

In the absence of Councillor Box no report was given.

It was noted that the problems with the bridge that had been hit were ongoing and a resident raised that there appeared to be sewage going into the canal opposite Whipcott Bridge.

Action: Clerk to report

012/2627/23 To receive a report on the Quarries

Councillors Downing and Elliss-Brookes advised that there had been no meetings in the last month. A report had been produced following the last liaison meetings and queries raised by residents were being followed up. There were two meetings in July.

The Holcim letter had been sent and would be published on the website. A response was awaited.

It was noted that the broken drain had been repaired.

There was once again a considerable amount of litter on the quarry route and this would be raised with Holcim.

012/2627/24 To receive a report from the Amenities Working Group

Councillor Forward advised that the group would meet in June to discuss the future methodology of maintaining community assets.

Other matters included:

Replacing Westleigh Play Park fence

Erecting the 'no dogs' sign at Westleigh Play Park

Reviewing the Leylandi tree quotes and receiving an update from the National Grid

MDDC Expression of Interest for Burlescombe Play Park and Open Space.

012/2627/25 To receive a report from MDDC Councillors Westcott and Lock

Councillor Westcott had given her report to the Annual Parish Meeting and this would also form part of the minutes of this meeting.

012/2627/26 To receive a report from DCC Councillor Simon Clist

Councillor Clist had given his report to the Annual Parish Meeting and this would also form part of the minutes of this meeting.

012/2627/27 Items for next meeting

As listed in the minutes of this meeting.

012/2627/28 Dates of the next Parish Council Meetings

Councillor Forward had circulated potential dates and this would be firmed up with the Clerk and published on the website.

Councillor Forward closed the public meeting at 9.15pm.

Signed _____ Date: _____
Chair

Part 2

The Parish Council considered the latest information received regarding the Jackalope Grant and Confirmation of Outcomes together with matters concerning the historic website / emails.

The Parish Council had concluded that utilising public money to pursue an outcome was not a good use of such funds.

However, other avenues were open to the Parish Council and a comprehensive report would be put together and submitted. The report would be undertaken on a voluntary basis and the Clerk would be the main point of contact on behalf of the Parish Council.

Burlescombe WWTW storm overflow and River Culm pollution report for Parish Council

This document explains what the reported storm overflow figures show for **Burlescombe WWTW** (Wast Water Treatment Works), how this connects to the wider picture on the **River Culm**, and what parishioners can do next. It also shows how to **check current overflow status** and **report suspected pollution**.

Recent monitoring and published spill data show **frequent sewage discharges** across parts of the **River Culm** catchment, largely linked to **South West Water** assets. Burlescombe WWTW is one contributing site, discharging to **Fenacre Water**, a tributary of the Culm.

Burlescombe WWTW storm overflow summary

2024

16 spills 98.6 hours Fenacre Water

Data from Environment Agency EDM Annual Return.

2025

20 spills	121.28 hours	Fenacre Water	Discharges occurred during heavy rainfall events when treatment capacity was exceeded.
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*Note: Event Duration Monitoring (EDM) records **start/stop times and duration** of discharges. It does not measure the volume released.*

Environmental context (Fenacre Water → River Culm)

- **Storm overflows** are designed to prevent flooding by releasing excess rainwater mixed with sewage when treatment works reach capacity.
- **Fenacre Water**, a tributary of the River Culm, is sensitive to these discharges, which can affect downstream ecosystems.
- The **trend from 2024 to 2025 shows an increase in both spill frequency and duration**, suggesting worsening pressure on the system.
- South West Water's **WaterFit programme** aims to reduce overflow frequency through infrastructure upgrades and catchment management.

River Culm overview

Sewage spills

Top of the Poops data for **2025** shows:

- **570 sewage dumps** into the River Culm
- **6,570 hours** of sewage discharge
- Major sites include:
 - **Rewe WWTW** – 175 spills, 2,568 hours
 - **Bradninch WWTW** – 98 spills, 1,549 hours
 - **Willand WWTW** – 106 spills, 1,182 hours
 - **Culmstock STW** – 68 spills, 580 hours

[Top of the Poops](#)

Overall, these figures point to **repeated and sometimes long-running discharges**, rather than one-off incidents.

Water quality status

The **Lower Culm** water body is rated:

- **Moderate ecological status**
- **Chemical status: FAIL**
- Failures include:
 - **Mercury**
 - **PBDEs (flame retardants)**
 - **Priority hazardous substances** [Defra Data Services Platform](#)

In the catchment assessment, sewage discharge is listed as one of the **reasons the water body is not achieving good status**.

What can parishioners do?

If you suspect an active discharge or see signs of pollution, you can (1) **check live/near-real-time overflow status** in the relevant dashboards, and (2) **report the incident** to the Environment Agency using the routes below.

How to report Fenacre Water / River Culm pollution (sewage, dead fish, smells, discoloration) Environment Agency incident hotline

[0800 80 70 60](tel:0800807060) — 24-hour service

This is the official number for reporting:

- **Sewage pollution**
- **Dead fish or fish gasping for air**
- **Chemical smells or unusual colours**
- **Oil, foam, or scum.**
- **Any sudden change in river flow or appearance**

[GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Online reporting (England)

You can also report pollution online via the EA's official service:

Report water pollution online.

The service allows you to report:

- Sewage spills
- Farm runoff
- Industrial discharges
- Pollution from vehicles or objects in the river

[GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Since **May 2025**, the Environment Agency has expanded online reporting to make it faster and easier.

[Engage Environment Agency](#)

What you will need to provide

- **Exact location** (nearest bridge, village, postcode, or map pin)
- **Time you noticed the pollution.**
- **Description** (colour, smell, dead fish, sewage debris, etc.)
- **Photos** (optional but very helpful — requires email if reporting online)

[GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Who *not* to contact.

For river pollution incidents, the Environment Agency is the right contact. Local councils generally deal with issues such as litter, fly-tipping, and noise rather than water pollution.

[GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Sources.

- Top of the Poops (River Culm waterway page)
- Defra Environment / Catchment Planning Data Services Platform (Lower Culm water body status and reasons)
- Floodmapper station page (Uffculme WWTW monitoring station)
- GOV.UK: Report an environmental problem / Report water pollution (Environment Agency)
- Engage Environment Agency online reporting portal.
- Environment Agency / Rivers Trust sewage spill map (EDM publication)
- South West Water WaterFit Live and the National Storm Overflow Hub (near-real-time status)

Burlescombe Parish Council communications update

May 2026

Communications since last meeting

1. Parish magazine

A summary of April's meeting will be in the June issue of the magazine, which will be out soon.

2. Website and Facebook

Our standard approach for significant updates is to add a news item to our website, share that story on our Facebook page and share into the local Facebook Group. This month we have shared:

- Updates from the April meeting.
- Spring clean-up day success story.
- Housing Needs Survey promotion.
- Information about the Annual meetings.
- MDDC post about Crisis & Resilience Fund and Oil Support Scheme

3. Noticeboards

Notices, agendas and minutes continue to be posted in the Westleigh, Burlescombe, Appledore and Ayshford noticeboards, where space allows.

4. Email newsletter

An email newsletter went out on 13 May containing links to news articles on: The summary and minutes from the April meeting, Housing Needs Survey information, Spring Clean-Up report and photos, annual meetings date and agendas.

Subscriptions

- 43 residents are subscribed to the newsletter.
- A further 15 have filled in the form but not yet confirmed their subscription, we'll continue to emphasise the importance of clicking the link in the confirmation email.
- Councillors continue to deliver postcards around the parish to spread awareness.

Newsletter stats

- 75% per cent of recipients opened the April newsletter
- 17% clicked on a link in the newsletter

5. New Visit Mid Devon Website

We were contacted by MDDC about a refreshed Visit Mid Devon website, on which there is a page dedicated to our parish.

The website:

- Acts as a digital front door for Mid Devon
- Showcases towns, villages, walks, attractions and events
- Supports local tourism, hospitality and leisure businesses

We have sent some updates to the text and photos to ensure it reflects our area as best as possible. Once it is updated and relaunched, we will share with residents and add a link on the Parish Council website.

Quarry Report May 2026

There have not been any Quarry Liaison Group meetings since the last BPC meeting in April. An online news article was published in Devon Today on 16th April, based on Councillor Downing's quarry report in the agenda for the BPC April meeting.

<https://devontoday.com/concerns-mount-over-mothballed-quarry-and-landfill-site-safety-risks/>

Holcim provided refreshments for the BPC Spring Clean-Up Day held on Sunday 26 April in Burlescombe and Westleigh villages, this was very much appreciated by the volunteers who took part.

Holcim staff also undertook a litter pick on 6th May, litter picking the complete boundary on the roadside verges belonging to Westleigh Quarry.

Blasting at Fenacre, Westleigh Quarry, took place on Friday 24th April and Monday 11th May.

On 15th May I sent a summary of quarry-related items raised and discussed at the April Burlescombe Parish Council meeting to members of the Westleigh Quarry Liaison Group.



Reported prepared by Lucy Elliss-Brookes, Vice Chair, Burlescombe Parish Council

This summary sets out my work and activity as a District Councillor between May 2025 and April 2026.

Full Council meetings

Attended to represent the interests of the Canonsleigh parishes in regard to Planning and other matters. Recently this has included discussion of the Mountain Oak applications for new housing in Sampford Peverell, where I represented both supporters of the application wanting provision of social housing through Sampford Peverell CLT, and also the critics of South West Water's appalling record of allowing sewage-laden storm overflows into Spratford Stream and thence to the Exe Estuary and coastal waters. In the light of SWW's intention to review the adequacy of their provision only in 2040, and poor record of investment, further conversations with their representative are planned with myself and a representative from Sampford Peverell.

I attended numerous Planning training sessions through PPAG, and meetings of the **Net Zero NZAG and PES**, Planning, Environment and Sustainability Policy Committees. I also supported the Full Council motion recognizing the Rights of Rivers, including the right to flow with clean waters and support distinctive ecologies and a rich mix of natural and wildlife species.

I attended meetings of **Borden Gate, Uplowman, Holcombe Rogus and Sampford Peverell Parish Councils**, sharing developments and news from the District Council and taking forward concerns from the PCs. I have also updated PC's with prospects for **Local Government Reorganisation**, whereby Mid Devon is likely to become part of a much larger Unitary Authority in 2028.

In that connection, Parish Councils and other bodies interested in taking over the management of **Community Assets** in their area should put in an **Expression of Interest by 30th June this year**.

Commercial businesses cannot apply, only bodies with public interest at heart such as Parish Councils, CIC's, charities etc. They will need to provide reasons for the transfer such as aims for the asset, evidence of the resilience of the organization, expertise, track record of maintaining and/or developing such assets.

I attended the **Grand Western Canal** Joint Committee, supporting the maintenance of the canal as a key asset for residents, tourists and wildlife in Mid Devon.

I also serve on the **Green Enterprise Grants** panel; this MDDC fund makes grants for energy saving to local enterprises. I am also able to obtain small grants for local projects through the **Locality Fund**.

Individual concerns: Responding to particular concerns and questions from residents is a large part of my work as a councillor. These include prominently, issues of planning and enforcement.

Gill Westcott District Councillor for Canonsleigh

gwestcott@middevon.gov.uk

Devon District Council

Councillor Clist advised he was not able to verify the figures for the fixing of potholes in Cornwall and Somerset. Devon, given the potential move to Local Government Reorganisation were not in a position to bring the mending of potholes in-house. The budget allocated an additional £10m for highways, £4 for a ditch and drainage scheme and £5m for a rapid response team to deal with potholes in extreme weather conditions.

DCC had to run with at least 10% of income in the reserves and £20m had had to be found to ensure this figure. However, DCC had been told that LGR would have to be funded from reserves.

Councillor Clist understood that the Government was considering 2 of the proposals sent in and one of their own which could be a north-south divide with Plymouth and Exeter as the commercial hubs.

He had presented long service awards at DCC's call centre and would be attending Devon County Show to talk about the farm estate and the work of Trading Standards which included rogue traders, illicit tobacco and vapes, boot polish in meat and dangerous toys.

Eighty percent of the DCC budget was allocated to SEND and Adult and Child Social Care.