

KENTISBEARE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 7th July 2026
at 6.30pm in Kentisbeare Village Hall

Present: Cllrs: Nick Allan (Chairman), Mrs Elise Ellicott, Martin Disney, Edd Southerden, Mrs Felicity Ryan, Nel Woofenden and the Clerk.

Public Question Time: None.

86/07/26. Apologies: Cllrs. Mrs Irene Edwards and Oliver Forster. MDDC Cllr. Cathy Connor and DCC Cllr. James Buczkowski.

87/07/26. Declarations of Interest: None.

88/07/26. The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on 09/06/2026 were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

89/06/26. Matters Arising: None.

90/07/26. Planning & Planning Correspondence/Information:

a) Applications considered by the Parish Council:

-26/00789/LBC Listed Building Consent for the conversion and alterations to 5 barns to create 4 dwellings.

Land & Buildings at NGR 306868 108436 (Ford Farm) Fore Street, Kentisbeare. No objections.

-26/00818/FULL Erection of an agricultural building. Church Cottage, Blackborough, EX15 2HP. No objections.

-26/00772/FULL Change of use and conversion of buildings to two dwellings, erection of garages and associated works (part retrospective). Land and Buildings at NGR 305944 108931 Wressing Barton, Kentisbeare. No objections.

b) Results of applications from Mid Devon District Council.

-26/00619/FULL Erection of an agricultural shed on existing concrete pad from former piggery.

Land at NGR 304418 109085 (Lower Kingsford), Kentisbeare. Approved.

c) Culm Garden Village. The Chairman reported on the last meeting of the Delivery Board – news is still awaited regarding funding for improvements to junction 28 of the M5. It is anticipated that the train station will be open by December 2028 with completion of the relief road sooner. There will shortly be a consultation on the East Cullompton Strategic Design Code with sessions being held in Kentisbeare and Cullompton.

d) Any other Planning Matters: Plan Mid Devon – Launch of New Local Plan and Consultation; a reminder that the initial scoping consultation closes on 10/07/26.

91/07/26. Highways - items to report and any other matters: Cllr. Woofenden queried whether two directional signs could be renovated; the Clerk will enquire whether Highways will undertake this.

92/07/26. Reports.

a) The Clerk: (i) Notification from MDDC of upcoming site tours open to all Parish & Town Councils at the Waste and Recycling Depot at Hitchcocks Business Park – this is to view the new Depot Configuration and In Cab Technology; the Clerk will endeavour to attend a session. (ii) DALC Conference and AGM – agreed for the Clerk to attend.

b) The Chairman/Vice-Chairman: None.

c) Any Reports from MDDC and DCC Councillors. **MDDC** – MDDC Cllr. Cathy Connor submitted a report on behalf of MDDC, details include: DCC and the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) recently facilitated a workshop for Devon's larger towns and parishes on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR); to ensure that information on the timeline and process is being shared widely and that the strong relationship with local councils and their communities is championed as we move through the process of LGR. MDDC had previously run its own sessions and the value of these is in both strengthening those individual relationships and ensuring towns and parishes have full visibility on the various steps in the complex journey. Whilst some immediate attention has been on the consideration of specific community assets, there is also a desire from local councils to look forward and shape what area-based and community decision-making feels like in the future. The journey ahead will have its challenges, however the message was clear that these will more easily overcome and faced by working together to ensure the best possible outcome for our communities.

..... cont/

Reports continued:

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) Published – MDDC has published its latest HELAA, an important evidence document that will help inform preparation of the new Local Plan, *Plan Mid Devon*. The HELAA assesses land that has been submitted to the council by landowners, developers and other interested parties through the 2021 and 2025 'Call for Sites' exercises. It considers whether sites may be suitable, available and achievable for housing, employment, renewable energy or habitat creation. Inclusion in the HELAA does not mean that planning permission will be granted, nor does it mean that a site will be allocated for development in the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment provides technical evidence to help the council understand the potential supply of land available to meet future development needs. It will form part of the evidence base for Plan Mid Devon, assisting the council in deciding which sites should be taken forward for further consideration and public consultation as the new Local Plan is prepared. Parish councils may wish to review sites within their areas and consider any implications for housing, employment, infrastructure, environmental protection and community facilities as the Local Plan process progresses.

Plan Mid Devon Consultation Now Underway – MDDC has launched work on a new Local Plan, which will guide how the district develops over the next 20 years. The plan will identify land for new homes, jobs, infrastructure and community facilities, whilst also considering environmental protection and the response to climate change. The plan is being prepared under updated government requirements which require councils to complete Local Plans within a 30-month timeframe. Work commenced on 26/05/26 and an initial scoping consultation was opened inviting interested parties to help shape the plan from the outset. The consultation seeks views on the key issues facing Mid Devon, what the new Local Plan should cover, and how people would like to be kept informed as the process progresses. A further consultation on draft policies, evidence and potential site options is expected in early 2027, followed by consultation on the full draft plan in early 2028. Subject to examination by a Planning Inspector, adoption is anticipated in spring 2029. Parish councils are encouraged to take part in the consultation which provides an opportunity to raise local priorities, identify infrastructure needs, highlight environmental concerns and ensure that the views of local communities are considered before draft policies and potential development sites are prepared. Residents are encouraged to participate.

New Pitch Ready for Cullompton Cricket Season - Cullompton Cricket Club will begin the 2026 season at Horn Road. Built to modern ECB standards, the facility includes improved drainage and irrigation systems, with temporary clubhouse and changing facilities in place and permanent facilities due in 2027. The new ground forms part of the wider Cullompton Relief Road project and represents a significant investment in community infrastructure.

Grand Western Canal Retains Five-Star Award - The Canal Country Park has retained its prestigious five-star Pride in Parks Award from the Royal Horticultural Society's South West in Bloom scheme for the second year running. Judges highlighted the quality of the Canal Visitor Centre, recent towpath improvements and the contribution of volunteers working alongside the Canal Ranger Service. The award recognises the high standards of maintenance, conservation and visitor experience provided at one of Mid Devon's most valued natural and heritage assets. Stretching more than 11 miles through the district, the canal continues to attract residents and visitors for recreation, wildlife and tourism. The award is recognition of the dedication of staff and volunteers and helps raise the profile of one of Mid Devon's premier visitor attractions.

Bin It 123, Mid Devon Amongst England's Best for Recycling - Mid Devon continues to be one of the highest-performing councils in England for waste and recycling. Latest national figures show the district ranks 6th lowest out of 197 collection authorities for residual household waste and 10th highest for recycling rates. A programme of service improvements is planned over the coming year to help residents recycle more and reduce waste. Recent changes include accepting metal baking trays in household recycling collections, whilst future initiatives will include trials of soft plastic collections, additional recycling containers and food waste caddies.

Working with DCC, MDDC will also launch the Monster Bins Project in primary schools from September 2026, using assemblies and educational activities to encourage food waste recycling amongst younger residents and their families. Town and Parish Councils are invited to attend a tour of the waste depot to learn more about recent service developments and new collection technologies.

New Mid Devon Residents' App Launched – MDDC has launched a new free residents' app, giving people easier access to council services from their smartphones. Residents can report issues, contact councillors, receive waste collection reminders, read council news, check planning applications and access local service information.

Apprenticeships Supporting Skills and Careers at Mid Devon – MDDC currently supports 17 apprenticeships across a range of services. These include traditional apprentices and existing employees who are undertaking apprenticeship qualifications alongside their day-to-day roles. Apprenticeships are delivered through 8 training providers and cover a diverse range of subjects including plumbing, procurement, housing management and environmental health.

..... cont/

Reports Continued:

Strategic Sustainability Grants Launched – A new Strategic Sustainability Grants (SSG) scheme has been launched to support community organisations delivering local action on sustainability, climate change and nature recovery. The programme will provide seed and core funding to help community groups strengthen partnerships, build resilience and deliver practical environmental projects. £80,000 has been allocated to the scheme over the next two financial years.

DCC – DCC Cllr. James Buczkowski had sent apologies and a report should follow.

d) P3 Footpaths, Parish Paths & Silver Wood. (i) The Clerk has submitted the annual grant forms to DCC.

(ii) Summer walks – Cllr. Mrs Ellicott gave final details regarding the upcoming walks. (iii) A reminder that the Parish Council may have to consider funding repairs to the boardwalk in Silver Wood; to be discussed with the contractor for The Woodland Trust. Replacing the stile with a gate is also a matter for discussion.

e) Blackdown Hills Parish Network – notification of upcoming AGM; details circulated to all. Cllr. Southerden and the Clerk will endeavour to attend.

f) Any other reports. (i) History project – the Clerk reported on behalf of Cllr. Mrs Edwards who has various ideas for discussion at a future meeting.

93/07/26. Finance.

a) A report was given, the balances were noted and the finance schedule was signed.

Direct Debits taken: 10/06 EDF £50.88, 16/06 Lloyds Bank Service Charge £4.25, 30/06 Utility Warehouse £47.65.

b) Payments were approved:

Payment 1	£ 13.81	SMA Services. Payroll Provider.
Payment 2	£ 300.00	Helen Rose. Website & digital communications.
Payment 3	£ 1080.35	Clerk – salary and expenses.
Payment 4	<i>Payment to R&R Services Ltd., re: Grass maintenance contract – this will be paid over the summer recess.</i>	
Payment 5	£ 140.00	S Aldworth. Fee for internal review prior to external audit.
Payment 6	£ 319.60	HMRC. Quarterly PAYE.
Payment 7	£ 264.00	N Page. P3 footpath works.

c) Grass Maintenance Contract R&R Services (Devon) Ltd., – item 10.1 refers: The contractor has notified the Clerk that due to rising costs and circumstances beyond their control they are looking to increase the costs by around 20%. It was agreed for the Clerk to liaise with the contractor to see if an agreement could be reached for a smaller increase. Clerk to report at the next meeting.

d) Grant for St. Mary's re: churchyard extension – item 12 refers: St. Mary's church has approached the Parish Council for financial assistance regarding the purchase of land for extra burial space. This was agreed in principle with final figures to be discussed in the autumn – a full report was given at agenda item 12.

e) The dates set regarding the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return were noted as 29/06/26 to 07/08/26.

f) Any other financial matters: None.

94/07/26. Kentisbeare Play Area and Pump Track.

a) Grass cutting contract & monthly track maintenance re: R&R Services (Devon) Ltd: The Clerk reported on discussions with the contractor and Cllr. Forster regarding maintenance – cut and collect of grass from the pump track will coincide with cut and collect of the field; to include blowing the pump track. The contractor has recently sprayed the pump track and the access track at a cost of £40 as notified to the Chairman following Cllr. Forster and the Clerk reviewing the site. The overhanging verge has been strimmed and cleared at no extra charge.

b) Phase 2 - upcoming site meeting with contractor: A date has been arranged for a meeting with the contractor following which updated costs will be received for the second phase.

c) Any other matters: The Clerk reported that Cllr. Forster had raised the possibility of hopscotch being marked for playing on the basketball area. The Clerk recently met with the Landing Sites Officers from Devon Air Ambulance Trust for the annual site survey.

..... cont/

95/07/26. Register of Interest Forms (ROI). Notification from MDDC re: Important legislative change affecting the publication of Members' personal information. As at 29/06/26 local authorities are no longer required to publish an elected or co-opted member's home address in the public Register of Interests. This change is introduced through section 32A of the Localism Act 2011, as inserted by section 65 of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026.

Councillors are required to complete new ROI forms which should be submitted to the Clerk for checking. The Clerk will take all forms into MDDC, Phoenix House for submission to the Monitoring Officer when complete.

Despite the publication changes, Members are still required to provide their full home address for the Clerk/local records and for the Monitoring Officer. Members have the option to request that their home address is published if they wish.

96/07/26. St Mary's Churchyard. Extension required to churchyard – to discuss financial assistance: As 93/07/26 (d) the Parish Council resolved for a grant towards the purchase of land for additional burial space. Costs that the church will need to cover include purchase of the land, various works together with preparation of the ground, planning fees and legal and professional fees. It was discussed that the amount could be spread over two financial years, with the first grant being offered from reserve 2026/27 and additional funds being granted in 2027/28. A final figure for 26/27 will be discussed in September/ October meeting with a view to giving some funds by the end of the calendar year.

97/07/26. Summer Recess and Scheme of Delegation. The scheme of delegation will be in place throughout the summer recess to cover standard planning applications and routine expenditure.

98/07/26. Correspondence & Any Consultations. Clerks and Councils Direct.

99/07/26. Items for information, future agenda items, and dates of future meetings: Next meeting – Sept, date tbc.