

**DARTMOOR FOREST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 3 October 2011**  
**in the Forest Inn, Hexworthy at 7.30 pm**

**Present****Princetown**

David Worth (Chair)  
 Emma Derham  
 Gregg Manning  
 Wendy Stones  
 Paul Turnbull

**Postbridge**

Val Greatrex  
 Wendy Watson

**Hexworthy/Huccaby**

Alison Geen

**Apologies****Princetown**

Cliff Palmer

**Postbridge****Hexworthy/Huccaby****Absent without Apology****Princetown**

Sarah Ruffles

**Postbridge**

None

**Hexworthy/Huccaby**

None

**In Attendance**

Councillor Philip Sanders (DCC)

There was one member of the public present for the first part of the meeting

**A G E N D A**

1.	To receive apologies
2.	Report from Beat Manager
3.	To accept the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2011
4.	Matters arising from the previous meeting and not on the Agenda
5.	Station Road confusion
6.	Parish Voice devolved services discussion
7.	Review of Councillors' business interests
8.	Community Centre & Youth Club
9.	Repairs & maintenance
10.	Update on Highways jobs
11.	Reports from Committees
12.	Reports from meetings with other groups
13.	Report from Fire and Rescue service
14.	Correspondence
15.	Financial management
16.	Planning applications
17.	Urgent matters at the Chair's discretion
18.	Any other business

Date 7 November 2011

Signature of Chair

## 1. Apologies

There were apologies from Cliff, who was on holiday.

This was the sixth consecutive meeting that Sarah had not attended, which meant that she, automatically, ceased to be a member of the Council (Local Government Act 1972 s 85(1) and (2))

**ACTION:** Clerk to write a letter of explanation to Sarah and to set in motion the election process to find another Princetown Councillor

## 2. Report from Beat Manager

The new non-emergency phone number (101) was well received

PC Dave Pickles had provided an update on Speed Watch training for Princetown and Postbridge communities. He said that the training could be provided once a speeding issue had been identified and he and PCSO Mark Canvin had been trained themselves. He would update the Council as this matter progressed

The following items needed to be reported to the Police:

- Wendy S said that Tor Royal residents had complained about quad bike speeding on Tavistock Road. There was no particular pattern or timing for these events.
- David said that there were a number of fire extinguishers behind Fox Tor café that were a potential hazard. He was unsure whether they were awaiting disposal

## 3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of 5 September were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair

## 4. Matters arising from the previous Meeting

### 4.1 **Princetown Toilets –**

WDBC had confirmed that the toilets were locked each evening, after 6.00 pm, and the pay system was disabled. Cleaners reversed this when they arrived in the morning. WDBC had said that the timing of the evening closure of the toilets would be reviewed and changed if necessary during the darker winter evenings

WDBC had forwarded to the Parish Council an email from a visitor complaining about the new charges. The Clerk had emailed a very detailed reply to the visitor explaining the background to the decision to charge for use of the toilets. The visitor had replied, thanking the Parish Council for the explanation and saying that she now understood and agreed with the need for charging

- 4.2 **Parking in Princetown –**Highways had recommending that a consultation was carried out with residents to ensure that the impact of restricted parking was properly researched. Each Limited Order cost £1,500 so it was important to get the restricted area right first time as residents can become extremely angry if vehicles are parked outside their property for long periods of time.  
**Decision:** Councillors agreed that the restricted parking area was already known and that there was no need for a consultation with residents

Alison Kohler was, hopefully, returning in December to update Councillors on the DNPA members' reaction to her recommendations for parking improvements

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#### 4.3 Dog Exclusion Zone –

The Clerk had spoken to the Tavistock Works Superintendent, to seek his advice about posting a suitable sign before the formal consultation about banning dogs from the area had taken place. The advice received had been to post the signs, but to ensure that the wording did not imply that legal action would be taken in the case of infringement

**ACTION:** Clerk to obtain suitably worded signs

#### 4.4 Princetown Grass Cutting– DNPA had cut the grass near the Visitor Centre in response to complaints, however, the Authority was adamant that this area did not fall within its normal remit. Financial constraints meant that in-house staff now carried out grass cutting, as and when time allowed. Cuttings were not gathered up, due to a lack of time and equipment, but would continue to be blown away from pavements and roads

**ACTION:** - Clerk to check with the Duchy, again, regarding responsibility for cutting the grass in the area in question

#### 4.5 Beating the Bounds – Emma said that the walk from Culliford Steps to Babeny had taken place, as planned

#### 4.6 Weeds in Princetown

Highways had provided the following formal statement:

*“As a result of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2010, the County Council had to make a 17% reduction in its routine maintenance budget for 2011-12. Tough choices has meant that the amount and type of work that can now be undertaken has been affected. Many work functions have had to be reviewed and unfortunately weed treatment is one of them, with a £390,000 reduction. Noxious weeds such as ragwort and Japanese knotweed will still be selectively treated but weeds on footways (paths) and along kerb lines and boundary walls will not. Total weed treatment on French drains will be undertaken to keep them operational, and this type of work will also be completed prior to resurfacing or other surface treatment activities.”*

Highways had also said that it was in order for residents to pull up weeds near to their property, as long as it was safe to do so

**ACTION:** Paul to approach the Resettlement Unit with a view to providing resource to assist with weeding

#### 4.7 Moor Trees – Response to resident

At the previous meeting Wendy S had reported that a resident had contacted her and had asked her to:

- Inform the Council that another resident had sent a letter of concern to the Prison regarding the Moor Trees project
- Explain the purpose of the project to the Council

The author of the letter of concern had contacted Wendy and complained that information that he regarded as confidential had been discussed at the Council meeting. Wendy S had sent a letter of explanation to the author, saying that she had been unaware of the confidential nature of the letter of concern and, furthermore, she was obligated to report matters to the Council when requested to do so, whether or not she favoured them personally

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4.8 **Standards Consultation** – The Parish Council’s response to the consultation had been submitted to WDBC

## 5. Station Road Confusion

Paul explained that the properties in the original Station Road had formerly been known as “Railway Cottages” and this had been changed to “Station Cottages” at a later date.

It was noted that, some years ago, residents of both Station Roads had been consulted on whether they favoured changing the name(s) to avoid confusion for postal deliveries, emergency services etc.. The result was that a change was not wanted.

**DECISION:** It was agreed that another consultation should be carried out as part of the Parish Plan project

**ACTION:** Clerk to obtain some historical perspective on the current situation from WDBC

## 6. Parish Voice Devolved Services

This matter was carried forward to the next meeting.

**ACTION:** Clerk to re-send the list of services for potential devolvement

## 7. Review of Councillors’ Business Interests Register Entries

These were reviewed and amendments raised as required

## 8. Community Centre and Youth Club (Wendy S)

### 8.1 **Community Centre Meeting 19 September**

Wendy S and another village resident had been voted in as Trustees, bringing the size of the Committee to 9. The Chair and the Treasurer both said that they could not run the Centre with solely volunteers. A meeting with the Duchy a few days earlier offered some hope of employing a manager. Wendy S had persuaded the Trustees to defer voting to close the Centre or ending the Committee until the matters of a Manager and a rota for volunteer help had been discussed with the Duchy. She said that she felt a volunteer rota system would operate better than the present arrangements

### 8.2 **Community Centre Meeting 21 September**

Attendees at this meeting had been Wendy S, Tom Stratton and Paul Stubbs.

Tom Stratton had said that the Duchy could continue to keep the Centre open for a further six months, but that the charity shop could close at the end of September if it was not transferred to the new Committee.

At the moment, the new Committee did not have information on the size of the Centre’s service overheads (i.e. electricity, phones etc.), nor the income derived from permanent tenants (i.e. library, doctor’s and pre-school) nor the balance left in the HMCA that was to be transferred to the new Committee.

Tom Stratton had said that there might be sufficient funds to employ a manager for three days per week, supported by a rota for volunteer help. Paul Stubbs was advised to contact the University to see if a final year student might be interested in helping out, rather than advertising for a trained manager, which would be more expensive.

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### 8.3 Community Centre Meeting 26 September (3.00 pm)

Attendees at this meeting had been Wendy S, Tom Stratton, Gregg Manning, Chris Kingdon and Paul Stubbs.

Key figures were:

- The Community Centre makes an annual profit of £2,000 - £3,000k
- The charity shop makes an annual profit of about £4,000
- About £31,000 is to be transferred when the HMCA accounts are closed
- The £31,000 is made up of about £4,500 from the charity shop and the remainder from HMCA
- The annual cost of a part-time manager would be about £5,400

The Centre needed to elect a new Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Someone had expressed an interest in the taking Secretary's role and would provide an answer in November. **[Post-meeting note: A resident came forward to express an interest in taking the Treasurer's role]**

### 8.4 Community Centre Meeting 26 September (7.30 pm)

Attendees at this meeting had been the Trustees and some members of the new football team

The figures given at the meeting earlier in the day were discussed at length. There was general agreement that the ongoing running of the Centre was workable if a part-time manager was employed and a rota of volunteer workers was devised.

An action was taken by one of the Trustees to market the Centre via the Princetown News website

The next meeting of the full Committee was set for 4 October

### 8.5 Youth Club

The re-arranged September meeting, due on 2 October, did not take place. The next meeting date was not yet known

The Clerk said that Councillor Rose had requested a grant for the Youth Club from Councillor Sanders' Locality Budget

**ACTION:** Clerk to provide the necessary grant application form to Emma Gorbutt and Paul Dobbie

Residents in the village were generally in agreement that the Parish Council should provide some level of financial support to the Youth Club

## 9. Repairs & Maintenance

Nothing to report

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## 10. Update on Highways Jobs

### 10.1 **New Jobs**

- The visibility bowl opposite the entrance/exit for the Prison museum was broken (this may be a Prison responsibility rather than Highways)
- One of the bollards at the junction of the B3212 and the B3357 at Two Bridges was out of action
- The Saddlesbridge drain was, once again, blocked

### 10.2 **Existing Jobs**

The road works signs left around Hexworthy had been removed

## 11. Reports from Committees

### 11.1 **School (Wendy W)**

An Ofsted inspection in September had judged the school as making good progress in addressing the improvements identified in the inspection two years ago. In addition, the school was judged as making good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement

The visit of Marcus Trescothick had been a great success.

The school was collecting the latest issue of Morrison's vouchers for gardening equipment.

The harvest festival service would take place on 13 October

### 11.2 **Play Area (Report from Cliff via Emma)**

Cliff had inspected the play area. He had made adjustments to the small swing seats and had said that new ones would be needed next year.

Paul said he would repair/adjust the latch on the large gate

**ACTION:** Emma, Cliff and the Clerk to get together to decide how best to deal with the paperwork needed to demonstrate that the Council is carrying out regular formal inspections of the equipment

### 11.3 **Cemetery (Val)**

Dave Fisher and Val will carry out the memorial topple testing before the end of the month [**Post-meeting note:** the test took place and one headstone was found to be in need of stabilising. In addition, one of the unmarked graves on the consecrated side of the cemetery had collapsed and need some attention]

Val's husband will refurbish one of the benches over the winter

### 11.4 **Emergency Plan (David)**

Due to personal circumstances, David needed to find someone to take on the Emergency Plan and to undertake the snow warden training. He said that there was a resident who might be willing to do this and he would talk to him before the next meeting.

Information on the free salt delivery was still awaited from the County Council

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## 11.5 Parish Plan

At the sub-committee meeting on 29 September it had been agreed that there was a need to build expectation in the minds of residents to maximise their input when the formal consultation took place in/around March next year. Alison distributed a draft of a poster to ask for volunteers to help with the consultation and asked Councillors for their comments.

The sub-committee had agreed that the consultation would have two types of questionnaire: one for adults and the other for children/young people

## 11.6 Diamond Jubilee (Wendy S)

Councillor Sanders said that he should be able to provide information on the number of children and young people up to the age of 18 in the Parish. Wendy S needed this information as part of the arrangements for Jubilee mugs to be given out

## 12. Reports from Meetings with Other Groups

### 12.1 West Devon Homes Annual General Meeting (Wendy S)

The meeting had been held on 22 September.

Problems with contractors last year had been resolved and the backlog in the planned repair service in 2010 was being reduced.

An independent organisation had been commissioned to review the organisation's provision of services. Subjects examined included:

- Staffing structure (which had since been strengthened)
- Strategic planning
- Delivery of home services
- People and partnerships
- Residents and communities
- Business development
- Business viability and improvement

The new vision statement was "Staying Local"

Three hundred new homes had been built in the previous year. In addition, Drake Gardens had been re-opened after seven years, with five properties damaged by old mine workings having been made safe and suitable for habitation.

The Princetown Tenant representative had stepped down and the new contact was Helen Bayne

### 12.2 Southern Link Committee

This was held on 22 September. No-one from the Parish Council attended

The next meeting was on 2 December

## 13. Fire and Rescue Service Report

Paul said that the station had been painted and the training tower had been treated

He said that the staff complement was entirely retained firefighters. There were currently eleven members of the team and three vacancies. It took between eight and eighteen months to train a member of the team to the required level.

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He said there was a possibility that the station would be acquiring a quad bike for use in farmland fires

Paul extended an invitation to the Parish Council for a tour around the station and this was accepted

#### 14. Correspondence

- 14.1 **Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC)** – AGM calling papers. The Clerk would be attending on 8 October (self-paid)
- 14.2 **Commission for Rural Economies** – The Commission was undertaking a review of employment, education and training for young people in rural areas and was calling for evidence to be provided. The Clerk had obtained a statement from the Principal at Tavistock College and was seeking a statement from the Headteacher at the Primary School. Evidence needed to be submitted by 31 October
- 14.3 **BT Phone Book Entry** – On behalf of the Council, the Clerk had declined BT's offer of an entry in its classified 'phone book for £11.49 per quarter
- 14.4 **Redeeming our Communities** – RoC is a charity that promotes the improvement of community engagement and partnership working.
- 14.5 **West Devon Pre-Games Training Group** – The Group was seeking information on any past Olympians in the area
- 14.6 **Other Correspondence** – the following had also been received:
- DNPA monthly meeting papers for 7 October
  - DNPA Development Management Committee for 7 October
  - DALC newsletter – Copies were distributed to Councillors for the worthwhile article on Planning simplification proposed in the Localism Bill
  - DNPA Forum – The next meeting is on 25 November at 14:15. Agenda items by 11 November
  - Senior Council for Devon – October edition

#### 15. Financial Management

##### 15.1 Summary for September

<b>Payments made</b>	Ref 560	Geraldine Scott-Smith - paint for play area equipment	£37.77
	Ref 561	C Doidge – grass cutting	£165.00
	Ref 562	M Williams – litter picking	£51.39
	Ref 563	L D Parr – disposal of play area matting	£65.00
<b>Receipts</b>	Ref 558	WDBC costs - play area opening	£9.60
	Ref 559	Santander dividend	£9.53
<b>Balance in bank 30 September</b>			£10,546.33
<b>To Receive</b>	Ref 564	WDBC – 2 <sup>nd</sup> half-year precept	£6,362.50
<b>To pay</b>	Ref 565	WDBC – NNDR 2 <sup>nd</sup> half-year for cemetery	£47.00
	Ref 566	Duchy – 2 <sup>nd</sup> half-year rent	£30.00
	Ref 567	Clerk – 1 <sup>st</sup> half-year net pay	£801.30
	Ref 568	HMRC – Clerk's 1 <sup>st</sup> half-year PAYE	£200.20
	Ref 569	Audit Commission – Annual audit fee	£342.00
	Ref 570	M Druett – grass cutting	£235.00
	Ref 571	M Williams – litter picking	£51.39
	Ref 572	Round and About Magazine - donation	£60.00

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	Ref 573	Parish Link magazine - donation	£60.00
	Ref 574	Donation for 5 November event	£25.00

- 15.2 **Budget Management April to September** – This was carried forward to November's meeting to inform the initial discussion on next year's precept
- 15.3 **Annual Audit** – The Audit Commission had passed the accounts for 2010/11 without query or comment. However, the Playbuilder funding of £35,000 was still in the Council's bank account at the end of the financial year, which pushed the Audit Commission scale charge from £120 to £285. The Clerk had followed this up with the Audit Commission and with the Devon Association of Local Councils to see if the fee could be reduced, but without success
- 15.4 **Other Donations** – It was agreed that a small donation of £25 would be made for the 5 November bonfire and fireworks event hosted by the football club. In view of the pressure on the budget from, for example, the Audit Commission's additional fee, it was agreed that the normal annual donations to the CAB and to the Ring and Ride service should be withheld until the end of the financial year when the Council would have a clear picture of spending and could adjust the donations accordingly  
**ACTION:** Clerk to write to the two charities informing them of the situation

## 16. Planning Applications

- 16.1 The following planning application correspondence was received in September

DNPA Ref. & Applic. Type	Description	Location	Comments
11/0480	Change of use of upper yard to livery/trekking centre	Tor Royal Farm Princetown	With Councillors for comment
11/0464 Advertisement consent	Erection of banner	South West Elevation Creativity Centre Duchy Square Princetown PL20	

- 16.2 **Application 11/0491 Blackdown Piper Farm, Widecombe** – the Parish Council had written a letter of objection on behalf of residents affected by a similar application on the same property that was submitted last year. The application had been modified and re-presented and the Council was being asked to write a letter of objection again  
Councillors were in agreement that the proposed building was still out of keeping with the area in which it would be situated, and that the landowner had other location options on his land that would not be so intrusive  
**ACTION:** Letter of objection to be sent to the Park Authority

## 17. Urgent Matters at the Chair's Discretion

- 17.1 **Untaxed Vehicles** - Paul said that Highways needed to be informed of the parking of untaxed vehicles near Hillside Cottage on a road that was still formally maintained by Highways
- 17.2 **Remembrance Parade** – David expressed concern over the order of the procession in last year's Parade, which saw the Parish Council marching in front of members of the armed services. He said he did not want this to be repeated in this year's Parade. Wendy S said that she would bring this to Rev'd Shanks' attention

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## 18. Any Other Business

- 18.1 **Leat Leak** – The leak on the B3212 approaching the junction at Two Bridges had been reported to SWW
- 18.2 **HMP Dartmoor** – Village residents had expressed concern that the Prison was to hold an increased proportion of prisoners serving sentences for sex related offences. The Clerk distributed copies of a page from the September edition of “Inside Information” which was published by the Prison Service on its website. The article explained that the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (VPU) provided a service to assess the needs of vulnerable prisoners and to arrange for their transfer to suitable establishments around the country to serve their sentences. Full details of all prisons in the country can be found by following this link <http://www.insidetime.org/index.asp>
- 18.3 **Music and Dance in Devon** – Wendy S said that the area organiser had applied for several grants and hoped to hear positive news by the middle of the month. The project, if it goes ahead, will cover all age groups

## PUBLIC SESSION

Councillor Sanders said that:

- The land involved in the Vixen Tor ruling would be reviewed again as part of the normal Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) access land review
- Grit bins, ordered last year, would be installed in the agreed locations before the end of October
- The Authority’s plans for saving £0.5m in the next financial year were now subject to final consultation
- DCC’s next round of cost cutting involved “Tough Choices” consultation sessions around Devon. The most local one for the Parish was on 8 November in Tavistock Town Hall, starting at 6.30 pm

## Next Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:50 pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be at **7.30 pm on Monday 7 November 2011** in the **Community Centre, Princetown**

Alison will chair the meeting

## Sub-Committees and Groups

**Jubilee Sub-Committee** – Emma, Wendy S

**Parish Emergency Group** – Cliff, Wendy S, Paul

**Parish Plan Sub-Committee** – Alison, Val, Wendy S

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