

**DARTMOOR FOREST PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 5 July 2010  
in the Village Centre, Princetown at 7.30 pm**

**Present**

<b>Princetown</b>	<b>Postbridge</b>	<b>Hexworthy/Huccaby</b>
Ms Emma Derham	Mr Dave Fisher (Chair)	Ms Alison Geen
Mr Gary Easton	Mrs Wendy Watson	
Mr Cliff Palmer		
Ms Sarah Ruffles		
Mrs Wendy Stones		
Mr Paul Turnbull		
Mr David Worth (item 9 onwards)		

**Apologies**

<b>Princetown</b>	<b>Postbridge</b>	<b>Hexworthy/Huccaby</b>
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**Absent without Apology**

<b>Princetown</b>	<b>Postbridge</b>	<b>Hexworthy/Huccaby</b>
None	None	None

**In Attendance**

Councillor Philip Sanders  
PCSO Mark Canvin  
Steve Lees (Forestry Commission) – items 1 to 5 only

One member of the public was present

**A G E N D A**

1.	To receive apologies
2.	Declarations of Interest
3.	Report from Beat Manager
4.	Report from Fire & Rescue Service
5.	Report from Forestry Commission
6.	To accept the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2010
7.	Matters arising from the previous meeting and not on the Agenda
8.	Play Area Development
9.	HMCA
10.	Repairs & Maintenance
11.	Update on Highways jobs
12.	Reports from Committees
13.	Reports from meetings with other groups
14.	Correspondence
15.	Financial Management
16.	Planning applications
17.	Urgent matters at the Chair's discretion
18.	Any other business

**Date 2 August 2010**

**Signature of Chair**

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### 1. **Apologies**

The Chair welcomed Steve Lees from the Forestry Commission

### 2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest and no changes of circumstances to be reported

### 3. **Report from Beat Manager**

Mark reported that, after a four-week gap, a theft had occurred from a vehicle in Postbridge. This type of crime is particularly prevalent in Ashburton currently and Mark asked everyone to remain vigilant and report any suspicions in the normal way.

The driver of a black 4x4 had been given an S59 warning (anti-social use of a vehicle) for driving across the moor at 90mph. He had been told that his vehicle will be taken away if he is caught committing the same offence again

Mark said that the broken glass in the play area had appeared one night and, he hoped, that this was an isolated incident. Cliff said that he had picked up glass that day, when he did the routine inspection of the area and the equipment. The Clerk said that Mark Williams had been warned about the problem as well.

Mark said that there were ongoing problems with the parking in Tavistock Road, but enforcement was not possible whilst the appropriate signage was missing. The parking of large vehicles near the entrance to the Village Centre access road meant that visibility was much reduced for those trying to enter/exit the access road. Mark advised that the contact for these matters was David Incoll at WDBC Local Strategic Partnership.

Mark said that demolition of a building on the Two Bridges Hotel site had been halted pending a bat and bird survey. However, evidence of bat/bird occupation of the building had already been destroyed, so the demolition was completed. All interested parties were working together to install bat and bird boxes around the site, thereby ensuring that the wildlife position will be even better in the future than it had been prior to the demolition taking place.

Mark reported that a former resident of Princetown was currently in Bristol serving a sentence for breach of his bail conditions.

There had been three cases of cars being burnt out during the previous 5 or 6 weeks and Mark said he was hoping that these incidents were unrelated and not part of an emerging trend

The latest letter from Inspector Hammond was distributed to all Councillors

### 4. **Report from Fire & Rescue Service**

There not being any representatives present, this item was carried forward to a future meeting

### 5. **Report from Forestry Commission**

Steve Lees introduced himself and said that he had responsibility for Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. The Forestry Commission had been operating in very difficult financial circumstances for the last five years, and this was set to continue. Steve said that, as a local man who was familiar with the area, he had been tasked with looking at ways to reduce the costs of expensive services.

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Bellever car park was one of the very few exceptions where parking was still free. The annual cost of servicing the area (e.g. toilets, pathways etc.) was approximately £5,000 per year and there were only two alternatives for improving this situation, namely, closing or charging. He said that, being an area with high tourist numbers, the Forestry Commission believed that the charges would not be too controversial. The Parish Council, DNPA and the Duchy had all been consulted on the proposals. It was hoped that, by raising revenue from tourists using the Bellever facilities, other car parks in the area could remain free for local residents.

Steve said that he was working with local residents regarding roadside parking, preferring to monitor, review and adjust rather than carry out a long consultation. He said that the Bellever car park was the most attractive to visitors and was, therefore, at most risk of anti-social parking. For this reason the free of charge parking had been offered to Bellever residents to balance out the potential inconvenience, albeit the Forestry Commission Head Office was against any concessions to residents

Steve said that the new system was honesty based (i.e. no barrier to be erected into the car park) and his view was that people will simply not pay. He said that he felt the Parish Council's response to his consultation had been "extreme"

Dave F said that many Postbridge residents used the Bellever car park and were displeased to be excluded from the concession offered to Bellever residents. Steve said that he would consult internally about the possibility of extending the concession. The Clerk will provide printed address labels for Postbridge properties if the internal consultation is successful, to ensure that all residents receive the car sticker

Steve Lees left the meeting

## **6. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Minute 9.1 – Emma did not volunteer to paint the Postbridge phone kiosk

Minute 17.2 – Councillors took up the offer to look at the new IT unit in the prison, not to take a course

Subject to these changes, the minutes of 7 June were signed as a true record

## **7. Matters arising from the previous Meeting and not on the Agenda**

7.1 **Annual Parish Newsletter** – there had not been any feedback from residents

7.2 **A-Board Signage** – DNPA had confirmed that it had not carried out a clearance exercise recently, and suggested that it was DCC. Councillor Sanders said he was pleased that the exercise had been carried out and would try to find out who had organised it

7.3 **Census 2011** – the Clerk has obtained an electronic copy of the Councillors' Guidance booklet mentioned at last month's meeting. **This will be sent out with the minutes of this meeting**

7.4 **Prison IT facilities** – Councillors who had visited the Prison found the facilities interesting. There is an open day on 7 July

## **8. Play Area Development Group (Gary)**

Parents' concerns about the safety of the new entrance will be the subject of a consultation at the school and pre-school party on 10 July. Chris Jordan, new owner of the Post Office and Stores, has joined the Group and brings much needed contract management experience. He had started the dialogue with Sutcliffe, the chosen supplier, about the terms and conditions of the contract with the Parish Council.

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The Playbuilder funds must be spent by 31 March 2011 and installation in the autumn is needed to avoid the worst of the winter weather and to ensure that this deadline is not jeopardised. It is now looking unlikely that we will raise sufficient funding to purchase equipment for the whole of the new design before the autumn. Choices need to be made on the equipment that we can afford to buy, so the children will be consulted, again on 10 July at the party, and asked to choose their favourite pieces of equipment

In the last few days news had been received from DCC as follows:

*“DCC has entered into contracts and we will honour the terms of these contracts because we are committed to working with communities to improve local facilities for children and young people”*

This was good news and addressed the concern raised by the Parish Council when the contract with DCC was signed

Attendance at meetings of the Play Area Development Group was not good, albeit Councillors' attendance record was very high.

## **9. HMCA (Wendy S & David W)**

Wendy S and David W had attended a HMCA meeting immediately prior to the Council meeting and reported as follows:

The Parish Council had been asked by HMCA to intervene with DNPA who were retaining a grant of £2,000 pending the Council's decision to release it. Councillor Sanders said that the Authority's members had voted to release the money when a DNPA Officer had pleaded the case for HMCA. It was noted that, at the time, members were probably unaware of the help that the Council had offered. Councillor Sanders said that a large in-year cut in the Authority's funding had been announced since the members had voted and savings were being sought.

Mike Fitzpatrick had volunteered to become a Trustee and there was another resident in the village who might also join the Board. There needed to be 8 or 9 Trustees in post before another application for funding can be made to GDLEAF.

There was to be a meeting between Gregg Manning and a resident in the village with a view to the latter taking the role as Treasurer. Audrey Vigni is to contact the Clerk about production of invoices. The Clerk was asked to contact Geri Laithwaite to see if she is still available to help out. There is a possibility that Jenny Coleman may help out with writing funding applications.

Sarah expressed a concern that her advice on leases had not been heeded when the legal work for the Centre was being carried out. This means that, in the event of HMCA ceasing to exist, there will be implications in respect of protected tenancies

## **10. Repairs & Maintenance**

- 10.1 **Princetown Phone Kiosk** – Emma will carry out the painting when the weather permits
- 10.2 **Postbridge Phone Kiosk** – Dave F will see if anyone from Postbridge will volunteer to do this
- 10.3 **Postbridge Bus Shelter** – Dave F had inspected the bus shelter and found it to be in good condition  
[Post-meeting note: The shelter was subsequently found to be owned by DCC]
- 10.4 **Princetown Toilets** – Clerk awaiting reply from WDBC regarding actual closing times compared with the published timetable

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- 10.5 **New Hexworthy Notice Board** – The Clerk was awaiting a response from DNPA on questions raised about the application. The landownership is also being sought as permission needs to be formally granted for the installation.

## 11. Update on Highways Jobs

### 11.1 **New Jobs**

The ongoing problem of long term parking in Tavistock Road, and its impact on traders, was raised

### 11.2 **Existing Jobs**

Tom Stratton had checked out the sycamores and given instructions for their removal [**Post-meeting note:** the sycamores have been removed]

The drainage grids outside the Post Office and Stores had still not been repaired

## 12. Reports from Committees

### 12.1 **School (Wendy W)**

The Local Authority Governor vacancy had been filled  
 The bingo event had raised £210 for school funds  
 The school's summer fete will be held on Saturday 10 July  
 Summer terms ends on 22 July  
 The roll in September will be 55, which includes 12 Reception children

### 12.2 **Playground (Cliff)**

**DECISION:** Cliff recommended that the old post by the Tavistock Road entrance should be removed and this was agreed

David W and Les Parr were thanked for picking up litter

### 12.3 **Cemetery (Dave F)**

Frank Martin had inspected the cemetery wall and recommended that tree(s) were cut down or reduced in height to halt damage to the wall near the entrance. He will quote for work to repair the wall when the tree work has been completed.

**ACTION:** Clerk to contact local tree surgeon

Grass cutting has been missed again

**ACTION:** Clerk to contact Neil Smerdon

### 12.4 **Emergency Plan (David W)**

Emergency Planning Support sessions in South Hams are being offered to the West Devon area for those who missed them when they were held last year

David W said that there was a need to involve appropriate organisations to provide input to the Plan. He sought permission to approach Henry Melle (Fire & Rescue Service) and Jon Stones (Park Ranger)

**DECISION:** This was agreed

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### 13. Reports from Meetings with Other Groups

#### 13.1 Southern Parishes Link Committee (Dave F & Paul)

DCF had sent an apology for the meeting on 24 June

Paul reported that:

- The new Chair of the Committee was Councillor Anita Prosser (Mary Tavy), the new Vice-Chair was Councillor Audrey Hennessey (Stowford)
- Total crime figures remain unchanged but the mix of crimes was different (e.g. serious assault and shoplifting increased, harassment and theft from vehicles decreased)
- SPARSE is an organisation focussed on improving life in rural communities. West Devon is officially classed as 100% rural. There will be a rural focus leaflet sent out to Parish Councils, who will be working with West Devon to improve services
- The new waste contract has been in operation since 1 April, however, the biggest changes will take place from 1 August. The new fleet of collection vehicles will come into operation and the scope of material collected will increase. Every household will receive an explanatory leaflet nearer the time. It had been confirmed by WDBC that there will be new vehicles in the fleet that can navigate the narrow roads in various parts of the Parish
- The Local Strategic Partnerships of West Devon and South Hams will merge to make best use of resources and to provide a stronger influence on Partner priorities [**Clerk's note:** the organisations in the Partnership will be; DCC, WDBC, South Hams District Council (SHDC), Police Authority, Fire & Rescue Service, Community Voluntary Services, Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership, DNPA, community representatives and business representatives]
- The Winter Maintenance Task Group will be calling for help from local digger drivers and NFU farmers during bad weather when roads are difficult to navigate or blocked. There will be money made available by DCC to tackle the legacy of winter damage to the roads in Princetown

Next meetings are on 23 September and 2 December 2010

### 14. Correspondence

- 14.1 **Boundary Review** – a letter received from DCC indicated that the Boundary Review was officially at an end. The letter reads as follows:

*"We have today learnt the outcome of the Judicial Review initiated by ourselves and Norfolk County Council in February this year. The High Court Judge has determined that the previous Government's decision to create unitary authorities in Exeter and Norwich was unlawful and that due process was not followed. Responding to the decision John Hart Leader of the County Council said: "The judgment is loud and clear – it is a victory for common sense and a vindication of our decision to pursue legal action"."*

This now means that the Bill made by the previous Government can be quashed. The judge refused interested parties, including Exeter City Council, permission to appeal this decision without first seeking leave from the Court of Appeal. In addition, legal costs will be awarded to Devon County Council and to Norfolk County Council.

Details of the legal mechanics of implementing this judgement will be finalised over the coming weeks. Meanwhile, the new Coalition Government's Bill, that seeks to stop the process for implementing outstanding proposals for restructuring Local Government, will continue its progress through both Houses of Parliament

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- 14.2 **Implications from items in the Queen’s speech** – the Devon Association of Local Councils had sent out its latest newsletter, which contained a summary of the implications for Parish Councils. This was distributed to all Councillors for information
- 14.3 **“What’s on Guide”** winter 2010/11 – Sarah took the Events Diary form for completion
- 14.4 **Housing Strategy Update** – The latest update had been received from WDBC. The document is also available online at [www.westdevon.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=15488&cat=1828](http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=15488&cat=1828)
- 14.5 **CAB “Drop in” Sessions** – the CAB is concerned that the appointment service at the Village Centre is not proving to be very popular with local residents and is carrying out a number of drop in sessions instead. Notices have been posted.  
**ACTION:** Clerk to write to CAB cautioning that the drop in sessions had not been popular in the past and that residents preferred the relative anonymity of the CAB offices in Tavistock
- 14.6 **DNPA Annual Meeting**– the meeting took place on 25 June and the papers included a list of all committees/working parties and their members as well as a full list of all meetings until December 2011. Wendy S took the list. Copies available from the Clerk on request
- 14.7 **Dartmoor Hill Farm Project**– the May and June newsletters had arrived
- 14.8 **Senior Council for Devon** – the Council’s latest newsletter had been received
- 14.9 **Various others**
1. “Don’t let sunburn catch you out” – a poster
  2. Mental Health Services series of Network Action Group meeting 26 July in Tavistock library – an invitation
  3. Beef South West 2010 is to be held on 29 September at Exeter Livestock Centre - announcement

## 15. Financial Management

### 15.1 Summary for June

<b>Payments made</b>	471	Clerk’s 2nd half-year pay and expenses	£1,340.72
	472	WDBC dog bin emptying	£76.98
	473	Frank Martin - fencing and stile in play area	£842.47
	474	HMCA - hall hire	£20.00
	475	Area Leisure & Play Solutions - play area risk assessment	£76.38
	476	Roundabout - Parish magazine annual donation	£60.00
	477	Parish Link - Parish magazine annual donation	£60.00
	479	M J Williams - litter picking May	£50.27
	480	Devon Association of Local Councils – annual fee	£207.20
	481	M J Druett – Princetown grasscutting	£435.00
<b>Receipts</b>	Ref 462	Burial fees – Frances Williams	£316.00
	Ref 463	WDBC - First half-year precept	£3,825.50
<b>Balance in bank 30 June</b>			£3,960.43
<b>To Receive</b>			

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<b>To pay</b>	482	M J Williams - litter picking June	£50.27
	483	M J Druett – Princetown grasscutting	£290.00
	484	Emma Derham – paint for phone kiosk	£9.19
	485	HMCA - hall hire	£20.00
	486	Clerk – re-imburement for dog bin and JCT contract for Sutcliffe (play area)	£245.62

## 15.2 Quarterly Budget Review -

The major spend variances at the end of the first quarter were:

- Grass cutting – the forecast had been reduced by £1k now that the costs for the areas around the Village Centre were known
- Play area refurbishing – spend was currently £840 against a budget of £500

There were minor spend variances, but these largely balanced each other out

The major income variance was the recent burial, which brought in fees of £316 against a budget for the year of £125

The impact of these variances is that the net difference between income and spend at the year-end, which was budgeted to be a deficit of £299, is currently being forecast as a surplus of £502.

## 16. Planning Applications

16.1 The following planning application correspondence was received in June

DNPA Ref. & Applic. Type	Description	Location	Comments
10/0260 Full PP	Erection of 2.5kW wind turbine, 6.5m high, to provide power to the Activity Centre	Mine Cottages Princetown	The Council supported this application
10/0181 Prior notification	Erection of porch extension	Hillside Cottage Merrivale	Granted: Work to begin within 3 years Finishing of external walls and roof to be agreed by DNPA before installation Horizontal timber boarding to be stained brown/black within 30 days of the substantial completion of the work. Colour to be agreed with DNPA before application and only that colour to be used on the building in future unless otherwise agreed with DNPA Door to north west elevation to be approved by DNPA before installation Door and windows to be of timber and to remain so at all times thereafter

16.2 **DNPA Development Management Committee** – calling papers for the meeting on 2 July had been received

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

- 17.1 **Parish Plan Consultation** – Wendy S confirmed that a table had been booked at the fete on 7 August
- 17.2 **Grass cutting on playing field** – the Youth Worker and young people had sent a letter to ask if the grass in the playing field could be cut on a regular basis. It is presently too long for ball games and is concealing dog litter. Cliff had gained agreement from Paul Freeman at the Prison, but permission needed to be sought from the Governor before cutting could start  
**ACTION:** Clerk to seek permission from Mr Corcoran. **[Post-meeting note:** Permission was obtained, and the Youth Worker and young people were informed that the first cut should be carried out before the end of the month. An invitation was also extended to anyone with ideas about reducing dog litter to attend a Parish Council meeting to put their case]
- 17.3 **Additional Dog Bin** – residents had asked that a bin be installed by the Kissing Gate at the top of Woodville Avenue  
**ACTION:** David W to provide evidence of need
- 17.4 **Village Centre Disabled Parking** – David W said that he had received a complaint from a resident alleging that Councillors meeting in the Village Centre had parked their cars in disabled bays thereby preventing disabled people from attending an event in the Centre  
**ACTION:** the date/time of the alleged parking problem did not coincide with any Council meetings so David W took an action to find out more information from the resident
- 17.5 **“Hands on Heritage” Event** – the playing field needed to be cut for the event on 1 August  
**ACTION:** Cliff to ask Paul Freeman at the Prison
- 17.6 **Youth Challenge donation** – Wendy S asked for a donation for this event, which will take place in September  
**DECISION:** It was agreed that a donation of £25 should be made
- 17.7 **Public Transport Consultation** – permission was sought for a representative to gather information as part of a project being run by DNPA  
**DECISION:** It was agreed that the information could be gathered

## 18. Any Other Business

- 18.1 **Library Event** – Wendy S said that there was a presentation on “Myths & Legends” at the library on 19 July at 6.30 pm. The library’s hours of opening will be cut from September if use of the facilities does not increase

## **PUBLIC SESSION**

Nothing to report

## Next Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.06 pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be at **7.30 pm on Monday 2 August 2010** in the **Village Centre, Princetown**

Date 2 August 2010	Signature of Chair