



# Dartmoor Forest Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Nigel Tigwell, Wheal Lucky House, Rundlestone. Princetown, Yelverton, Devon. PL20 6SS

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9 July 2014

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 1930 on Tuesday 8 July 2014 in Princetown Community Centre.

Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward:	Princetown Ward:	
Cllr Alison Geen	Cllr Emma Derham	Cllr Wendy Stones
Postbridge Ward:	Cllr Jackie Gee	Cllr Paul Turnbull
Cllr Wendy Watson	Cllr Gregg Manning	Cllr David Worth
Cllr Val Greatrex	Cllr Cliff Palmer	

There were two members of the public in attendance

### 1. Apologies.

Nil.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

No amendments were reported.

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the June meeting were agreed and signed by the Chair.

### 4. Police Matters.

Two BMX bikes were stolen from a garden overnight on Sunday 6 / Monday 7 July. One bike was blue, the other red. If any member of the public has information, please contact the Police on 101. The crime reference number is 087797/14.

The Neighbourhood Watch team had a complaint of loud music in Burrator Avenue that was passed on to the Police.

Margaret (Maggie) Bell of 2, Beech Crescent, Princetown was found dead on the moor over the weekend. The cause of death has not been announced.

### 5. Repairs, Maintenance & Highways

David Worth asked when the pavement metal guttering work would be undertaken by Highways. The Clerk will enquire.

Paul Turnbull raised concerns over the potholes in Station Cottages: two had been filled but the third left untouched. The Clerk will enquire.

Val Greatrex reported the grass at junctions on the B3212 at Postbridge was obscuring clear views of oncoming traffic. This is down to the revised DCC Highways policy on grass cutting in rural areas. Details of the new policy and the programmes for cutting are on the DFPC website.

### 6. Defibrillators

We have the defibrillators but not the cabinets as there is a supply problem from the manufacturer. The cabinets may take up to 3 months for delivery.

July 2014

Signature of Chair



The St John's Ambulance Trainers advised us we should upgrade our cabinets to lockable ones as theft of defibrillators is becoming common. The cabinets are plastic so a determined thief would be able to smash their way in, but the lock would deter the casual thief and mischievous teenagers. The PIN code can be left with nearby residents and potentially it can be registered with the emergency service control room to be given out in response to a 999 call.

The Clerk has amended the DFPC order to the lockable version for an extra £48+VAT, but there is insufficient TAP funding left to upgrade the other cabinet. The Council discussed the options of either fitting an external combination lock to the telephone kiosk door at Hexworthy (£32.19) or paying to upgrade the TAP funded cabinet (£57.60). After debate, the Council voted to upgrade the TAP funded cabinet. The Clerk is to make the arrangements.

The temporary siting of the defibrillators until the cabinets arrive was discussed. It was agreed the Postbridge defibrillator would be kept at Middle Merripit Farm as Rachel Watson had been trained in its use; and the Hexworthy defibrillator would be kept in Huccaby Farm by Shirley Mudge. The Clerk is to advertise these locations on the website and through posters around the Parish.

The defibrillator pads can be used once only. The trainers recommended we buy spare pads for immediate replenishment after use, but they cost around £96 plus postage and have a 5 year shelf life. After discussion the Council agreed to buy one spare set. Paul Turnbull will enquire whether South West Ambulance Trust can supply a set at lower cost.

## **7. Wash-up on the Dartmoor Classic**

The following reports and points were made by Councillors and members of the public:

Organisation. The willingness of the organisers to meet the Parish Council, hear views and modify arrangements was appreciated. Increased and improved marshalling, increased signage and publicised predicted times for traffic disruption agreed at the meeting all helped on the day. The Parish Council would wish to be included in any post event wash-up and to be involved in the planning of any future event to help improve the event and minimise the negative impact on the Parish.

Hexworthy. In Hexworthy an extra marshal was posted but spent most of the time at the Forest Inn rather than at the double bend by Jolly Lane Cottage as promised, but the suggested marshal at Huccaby Bridge was not seen. Some cyclists were better than others at letting traffic through. At one point a farmer had pulled over to let a backlog of cycles past but then no cyclist would slow down to let him carry on. One of the advance warning notices has not been removed. Overall, it was slightly better than last year, but this may be due to the reduced numbers taking part and fewer 'tag along' cyclists owing to the hot weather.

Postbridge. In Postbridge it was congested at both the bridge and the shop. Drivers could not turn in or out of the shop forecourt and the owner was sworn at when he tried to slow the bikes down to let cars pull out. Most cyclists were going very fast downhill towards the bridge despite the number of pedestrian visitors walking about and trying to cross the road from the visitors centre car park to the clapper bridge. Cars were queuing to get over the bridge with abusive language being used by cyclists when traffic tried to get by. Some residents were held up badly getting back to the village. Overall, it appeared to be less congested than last year, again possibly due to reduced numbers. In future there really needs to be much better marshalling at both the bridge and the shop.

Princetown. In Princetown the only direct complaint to the Parish Council was about the volume of rubbish strewn along the roadside between Princetown and Yelverton. There were, however, many telephone complaints made to the High Moorland Visitors Centre about the disruption.

Rundlestone. At Rundlestone it was fairly subdued with model behaviour from cyclists, all in single file and quiet by the time they reached the top of the hill.

Two Bridges. The following letter was sent to the Plymouth Herald: *"Please can someone who organised the Dartmoor cycle ride on June 22 take note of this message. I was in a huge line of cars that were being held back at the junction near to the Two Bridges Hotel. Hundreds and hundreds of cyclists were coming from all directions and no filter systems were in place, cyclists were being allowed to go through while all the cars were not. Several motorists in front of me got out of their cars to see why we were not moving. I know the cyclists have to be kept safe but the road was open to all so it needs to be better organised or close the road to traffic. I saw one collision and several near misses. Please make this a safer event next time. Mrs B Morris."*

Businesses. The Dartmoor Classic impact on Parish businesses (in alphabetic order) was reported as follows:

**Country Charm, Princetown - Neutral Impact.** They found the attitude of the race marshals somewhat officious. The shopkeeper received verbal abuse from cyclists while trying to reverse a vehicle into their parking space.

**Fox Tor Café, Princetown - Positive Impact.** Takings were up from both members of the public and race officials.

**High Moorland Visitor Centre, Princetown – Negative Impact.** Visitor numbers were down on the day, although takings held up suggesting spectators were buying more goods than normal. They fielded a "huge number of complaints" via telephone from people who had their normal travel arrangements disrupted.

**Lords Café, Princetown – Neutral Impact.** Takings were similar to normal. They received a lot of requests from cyclists for drinking bottles to be filled.

**Moor Beads, Princetown – Negative Impact.** Regular customers had told the owner they would not be in as they were avoiding the Moor for the day. The shop ended up closed all day as the owner gave up on the journey between Bovey Tracey and Princetown due to delays caused by the cycle traffic.

**Plume of Feathers, Princetown – Neutral Impact.** A few more customers than normal bought drinks. However, the downside was that a lot of riders made use of their toilet facilities and others made requests for drinks bottles to be filled. Marshalls on roundabout prevented a member of staff from getting into work for quite some length of time by not letting her cross the road into the car park.

**Postbridge Stores, Postbridge – Negative Impact.** Drivers could not turn in or out of the shop forecourt and the owner was sworn at when he tried to slow the bikes down to let cars pull out. The owner had similar problems last year and is not a fan of the Dartmoor Classic in its current format and level of marshalling.

**Post Office and Shop, Princetown – Positive Impact.** Takings up by 20% compared to Sundays either side of the event. This may also have been helped by good weather on the day. The Postmaster had difficulty carrying out an unscheduled re-supply trip on the day due to cycle traffic.

**Old Police Station Café, Princetown. Negative Impact.** Traffic disruption prevented several of their usual customers from visiting them that day. The general feeling of the owners was that *"it's more trouble than it's worth"*.

**Prince of Wales, Princetown – Neutral Impact.** Possibly one or two more people than normal came in for drinks.

In summary, the claim that the Dartmoor Classic brings increased revenue to Dartmoor Forest is not substantiated. Only two businesses reported increased business, countered by four businesses that reported a negative impact and a further four businesses that reported no change from the seasonal average. There is anecdotal evidence that many visitors stay away from the moor, fearing traffic delays and disruption. In addition to the financial aspect, significant numbers of cyclists abused the facilities of restaurants, cafes and pubs by using their toilets and asking for water refills without actually buying anything.

It was also noted that the financial income from the event goes to the Dartmoor National Park Authority and not to the Dartmoor Forest Parish, which faces the disruption.

### Conclusions.

Despite improved communication between the organisers and the Parish Council, the overall impact of the Dartmoor Classic Sportive on Dartmoor Forest is **negative**. On the assumption this event is held again, there needs to be a key focus by the organisers to improve performance at several identified ‘trouble spots’:

Hexworthy Hill. This is a small community served by one narrow lane. Improved marshalling and signage needs to be in place on the blind double bend by Jolly Lane Cottage to maintain safety against oncoming vehicles and gravel. Marshalling is also needed at Huccaby Bridge to control traffic flow to keep vehicular delays to a reasonable minimum. Consideration must be given to residents and farmers. This would need a marshalling team of 3-4 at the minimum.

Postbridge. This is a fast hill down to a major tourist attraction (with a car park on the opposite side of the road) and a traffic bottle-neck at the bridge. Improved marshalling and signage is needed to slow cyclists down before they reach the Visitors Centre car park. Marshalling is needed to assist pedestrians to cross the road to and from the clapper bridge; to halt cyclists to allow traffic to turn into and out from the Postbridge Stores; and to control traffic flow on the bridge to keep vehicular delays to a reasonable minimum. Consideration must be given to residents, businesses and tourists (the majority of whom are not connected to the cycle event). This would require a marshalling team of 4-6 at the minimum.

Princetown. The organisers must discourage cyclists from using pubs and cafés as public toilets and from requesting water refills from businesses where they provide no custom. Additional marshals may be needed in the village to direct or redirect cyclists to appropriate facilities.

Two Bridges. This is the ‘central crossroads of Dartmoor’ and of the Dartmoor Classic. Traffic congestion should be no worse on these junctions than at Rundlestone, but it clearly was. Improved marshalling will be needed at Two Bridges for future events. A possible alternative would be routing all cyclists anti-clockwise around the Princetown-Two Bridges triangle to generate only left turns at Two Bridges (noting Rundlestone is the quieter road). Subsequent complex marshalling at Rundlestone could be avoided by either reversing the direction of the Lydford loop of the Grande route or alternatively by routing returning Grande cyclists from the B3357 above Merrivale along the Foggintor track and into Princetown along the cycle track, subject to appropriate permissions.

General. Everyone understands that even the best plans go wrong sometimes. However, the level of arrogance and verbal abuse levelled by cyclists at parishioners and businessmen trying to help traffic flow or resolve other problems is a recurrent and distasteful theme reported back to the Parish Council from all areas. At the very least, the Ride Manual must be updated

to include the requirement for basic courtesy to those trying to help, even if it appears to hinder cyclists' times. Until this issue is resolved, Dartmoor Classic participants are likely to be tolerated only, and not welcomed on the moor.

The Clerk will write to Mid Devon Cycle Club and the Dartmoor National Park Authority with the Council's feedback.

#### **8. Princetown Public Library**

The Sub-Group has met with DCC Library Service and proposed a solution where the Library is manned by volunteers but DCC continues to pay for rent and utilities. This would reduce running costs by around 75%. This received a favourable initial response from those present. Letters of support are needed before 10 July, as this is the date of the preliminary meeting to assess library options. The Clerk has written on behalf of the Council. Currently, it is unclear who would manage the library volunteers. It could potentially be the WI, PCC, DFPC or another bespoke body.

#### **9. Princetown Community Centre**

The Chair of the PCC Trustees had resigned and no-one came forward to replace him. He has now been persuaded to withdraw his resignation and is expected to be voted back into post at the Trustees meeting on 14 July. The committee is advertising for additional Trustees. The Council will monitor events and may offer assistance in the future if requested.

#### **10. Christmas Tree Lights**

The Christmas Tree was a great success last year and was appreciated by residents and visitors alike: until it was vandalised in the early hours of New Year's Eve. The Council agreed it would not give in to vandals and would erect a Christmas Tree again this year. Two replacement strings of lights would need to be purchased, at an estimated cost of £150-£160. The Clerk will order these. Wendy Stones agreed to take the lead in organising the tree this year as Emma Derham would be unavailable.

#### **11. PUBLIC SESSION**

Members of the public present raised a number of issues with the Council:

The smell of cooking from the Old Police Station Café is distressing to the occupants of Claremont House, who have contacted Environmental Health.

The smell of the drains on Tavistock Road in the vicinity of the school was described as a stench. South West water is to be contacted.

West Devon Homes have revised their policy to allow non-tenants to become tenant representatives. Wendy Stones is the named person for West Devon Homes and will attend future quarterly meetings.

The road and pavement on Moor Crescent need weeding. Devon County Council have reduced their services in this respect and advise resident self-help.

The grass area between 24 & 25 Burrator Avenue and the bank behind Grosvenor Flats needs to be cut as rodents are breeding there and coming into adjacent properties. This is believed to be a Duchy liability.

A member of the public was struck by debris blown from the roof of the Prison Officers Club. The roof needs stabilising before it becomes more dangerous. This is believed to be a Duchy liability.

Princetown Primary School is rumoured to be having difficulties and members of the media have contacted some residents for information. This is a matter for School Governors and is currently confidential.

Illegal parking on Tavistock Road between the Old Police Station Café and the Prince of Wales was causing congestion. This section of road will be upgraded from a single yellow line to a double yellow line under the revised Princetown Traffic Regulation Order proposals. Delivery vehicles would still be permitted to park to unload at the Old Police Station Café (see Item 18a).

## 12. Reports from Committees, Sub- Groups and Special Interests.

**Community Centre.** Wendy Stones attended a Community Centre meeting 19th June. There had been misunderstandings about the possible use of Community Centre to serve alcohol, screen World Cup Football and act as a food outlet beyond private functions. In fact none of these occurred and the centre's licence was not contravened.

The Library lease is now with DCC solicitors for signing. The PCC is looking into changing energy supplier to help reduce utility bills. The "Big Lunch" was a success with a profit of £108.40. See also agenda item 9.

**Pavilion Youth Club.** No recent meeting. Wendy Stones visited the Youth Club last week and found the young children very much into craft work and the cooking classes progressing well.

**Parking Committee.** Nothing to report.

**Princetown Primary School.** Shuffle-up day was held successfully this week. The school summer fair will be held on 19 July and a PTA bingo evening on 11 July. Term ends on 24 July. School numbers will remain about the same in the next school year. There is one vacancy for a Governor.

**Emergency Planning Sub-Group.** The Met Office 30 day forecast indicates normal summer weather with no strong signal for any likely extremes. The Monthly Environment Agency report indicates normal river water levels and the reservoirs in the South West of the UK are holding a 98% of their capacity.

**Public Library Sub-Group.** See agenda item 8.

**Parish Plan Sub-Group.** A stall will be held at the Youth Group Fair to gauge public views.

**Play Area Sub-Group.** Cliff Palmer has repaired the split crawl tube. A piece of wood is needed to repair the climbing frame, Alison Geen will supply. The planning for Phase 3 of the Play Area upgrade will start next month. The stump of the tree felled on orders from Highways has been cut into a seat. The Council agreed the Play Area was a suitable place for the Tarrant family to plant replacement memorial trees, but the site would be needed away from planned new equipment.

**Princetown Toilets Sub-Group.** The Dartmoor National Park Authority contribution for the next three years has been received.

**Postbridge Village Hall.** The village is holding an open evening and meeting to discuss the future of the Hall on Wednesday 16 July at 1930. This is to get opinions on raising more funds to extend and improve the Hall. There will be two members of the Community Council of Devon (funded by the National Park) at the meeting to guide the committee through the steps they need to take to create a feasibility study to use as a basis for funding applications.

**Fire & Rescue Service.** The open day marking the retirement of Henry Melle was a success.

**Food Bank.** Wendy Stones attended a meeting on 13 June. Tavistock Food Bank have agreed for Princetown to be a drop-in centre. They will send two people to observe and help at the drop-in sessions planned for July: on the 10th, 17th, 23rd, and 31<sup>st</sup> at 1000 -1200. This will assess the level of need in the village and determine whether to train and induct a local person.

**Emergency Committee.** No activity has been needed.

**1914 Commemoration Garden.** Cliff Palmer has sown the poppy seeds after Youth Club members dug over the ground. We will await results.

### 13. Reports from other meetings

**Southern Parish Link.** Paul Turnbull briefed the meeting on key points from the most recent Southern Parish Link meeting. These were: the campaign to re-open the Okehampton-Tavistock railway line as a complementary route; South West Energy Partnership proposals; new guidance on when a 30mph speed limit could be imposed; and seeking proposals for TAP funding. Details are on the WDBC website and in the minutes circulated to Councillors. The council agreed to co-sponsor a TAP fund proposal for a parish 'shared asset' projector and laptop.

### 14. Planning applications

a. The current status is:

With the Parish Council	0320/14 0319/14	Installation of 2 transmission discs on mast, North Hessary Tor Retrospective for 4mx3m field shelter, Oakery Bridge
<i>Neighbouring Parish, potentially impacting DFPC</i>	0351/14	<i>Blackdown Piper Farm</i>
Recent DNPA decisions (all conditional approval)	0262/14 0202/14 0198/14	Slate hanging additional external elevations, Wheal Lucky House Dung storage roof Beardown Farm Single storey extension, 5 New London Princetown
With DNPA	0272/14	Demolition outbuildings & single storey extension, 29 Blackabrook
Awaiting enforcement action	0164/07	Beardown Farm un-authorized chalet. Clerk is awaiting update from Jo Burgess.

The Council agreed to support applications 0319/14 and 0320/14.

### 15. Correspondence

Correspondence has been uploaded to the website.

The more significant papers are:

Mr Peter Harper was elected as Chairman of the Dartmoor National Park Authority and Mr Maurice Retallick was re-elected as Deputy Chairman of the Authority. Mr James McInnes and Mr Philip Vogel were elected as Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Development Management Committee respectively.

Dog Control Orders

Greater Dartmoor LEAF future grant programme

Play Area tree must be felled within 6 months

Empower Parish Councils to sell electricity they generate

Major changes to DCC Highways grass cutting in rural areas

Broadband Update (Princetown & Postbridge)

DCC Residential Services Review Recommendations

DCC Day Services Review Recommendations

DCC Youth Services Provision Revised Proposals approved

Further activity in support of the Okehampton Tavistock railway

Electoral Boundary – “Dartmoor Ward” may be challenged

Chagford Business Premises Survey

Holne Horse Ride

Grants to protect or enhance Dartmoor

West Devon Playing Pitch Strategy

## 16. Financial management

a. Cheques approved this month were:

775	St Raphael's Church – donation	£750.00
776	Grant Thornton – external auditors fee	£240.00
778/9	St John's Ambulance – lockable cabinet upgrade	£57.60
781	Devon County Council – Traffic Order Fee	£500.00
782	A Jaques – Litter Picking	£53.65
783	DNPA – Football Club Planning Application	£97.50
784	Cliff Palmer - Poppy Seeds	£10.00
785	Mike Druett – grass cutting	£169.45
786	Nigel Tigwell – Clerk's quarterly pay	£546.19
787	HMRC – income tax	£85.50
788	Diane Malley – payroll services	£24.00

b. Bank Reconciliation.

Balance on last statement (28 May)		£27519.58
Outstanding Income		
778	Toilets contribution for 3 years	£3000.00
Outstanding Cheques		
761	Postbridge Village Hall donation	£400.00
762	WDBC Toilets Contribution	£4,266.24
766	Don Agnew - Internal Audit	£50.00
768	David Worth - reimbursement for varnish	£15.95
769	A Jaques Litter Picking	£53.65
770	PCC - Room hire 30 Apr 14	£7.50
771	St John's Ambulance - defibrillator & cabinet	£1,603.20
772	Mike Druett - grass cutting	£410.81
773	Nigel Tigwell - administrative expenses	£88.83
774	DALC - J Gee training course	£30.00
Reconciled total (30 June)		£23,593.40

c. **Forecast of Outturn.** This is shown in the tables and graphs attached.

## 17. Potential Revised Banking Arrangements

The Clerk had investigated a number of options for investing the Council's reserves, which were discussed in some detail. The Council agreed not to invest in schemes linked to the stock market.



Investment would be based on the rule of thirds ( $\frac{1}{3}$  cheque account,  $\frac{1}{3}$  quick access,  $\frac{1}{3}$  long term investment) but not tying money up for more than 1 year. A decision in principle was made to move the Council's account to the Co-Operative Bank and to invest in their savings options, with a potential revenue of £342 per annum. The Clerk is to investigate in detail.

#### 18. Progress reports on previous actions, not on the Agenda

- a. **Traffic Regulation Order & Parking.** Amendments to the Traffic Order agreed at the last meeting have been agreed by Highways and incorporated into a revised proposal. Cllr Sander's locality budget transfer is complete.  
Janet Jenner has responded to the Council's letter asking delivery lorries not to park on Tavistock Road, explaining that the café cannot accept deliveries to the rear entrance owing to the steep steps. She has discussed delivery van parking previously with PCSO Mark Canvin, who has advised the current, longstanding arrangements are reasonable. Delivery vans are only on site for short periods and the lorry in the photograph featured in the Princetown Times was not delivering to the café. While she is sympathetic with the occasional congestion, there is little she can do to alleviate it.
- b. **Councillor Back Pocket Briefs.** Jackie Gee had reviewed the sample back pocket brief and recommended it. The Clerk will produce more booklets for the Councillors who want one.
- c. **Submit planning application on behalf of the football club.** This is progressing. The Clerk will assist the Football Club in drawing up their plans.
- d. **Award new grass cutting contract.** A letter of instruction has been issued. The contract will be let once we have finalised the price for subsequent cuts of the Churchyard.
- e. **Investigate feasibility of grants for a Skate Park and the Bowling Green.** It was agreed priority should be given to a skate park as this would serve the younger generation.
- f. **Approach local businesses for chargeable links and adverts.** The Clerk has one applicant but has not actively marketed the website to date. This will progress as time permits.
- g. **Monitor progress on the biomass boiler.** The boiler is not deemed to be an environmental hazard during the summer as it only runs for 1½ hours per day. A further assessment will be conducted in winter. The Duchy plan to plant trees to help shield the noise.

#### 19. Urgent decisions since the last meeting

None.

#### 20. Any other business

Paul Turnbull reported a number of incursions by children and teenagers into the plantation at the end of Station Cottages, Princetown (where the fences are dilapidated) and engaging in hazardous activities. One person had to be evacuated by the Fire and Rescue Service recently after falling in the plantation. Amongst other activities, camp fires have been lit that Station Cottages residents fear could get out of control and threaten their properties. Residents have tried unsuccessfully to contact the plantation owner, who is believed to live in Oxford. Cliff Palmer has notified PCSO Mark Canvin but was unaware of what action had been taken. It was agreed the Clerk would raise the matter formally in a letter to the Police.

21. **Second Public Session.** Nothing was raised.

#### 22. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be at 1930 Monday 11 August 2014 at Princetown.