

## MORCHARD BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 13 April 2026 at 7.00pm

### At Morchard Bishop Memorial Hall

**Present:** Simon Baker, (Chair), Dawn Parkhouse (Vice Chair), David Gillbard, Sarah Gillbard, David Grant, Andy Hankins, Stephen Leese, Sheila Sinclair, Debbie Ticehurst, Sarah Vere, District Councillor Mark Jenkins, and David Parker (Parish Clerk).

Members of the Public attending: Georgina and Alex Linnell, Greg Anson, Colin Crewdson & Sue Eaglen.

1. **Apologies:** Les Partridge, District Councillor Helen Tuffin, County Councillor Steve Keable.
2. **Members of the Public** – the members of the public present were all there to object to the application for planning permission in relation to application number 26/00300/PIP, two of them had previously written a letter to the Parish Council which had been circulated before the meeting.
3. **The minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2 March 2026 were approved - Proposed: Sheila Sinclair, seconded: Sarah Gillbard - carried unanimously.
4. **Matters Arising (not dealt with elsewhere in the minutes):**
  - Before the meeting, the Parish Council had held a site visit to view the area of land that Mr Jeffrey had offered the Parish Council for use potentially as a Community Orchard.
  - Andy Hankins had fitted a new digital timer for the outside lighting of the church tower.
  - **The Clerk had sent Stephen Leese his "Not-Spot" report. Cllr Leese will amend the report and then send it to the South West Business Lead at Dragon Wi-Fi.**
  - Simon Baker and Stephen Leese had attended on-line, the MDDC Planning Training for Town and Parish Councils.
  - **Seats - Sarah and Debbie would see if they could put some paint on the seat at Groberry Hayes. The 2000 Commemoration seat in St. Gatien Garden needed to be repaired by a joiner, both seats in St Gatien would benefit from a rub down and a coat of wood preserver.**
  - **The newer Notice Board by the skittle Alley had been taped shut. Sarah Gillbard hoped to get Julian Rice to look at it and suggest appropriate repairs. – It was asked whether the doors could operate on a sliding mechanism rather than on hinges.**
  - **Fuji Salt Spreader – As Councillor Les Partridge was not at the meeting to give a report, this will be an action point for the next meeting.**

#### 5. Finance.

A cashflow table for April was circulated which explained the income and expenditure figures for March/April. Expenditure for April was £1,652.87 on the main account, nothing on the Reserve account and £98.50 on the footpaths account. Funds at the end of March before payment of these invoices stood at: Reserve Account, £11,990.30; Current Account £10,275.83; P3 Account £3,572.69.

#### Current Account Receipts and Invoices to be paid:

Precept	Receipt	£6451.00 credit
MorFest	Ticket Sales	£ 850.00 credit
British Gas Energy	Outside lighting of the Church (est.)	£ 22.83 Direct Debit
David Parker	Salary Jan - Mar	£1092.00 BACS
HMRC	Clerk's Tax	£ 20.40 BACS
John Charman	Keep off the grass signs	£ 15.00 BACS
DALC	Membership	£ 453.18 Precept
Rexel UK Ltd	Timer for Church Lights	£ 49.46 BACS

#### P3 Footpaths Account

London Inn	Footpaths Friends lunch	£ 98.50 BACS
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The Current account stands at £15,923.96 after payment of these invoices, the Reserve account stands at £11,990.30 including funds for Jubilee Funds (£113.46), DAAT (£150.48), Clock Face fund (£613.99), Election Expenses (£4,000), and the P3 account stands at £3,474.19.

Stephen Leese proposed, and Dawn Parkhouse seconded that these invoices be paid and the Financial report accepted – carried unanimously.

The Clerk had asked for a subscription to WinZip to open Electoral Roll documents from Mid Devon District Council, but **Simon Baker and Stephen Leese would see if free software would do the job before funding was spent. The Clerk would chase up Cllr Stephen Keable about the locality Budget for the VAS sign. The Clerk was also due to make the VAT reclaim soon.**

## 6. Planning

26/00300/PIP	Permission in Principle for the erection of 1 detached dwelling	Land at NGR 277210 106707 South East of Lydcott House, MB
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The Parish Council commented on the following difficulties with this application: Two letters from members of the public had been received, objecting to the development. There were difficulties with access to and exit from the land onto a busy road and there was no room to create a visibility splay. If building was to be allowed on this green field site it would set a precedent for other development. This land was outside of the settlement limit according to the Adopted Policies Map agreed to be in place until 2033. South West Water had expressed concerns that there was no plan for dealing with water run off and the natural place for any water to flow would be Rixey Lane which already flooded. After Discussion: Debbie Ticehurst proposed that this application be OBJECTED to, Sheila Sinclair seconded the proposal and it was CARRIED. Cllrs. David Gillbard and Andy Hankins declared an interest and abstained from the vote.

26/00369/PIP	Permission in Principle for the erection of 9 dwellings	Land at NGR 276588 107753 Chulmleigh Road, MB.
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The Parish Council commented on the following difficulties with this application: This land was outside of the settlement limit according to the Adopted Policies Map agreed to be in place until 2033. After Discussion: Debbie Ticehurst proposed that this application be OBJECTED to, Sarah Vere seconded the proposal and it was CARRIED. Cllr. Sheila Sinclair abstained from the vote.

26/00397/FULL	Conversion of barn to self build dwelling and construction of a new vehicular access	Land and Building at NGR 276997 107128 Polson Hill, Morchard Bishop
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The Parish Council commented on the following difficulties with this application: The development area including the proposed track, was approximately three times the area of the building. This land was outside of the settlement limit according to the Adopted Policies Map agreed to be in place until 2033. After Discussion: Sarah Vere proposed that this application be OBJECTED to, Simon Baker seconded the proposal and it was CARRIED. Cllrs. Sheila Sinclair and David Grant abstained from the vote.

### Planning: decisions / appeals / withdrawals:

26/00327/PMCOU Information Only - Approved	Prior Approval for the change of use of land to a temporary campsite under Class BC for a period of 60 non-consecutive days from 01/04/2026 – 31/10/2026 with associated toilets	Beech Hill House, Morchard Bishop
24/00241/RURAL	Enforcement Notice issued due to a breach of planning control.	Land and Building at NGR 275295 104685, Noahs Ark, Morchard Road, Devon, EX17 5LQ.
26/00012/CLP	Certificate of Lawful Use for a proposed use or development Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed use of Northleigh Manor, as a short term holiday letting for up to 140 days per year, with the remaining days used a private residence.	Northleigh Manor, Broadridge Lane, Morchard Bishop
26/00230/HOUSE Approved	Erection of two storey side extension	2 Westhill Cottages, MB

## 7. County and District Councillors' Headlines

Councillor Mark Jenkin's report was received before the meeting: Mid Devon Councillors on the Planning Committee had received mandatory training refreshing the requirements for lawful decision-making including reliance on the Development Plan and material considerations, clear evidence-based reasoning and correct procedure. Training had been offered to Parishes and two of our Councillors had attended on-line. The M5 Junction 28 Improvement Scheme had passed a national review. It remained supported by Government, but funding had not yet been approved. The annual charge for the optional garden waste collection service had been frozen for the year 2026/27. Free Recycling advice and additional containers are available from Mid Devon District Council. There would be a Landlord Networking Event on Wednesday 13 May 2026 between 5.00 and 8.30pm at Upton Barn & Walled Garden, Cullompton.

Councillor Steve Keable's report arrived just before the meeting: A stakeholder meeting had been held to hear plans to modernise the Tarka line between Exeter and Barnstaple. Two key transport schemes had been backed by the Government, a new junction 28 on the M5 at Cullompton which would unlock strategic plans for 5,000 new homes in the designed garden village east of the town. Work on the Cullompton Relief road was due to start work this summer and the Railway Station at Cullompton was due to re-open. These new homes would take some of the pressure off the rest of the District. Maintaining **Devon's roads** was essential for residents, businesses and rural communities who relied upon them every day. From April 2026 the good news:- • £36m for highway maintenance, 20% up on last year • £100m capital investment for preventative highway maintenance • £4m additional for drainage, gully clearance, ditching, & vegetation management • £10m matched-funding opportunity for parish & town councils • £0.5m to strengthen highways inspection. **Libraries:** From April the reduction in the Libraries budget had been reversed. Over 25,050 responses had been received in the libraries consultation. **Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)** - In 2022 and 2025 Mid Devon put out a call for landowners to submit plots of land they would wish to consider for residential housing or economic development for businesses. Across time these sites have been considered against criteria for what is suitable, achievable and available. These findings will be published in June. The findings will be used to inform the local plan to determine where future development is to be located. Inclusion in the HELAA does not imply the site will be approved for development.

#### 8. Correspondence not dealt with elsewhere in the meeting:

- Mid Devon District Council – Budget and council tax set for the financial year 2026/27.
- State of boundary Wall at Ridge House, Church Street. – Two residents had written bringing to the attention of the **Parish Council the poor and possibly dangerous state of the boundary wall at Ridge House, Church Street. The Clerk was asked to write to the owners of Ridge House and also Devon Highways to bring this matter to their attention and ask for remedial work to be urgently undertaken.**
- Mid Devon District Council – Lifeline Alarm Service. **Leaflet to be placed on the Parish Council Website and to be drawn to the attention of Carers Group.**
- Sustainable Morchard – Wilding Film poster – Advertising the film to be shown on 14 April.
- Mid Devon District Council – Mid Devon Landlord Networking Event – Wednesday 13 May 2026 from 5.00pm to 8.30pm at Upton Barn & Walled Garden in Cullompton.
- Devon Association of Local Councils – Membership Renewed. Membership gives access to Expert advice and guidance, Regular updates and information, Training and professional development, Networking and sector influence, Membership of the National Association of Local Councils.
- Mid Devon District Council, Garden Waste price freeze, Recycling and opportunities to visit MDDC's depot. Coffee Pods could now be recycled if taken to the Punchbowl recycling centre.
- Two Moors Way 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations. – Two walks finishing at Morchard Bishop will take place on 29/5/26 with a tea party in the afternoon at the Memorial Hall at 3.00pm. **Dawn Parkhouse and Sarah Gillbard would represent the Parish Council.**

#### 9. Ongoing Matters:

- a) Roads, Signage, Hedges, Potholes, Footpaths and Mud on roads, Road Wardens and Finger Posts: Devon Highways had confirmed that they would replace four fingerposts when they had funds available. **The VAS sign would be moved on Friday 17 April.** The Chairman encouraged all Councillors and Members of the Public to report any and all potholes in the Parish. Sarah Gillbard hoped to get the pothole team back in action weekly on a Tuesday soon.
- b) Accidents and Incidents: Nothing to report.
- c) Defibrillators – All checked and in working order.
- d) Neighbourhood Plan – No progress. *After the meeting Councillor Steve Keble confirmed that it would be a good idea to have a Neighbourhood Plan but that we did not need to employ a consultant.*

- 10. MorFest** – Organisation of the event was progressing well. There was now a need to push ticket sales.
- 11. Bowling Club** – The Bowling Club had invited the Parish Council and other organisations to join a weekly roll-up from 2<sup>nd</sup> June until 7<sup>th</sup> July with a 6.15 for 6.30pm start. Sarah and Devid Gillbard volunteered to represent the Parish Council with Sheila Sinclair and David Grant acting as reserves.
- 12. Brains of Morchard Quiz** – The Memorial Hall had invited the Parish Council to put in a team. Simon Baker, Andy Hankins, David Gillbard and Sheila Sinclair were selected to represent the Parish Council.
- 13. Parish Initiatives** were all reviewed:
- Apple Pressing Day was requested to be held again in 2026 – the Clerk will organise.
  - A Booklet of printed walking maps was being worked on by the P3 Footpaths group. The project had grown and it was anticipated that this would take another year.
  - Broadband provision – Open Reach appeared to be working in the village at present.
  - Roads – The Parish Council continued to keep up pressure on Devon Highways.
  - “Charge my Street” initiative – The Parish Council still awaited further action from Devon County Council.
  - Community Event – MorFest was progressing well.
  - Supporting Carers – The monthly meetings continued and were proving worthwhile. Vicky Cole from the Surgery had been made aware of the existence of the group in the village.
  - Welcome Pack – The Welcome Pack for new residents was on the website and also available in hard copy.
- 14. Trustees and Village Organisations Reports**
- Sustainable Morchard – Wilding Film on 14<sup>th</sup> April and a plant swap on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.
  - Memorial Hall – Quotes were being sought to make the outside of the building, particularly the flat roof, waterproof.
  - Morchard Bishop Playing Fields – The AGM had been postponed. The Premises Licence hearing was taking place on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April at Tiverton. Professional Mediation between the Playing Fields Association and the Sports and Social Club Committee was to be provided at a cost through Devon Communities Together.
  - School – No report.
  - Churchyard – Plans were being worked up for a wall to contain Memorial Ashes. Funds were healthy.
  - Parochial Church Council (PCC) – The AGM would take place on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April.
- 15. Items for Future Meetings** (Note – items in this section cannot be discussed – merely scheduled for a future meeting).
- Nothing mentioned.
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- Meeting Closed at 8.54pm

The next meeting of Morchard Bishop Parish Council will be on **Monday 11 May 2026** at the Memorial Hall at **7.00pm** which will start with the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.