

MORCHARD BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Meeting Monday 3rd November 2025 at 7.30pm

At Morchard Bishop Memorial Hall

Present: Simon Baker, (Chair), Dawn Parkhouse (Vice Chair), Sarah Gillbard, David Gillbard, David Grant, Andy Hankins, Les Partridge, Sheila Sinclair, Debbie Ticehurst, Sarah Vere, County Councillor Steve Keable, District Councillor Helen Tuffin and David Parker (Parish Clerk).

1. **Apologies:** Stephen Leese, District Councillor Mark Jenkins.
2. **Members of the Public** – No members of the public were in attendance.
3. **The minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6 October 2025 were approved - Proposed: Dawn Parkhouse, seconded: Debbie Ticehurst - carried unanimously.
4. **Matters Arising (not dealt with elsewhere in the minutes):**
 - The Defibrillator post at Frost had become loose. – Sarah Gillbard will tamp it down with the Tamper from the Pot Hole repairing tools.
 - Some of the signs around the village still needed to be cleaned. Would Councillors note which these were and bring the details to the next meeting.
 - The Emergency Plan was ongoing.
 - The safety barrier below the steps from the Methodist Church had been repaired by John Charman.
 - The damp salt/grit was still to be delivered to the field behind the London Inn.
 - Letters of thanks to the Apple Day helpers were still to be sent.

5. **Finance.**

Cashflow table for November was circulated which explained the income and expenditure figures for October/November. The second half of the precept (£5,780) had been received. Expenditure for November is £1,305.18 on the main account, £385 on the Reserve account and nothing on the footpaths account. Funds at the end of October before payment of these invoices stood at: Reserve Account, £14,338.02; Current Account £6,274.59; P3 Account £4,551.69.

Current Account Receipts and Invoices to be paid:

British Gas Energy	Outside lighting of the Church	£ 17.67 Direct Debit
HMRC	Clerk's Tax	£ 18.95 BACS
Memorial Hall	PC Meetings	£ 52.50 BACS
D Parker	Salary for July to September	£1,050.80 BACS
Lycott Nursery	Winter planters	£ 166.06 BACS

Reserve Account

Urban and Rural Plants	Malus (Crab Apple) Tree	£ 385.00 BACS
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The Current account stands at £10,748.61 after payment of these invoices, the Reserve account stands at £13,953.02 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 £4,551.69.

Sheila Sinclair proposed, and David Grant seconded that these invoices be paid and the Financial report accepted – carried unanimously.

6. **Planning - There were no Applications to consider**

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Planning: decisions / appeals / withdrawals:

25/00332/FULL Granted	Erection of replacement stable building	Land at NGR 276231/107856 South of Turning Ways Lapford
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25/01147/CAT No Objection	Notification of intention of Crown thinning by 30% to 1 Oak tree within the Conservation Area	Oakridge, Church Street, MB
25/01118/FULL Granted	Construction of a Dung Store	Land and Buildings at NGR 274845 107922 Rudge Rew, Lapford
25/01099/FULL Application Withdrawn	Erection of replacement dwelling	Shobrooke Bungalow, Morchard Road, Crediton.

7. County and District Councillors' Headlines

Councillor Steve Keable's report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

Councillor Helen Tuffin's report was circulated in advance of the meeting. – Particular Headlines for Morchard Bishop to note over both reports were: (i) Pots and Pans Collections Have Started! The permanent collection of unusable metal pots and pans is now in operation. If residents want more recycling containers please contact Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) and they will deliver them. Also, and if residents want to know how they can recycle more as a household, please contact MDDC's team of advisers who will offer in person, telephone and online advice. Please email MDDC at bin-it123@middevon.gov.uk or call 01884 255255. (ii) Awaab's Law was officially introduced on 27 October and brings in new legal duties for social housing providers to investigate and act upon hazards in tenants' homes. Social landlords must address all emergency hazards and all damp and mould hazards that present significant risk of harm to tenants to fixed timeframes. (iii) MDDC Residents' Survey 2025 is open. The more people that take part in this survey, the better the Council can respond to your needs! Please find details of the 2025 Residents' Survey at this address: <https://letstalk.middevon.gov.uk/resident-survey-2025> and do please take part, this is used to assist the Council in deciding how much to precept and how best to spend your money.

8. Correspondence not dealt with elsewhere in the meeting:

- Devon Countryside Access Forum – call for Members. The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a statutory local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, with a remit to give independent advice on improving public access to land and the enjoyment thereof. It has eighteen members appointed by Devon County Council who represent the interests of access users, for example walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and trail riders; landowners or managers, and people with other relevant expertise such as conservation, tourism, planning and health. Devon County Council is currently advertising to fill places on the DCAF. No Councillors offered themselves and the call would be opened to members of the P3 Committee and after that to Parishioners.

- Free 'Do not Knock' stickers for older people. The Parish Council agreed to obtain some of these stickers so that they could be available in the shop, the pub and coffee mornings for older people to collect.

9. Ongoing Matters:

- Roads, Signage, Hedges, Potholes, Footpaths and Mud on roads, Road Wardens and Finger Posts: The Parish Council were due to meet the Highways Liaison Officer and our County Councillor on Friday 7 November. There was a request for the pothole team to repair potholes in Church Street which had caused a trip hazard as parishioners crossed the road.
- Accidents and Incidents: Nothing to report.
- Defibrillators – All checked and in working order.
- Emergency Plan – A date for the working group was to be agreed.
- Neighbourhood Watch – Stephen Leese would draft a neighbourhood plan document contents page.
- Replacement for Cherry Tree on the Green – A Crab Apple Tree had been planted on the Green.

10. Crediton Area Association of Local Councils Meeting Report – The Clerk attended in place of Stephen Leese.

The Town Clerk from Crediton had produced a report on Section 106 obligations which recognised the problems that Towns and Parishes experienced with the scheme. A letter had been proposed to go to both our MP and the District Council. However, David Paker proposed that two separate letters should be written, one to all of the MP's in the Mid Devon area and one to Mid Devon District Council, each being specific about the difficulties that either Central Government or the District Council could address. This proposal was accepted.

Forward Planning was looked at and the emphasis removed on solely Crediton. The District Council were still looking for areas of land to build houses upon. It was noted that Developers were sitting on land which already had planning permission, and this meant that MDDC were not meeting their housing targets, hence looking for more land and Planning Inspectors over-ruling refusals of planning permission.

Cllr Ward from Sandford wondered why S106 funds could not be used to link footpaths together – he was recommended to set up a P3 group.

Everyone was encouraged to report Flooding and Potholes.

With regard to the Crediton to Exeter Cycle route, DCC would be invited to the next meeting of the Association, however, the scheme was going to cabinet in November so it looked as though the “Quiet Lanes” option would be adopted.

Local Government Reorganisation - discussion took place about the MDDC Annual State of the District Debate which was regarded as a missed opportunity, the Annual meeting of Parish Clerks had been postponed until 2026. With regard to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), David learned that Parish Councils may be required to take over certain services such as the emptying of Public Bins and Dog Poo Bins. *County Councillor Steve Keable did not agree with this understanding of the changes that may follow LGR.*

The Association would next meet on Monday 1 December at 10.00am at a venue to be agreed.

- 11. Morchard Bishop Primary School** – The Track Opening Ceremony had gone very well. The new Head Teacher had contacted the Chairman and expressed an interest in working with the Parish Council. She would attend the next meeting of the Parish Council. She would be interested in exploring electric vehicle charging in the car park by the school. The Head Teacher had dispensed with the services of the Groundsmen and was looking for volunteers from the village to carry out repairs around the school grounds particularly on the raised beds in the garden and the trim trail to get them ready for the spring. The Head Teacher would also be interested to hear from those willing to assist with children reading.
- 12. Morchard Bishop Music Festival – Saturday 23 May 2026.** – The event was beginning to take shape. The event was taking place in the name of the Parish Council and the Parish Council agreed to work with the organising group to make the event a success.
- 13. Parish Initiatives** – The Parish Council reviewed the existing initiatives. The third Apple Day had been another success. The P3 Committee were actively working on a booklet of Printed Walking Maps. Broadband provision was suffering a lack of leadership from “Connecting Devon and Somerset”. The PC were keeping up pressure on Devon Highways regarding our roads. The PC awaited action from DCC in relation to the “Charge my Street” initiative. MorFest was the Community Event for 2026. *Debbie Ticehurst suggested that the Council add an initiative to support Carers in the village. Debbie would do some research and report back to the PC.*
- 14. Vehicle Activated Speed Sign (VAS)** – The Chairman presented some research about VAS including costings £3,631 + VAT including Solar power and data capture. Sarah Gillbard proposed that the Parish Council support purchasing a VAS sign. The Parish Council were unanimously in favour of the principle of purchasing a VAS sign and it was agreed that the Chairman would look into it further. Councillor Steve Keable offered £500 from his locality budget towards the purchase of the sign.
- 15. Meeting Dates for 2026** – The following dates for Parish Council Meetings were agreed for 2026:

	Parish Council 7.00 pm at the Memorial Hall	Agenda items for Parish Council only	Footpaths / P3 6.30pm at the Sports and Social Club
January	Monday 5 th	Set budget & precept, Emergency Plan	
February	Monday 2 nd	Governance Documents	Monday 9 th
March	Monday 2 nd	Village Assets - Maintenance	
April	Monday 13 th *	Parish Initiatives	Monday 20 th *
May	Monday 11 th *	AGM	
June	Monday 1 st		Monday 8 th
July	Monday 6 th		
August	Monday 3 rd		Monday 10 th
September	Monday 7 th		
October	Monday 5 th	Christmas Lights & Nativity Bad Weather Wardens & Gritting	Monday 12 th
November	Monday 2 nd	Parish Initiatives Next year's meetings	
December	Monday 7 th	Budget & Precept – First consideration	Monday 14 th

*due to bank holidays on first Monday of April and May

The Parish Council resolved to commence their meetings at 7.00pm in the future.

16. Trustees and Village Organisations Reports

- Sustainable Morchard – the talk about Otters was well received.
- Memorial Hall – There was £15,000 in the account. The Indoor Car Boot sale and the Film night went well as did the Bingo. A group of veteran marines who were involved in a gun-pull from John o'Groats to Land's End had stayed in the hall for a night.
- Morchard Bishop Playing Fields – A child had put some graffiti on the new play equipment, the police had become involved and they worked with the offender under the Restorative Justice scheme. The Playing Fields Committee were hoping to apply to the Police and Crime Commissioner for a grant to install CCTV.
- School – No Report.
- Churchyard – There had been good turnouts for the Churchyard tidy up and a lot had been achieved. Some areas of the Churchyard would not be mown and left as conservation areas. The Churchyard Garden of Remembrance was running out of room to bury ashes and so the proposal was to build a wall in the newer section of the Churchyard for the internment of ashes. Snowdrops and yellow rattle seeds had been planted. The Churchyard Committee were pleased to receive £800 from Sarah Gillbard from the Cardboard recycling.
- Parochial Church Council (PCC) – The PCC had not met since the last Parish Council meeting.

17. Items for Future Meetings (Note – items in this section cannot be discussed – merely scheduled for a future meeting).

- The Parish Council agreed to support the Parish Church Christmas Tree Festival between 5th and 7th December and to decorate a tree.
- Dawn Parkhouse would take over, looking after the Parish Council noticeboard and keeping it up to date.
- The Parish Council were running the Coffee Morning on 6 December, Debbie and Sheila volunteered to staff the kitchen and Dawn would run the raffle. Councillors were asked for Draw Prizes.
- Emma Gillbard will use her drone to take close-up pictures of the clockface on the Church Tower.
- A working party to clear mud around the kerbs of the War Memorial and Green was organised for Saturday 8 November at Midday.

Meeting Closed at 8.59pm

The next meeting of Morchard Bishop Parish Council will be on **Monday 1 December 2025** at the Memorial Hall **at 7.00pm** when the Parish Council will give first consideration to the Budget and Precept.