

MORCHARD BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 1 June 2026 at 7.00pm

At Morchard Bishop Memorial Hall

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

Members of the Public attending: Tom Murby, Derek Horn

1. **Apologies:** District Councillor Helen and District Councillor Mark Jenkins.
2. **Members of the Public** – Tom Murby wanted to thank the whole Parish Council in person for putting on MorFest. He congratulated the Parish Council for an excellent and well organised event. The Parish Council thanked him for his comments and also his and his partner's contribution during the day.
3. **The minutes** of the Annual Parish Council Meeting and the Parish Council Meeting held on 11 May 2026 were both approved - Proposed: David Grant, seconded: Les Partridge - carried unanimously.
4. **Matters Arising (not dealt with elsewhere in the minutes):**
 - Seats - Sarah and Debbie would see if they could put some paint on the seat at Groberry Hayes. Sarah Gillbard would ask Kirk if he could repair the 2000 Commemoration seat in St. Gatien Garden, both seats in St Gatien would benefit from a rub down and a coat of wood preserver.
 - Fuji Salt Spreader – Les confirmed that John Charman would clean down the salt spreader and give it a coat of diesel before putting it away for the summer.
 - The Clerk had written to the Highways Officer about the Village Gateway sign which had been stolen, DCC had confirmed that it was their responsibility to replace it.
 - Stephen Leese would place the “no such thing as a dog poo fairy sign” on the website and also the promotion of the new Crisis and Resilience Fund”. Stephen queried whether it would be worth creating a new page on the website for these “notices” – he would look into it.
 - The Clerk had informed Councillor Keable that the Parish Council intended to instruct a drainage specialist to clear some drains and gullies within the village.
 - Sarah Gillbard had spoken to the person who had been parking inconsiderately in a space along The Green, she found him less than interested in the problems he was causing.
 - The Clerk had spoken to Steve Dockings about the work he was to do around the War Memorial, Steve had apologised for the delay and said that he would get on with it.
 - Stephen Leese had spoken to the lead at Dragon Wi-Fi regarding the Not-Spots in the village. The study was free of charge. Dragon Wi-Fi advised that a solution would be for a pyramid structure to be placed on the roof of the Church Tower to receive and bounce signals from a mast to local networks.

5. Finance.

A cashflow table for June was circulated which explained the income and expenditure figures for May/June. Expenditure for June was £839.18 on the main account, nothing on the Reserve account and nothing on the footpaths account. Funds at the end of May before payment of these invoices stood at: Reserve Account, £12,007.06; Current Account £16,134.49; P3 Account £2,614.32.

Current Account Receipts and Invoices to be paid:

British Gas Energy	Outside lighting of the Church (est.)	£ 20.78 Direct Debit
WJP Software Ltd	Annual Support for Website & e-mails	£ 818.40 BACS

The Current account stands at £15,295.31 after payment of these invoices, the Reserve account stands at £12,007.06 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 £2,614.32.

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

6. Planning

There were no planning applications to consider.

Planning: decisions / appeals / withdrawals:

24/00241/RURAL Appeal entered	Appeal entered against the service of an Enforcement Notice	Land and Buildings at NGR 275288 104684, Morchard Road
26/00300/PIP Refused	Permission in Principal for the erection of 1 detached dwelling	Land at NGR 277210 106707 South East of Lydcott House, MB
26/00107/LBC Approved	Listed Building Consent for the replacement of 6 windows and 3 doors	12 Fore Street, MB

7. County and District Councillors' Headlines

Councillor Steve Keable's report was circulated before the meeting: Councillor Keable mentioned that the managed decline of roads and libraries that the County Council had been overseeing for the past few years had been reversed with a £2million investment meaning that £8million would be spent on Highways. Councillor Keable mentioned the new Local Plan that Mid Devon were commencing with a scoping consultation which was open until 10 July. Councillor Keable also mentioned that the Planning system was changing with all Planning Applications being dealt with on paper and that District Councillors would no longer be able to call matters in for examination. When the Parish Council commented upon a planning application they should make detailed points as the Planning Officer dealing with the application may not have the local knowledge they used to and because the comments may go as far as a Planning Appeal. With regard to the Parish Council's Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) Sign, "M Group" had been instructed to put poles in place. All the finger posts that the Council had requested were likely to be provided by Devon Highways at no cost to the Parish Council. Councillor Keable will take up the concerns over the Ridge House boundary wall with Buildings Inspection Officer at Mid Devon. Devon Highways were already aware of the damage to the bridge over the river at Bugford. With regard to the Morchard Road Railway Bridge and the subsidence there, Steve Tucker was chasing Network Rail. Devon County Council had refused our Locality Budget claim towards the VAS sign because it was deemed retrospective. However, £1,000 Locality Budget would go towards drain and gully clearance – this had been approved in principle by the Highways Officer. **The Clerk was asked to make a new application for Locality Funding for this work immediately.** Councillor Keable passed to the Parish Council a new Guide about Pothole repairs. Councillor Keable passed comment that he thought MorFest had been brilliantly organised and that we should celebrate such a success, he also asked that the MorFest banners by the sides of roads be taken down. With regard to the Creative Communities grant, Councillor Keable had had to fight our corner to be able to have the grant as again it was an event that was going ahead and was not commenced because of the grant funds. He suggested that in the future we should not admit on the form that the event would go ahead whether or not the grant was made. No report was received from Councillors Tuffin and Jenkins.

8. Correspondence not dealt with elsewhere in the meeting:

- Phonely / Liquid 11 – Digital Landline Switch over – free resource for residents. – **The information would be placed on the Parish Council Website and Noticeboard and passed to the Carers' Group.**
- Mid Devon District Council – Economic Development Team have refreshed the Visit Mid Devon Website. www.visitmiddevon.co.uk . – Further promotional material and the opportunity for Parishes to have their events listed on the website.
- Mid Devon District Council – The launch of Plan Mid-Devon. – Documents available on "Let's Talk Mid-Devon" website.
- Morchard Bishop Playing Fields Association – Vintage Rally and Fun Day on Saturday 1st August – invitation to the Council to take part. – The Parish Council would offer the Jacket Potato cooker manned by Sarah Gillbard, Emma, Karen and Ruth. The Parish Council would also once again organise the Welly Wanging. **Sarah and David Gillbard will organise a rota of people to run it.**

9. Ongoing Matters:

- a) Roads, Signage, Hedges, Potholes, Footpaths and Mud on roads, Road Wardens and Finger Posts: The pothole repair material had been received. The Road Warden team would have a meeting soon. The VAS sign would be moved as soon as Devon Highways provided posts on which to fix the sign. **Sarah and David Gillbard would continue their search for a "headland plough" to be used as an "edge plough" for the roads,**

Sarah Vere and Derek Horn would also look out for one, David Grant offered to contribute £100 towards the purchase of such a plough.

- b) Accidents and Incidents: Someone had driven into the wall at Weeke Bungalow.
 - c) Defibrillators – All checked and in working order.
 - d) Neighbourhood Plan – A working group to consider the Neighbourhood Plan and the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) particularly with a view to identifying land in the Parish for future building was to be held after this meeting.
 - e) MorFest – Sarah Gillbard and Simon Baker were thanked for their hard work in the organisation of MorFest.
 - f) Community Orchard – Simon Baker, Les Partridge, Debbie Ticehurst, David Grant and the Clerk would attend a meeting on Thursday 4th June with Steve Jeffery to consider the area of land that Steve proposed the Parish Council use as a Community Orchard. The area would need to be fenced off from Cattle, Sarah Vere commented that the Applications for Capital Grants (Fencing Grants) would open in July and that Steve should be asked to include this piece of land within a grant application.
- 10. Crediton Association of Local Councils** – The next meeting of the group would take place on Monday 8th June at 10.00am – Sarah Gillbard volunteered to attend on behalf of the Parish Council.
- 11. Resignation of Parish Councillor** – Councillor Andy Hankins has resigned from the Parish Council citing pressure of work and new responsibilities there as his reasons. The Clerk explained that the vacancy would need to be advertised. **The Clerk will contact the elections office at Mid Devon DC to obtain a Notice of Vacancy.**
- 12. Parish Clock** – The Parish Clock housed in the Church had stopped chiming. It was clear that the clock needed repair and service. The Clerk had corresponded with the repairers Smith of Derby and been quoted figures of £384 + VAT for a single service or a three-year contract costing £1,094+ VAT (ie £364.67 + VAT). The Parish Council voted to engage the firm for a three-year contract.
- 13. Trustees and Village Organisations Reports**
- Sustainable Morchard – were looking at a scheme to recycle coffee pods.
 - Memorial Hall – The Annual General Meeting had been postponed. The loose carpet on the stairs would be fixed in place soon.
 - Morchard Bishop Playing Fields – The last meeting concentrated on Licensing and the Mediation (where suggestions were awaited from the Sports and Social Club) – a zoom meeting would be held with the Mediator on Thursday 4th June. Lindsey Starrs had also suggested that the Playing Fields Association also explore Gift Aid.
 - School – No Report
 - Churchyard – The north-east side of the Churchyard will now only be cut twice a year. The Wall of Remembrance would be positioned to the south-east of the Churchyard and have space for 33 containers of ashes. A planning application for this wall would be submitted soon.
 - Parochial Church Council (PCC) – The Open Gardens event had been successful raising £1,320. Robert Vere was to receive a St Boniface Award at the Cathedral on Saturday 6th June.
- 14. Items for Future Meetings** (Note – items in this section cannot be discussed – merely scheduled for a future meeting).
- Nothing mentioned.

Meeting Closed at 8.22pm

The next meeting of Morchard Bishop Parish Council will be on **Monday 6 July 2026** at the Memorial Hall at **7.00pm**.

Working Group to discuss Plan Mid Devon – Monday 1st June following the Parish Council Meeting

To look at the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) with regard to Housing and Employment Land availability in relation to Morchard Bishop Parish.

All Parish Councillors attended.

Common themes discussed were that infrastructure needs to be taken into consideration. Building needs to be sympathetic to the surroundings and the rest of the village. Any new building project would need to be sustainable, perhaps self-builds would be appropriate, above all, any new homes need to be affordable. There would need to be a larger financial input into infrastructure. Would a small development of bungalows for older people to re-locate to (freeing larger homes for families) be worth looking at?

Was doing nothing and waiting to see what would happen an option?

Parish Councillors would need to read the material that had been sent to them and make valid reasons for either building or not building to protect the character of the village.

Councillors were asked to send the clerk an e-mail containing their considered views by Monday 15th June, with David to collate the views and circulate to the Council by 22nd June and for the Council to consider at their next meeting on 6th July.