

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Clayhidon Parish Council
Held at the Village Hall, Clayhidon, at 7.45pm on Monday, 18 May 2026**

Present:

Councillors Saunders (Chair), Bendle, Kidner, King and Weekes together with Councillor Clist (MDDC and DCC Councillor) and Mrs S McGeever (Parish Clerk).

CPC002/1. To elect the Chair and receive declaration of acceptance of office

Councillor Kidner proposed that Councillor Saunders be re-elected as Chair. There were no other nominations.

PROPOSAL: Councillor Saunders be re-elected as Chair.

PROPOSER: Councillor Kidner

SECONDER: Councillor Bendle

DECISION: unanimous

Councillor Saunders accepted the office of Chair.

Councillor Bendle thanked Councillor Saunders on behalf of the Parish Council for taking on the role.

CPC002/2. To elect the Vice-Chair and receive declaration of acceptance of office

Councillor Saunders proposed that Councillor Drew be re-elected as Vice-Chair having confirmed that he was happy to take up the appointment. There were no other nominations.

PROPOSAL: Councillor Drew be re-elected as Vice-Chair.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kind

DECISION: unanimous

Councillor Saunders accepted the office of Vice-Chair on behalf of Councillor Drew.

CPC002/3. Welcome by Chairman, apologies for absence and introductions

Councillor Saunders welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from and were approved for Councillors Blackmore and Drew.

CPC002/4. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

CPC002/5. To approve minutes of the meeting on 13 May 2026

It was RESOLVED that with minutes of the meeting of 13 May 2026 should be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting and the minutes were duly signed.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kidner

DECISION: unanimous by those present at the last meeting

CPC002/6. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

CPC002/7. Planning

The Parish Council considered the following applications:

26/00428/HOUSE

Proposal: Erection of single storey extension
Location: Applehayes Cottage Clayhidon Cullompton
Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 317291 / 115442
Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council RESOLVED that it had no objections to this application.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kidner

DECISION: unanimous

26/00143/FULL

Proposal: Erection of dwelling following demolition of an agricultural building
Location: Land and Buildings at NGR 317188 116575 (Willtown Farm) Clayhidon Devon
Grid Ref: 317188 : 116575
Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council RESOLVED that it would continue to object to this application whilst noting the revised site plan no longer included Parish Council land.

The reasons for objection were that the proposed building would adversely affect the nearby Grade II listed property given its current size and design and it was not in keeping with the surrounding area.

The Parish Council noted that both the Blackdown Hills AONB and the Area East Conservation Officer were concerned about its impact, scale and size.

The Parish Council believed that the proposed building should be reduced in size and height and retain the current footprint and ridge line of the agricultural barn. A conversion being preferential to the current building being demolished.

PROPOSER: Councillor Kidner

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: unanimous

7.2 To note the following planning decisions:

The Parish Council noted the following decisions:

26/00335/LBC – APPROVED – 27 April 2026

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations, including works to a south-west and north-west elevations, and replacement of the existing garden room with a single-storey extension
Location: Barn Battens Farm Clayhidon Devon

26/00337/FULL – APPROVED – 27 April 2026

Proposal: Retention of the change of use of agricultural barn to an annexe ancillary to the main dwelling; retention of two windows on the south-west elevation and alterations to openings on north-west elevation; and replacement of the existing garden room with a single storey extension
Location: Barn Battens Farm Clayhidon Devon

7.3 Enforcement

It is understood that the Enforcement Officer has visited four sites in Clayhidon and an update has been requested. Updates are normally given after any action has been taken and an Enforcement Notice issued.

CPC002/8. Finance

The Parish Council noted the financial report provided by the Clerk.

The 2025/26 accounts had been circulated to councillors at the April meeting and forwarded to the internal auditor and the report is awaited before the AGAR paperwork can be completed and presented to the Parish Council at the June meeting.

8.1 Unity Bank Current Account

Balance on 31 March 2026				£1003.49	
Less payments					
20-Apr-26	Clayhidon VH	PARISH COUNCIL	-68.00		
20-Apr-26	Mrs S M McGeever	WAGES JAN-MAR26	-765.47		
20-Apr-26	Mrs S M McGeever	EXPENSES/MILEAGE	-121.10		
20-Apr-26	hmrc cumbernauld	475PL00323677	-191.40		
		CLAYHIDON			
20-Apr-26	savills uk	1060855	-323.00		
20-Apr-26	dalc	7303	-209.33		
30-Apr-26	Service Charge		-7.00		-1685.30
Receipts					
	04-Apr-26	Transfer from 20462521		2500.00	
Balance on 30 April 2026					£1818.19

Payments to be authorised:

Community First (Insurance)	£528.51 (one year)
	£506.16 (three years)
Village Hall (room hire)	£ 24.00

The Parish Council RESOLVED to make the above payments and take the three-year figure for the insurance policy.

PROPOSER: Councillor Kidner

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: unanimous

8.2 Unity Bank Instant Access Account

Balance on 31 March 2026			£8374.40
Less payments			
04-Apr-26	Transfer to 20462518		-2500.00
Receipts			
14-04-26	Precept		£10125.00
Balance on 30 April 2026			£15999.40

The Cumulative bank reconciliation from 1 April 2026 to 30 April 2026 had been completed and was presented to the Chair at the meeting. The Chair duly signed the bank reconciliation.

The Month 1 budget monitoring information had been circulated to Parish Councillors and the contents was noted. Revenue and expenditure were in line with budget.

8.3 S106

The Clerk hoped that the S106 application for the benches would be approved shortly.

8.4 Defibrillators

A spare pad for the defibrillator at the Half Moon has been ordered and the invoice was awaited.

8.5 Grant requests

The Village Hall had made a request for the annual grant of £2000.

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council provide the Village Hall with a grant of £2000.

PROPOSER: Councillor Weekes

SECONDER: Councillor Bendle

DECISION: unanimous

8.6 Noticeboards

Councillor Weekes reminded councillors that the agenda should be posted on **all** noticeboards.

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to ask a local resident to make two enclosed noticeboards and repair the other noticeboards. There was a locality budget of £500 for the two new noticeboards.

CPC002/9. Annual Return

As reported in Finance, the annual return will be prepared for the June 2026 meeting following the completion of the internal audit and submitted to the External Auditor in accordance with the timescales provided.

Based on the year-end figures the Parish Council will be required to submit accounts to the External Auditor for 2025-26.

CPC002/10. General Power of Competence

The Parish Council is not eligible to adopt the General Power of Competence as the current Clerk is not CILCA qualified.

The Clerk is undertaking the qualification.

CPC002/11. Policies and Procedures

The Parish Council had reviewed the following documents which did not require any amendments:

- Code of Conduct
- Standing Orders (2025 version)
- Financial Regulations (2025 version)
- Risk Management Scheme
- Publication Scheme
- Privacy Notice
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Contract of Employment (in place)
- Health & Safety Policy
- Website Accessibility Statement
- Grant policy

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the above policies.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kidner

DECISION: unanimous

- Asset Register (updated)

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated Asset Register.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kidner

DECISION: unanimous

- IT Policy

As agreed at the last meeting, the Clerk had updated the IT Policy to reflect Clayhidon Parish Council's operating procedures.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that the revised IT Policy was accurate in its wording.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kidner

DECISION: unanimous

CPC002/12. Clerk Update and Correspondence

Emergency Plan

The draft plan had been circulated to Parish Councillors together with information on Emergency Community Hubs and the Clerk was awaiting Parish Councillor's to feedback on specific Clayhidon areas of concern.

The date for a public meeting would be set at the June meeting.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council noted that the Housing Needs Survey would be sent out in early June with a closing date of 21 July 2026.

The results would be used to assist in preparing a Neighbourhood Priority Statement.

Free Landmark Tree

The Clerk was still awaiting the what-three-words location and photo for the Landmark tree which had been planted in the autumn

Storage of Parish documentation and maps

The Clerk had the documentation but had not yet managed to get to Exeter to drop it to the Devon Archive.

Dumped Caravans

The dumped caravans had been moved but some rubbish remained.

Action: Clerk to contact MDDC Street Scene

Blackdown Hills Parish Network

The request for support from the BHPN was considered and Councillor Weekes advised that a donation of £25 had been recommended and she made this proposal.

PROPOSER: Councillor Weekes

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: unanimous

Connecting the Culm

The Clerk was waiting for Connecting the Culm to come back and advised if any council/charity land would be suitable for measures to assist with flooding.

Assertion 10

See IT Policy under Item 11

CPC002/13. County Council Report

Councillor Clist provided the following report:

He noted he had been a councillor for Hemyock for 41 years and reflected that he had recently handed out long service awards of 17 to 34 years.

This year, his Locality Budget had funds of £10790.00, and it was earmarked to go towards children and improvements to the environment.

DCC had been advised that the cost of Local Government Reorganisation had to come from reserves.

Additional funding had been allocated to highways for pothole work.

DCC currently had 9600 acres of farmland with farms ranging from 70-80 acres up to 170 acres and the rental process was currently ongoing.

Trading Standards were concentrating on rogue traders, illicit tobacco and vapes, toys, play sand with asbestos fibres and boot polish in imported meat.

The Torbay and Devon Combined Authority were looking at increasing the number of affordable and social rented houses.

CPC002/14. District Council Report

Councillor Clist had circulated the Town and Parish Report prepared by MDDC Councillor DuChesne which is published as an addendum to these minutes.

CPC002/15. Highways/Footpaths

15.1 Appointment of the lengthsman

Councillor Saunders proposed that Mr Houghton should continue as the lengthsman.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor King

DECISION: unanimous

The Parish Council noted that the tarmac has been ordered and delivered to Councillor Drew.

The Parish Council noted the information provided in the Annual Parish Meeting regarding the Road Working Group and the Clerk was awaiting email addresses of the members to set up online training and then Chapter 8 training for two members. At the upcoming meeting, a decision could be made on any necessary PPE to be purchased.

15.2 Appointment of the Footpaths representative

Councillor Saunders proposed that Mr West should continue as the Footpaths representative.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor King

DECISION: unanimous

Councillor Saunders thanked Mr West for his work.

CPC002/16. Clayhidon Charity & John Griss Charity

To receive any relevant information.

16.1 Clayhidon Charity

The Parish Council confirmed the appointment of its Trustees:

Jamie Blackmore

Nicholas King

Richard Drew

and noted that the accounts for 2024/25 had now been signed.

The Clerk had set up the Unity Trust Bank account for both Councillors Blackmore and King to be able to authorise payments. There continued to be a problem.

Action: Clerk to request a cheque book and add herself and Councillor Drew as signatories.

It was noted that the Blackdown Support Group were awaiting the donation of £750 and had requested that a further grant be considered.

Merger

The Clerk was in discussions with the solicitor to move the potential merger of the Clayhidon Charity and John Griss Charity. Any transfer of funds or potential merger would need to take account of both the monetary and land assets.

16.2 John Griss Charity

The Clerk advised that the minutes of the Open Meeting have been circulated to Parish Councillors. Recent payments had been for the upgrading of the paths at Hartsmoor and meeting rooms.

Councillor Kidner advised that the quotation for defibrillator training was £400 (no VAT) for 10 people and felt this quotation should be accepted.

PROPOSER: Councillor Kidner

SECONDER: Councillor King

DECISION: unanimous

Use of the land at Hartsmoor would be offered to Wellington Scouts if Hemyock Scouts did not wish to take up the offer.

A letter could be sent to MDDC to say that work on the approved planning application had started.

Negotiations on a possible location for a play park in the parish were ongoing.

Councillor King asked that the minutes of the Open Meeting be amended to reflect that Mr Lehner was providing the electricity for the defibrillator at Bolham but that the John Griss Charity was responsible for its maintenance.

Action: Clerk

CPC002/17. Items raised by Chair

The Chair had no issues to raise.

CPC002/13. Items raised by Councillors

Councillor Bendle asked that damage to verges be reported to DCC and Councillor Clist advised that he had already taken photographs and sent them to the Neighbourhood Highways Officer.

Weekes advised that the Blackdown Support Group was holding a monthly coffee morning at the Village Hall.

09032026/14. Date of the Next Council Meeting

The Parish Council set the following dates for its meetings for 2026/27:

2026		2027	
8 June	AGAR paperwork	11 January	
13 July		8 February	
10 August (if required)		8 March	
14 September		12 April	
12 October		10 May	Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
9 November			
14 December			

Signed..... **Date**.....
Chairman

Mid Devon District Council – 1 – 30 April 2026 Update

Cabinet decisions – April 2026

Mid Devon District Council Cabinet met in April and agreed a number of decisions affecting communities across the district.

Customer Care Policy

A new Customer Care Policy was approved, setting clearer standards for how residents are supported and how enquiries are handled.

Leisure pilot for unpaid carers

Cabinet approved a new leisure pilot to support unpaid carers, including:

- Free access for carers under 18
- Discounts for adult carers
- Reduced casual session costs
- Removal of peak-time restrictions

Key policy changes

- Adoption of an updated **Anti-Social Behaviour Policy**
- Approval of a new **Community Asset Transfer Policy**, making it easier for community groups to take on suitable Council buildings or land
 - *The Community Asset Transfer scheme closes on **30 June 2026***


Environment and sustainability Environmental action featured strongly, with approval of:

- The **Climate Action Plan 2026–2028**
- The **Local Nature Recovery Strategy**
- A new **Strategic Sustainability Grant Scheme** to support local projects

Other decisions

- Progress on planning guidance for **Anaerobic Digesters**
- Approval of a contract for a new **temporary accommodation project**

Further details, including reports and minutes, are available at:

 <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-democracy/decisions/>

Crisis & Resilience Fund – from April 2026

Devon will receive **£1.3 million in additional support** as global conflict continues to drive up heating oil costs.

What it is

A new government-funded **Crisis & Resilience Fund (CRF)** run by Mid Devon District Council, replacing the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments.

Who it is for

Low-income households facing a sudden financial shock.

What it offers

Rapid, flexible support alongside access to advice on income, debt, housing and wellbeing, delivered through a “no wrong door” approach with partner organisations.

What it is not

- Not a universal payment
- Not a replacement for benefits
- Not long-term income support
- Not for emergencies

Focus

Reducing repeat crises and improving financial resilience, including budgeting and longer-term stability.

Next steps

Full application details will be published once final approvals are in place.

 *For support, contact Mid Devon District Council Customer Services.*

Full Council Meeting – 22 April 2026

(I was unable to attend this meeting due to annual leave.)

Two motions affecting residents across Mid Devon were debated:

Motion 609 – Recognising the Rights of Rivers

(Proposed by Cllr Natasha Bradshaw)

Council debated a significant environmental motion seeking to:

- Recognise the ecological, social and cultural importance of Mid Devon’s rivers, including the **Exe, Culm, Creedy, Lowman, Yeo**, and the upper reaches of the **Dart and Taw**
- Build on previous Council commitments to river and marine protection
- Align Mid Devon with **Devon County Council’s December 2025 decision** recognising the rights of rivers

The motion acknowledged ongoing pressures from pollution, abstraction and climate change.

✅ **Outcome:** Council agreed to support the principles of the motion, with further work to follow through the scrutiny process.

Motion 610 – Anti-Social Behaviour

(Proposed by Cllr Lance Kennedy)

This motion addressed concerns regarding anti-social behaviour and the under-reporting of crime across Mid Devon.

Key discussion points included:

- Local crime statistics
- Residents choosing not to report incidents due to perceptions of police inaction
- The resulting impact on recorded crime data and police resource allocation

Members highlighted the importance of **encouraging residents to report incidents** through appropriate channels so that policing decisions reflect real community experience and need.

Headline figures referenced in the motion:

- **Cullompton:** 62 crimes per 1,000 residents
- **Tiverton (2025):** 68 crimes per 1,000 residents (11% above the Devon average)
- **Crediton (2025):** 62 crimes per 1,000 residents

Waste and Recycling Performance

Mid Devon continues to perform exceptionally well nationally:

- Ranked **10th out of 197** local authorities for waste and recycling
- **57.9% recycling rate** in 2024/25, placing the district within the top 5% in England
- Among the **top 3% nationally** for lowest residual household waste
 - Just **296.8kg of non-recyclable waste per household**

This reflects strong resident participation in the three-weekly collection scheme and ongoing waste-reduction initiatives.

Landlord Networking Event – 13 May 2026

An event for landlords and others involved in the private rented sector in Mid Devon.

📍 **Venue:** Upton Barn & Walled Garden, Cullompton EX15 1RA

📅 **Date:** Wednesday 13 May 2026

🕒 **Time:** 5:00pm – 8:30pm

👉 Full details:

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/mid-devon-landlord-networking-event-2026-speakers-announced-get-your-tickets-now/>

Let’s Talk Mid Devon – Resident Survey Results

The survey ran from **27 October to 8 December 2025** and received **525 responses**.

Key findings:

- Overall satisfaction with how the Council runs things: **51%** (stable year on year)
- Satisfaction with the local area as a place to live: **74%**
- Satisfaction with key services:
 - Waste collection: **76%**
 - Parks and green spaces: **56%**
 - Street cleaning: **42%**


The results are being used to inform Council priorities, budget setting and service improvements.

Grants – Creative Communities Grant Scheme (Round 1)

Round 1 of the **Creative Communities Grant Scheme 2026/27** is now open.

- **Who can apply:** Community groups, businesses and organisations
- **Funding available:**
 - Up to **£5,000** for partnership projects
 - Up to **£1,000** for individual applicants
- **Eligible projects include:**
Festivals and events, arts and cultural activities, heritage projects, trails, and small public-realm improvements such as seating, signage or pocket parks

Projects must be **new**, not already underway, and completed by **31 March 2027**.

 Applications open: **6 March – 24 April 2026**

 Funding decisions expected: **late May 2026**

Sign-off

If you have any questions about the information above, or if there is a local issue you would like to raise, please do get in touch. I am always happy to help signpost support or follow up concerns on your behalf.

Cllr Gwen DuChesne

Parish Councillor – Halberton

 Email: GDuChesne@middevon.gov.uk