

**Minutes of the Meeting of Clayhidon Parish Council
Held at the Village Hall, Clayhidon, at 7.30pm on Monday, 13 July 2026**

Present:

Councillors Saunders (Chair), Bendle, Blackmore, Kidner and King together with Mrs S McGeever (Parish Clerk).

CPC004/1. Welcome by Chair, 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 Weekes. Councillor Clist (MDDC and DCC Councillor) had also sent his apologies.

Councillor Saunders advised that a list of Parish Council meeting dates had been placed on the noticeboards in the parish.

CPC004/2. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

Councillor Bendle declared an interest in planning application 26/00825/FULL.

CPC004/3. To approve minutes of the meeting on 8 June 2026

It was RESOLVED that with minutes of the meeting of 8 June 2026 should be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were duly initialled and signed.

PROPOSER: Councillor King

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: unanimous by those present at the last meeting

CPC004/4. Public Participation

A member of the of the public was present to speak to the Parish Council on planning application 26/00825/FULL.

The application called for land associated with a residential property to become a haulage centre for a trade waste company who had been operating out of the site without planning permission. It was understood that the application had resulted from the work of MDDC Enforcement hence the word 'retention' for an activity that had no planning permission.

The operator had a Transport Operating Licence which had been advertised in Somerset rather than Mid Devon with the site sitting both in Mid Devon and East Devon. There were major restrictions on the licence due to the noxious nature of the waste being transported. For example, vehicles could not be washed on site.

It was understood that the Traffic Commissioner had reduced the company's number of HGVs from 15 to 11 lorries and 25 trailers. Reduction in the number of HGVs was generally for a serious breach of the rules governing an operating licence.

Smeatharpe had always been operated as a recreational disused airport not as an industrial area unlike nearby Dunkerswell airport which, it was believed, had capacity to provide a yard for this operator.

The potential impact on the nearby SSSI area was of particular concern and the member of the public present called upon the Parish Council to object to the application.

CPC004/5. Planning

5.1 To consider the following planning applications:

The Parish Council considered the following applications/notifications:

26/00825/FULL

Proposal: Retention of change of use of disused airfield/concrete yard to a contractors/haulage storage yard
 Location: Timberleigh Smeatharpe Honiton
 Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 319065 / 110425
 Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council noted the comments in the public forum and reviewed documentation on the planning portal. Whilst generally in favour of employment opportunities in the area, the restrictions on the Transport Operating Licence were of particular concern.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to object to this retrospective application given the nature of the business and the potential for waste and potentially hazardous products to be adjacent to residential properties and SSSI land with the resulting environmental concerns. In making this decision, the Parish Council had noted the restrictions on the Transport Operating Licence that had been issued to the company concerned.

PROPOSER: Councillor Blackmore

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: approved with one abstention

5.2 To note the following planning decisions:

The Parish Council noted the following decision:

26/00686/CLP – APPROVED – 19 June 2026

Installation of solar PV panels on the south facing roof slope of a dwelling, at Carlingwark, Clayhidon.

5.3 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.

CPC006/9. Finance

The Clerk ran through the financial report provided to Parish Councillors prior to the meeting.

6.1 Unity Bank Current Account

The Clerk ran through the financial report provided to Parish Councillors prior to the meeting.

Balance on 31 May 2026			£1281.03	
Less payments				
16-Jun-26	B/P to: Clayhidon VH	CPC 185-26	-30.00	
16-Jun-26	B/P to: BHPN	CLAYHIDON PC	-25.00	
16-Jun-26	B/P to: Clayhidon VH	CPC GRANT	-2000.00	
16-Jun-26	B/P to: Mrs S M McGeever	DEFIB PADS	-153.60	
30-Jun-26	Service Charge		-7.00	-2215.60
Plus Receipts				
10-Jun-26	Transfer from 20462521		4000.00	4000.00
Balance on 30 June 2026			£3065.43	

Payments to be authorised:

Village Hall (room hire - June)	£ 24.00
S Aldworth (Payroll/Internal Audit)	£ 169.60
Clerk's wages (Apr-Jun 2026)	£ 940.04
HMRC (PAYE Apr-Jun 2026)	£ 235.00
Clerk's expenses (Apr-Jun 2026)	£ 78.00
Clerk's mileage (Apr-Jun 2026 @ 45p)	£ 43.20
Lengths Man (pothole work)	£ 790.50

The Parish Council RESOLVED to make the above payments.

PROPOSER: Councillor King

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: unanimous

Mileage increase:

The Parish Council noted that HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) had changed the approved mileage rates for the tax year 2026/27. It was the first change since 2011.

Approved mileage rates from tax year 2026 to 2027

- Cars and vans — 55p per mile for the first 10,000 business miles in the tax year, then 25p per mile thereafter.
- Motorcycles — 24p per business mile.
- Bicycles — 20p per business mile.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the use of the new mileage rates effective 1 April 2026.

PROPOSER: Councillor King

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: unanimous

The Clerk would recalculate the mileage amount when submitting the quarterly mileage for July-September.

6.2 Unity Bank Instant Access Account

Balance on 31 May 2026	£15999.40	
Less payments		
10-Jun-26 Transfer to 20462518	-4000.00	-4000.00
Receipts		
30-Jun-26 Interest	66.12	66.12
Balance on 30 June 2026	£12065.52	

The Cumulative bank reconciliation from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026 had been completed and circulated to Parish Councillors prior to the meeting and was duly signed by the Chair at the meeting.

The Month 3 budget monitoring information had been circulated to Parish Councillors prior to the meeting. The Parish Council noted that spending was in line with budget and that this would enable further expenditure on village maintenance during the second quarter of the year.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that a further pallet of tarmac would be ordered to allow pothole repairs to be undertaken over the summer months. Quarters 1 and 2 would focus on repairs while Quarters 3 and 4 would focus on clearing drains etc.

6.3 S106

The Clerk advised that the S106 monies for the benches/picnic table was ongoing.

6.4 Defibrillators

The defibrillators were all in working order and The Circuit information had been completed.

6.5 Noticeboards

The Parish Council considered the information provided regarding the cost of making two new noticeboards for the village. The Parish Council RESOLVED to have two wooden noticeboards made at a cost of £700. Materials would be donated from members of the community.

Action: Councillor Kidner/Clerk

6.6 AGAR documentation

The AGAR documentation was submitted by the due date and all relevant information uploaded to the Parish Council website to coincide with the notification of public rights.

CPC004/7. Clerk Update and Correspondence

Emergency Plan

The Parish Council RESOLVED that the Emergency Plan covered the most likely events in Clayhidon although problems arising from extreme heat should be considered. No area within the parish was cut off by flooding although access to Hemyock could be affected by flooding at Culmbridge.

The Village Hall was attending an event on Emergency Community Hubs and would provide a hub in the event of an emergency.

The Clerk would prepare the maps required which would include the defibrillators, salt bins etc.

Rosemary Lane – dunk-shunts-section

Half Moon – cheerily-table-venue

Village Hall – scoring-sgstepping-trackers

Bolham – glass-inches-occupiers

A Public Meeting would take place in October to finalise the response team and provide a list of contractors able to assist in an emergency.

Action: Clerk to contact Village Hall

Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council is awaiting dates for the Housing Needs Survey.

Further information has been circulated on Neighbourhood Plans and preparing a planning priority statement.

Free Landmark Tree

Councillor Drew had provided a photo and the location of the tree.

Storage of Parish documentation and maps

Ongoing

Dumped Caravans

MDDC had advised that the caravans would be removed.

Fly tipping

Fly tipping had been reported to MDDC and the electrical appliances had been removed.

Connecting the Culm

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

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

The Parish Council noted that LNRS was a strategy for the whole of Devon, including Plymouth and Torbay and was developed by Devon County Council.

Given the Parish Council had commons and land and looked to keep habitats natural, no further work was required at this present time..

Biodiversity and Wildlife Enhancement

See above

Blackdown Healthy Living & Activity Centre - Support for local communities

The Parish Council considered that the BHLAC already provided support for local community.

Blackdown Hills Parish Network

The Parish Council noted that the AGM was on Wednesday July 22nd 2026 at 6:45 for 7pm and was being held in The Otter Room at the Sidmouth Arms, Upottery, EX15 9PN

There would be a People's Emergency Briefing on Climate Change, followed by a panel discussion

CPC004/8. County Council Report

In the absence of Councillor Clist no report was given.

CPC004/9. District Council Report

In the absence of Councillor Clist no report was given.

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

CPC004/10. Highways/Footpaths

10.1 Highways

The Parish Council were still awaiting a meeting with the Working Group that had been formed to assist with road maintenance and pothole fitting.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to call another meeting of all those who had expressed an interest.

Action: Councillors Drew/Weekes and Clerk

It was noted that the salt bins at the top of Chapel Street and outside Duns Green were in need of repair.

Action: Councillor Drew to provide the Clerk with the serial numbers

The Clerk would order additional tarmac (see Finance).

10.2 Footpaths

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report on Footpaths at this meeting.

CPC004/11. Clayhidon Charity & John Griss Charity

11.1 Clayhidon Charity

Bank Account

The Clerk was working to gain access to the account for Councillor King and Blackmore.

Action: Councillors Blackmore and King together with the Clerk.

Annual Accounts

A meeting was required to sign the accounts and this would take place before the September Parish Council meeting.

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.

It was noted interest had been expressed in buying some of the Charity's land.

Action: Councillor Blackmore/Clerk

11.2 John Griss Charity

Councillor Kidner advised that a meeting had taken place on 8 July 2026. A report would be issued on the website.

CPC004/12. Items raised by Chair

The Chair had no issues to raise.

CPC004/13. Items raised by Councillors

Design of posters for the John Griss Open Day.

Councillor King advised that he would require the six-month rule to come into effect from November to cover travel plans. The Parish Council would approve this absence at the September meeting.

09032026/14. Date of the Next Council Meeting

The next meeting would take place at the Village Hall on 10 August 2026 and would be followed by a meeting of the John Griss Charity to finalise arrangements for the Open Day,

A date for the Annual Parish Meeting would be considered at that meeting.

Councillor King gave his apologies for that meeting.

Signed..... Date.....

Chairman

2026 July Parish Report

Alongside attending meetings of the Council and its committees, I have continued to support a range of community activities across Mid Devon during the past month, including , involvement on the steering group to empower young people and supporting the work being taken forward at St Paul's church rooms. I was also pleased to represent Mid Devon District Council at Tiverton Museum of Mid Devon Life during the visit of HRH The Duke of Gloucester on 9 June. The visit highlighted the museum's important heritage, educational and community role, as well as its ambitious plans for future development. Such events provide valuable opportunities to promote Mid Devon, support local organisations and strengthen community connections across the district.

County Council hosts LGR event for Towns and Parishes

On 22nd June, DCC and the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) facilitated a workshop for Devon's larger towns and parishes on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). This was to ensure that information on the timeline and process is being shared widely and that the strong relationship with local councils and their communities is championed as we move through the process of LGR. Mid Devon has previously run its own well-attended sessions for its towns and parishes, and the value of these is in both strengthening those individual relationships, as well as ensuring towns and parishes have full visibility on the various steps in the fairly complex journey moving forward. While some immediate attention has been on the consideration of specific community assets, there is also a desire from local councils to look forward and shape what area-based and community decision-making feels like in the future. Everyone knows the journey ahead will have its challenges, however the message in the room was clear that these will be better faced, and more easily overcome, by working together across all levels of local government to ensure that LGR delivers the best possible outcomes for our communities. If you have any questions about this event, please contact your DALC representative directly.

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) Published

Mid Devon District Council has published its latest Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), an important evidence document that will help inform preparation of the new Local Plan, *Plan Mid Devon*.

The HELAA assesses land that has been submitted to the Council by landowners, developers and other interested parties through the 2021 and 2025 'Call for Sites' exercises. It considers whether sites may be suitable, available and achievable for housing, employment, renewable energy or habitat creation. It is important to note that inclusion of a site in the HELAA does not mean that planning permission will be granted, nor does it mean that a site will necessarily be allocated for development in the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan. Instead, the assessment provides technical evidence to help the Council understand the potential supply of land available to meet future development needs.

The HELAA will now form part of the evidence base for Plan Mid Devon, assisting the Council in deciding which sites should be taken forward for further consideration and public consultation as the new Local Plan is prepared.

Parish councils may wish to review sites within their areas and consider any implications for housing, employment, infrastructure, environmental protection and community facilities as the Local Plan process progresses.

Further information:

- HELAA: <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/planning-policy/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/>
- Plan Mid Devon: <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/plan-mid-devon-council-launches-new-local-plan/>
- Let's Talk Mid Devon: <https://letstalk.middevon.gov.uk/>

Plan Mid Devon Consultation Now Underway

Mid Devon District Council has launched work on a new **Local Plan**, which will guide how the district develops over the next 20 years. The plan will identify land for new homes, jobs, infrastructure and community facilities, while also considering environmental protection and the response to climate change. The new plan is being prepared under updated Government requirements which require councils to complete Local Plans within a 30-month timeframe. The Council formally commenced work on **26 May 2026** and has opened an initial **scoping consultation**, inviting residents, businesses, community groups and parish councils to help shape the plan from the outset.

The consultation seeks views on the key issues facing Mid Devon, what the new Local Plan should cover, and how people would like to be kept informed as the process progresses. A further consultation on draft policies, evidence and potential site options is expected in early 2027, followed by consultation on the full draft plan in early 2028. Subject to examination by a Planning Inspector, adoption is anticipated in spring 2029.

The current consultation remains open until **5pm on Friday 10 July 2026**. Parish councils and residents are encouraged to take part and ensure local priorities are reflected in the emerging plan.

For further information and to participate in the consultation, visit:

 <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/plan-mid-devon-council-launches-new-local-plan/>

 <https://letstalk.middevon.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, comments can be submitted by email to: **planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk**.

What can parish councils do?

Parish councils are encouraged to take part in the current Plan Mid Devon consultation and help shape the district's future development strategy. This early stage consultation provides an opportunity to raise local priorities, identify infrastructure needs, highlight environmental concerns and ensure that the views of local communities are considered before draft policies and potential development sites are prepared. Parish councils can also encourage residents to participate in the consultation process.

Affordable Homes at Post Hill

The first 25 affordable homes have been completed at the Post Hill development in Tiverton, with residents now moving in. The wider scheme will deliver 70 affordable homes, including properties for social rent, through a partnership between Allison Homes South West and LiveWest. The development will increase the supply of affordable housing for local people and help address housing need across Mid Devon.

New Pitch Ready for Cullompton Cricket Season

Cullompton Cricket Club will begin the 2026 season at its new Horn Road ground, with the wicket and outfield now fully established and ready for play. Built to modern ECB standards, the facility includes improved drainage and irrigation systems, with temporary clubhouse and changing facilities already in place and permanent facilities due in 2027. **The new ground forms part of the wider Cullompton Relief Road project** and represents a significant investment in community infrastructure. Alongside the transport benefits of the relief road, the facility provides a long-term asset for local sport, supporting health and wellbeing, increasing opportunities for participation and helping to secure the future of cricket in the town.

Grand Western Canal Retains Five-Star Award

The Grand Western Canal Country Park has retained its prestigious **five-star Pride in Parks Award** from the Royal Horticultural Society's South West in Bloom scheme for the second year running. Judges highlighted the quality of the Canal Visitor Centre, recent towpath improvements and the contribution of volunteers working alongside the Canal Ranger Service.

The award recognises the high standards of maintenance, conservation and visitor experience provided at one of Mid Devon's most valued natural and heritage assets. Stretching more than 11 miles through the district, the canal continues to attract residents and visitors for recreation, wildlife and tourism.

Why it matters: The award is recognition of the dedication of staff and volunteers and helps raise the profile of one of Mid Devon's premier visitor attractions, bringing environmental, community and economic benefits to the district.

Bin It 123 – Mid Devon Among England's Best for Recycling

Mid Devon continues to be one of the highest-performing councils in England for waste and recycling. Latest national figures show the district ranks 6th lowest out of 197 collection authorities for residual household waste and 10th highest for recycling rates, placing Mid Devon among the country's top-performing councils.

A programme of service improvements is planned over the coming year to help residents recycle more and reduce waste. Recent changes include accepting metal baking trays in household recycling collections, while future initiatives will include trials of soft plastic collections, additional recycling containers and food waste caddies.

Working with Devon County Council, Mid Devon will also launch the **Monster Bins Project** in primary schools from September 2026, using assemblies and educational activities to encourage food waste recycling among younger residents and their families.

Town and parish councils may also be interested in upcoming tours of the waste depot, where members can learn more about recent service developments and new collection technologies.

Why it matters: High recycling rates reduce disposal costs, support environmental objectives and help keep Mid Devon among the best-performing districts in the country. The planned improvements aim to make recycling easier for residents while increasing participation across the district.

New Mid Devon Residents' App Launched

Mid Devon District Council has launched a new free residents' app, giving people easier access to council services from their smartphones. Residents can report issues, contact councillors, receive waste collection reminders, read council news, check planning applications and access local service information.

[\[middevon.gov.uk\]](https://middevon.gov.uk)

The app is designed to make it easier for residents to access services, receive important updates and stay connected with the Council.

Download: www.middevon.gov.uk/app [\[middevon.gov.uk\]](https://middevon.gov.uk)

Why it matters: The app provides a simple, accessible way for residents to engage with council services, receive timely information and report issues while reducing reliance on phone calls and paper communications.

Apprenticeships Supporting Skills and Careers at Mid Devon

Mid Devon District Council currently supports **17 apprenticeships** across a range of services. These include both traditional apprentices and existing employees who are undertaking apprenticeship qualifications alongside their day-to-day roles.

The apprenticeships are delivered through **eight different training providers** and cover a diverse range of subjects including plumbing, procurement, housing management and environmental health.

The Council has a strong track record of apprentices progressing into permanent roles, helping to develop local skills and build a talented workforce for the future.

Why it matters: Apprenticeships provide valuable career opportunities for local people while helping the Council attract, develop and retain skilled staff in key service areas.

Anyone interested in future opportunities with the Council can sign up for job alerts via the Council's recruitment notification service.

Strategic Sustainability Grants Launched

Mid Devon District Council has launched a new **Strategic Sustainability Grants (SSG) scheme** to support community organisations delivering local action on sustainability, climate change and nature recovery. The programme will provide seed and core funding to help community groups strengthen partnerships, build resilience and deliver practical environmental projects. A total of **£80,000** has been allocated to the scheme over the next two financial years. [\[middevon.gov.uk\]](https://middevon.gov.uk)

The scheme offers new funding opportunities for local organisations to develop projects that support climate action, biodiversity and environmental sustainability across Mid Devon. [\[middevon.gov.uk\]](https://middevon.gov.uk)

Further information: <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/new-strategic-sustainability-grants-to-support-community-climate-and-nature-action/> [\[middevon.gov.uk\]](https://middevon.gov.uk)

Learning from Local Success

If you have an idea that could make council services work better, reduce costs, cut waste or improve life for residents, I'd love to hear from you. Likewise, if your parish council has introduced a change that has delivered savings or improved services, please share it. Some of the best ideas come from local experience, and there is much we can learn from each other across Mid Devon. Together we can identify practical ways to improve services while making the best use of limited public funds.

Gwen DuChesne

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