Minutes of the Meeting of Clayhidon Parish Council
Held at the Village Hall, Clayhidon, at 7.30pm on Monday, 12 October 2026

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

CPC007/1. Welcome by Chair, apologies for absence and introductions
Councillor Saunders welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from and were approved Councillor King. Councillor Bradshaw (MDDC Councillor) had also sent her apologies.

CPC007/2. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations
There were no declarations of interest.

CPC007/3. To approve minutes of the meeting on 14 September 2026
It was RESOLVED that with minutes of the meeting of 14 September 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 Kidner
SECONDER: Councillor Saunders
DECISION: unanimous by those present at the last meeting

CPC007/4. Public Participation
A Trustee of the Mary Waldron Trust spoke to the Parish Council about the work of the charity and how it supported young people in Hemyock and Clayhidon with grants for computer equipment when starting university.

The grants were funded through the interest from their invested funds and allowed for up to three applicants to receive the sum of between £200-300 each. This year, there had been six applicants, and the Trust required additional funds to support all the individuals who had applied.

The Trustees of the Clayhidon Charity would consider the request at its next meeting.

CPC007/5. Planning
5.1 To consider the following planning applications:

26/01232/FULL
Proposal: Conversion of existing building to a dwelling
Location: Dunsgreen Clayhidon Cullompton
Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 315337 / 113844
Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council noted the location of the existing building and, in general, supported the use of existing buildings to provide homes particularly when the original building and footprint were being retained.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that it had no objections to this application.
PROPOSER: Councillor Kidner
SECONDER: Councillor Drew
DECISION: unanimous

26/01245/CLU
Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness to establish the lawful commencement of development approved under planning permission 23/01058/FULL - Restoration and erection of extension to Trood's Cottage and erection of garden shed
Location: Land and Buildings at NGR 318115 111253 (Trood's Cottage) Clayhidon
Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 318115 / 111253
Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council noted that it had supported the original application for the restoration and erection of an extension of Trood's Cottage.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that it had no objections to this application.
PROPOSER: Councillor Drew
SECONDER: Councillor Blackmore
DECISION: unanimous

5.2 To note the following planning decisions:
The Parish Council noted the following decision:

26/00837/FULL – APPROVED – 2 October 2026
Proposal: Erection of a two storey rear extension to an approved barn conversion scheme (App no: 24/00016/FULL).
Location: Land and Buildings at NGR 317188 116575

5.3 Enforcement
It is understood that there were ongoing investigations being carried out by Enforcement. As reported before, updates are normally given after any action has been taken and an Enforcement Notice issued.

CPC007/6. Finance
The Clerk ran through the financial report provided to Parish Councillors prior to the meeting.

6.1 Unity Bank Current Account	
Balance on 31 August 2026	£2771.09
Less payments	
Service Charge	£ 7.00
Receipts	
Balance on 30 September 2026	**£2764.09**

Payments set up following the September meeting had now been authorised but were not reflected in the balance on 30 September 2026.

C Houghton (Lengths Man)	£594.50
Village Hall	£ 60.00

The payments to be authorised at the October meeting were as follows:

HMRC (PAYE Jul-Sep)	£241.80
Wages (Jul-Sep)	£940.04
Expenses (Jul-Sep)	£ 78.00
Mileage (Jul-Sep)	£ 62.40
PKF Littlejohn (Audit)	£378.00
Devon Communities Together (HNS)	£300.00
C Houghton (potholes0	£502.00

The Parish Council RESOLVED that the above payments should be made.
PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders
SECONDER: Councillor Drew
DECISION: unanimous

6.2 Unity Bank Instant Access Account

Balance on 31 August 2026	£10139.59
Less payments	
Receipts	
Interest	£ 51.01
Balance on 30 September 2026	**£10190.60**

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

The Month 6 budget monitoring information has been circulated to Parish Councillors prior to the meeting, and it was duly noted that the receipts and expenditure were in the line with the budget.

Given there were still funds available for the Lengths Man, it was RESOLVED that further pothole work could be organised.
Action: Clerk

6.3 S106
In order to progress the application, the PC needed to confirm the proposed location of each bench and picnic table, together with the relevant landowner and confirmation that they are happy for the works to go ahead.

The Clerk would write a letter for signature by the Chair of The John Griss Charity and contact other landowners.
Action: Clerk

6.4 Defibrillators
It was noted that the defibrillators were all in working order and listed on The Circuit.
The location of each defibrillator would be listed on the website and a link to the page could be put on social media.
Action: Clerk to update website and obtain laminated labels

6.5 Noticeboards
In order to complete the noticeboards, the following materials were required.

1. a full 8 x 4 sheet of 9mm ply
2. Two sheets of glass approximately 2 ft by 3 ft

The approximate cost of the ply and glass would be £105.00.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to purchase the materials required.
PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders
SECONDER: Councillor Drew
DECISION: unanimous

6.6 External Audit
As reported at the last meeting, the External Auditor had requested an updated explanation of the variance in Box 6 of Section 2 of the Accounting Statement, and this had been produced and accepted. The revised explanation has been uploaded to the website.
The External Auditor also put the following note on the Section 3 report: The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The smaller authority has confirmed that the figures in Section 2 exclude trust transactions and so the response to Section 2 Box 11 should have been 'yes'.
This was because the accounts did not contain monies related to The John Griss Charity of which the Parish Council was the sole Trustee but did contain monies relating to the Clayhidon Charity that the Parish Council had been holding on account.

CPC007/7. Clerk Update and Correspondence

Emergency Plan

The Parish Council noted that it had a statutory duty to produce an Emergency Plan. The draft plan had been circulated to Parish Councillors together with information on Emergency Community Hubs. Parish Councillors still needed to feed in specific Clayhidon areas of concern, a Household Emergency Plan leaflet produced and a public meeting held.

Key areas of concern were the state of the roads and the ability of emergency vehicles to access:

- the Grace & Payne hill out of Bolham Water between the road junctions of Bolham Hill and White Down Cross and
- the road which passes Hartsmoor from the road junction of Bolham Hill ending at the Stock Car Stadium on the old airfield.

The Village Hall had signed up to be part of the Emergency Hub

It was RESOLVED that all Parish Council members would be on the response team together with the key holders for the Village Hall, Rosemary Lane Chapel and the Road Warden.
Action: Clerk to contact individuals concerned

Neighbourhood Plan

The draft Housing Needs Survey report has been circulated to Parish Councillors who had no comments to make.

This information could be used to form a Neighbourhood Priority Statement and from there a Neighbourhood Plan.

Given its location and transport links, Clayhidon was unlikely to see a high number of homes built but it was important to understand residents' vision for the area which would require consultation. Parish Councillors noted that Culmstock was working on a Neighbourhood Plan.

Storage of Parish documentation and maps

The Clerk had an appointment to deliver minute books etc to the Devon Archives on 19 October 2026.

Dumped Caravans

The tyres left following the removal of the caravans have been reported to MDDC, but it was understood they were still present on the roadside.
Action: Clerk

Connecting the Culm

A site meeting is still required to identify any suitable areas to undertake flood defence work.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and Biodiversity and Wildlife Enhancement

The Parish Council noted that it had a statutory obligation to look at biodiversity and wildlife enhancement. A meeting could be set up with Devon Wildlife Trust and reports taken from the LNRS website.
Action: Clerk

The Clerk advised that the Giant Tree Circle was a community tree planting project building a Giant Circle of Trees of which Clayhidon is part and could involve landowners.

Plan Mid Devon

There will be several consultations coming forward on the Local Plan currently under development with a timescale of 30 months. The Local Green Space consultation is open until Thursday, 07 January 2027 and Parish Councillors would consider areas that could be included in their response.
Action: All

Blackdown Hill Parish Network
Councillor Weekes advised that a BHPN newsletter would be circulated soon. Of particular concern was the sale of Crown Estate to a developer at Taunton which would see significant housing.

Residents at Sheldon were concerned about adding days at the raceway whilst those at Timberleigh were concerned about the possibility of increasing lorry movement. Lorries should be using the A30.

The Culm River Against Pollution (CRAP) was looking for support. The Clerk advised that parishes along the Culm were looking to work together to do water quality testing.

CPC007/8. County Council Report
Councillor Clist gave a brief report cover Ofsted and SEND progress in children's social care.

There was likely to be a £8.8 million overspend of which £3 million was spent on Local Government Reorganisation. LGR was paused and Devon was looking to move to a strategic mayoral authority.

Councillor Clist was lobbying for more money to be spent on rural roads before the winter and he had also attended several meetings to relating to farming and the Farm Wise event for school children.

He again recognised the frustration of residents to the number of potholes, but it was essential that these were reported online. Report a pothole - Devon County Council

CPC007/9. District Council Report
Councillor Clist made reference to the Town and Parish Report prepared by MDDC Councillor DuChesne who was the Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement. The report is shown as an addendum to these minutes.

The information on planning was particularly important and district councils had a legal duty to send applications to Parish Councils to give an opinion. Officers were looking for local knowledge when making delegated decisions.

It was becoming increasing difficult for councillors to call planning applications in that were planning policy compliant. However, ensuring that infrastructure was present to support new residents was essential and Parish Councils would be able to comment on the Mid Devon Local Plan.

CPC007/10. Highways/Footpaths
10.1 Highways
The Clerk had carried out several actions associated to move the Working Group forward:

a) A WhatsApp group had been set up
b) A call for email addresses had gone out
c) Nine members of the group received emails linking to the online training offered by DCC Highways
d) One individual had come forward to undertake the Chapter 8 training following successful completion of the online training.
e) One individual had come forward to coordinate activities and set up a spreadsheet of roads and potholes filled so the success of the repairs could be monitored.

The next task was to send out a call for equipment required (PPE etc).
The Neighbourhood Highways Officer had also been contacted.

Councillor Drew and Weekes were looking to take on the WhatsApp group going forward.

The Parish Council asked that a further pallet of tarmac be ordered for the Lengths Man.
Action: Clerk

Councillor Weekes had set up a poster to encourage residents to report potholes online with a QR code.

Actions carried forward:
It was noted that the salt bins at the top of Chapel Street and outside Duns Green needed repair.
Action: Councillor Drew to provide the Clerk with the serial numbers

The lack of salt bin at Battle Street had also been reported.

The Clerk asked Parish Councillors to forward concerns over roads that she could feed into a report for Rachel Gilmour, MP.

This included the gritting of roads (Monument Road, Ford Street and Wrangway), the state of rural roads and the lack of white lines at the crossroads

10.2 Footpaths
There was no update on footpaths.

CPC007/11. Clayhidon Charity & John Griss Charity

11.1 Clayhidon Charity
A meeting of the Clayhidon Charity would be organised to discuss the request from the Mary Waldron Trust.

The signed accounts had been sent to the auditor.

11.2 John Griss Charity
Councillor Kidner advised that the was waiting for a response from Welliington Scouts regarding the land at Hartsmoor.

Work was ongoing to prepare the new Hartsmoor Fishery lease.

The Clerk had followed up on the LEMP report and the planning application and was awaiting a response.

CPC007/12. Items raised by Chair
The Chair advised that he had received an offer to purchase a new laptop for the Clerk.

Action from previous meeting: Purchase of a laminator

CPC007/13. Items raised by Councillors
Councillor Kidner noted that the new lease for Wellington Scout's had been circulated for comment on 5 October 2026.

CPC007/14. Date of the Next Council Meeting
The next meeting would take place at the Village Hall on 9 November 2026.

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

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

MDDC REPORT

Welcome to my September update. There has been a great deal going on across the district over the past few weeks and I have tried to highlight the items most likely to be of interest to parish councils, together with opportunities to get involved and have your say on future plans for Mid Devon.
This report isn't just about what's happening in our own parish. Increasingly, we're being encouraged to work together across Mid Devon, share ideas and learn from what's happening elsewhere. Some of the items included may not affect us directly today, but they could well do in the future, and there is often value in seeing how other communities are tackling similar challenges and making the most of new opportunities.

Local Government Reorganisation
Mid Devon District Council has welcomed the Government's decision to pause and review proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Devon. The review follows updated legal advice and will consider how local government reform fits with the Government's wider plans for devolution.
The District Council had previously raised concerns with the Secretary of State about the speed of the process and the limited opportunity for meaningful local involvement in decisions that could significantly affect community representation. Particular concern was expressed about protecting community identity and ensuring that rural areas continue to have a strong voice in local decision-making.
Council Leader David Wulff welcomed the pause, describing it as an opportunity to reassess the best way forward for Devon. He emphasised the importance of ensuring that any future arrangements preserve local democracy, provide sustainable funding for councils, and allow all communities, including rural areas, to benefit from future investment and economic growth.
The Council has indicated that it will continue to work with Government and local partners as discussions on devolution and local government reform develop.

National Planning Policy Framework Update
The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 17 August 2026, which will have a significant influence on how councils prepare Local Plans and determine planning applications. The changes place a stronger emphasis on plan-making, strategic planning across wider areas, housing delivery, economic growth, and action on both the climate and ecological emergencies
One important change is the introduction of national development management policies, which are expected to carry considerable weight in planning decisions. The new framework also reinforces the need for councils to adopt up-to-date Local Plans more quickly and sets out a greater role for Strategic Development Strategies to help coordinate growth, infrastructure and long-term planning across larger areas.
Of particular interest to Mid Devon is the continued focus on tackling climate change. The framework supports stronger policies on climate mitigation and adaptation, and there are opportunities through the new Local Plan to consider measures such as higher energy efficiency standards, net zero development, renewable energy generation and improved resilience to climate impacts.
You can read the revised NPPF here National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK

Plan Mid Devon Update
Work is underway on **Plan Mid Devon**, the new Local Plan that will guide future development across the district. Information is available on the Council website and the Let's Talk Mid Devon engagement hub.
The Council is working to the Government's new 30-month plan-making timetable, with **adoption currently scheduled for April 2029**. Key milestones include:

- **October 2026**: Publication of the Gateway 1 self-assessment.
- **January to March 2027**: Consultation on proposed plan content and supporting evidence.
- **January to March 2028**: Consultation on the draft Local Plan.
- **September 2028**: Submission of the plan for independent examination.
- **April 2029**: Planned adoption of Plan Mid Devon.

There will be several opportunities for residents, businesses and parish councils to comment as the plan develops, and I would encourage anyone with an interest in Mid Devon's future to take part in the consultations.

Local Green Space Consultation – Opportunity for Parish Councils

You will find attached the **Plan Mid Devon Local Green Space Parish Consultation Package**, which has now been issued as part of the preparation of Plan Mid Devon, the new Local Plan covering 2026 to 2046.

This is an opportunity for parish and town councils to nominate additional green spaces that are particularly important to their communities for consideration as **Local Green Space** designation. The designation can provide additional protection for sites that are demonstrably special to local people.

A few key points:

- This is aimed at identifying **new Local Green Space nominations**. Existing designated Local Green Spaces do not need to be re-submitted.
- Not every valued open space will qualify. Sites must meet the national criteria and be shown to be significant to the local community.
- For each nomination, councils will need to provide a map showing the site boundary and supporting evidence explaining why the space is special and locally significant.
- The Council will assess all nominations before deciding whether any should be taken forward through the Local Plan process.

I understand that the consultation period has been extended, with the current closing date expected to be **7 January 2027**, giving parish and town councils additional time to consider potential nominations and gather supporting information.

If you are aware of green spaces that play an important role in the life of your community, I would encourage you to review the attached information and consider whether a nomination may be appropriate.

New Business Rates Relief for EV Charging Points

Businesses operating eligible electric vehicle (EV) charging point sites may be able to benefit from a new Government-funded Business Rates Relief scheme. The scheme offers **100% business rates relief until 31 March 2036**, with the possibility of relief being backdated to **1 April 2023** where qualifying conditions are met

The relief is intended to encourage investment in public EV charging infrastructure as part of the transition to lower-emission transport. Not every charging point will qualify. The scheme is generally aimed at dedicated EV charging sites that have their own Business Rates assessment and are operational and open to customers.

Mid Devon District Council is currently updating its arrangements for administering the scheme. Businesses seeking further information can contact the Council's Revenues team at **revenues@middevon.gov.uk** or speak to the Council for

Business rates: Electric Vehicle Charging Points Relief – local authority guidance - GOV.UK

Creative Communities Grants Now Available

Community groups, charities, businesses, event organisers, and town and parish councils are being encouraged to apply for funding through Mid Devon District Council's Creative Communities Grant Scheme. The scheme offers grants of up to £5,000 for partnership projects and up to £1,000 for individual organisations to support tourism, arts, culture and heritage initiatives across Mid Devon. The aim is to help bring new life to towns and villages, celebrate local heritage, encourage visitors, and strengthen community connections.

Projects might include heritage events and trails, music and arts festivals, cultural celebrations, seasonal events, food festivals, or other creative activities that benefit the local community. Priority will be given to projects that can be delivered by 31 March 2027 and demonstrate a positive local impact.

The funding provides a valuable opportunity for local organisations to bring creative ideas to life while boosting community pride and attracting visitors.

Further details and application forms are available through Mid Devon District Council's Love Your Town Centre funding programme. Interested organisations can also contact funding@middevon.gov.uk for more information.

Free expert support for Devon businesses

On 14 September 2026, Devon County Council announced the launch of a new programme offering **free business support, mentoring and advice** to businesses, entrepreneurs and young people across Devon.

For businesses in Mid Devon, support is being delivered through the **Devon Business Support Programme**, which provides access to experienced business advisers and one-to-one guidance. Support is available for both start-ups and established businesses and can cover:

- Business growth and development
- Starting a business
- Funding and finance management
- Digital tools and productivity
- Marketing and sales
- Leadership and people management
- Sustainability and net zero initiatives

The programme is intended to help improve business growth, productivity and innovation across the county. Businesses from any sector, including farming and agricultural enterprises, are eligible to seek support.

The announcement also highlighted the **Festival of Business**, hosted by Devon County Council and the Federation of Small Businesses, bringing together more than 100 local businesses, speakers and support organisations to share advice and opportunities for growth.

As always, if there is anything in this report you would like to discuss, or if there are issues affecting your community that you feel I should be aware of, please do get in touch. I value hearing directly from parish councils, clerks and residents.

Cllr Gwen DuChesne
District Councillor for Halberton Ward
Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement
GDuChesne@middevon.gov.uk