

THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Thorverton Parish Council held at the Memorial Hall, Silver St, Thorverton on Tuesday 9th December 2025 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Andy Price (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Stuart Crang
Cllr Andrew Foster
Cllr John Hodge
Cllr Bryanna Uglow

ABSENT

Cllr Stephanie Shelton (Chair)
Cllr Graham Sims
Cllr Karl Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE: Three members of the public,
C/Cllr Steve Keable, Jim Roberts (Clerk and RFO)

1 Chair Welcome

Cllr Price opened the meeting with a welcome to all.

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Foster is the Chairman of the Thorverton Community Land Trust (TCLT) Board and is the Parish Council's nominated Board member. Cllrs Hodges & Uglow are members of TCLT. Cllr Uglow is also the Council's nominated representative on the Thorverton Memorial Hall Committee. Cllr Crang is the client in the Bidwell Woodland Creation (item 9.2.3).

3 Apologies

Cllrs Sims did not attend due to hearing issues, Cllr Wilson did not attend due to illness and Cllr Shelton is away. All sent apologies and Council accepted the reasons given.

4 Public Open Session

Cllr Crang invited questions about the Bidwell Woodland and helped everyone understand the map of the intended site (the woodland area is indicated with a red border in the Additional Information). He is liaising with the Forestry Commission to understand what is permitted to plant but confirmed there would be a mix of broadleaf and conifer trees.

A member of the public raised the issue of the Boxing Day hunt. She had submitted an email with practical questions and observations on the nature of the hunt (see item 8.2 in the additional information). She believed that the hunt should have contacted the County Council to organise an event. She advised that Tiverton Town Council has voted to ban the hunt meet in their town, although the hunt had announced that they would ignore the ban. C/Cllr Keable advised that the hunt in Tiverton meets in the pannier market which is a public open space and hence there is no legal power to stop the event.

5 Minutes

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11th November 2025 and the Chairman duly signed them.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Hodge Cllr Uglow abstained from this vote.

6 External Reports

6.1 County Councillor Steve Keable

C/Cllr Keable referred to his printed report which is included in these minutes (appendix A) highlighting the need for Parish Councils to budget for increased work that will flow to them under the Local Government Review, eg play areas, grass cutting etc., although this will not apply until January 2027.

.....
Chair
Initials

C/Cllr Keable agreed with the Council that the bus service is very poor with no Sunday nor evening service to Thorverton.

6.2 District Councillor Rhys Roberts

D/Cllr Roberts had to attend an MDDC Finance meeting this evening and sent apologies. His written report is included in these minutes (appendix B).

6.3 Saturday Market

No market since the last meeting.

At this point in the meeting the Chairman called forward item 8.2.

8.2 Boxing Day Hunt

The Chairman reported that the hunt had been a small uncontroversial event since he had moved to the village 12 years ago.

Council **RESOLVED** to give the following answers:

1) Why does the Silverton Hunt meet in Thorverton and not Silverton?

All Council knows is that it always has. This is a question for Silverton Hunt.

2) Who owns the land in the Bury on which they meet?

This land is owned by Devon County Council.

3) Has the Silverton event organiser completed an Events Application Pack for the district or county council?

Council does not know and does not receive event packs for any Thorverton events.

4) Has the event organiser completed a risk assessment?

Council does not know and feels this question is best addressed to Silverton Hunt.

5) Has the event organiser obtained, or applied for, legal permission to close any roads?

Council does not believe that any roads are closed for this event. Council has never seen a road closure order for the hunt.

6) If so, what type of road closure did the event organiser obtain?

Not applicable.

7) Does the event organiser have a license to collect money from the public?

Council is not aware if they do and if a licence is needed.

8) Who is cleaning up after the event? Who is paying for this?

The Silverton Hunt cleans up after themselves and the Council does not pay anything towards this.

[1 member of the public left at 8:02pm]

9) Does the parish council, or [MDDC] own any land that the event will be using?

The Parish Council doesn't own any land that is used (other than spectators or hunters standing on Jubilee Green or Leigh Gardens). Council is not aware of which land MDDC owns.

10) With the knowledge of the term "trail hunt" widely known to be a smokescreen for fox hunting, an illegal practice, will the parish council consider a vote, on moral grounds, to ban future use of the Bury for this event?

Council does not have the power to ban anything on the Highway. Any concerns of illegality or unlawfulness is a matter for the Police.

[Cllr Keable left at 8:05pm]

Council decided not to vote as suggested given that the Council has no powers to influence the hunt or ban it.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Hodge

7 Actions from Previous Minutes (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

7.1 Litter Bins

Request for changes required is with MDDC.

[Two members of the public left at 8:09pm]

7.2 Sheep Dip Wall

Church Commissioners have been chased for a response. Council may consider removing this from the agenda at the next meeting.

7.3 Untaxed Vehicle in the Quarry Car Park

Clerk has having no success with the telephone number on the vehicle and

.....
Chair
Initials

Cllr Uglow will pursue this with the family.

7.4 Clerk CiLCA Training

Dates for training have been received and the clerk will attend the first event in March. He advised that the cost would be in the region of £1,000 and he will need to join the Society for Local Council Clerks. The clerk does not yet know when exactly this will be invoiced.

7.5 Register Dorothy's Triangle

No action this month.

7.6 Change of Bank to Unity Trust

Liaison has been established with Unity Trust Bank by the clerk but the allotment rents will be collected using the existing account. The transfer to the new bank will be planned for the end of the financial year.

7.7 Rec Ground Lottery Bid

This item needs to be restarted and a new working group formed as all the quotes will have expired now.

7.8 Tree Inspection/Survey

No action this month

8 Projects

8.1 New Cemetery

Council discussed the issue of spending around £1,000 on the planning application. Two consultants have been asked for quotes for the Biodiversity Net Gain report and one had been received at £885. Cllr Hodge will seek a third quote. Council firmly believes that they need to comply with the planning regulations in full and will proceed with the application as previously resolved incurring approx. £1,000.

Council discussed acquiring the churchyard once it is full. This will be raised as a separate agenda item at the next meeting.

8.2 Boxing Day Hunt

The Chairman had earlier called this item forward (see above after item 6.3).

8.3 Fence at Broadlands

Postponed to next meeting.

8.4 Affordable Housing

Cllr Foster gave the following report:

The recent Open Meeting, the seventh, was attended by more than 40 people. The audience heard presentations from the Board on the latest state of affairs; these included confirmation that Hastoe Housing Association will be the CLT partner and will take the lead in delivering up to 19 homes on the north of the site. The plans for the southern side are still to be determined and negotiations continue with the Church Commissioners through their agents Savills. When asked to express an opinion on the update, those present endorsed the actions of the Board. Full details of all the presentations and the Q+A session that followed are available on the website. The next meeting will be in the spring.

8.5 Barliabins

Council asked Cllr Uglow to provide designs and costs for the proposed 'Barliabins' sign after referring to the working group. Council congratulated the working group on delivering the project for £3,000 less than the original budget.

8.6 Chilton Gate Road Surface

Council will urge residents and road users to report the problems using the [DCC Report-a-Problem webpage](#). The more reports that are submitted the more likely it is that the significant problems with the surface will be addressed.

8.7 Christmas Trees and Lights

Council is very grateful to Toby Giles, Greg Hopton, Pete Marshall & John Hodge for help erecting the trees and grateful thanks to Sam Fice, Nic

.....
Chair
Initials

Fice, Dom Carbine & Natasha Carbine plus all their little helpers for the superb light display on Jubilee Green (and Pete Marshall for lights on the TMH tree).

8.8 Hedges at Old Pound

Postponed to next meeting.

8.9 Cake Shed in the Quarry Car Park

Clerk reported that he had received a phone call from someone interested in siting an unmanned cake shed in the Quarry Car Park. He had invited the caller to send in a proposal but none had been received by the time of the meeting. Should anything be received he will circulate it to the Council in the usual way.

9 Planning

9.1 Planning Decisions

9.1.1 25/01269/HOUSE Fordy Bridge Single-storey Extension **REFUSED**

9.1.2 [25/01413/CAT](#) 12 Silver St Remove one silver birch tree **NO OBJECTION**

9.2 Planning Applications

9.2.1 25/01483/LBC 9 Silver St Replace 11 windows

9.2.2 25/01690/FULL Berrysbridge Lodge Removal of agricultural tie
Council **RESOLVED** to make no comment on either of these applications.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Hodge

9.2.3 Bidwell Barton Woodland Creation

[Cllr Crang left the meeting at 9pm]

Council looks forward to hearing more information as this proposal develops but **RESOLVED** to make no comment at this time.

Prop Cllr Uglow **Sec** Cllr Hodge

[Cllr Crang rejoined the meeting at 9:04pm]

9.3 Planning Applications Received after Publication of the Agenda

9.3.1 25/01604/HOUSE & 25/01607/LBC Perry Barn, Perry Farm

Reroof and new door, heating system, bathroom and kitchen fixtures, log burner etc
Council **RESOLVED** that these applications did not require an extraordinary meeting and they will be listed on January's agenda.

Prop Cllr Hodge **Sec** Cllr Crang

10 Recreation Ground

10.1 Financial Report

There was no expenditure in November.

10.2 Information & No dogs Signs

No progress this month

10.3 Devon Air Ambulance Landing Site

No quote as yet for the new lamp, the clerk will chase this up.

The Council was grateful to the Defib Trust for their offer to take over the running of the landing site but Council **RESOLVED** that it would not accept the offer as the site is the Council's property.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Crang

10.4 WI Assembly Point Sign

Council **RESOLVED** to allow the sign in principle but asked the WI to let the Council know the proposed site before finally erecting it.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Uglow

11 Grounds Maintenance Contractor

Council did not raise any pressing matters. Council asked that the bank in the Quarry Car Park be further attended to, if possible. Council will ask Mr Colin Marshall to liaise with the contractor to identify any work required.

.....
Chair
Initials

Cllr Crang had researched the alternative weedkiller as promised at the previous meeting but it is only appropriate on soft ground and therefore no use on the cobbles.

12 Council Administration

12.1 Implications of Planning Application

Cllr Foster reported that he took the opportunity to speak to one of the senior Planning Dept managers at Mid Devon District Council about this matter when he came to the CLT Open Meeting two weeks ago. He told me that, while the CLT is allowed to ask the PC to submit the planning application on their behalf, his personal advice is not to do this as it makes the CLT look like it's trying to circumnavigate the process that applies to other applicants or developers. Given the great support that has been offered to the CLT by MDDC it seems only sensible to follow his advice and the CLT will not therefore be troubling the PC with this matter again.

Council did not discuss the matter further but **RESOLVED** to amend the Additional Information as published due to a potentially libellous content.

Prop Cllr Crang **Sec** Cllr Uglow

12.2 Clerk Pension *[This item is in Part B and therefore the public were excluded]*

In order to make a pension possible for the clerk he will need to take over running the payroll and arrange the pension with NEST Pensions.

Council to **RESOLVED** the following:

That notice will be given to GX Accountancy & Bookkeeping to end their Payroll services for the Council at the end of this financial/tax year (March/April 2026).

The clerk's contract will be amended with one extra hour per month for payrolling taking him to 40 hours per month from February 2026 (allowing 2 hours to set everything up).

The NEST Pension will start from 1st April 2025 with the Council as employer contributing 9% of pensionable pay.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Crang

13 Finance

13.1 Council **NOTED** the bank balance of £ 49,139.84 (4th December 2025) and receipts since the previous meeting of £27.74 (interest)

13.2 Appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2025-26

Council **RESOLVED** to appoint Mrs P Clapham BSc(Hons) as the internal auditor for 2025-26.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Crang

13.3 Payments

Council **RESOLVED** to make the following payments:

13.3.1 BRN Fitch Grounds Maintenance November	£ 515.28
13.3.2 Thorverton Memorial Hall Room Hire 2025-26	£ 256.00
13.3.3 PKF Littlejohn LLP External Auditor fee 2024-25	£ 797.28
13.3.4 Exe Valley Christmas Trees invoice 25-2025	£ 350.00
13.3.5 J P Roberts Clerk pay for November	£ 580.27

Council **NOTED** that the external auditor's fee was £454.40 which is higher than it should have been due to a parishioner's challenge to the accounting for the new cemetery funds at in the 2024-25 accounts. This challenge had been rejected by the external auditor.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Hodge

14 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7:30pm on Tuesday 13th January 2026.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:50pm.

Signed Date
Cllr Stephanie Shelton, Chair

Cllr Steve Keable

December 2025

Devon County Councillors Report - Creedy, Taw & Mid Exe:

Bickleigh • Brushford • Cadbury • Cadeleigh • Chawleigh • Cheriton Fitzpaine • Coldridge • Cruwys Morchard • Down St. Mary • Eggesford • Kennerleigh • Lapford • Morchard Bishop • Newton St. Cyres • Nymet Rowland • Poughill • Puddington • Sandford • Shobrooke • Silverton • Stockleigh English • Stockleigh Pomeroy • Thelbridge • Thorverton • Upton Hellions • Washford Pyne • Wembworthy • Woolfardisworthy • Zeal Monachorum

Steve.keable@devon.gov.uk

Mid Devon Councillors Report - Taw Vale:

Chawleigh • Lapford • Nymet Rowland • Wembworthy

Skeable@middevon.gov.uk

To follow the internet links use the words provided in your web search



As we move toward the end of 2025, November has brought significant developments shaping the future of public services, local governance, and community support across Devon. All Councils have met to decide their positions on Local Government Reorganisation in Devon.

Local Government Reorganisation

Once the government has received proposals from all of the local councils in Devon it will examine their submissions. It will then decide which proposal(s) will go to statutory stakeholders for consultation during the first half of next year.

A final decision by government is expected next summer, and shadow elections are due to be held in May 2027. The chosen new authority/authorities will take on its new powers and responsibilities on 1 April 2028.

Devon County Council is proposing that the County Council and the existing eight district councils are replaced with a single unitary authority serving around 840,000 residents, while retaining the existing authorities of Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council. [Search: Devon Blueprint](#)

Mid Devon District Council is one of seven of Devon’s councils – East Devon, Mid Devon, North Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torridge, West Devon - working together to create the Reimagining Devon Case for Change, with three unitary authorities across Devon. [Search: Reimagining Devon](#)

Streetlight trial is cutting energy use, emissions and costs

An ongoing street lighting trial is on track to deliver major savings in energy, carbon, costs and emissions – and early next year to decide whether to make the changes permanent.

The year-long trial, which began in April 2025, introduced earlier switch-off times and ‘deeper’ dimming across Exeter, market towns and rural areas – saving around £270,000 and 200 tonnes of carbon in a single year.

“reducing costs and carbon while still keeping people safe. The ability to adjust lighting quickly means we can respond to local concerns without losing the wider benefits.”

Community support and programmes

The council’s winter version of the Holiday Activities & Food Programme (HAF) is now live, offering children in Devon access to free holiday meals and activities during school breaks.

Benefit to families needing support over the winter break, ensuring children have access to meals and engaging activities — a boost for community wellbeing during a time of rising living costs. [Search: Devon HAF Programme](#)

Reshape the future of adult social care

Devon County Council is reshaping its adult care amid rising costs and financial pressures.

The move, grapples with increasing costs and a growing number of people needing support, particularly those transitioning from children’s services and those with complex mental health needs.

The transformation programme is aimed at making adult social care more sustainable, person-centred, and focused on promoting independence.



- The transformation will focus on four key areas:
- **Improving outcomes for people** through social work and personalised care
 - **Reducing reliance on residential care** by expanding housing options and community support
 - **Boosting workforce capacity** in a sector struggling with recruitment and retention
 - **Delivering better value for money** in a system where demand continues to outstrip budget capacity.

.....
Chair
Initials

DCC November Review & December Outlook

As we approach the end of another eventful year, I wish to extend a warm thank you to all residents, councillors and partners.

In this edition, I reflect on the highlights and look ahead to an exciting December full of opportunities, community events, and important council updates, as we move into the year ahead.

November brought significant developments shaping the future of public services, local governance, and community support across Devon.

Mounting financial pressures for the County Council, with forecasts indicating an overspend driven by increasing demands within children's services and adult social care will require careful budget preparation and will feature prominently in discussions ahead of final budget planning.

Building a positive future for Devon where everyone thrives

For Devon we want every child, every person, every family, and every community in Devon to live well – with access to opportunity, services that work, and a future shaped by hope, fairness, and resilience.

Our vision has been developed following the views of residents gathered through our surveys and discussions with the Devon Youth Council. These insights have also helped us shape our values and operating principles.

Devon's strategic priorities through to 2029:

- Positive futures for our young people
- Supporting independence and dignity
- Continuous improvement of services
- A greener Devon for future generations
- Economic inclusion and local prosperity
- Stronger communities and safer places.

To find out more [Search: Devon Strategic Plan](#)

And into January

Bus operational changes are on the horizon. Several bus routes currently run by Stagecoach South West are scheduled to move to different operators in early January. [Search: Travel Devon Latest News](#)

Devon County Cabinet Forward Plan for active travel: Boniface Cycle Trail Route Adoption – DCC Cabinet 14th January. [Search: DCC Boniface Cycle Trail](#) and [DCC Cabinet Forward Plan](#)

Have your say: Residents in Mid Devon if you have views about services before 8 Dec 2025 then please complete the 'residents survey'.

Mid Devon District Council News:

Significant Developments, Community Initiatives, and Local Highlights

Free Christmas Parking

Mid Devon District Council has confirmed it will once again offer free Christmas shopping parking across three long-stay car parks.

Free parking is at Crediton, St Saviours Way; Cullompton, Station Road, Tiverton, Multi Storey, and will be available on the following Saturdays: November 29, December 6, 13, & 20. Normal parking charges apply at the above car parks on all other days of the year.

A NEW "work hub" ...

... for remote workers and small businesses has opened in Tiverton. Mid Devon District Council has converted the building in the town's Market Place car park into a professional office space. The hub features a reception area, a large open-plan office, smaller offices/ meeting rooms, a kitchenette, toilets, outdoor space, secure bike-parking and more.

"The opening of the Tiverton Work Hub highlights our commitment to drawing people back into our town centres, economies and the vitality of our district," cabinet member Cllr Steve Keable (Lib Dem, Taw Vale) said.



"The Tiverton Work Hub will offer more than just a desk or an office, it will provide modern facilities ready for use, while offering support to self-employed workers, small businesses, and remote employees". [Search: Tiverton Workhub](#)

Strengthening community & voluntary sector support The Council's recent "Meet the Funders" event brought together over 50 local community groups, charities and social-enterprises with funders (including the National Lottery Community Fund, the Devon Community Foundation and MDDC's own teams). [Search: Mid Devon Meet The Funders](#)

"Green Enterprise Grant" for local businesses MDDC has launched its 2025 **Green Enterprise Grant**, offering small and medium-sized businesses grants of between £500 and £5,000 (covering up to 50% of project costs) to invest in energy efficiency or renewable/low-carbon technologies (e.g. efficient heating, lighting, energy-saving machinery). [Search: Sustainable Mid Devon Events](#)

Mid Devon Cabinet Forward Plan for rail investment: Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance – MDDC Cabinet 13th January [Search: MDDC NDRDA](#)



Printed & Published by Cllr Steve Keable, Bromstone Cottage, Lapford, Crediton, EX17 6PZ
Issued: 27 November 2025

.....
Chair
Initials

Appendix B District Cllr Rhys Roberts' Report

Local Government Re-organisation

A business case for reshaped and reimagined local services has been jointly submitted to the Government by seven of Devon's 11 councils.

In a joint statement, the councils' leaders said: "Our submission of Reimagining Devon marks a key milestone in the future of local government in the county. We believe our proposal, which has been backed by our elected members, will create balanced authorities which can thrive and ensure no community is left behind.

"A lot of work has taken place to get to this stage, and we have worked collaboratively across political and geographic boundaries to create a structure that is financially robust, reflects Devon's unique geography and identity, and will deliver high-quality, accessible public services in the heart of our communities.

"We would like to thank the residents, businesses, community groups and stakeholders who helped shape this proposal. A further consultation will take place in the new year, and we hope everyone will use the opportunity to have their say and ensure we have a local government structure which is right for our residents, delivering services we can all be proud of for generations to come."

Reimagining Devon: Believe in Better – 451 proposals:

two new unitary councils that combine existing areas as follows:

- A new unitary council combining the South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon areas with Torbay.
- A new unitary council including East, Mid and North Devon alongside Torridge District and the City of Exeter; and
- The retention of Plymouth City Council as a unitary

This proposal has come to be known as the 4-5-1 proposal given the groupings as outlined above, it groups the existing principal authorities into three unitary councils without any changes to existing district or borough council boundaries.

Devon County Council is for a single unitary authority to replace the county council and the existing eight district councils. It would keep the existing unitary authorities of Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council as they are.

Next Steps The next stage will see a consultation on the Governments preferred plan for the county during the first half of next year with a final decision expected next year. The new system is due to start in April 2028.

View the full proposal at www.reimaginingdevon.org.

To support local Christmas programmes and to enhance trade Mid Devon District Council is offering 24-hour free parking in three of the Council's long-stay car parks. This year will continue to see the addition of an extra day to make it five Saturdays of free parking leading up to Christmas

Free parking at St Saviour's Way (Crediton), Station Road (Cullompton), Multi-Storey (Tiverton) will be available on the following Saturday's:

- 22 November
- 29 November
- 06 December
- 13 December
- 20 December

Normal parking charges apply at the above car parks on all other days of the year.

.....
Chair
Initials

New Work Hub

A NEW “work hub” for remote workers and small businesses has opened in Tiverton inside a former youth centre. Mid Devon District Council has converted the building in the town’s Market Place car park into a professional office space. The hub features a reception area, a large open-plan office, smaller offices/ meeting rooms, a kitchenette, toilets, outdoor space, secure bike-parking and more.

It had been hoped it would open in spring this year, but the project was delayed.

Applications for warm home grants now open

Mid Devon Council, in partnership with Devon County Council and other local authorities in Devon, is proud to deliver the Warm Homes Local Grant, a government-backed scheme designed to make homes across Devon warmer, greener, and more affordable to heat.

The scheme offers fully funded energy efficiency upgrades for eligible households, including measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation, double glazing, air source heat pumps, solar panels and insulated doors. These improvements not only reduce energy bills but also cut carbon emissions, supporting Devon’s commitment to a sustainable future.

To qualify, homes must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or below, and must either receive certain benefits or meet the specified low income criteria. Landlords can also apply, with one property fully funded and contributions required for additional homes.

From <<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/applications-for-warm-home-grants-now-open/>>

Land Charges Team Achieves Gold Standard

Mid Devon District Council’s Land Charges team has been awarded Gold Standard for its exceptional local land charges data management.

The council was assessed by HM Land Registry as delivering the very best service levels during 2025 and awarded the accolade this month.

The Land Charges team, of Peter Whateley and Diane Carne, is responsible for preparing local authority searches for solicitors and conveyancers acting on behalf of clients looking to buy, lease or re-mortgage a property, or a piece of land. The searches they conduct identify whether there are any legal restrictions affecting land or property, upon which completion of a sale would be binding, such as conditions imposed on planning permissions, conservation areas and listed buildings status. More detailed searches include other pending matters such as tree preservation orders, responsibility for any road maintenance, parking restrictions, compulsory purchase orders and whether a property falls within a contaminated area of land.

This year HM Land Registry introduced a categorisation system with local authorities deemed to have excellent land search data management awarded gold status, which is publicly recognised on GOV.UK in a ‘status’ column which is updated quarterly.

The achievement marks another successful year for the Council’s Land Charges team, which has previously won national awards in the Land Data Local Land Charges Awards for Excellence.

From <<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/land-charges-team-achieves-gold-standard/>>

Cllr Rhys Roberts

.....
Chair
Initials