

BICKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14th April 2025 at 7.30pm. at
Bickington Village Hall

Present; Cllr Briddock Chairman Bickington Parish Council & Mrs Carol Retallick - Clerk
Cllrs Bruckner, Cox, Humphreys, Meek and Warren Cllr Major were in attendance

4 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Meeting Apologies -D Cllrs J Nutley

1. Welcome

Cllr Briddock welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from last year's meeting

These were signed as a true record of that meeting.

3. Parish Council update

Chairman's Report - Bickington Parish Council

Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow parish councillors for their continued support and diligence. We are always quorate and usually fully attended. I would also like to thank our new clerk, Mrs Carol Retallick, who took her post part way through the year and provided us with a seamless transition. Finally, I would like to thank our District and County Councillors for their help and advice. I would particularly like to thank our County Councillor Stuart Rogers for the financial help he made available to mitigate the cost of our new website and IT equipment.

The year itself has been unremarkable and our achievement small but worthwhile, we have a new compliant website which is fully supported going forward. We continue to support the church with financial help for the maintenance of the churchyard. We have had the parish notice board refurbished and likewise the flagpole. We would like to do more but are very conscious of the financial pressures on our parishioners. Our funds come from the precept and this year we have kept the increase to a minimum.

Looking forward we are working to have a defibrillator installed at the Dartmoor Halfway. The bus stop on the A383 is overgrown and needs clearing and repairing – quotes have been requested for this and sadly our most recent bus stop on the old A38 has been destroyed in a hit and run incident. This subject to a claim on our insurers and hopefully will be replaced.

The council as a body as well as individual councillors are always available to listen to our parishioners concerns and to resolve them if at all possible.

4. Reports from local groups

Resident 1

Noted the new website and queried some of the content, the chairman informed the meeting that the new site is still being developed.

Resident 2 & 3 from Chipley – Bickington Quarry queries on the development there. Residents have visited the site, works have stopped. The PC is aware of this and notified TDC. The owner has been in touch with National England for contact. The Facebook site has more information regarding the site and the plans there.

Resident 4 – spoke about dog poo, the signage that was previously displayed has been destroyed, the PC will speak to TDC's dog wardens

Speeding vehicles through the village is also of concern – Cllr Briddock confirmed that it is national speed limit through the village and is difficult to police. Discussed temporary speed reduction due to the diversions but this was not supported by DCC.

The meeting discussed the latest position at Lemonford caravan park being that there are plans to move residents from the site by August. The site will return to a touring site as per planning permission.

It was also noted the Enforcement action on the school business at Chipley due to the business is on a flood plain.

ACTIONS : - Chipley Quarry – dog poo – website -

Cllr R Warren reported from St Mary's Church. The New vicar come to the church in August 2025, they have settled in well from west Devon, where they worked with the small rural parishes similar to Ashburton. Work has been carried out at the church sealing the top of the church tower and vestry has new guttering

Dartmoor National Park Authority – Sector ranger Sam LeBailly – April 2026

General sector update

Firstly, my apologies for not being able to attend this evening.

The sector ranger for your parish, Stuart Hooppell, is currently on a 12-month sabbatical break from which he will be back at the end of August. Ethan Parsons, assistant ranger has covered Stuart's role from September last year until the end of February, for me (also assistant ranger) to then step up into Stuart's post for the next 6 month period (March – August inclusive), which leads us nicely to Stuart's return!

For those who don't know, the ranger role encompasses a huge amount which I could write a number of pages on, but one of the many priorities for us is the PROW (Public right of way) system and infrastructure – which includes finger posts, stiles, boardwalks, gates and bridges – surface and, in the late summer, vegetation clearance.

General parish update

Ethan has been busy in Bickington over the last 6 months, installing new finger posts and overseeing the contractor installing the new barriers at Ramshorn down. Thank you to the local farmers and landowners who supported Stuart and Ethan with this.

This was necessary for a few reasons; not only was Ramshorn becoming a popular fly tipping site, but also attracting a lot of illegal off-roading activity,

which was damaging what is a sensitive habitat, causing soil erosion, habitat destruction and posing a danger to those of you using the public rights of way legally.

Having been in post for a little over a month now, I am still getting to know the parish, building a programme of works and improvements that are required on the PROW system and steadily starting some larger projects within my 7 parishes. Naturally, 6 months will fly by and of course I won't get everything done, but your parish will be back in Stuart's capable hands by then! Until that time though, I will be around regularly.

Should you discover a PROW issue, you can visit our website to report it direct – <https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/enjoy-dartmoor/outdoor-activities/report-a-path-problem>

The wider authority and national park

This year we are celebrating the 75th anniversary of Dartmoor national park!

In March we welcomed our new CEO, Tom Surrey, after Dr Kevin Bishop stepped down after 18 years in the role.

Also, in March we kicked off our annual 'dogs on leads' campaign with an engagement day at Haytor and Roborough down, speaking to dog walkers and giving out leads whilst engaging with them about the importance of keeping their dogs on leads on the commons and access land from 1st March – 31st July. For those who aren't familiar, this is the period we call bird nesting season, with Dartmoor playing host to many species of ground nesting birds throughout this period. Not only this, but with lambs (and other livestock) out grazing, worrying incidents and attacks do unfortunately increase at this time of year. We ask for the public to do their part by being responsible dog owners. The DLPS (Dartmoor livestock protection society) livestock officer, Karla can be contacted 24/7 on 07873 587561 should you witness any livestock worrying or injured livestock on the moor; she is absolutely fantastic and it's definitely worth keeping her number saved in your phone if you haven't already.

Moving on, the FiPL (Farming in protected landscapes) funding has been as popular as ever this year, with continued funding confirmed. 64 fantastic projects have benefited from this funding over the past 12 months. It aims to support farmers and land managers in carrying out projects that support the natural environment, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide public access opportunities or support naturefriendly, sustainable farm businesses. FiPL is being delivered on Dartmoor from March 2021 - 2029.

Another project you may have heard of recently, is DDL (Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes), which is funded by the heritage lottery fund for 5 years, 2025-2030. To

summarise, the aim is to

- Create better access to nature for a wide range of people
- Celebrate and learn about landscape heritage with people who live on and on the edge of Dartmoor

- Gather and share information, vital to understanding our natural heritage, through Citizen Science
- Improve our knowledge and skills, and the application of these to benefit natural heritage
- Enhance and restore nature

If you are interested in finding out more, you can visit our website here – <https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/wildlife-and-heritage/our-conservation-work/dartmoordynamic-landscape>

5. Open discussion – questions and ideas from residents

No other comments were received

6. Any other business

None

The meeting closed at 19.34