

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF YEALMPTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY, 9th JUNE 2025 AT 7.30 PM AT THE COMMUNITY ROOM, STRAY PARK, YEALMPTON.

Members of the public present: 0. No one spoke in the Open Forum.

Councillors present: Cllrs Baldry, Endicott, Craddock, Tucker, Street, McKay, Thomas, Riley, Barton and District Cllr Edie. Cllr Edie left after item 7.

No	Minute	Action
1)	a. Apologies for absence. None.	
2)	County Council Report – Cllr Dan Thomas Cllr Baldry congratulated Cllr Thomas on his appointment as Cabinet Member for Highways at Devon County Council. Cllr Thomas said that the department would tackle the following problems, in order of priority; i. Tackling pot holes. The team would be trailing a new approach of repairing sections of pot holes, rather than individual pot holes. ii. White lines would be remarked. iii. Drains would be cleared.	
3)	District Council Report – Cllr Tom Edie <i>(See attached written report)</i> Dist. Cllr Thomas was asked whether SHDC would be consulting with the public in relation to LGR. SHDC had decided to consult with the Parish Councils as representatives for their parish and had a meeting with the 13 parish and town councils arranged on 18 th June. Cllr Thomas was urged to include some wider public consultation as part of their proposals for LGR. Cllr Thomas confirmed that data sharing between the Districts, DCC, Toray Council and PCC had been agreed. Cllr Thomas confirmed that the existence of Parish Councils will continue post LGR. It would require primary legislation to remove Parish Councils and that is not anticipated.	
4)	Councillors Declaration of Interest: Cllr Tucker declared an interest in an invoice that would be discussed at item 8 below.	
5)	To agree and sign the previous minutes The minutes of the meeting on 12 th May 2025 were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.	
6)	Exclusion of the Public No matters required the exclusion of the public.	
7)	Planning matters a. A brief update was given on applications relevant to the Parish. b. The following planning decisions were unanimously agreed, with Cllr Thomas abstaining from voting, due to his role with the District Council. i. 1566/25/VAR Waye Farm Barn, PL21 9NU - Comment - YPC note the original carport has become a garage in all but words further domesticating the site. We urge SHDC to ensure no garage door be allowed at any further date to preserve the aesthetic of a carport as originally intended. We also note the inclusion of the 'paddock' in this 'Variation', which we think should be considered as a change of use. Also, it is our belief there is 'waste' drainage within this paddock area for the Waye Farm	Clerk to update portal.

	listed buildings complex that should be considered in any decision by SHDC.	
8)	Financial matters a. Accounts to end of May were reviewed. b. Payments were approved totalling £6,154.32. (Cllr Tucker declared an interest in an invoice totalling £960 for various installations and repairs around the parish and for some travel expenses when attended a training course)	Clerk to arrange payments.
9)	Environmental Report (See attached report)	
10)	Silverbridge Way a. Path between Ben's Farmshop and the existing entrance to Silverbridge Way. Terms of Reference for a Silverbridge Way Extension Group were approved with one abstention. At this stage YPC would not ringfence any funds in the general reserves for this project. The aim of the group is to work collaboratively to improve the access to and safety of Silverbridge Way at Yealmpton by extending the existing path from its exit on the A379 at Yealmpton to Ben's Farm Shop along the inside of the road hedge b. It was agreed that the hedge would be cut between Ben's Farmshop and the entrance to Silverbridge Way and the pavement would be cleared, if possible ahead of the Yealmpton Show.	Clerk to arrange
11)	Local Government Reorganisation a. The government's interim plan feedback had been received by the upper Councils in Devon (existing Unitaries, Districts and County). It reiterated points made in the initial letter to the larger councils asking them to submit proposals for Unitisation. A letter of response had been received by YPC to our letter to the government minister stating our wish for the existing district council boundaries to be respected. This letter of response would be circulated to all the recipients in copy to our letter of 12 th May. The letter of response stated; <i>"There will need to be a strong public services and financial sustainability related justification for any proposals that involve boundary changes, or that affect wider public services due to the likely additional costs and complexities of implementation."</i> b. Correspondence from PCC i. PCC had scheduled a Parish Council Consultation on 16 th June – this would be on MS Teams. Cllr Baldry and the Clerk would attend and report back. The 13 parish and town Councils were also meeting on 16 th June in the evening to see whether any joint position could be established and discuss matters pertinent to the PCC proposal. ii. PCC had arranged various public consultations across the 13 parish and town councils. The one in Yealmpton is being held on 25 th June at 6.30-8.30pm at the Methodist Chapel. c. Correspondence from SHDC YPC would be attending a meeting called by SHDC on 18 th June 2025 to outline YPC views on LGR (i.e. that we wish to remain with the other parishes and towns in the South Hams, rather than be selected as part of a few rural areas to join PCC).	

12)	Neighbourhood Plan The Clerk had spoken with the Neighbourhood Plan officer at SHDC. SHDC would start work on a new joint local plan in the Autumn. Council felt that the issue of which unitary authority we would form part of should be resolved before we decide whether to embark on a Neighbourhood Plan in Yealmpton.	
13)	The Parish Room a. Proposed maintenance works for the Parish Room required scaffolding on neighbouring land. Correspondence from one of the owners of the neighbouring properties was reviewed. Consent for scaffolding on their land this summer/autumn was not given, although consent for some works next Spring may be given. In the meantime, the Clerk would contact alternative contractors to ascertain whether anyone would be prepared to undertake the proposed works with a ladder. The proposed contractor felt it was not safe. b. Review of wage for the cleaner of the Parish Room. It was agreed that this was not a matter for Council. The cleaning was arranged by the YCA and provided those charges were reasonable, YPC would be happy for them to be deducted from the income of the Parish Room by the YCA.	Clerk to write to the land owner to fix some dates to progress this. Clerk to inform the administrator at the YCA.
14)	Memorial Garden a. It was agreed that a gardener would be instructed to undertake a thorough pruning of the Memorial Garden. This would come out of the Gardening budget, previously agreed. b. Potted plants which are still growing will be left. Any dead potted plants will be removed.	Clerk to arrange.
15)	Footpath 20 a. A pre-application meeting with the Environment Agency had indicated that the creation of a bund along Footpath 20 would be refused by the EA. The concreting of the path and the proposed works to the river bank are likely to be acceptable. The river is salmonoid which means it is likely that any permit will state that no works can take place between 1st October and 15th June. The permit application was 2-3 months, so the works are unlikely to be able to be completed this year. They could not advise on the likely fee. Council confirmed they wished to continue with the proposed scheme without the inclusion of the bund.	Clerk to submit the application.
16)	Village Car Park a. The valuer had asked for details of the proposed income from the car park in order to formulate their valuation. The only meaningful information we have is that SHDC charged c.£2,500 per annum, not to install parking meters. The valuer would be informed of this. The Clerk had received an email from a representative of the Market Street Businesses and Residents Association. The contents were noted.	Clerk to inform the valuer.
17)	Provision of a Dog Waste bin on Ford Road (South end) The Clerk was asked to obtain a quote from SHDC for provision of an extra bin, the costs of emptying it.	Clerk to obtain a quote.

18)	Report on actions arising from previous meetings a. A list of assets managed or owned by SHDC in the Parish had been received. They were as expected. At this stage the only asset that we may seek to purchase/take over the management of is the Car Park (see item 16 above). b. Purchase of a Picnic Bench for the Park. Landowner consent to install is still awaited. The Clerk had reviewed some options for benches. It was noted that recycled plastic is a lot of more expensive than wood, it is felt that this is money well spent, due to maintenance costs. It was agreed that an accessible picnic bench would be purchased and a budget of up to £1,000 was agreed. This would come from the Works budget.
19)	Reports on areas of responsibility a. Works – removal of Sam King memorial bench on Fore Street. The wooden slats of the bench were rotten beyond repair and a potential safety risk. The bench had been removed and the memorial plaque had been installed on the slate in the Memorial Garden. b. Footpaths a. Warning signs would be placed on the permissive path entrance at West Park, warning walkers of the busy road and also a sign would be put up asking dog walkers to pick up after their dogs. b. A contractor would be asked to trim the footpaths on Bowden Hill and around the village. c. It had been reported that the green lane between Crebar and Dunstone was almost impassible. The Clerk was asked to write to the land owner to request the hedge was cut.
20)	Correspondence a. Email regarding the status of works at Torr Cross – these are works on private land by private contractors and it is understood the Local Authority is advising. b. Post box removal update – the Clerk had written to Royal Mail and stressed the importance of the return of the box to the village. The decision as to whether or not it would be returned is with the “Strategy Team”. Cllr Thomas agreed to write as the District Councillor. c. TRAYE youth Club had offered to come in to tell YPC about their work. This offer would be accepted. Meeting closed at 9.30pm
	Date of next meeting: 14th July 2025

Appendix – Reports

SHDC – June 2025

Council installing solar panels at three of its leisure centres

The leisure centres in Ivybridge, Dartmouth and Totnes will take a bold step forward, after South Hams District Council committed to fitting the facilities with solar panels.

Plans are moving forward to install panels at each of the three centres, drastically reducing their energy bills, helping to make each of the centres more financially sustainable.

The panels will also have a huge impact on the environment, saving around 90 tonnes of CO₂ emissions each year. The yearly CO₂ emissions savings from the investment is the equivalent of flying from London to New York more than 50 times.

Helping the environment is a key priority for South Hams District Council. The Council is committed to reducing its own carbon footprint, and its leisure centres have been identified as one of its biggest emitters.

The financial savings made from energy costs will help to secure the long-term sustainability of the centres, so they can each continue to benefit their communities.

Help shape South Devon's future

Conversations are taking place this month with South Hams town and parish councils that may be swallowed up by Plymouth City Council's expansion plans.

As part of a series of engagement activities on the future of local government, Cllr. Dan Thomas, the newly elected Leader of South Hams District Council, is inviting all 13 of the councils affected by Plymouth's proposals to meet with him to find out what matters to them. District councillors for the affected area will also be involved.

As requested by Government, a joint outline proposal has been submitted on behalf of all the Devon District Councils, except Exeter.

Known as the 1-4-5 plan, it proposes:

Retaining Plymouth unitary authority.

A unitary combining the South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon areas with Torbay.

A unitary including East, Mid, North Devon, Torridge and Exeter.

Multiple other initial proposals have also been submitted to Government by other councils in Devon. This includes Plymouth's plan to expand into part of the South Hams.

Cllr. Thomas has written to the chairman and clerks of the 13 towns and parishes affected to discuss how they would like to move forward in the future. The feedback will help shape final proposals which will be submitted to Government in November. The town and parish council meeting will be held at Follaton House in Totnes on Wednesday 18 June.

Here is a useful link that highlights the options.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/devolution-and-lgr/getting-it-right-for-devon-iterim-plan/>

YEG report May 2025

River Yealm

The spring Riverfly Survey took place on 19 May and identification of the invertebrates began in the Parish Room, Bakery Square on 20-21 May. After such a dry few months the river and its tributaries are low allowing us easy access and a very different river profile from Autumn 2024 when flow and turbidity prevented some of the samples been taken for a few weeks. We are seeking one more volunteer to be trained to identify invertebrates. Please make contact if you know anyone who may be interested. Cllr Julia Bertram reported a number of pollution incidents to the EA in April and May: on the Piall on 28 April 2025 with water running cloudy. The Yealm at Worston was also seen to be very white/cloudy; and 29 April an incident report made for Quick Bridge. Sat 17 May, a dead fish (reason for mortality not known) was observed at Yondercott, reported to EA and related to previous EA reports on 28 and 29 April.

Trees

Towards the end of the planting season a wildlife corridor hedge 275-metres long consisting of 1,500 trees was planted by volunteers under the supervision of ParkLife SW CIC at Torr Farm south of Yealmpton. Trees for the planting were lifted from the Kitley Community Tree Nursery by volunteers, supervised by Liz Tutty, who manages the nursery. These include hazel, hawthorne, dog rose, spindle, hornbeam and wyche elm, from seeds gathered at previous Tree Seed Sundays. Additional trees were provided for the planting from the YEM Tree nurseries at Noss Mayo and Newton Ferrers and from the Devon Wildlife Trust. Volunteers also planted mixed woodland of approximately 650 trees in a field of circa 2,020 square metres at Trap House, Yealmpton.

In the last planting of the season volunteers dug in an incredible 1500 whips, predominantly alder and willow, at Worston Farm, to prevent the loss of an existing habitat through river bank erosion with the benefit of creating a new and joined up habitat. In addition:

- 110m hedge at Worston Farm
- 2,000 trees planted at Ewells Wood, Kitley
- 80 low density hedge trees at Long Meadow by Steps River Lane.
- holly trees planted last season in the wood beside the Yealmpton sewage works that had not survived were removed and a number were replanted in gaps
- orchard and other trees in Stray Park were pruned.

Biodiversity

Ruby's wood biodiversity surveys with ICC continue this spring funded from a locality grant. Volunteer bird, mammal and bat surveys are planned, which will form part of an ongoing monitoring programme to assess change along the Yealm corridor. DWT had a field mice habitat survey and capture cameras in place but none were seen. A new pond for invertebrates is planned at a location beside Steps river Lane. A nasty invasive black flat worm from Australia has appeared all over the country next to Garden Centres. The worms are carrion eating, but they are adapting to eating anything too slow to move: snails slugs worms even snakes. They are voracious and attack en mass. We are hoping not to find them in Rubies Wood .

Control of Invasive species

A Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed eradication programme is currently being planned for three sections of the Yealm river, the middle and lower sections being in the Yealmpton parish. This will involve volunteers 'pulling' the Himalayan Balsam out but large stand where it grows amongst brambles and ferns, it will require professional 'brush cutting'. There are also two large stands for Japanese Knotweed, which will require professional spraying.

Yealm Erme Species Survival (YESS) includes six non farming landowners within the Yealmpton parish. The programme involves tree and hedgerow planting, stream realignment with leaky dams, fencing to protect the watercourse from poaching and preparation works for wildflower meadow creation. LD, YEG