

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF YEALMPTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 9TH MARCH 2026 AT 7.30PM AT THE COMMUNITY ROOM, STRAY PARK, YEALMPTON.

Members of the public present: 0

Public Forum

No members of the public chose to speak.

Councillors Present: Cllr Baldry, Cllr Endicott, Cllr Craddock, Cllr Tucker, Cllr Barton, Cllr Thomas and Cllr MacKay.

1) Apologies and absences

Apologies were received from Cllrs Hopkins and Riley, and Dist. Cllr Edie.

2) County Council Report

See written County Council Report at the end of the minutes.

3) District Council Report

See written District Council Report at the end of the minutes.

Cllr Thomas noted that the Garden Waste Collection charge had increased from £49 to £70 over several years. The £49 fee in 2023 did not represent full cost recovery.

4) Councillors' Declarations of Interest

Cllr Thomas declared an interest in item 10. He submitted a written request for a dispensation to remain in the meeting while the item was discussed but not to vote on the consultation response. His interest arises from his role as both a County and District Councillor, and the fact that those authorities have submitted a proposal for Local Government Reorganisation in Devon. Cllr Thomas has previously voted on related matters at County and District level.

The request for a dispensation was considered, and the remaining Councillors agreed to grant the dispensation. It was acknowledged that Cllr Thomas' knowledge of the proposals would be of benefit to the Council. He may be asked to give a neutral summary of the proposals and to answer any factual questions Councillors may have.

Cllr Craddock declared an interest in item 20 as Trustee of the Yealmpton Community Association, which acts as the booking agent for the Parish Council in respect of the Parish Room.

5) Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 9th February 2026, were approved by those who had attended that meeting and signed by the Chairman.

6) Exclusion of the Public

No matters required the exclusion of the public.

7) Planning matters

- a) A general update on applications relating to the parish was given.
- b) The following responses were agreed;
 - i) 0214/26/HHO 10 The Borough, Yealmpton, PL8 2LR

“Support - YPC support this application but ask SHDC to ensure surface water from the proposal and site is managed suitably.

8) Financial matters

- a) The accounts to the end of February 2026 were noted.
- b) Payments totalling £2,549.98 were approved.

9) Yealmpton Environment Group

- a) See written report from Dr Linda Durman at the end of the minutes.

10) Local Government Reorganisation

- a) It was agreed that Councillors Barton, Baldry and Endicott would meet to determine Council's response to the consultation, and this would be submitted by the Clerk. Cllr Thomas may attend the meeting to answer any questions about the proposals, but not to take part in agreeing the response.
- b) Cllr Baldry and the Clerk had met with other Councils included in the Plymouth Growth Area Proposal and had agreed that each Council would submit its own response, rather than seeking to agree a response across the thirteen Councils. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Minister, resending a copy of the letter sent on behalf of nine Council in November 2025 and stating disappointment that Parish and Town Councils had not been made statutory consultees in the consultation.

11) Silverbridge Way Extension

- a) Cllr Barton provided an update that the pre-planning application had been submitted.

12) Footpath 19

- a) The landowner's solicitor had not responded to requests for a date for the further meeting to progress resolution of the claim. It was agreed the meeting to walk the proposed new route should be arranged by the end of March, failing which the Council would seek Secretary of State resolution. The Clerk would write again to the landowner's solicitor.
- b) Quotes had been received from contractors to improve the surface of Footpath 19. The lowest quote would be accepted. Works would not take place until later in the spring or early summer.

13) Response Planning

- a) Due to Cllr Riley's absence, this matter would be dealt with at the next meeting.
- b) It was agreed that up to two additional grit bins would be funded by the Parish Council at £350 each.
- c) Due to Cllr Riley's absence, this matter would be dealt with at the next meeting.

14) Pavement Clearing

- a) A quote had been received to clear the pavement between the entrance to Silverbridge Way and the bus stop inside the 30mph limit.
- b) Yeo Lane to Yealmbidge Pavement. It had not proved possible for a joint project with Devon Highways' contractor to clear the pavement at shared expense. The Neighbourhood Highways Officer would try to identify some funds from next year's budget to undertake the clearing at County Council expense. As an interim measure, our contractor will undertake some clearing of the worst sections by hand.

15) Policies and Procedures Review

- a) The following documents were approved and adopted:
 - i) Document Retention Policy
 - ii) Confidentiality Policy
 - iii) Safeguarding Policy
 - iv) Press, Media and Social Media Policy
 - v) Guidance for use of YPC Facebook and website
 - vi) Scheme of Delegation
- b) The data and document management procedure was discussed and a new guidance document would be circulated to the Council.

16) Heritage Features

- a) A list of heritage features had been compiled from parishioners' suggestions and from the Parish Archive. Council expressed its thanks to all contributors. A Working Group would be formed to consider the list of features further and make recommendations to the Parish Council for any listing applications.

17) Victorian Post Box

- a) Royal Mail had confirmed that they had found an antique post box that would be transferred to the Parish Council on the basis that the Parish Council refurbish it, paint it black to show it has been decommissioned and install it at the Parish Council's own cost. Council was willing to proceed on this basis and the Clerk was asked to write to confirm this.
- b) It was agreed the Parish Council would take possession of the box and then assess whether the work could be undertaken by volunteers.

18) TRAYE Youth Club

- a) Newton and Noss Parish Council (NNPC) had asked whether they could advertise the Youth Club in Yealmpton to young people in their Parish. Council agreed that a well-attended Youth Club was in the interests of the young people in Yealmpton. TRAYE had provided location details of the young people who had attended over the last year and it was noted that some young people from Brixton parish had also attended. Newton and Noss and Brixton Parish Councils would be invited to make a financial contribution to TRAYE directly and advertise the Youth Club to their young people.

19) Bathing Water Quality

- a) YPC had previously sent a letter in support of the bathing water application at Newton Ferrers and Noss Mayo. The Clerk was asked to complete the DEFRA consultation on behalf of YPC confirming support for the application on environmental grounds.

20) The Parish Room

- a) Yealmpton Community Association manages the bookings for the Parish Room and have reviewed their booking rates. They suggested increasing the rate for a four hour booking in the Parish Room from £29 to £32. Council approved this increase.

21) Report on actions from previous meetings

- a) Market Street Car Park – a meeting had been scheduled between the Clerk and an Officer at South Hams District Council to discuss the terms of the proposed lease. Report deferred.
- b) Footpath 20 – the Environment Agency had granted the permit for resurfacing and bank-restoration along Footpath 20. It was agreed that quotes would be obtained for the required works and Yealmpton Environment Group would be asked to assist with the bank restoration project.
- c) So far nine clubs, classes, groups or associations from the Parish Directory had responded to say they wished to attend the Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that tea, coffee and cake would be available at 6.30pm, to enable the meeting to start promptly at 7.00pm. A shorter Parish Council meeting would follow.
- d) No applications had yet been received for the Councillor vacancy.

22) Road Closures – the following were noted

- a) Stoney Cross to Yealmbury Hill along ZC143, Yealmpton 14th May – 18th May 2026
- b) Stoney Cross to Yealmbury Hill along ZC143, Yealmpton 1st June – 3rd June 2026

23) Correspondence

- a) A parishioner had enquired to the Clerk about the repair of the milestone at the Petrol Station. The Clerk had spoken to the owners and it was in hand. They required dry weather for the concreting.
- b) TRAYE Youth Conference 13th April – Cllr Thomas would check whether he could attend.
- c) Dementia Friendly AGM 18th March – Cllr Baldry would attend.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

Date of the next meeting: 13th April 2026

(Minutes prepared by the Parish Clerk)

County Council Report

County Council Report – Cllr Dan Thomas

March Report

February and March have marked a significant moment for Devon. After months of scrutiny, debate and difficult decisions, the County Council has now agreed its 2026–27 budget. This is our first full budget of the new administration, and it sets a clear direction: stabilising essential services, repairing what has been neglected, and investing in the foundations that keep Devon moving. As you'd expect from a budget of over £2 billion, it has taken a long time to get to this point.

£19 Million Extra for Devon's Roads

The headline for many residents will rightly be highways.

This year's budget includes an additional £15 million investment in Devon's roads, alongside a commitment to maintain £10 million per year in additional funding over the following five years.

This is a major shift in approach. For too long, highways funding has been reactive and insufficient, leading to a cycle of patching rather than repairing.

The extra funding will allow us to move beyond emergency pothole filling and begin tackling structural deterioration in a more strategic way. That means more resurfacing, more preventative maintenance, and more drainage work to stop water destroying road foundations in the first place.

After one of the worst winters on record for storm damage, this investment is both timely and essential. While it will not fix every problem overnight, it represents a serious and sustained commitment to improving the condition of Devon's roads.

At the same time, an extra £4 million of revenue funding will allow us to fix the potholes that we have now, as well as addressing the regular issue of blocked culverts, grips and buddle holes in quicker order.

Protecting Frontline Services

Despite the continued unfairness of national funding arrangements, we have delivered a balanced budget that protects frontline services.

Adult social care remains the largest area of council spending, accounting for nearly half of the total budget. Demand continues to rise, particularly as Devon has one of the oldest populations in the country. This budget provides stability while work continues to modernise services in a way that protects dignity and independence.

Children's services and SEND provision also remain a priority. While financial pressures are significant, we are committed to improving outcomes and ensuring that vulnerable children receive the support they need.

There was also significant national news on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities funding. The Government has confirmed it will write off around 90 per cent of councils' historic High Needs deficits, including Devon's, which will equate to approximately £200 million. It is important to be clear that this deficit did not arise from local overspending. Councils have a statutory duty to support children with SEND, and when national funding failed to keep pace with rising demand, local authorities were required to meet those costs regardless. In effect, councils have been carrying debt on behalf of central government in order to protect children and families. This decision is therefore the Government repaying money that should have been properly funded in the first place. I welcome both the write off and the stated commitment to put SEND funding onto a sustainable national footing so that councils are not placed in this position again.

Importantly, our budget is built around long-term sustainability, with a renewed focus on rebuilding reserves after years of erosion.

Libraries, Communities and Local Investment

There is additional funding to strengthen library services and develop them as resilient community hubs, particularly in rural areas. Libraries are so important for our communities, they are warm spaces, digital access points, advice centres and meeting places. In the National Year of Reading, this investment sends an important signal about literacy and opportunity. As the consultation has only just closed, we will have to wait until later in the spring to hear what

residents want the library services to look like in the future, however what is clear is that communities want these spaces protect. Message received, loud and clear.

Locality budgets are set to continue and expand in the new financial year, with the allocation opening in April. Each councillor will now have £10,000 to allocate to community projects, up from £8k last year. These funds may be modest in the context of the overall council budget, but their impact at parish level can be transformational. From supporting defibrillators to funding youth activities or small infrastructure improvements, locality funding remains one of the most direct ways to strengthen community life.

LGR

At the same time, we continue to face uncertainty around Local Government Reorganisation and future national funding reforms. Large rural counties like Devon are still disadvantaged by the current funding formula. We will continue pressing for a fairer settlement that reflects the real cost of delivering services across a geographically large and dispersed county.

Two Labour-run councils up country have openly said that they will not be cooperating with the government on LGR. In the face of cancelled and then un-cancelled elections in Exeter and 29 other areas, it's looking more and more of a possibility that the government are about to U-turn on LGR.

Looking Ahead

The coming months will be about delivery. Highways teams will move from winter emergency response into planned recovery and resurfacing programmes. Drainage work will be critical to ensuring that new road surfaces last. Parish councils can continue to support this work by reporting issues promptly and sharing reference numbers where follow-up is required. This budget does not solve every challenge facing Devon. The financial climate remains extremely difficult. But it does mark a turning point. It demonstrates that even in constrained circumstances, we can choose to invest in the essentials, protect communities, and begin repairing the foundations.

District Council Report – Cllr Tom Edie

SHDC – March 2026

Garden waste subscriptions

A reminder that it's time for residents to renew their subscription to the garden waste subscription service.

Messages for residents:

- Early bird renewal costs £70 if subscribed before 1 April 2026.
- The price from 1 April will be £73.
- The new subscription year runs from 1 April 2026 until 31 March 2027.
- Renew subscriptions by card payment on **our website**.

- The annual cost applies for fortnightly collections, excluding the weeks over the Christmas period when the service is suspended.
- If you have decided not to renew this year, you will no longer receive garden waste collections from 1 April 2026.

LGR

Following the launch of the government consultation, we have done a series of comms in the last week to promote the survey and promote our support for the Reimagining Devon proposal.

- We released our first press release and video with Cllr Thomas encouraging people to take part at the end of last week.
- Several districts across Devon, including Torridge, North Devon, and West Devon, released follow-up press, pledging support for the Reimagining Devon proposal from their leaders. We have done the same - You can find ours here.
- A single website containing all the proposals can be found at www.devonlgr.co.uk

Yealmpton Environment Group Report

YEG annual report 2025/6

This year, members of YEG and their volunteer workers have continued to improve the quality and biodiversity of the air, land and river water in our parish.

River Yealm

Systematic monitoring of the chemical and physical properties (temperature, pH levels, dissolved oxygen, total dissolved solids, dissolved organics and turbidity) of Yealm water has continued. Results from July 2022 to April 2025 were reported in Yealmpton Press in January 2026. Such evidence can be used to inform remedial action locally via the River Yealm Water Quality Group and informs the scale of response required nationally through Westcountry Rivers Trust (one of 65 UK Rivers Trusts) and other national organisations who aggregate the data and use it to lobby ministers on our behalf to improve the quality of water in the UK.

In addition, we now have trained citizen scientists (training funded by YPC and Wildfish) who can identify and report invertebrates in Yealm water samples. YEG also receives swift reports on local pollution incidents from the public that are logged with the Environment Agency (incident hotline 0800 807060).

A set of specific projects that would help to prevent further pollution events and improve Yealm river water quality has been prepared with YEM and RYWQG. We are developing a standardised system for collecting information on run-off from land into the river as the EA's Mudspotters system does not address the source of run-off and is therefore unlikely to deliver the impactful change we need locally.

The episode of pollution on the River Piall reported to EA in early 2025 was deemed 'within allowable limits'. Although RYWQG considers that the relevant licence really needs to be renegotiated, the documentary 'Dirty Business' on BBC iPlayer explains how this has happened. And where is Public Health when you need it?

rees

Many more trees and shrubs have been planted in the 12 months from April 2025 using 1,600 trees from the Kitley Community Tree Nursery, funded by Yealmpton PC and managed and maintained by volunteers. We have also planted trees from community nurseries at Noss Mayo and Newton Ferrers. Towards the end of the planting season a wildlife corridor hedge 275-metres long (1,500 whips) was planted. Volunteers also planted mixed woodland of approximately 650 trees and in the last planting of the season 110m hedge at Worston

Farm, 2,000 trees at Ewells Wood, Kitley and 160 metres of hedge restoration work at Highter Torr. Tree planting **the Yealmpton section of the river is now completely lined** with trees and shrubs, preventing animal access and limiting run-off. We have until the end of March to plant whips before the end of the season.

The orchard and other trees in Stray Park have been pruned. The ancient orchard at Mill Farm in Yealmpton has been restored by volunteers from YEM and YEG this January. Tree Seed Sunday 2025 was a great success again. 1700 trees at the tree nursery will be ready for planting from autumn 2026. The Mini Tree Nurseries at primary schools in the catchment have had a three year review, including the nursery at Yealmpton, that has not suffered from theft by squirrel as much as others.

Biodiversity

Ruby's wood biodiversity surveys with ICC continue. Volunteer bird, mammal and bat surveys are planned. A new pond for invertebrates is planned at a location beside Steps River Lane. Ivybridge Community College students undertook two days' field work on the Research Methods Module of the AQA A Level in Environmental Science at Rubies Wood. This resulted in a standardised data set that will act as a template for the future. A second cohort of 23 Environmental Science students at ICC have used methods such as quadrant analysis, transects, camera capture, setting traps, nests, sweep surveys, water analysis, kick surveys and river flora and fauna surveys in Rubies Wood.

Programmes to control invasive species and eradicate noxious weeds continue. The Yealm Erme Species Survival programme is currently working with six non farming landowners within the Yealmpton parish. Work involves tree and hedgerow planting, stream realignment with leaky dams, fencing to protect the watercourse from poaching and preparation works for wildflower meadow creation.

The area of Kitley Meadow at Lodge Gate Field that is under power lines, and therefore cannot be planted with trees, has been scarified, topped and raked and planted with wildflower seeds.

Catchment based approach

YEM is finalising the Yealm Catchment Management Plan that will highlight priorities for the catchment with regard to wild habitats, biodiversity, and water and land management, including natural solutions to flood and drought. It will also address water quality and pollution and community engagement.

Significant progress to improve the Yealm is dependent on action throughout the catchment. The River Yealm Water Quality Group has trailblazed this approach and now a programme has begun to work with the Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest, YEM and Catchment Sensitive Farming, to establish works and management options for individual farms. This will result in improvements to water quality and management, biodiversity and habitat connectivity (a green corridor) throughout the catchment. Using low density tree planting (25 trees/ha) allows farmers and land managers to benefit and importantly does not interfere with DEFRA/other grant schemes.

Active travel

The long awaited 'Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan' (LCWIP) for South Hams was published in August 2025. Initial hopes that this would prioritise a safe walking-cycling route into Plymouth were dashed.

Air quality at Yealmpton sewage treatment facility.

The summer of 2025 brought the stench of deeply unpleasant smells emanating from the Yealmpton sewage treatment plant and trucks frequently taking away significant waste. **South West Water** has advised that the sewage works in Yealmpton are functioning within their designed capacity. No explanation of the cause of foul smells has been offered. They refer us to their Drainage and Wastewater Plan:

[yealm-erme_l2_dwmp.pdf](#).

With thanks to Yealmpton Parish Council for their funding for these projects.

Linda Durman
Chair YEG