

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF YEALMPTON HELD ON MONDAY 13TH APRIL 2026 AT 7PM IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM, STRAY PARK, YEALMPTON.

Meeting commenced at 7pm

Members of the public present: 29

1) Approval of minutes of the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting Minutes.

The minutes were approved.

2) County Council Report – Cllr Dan Thomas

Highways

I have been able to introduce 2 projects to the department during 2025, with a third about to start:

1) The ‘Common Sense’ pothole trial

This ran across 2 electoral divisions in 2025 (1 urban, 1 rural) where the process was that for every pothole reported that met the safety criteria (300mm by 40mm vertical edge), the team would be empowered to fix other defects that did not (meet the criteria). So enthused were the gangs that they decided to use a range of 500m in either direction or to the nearest junction. In practical terms, this is too costly and too large an area. In 2026, a larger version of the trial will run across 7 divisions where the gangs will be asked to follow the ‘reasonable person’ test, ie would the public reasonably expect you to mend that pothole while you are there as well as this one. Locations will be picked on pothole data as well as those areas high in elderly, disabled and/or pregnant road users, who are disproportionately affected by poor road surfaces.

2) The Parish Protocol

We are in the process of employing a member of staff specifically to run the PP, which will support towns and parishes to buy bespoke schemes of work from DCC – this will include 20mph zones, parish white lining remarks, zebra crossings, extra road signage – anything in short that the county either does not feel is essential or which it has budgeted for, but not within the time frame requested by the Town or Parish Council.

3) The Fast Response Squads. These will be set up for 2026/27 as four geographically based teams with a short work programme, meaning that Councillors and their Neighbourhood Highways Officers will be able to get some quick results in areas that are causing particular issues for a community. This is precisely the sort of rapid response that will help to change the ‘Computer says no’ belief that many have about the Highways Department.

On top of these, and as previously reported, 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. It is worth pointing out that we have had 50 gangs out all the time over the winter, fixing around 2500 potholes per week.

At the same time, an extra £4 million of revenue funding will allow us to continue 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.

Integrated Adult Social Care priorities

We are continuing with our existing four priorities that will shape our work over the next twelve months, building on the progress we've made. As a reminder our four priorities remain:

- We will reduce waiting times*
- We will find local solutions that promote independence*
- We will consistently deliver best practice*
- We will work within our budget*

Children's Services

In a report published in December last, the Department for Education's Commissioner Nigel Richardson CBE recognises significant progress in improving services for children and families, while acknowledging that further work is needed.

The Commissioner concludes that Devon now has the capacity and capability to improve itself, and recommends that operational control of services should remain with the council rather than be transferred to a trust.

The report praises:

- strong corporate leadership: children's services are now the council's top priority, with clear commitment from senior staff*
- strong political leadership, with the Leader and Cabinet having made children's futures their top priority*
- a stabilised leadership team: An experienced interim Director of Children's Services (DCS) and a strong Deputy Director have brought confidence and clarity, supported by a permanent senior leadership team for the first time in years*
- workforce development: recruitment and retention are improving, supported by initiatives such as the Social Work Academy and Leadership Development Programme*
- strategic investment: the council has committed £156m over 10 years through its Growing Futures programme to provide more local homes for children in care.*
- improved partnership working: relationships with Ofsted and safeguarding partners have strengthened*

As a footnote, we should hear imminently both from OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission regarding progress in Children's and Adults' services respectively.

Young People

Over the course of 2025/26, the Devon Youth Forum has been re-energised, with a series of events taking place at County Hall.

The priority for 2025-26 was **'Places to go, things to do'**.

This project is based on the belief that all young people in Devon should be able to access "affordable activities and places in our local areas; somewhere to go with friends for fun, relaxation and to try new things".

(This was the most voted topic in our [Make Your Mark 2025](#) ballot, receiving 20% of the vote. **Mental health** and **public transport** came second and third in the ballot, receiving 16% and 13% of the votes respectively.)

Locality

I was delighted to support the Parish with the following projects over the last 12 months:

£250 to support the Community Breathing Difficulties Group

£500 towards the Parish Archive

£250 to help establish a Pickleball group

£500 to YAGA for the purchase of a mower/rotavator.

I would be delighted to hear from any community group in 2026 in need of seed funding for projects or groups that benefit the village.

Dan Thomas

3) District Council Report – Cllr Tom Edie

The last twelve months have been dominated by Local Government Reorganisation that will see South Hams District Council and Devon County Council abolished and replaced by new Unitary Authorities that run the services currently delivered by District and County. We are waiting for central government to decide on how Devon will be split up with news expected in June with a preferred 4-5-1 configuration being supported by SHDC.

District Councillors, Dan Thomas (Leader of SHDC) and Tom Edie, support Yealmpton Parish Council and have provided financial support this year including TRAYE Youth club, Yealmpton and Brixton Community Friend project and Dementia Friendly Parishes. They have also provided support using Climate Change and Biodiversity funds to groups including Yealmpton Estuary to Moor and a tree planting scheme at Yealmpton Primary School.

Both Tom and Dan look forward to working with the Parish Council as we navigate the coming year.

Tom Edie

Dan Thomas remarked that an enormous amount of work had been put into the District's LGR response and this had diverted resources from where they would usually be expended.

4) Yealmpton Parish Council Chairman's Report

There are 10 members of the Parish Council. We met 10 times during the year. It was a busy year and we handled many matters on behalf of the residents of the parish.

We spent much time discussing the Central Government proposal to reorganise arrangements for local government. This is a scheme imposed by Westminster and without any enthusiasm from any of the existing local authorities. The plan is to abolish County and District Councils and to replace them with a single 'unitary council'. Parish Councils will continue. A number of options are being considered. Plymouth is proposing to extend their boundary to include the nearest 13 Devon parishes, including Yealmpton. South Hams favour the whole of the present District joining West Devon, Torbay and Teignbridge. The Parish Council opposes the Plymouth proposal and we wish the current District boundary to be unchanged. We have led meetings of the 13 facing Plymouth takeover. We have written to the Secretary of State to represent our view.

We are responsible for collecting a financial precept from households. Our major expenditure includes paying for youth clubs in the village. They meet weekly with alternate weekly meetings for different age groups. We have an ambition to extend this to weekly meeting for both age groups. The sessions are professionally run by TRAYE [Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement].

We are grateful to the team of volunteers who deliver the Yealmpton Press to every household. The Parish Council make a significant contribution to the cost of production.

The Yealmpton Tidy Village Group tackle pavement weeds and litter pick.

We are responsible for the maintenance of the Memorial Garden also for the upkeep of the Parish Room and Bakery Square.

We were appalled by the removal by Royal Mail of the door on the Fore street Victorian post box and we are committed to replacing it. I am pleased to report that we are close to achieving this ambition.

We considered a suggestion from Brixton Parish Council to pay Devon County Council to process a reduction in speed limit to 40mph between the two villages. Our Parish Council was divided in its opinion deciding by a close vote not to support the change.

We are working with the Highways Authority to pay for traffic calming marking on Ford Road and Yeo Lane. Improvements to the width of the footway between Yeo Lane and Yealmbridge are under consideration.

A working group is looking at a way to extend Siverbridge Way to join the A379 near Bens Farm shop and stop the need to walk alongside the main road. We are in discussion with Newton and Noss PC and the landowner about a footpath from Yealmpton to Newton Ferrers. The challenge is the cost of doing these projects. We are also in talks with the landowner of the Shire Horse Centre about regularising the public footpath across their fields.

The village speed monitors purchased and monitored by YPC provide useful information.

The Environment Group, funded by the Parish, are enthusiastic guardians of environmental needs. They provide a monthly report on a wide range of activities including tree planting and the condition of the River.

We are nearing the end of negotiations with South Hams District Council for the Parish Council to take over the village car park on Market Street. The objective is to maintain the use of the car park after any change in local authority arrangements.

The Parish Council are responsible for an Emergency Plan. This is currently being reviewed. We have updated arrangements to make footways safe when it snows.

Following the ceasing by DCC of the mobile library, the Parish now provide a book exchange in the former telephone box and a library in the Parish Room.

Requests for donations from local organisations are considered once a year.

Councillor James Street left the Council in January. We appreciate his contribution. We are hoping shortly to fill the vacancy.

I am grateful for the support of fellow councillor: John Endicott, Sheila Barton, Kate Hopkins, Rod McKay, Cliff Tucker, Simon Riley, Geoff Craddock. Above all my thanks and from the whole of Yealmpton to our indefatigable Clerk Sasha Walton-Jackman.

Keith Baldry

5) Local Community Group – updates and news

Lisa Barry from the Rose and Crown presented a cheque to the Yealmpton Community Centre. The YCA were the Rose and Crown's Charity of the Year and were delighted to receive £1,500. The Rose and Crown offer support to local organisations and are pleased to be working with Dementia Friendly Parishes.

The following groups gave a brief overview of their activities;

Yealmpton Parish Archive

The Archive is pleased to receive photographs, information and artefacts to add to their collection. Two notable donations include; a map of the Kitley Estate, donated by the Bastard Family. This will be restored and displayed next year as part of an exhibition *Life on the Estate*.

The second donation was found by a metal detectorist and is believed to be part of a stirrup dated from between 1000-1200 AD

The Archive will be taking over the History Tent at this year's Yealmpton Show and send regular articles to the Yealmpton Press.

Dementia Friendly Parishes

The charity is entirely dependent on donations and currently supports seven activity groups. These include a monthly craft group, a sing-along group, gentle exercise sessions, a reading group in which members explore a piece of prose or poetry rather than running a book club, and a walking group of around fifteen people who are accompanied by a trained first aider.

In addition to these groups, the charity runs a monthly "tea and chat" at the Rose and Crown, offering a relaxed social occasion, and provides a monthly carers' support group.

There are more than one hundred types of dementia, and it is a devastating disease. The charity supports both the person living with dementia and their carer, and this support continues even after the person with dementia has passed away.

Yealmpton Environment Group

Yealmpton Environment Group is a committee of Yealmpton Parish Council, working to improve the local environment and prevent further decline. Their work is delivered through several initiatives.

A major focus is water quality. Forty citizen-scientist volunteers regularly monitor the condition of local watercourses, and their findings are passed to the Westcountry Rivers Trust.

The group also works to enhance biodiversity. All land bordering the River Yealm has now been planted with trees and shrubs, with more than one thousand trees established along the riverbanks to help address flooding issues.

A community tree nursery has been created behind Ben's Farm Shop, growing trees from seed, including those collected locally during the annual Tree Seed Sunday event.

In addition, the group is supporting an A-level in Environmental Science.

Monthly reports are passed to the Parish Council, reporting on activities.

Yealmpton and Brixton Community Friendship Project

The organisation's aim is to reduce loneliness within the community. It has a team of fifteen volunteers who liaise with statutory agencies to provide support. Thank you to the Parish Council for their support and to the District and County Councillors for their support via their Localities grants.

The organisation is currently supporting thirty-five people on a one-to-one basis, with a further eight individuals on the waiting list. Demand for their services is high. Referrals come through the doctor's surgery, self-referral, and adult social care.

Over the coming year, they hope to involve younger people and encourage more volunteers to join.

Devon Breathers

Thanks were expressed to everyone who has been funding and supporting the Devon Breathers. The group meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month and has more than thirty members. It is run by a member of the group.

They support anyone who requires breathing-rehabilitation care. Given that one in three deaths are linked to respiratory conditions, their work is considered highly important.

Yealmpton Athletics Association

The Yealmpton Athletic Association exists to promote and facilitate sport and recreation within the parish and has been around for 170 years. It is responsible for maintaining the sports field and its buildings, and is run entirely by volunteers drawn from the four clubs that use the site: bowls, cricket, rifle and football. Members of the wider community are welcome to join the volunteer team.

The Bowls Club is a friendly mixed club with around thirty-five members, offering both social and league play. Social sessions take place on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons, with informal instruction, equipment and free introductory sessions available to anyone wishing to try the sport.

Yealmpton Cricket Club is expanding its youth provision in 2026 and introducing women's cricket for the first time. The senior side plays weekday league and friendly T20 fixtures in summer and an indoor league in winter. New members are welcome.

The Rifle Club has fifty-five members and is currently the most successful precision small-bore target shooting club in Plymouth and the South Hams. Over the past year it has achieved twenty-one individual wins, three team wins and fifteen second-place results in national and regional competitions. The club is at full capacity with a substantial waiting list.

The football pitch is used by both children and adults and forms part of a wider club with more than four hundred young players. The adult Sunday team consists of thirty-plus players who originally played together as children. The YAA is open to additional tenants for next season, particularly youth teams.

Current challenges include ongoing building work and grounds maintenance, alongside projects to secure funding for a new electric mower and a publicly accessible defibrillator. The village pavilion is available for community or private hire, with recent bookings including birthday parties and regular use by the Youth Club. It now benefits from new heating and a small kitchen.

The YAA expressed thanks to Michael Bastard and the Kitley Estate for their continued support, to Yealmpton Parish Council for its annual donation, to the TRAYE Youth Club, to Cliff Tucker for hedge-cutting, and to the Yealmpton Press for publicising activities.

The main fundraiser for the year, the 2026 Duck Race, will take place on Saturday 6 June, followed by food, music and games at the village pavilion. All are welcome.

Table Tennis

The table tennis club has been running for just over a year and meets every Thursday from 7.30 to 9.00 pm. The group is fortunate to have five tables, with doubles often played. Attendance usually ranges between fifteen and twenty-five people. It is a very welcoming club, with players of a similar standard, and sessions often end with a social visit to the pub.

Yealmpton Community Association

Sam Piller provided a written report from Yealmpton Community Centre warmly thanking participants for their vital role in maintaining the community in the village. The YCA offers a welcoming space for social activities, fitness and wellbeing classes, creative groups and community events. Appreciation was expressed to everyone who supports the centre, including Yealmpton Parish Council for its ongoing financial backing, Lisa Barry and the Rose and Crown for their generous £1,500 donation, and the volunteers whose commitment keeps the centre running. The message encouraged residents to continue using, supporting and getting involved with the centre so it can continue to thrive and serve the community. Terry Milam praised Sam for her enthusiasm and dedication to the YCA activities.

Men's Shed

The Men's Shed is a project of the YCA and provides a valuable resource for the community, helping to combat loneliness.

Yealmpton Pre-School

Sarah, Chair of the Board of Trustees, spoke on behalf of Laura, who leads Yealmpton Preschool. The preschool is a registered charity, guided entirely by what is in the best interests of the children. They expressed gratitude for the fundraising, grants and community support that help sustain the setting. Although early years education receives some government funding, it does not cover all costs and does not keep pace with rising demands. The preschool is

Ofsted-registered and inspected, and maintaining a high-quality learning environment remains a priority. It continues to provide a thriving early years education setting for children in the village.

Yealm Guiding

Yealmpton and Brixton Guiding, supported by both Yealmpton and Brixton parish councils, currently runs two groups with a total of forty-eight girls: Rainbows for four- to seven-year-olds and Brownies for eight- to ten-year-olds. The children take part in a wide range of activities, including planting trees in Marjory Walk, charity projects, the Christmas Tree Festival, a silent disco, and talks from visiting professionals such as a dentist discussing dental hygiene. They earn badges through challenges such as wildlife activities, celebrating VE Day, fundraising, and learning to write postcards. The groups are supported by a dedicated team of adult volunteers, and the programme continues to offer enormous fun and valuable experiences for the children.

Mahjong

The newly formed Mahjong group meets on Monday afternoons and has quickly become a popular and sociable activity. Mahjong, an ancient Chinese tile-based game, was introduced locally in September 2025 and now has fifteen members. The sessions are relaxed, friendly, and great fun, offering both mental challenge and companionship. New members are warmly welcomed.

Yealmpton Press

The Yealmpton Press is delivered free to every household in the village each month, with thanks to Yealmpton Parish Council for supporting the printing costs. The publication is overseen by a committee of seven members. The magazine welcomes suggested articles from residents; recent contributions have included a writing-workshop mini-series and pieces from the Parish Archive. Volunteers are currently needed to assist with distribution.

Woodland Burial

Yealmpton Woodland Burial became a registered charity last year. It is a beautiful and peaceful site, offering views across to Dartmoor and, beyond Plymouth, to Bodmin Moor. The grounds are filled with trees and natural planting, with spring flowers currently in bloom, creating a calm and reflective environment. Further information is available on their website: www.woodlandburial.org.uk

Yealmpton Methodists

Yealmpton Methodists continue to offer a warm and welcoming space for the community. In addition to Sunday worship, the church opens its doors on three mornings or afternoons each week for informal gatherings. These include a weekly soup lunch, a regular coffee morning, and a supportive bereavement group. The church places great value on hospitality, ensuring that everyone who attends is met with kindness and a genuine welcome.

Bee Wild

Beewild continues its work to support local biodiversity through the creation and care of meadows, pollinator-friendly planting, bee-lines, and habitats for bug life. Volunteers have been maintaining several village spaces, with recent photographs showing how these areas are beginning to flourish. The group would love to revive its popular bat walks and bird walks, but

this will only be possible with more hands to help. Beewild is issuing a call to arms for new volunteers who are passionate about nature and would like to play a part in enhancing local wildlife habitats.

Badmington Club

The Badminton Club meets on Mondays from 7.00 to 9.00 pm and offers a fun, relaxed session for all ages. Players enjoy short, sociable games, and the atmosphere is welcoming and inclusive. New members are warmly encouraged to come along, join in, and give it a try.

Veterans Outdoors

Veterans Outdoors is relocating its headquarters to the Yealmpton site on the edge of the village. The charity supports veterans who find it difficult to integrate after leaving the services, offering purposeful activity through gardening, conservation, and wildlife projects. Around seventy per cent of those they help are women who have served. The move to Yealmpton will provide a stable base for their work and strengthen their connection with the local community.

Cllr Baldry concluded this section of the meeting by thanking all the groups of their participation and for their work in making Yealmpton the thriving community it is.

6) Open Forum

A resident raised the difficulties caused by fly tipping and blamed the high cost of disposing of rubbish as the reason for the problem. There must be cheaper means of disposing of rubbish.

Cllr Thomas responded that it costs Councils a lot to dispose of certain types of rubbish and these costs are passed on. High costs do not justify illegal dumping of rubbish.

The resident called on the District and Council to lobby government to make the process simpler and cheaper.

7) Any other business

A member of the Parish Council reported that the footpath between Yeo Lane and Yealmbridge was due to be cleaned this coming week. This news was well received.

Meeting closed at 20.20

Minutes prepared by Sasha Walton-Jackman

Clerk to Yealmpton Parish Council.