

LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

There was a meeting of Lapford Parish Council on Tuesday 7th April 2026 at 7.30pm held in the Orchard Centre, Lapford

Members Present: Cllrs. Julie Down; Sue Briant-Evans; Bill Graham; Peter Heal; Roy Andrew.

Also Present: No other councillors

In attendance: Rob Martin (Clerk).

Others: Eight members of the public.

MINUTES

2526-301 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Fletcher due to work commitments and these were accepted by the council.

District & County Cllr. Keable had also apologised for his absence.

2526-302 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

No declarations of interest in items on the agenda were declared.

2526-303 COUNCILLOR COOPTION

Applications for the position of Councillor would be considered at the next meeting as long as they were received by the end of April 2026.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow public participation

2526-304 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION & UPDATES FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

A representative from the Congregational Chapel thanked the council for its £60 donation for the provision of food and drinks on the clean-up day. It worked very well and the church deacon had said that it could be repeated in the future.

Concern was expressed about the number of trees that had been removed in the village and whether they were going to be replaced. The chairman explained that there were often reasons why the trees removed would not be replaced immediately, particularly when the roots of the removed specimens were interfering with drains and foundations.

Those next to the churchyard were also affecting the graves and the Lower Town Place side would potentially affect the restored bank. It was agreed that consideration of planting trees in acceptable places could take place when offers of supply were made by the Tree Council or Devon County Council later in the year.

The Mill steam train was now operative.

2526-305 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

To receive a verbal report for information.

a) Devon County Council

b) Mid Devon District Council

Cllr. Keable had circulated a monthly report for April but was not able to attend this meeting.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting

2526-306 MINUTES

On a proposal by Cllr. Andrews, seconded by Cllr. Heal, it was **Resolved** to adopt the attached draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th March 2026.

2526-307 ACTION LIST, CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The clerk reported that he was going on leave the following day and had been concentrating on preparing the final accounts and annual return for the year ended 31st March 2026 ready for submission to the Internal Auditor. He confirmed that the necessary paperwork had been submitted electronically and that he would be meeting

online with the auditor on 29th April 2026. The half-year VAT reclaim of £784.72 was made online and payment would be expected during April.

The clerk would look to put the pictures of the clean-up day on the parish council website.

Action List updates on matters not on this agenda were as follows: -

- Orchard Centre Land – Steve Densham has responded saying that he was on the transfer.
- Toddler Play Area lease – this had now been completed.
- Planning Enforcement Matters – no progress report available.
- Telephone Box – Cllr. Andrews was confident that this would be done in May 2026.
- Additional Youth Play Equipment – discussions with LYPFT were still needed.
- Footpaths – Cllr. Shapland was not in attendance, so no report was available.
- Concrete Bin Disposal – no progress to date.
- Orchard Centre Telephone Connection – not progressed.
- Temporary Fencing – a further response was awaited.
- Toddler Play Equipment – Cllr. Down would take a video of the equipment needing attention demonstrating the noisy operation, so that the clerk can get the warranty work completed.
- Tarka Line – Cllr. Graham reported that Steve Munday would not represent the parish council at the two organisations.

2526-308 FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES

The next HOLD meeting to take place on 10th April 2026, other than that there was nothing to report.

2526-309 COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Celebrations Committee

No committee meetings have occurred since the last Parish Council.

b) Lapford Emergency Action Plan (LEAP) Committee.

There had been no LEAP committee meetings held since the last Parish Council meeting, but the MDDC Emergency Planning Officer would meet with it on 1st May 2026 to discuss a review of the Lapford plan.

2526-310 CHURCH GREEN TRUST FEEDBACK

The minutes of the last meeting held on 1st April 2026 had been circulated but there were no matters of concern for the parish council.

2526-311 VILLAGE MAINTENANCE PERSON

The individual had been contacted by Cllr. Andrews who reported that, as he had now been appointed to a full-time position, he might not be able to work for the parish council, but would like time to let the situation settle before saying no.

2526-312 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The meeting was scheduled to take place on Saturday 9th May 2026 at 10.00am in the village hall.

2526-313 DOG FOULING

A response had been sent to the school thanking the children for writing to the parish council outlining the scale of the dog fouling problem. The letter had been put on the school website and had been well received.

Cllr. Heal had arranged for the posters to be put up around the village and Cllr. Braint-Evans had put an article in the Lookout in order to highlight the issue and the potential for a £1,000 fine.

2526-314 ROAD WARDENS

No progress had been made on the potential implementation of the Road Warden work

- methodology notices.
- 2526-315 GRANT APPLICATION**
On a proposal by Cllr. Heal, seconded by Cllr. Briant-Evans, it was **Resolved** to award a grant of £2,500 to the Lapford Victory Hall towards the cost of installing a new entrance leading to the Lower Town Place field.
- 2526-316 ASSET REGISTER**
On a proposal by Cllr. Briant-Evans, seconded by Cllr. Down, it was **Resolved** to adopt the attached Asset Register as at 31st March 2026.
Cllrs. Andrews and Briant-Evans would undertake an asset condition survey before the next meeting.
- 2526-317 ORCHARD CENTRE CHAIRS**
Materials had been purchased and these would be recovered shortly, the overall cost having been agreed as £60.
- 2526-318 NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**
Cllr. Briant-Evans had put an article in the Lookout requesting interested people to come forward. No responses had yet been received.
- 2526-319 TIDY-UP DAY**
The tidy-up day held on Saturday 28th March 2026 had been very successful with good weather and 18 people turning up on the day. Of three bags of rubbish two were gathered from the trading estate which would be communicated to them for the future. A lot of people weeded with 20 bags of weeds and other foliage being collected and disposed of.
It was considered a good idea to set another date during early summer, and a date of 27th June 2026 was set aside for this starting at 9.30am. The Congregational Church would be contacted to arrange refreshments.
- 2526-320 PLANNING TRAINING**
The planning training session was booked for Saturday 23rd May 2026 and it was agreed that this should be booked at the village hall or the Orchard Centre from 10.00am onwards. The clerk would ask what was needed by the presenter and a decision made on the venue afterwards.
- 2526-321 2026/2027 BUDGET**
The final statement of the budget including the agreed precept for 2026/2027 was received. A further review of the budget would be carried out over the next couple of meetings to ensure financial prudence.
- 2526-322 HIGHWAYS MATTERS**
Cllr. Keable was unable to attend this meeting so there was no further update.
- 2526-323 LAPFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**
The next meeting on the Steering Group was to be on 25th April 2026 and Cllr. Briant-Evans wanted to confirm that the unspent £779 in the 2025-26 year was to be carried over to the new year and that in addition a further £2,000 budget had been set aside in 2026-27, making a total available of £2,779.
- 2526-324 PLANNING MATTERS**

a) APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED

To consider the following Planning Applications and to agree comments:

Reference	Location	Proposal
26/00465/PNAG	Land at NGR 272901 107076 (Bury Barton Farm) Lapford	Prior Approval for the erection of an agricultural storage building
		For Information Only

b) APPLICATIONS AFTER THE AGENDA WAS ISSUED

No applications had been notified after the agenda had been set.

c) MDDC DECISIONS

Reference	Location	Proposal	MDDC Decision
25/01317/PNAG	Land and at NGR 273115 107158 Bury Barton Farm Lapford Devon	Prior Approval for the erection of an agricultural storage building	Refused – Prior Approval is required

2526-325 **BANK RECONCILIATION AND RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS COMPARED WITH BUDGET**

On a proposal by Cllr. Graham, seconded by Cllr. Briant-Evans, it was **Resolved** to adopt the bank reconciliation and budget comparison document for the period ended 31st March 2026.

2526-326 **2025-26 FINAL ACCOUNTS**

On a proposal by Cllr. Graham, seconded by Cllr. Briant-Evans, it was **Resolved** to adopt the attached accounts statement for the 2025-26 financial year.

2526-327 **2025-26 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)**

The completed AGAR sections 1 & 2 were approved for onward transmission to the Internal Auditor. The formal adoption of these will take place once the Internal Auditor’s report has been considered at the Annual Council meeting on 12th May 2026.

2526-328 **RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SCHEDULE**

On a proposal by Cllr. Andrews, seconded by Cllr. Briant-Evans, it was **Resolved** to approve the payment of the invoices on the schedule below for the period since the last meeting:

PAYMENTS

Payment to	Services	Month/Ref	Amount £	Payment No.
2025/2026				
Tozers	Lease Legal Fees		1,200.00	2526-38
A&S Paving	Footpath Stones		337.31	2526-38
Lapford Congregational Church	Food for Tidy-Up day		60.00	2526-36
2026/2027				
S Hemsworth	Salary	Apr 26	67.83	2627-01
RJ Martin	Salary	Apr 26	568.15	2627-01
HMRC	Tax Deductions	Apr 26	158.80	2627-01
HMRC	National Insurance	Apr 26	43.97	2627-01
Everflow	OC Sewage & Water	Apr 26	40.23	DD
BT Group Ltd	OC Broadband	Apr 26	55.63	DD
Adobe	Acrobat Professional	Apr 26	19.99	DD
Lloyds Bank	Service Charge	Apr 26	4.25	DD
Valda Energy	Orchard Centre Electricity	Apr 26	74.17	DD
Devon Association of Local Councils	Affiliation Fee	2026-27	445.14	2627-02
Clyst Honiton PC	SLCC Shared Subs	2026-27	105.00	2627-02

RECEIPTS

LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Receipt from	Services	Amount £	Method
2026/2027			
MDDC	Precept	16,500.00	BC

- 2526-329

MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

The chairman had been approached and asked whether a storage container could be provided to house the playing field ride-on mower and the emergency equipment to be placed at the far end of the playing field. This matter would be considered at a future meeting.
- 2526-330

COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Cllr. Briant-Evans wished the website to be appropriately updated, including a list of meetings dates.

Cllr. Andrews asked whether the footpath in front of the playing field gate could have a dropped kerb to help access for car-boot sale participants. He was advised to enquire of County Highways to see if this was possible and how much it might cost.

Cllr. Andrews had been asked to thank the parish council for its contribution to the surfacing of the footpath previously discussed.
- 2526-331

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The **Annual Parish Meeting** would take place on **Saturday 9th May 2026** starting at 10.00am in Lapford Village Hall.

The date of the **2026 Annual Parish Council Meeting** is scheduled for **Tuesday 14th May 2026** at 7.30pm in the Orchard Centre.
- 2526-332

CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Action List
7th April 2026 Meeting

Ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
	Orchard Centre Adjacent Land	Clerk/MDDC	<i>Awaiting update from MDDC</i>
	Planning Enforcement Issues MDDC was currently overwhelmed by enforcement cases with just one officer to do them. The concentration was on those matters that were dangerous, which none of those in Lapford were.	Clerk/MDDC	<i>MDDC have conducted site visits and conclusions are awaited.</i>
	Ash Dieback To encourage DCC to consider notifying residents of the danger to the highway	Clerk/DCC	<i>DCC Highways List with SK</i>
	Highways	Clerk/DCC	<i>DCC Highways List with SK</i>
	Neighbourhood Plan	Parish Council	<i>Financial position of NP grants outlined for Steering Group. Workplan and timescales to be supplied</i>
	Telephone Box Make safe for use as book swap area.	Cllrs. Heal, Andrews	<i>To be done in May 2026</i>
	Co-option of new councillors	Council	<i>There are still three vacancies Lookout article published, response awaited</i>
	Youth Play Equipment Additional requests	Clerk	<i>Liaise with LYPFT on whether and how the request could be fulfilled.</i>
	Orchard Centre a) Painting of toilet door b) Toilet handrail to be refurbished c) Cleanup of the outside of the Orchard centre and complete the exterior painting d) Entrance into the Orchard Centre by the door can be slippery. e) Hole in archive cupboard as a result of the fuse board being moved f) Repainting of interior and fitting of new notice boards	Councillors	<i>All tasks are pending for the time being</i>

Action List
7th April 2026 Meeting

Ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
	Road Wardens	Clerk & Cllr. Heal	<i>Method statements circulated to councillors</i>
	Footpaths Overgrown Footpaths	Chair & Clerk Cllr. Shapland	<i>Some work done & Cllr. Shapland to be liaised with</i>
	Concrete Bin Disposal To remove the unsightly concrete bin next to the A377	Cllr. Heal	<i>Awaiting dry weather</i>
	Village Maintenance Cleaning of signs To be arranged.	Cllrs Heal & Down	<i>Possibly done by maintenance person</i>
	Village Maintenance Weed Clearance	Cllr. Graham	<i>Possibly done by maintenance person</i>
	SWW and sewage issues	Clerk	<i>MP contacted by Alex</i>
	Orchard Centre Telephone	Clerk	<i>The telephone had been purchased and was installed but was still not working. The clerk would contact BT once again to sort this out</i>
	Tarka Line To confirm that Steve Munday continues to be the parish council representative on the two organisations	Clerk	<i>Steve Munday has said he does not want to be the parish council representative.</i>
	Local Government Reorganisation To consider the potential effect on the parish of the implementation of the proposals to introduce a Unitary Authority to replace DCC and MDDC	Clerk	<i>Meeting arranged for 15 April 2026</i>
	Dangerous Tree The tree identified is considered to be a danger to motorists as it is hanging over the highway and only secured by webbing.	Clerk	<i>MDDC to rectify this</i>
	Planning Training Training offered at Lapford for latest planning legislation and proposals		<i>To be on Saturday 23rd May 2026</i>
	Temporary Fencing at Village Entrance The temporary barriers next to the bridge need to be replaced by a permanent		<i>Cloverdown contacted requesting fencing to be fitted. Response received</i>

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**Action List
7th April 2026 Meeting**

Ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
	fence. The landowners need to be identified and a request made for this to happen.		
	Village Maintenance To appoint someone to undertake general maintenance tasks around the parish either as a contractor or an employee	Cllr. Andrew/Clerk	Awaiting final decision by individual

