

Lapford Parish Council

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 14th January 2025

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk Phone: 07768 829511 Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

There was a meeting of Lapford Parish Council on Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.30pm held in the Orchard Centre, Lapford

Members Present: Cllrs Julie Down; Sue Briant-Evans; Bill Graham; Steve Fletcher; Ian Wilkie; Roy Andrews; Peter Heal; Alex Shapland.

Also Present: District Cllr. Steve Keable

In attendance: Rob Martin (Clerk) was not able to be present and the meeting minutes were written based on the audio recording taken by the Chairman.

Others: One member of the public.

MINUTES

2425-215 APOLOGIES

No parish councillor apologies had been received.
Apologies for absence had been received from County Cllr. Squires.

2425-216 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

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

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow public participation

2425-217 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION & UPDATES FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The parish council was invited to a meeting at the school on Tuesday 28th January 2025 at 6pm, alongside representatives from the PCC to hear about possible developments regarding the school's future. The chairman and Cllr. Graham would attend on behalf of the parish council.

2425-218 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

No reports had been received from:

a) Devon County Council

Cllr Squires had submitted a written report, as follows:

'Local Government Reorganisation

The English Devolution White Paper was published on just before Christmas.
Extract from the ministers letter probably gives some explanation as to where we are heading as residents in a two tier area;

"Local government reorganisation My intention is to formally invite unitary proposals in January 2025 from all councils in two-tier areas, and small neighbouring unitary councils. In this invitation, I will set out further detail on the criteria I will consider when taking decisions on the proposals that are submitted to Government. I intend to ask for interim plans by March 2025. As set out in the White Paper, new unitary councils must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.



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For most areas, this will mean creating councils with a population of 500,000 or more. However, there may be exceptions to ensure new structures make sense for an area, including on devolution. Final decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. We will ask you to work with other councils in your area to develop unitary proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area, rather than developing competing proposals."

Following publication of the Governments Devolution White paper it is clear that considerable change is going to happen in Local Government in Devon.

We have two options;

- 1. Do nothing and the government will impose changes**
- 2. Engage with government to get the best result for the residents of Devon.**

I believe that engagement with the government is the best option.

While I may not agree with all the government's proposals, I need to do everything I can to ensure that the changes will make local government sustainable for the long term for Devon and the residents.

Changes for disposal of upholstered furniture-reminder

New environmental requirements will mean that from **Sunday December 1** we will only be able to dispose of their upholstered furniture at one of eight of our specially designated Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

It follows the introduction of new requirements from the Environment Agency which require our recycling centres to have segregated facilities to handle Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS). WUDS include sofas, sofa beds, armchairs, recliner chairs, upholstered kitchen and dining room chairs, upholstered garden furniture, stools and foot stools, office chairs, futons, bean bags, floor and sofa cushions.

The HWRCs that will be able to accept Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating from Sunday December 1 2024 are: –

East Devon; Knowle Hill in Exmouth

Exeter; Pinbrook Road, Exeter

Mid Devon; Ashley, Tiverton

North Devon, Seven Brethren, Barnstaple

Torridge; Bideford

South Hams; Ivybridge

West Devon: Okehampton

Teignbridge: Brunel Road, Newton Abbot

WUDS cannot be accepted at any other Devon HWRC after December 1 and residents will need to ensure that they take their WUDS to a site that can accept them or book a bulky collection with their district council who will charge for the service.'

b) Mid Devon District Council

District Cllr. Keable thanked the parish council for its response to the transport plan which had identified the need for more bus services in the Mid Devon area, particularly north of the Tarka line.

He went on to say that it was becoming clear that there would be more capital investment in the Tarka line services because it was currently operating at or above its



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capacity at times and that new proposed housing developments were proposed in villages and towns adjacent to the line. This investment would need to be across the board with stations, lines and signalling having to be upgraded to accommodate a potential doubling of the service frequency to two trains per hour.

As far as improving the service to Lapford is concerned, there was resistance to increasing the number of stopping trains because of poor access to the station. This is an important matter to be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan which should include proposal for better access and press for all trains to stop because it was the biggest community adjacent to the Tarka line.

Mid Devon District Council were looking at moving decisions on Section 106 closer to the communities involved. A revised process would be introduced to allow this.

He commented on the Government's Devolution White Paper and highlighted that the proposed changes would have an impact on the work of parish councils.

2425-219 MINUTES

On a proposal by Cllr. Andrews, seconded by Cllr. Wilkie, it was **Resolved** to receive and adopt the minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on 10th December 2024.

2425-220 ACTION LIST, CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The clerk had circulated his report, as follows:

1. Christmas & New Year Break

In the five weeks since the last meeting, there have been less time than usual to get things done, but I have concentrated my efforts on clearing some items from the Action List.

2. Bus shelter grant

Devon County Council have managed to pay the grant for 50% of the bus shelter twice in December 2024. I have notified the relevant officers of this and will repay the grant when I receive an invoice.

3. Road Warden Equipment – Storage

The full list of equipment has been purchased and is currently being stored by Southwest Fixings Ltd, who are waiting for instructions for delivery. An email exchange with David Drew is still unresolved and the suppliers are pressing for a delivery date and location. If Mr. Drew concludes that he is unable to store the equipment, another interim solution will be have to be found fairly quickly.

4. Community Risk Assessments

This was circulated before the last meeting and, to date, no ideas have been put forward by councillors. The end-date of the consultation is 28th February 2025 and some sort of response should come from the parish council.

5. Action List

I have updated the Action List to present the current position as I know it. These include:

- **Neighbourhood Plan** – This is on the agenda. DCT have sent a lot of information on the conclusions of the consultation event and have liaised with the chairman on a potential house to house survey questionnaire.



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- **Lapford Toddler Play Facilities** – The toddler play equipment price has been secured and an intention to order sent to the contractor. A formal order will not be sent until confirmation of the S106 finance is received. Too much delay in this will push the price up and could make the whole project unaffordable. The lead-in time from order to installation is approximately 10 -12 weeks.
- **Gift Aid for Church Green** – this has now been claimed and should result in tax refund of around £360.
- **Select List of Contractors** – still not attempted yet.
- **Bank Account Signatories** – This has now been put in place and Cllr. Graham added to the signatories list.

The chairman ran through the matters on the Action List. The matters discussed were:

- **Road Warden's Equipment** – the equipment had eventually been delivered and was being stored in a shed provided by David Drew. There would need to be a check to ensure that what had been delivered was in accordance with the original list which would be carried out by Cllr. Wilkie. There was still a need for further training to be done and all work would need to be planned before being carried out. Contact would be made with Stacey Lumsdon to ensure she was aware that progress had been made. Cllr. Wilkie would take the lead in liaising with the Road Wardens on behalf of the parish council.
- **Highway Matters** – the clerk to follow up the previous emails sent on the subject.
- **Toddlers Play Equipment and Section 106 Application** – the clerk had just been notified that there was further information required to finalise the application which he would put together as a matter of priority. Cllr. Andrews would supply supporting documentation for the Section 106 application.
- **Footpaths** – Cllr. Shapland had received the P3 grant application forms from the PROW team at Devon County Council and he would liaise with the clerk to complete these for next year.

2425-221 FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr. Briant-Evans reported on the latest HOLD meeting with the grass-cutting contract going out to contract and the faulty gate locks on Lower Town Place being removed. It was also decided not to renew the Cooperative Society Membership.

2425-222 COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Celebrations Committee

- i) Cllr. Heal reported that the Quiz would be on 31st January 2025 and that the maximum number of 14 teams had applied. A reserve list would be drawn up if more came forward. People had indicated they might offer a draw prize for the event, or even a cake for the evening and these could be dropped at the chairman's home or at the event from 5pm onwards. Planning for the VE day celebrations was the current task which was proceeding well.
- ii) On a proposal by Cllr. Graham, seconded by Cllr. Fletcher, it was



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Resolved that the funding contained within the events reserve (circa £500) be made available to pay for the set-up costs of the VE Day Celebration event.

b) Lapford Emergency Action Plan (LEAP) Committee.

A LEAP meeting had taken place with the main concern being the lack of response to the letter to Highways sent in November 2024. The clerk would chase this up again, adding in a further problem with the hedge opposite the Mill with a gap appearing following work carried out and the protective fence falling over. Cllr. Graham had a land ownership plan which he believed indicated that the land in question might be owned by Network Rail. He would send the plan around to everyone.

2425-223 CHURCH GREEN TRUST FEEDBACK

The next meeting of the committee would be Tuesday 21st January 2025.

2425-224 GRANT APPLICATIONS

The following grant applications had been received

- a) **Citizens Advice - £300 towards running expenses** – the clerk would follow up the question of where the quoted presence in Lapford was and when it was available. A decision would be delayed until this was known. (Power to be used – Section 142, Local Government Act 1972)
- b) **Lapford Community Church - Projector Equipment for Village Hall** – On a proposal by Cllr. Heal, seconded by Cllr. Fletcher, it was **Resolved** to give a grant of £2,000 to this project, with £1,305 to be financed from the Calor Gas grant reserve and the remainder from the General Reserve. (Power used – General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011)

2425-225 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (PROW) P3 GRANT – 2025/2026

Dealt with in item 2425-220 above.

2425-226 GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

Quotations would be invited for the cutting of specified areas of grass in the village during Summer 2026 in the next Lapford Lookout. The advertisement would be based on that used for 2025.

2425-227 ROAD SAFETY ON THE A377

To consider the request for a footpath on the A377 as follows:

I live at, 2 Railway Cottages, Lapford, Crediton EX17 6QU, on the A377 just past lapford along with 8 other cottages along the road .

I am contacting you in conjunction with contacting Devon highways on the recommendation from the police , on a number off occasions my self and my wife have been forced into the hedge by speeding cars and Hgv vehicles then verbally abused for walking on the road to catch the train or bus into crediton /Exeter, yesterday a speeding car flipped on its roof and through my garden fence onto my drive , a few months ago a speeding car crashed through my neighbours



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fence and smashed through the house into the bathroom. I have asked for a path from the kennels on the 377 up to lapford train and bus stop so we can use the local amenities safely we are an older generation of residents and often also use the spar shop at lapford garage .Sooner or later one of us is going to get killed on that road , I spoke to Devon highways sometime ago and they have told me to contact yourselves for a solution to this speeding and safety problem

The response from the Community Highways Officer was that new footpaths were not being provided as funds were being directed towards maintaining the highways in the existing network, not creating new. The clerk would write back to the resident accordingly.

2425-228 CAR PARKING AT EGGESFORD STATION

To consider a proposed improvement of car parking at Eggesford Station through Winkleigh Parish Council where DCC have produced a report that considers options. It is important that if Lapford is not to lose out, for this Council to be involved, as this will include campaigning for the doubling of train on the Tarka Line, as a 30-minute service.

Eggesford Station Monitoring Group are working to get an acceptable improvement in parking and are working with Steve Munday. What form of feedback does Lapford Parish Council want from the monitoring group? The conclusion was that Lapford Parish Council would keep a watching brief on the progress of this whilst trying to ensure that it does not mean that the service for Lapford would suffer.

A note should be written to Steve Munday thanking him for his continued work with the railway authorities on behalf of Lapford.

2425-229 AGGRESSIVE DOGS AND OWNERS

District Cllr. Keable wished to raise awareness of what was being done to reduce the effect of aggressive dogs in Eggesford Forest which followed a public meeting at Winkleigh Village Hall with the Police, Forestry England, and him as District Councillor. He can report the installation of notices at the three main forestry car parks. There is to be a further meeting in January to review and consider what other action could be taken.

Cllr. Keable also wanted the parish council to consider making a contribution to the emptying of possible new rubbish bins if they are installed. The chairman said that this could not be considered without knowing the potential cost of doing so.

2425-230 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION & DEVOLUTION

District Cllr. Keable reported on the possibilities for Devon County Council and the District Councils considering what form Unitary Authorities might take in the future. He stated that the options being discussed seemed to be changing daily and he believed that Devon would not be part of the first tranche to be considered by central government.

When the situation became clearer, parish councils will need to look at the effect on its activities caused by the changes, so it will be just keeping an eye on the situation over the



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coming months and years.

2425-231 LAPFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Since the last meeting there had been quite a number of meetings including with Luke from DCT in putting together the consultation survey.

A meeting of volunteers had taken place on 11 January 2025 which had involved seven volunteers and five councillors and revealed that the group had wide-ranging skill-sets which could be useful. A Steering Group has been set up.

The next parish council step would be to get the explanatory pamphlet out to inform the community of the progress to date and what needs to happen thereafter. The pamphlet would be distributed to all households with the next Lookout.

It was decided to have a separate meeting to decide on the final survey questions to be asked following Cllr. Graham's suggested changes and the date was set as being immediately after the Church Green meeting on 21st January 2025.

2425-232 PLANNING MATTERS

a) APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED

To consider the following Planning Applications and to agree comments:

Reference	Location	Proposal
None		

b) APPLICATIONS AFTER THE AGENDA WAS ISSUED

To consider responses to applications notified after the agenda had been set.

c) MDDC DECISIONS

Reference	Location	Proposal	MDDC Decision
24/01733/PNAG	Land at NGR 272981 106370 (Kelland Barton) Lapford Devon	Prior notification for the proposed formation of cow tracks for agricultural use	No Objection – Prior Approval Not Required

2425-233 BANK RECONCILIATION & BUDGET MONITOR STATEMENT

The Bank Reconciliation and Receipts and Payments statement, as at 31st December 2024 were received and **Adopted**.

2425-234 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SCHEDULE

On a proposal by Cllr. Graham, seconded by Cllr. Andrews, it was **Resolved** to make the payments scheduled below:



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PAYMENTS

Payment to	Services	Month/Ref	Amount £	Payment No.
2024/2025				
S Hemsworth	Salary	Jan 2025	65.62	2425-29
RJ Martin	Salary	Jan 2025	550.30	2425-29
HMRC	Tax Deductions	Jan 2025	154.40	2425-29
Everflow	Orchard Centre Sewage & Water	Jan 2025	55.93	DD
BT Group Ltd	Orchard Centre Broadband	Jan 2025	55.70	DD
IONOS	Village Website Hosting	Jan 2025	21.88	DD
Adobe	Acrobat Professional	Jan 2025	19.99	DD
Devon County Council	Duplicate Grant Payment Refund	Bus Shelter	2,215.00	2425-30
Congregational Church	Grant	Audio/Visual Equipment	2,000.00	2425-30
The Ark	Room Hire	Neighbourhood Plan Meetings	100.00	2425-30
Victory Hall	Xmas Light Energy	Contribution	10.00	2425-30

RECEIPTS

Receipt from	Services	Amount £	Method
2024/2025			
Devon County Council	Bus Shelter Grant Mk 2	2,215.00	BGC

On a proposal by Cllr. Graham it was **Resolved** to pay The Ark £25 per Neighbourhood Plan meeting, including drinks. This would result in a payment of £100 for the four meetings to be held there for the Neighbourhood Plan for January 2025. It was also **Resolved** to pay the Victory Hall £10 in respect of electricity used for the Christmas Tree lights.

2425-235 MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

The chair had nothing further to raise.

2425-236 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Cllr. Wilkie raised the question of whether there should be a maintenance and clearance programme for the bus shelters. This, together with village weed clearance, would be considered for a future meeting.

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2425-237 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Parish Council meeting is to be on Tuesday 18th February 2025 at 7.30pm in the Orchard Centre.

2425-238 CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed at 9.18pm

 18/2/25

LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Action List 12th November 2024 Meeting

Latest Minute ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
2324 235	Ownership of the adjacent land to be determined.	Clerk	LEASE TO BE DRAWN UP
2324 069	Ash Dieback. Ownership of affected trees to be researched and addresses passed to the Clerk.		ON LIST FOR MS/ST
2324 235 2425 043	Cleaning of signs to be arranged.	Cllrs Heal & Down	Deferred until Spring
2324 242	Neighbourhood Plan.	Parish Council	Finalisation of survey contents to be able to conduct it in March 26 Setting up of Steering Group
2324 235 6 2425 046	Telephone Box – Make safe for use as book swap area.	Cllrs. Wilkie, Heal	PROGRESS NOT KNOWN
2324 117	Community Broadband	Clerk	PENDING
2324 137 3	Clerk's Hours Worked – to solve the disparity between the hours paid for, 35 hours per month, and the hours worked.	Clerk	With the chairman.
2324 231 2425 047	Openreach Fibre Connection	Clerk	With Openreach
2324 235 3	PC Historic Records	Clerk Cllrs Briant-Evans and Down	For Chair and Vice Chair to action.
2425 005	Co-option of new councillors	Council	Cllrs. Down and Briant-Evans to work up advertisement
2324 250 2425 053	Lapford Play Facilities - To put together a plan of what is to be done with both the Playing Field, liaising on this with LYPFT, and play equipment	Clerk, District Chairman, Cllr. Keable, Cllr. Andrews and others	Toddler equipment agreed. Order to be sent once Section 106 received Youth equipment, liaise with LYPFT
2324 309	Orchard Centre work to be done <u>Painting of toilet door</u>		

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Action List 12th November 2024 Meeting

Latest Minute ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
	<u>Toilet handrail to be refurbished</u> <u>Cleanup of the outside of the Orchard centre and complete the exterior painting</u> <u>Entrance into the Orchard Centre by the door can be slippery.</u> <u>Hole in archive cupboard as a result of the fuse board being moved</u> <u>Repainting of interior and fitting of new notice boards</u>		All tasks are pending for the time being
2425 037	Highways – Road Wardens	Clerk & Cllr. Heal	Equipment delivered & in storage Further Training to organise
2425 039	Footpaths P3 Grant Claim 2025/26 Overgrown Footpaths	Chair & Clerk Cllr. Shapland	Cllr. Shapland to be liaised with
2425 040	Highways Additional outstanding jobs requiring completion	DCC	Additional list sent to Margaret Squires, awaiting response.
2425 175	Select List of Contractors – to draw up a list of people that can be contacted first when work needs to be done.	Clerk	List to be drawn up from the Lookout and other local sources with request for hourly rates being made.
2425 177	Projector Equipment for Village Hall	Cllr. Graham	Donation of £2,000 agreed