

Lapford Parish Council meeting 12th August 2025

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**There was a meeting of Lapford Parish Council on Tuesday 12th August 2025
at 7.30 p.m. held in the Orchard Centre, Lapford.**

Members Present: Cllrs. Julie Down, Sue Briant-Evans, Bill Graham, Peter Heal, Steven Fletcher, Alex Shapland.

Others: Four members of the public.

MINUTES

2526-095 APOLOGIES

Cllr. Roy Andrews, District & County Cllr. Steve Keable, Rob Martin (Clerk).

2526-096 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow public participation.

2526-097 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

- Alex Gater gave an update regarding South West Water and the recent incident at Lapford Mill. He is now preparing a letter to our MP and will provide the Council with a timeline and supporting information. He also has maps of the pipework. Concerns raised include the age, condition and monitoring of the pipes, and the health of the river. Cllr. Down to write to SWW with copy to Environment Agency. **Action Cllr. Down.**
- Another member of the public wished to make a positive comment that there was a constant stream of children, parents and grandparents making use of the new Toddlers' Area. It is an excellent and well used site.

2526-098 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

A report had been received from District and County Councillor Steve Keable and is attached to these minutes, along with a supplementary report from Cllr. Dechesne, Cabinet Member for Parish & Community Engagement.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in line with Standing Orders.

2526-099 MINUTES

It was resolved to adopt the draft minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on 8th July 2025. Proposed Cllr Briant-Evans, Seconded Cllr Fletcher, All in favour.

2526-100 ACTION LIST, CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) Telephone kiosk – Cllr. Down has spoken to Cllr. Andrews and he will make progress on kiosk. Cllr. Heal has the door. **Action – Cllrs. Andrews & Heal.**
- (b) Footpaths – Cllr. Shapland reported that the go ahead had been give for the gates in Park Meadow. He was requested to action the items from last month's minutes (2526-071). **Action – Cllr. Shapland.**

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- (c) Orchard Centre telephone. The Clerk has this. Cllr. Down will collect it. **Action Cllr. Down.**
- (d) Planning Enforcement – No further information received. Cllr. Heal reported that Mid Devon District Council were not very robust in enforcement. It was agreed that the situation at Eastmere Farm was more urgent than at Prospect Cottage. Cllr. Down will email Cllr. Keable with photos and copy in Cllr. Heal. **Action Cllr. Down.**
- (e) South West Water re drainage issues – Already covered, see 2526-097 above.
- (f) Tourism signs – The cost of two large (up to 2 square metres) signs on the A377 would be £1,000 each. Do we wish to spend £2,000 to support local businesses? Devon County Council would install them at that cost. Signs could include: accommodation, food, pub, miniature railway, historic church, playing field, war graves, The ARK Café, etc. The cost could potentially be split between local businesses and topped up by the Council. To be explored further.
- (g) Yellow post box – This should stay where it was originally installed but does need a tidy up and repaint. There is also a metal plaque mounted on timber. Alex Gater kindly undertook to refurbish these items.
- (h) Sybil Williams' tree – This will be pruned again once the fruit has finished. Agreed to publicise that members of the public could help themselves to fruit once ripe. **Action - Cllr. Down.**
- (i) Concrete bin – Graham Heal will deal with this in the next couple of weeks.

2526- FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES

101 There was no feedback.

2526- COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 102
- (a) Celebrations Committee. This committee is no longer meeting. £20 has been received from the sale of surplus Jubilee mugs which is to be allocated to the Celebrations pot. **Action – Clerk.**
 - (b) Lapford Emergency Action Plan Committee (LEAP). This Committee had not met since the last Parish Council meeting.

2526- CHURCH GREEN TRUST

103 Minutes of the meeting held on 15th July have been circulated.

2526- YOUTH PLAY FACILITIES

104 The Clerk was able to submit an application for £7,147 of S.106 funds on 6th August 2025. In addition, LYPFT are contributing £1,000, and there will be a balance to come from Lapford Parish Council reserves.

2526- WEED CLEARANCE, ETC

105 The Clerk has queried situation with public liability. If someone is working for the Parish Council and has undertaken an appropriate risk assessment, then cover is in place. It was agreed to trial a vinegar based weedkiller, Jennychem. Cllr. Heal to purchase 5l and test around the Orchard Centre and on his own property. If it is successful, the treated area can be expanded. **Action – Cllr. Heal.**

There are trees growing under the doors of some garages at Moorland View. Cllr. Down to report again (to Simon Newcombe). **Action - Cllr. Down.**

Village Tidy Up Day 20th September 2025. Cllr. Briant Evans has posters. How do we

encourage more public participation? Public need to be reminded that Mid Devon District Council no longer clears weeds. The idea of a Village Task Force, a band of helpers with an hour or two to spare was discussed and it was thought the direct approach might work best. To be publicised via Lapford Lookout, **Action Cllr. Briant-Evans**, and Facebook, **Action – Cllr. Down**. Suggestions for tasks to be considered at next meeting.

The situation regarding weeds on the boundary wall between Church Green and Lower Town Place and on the wall of Lower Town Place adjacent to the pavement was discussed. It was agreed to ask Trevor Hill to clear the pavement and wall but to leave the top which will require hand weeding. Everything else to be left to HOLD. Cllr. Down to speak to Andy Epstein. **Action – Cllr. Down**.

2526- ORCHARD CENTRE REFURBISHMENT

106 The Orchard Centre is looking much better and Cllr. Heal will get back to it shortly. **Action – Cllr. Heal**.

The situation regarding members of the public taking water has been resolved since Cllr. Fletcher had a word.

2526- HIGHWAYS MATTERS

107 Cllr. Down will speak to the Clerk as soon as possible as he aims to be back doing paperwork in the next few days. **Action – Cllr. Down**.

2526- GRANT APPLICATION

108 Cllr. Down has received a bank statement from LYPFT showing a balance of circa £2,000. The request was for a grant of £336.27 to cover the insurance premium. This was agreed. Proposed Cllr. Graham, Seconded Cllr. Fletcher, All in favour. Cllr. Down to contact the Clerk to see if he can authorise payment. **Action – Cllr. Down**.

2526- LAPFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

109 Clerk remembers contacting the Conservation Officer, but was unsure of the conversation. Cllr. Briant-Evans reiterated that the query was about how to manage the Conservation Area not about redefining the boundaries. It was more to ask for advice and any update on conservation matters and what conservation means. Clerk to follow up. **Action – Clerk**.

2526- PROPOSED CHANGE OF NAME FOR LAPFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

110 The new name will be "St. Thomas of Canterbury CE Primary School, Lapford". Cllr. Briant-Evans suggested that we need to somehow strengthen the ties between the Council and the School.

2526- TODDLER'S PLAY AREA KEY

111 Nate Hayes has the key as it's his padlock. He will let Cllr. Andrews know. Following a discussion about where to keep the key for emergency use, it was decided that there was now no need to lock the gate and that the padlock could be removed.

2526- FLOWER BED

112 Two fuchsias have been stolen. Cllr. Heal has two more and will replace them. **Action – Cllr. Heal**.

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2526- PLANNING MATTERS

- 113 Only one application has been received for an agricultural building at Great Hole. All Councillors agreed to support this application. Cllr. Down to write to MDDC in support.
Action – Cllr. Down.

2526- BANK RECONCILIATION AND RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS COMPARED WITH BUDGET

- 114 Not available due to the Clerk's illness.

2526- RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SCHEDULE

- 115 Not available due to the Clerk's illness.

2526- CLERKING ISSUES

- 116 The Clerk is entitled to three months' full pay. He will be back to desk work within this timescale but probably won't be attending meetings. His first task will be to get the Council's accounts and financial records up to date and make any necessary payments. The Clerk and Chair had agreed a payment of £1,221 (to come from Neighbourhood Plan funds) to employ a university student to analyse data during the summer break. Cllr. Down was unsure what data was to be analysed but requested retrospective approval for this payment. Cllr. Briant-Evans stated that this had not been agreed by the NP Committee who had not yet agreed a way forward. Concerns were raised as to whether it would be a worthwhile exercise but there was a need to go back to NP Committee and revisit the minutes. The NP funds are ring-fenced and it was not for the Parish Council to decide how they should be spent.

2526- PLANNING TRAINING

- 117 Cllr. Down was unable to attend but has received a presentation which she will forward to all Councillors. All Councillors and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group need to be very aware of this. More emphasis is being placed on meeting housing targets, but it's not necessarily based on a rural standpoint and fighting sporadic development may become more difficult in future. Cllr. Heal asked a question about the Neighbourhood Plan and was told that the money we've already got is it, there will be no more. Clerk suggests we may go back to Devon Communities Trust to fund if they have sufficient monies. There will be no funding for new NPs and any in process may not come to fruition as there will be no more money.

2526- MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

- 118 (a) The bench in memory of Karen Burrows, currently on Lower Town Place, is to be moved to the Playing Field. All agreed. Trevor and Grace Hill are all ready to move it and will work with John Burrows on a date. There was a discussion about whether it needed to be fixed. It doesn't need a base as it is plastic. It was agreed to place the bench against the chain link fence next to the churchyard. All agreed to go ahead.
- (b) The Chair sent pictures of the hedges to Network Rail and they were cut the next day – but by the Quicks. Now that the hedge has been cut, what about the weeds? They are aware of this and it's not a concern, they will look again at annual review. Lapford Parish Council to keep an eye on the situation and flag it again if needs be.
- (c) Lapford Parish Council had a table at this year's Revel, a very hot day. There had been some interest and potential new Councillors were advised to attend some meetings to see what's involved. There wasn't as great deal of engagement from the public but it

was thought to be a worthwhile exercise and we should do it again. Perhaps LPC should have some big banners, and maybe even a logo? This to be a subject for the next meeting as it was felt guidance was needed as to what LPC is looking for. Suggestions put forward include: Apple tree, bridge, river, cow. Councillors were asked to put their thinking caps on!

2526- COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- 119**
- Cllr. Briant-Evans enquired whether Cllr. Keable's reports could go to the Neighbourhood Plan Committee.
 - The water leak on Kelland Hill has now been repaired.
 - There has been a large lorry parked outside the Orchard Centre each week night recently. Cllr. Down will speak to the driver. **Action - Cllr. Down.**

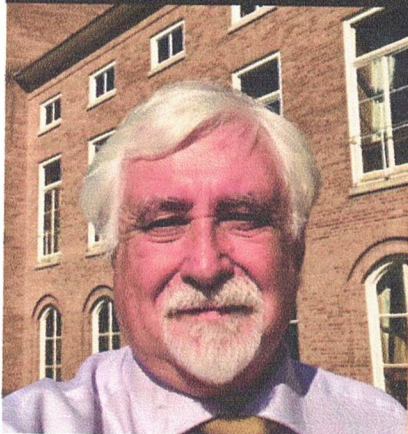
2526- DATE OF NEXT MEETING

120 9th September 2025, Orchard Centre, 7.30pm.

2526- CLOSE OF MEETING

121 The meeting closed at 8.59 p.m.

JD



Cllr STEVE KEABLE August 2025

County Councillors Report - Creedy, Taw & Mid Exe for:

Bickleigh • Brushford • Cadbury • Cadeleigh • Chawleigh Cheriton Fitzpaine • Coldridge • Cruwys Morchard • Down St. Mary • Eggesford • Kennerleigh • Lapford • Morchard Bishop • Newton St. Cyres • Nymet Rowland • Poughill • Puddington • Sandford • Shobrooke • Silverton • Stockleigh English • Stockleigh Pomeroy • Thelbridge • Thorverton • Upton Hellions • Washford Pyne • Wembworthy • Woolfardisworthy • Zeal Monachorum

Mid Devon Councillors Report - Taw Vale for:

Chawleigh • Lapford • Nymet Rowland • Wembworthy

Mayoral Strategic Authority

All Council Leaders in Devon are advocating for the creation of a South West Peninsula Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) to represent £1.2 million residents and a £25 billion economy.

This proposed MSA would replace the recently formed Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority, aiming to become an "economic powerhouse" to drive growth.

This Mayoral Strategic Authority is distinct from the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Devon.



Local Government Reorganisation

All Parish Councils in Mid Devon District Council area are being invited to the Annual State of the District Debate on September 17th, 5pm at Phoenix House, Tiverton.

Both Devon County and Mid Devon District have Surveys. We need your help to shape the future of local government in Devon, by letting us know what matters to you in your community.

MDDC survey closes at the end of August:

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk>



DCC Survey link is open until 14th October:

<https://devoncountycouncil.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/v3/accessible-survey?step=step1>

County working with Barnardo's on new homes for care leavers

The council is partnering with Barnardo's to create eight new homes for care leavers with complex needs. These homes, located at Aldens Farm in Alphington, Exeter, and Silverhills in Barnstaple, will help young people aged 16 and over transition to independent living.

Each site will have four self-contained homes and accommodation for a support worker to provide tailored guidance.

Barnardo's is investing £950,000 per site, supported by an £18 million donation from the Katherine Martin Charitable Trust, while the council will lease the land for 125 years. Construction is expected to finish by March 2027.

Railway funding confirmed

Funding for Cullompton's new railway station has been confirmed by the Department for Transport and HM Treasury. This marks a major milestone after years of campaigning. The funding will support new stations at Cullompton and Wellington, improving connectivity and enabling growth. Cullompton station, originally opened in 1844 and closed in 1964, will reopen near Junction 28 of the M5, supporting the Culm Garden Village development with around 5,000 homes.

Councillor Steve Keable, Mid Devon District Council Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration, said: "I am delighted to see this significant progress. This builds on the positive momentum of the relief road project and shows real progress towards delivering infrastructure that supports Cullompton's future. I am hopeful that funding for major improvements to Junction 28 will be re-confirmed by the Government later this year, as that is a critical piece of infrastructure that is essential to planned Culm Garden Village, and further support the growth and sustainability of the town centre."

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Strategy aims to create Brighter Futures for young people in Devon

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/news/strategy-aims-to-create-brighter-futures-for-young-people-in-devon/>

Councillors backed the "Brighter Futures – Employment, Education and Training Strategy" which not only sets out a long-term vision to tackle the levels of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) but also looks to address the root causes of disengagement of young people aged 16-25.

New grant scheme to boost essential skills across Devon

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/news/new-grant-scheme-to-boost-essential-skills-across-devon>

Essential Skills Devon is designed to support innovative, community-led projects that help people aged 16 and over to overcome barriers to learning and unlock new opportunities.

Mid Devon - A year of achievement

MDDC Council Leader's Report

Mid Devon District Council has continued to make improvements across the district. Resident satisfaction with the council has risen by 11%, reaching 52%, with 60% of residents now feeling well informed which is a 15% increase.

Overall satisfaction from housing tenants sits at 70%, with 79% feeling safe in their homes and 72% happy with the repairs service.

The council is listed in the top five per cent of districts nationally for recycling, 11th out of 197 councils, with residual waste reduction placing it 9th. Recognised as one of the fastest improving councils for recycling, Mid Devon is shortlisted for a national Local Government Chronicle Environmental Services Award.

The rebranded Active Mid Devon service has cut operating costs by around £500,000, and memberships are at a record 7,000 members. The council is supporting care leavers, carers, and low-income households with free and discounted memberships—ensuring health and wellbeing are not a luxury, but something that is accessible to all.

The leisure centres themselves are improving too with new facilities, accessible toilets, and major energy efficiency upgrades thanks to additional grant funding. Across the district, there are more electric vehicle chargers, more trees, and greater biodiversity, showing real action to support the council's climate ambitions.

On infrastructure, the £33.5 million Cullompton Relief Road funding was secured in February with work starting in 2026. This, alongside the railway station announcement, shows the

Edging closer to major rail upgrade

The 15-year Local Transport Plan, approved on Monday, July 28 by the Board of the newly formed County Combined Authority, outlines a long-term strategy for improvements across all modes of transport, with implementation set to begin in April 2026.

Tim Steer, Chair of the Devon and Cornwall regional branch of Railfuture and founder of the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance (NDRDA), described the plan as "a vitally necessary point of reference for all those campaigning for sustainable transport improvements."



Tim Steer (centre) with David Northey & Cllr Steve Keable at Kings Nympton Rail 200 Event

.... enormous effort by officers and members to deliver what communities have been waiting for. Planning application decision times are also well above national targets.

Economically, the council attracted more than £1m in project funding to be invested into communities — including the Tiverton Work Hub.

The council was 11th nationally for business rates collection in 2023/24 and has now surged to 2nd in 2024/25, hitting 99.83%. Council tax collection continues to improve, even in tough times, alongside continued support for those who most need it.

£250,000 in food and energy vouchers has been distributed through the Household Support Fund to those who need it most.

Cllr Luke Taylor, Leader of the Council, said: "We have faced many challenges over the past few years and there are some big hurdles ahead, particularly around government funding and changes to national targets.

"These changes will affect our housing targets and planning service particularly, while a lack of clarity over large scale projects such as improvements to Junction 28 and the Local Government Reorganisation programme causes uncertainty for us all.

"But the progress we have already made together is real, measurable, and nationally recognised. We are a council delivering on its promises, adapting to change, and placing residents at the heart of everything we do."

August 2025 Report – from Cllr Gwen Dechesne MBE, Cabinet Member for Parish & Community Engagement

Positive news

Mid Devon wins national praise as it slashes costs and boost green goals (as reported on Devon Live 29/07.2025 – by Lewis Clarke).

Well worth a full read the article shows how progress is thriving even under pressure, here are just a few bullets points:

- Slashing leisure costs- now Active Mid Devon achieved record membership numbers of 7000 while reducing operating costs by £540,000.
- Leading the nation
- Residents reporting greater satisfaction with local services (11% increase to 52%)
- Residents feel better informed (15% increase to 60%)
- Tenant satisfaction with housing services remains strong (70% overall approval)
- Greener initiatives taking root across the district
- Economic development is seeing a boost

Well being

July will see the first of three wellbeing walks being trialled in Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton, with a view to giving potential volunteers confidence to lead walks themselves. Two junior park runs have been approved and funding is currently being sought.

Planning for Towns & Parishes 28 July

An information event was held via Teams and in person aimed at enlightening us around the planning changes. It was lovely to see many of our parish councillors attending. It covered the Planning & Infrastructure Bill, other recent MHCLG consultations, the 5 year housing land supply and Applying the “tilted balance”. There was a huge amount of information in the presentation, the event was recorded and is available on-line to view if you are interested. Below are a few of the highlights I noted.

The Planning and infrastructure Bill (which is still going through committee stage) has implications for Development management as it has changed the national scheme of delegation, which sets out the powers of officers, committees etc and the powers that are delegated to officers and where an application may go to a planning committee, rejected developments

Within MDDC currently 96% of planning applications are determined under delegated powers – but everything could be called to committee subject to councillors providing sound reasons as to why it should be determined in a public forum

MHCLG want to provide standardised scheme of delegation and the government will tell us what can and cannot be referred to committee.

Scheme of delegation – this will split applications into two tiers. Tier A and Tier B. Tier A will never go to committee, Tier B will go, via a gateway which will require the head of planning and chair to agree what is brought before the committee. At present there is no guidance around what will happen in the event the two parties do not agree.

Tier A - this tier will never go to committee and covers Householder, approval of conditions, prior approvals, lawful development (existing & proposed), non-material minor amendments.

Tier A also includes: minor commercial development (up to 999 m2 floor space) minor residential development up to 9 dwellings) and all reserved matters applications.

Tier B – is anything not in Tier A. These include significant new housing and commercial applications not in A (Major developments). Applications by the local authority, officers or councillors. EIA development is not mentioned but likely to be referred given scale (major development)

There is scope to refer some enforcement cases and S106 not linked to a planning application e.g. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

MHCLG consultations

There are consultations still taking place on areas within the Bill, these include consultations on:

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- **Environmental Delivery Plans** covering specific geographies. This provision has led to wider environmental concerns that instead of producing specific solutions to particular problems (e.g. nutrient neutrality embargos) developers will not have to establish a specific base line.
- **Build out rates** – this part of the bill responds to concerns about land banking and slow delivery. Developers would need to set out a proposed delivery rate for their development and may be liable for a “Delayed Homes Penalty” for failure to deliver.
- **Consultations** planning applications fees. Planning Fees is likely to be ringfenced – however, plan making and enforcement are excluded.

Housing Land supply – initially MDDC were required to deliver 392 per year (now 566 pa). The 2023 Housing Delivery Test indicated that MDDC was at or below and the 95% delivery requirement assessed against the previous 3 years supply. This is a reflection of build outs, not planning permission therefore it is based on market conditions. This led the Council to prepare an Action Plan setting out how it would improve housing delivery.

If we are unable to demonstrate ways to increase housing supply across Mid Devon in the short term we will have less control in how the area is developed. Without a housing land supply or a current Local Plan – ours expired July 2025, the “Tilted Balance” comes into operation which introduces a far higher threshold for refusal of an application.

“d) where there are no new relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas of assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. if any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”

Local plans – there is a legal requirement for the council to prepare a local plan for the district. The Local Plan adopted in July 2020 – lifespan to 2033 has to be reviewed every 5 years and demonstrate the 5 year land supply – it is out of date and does not demonstrate the 5 year land supply.

Travellers and disruption at our Leisure centre in Cullompton

A message from the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement

“As many of you are already aware our popular leisure centre in Cullompton has been closed since Friday 4 July, following the arrival of a large number of travellers on a nearby field.

“While the travellers are not on our land, the Council took the decision to close because our centre has easy access to showering and toilet facilities, which in the past have been damaged and misused under similar circumstances. Our staff have also received verbal abuse and direct threats to damage Council property have also been made. The police have been made aware of these threats.

Read the full press release: <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/travellers-cullompton/>

Active Cullompton will reopen at 5pm today (Tuesday 15 July) following the departure of the traveller encampments from nearby land.

As a thank you for your patience and continued support, we’re increasing the previously announced £10 discount on member accounts to £15. Members just need to speak to the reception team on their next visit to the centre, who will apply the credit to their Direct Debit.

Read the full press release at:

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/active-cullompton-reopens-today/>

Waste Depot remodelling – need to increase the storage capacity

MID Devon District Council has outlined initial plans for a remodelling of its waste depot site that could cost around £1.7 million. A host of changes are being planned for the Willand waste depot to

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Email from Alex Gater - 13th August 2025

Dear Julie

Thank you for your time last night at the regular meeting of the council. To this end I am writing as discussed regarding Southwest Water and their recent sewage spill

My Case Reference with SWW : 0015253853

Following the failure of the pressurised sewage riser main, a request of the operator SWW is;

- -Can they give details on the age, type and construction of the pipe?
- -What is the serviceable life given for the pipe?
- -What is the max operating pressure and flow rate of the pipe, are these monitored and if so, are these exceeded?
- -Why did the pipe fail?
- -As the pipe connects their pump station to their treatment works, do they monitor input and output at these assets, which would give an early warning to pipe failures when the I/O do not match and, if not, why not?
- -What assurances can SWW give that the pipe will not fail again?

To limit the size of the email I am using WeTransfer to forward a section from the **CON29DW Residential Drainage and Water enquiry** at the point of conveyance in 2015, and the **email correspondence I have with the water company** - this is long and probably does not require a reading by the councillors, but I attach it for completeness and for your reference.

Email from Alex Gater - 18th August 2025

Dear Julie,

Further to my email below, it has occurred that it might be prudent when writing to SWW to also ask if they can tell the council more about their procedures for assessing and processing sewage spills.

More fully, Can SWW please explain what their procedure is for assessing spills and the impacts of such on the people living locally to them?

I am drafting a letter to Mel Stride who has been helpful in the past and will copy the council in this.

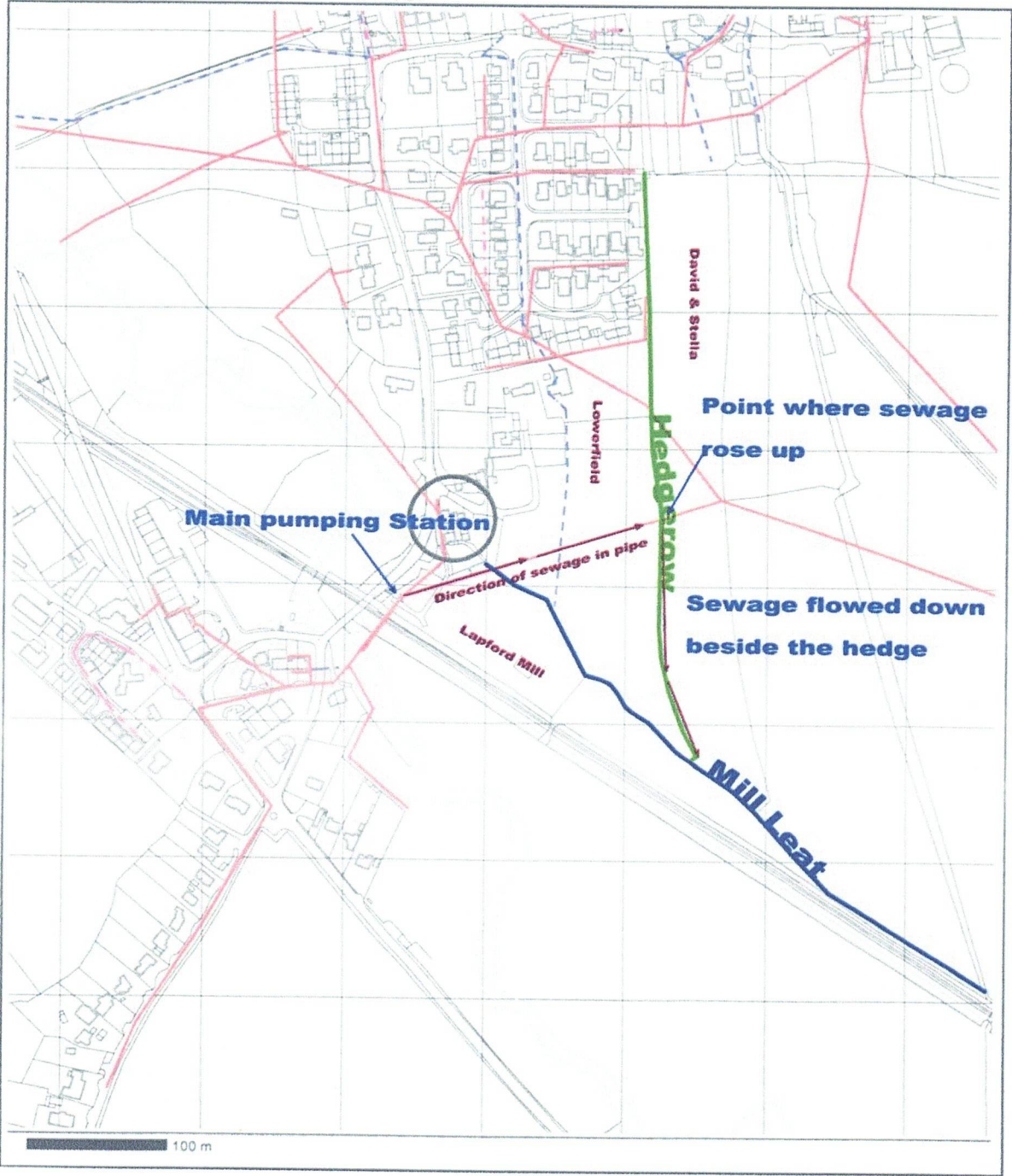
Best regards

Note for Councillors:

Full details of all correspondence is available from Alex Gater on request. He is also happy to answer any questions.

Please see plan overleaf.

1.1 - DRAINAGE PLAN



Handwritten signature or mark.