

Alwington Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Alwington Village Hall on 22 July 2025, commencing at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllrs Brian Adams (Chair), Elaine Beresford, Alison Browning, Christine Moore, Neil Rothney and Bill Slee.

In attendance: Michael Olley (Parish Clerk), Cllr Robin Julian (Devon County Council), Cllr Phil Pennington (Torridge District Council) and 3 members of the public.

1. Min. 23:25/26 Apologies

No apologies were received.

2. Min. 24:25/26 Declarations of Interests

No declarations were received in respect of personal or prejudicial interests.

3. Min. 25:25/26 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 13 May 2025 were approved as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Browning, and seconded by Cllr Rothney.

4. Min. 26:25/26 Correspondence and Communication:

a) Correspondence

Various bulletins and correspondence including those from Devon Association of Local Councils, Devon County Council, Torridge District Council, Devon Climate Emergency, Devon Communities Together, North Devon Records Office, North Devon Coast National Landscape and Royal Devon University Healthcare were noted.

b) County/District Council Reports

Cllr Phil Pennington (Torridge District Council) gave apologies for not attending meetings since December 2024. He updated the Council on Local Government Reorganisation which would end the current two tier organisation and replace it with a unitary authority. These would need to be formed of a district with a minimum of 500,000 residents. Discussions were continuing, with consultation taking place. Any resulting unitary authority would likely be centred away from Torridge, possibly in Exeter.

Cllr Pennington stated that TDC had been awarded money to assist those living in poverty within Devon. Those wishing to access those funds should contact TDC. Recent letters sent to those using their home for business (e.g. those with holiday lets) were also discussed. The Council expressed their dissatisfaction to Cllr Pennington that waste which had previously been recycled was now going to landfill. Cllr Pennington thanked the Council for bringing this to his attention.

Cllr Julian (Devon County Council) updated the council on matters relating to Devon County Council and the various committees he was a member of. On devolution proposals he stated these would

be sent to Government later in the year following the ongoing consultation. On First Responders he explained that the South West Ambulance Trust had been asked to reconsider plans to remove the Fire Brigade as First Responders after having heard the views of DCC Councillors. He asked that if potholes were poorly repaired or not repaired following reporting that photos be sent to DCC Highways, copying him in. Cllr Julian expressed concerns regarding DCC financial reserves.

The Chair raised concerns regarding repairs a local farmer was having to undertake to a wall bordering a road following the collapse of a culvert. The Chair also raised concerns over wasted time/resource during recent road repairs within the Parish. Cllr Julian asked that the Chair email him details so that he could follow the concerns up and report back.

PUBLIC SESSION

No points were raised during the public session.

5. Min. 27:25/26 Financial Matters:

a) To receive an update on the current financial position

As at 14 July 25 the total in the bank account was £9101.97. Since the last meeting payments had continued to be made to Ionos (monthly email subscription) totalling £71.40 and Lloyds (monthly account maintenance) of £12.75. Payments were also made for the internal audit of £110 to Mrs K J Snooks, Square Space (for website services) of £148.80 and the agreed grant of £284 to the Village Hall (to assist the costs of the Horticultural Show).

b) To receive any accounts to pay

Payments will need to continue to Ionos (email subscription) and Lloyds (account maintenance). The Council's insurance policy is due for renewal on 14 August, with a premium due of £544.34.

c) To note any income received

None received.

d) To note any other financial matters arising and consider any small grant applications received

No other matters were discussed. All financial matters and accounts to pay were approved, proposed Cllr Browning, seconded Cllr Rothney.

6. Min. 28:25/26 Planning Matters:

a) To note and consider any applications received

The council had been consulted on an application for change of use from place of worship (F1) to dwelling house (C3) (Self-Build) at Alwington Methodist Church. No comments were raised at the meeting.

b) To note any permissions granted

It was noted that the application seeking demolition of the existing barn and erection of one dwelling and associated works in lieu of Class Q approval (self build) at grid reference 241088 123728 and the application for erection of livestock building at grid reference 241844 123590 had been approved.

c) To note any refusals advised

The application for agricultural access and track at grid reference 241041 123326 had been refused.

d) Any other planning matters arising

No other matters arose.

7. Min. 29:25/26. Maintenance and highways

Cllr Rothney had reported 30 potholes to the Highways team at Devon County Council. Although he and other Cllrs had checked that each pothole had met the DCC repair criteria, DCC only accepted that two met the criteria, although five were in fact repaired by the attending team.

It was agreed that the Council should use the ready mixed cold tarmac it had received from DCC to repair small potholes, leaving the bigger potholes for DCC to repair. It was agreed that Cllr Rothney purchase repair sealer to be used by the Council when conducting repairs. Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Rothney.

8. Min.30:25/26. To agree actions the Parish Council could take regarding concerns of excessive speed on the A39.

A paper circulated to Cllrs gave details of speed surveys undertaken by the DCC Neighbourhood Highways Officer. These showed little evidence of excessive speed, with the Highways Officer stating that the speed limit appeared to be correctly set for the road. The Council discussed concerns from residents living near the road and those crossing the road (e.g. to use the bus stop). It was agreed that Cllr Slee write to Geoffrey Cox MP raising the residents' concerns.

Action: Cllr Slee to contact Geoffrey Cox MP.

9. Min. 31:25/26. To consider moving the Council bank account.

A paper circulated to Cllrs gave options the Council could take to avoid or mitigate the recent introduction of charges by Lloyds Bank. It was agreed that the Council would continue to use Lloyds bank but put £7000 into a Commercial Instant Access Account. This would generate funds to offset the charges introduced by Lloyds.

Action: Clerk to move funds as requested and manage them appropriately.

10. Min.32:25/26. To agree an approach to managing the Parish Website

It was agreed that Cllrs Slee and Bereford work with the Clerk to edit the Council's website. The Clerk would act as owner/manager.

11. Min. 33:25/26. To agree Parish Priorities for action in 2025/26

Following a discussion of possible priorities, the Chair requested that Cllrs agree the priorities ahead of the next meeting, letting the Clerk know what the priorities would be and which Cllr would manage each priority.

The Formation of the QEII Memorial Gardens was considered in a Section 2 meeting.

Action: Cllrs to email the Clerk priorities/managers by 26 August.

Date of next meeting: 2 September 2025 at 7.30 pm in the Committee Room, Alwington Village Hall.

Signature _____ **(Chair)** **Date** _____