

Alwington Parish Council

DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Alwington Village Hall on 8 September 2026, commencing at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllrs Brian Adams (Chair), Alison Browning, Elaine Beresford and Bill Slee (Vice Chair).

In attendance: Michael Olley (Parish Clerk), one member of the public and Cllr Robin Julian (Devon County Council - DCC).

1. Min. 30:26/27 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Moore and Cllr Rothney.

2. Min. 31:26/27 Declarations of Interests

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

3. Min. 32:26/27 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 7 July 2026 were approved as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Slee, and seconded by Cllr Browning.

4. Min. 33:26/27 Correspondence and Communication:

a) Correspondence

Various bulletins and correspondence including those from Devon Association of Local Councils, Devon County Council, Torridge District Council, Devon Wildlife Trust, North Devon Coast National Landscape and Westbank Community Health and Care had been received and circulated to Cllrs.

b) County/District Council Reports

Cllr Julian updated the Council on various highways issues including work on the new Clovelly Road roundabout and on safety measures due to be taken to improve the Clovelly Road traffic lights next to Asda/Affinity Village. He confirmed that although local Government reorganisation was on hold, next year's elections would take place within Torridge. He also mentioned continuing support offered to carers by DCC and the planned re-opening of the maternity unit at Barnstaple. Finally, he offered to support a bid by the Council for a locality grant in the region of £500.

PUBLIC SESSION No comments raised.

5. Min. 34:26/27 Financial Matters:

As at 1 Sep 26 the total in the bank accounts was £8884.03. Payments of £8.50 for bank charges, £235.20 for annual defibrillator support and £595.68 for renewal of the Council's insurance had been made. £5.98 had been received in interest payments.

The ongoing annual payment in the region of £235 for defibrillator support (in Woodtown) was agreed. Proposed by Cllr Beresford, seconded by Cllr Slee.

6. Min. 35:26/27 Planning Matters:

Retrospective application for replacement of farm track at Grid Reference 240461 125447 had been received (and had subsequently been approved by TDC). An application for the demolition of an existing barn and erection of new dwelling in lieu of planning approval (affecting a public right of way) - self build at Grid Reference 241893 124226 had also been made. No comments were made by Cllrs on either application. An application for the creation of agricultural access and track

at Grid Reference 241041 123326 had been received. The Council agreed to support the application. ACTION: Chair to draft a letter of support for submission.

It was noted that planning approval had been given for a temporary agricultural workers dwelling at Grid Reference 239547 123390. The Chair and Vice Chair had attended the planning meeting on July 30th to present their concerns with the application. The Chair reported back that they have serious concerns about the process that led to this decision to approve the application. The expert opinion from Devon Highways was that the junction joining the A39 was hazardous. Photographic evidence demonstrating the poor visibility for a driver joining the A39 from the single track lane and of vehicles attempting to turn into the single track lane being forced to reverse back towards the A39 after meeting oncoming vehicles on the lane was provided. This expert evidence was disputed and ignored by two committee members who simply provided personal anecdotes describing their own driving experience at this junction.

In addition, the economic/ business case to support the application for the dwelling depended on the applicant expanding his business. This would involve significantly increasing the number of cattle ultimately necessitating the erection of a second large building on the 5 acre plot. This was highlighted by the Chair in his presentation to the committee where he provided evidence regarding the amount of organic waste that such an enterprise would generate. He also highlighted that due to the small size of the plot, the majority of this waste material would likely be hauled off site by road and that the larger enterprise would also likely require a significant increase in the number of deliveries by road. This evidence was ignored and or dismissed by some members of the committee who claimed that it was not relevant to the application in front of them. Their principal argument was that this enterprise should be "given a chance" to develop and expand.

The Chair and Vice Chair were extremely disappointed and concerned by the standard of debate at the meeting and the apparent disregard of relevant evidence placed before the committee. They expressed their concerns of the raised potential for a serious road traffic accident at the A39 junction as a result of the decision taken by Councillors on the TDC Planning Committee. The Chair had written expressing his concerns to Helen Smith, Head of Planning & Building Control at TDC. They had not yet received a response.

Cllrs had been notified of a potential planning breach Cllrs had also been notified of the erection of wire netting and black plastic sheeting to a height of approximately 2 metres on land situated in Portledge Place. The information had been passed to TDC in both cases.

7. Min. 36:26/27. Maintenance and highways

As Cllr Rothney was absent no update was given.

8. Min. 37:26/27. Parish Priorities

An update was given on the Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Gardens.

Date of next meeting: 10 November 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Committee Room, Alwington Village Hall.

Signature_____ (Chair) Date_____