

DITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Incorporating the Hamlet of Capton and the Manors of Bozomzeal and Coombe

DRAFT Minutes of the monthly meeting of Dittisham Parish Council
Wednesday 4 March 2026 at 7:00pm, Dittisham Village Hall

Present: Parish Cllrs Bond (Chair), Golding, J Green, N Green, Hawkes, Neale, Unitt & Taylor were present, as was C Radford (Clerk). C.Cllr Rake was present for part of the meeting. 2 members of the public attended.

Apologies: Cllr Pope, D.Cllr McKay

Public Forum: No issues were raised in the public session

1. **Apologies** were received as above.
2. **Declaration of Interests** *To declare interests on items on the agenda.* Cllrs declared an interest in the following items: Cllr Neale on item 5.7 payment 2603_5. Cllr Bond on item 5.7 payment 2603_9.
3. **Approval of Minutes** To consider approval of the minutes of monthly meeting held on February 4 2026. **It was RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting as an accurate record without amendments.
4. **Community Reports** To receive reports from:
 - 4.1. South Hams District Council Councillor (D.Cllr) The D.Cllr had given apologies, and raised two matters via the Clerk:
 - Operation of Leisure Centres South Hams District Council (SHDC) has various options available to it which will be discussed by the Council's Executive. All are likely to be expensive.
 - National Planning Policy Framework Briefing The D.Cllr encouraged engagement with the briefing in relation to Neighbourhood Planning.
 - 4.2. Devon County Council Councillor
 - Devon County Council (DCC) Budget It was reported that the budget was passed last week. The Financial Settlement from Government was better than expected, however the burden of finance of local government is being shifted from general taxation to local taxation. County level council tax can't be put up beyond the 4.9% limit set and can't put it up by less otherwise the Council risks 'stepping off the escalator'. Budget headlines include a total of £19M for highways, and £4m fund for potholes, white-lining and vegetation. This is still not enough but an improvement on last year. There is a 7% increase in Children's Services. The proposed budget cut for Libraries has been reversed. A £1M reserve has been set to support the transformation.
 - Libraries The consultation for libraries has closed, 20,000 representations. The outcome of the consultation has been called in for review. The whole of the cabinet is from the same political wing, and no one came into politics to shut or damage libraries. It was commented that the comms around the consultation has been poor, as it was intended to support a vision for a transformed library service which was turned into consultation on reduction in services.
 - Fostering New arrangements offer better terms with reduced bureaucracy for fostering parents.
 - Torcross The C.Cllr is proud of the County's response to the collapsed road at Torcross. Officers have done everything they could do to support the acute problem, the chronic problem still needs consideration.
5. **Financial Matters**
 - 5.1. Grant Applications *To note grant applications received and agree process for consideration.* It was noted that applications have been received from West Dart Bus and Dittisham Store. Applications will be reviewed first by the Finance Committee before making a recommendation to the Parish Council. **ACTION: The Clerk** to invite Dittisham Stores to the April meeting of the Parish Council to present their application. It was noted that there is a public meeting about the shop taking place on April 1 between 5 – 7pm to which cllrs may also wish to attend.
 - 5.2. 2026/27 Car Parking Tariff increases *To consider quotation from Metric Group to update tariffs from 01/04/26* **It was RESOLVED** to accept the quotation of £219 plus VAT to change the tariff on 2 car park machines and to raise a purchase order as requested by the supplier. It was noted that the last cash reconciliation noted some inconsistencies between the cash counted and the amounts recorded. **It was agreed** to ask Metric to check the machines if there are still inconsistencies in March.
 - 5.3. 2025/26 Internal Audit *To confirm arrangements for internal auditor contract* Cllrs were informed that the internal auditor that provided audit services to the Parish Council in 2024/25 was available to undertake the 2025/26 audit at a cost of £195 no VAT. **It was RESOLVED** to contract PATAS to undertake the 2025/26 audit, as independent and competent.

DITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Incorporating the Hamlet of Capton and the Manors of Bozomzeal and Coombe

- 5.4. Red Lion ground rent To consider response to Red Lion's query on ground rent arrangements. It was **RESOLVED** to note that the virtual payment of the peppercorn rent for 2025 has been paid. **ACTION: The Clerk** to relay this to the Red Lion and to confirm the dates on which the annual peppercorn rent is due, as 26th July each year.
- 5.5. Maintenance Contracts
- 5.5.1. Grounds Maintenance Contract To consider contract extension letter and approval of proposed payment schedule It was **RESOLVED** to approve the contract extension letter as produced by the Clerk and to simplify the payment schedule spreading the £4300 + VAT contract across 10 monthly payments of £430 + VAT per month from March to December.
- 5.5.2. Maintenance Works – Various To consider quotations received in response to brief for works It was **RESOLVED** to contract the services of Jon Hodge for maintenance works at a cost of £2650, no VAT. Works include 1: Laying two sections of concrete foundation along the base of the Ham wall to prevent undermining of wall by wave action. 2: Replace 3 posts in the Ham Car Park; 3: Replace 1 slat on bench on the Ham; 4: To repair wall in the culvert next to the footpath to sailing club; 5: Fix guttering to the bus stop on Riverside Road.
- 5.6. Receipts and Payments between meetings the following was noted:
Payment 2602_8 Lloyds bank fee = £4.25
- 5.7. March Payments for authorisation It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the following payments:
- Payment 2602_1 to HMRC for Quarter 3 VAT Payment = £2550.88
 - Payment 2603_1 Nest Pensions for Pension contributions on Clerk's Feb Salary = £39.61 no VAT
 - Payment 2603_2 to CRadford February Clerk Salary (month 11) = £877.61 no VAT
 - Payment 2603_3 to HMRC for Tax and NI on Clerk's February Salary = £262.49 no VAT
 - Payment 2603_4 to MHurrell for monthly car park checks and banking takings (Feb) = £150 no VAT
 - Payment 2603_5 to RNeale for reimbursement: JottaCloud backup services Monthly renewal Feb at 12EUR per month (£10.55) and Lebara mobile phone monthly renewal Jan at £4.08 plus 82p VAT per month = £15.45
 - Payment 2603_6 to Judge's Web Design for INV003128 Hosting Renewal Standard Hosting Package - 1 Year: dittishamparish.co.uk and 12 March > @ £80 no VAT. Website Hosting: Backups & Wordpress updates - 1 Year 12 March > @ £60 no VAT = £140
 - Payment 2603_7 to Lazerpics for inv 32144 200 x Full colour reverse print onto Clear vinyl with White backing contour cut to shape window stickers inside stick 74mm Dia Ref: Car Park Permits 01-04-25 / 31-03-26 @138.00 plus VAT. Set up @ 10.00 plus VAT Postage & Packing @ 15.00 plus VAT = £195.60
 - Payment 2603_8 to HMRC for interest of Q3 VAT payment = £8.66
 - Payment 2603_9 to RBond for reimbursement: HP Instant Ink at £3.74 plus £0.75 VAT = £4.49
 - Payment 2603_10 to South Hams District Council Invoice: 22389350 Cashless Processing fees for 1st October 2025 to 31st December 2025 for The Level and The Hams Cashless Income at £212.50 plus £42.50 VAT = £255
 - Payment 2603_11 to Dittisham Village Hall for 3 meetings at 2025 rate. 3 x DPC Monthly meetings at 2026 rate. 1 x 2 hour meeting in School Room at 2026 rate at £149.16 plus £29.83 VAT = £178.99
6. **South Hams District Council's Planning Decisions** To note the following:
- 6.1. 3733/25/PDM Land At Sx 848 537 (Little Coombe Barn) Dittisham Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to 1No dwellinghouse (Class C3) & for associated development (Class Q (a+b)) REFUSED
- 6.2. 0049/26/TCA 2 Watermans Cottage Manor Street Dittisham: Ash – remove, die back present. T3: Maple – reduce by 1/3 all over, to reduce risk of branch failure. APPROVED
- 6.3. 0071/26/TCA Laburnum Cottage Manor Street Dittisham: T80: Oak – remove dead wood. A,B,D,E,T88,T87: Ash – remove deadwood and Ivy. T83: Acer – remove Ivy. G84: x3 Sycamore – remove Ivy. T81,T82,T86,T85,C: Ash – fell, due to Dieback. APPROVED
7. **New Planning Applications** to consider a recommendation to the planning authority on the following applications:
- 7.1. 3607/25/FUL Red Lion Inn, The Level, Dittisham, READVERTISEMENT (amended description & revised plans) Construction of ground floor bay window, rear first floor extension, installation of 3.no Juliet balconies, & roof light It was **RESOLVED** to SUPPORT the application.
- 7.2. 0022/26/HHO Herongate, Lower Street, Dittisham, Householder application for new incidental outbuilding It was **RESOLVED** to OBJECT TO the application with the following comments:
- Inappropriate development in a conservation area

DITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Incorporating the Hamlet of Capton and the Manors of Bozomzeal and Coombe

- Inappropriate development in a national landscape
- visual impact from the river

8. Blackberry Cottage Surface Water Drainage

8.1. Update *To receive an update following cllrs attendance at a site meeting, advice received as requested, and note receipt of an updated Drainage Risk Assessment and Draining Strategy from the applicant's consultants*

- It was reported that cllrs Bond and Taylor met with PCA, the structural engineers who compiled the surface water drainage report. The meeting clarified that the 'infrastructure' would stop at the boundary line and the clean surface water run off would run into the culvert. The view was that the easement wouldn't be required, and no commercial benefit would be appropriate.
- It was requested whether the photographs provided giving an example of the pipe on the boundary be included in the report, and that the type of tank be specified: i.e. replacement of the septic tank with a digester system.
- It was also noted that the Construction Management Plan has been provided. The Parish Council had raised concerns about access to the lane. The Construction Management Plan confirms that the logistics will come via the Dart, and up the path to the rear of the property, and completed at high tide, so it shouldn't interrupt public access.
- The owner confirmed that the gully would be cleared regularly.

8.2. Request for Parish Council permission *To consider the owner's request to obtain the Parish Council's permission in writing to cross third-party land and connect the surface water drainage to the watercourse for the life of the development.*

It was RESOLVED to confirm to South Hams District Council that based on the PCA report of 2026, there is not easement required on for the surface water drainage from the property to flow into the culvert that exists on the Parish Council land.

Members of the public left the meeting.

Cllrs raised some concerns about the track leading from the foreshore alongside Lod Cottage to Blackberry Cottage being degraded as a result of the contractors' use. It was agreed to raise this with the landowner in correspondence and get confirmation that it would be restored if damaged.

9. Reports from Councillors' Working Groups and External Forums

9.1. Neighbourhood Plan *To receive an update* Cllrs were informed that a Neighbourhood Plan page has been added to the Parish Council's website. South Hams District Council (SHDC) has apologised for the delay in signing off on the Parish Council's Reg 5 application for designation of a neighbourhood area. The legal team has yet to sign this off.

9.2. West Dart Bus *To receive an update* The new bus has arrived and is now parked on Riverside Road. It will go on its first community transport trip this week.

9.3. Dittisham Village Hall *To receive reports to and from the Committee meeting* Reports were circulated. The notes reported that the committee could not change the Village Hall's financial year end to align with the Parish Council's financial year. **ACTION:** Cllr Unitt will follow up with a query as to why.

10. Clerk's update

- Pensions Regulator The Clerk has made the necessary redeclaration to the Pension's Regulator, due this year.
- Play Park inspection Booked The Annual Play Inspection has been booked to take place during March. A fee of £50 would be levied if the Parish Council wished to meet the inspector on site. The Clerk has opted to be set up on the system as an 'Automatic' client with RosPA, unless otherwise instructed. **It was RESOLVED** to hold off on this until the next inspection has been received.
- Car Parking Stickers 180 car parking stickers have been purchased by Dittisham Sailing Club. An invoice has been raised and the stickers have changed hands.
- VAT Despite the VAT100 form being completed, and payment signed off by the Parish Council, there was an error in the return being filed with HMRC. On review of the Clerk's appeal, HMRC cancelled the late submission penalty point issued. An interest payment is due, and appears on the March payment schedule.

11. Potential new car park and burial ground *To receive an update following meeting held on 2nd March and consider proposals going forward.* Those who had attended an information sharing meeting with proposed project managers of the potential new car park and burial ground site updated other members. It was reiterated that the Parish Council had agreed to be the named party on an options agreement for the land and cover legal fees of up to £2000. The meeting of the March 2 informed cllrs that further funding of approximately £10,000 would need to be raised to support a comprehensive preapplication process. The Parish Council has been identified as a potential source for that funding, alongside the Red Lion, the Village Hall, St George's Church and the Dittisham Charity. It was noted that this expenditure would be speculative, as there are no guarantees that planning would be successful. During discussion, cllrs considered the potential beneficiaries, potential liabilities, and agreed that further consultation in the community would be required before going down a preplanning route, particularly if the precept

DITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Incorporating the Hamlet of Capton and the Manors of Bozomzeal and Coombe

is raised to finance the project.

It was RESOLVED that process should be taken a step at a time. The Parish Council will pursue the Options Agreement, as already agreed, and work with the project managers to develop a consultation/communication process with the Parish, noting that the Neighbourhood Planning process would provide a helpful framework for that consultation process. It was proposed to form a working group of all interested parties, with representation from the Parish Council, should Parish residents be in support of the project.

- 12. Lengthsman Contract** To note current contract is due to expire on 31/03/26. Consider arrangements from 01/04/26. **It was RESOLVED** to readvertise the contract. **ACTION: The Clerk** to write to the Lengthsman to advise him.
- 13. Trees on Ham Lane** Consider request made to the Parish Council for trees on the north bank to be cut back. It was reported that there is a TPO in place. **It was RESOLVED** to ask for the trees to be included in the next tree survey.
- 14. Devon Local Government Reorganisation Proposals** *to discuss proposals ahead of consultation closure on March 26 2026.* Not discussed.
- 15. Internal Audit: Assertion 10 compliance** *To consider actions required for completion before March 31 2026.*
- **Digital Compliance**
 - It was confirmed a council-owned domain is in place for website and staff emails and no action is required.
 - It was confirmed a role based email for the clerk is in place and no action is required.
 - It was confirmed that the Parish Council has adopted an IT policy was adopted and no action is required.
 - It was noted that the Parish Council's website was last reviewed in November 2024. **It was RESOLVED** to contract Judges Web Design to undertake a review before March 31 2026 at a cost of £80.
 - **GDPR/Data protection**
 - It was noted that the Parish Council has an 'Information Management Requirements Policy' that references Data Protection last reviewed in April 2023. **It was RESOLVED** that the Clerk produce a Data Protection Policy for consideration by the Parish Council at the earliest convenience.
 - It was noted that there is no:
 - Training programme in place for both staff and Councillors on GDPR principles and requirements.
 - Policies and Procedures for subject access requests and data breaches in place.
 - Data Protection Impact Assessment procedure in place to cover any additional services.
- It was RESOLVED** that the Clerk produce policies for consideration by the Parish Council at the earliest convenience, and for these policies to confirm appropriate and secure technical and organisational measures are in place to protect personal data from breaches.

16. Correspondence and Contacts to note or consider

To note:

- South Devon National Landscape (SDNL) Partnership - 13 March at 1000 The Parish Council was informed Partnership meetings are broadcast live to the South Devon National Landscape YouTube channel allowing observers to follow the meeting remotely. Videos remain available on the YouTube channel until draft meeting minutes are published on the website.
- Dittisham village hall website Cllrs were informed that Dittisham Village Hall is currently looking at setting up a page on the new dittisham.com website for the village hall. This is going to have all our events and activities listed as well as prices and a booking form for any potential hirers. The Village Hall feels that users are finding it hard to access the information that they need on our current website. The village hall will make sure that there is a clear link to the new website so that users can find their way to the information they need through either route.

To consider

- 20260204 Bonfire Night Cllrs has been asked by Galmpton Bonfire Society if Dittisham was interested in having a bonfire night. A suitable venue outside of Galmpton is being sought for a display. The Society has been made aware that an application to use the Ham would be required, but is interested in the Parish Council's view on the principle of a Bonfire night held in Dittisham before a formal application is made. **It was RESOLVED** to politely decline.
- South Hams Leader urges people to have their say on shake-up to local services and councils in Devon Cllrs noted that the Leader of South Hams District Council is urging everyone in the district to take part in the Government consultation on the reorganisation of local government in Devon, which closes on the March 26 2026. All proposals are published on the following website, where there is also a link to the consultation questionnaire: <https://www.devonlgr.co.uk/>.

DITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Incorporating the Hamlet of Capton and the Manors of Bozomzeal and Coombe

- 20260212 Devon County Council - Public Footpath Diversion Order 2026 - Footpath No.7, Dittisham As required by Schedule 6 of the Highways Act 1980, the Parish Council has been issued with Notice of the making of the above Order, together with a copy of the Order itself. Any representations on the order should be made by the deadline of March 12 2026. **It was RESOLVED** to SUPPORT the diversion.
 - 20260223 The Dittisham Nativity - Brian Patten The Parish Clerk has been asked if any help can be given to source a copy of 'The Dittisham Nativity', seemingly unpublished. **ACTION: Cllr Neale** to follow up with the Clerk.
 - 20260226 All Town & Parish Council Briefing: NPPF and its Relationship with Neighbourhood Plans Cllrs were informed that a briefing will be held remotely via MS Teams on Thursday, 12 March from 4:00pm to 5:00pm to address reforms to the national planning system and the impact on how planning applications are determined locally. Huge increases in housing numbers handed down by government have left a lot of planning authorities vulnerable to speculative development as locally adopted policies are given less weight in decision making. By intentionally undermining adopted local and neighbourhood plans, government intend to create a 'boost' to the supply of housing across the country. Despite South Hams District and West Devon Borough Council's trying to protect the integrity of Neighbourhood Plan policies for as long as possible, emerging decisions from the Planning Inspectorate and the High Court are clear that certain Neighbourhood Plan policies can no longer be given the weight that either the Local Authority, or local communities would like. The virtual briefing to Town and Parish Councils to explain how changes to national policy will impact certain local and Neighbourhood Plan policies, and what the options are in the short to medium term. **ACTION: The Clerk** to send a link to cllrs interested in attending.
- 17. Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday April 1 2026 at 7:00 pm.

Meeting closed at 21:15.