

St GILES IN THE WOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held
on June 12th 2025

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Present: Mrs L Herniman took the chair, Mr G Hookway, Mr P Middleton Mr R Petherbridge Mr B King, Mr J Ayre, Mr A Chamings Mrs S Montague Mr S Dyer and Mrs A Snell (Clerk)
Apologies: Cllr R Lock Cllr T Elliott District Councillor Cllr C Cottle-Hunkin (County Councillor)
In Attendance:

Time for Public Participation

Declaration of Interests – Councillors are invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interest, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting. They are also reminded to consider whether in the light of recent activities any items within their Register of Interests should be updated.

1. The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th May were agreed and signed.

2. Clerk's report i. The Dog fouling issue, the problem is not improving, it was discussed and the next step is to send letters from the Parish Council to owners in an effort to get the issue sorted before contacted TDC.

ii. IWM Memorial Register. Cllr Middleton and his father are to deal with this enquiry.

3. Chairman's report i.

4. Highways,

The road from the village to Stoney Ford, at the back entrance to the farm buildings there is large pot holes and very uneven road, three people have fallen at this juncture, so highways are to be informed.

5). County and District Councillors items.

Please remember to report potholes online on [devon.cc/report-it](https://www.devon.gov.uk/report-it) or telephone 0345 155 1004. Cllr Cottle-Hunkin reported It's been an extremely busy few weeks since being elected as a county councillor, especially with the added responsibility of being Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs! This appears to have an extremely wide remit... A huge amount of work involved but I am hoping it will give me the opportunity to have a really positive impact on the council and will allow me to have a much stronger voice for our communities up here in Torridge and North Devon, which as we know are extremely rural and isolated and are so often forgotten about in favour of urban areas such as Exeter and the Southern half of Devon... I attended the Devon County Show this year and was pleased to speak on BBC Radio Devon alongside our new leader Cllr Brazil about rural isolation here in Devon, including the lack of public transport and poor access to services as well as the isolation experienced by farmers and the farming community. At our first full council meeting and AGM, as well as voting for our leaders and chairs, we also voted to install "swift boxes" to some of DCC's buildings, a quick and easy way to protect this declining species, and we will be lobbying central government to require all new builds to install "swift bricks" as standard.

At our first cabinet meeting we heard about plans to improve support for foster carers and agreed to bring allowances in line with national levels, reduce council tax charges for registered foster carers in line with neighbouring authorities, and also introduced an “equipment fund” to provide carers with equipment such as new mattresses, buggies and car seats. We hope this will show how much we value our foster carers and the important job they do, and increase retention rates across Devon. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/children-families-education/news/councillors-agree-improved-support-for-devon-foster-carers/> I have had lots of informal meetings too, some training, and briefings on a wide range of issues affecting the County, from Broadband to Childcare provision. Luckily most of these can take place online so I haven't had to travel to Exeter too much! You

will be pleased to hear I spent a day traveling throughout Torrington Rural in the Highways van with our neighbourhood highways officer. We were looking at the state of our roads, and I was learning about different methods and processes and finding out about what has been prioritised for future work. As well as this, it was the opportunity for me to highlight the many roads and areas that have been raised with me by local residents in the past few months. This of course included a drive through St Giles and the local rural roads, and the areas that you raised at the last parish council meeting are now on the spreadsheet for repairs! Unfortunately, due to the way their system currently works they are unable to provide timescales which is frustrating.

I attended the public meeting in the pannier market from Torrington Regeneration Board to find out what has been happening and some of their planned projects. They have created a new website for the town, building on the original OneGreatTorrington website that was set up 5 years ago. This website has new branding and will be updated regularly to show all of the local events taking place etc. I was particularly interested to find out about the Tarka the Otter Trail initiative which will involve a number of sculptures across Great Torrington and the Commons, and a dedicated book linking to the trail. The regeneration board is looking for people to join them, so if you would like to join or have any ideas for the town please email great-torrington@torridge.gov.uk

As your county councillor I have £8000 available through the locality budget! Very exciting! This can be used for projects that benefit the local community. Please get in touch with me first if you are interested in applying. The application form is very simple and can be found here along with more information about who can apply and what it can be used to support: [Locality budgets - Democracy in Devon](#)

I was really pleased to be invited to the Friends of Great Torrington Library's AGM and to hear from their guest speaker Alex Kittow, Chief Executive of Libraries Unlimited. I heard about the numerous craft events, message in a bottle, bounce and rhyme, walk and talk, plans for a repair café, and being the only place to print in Great Torrington. The friends have raised £1500 from book sales and do such a fab job volunteering at the library. Summer '25 has a new reading scheme with an underwater adventure theme, launching 12th July! The importance of the summer reading challenge was really emphasised, and I learned that children drop two reading levels at school if they don't read over the summer holidays! There was a reminder too that libraries are a charity. Libraries Unlimited run 54 libraries across Devon, have 2.3million visits, and receive help from more than 700 volunteers offering more than 24,000 volunteer hours (including teenagers doing their Duke of Edinburgh Award!). Yes reading is a tool to increase life chances. But libraries are much more than a place to borrow books. The slogan for Libraries Unlimited is “Enriching lives, building communities”, they are a community hub where everyone is welcome and libraries are for everybody. And in terms of looking after the environment, libraries are the ultimate form of recycling. Why buy when you can borrow?

I was shocked to hear on the news the plans to phase out fire service co-responders across the Southwest and put forward a response on the same day, and will be looking to find out the details and whether the decision can be reconsidered. [Devon County Council's concern at plans to phase out co-responder service - News](#)

Finally... PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE can I ask you to support The Globe Hotel community project in Great Torrington. They will be holding a public meeting this Saturday 14th June, 5pm in the Town Hall. There is currently around £100,000 raised but the goal they need to reach is £230,000. With less than two weeks to go this is urgent. Once this amount is raised the hotel will be owned by the community and a grant of more than half a million pounds will be released by central government towards its renovation. The aim of the globe project is to provide a training hotel to train young people in the hospitality sector. It would raise aspirations and would transform our town centre. Wouldn't it be great to have a hotel right next door to our Plough Arts Centre! Community shares start at just £50. Please spread the word with everyone and encourage them to invest. Link to crowdfunder here: [The Globe Hotel Torrington - a Community crowdfunding project in Torrington by The Globe Hotel Torrington](#)

6. Finance

Approve and sign the following cheques: -General Account,

656	Clerk's salary	£800.00
657	St Giles PCC	£200.00
658	Torrridge Volunteer Cars	£100.00
659	SW Ambulance Service Trust Fund	£100.00

- i. Agree and sign the Annual Governance Statement;
- ii. Agree and sign the Accounting Statement.
- iii. Fixed Asset Register

It was proposed by Cllr Petherbridge and seconded by Cllr Middleton to agree the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting statement, all in favour.

7. Planning

P C recommendations TDC

1/0442/2025/FUL	Removal of a section of hedge to create highway access for two parking spaces, Higher House, Kingscott.	No objections.
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- i. Enforcement cases, no report.

8. Police Report I Speedwatch as the road is closed none is being undertaken at present.

9. Recreation Field, TK Play do not offer a brochure. Cllr King is to look at the Thetford Play equipment to assess the next step to take to ensure all is in order.

ii. Parking on the Recreation Field, this was discussed as there has been a request when a wedding was taking place and also funerals. It was agreed unanimously that there would be "No Parking on the Recreation Field at All", for Health and Safety concerns.

10. Correspondence i. DALC Newsletter ii Emails have been circulated regarding the Torrridge Collaborative Group. li. An email has also been received regarding the Mobile Pizza Van

Date of next meeting—: **Wednesday 16th July 2025 7.30pm in the Parish Hall**

..... Chairman.....Date

Forthcoming meetings: **Wednesday 10th September 2025 at 7.30pm**