

Gulworthy Parish Council

Minutes of ordinary meeting held on Monday 7th July 2025 at Gulworthy Parish Hall No 181

These minutes are provisional until they are agreed and signed by the chair at the next meeting of the parish council.

Councillors present – Cllr K Steer (Vice Chair), Cllr K Royston (Chair), Cllr W Hamilton, Cllr E Wearing and Cllr G Lister

Also present – Emily Young – Parish Clerk, Cllr Debo Sellis and Revd Judith Blowey

Meeting opened 7.40pm

1. **Chairman's welcome** – Cllr Royston welcomed all and thanked everyone for coming.
2. **Members of the public** – *To consider requests from members of the public to make representations, answer questions or give evidence in respect of Council business under Standing Orders 3d to 3n.*
Revd Blowey said on 31 August starting at 12pm is the Gulworthy fete and dog show being held at Stubberlands. She also thanked Cllr Sellis for the generous grant towards the church toilet.
3. **To accept apologies for absence** - *Under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, members present should decide whether to approve the reason(s) given for absence.* **Apologies received from Cllr Edwards. Cllr Saxby also sent her apologies.**
4. **Dispensations & declarations of Interest** - *Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it. Requests for Dispensations should be made in writing to the Parish Clerk in advance of the meeting.* **None.**
5. **Minutes of previous meeting 180 to be approved and then signed by the chair as a true and accurate record of that meeting** - *To accept as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 2 June 2025 LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1).* **It was proposed by Cllr Steer to approve the minutes, seconded by Cllr Hamilton and agreed by all. Cllr Royston signed and dated the minutes.**
6. **Planning applications received to-date**
 - 6.1.1 **1611/25/LBC – Gawton farmhouse, Bere Alston** - Listed Building Consent to replace five slate windowsills on west elevation of main house with new local slate cut to same dimensions, bedded on NHL (lime) mortar, repair hall ceiling in same part of building which has a 0.5m2 area of collapse & much wider area of loss of adhesion to laths & joists, & apply a harling coat, scratch coat & top coat using a lime plaster, replace window frame in eastern elevation of master bedroom with a timber copy with single glazed windows – **Proposed to support by Cllr Royston, seconded by Cllr Steer, agreed by all.**
 - 6.2 **Planning applications received after publication of this agenda**
 - 6.2.1 **1903/25/HHO – Stubberlands bungalow, Gulworthy** – Householder application for small single storey garden room for incidental use – **Proposed by Cllr Steer to support, seconded by Cllr Hamilton, agreed by all.**
 - 6.3 **Planning decisions**
 - 6.3.1 **Ref: 189/25/FUL – Hele Farm, Gulworthy** – Replacement of existing slurry store and removal of an agricultural building together with associated landscaping – **Conditional approval**
7. **DCC Cllr Sellis** – £8k community budget, £2k granted to St Pauls towards new toilet. She recently attended the village centre meeting and afterwards spoke to Milestone (MGroupServices) who confirmed they have a community pot to support good community projects. They can offer

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physical and financial help. Cllr Sellis is involved in the audit and governance committee. The new council is in the process of carrying out lots of training as since the election 80% of Cllrs are completely new to local government. The new council have said they will borrow £10M for new children homes.

8. WDBC Cllrs Saxby & Blackman – Cllr Saxby

National Spending Review: Council Tax & Funding Updates

Council Tax Referendum Limits

The Government's Spending Review confirms no change to council tax referendum limits for 2026/27. For shire districts like West Devon (which do not run social care), the maximum increase remains the higher of 2.99% or £5 per year on a Band D property. In practice, this means West Devon Borough Council can consider up to a ~3% rise without triggering a local referendum.

Core Spending Power

Nationally, local government "Core Spending Power" is projected to rise by around 2.6% in real terms over the next few years. However, the specific figures for West Devon for 2026/27 will only be known later in 2025 once the detailed finance settlement is announced. A modest real-terms increase is expected, but caution remains around spending until figures are confirmed.

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

A386 Priority Route

Devon County Council's countywide LCWIP identifies the Tavistock-Plymouth corridor (A386) as a priority for improved walking and cycling routes. Currently carrying around 16,000–18,000 vehicles daily, the A386 lacks safe footways or cycle lanes. The LCWIP proposes a new multi-use trail linking Clearbrook to Roborough, providing a safe off-road alternative for cyclists and pedestrians.

Local LCWIP Projects

West Devon has submitted a prioritised list of local LCWIP projects, including routes within the Bere Ferrers ward (covering Bere Alston and surrounding villages). Devon County Council will now review these proposals and determine which schemes may receive support or funding. Once feedback is received, I will update the Parish on progress and which projects may move forward.

Highways & Maintenance Updates

Cornwall Street Resurfacing

A car park on Cornwall Street in Bere Alston will undergo resurfacing and line painting from 9th to 14th July. The carpark should reopen on Monday 14th July, barring delays.

A390 & A386 Maintenance

Several sections of the A390 and A386 near Tavistock have been identified for maintenance and have been included in Devon Highways' 2025/26 program. Parishes are encouraged to report persistent issues such as drainage problems, potholes, or overgrown hedges so they can be escalated for action.

Local Government Reorganisation

Background & Proposals

The Government is exploring reorganisation of local government in Devon, potentially moving to unitary councils instead of the current two-tier system (county and district councils). A concept under discussion is the "1-4-5" plan:

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- *Plymouth would remain a separate unitary.
- *A single unitary might cover East, Mid, and North Devon plus Exeter.
- *Another unitary could combine West Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, and Torbay.

These ideas are not final, and councils are working together to assess the best structure. Final proposals are due by November 2025, with Government making the ultimate decision.

Consultation

A public consultation is open until 11th August 2025. Residents can complete the survey via West Devon's website to share views on local services and priorities: www.westdevon.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation. Paper copies are available upon request.

Town & Parish Briefing

A Teams briefing session for Town and Parish Councils will take place on Wednesday 9th July at 5:30pm to discuss these proposals. The link has been circulated to Parish Clerks, and I encourage Gulworthy Parish Council to attend.

Planning & Development

Local Plan Update

West Devon Borough Council has begun work on the next Local Plan, which will guide future development policies and land allocations. Parishes, including Gulworthy, will be invited to participate in consultations later this year to help shape local priorities.

Environment & Climate

Ash Dieback

Ash dieback continues to severely impact trees across rural areas, including Gulworthy. Many ash trees are dead or dying, creating safety hazards. Devon County Council and West Devon are actively removing dangerous trees and replanting with diverse species. Residents are encouraged to report any unstable or obstructive trees along roads.

Wildlife-Friendly Verge Management

Devon County Council is trialling biodiversity-friendly verge management, reducing cutting frequency where safe to encourage wildflower growth and pollinators. Gulworthy may wish to identify verges suitable for this approach in consultation with the county's environment team.

Community Funding Opportunities

Community Hall Grants

West Devon Borough Council's Community Halls Capital Grant Fund offers grants of £500 to £25,000 for improvements to village halls and community buildings. Eligible works include roofing, heating upgrades, kitchen or toilet refurbishments, or accessibility improvements. Matching contributions may be required. Details are on the WDBC website.

Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund

The Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund, launched by DEFRA, offers grants to improve and modernise village halls, helping them deliver activities that support health, wellbeing, rural economies, community cohesion, and environmental sustainability. Grants range from £7,500 to £75,000 (up to 20% of project costs). Halls must be charity-run, in rural communities under 10,000 people, with works to be completed by 31 March 2026. Details: [Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund - ACRE](#)

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Great British Energy Community Fund – South West

£1 million is available in 2025/26 through the Great British Energy Community Fund for community-led renewable or low-carbon energy projects in the South West. Grants of up to £40,000 can fund feasibility studies, while up to £100,000 is available for project development. Eligible projects include new community energy assets or energy efficiency initiatives. Applications close 7 July 2025, and funds must be allocated by March 2026. More information: [SW Net Zero Hub Community Energy Fund](#)

National Lottery Awards for All: Environment

The National Lottery Awards for All programme offers grants of £300 to £20,000 for projects lasting up to two years that improve local environments, help people connect with nature, and promote sustainability. Eligible projects include community gardens, tree planting, wildlife habitats, outdoor learning activities, installing solar panels, and more. Applications open 25 June 2025 and close 17 December 2025. Details: [National Lottery Community Fund Environment Grants](#)

Tree Council Funding Opportunities

The Tree Council offers various grants for tree-planting and green space projects:

- **Network Rail Community Tree Planting Fund** (£2,500–£10,000) for planting trees in public or community spaces. Deadline: 31 July 2025.
- **National Highways 3 Million Trees Project** – free trees for well-planned schemes benefiting people and wildlife.
- **Trees Outside Woodland Fund** (£10,000–£40,000) to establish trees outside woodlands and enhance local green infrastructure. Deadline: 31 October 2025.
- **Branching Out Fund** – grants of £250–£2,500 for small community planting projects such as hedges and orchards. Deadline: 14 November 2025.

Details: [Tree Council Grants](#)

SeaMoor Lotto

The SeaMoor community lottery continues to support local causes, with 60% of proceeds going to charities and community groups. Gulworthy or any local project can register to benefit.

Other Updates

Cost of Living Support

West Devon Borough Council continues to offer hardship support, including the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments. Residents facing difficulties with food, energy, or housing costs should contact the Council for assistance.

Help for Residents with Damp and Mould

West Devon Borough Council is highlighting support for tenants facing damp or mould issues. Landlords of both social and private rentals must ensure homes are safe and habitable. Tenants experiencing problems should first contact their landlord, but if this fails, they can report issues to the Council online at westdevon.gov.uk/rental-housing-standards or westdevon.gov.uk/report-disrepair. A useful leaflet is available to guide residents through their options, and more copies can be requested from the Council.

Parking Fine Text Scam Alert

Residents are warned about scam text messages falsely claiming to be from the Council about parking fines. These messages look official but are not genuine. The links in the texts are fake, and

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the payment amounts often appear suspicious. Residents should not click any links or provide personal or payment details. If unsure whether a message is legitimate, visit www.westdevon.gov.uk/parking or contact the Council directly.

9. Gulworthy Cllr reports – *for information only*

Cllr Hamilton – Japanese knotweed has been identified in a few places. Cllr Hamilton asked to report.

Cllr Lister – 2 new grit salt bins needed; one at Harvest home and the other Mill Hill. Cllr Steer to ask Mill Hill resident(s) best location. Clerk to price and check with highways. Cllr Lister to top up existing bins.

Cllr Steer – Disappointed that Tamar Trails café isn't opening at all this season. Some pot holes repaired others not. Ofsted at the school was good. 3.15pm this Friday is the school summer fair.

Cllr Royston – To ask Rob Sekula about the Tamar trails cafe.

10. Burial ground

10.1 Emery memorial application – **noted**.

Mole traps have been lifted. Clerk carried out risk assessment before meeting.

11. Finance - *To approve the list of payments (to be tabled at the meeting) LGA 1972 s150 (5)*

11.1 – Invoices for approval to be paid –

Clerk expenses WAH allowance £6.00p.w + mileage + expenses	£52.47
Clerk June payroll	£437.40
HMRC Tax and NI for June 2025	£37.56
Gulworthy parish hall – 2/June meeting – Inv 752	£23.75
Elliott groundcare – 2 x grass cuts	£170.00

It was proposed by Cllr Lister to authorise the above payments via BACs, seconded by Cllr Royston agreed by all.

11.2 – Request for spending

11.2.1 Key safe box £40.00 - **deferred**

11.3 Credits received

11.3.1 interest received of **£26.09** 10/06/2025 **noted**

11.3.2 Emery memorial application **£330.00** 10/06/25 **noted**

11.4 To note VAT reclaim submitted **£282.22** 25/06/25 **noted**

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11.5 Bank reconciliations - see separate RFO report provided (RFO No 181)

No 181 1 July 2025 - (Clerk to enter all interest from bank statements into items of receipts)

<p><u>Club, Charity & Trust account (00298624). Sort 30-98-46</u> Opening Balance as at 27 May 2025 b/fwd</p> <p><u>Receipts</u> Wayleave payment</p> <p><u>Expenditure:</u> <u>29/05/2025</u> – annual insurance renewal <u>03/06/2025</u> Clerk expenses HMRC Clerk May payroll Gulworthy hall ICCM membership Total expenditure</p> <p>Balance on 1 July 2025</p>	<p><u>Paid Out</u></p> <p>289.93 165.60 £11.00 £362.92 £23.75 £105.00 £958.20</p>	<p><u>Paid In</u></p> <p>7.61</p> <p>£300.00 £19.73 £30.00 £349.73</p>	<p><u>Balance</u></p> <p>£5,565.56</p> <p>£4,614.97</p>	
<p><u>Gulworthy Cemetery account (00020251)</u> Opening balance as at 27 May 2025</p> <p><u>Expenditure</u> 03/06/25 Elliott groundcare</p> <p><u>Credit receipts</u> 03/06/2025 E Pascoe Emery memorial 10/06/2025 Credit interest 10/06/2025 E Pascoe Emery extra</p> <p>Total credit</p> <p>Balance on 1 July 2025</p>	<p>170.00</p>	<p>£300.00 £19.73 £30.00 £349.73</p>	<p>£15,552.43</p> <p>£15,732.16</p>	
<p><u>Gulworthy Fundraising account (00035992)</u> Opening balance as at 27 May 2025</p> <p><u>Credit receipts</u> 10/06/2025 credit interest</p> <p>Balance on 1 July 2025</p>		<p>£6.36</p>	<p>£5,018.67</p> <p>£5,025.03</p>	
<p>Combined balance £25,372.16</p>				
<p>(No differences to the bank statements) – Proposed by Cllr Royston to approve, seconded by Cllr Wearing, agreed by all.</p>				

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11.6 Q1 budget versus actual comparison (see separate report circulated)

Proposed by Cllr Royston to approve, seconded by Cllr Steer, agreed by all.

Clerk asked to make a couple of alterations to the layout going fwd.

11.7 Internet banking update - deferred

11.8 Review of Internal controls policy (see separate doc circulated)

Proposed by Cllr Hamilton to approve, seconded by Cllr Wearing, agreed by all.

12. Gulworthy village centre meeting – Cllr Royston gave a summary of the meeting. Looking to create more of a centre for the parish as a “village” and strengthen the sense of place and identity. Reps were present from the school, church, parish council and the hall. Plan to meet every quarter. Overarching issue for all at the moment is storage space.

13. Broadband – Cllr Steer and Royston chased CDS. Hoping to meet up again soon.

14. Highways

14.1 Road signs - deferred

14.2 Police – Clerk to forward April email about possible quick solutions.

15. Bus shelter, cleaning rota and notice board – Cllr Royston to do July, Cllr Steer, August and Cllr Wearing September. Agreed to clean the shelter in the middle of each month.

16. To note office closure: 23 July-11 August and 21-29 August 2025 inclusive – **noted with back up date of Monday 18 August 8pm agreed if needed.**

Meeting closed at 9.15pm.

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