

DOWN ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 10th February 2026 in the Village Hall

Present: Mr A. Clark, Mr M. Austin, Mr D. Cox, Mrs D. Cridland, Mrs J Bennett, Mrs. N. Letch and Mr A. Martin [Clerk]

In attendance: Mr J. Beament

[2026/2/1] Apologies: Mr A. Baker, Mr W. Jones, Mr A. White, Mr S. Keable.

[2] There were no disclosures of interest

[3] The **Minutes** of the meeting held on 13th January which had been circulated were approved and signed.

[4] **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:** Mr Beament asked for advice as he had recently suffered an infestation of rats. The pest controller had been unable to find where the ingress was. It was suggested that he contacted his neighbours to see if they had a similar problem. The Council felt it would be helpful if they could see the pest controller's report. This could be discussed further at the next meeting.

[5] **Public Conveniences:** It was likely that the car park would continue to be liable for business rates although the toilets were likely to be exempted. The maintenance work needed to be done and the situation sorted before MDDC came to an end.

The light had recently been fixed. A tree had recently been removed and the drain cleared. The bins had been emptied. MDDC needed to repair the wall that had collapsed. It was suggested that if a bus stop sign was erected, lorries might stop parking in the lay-by. It was agreed that the sign and shelter cleaners could come back in the spring.

Action Point: Letter to be sent to MDDC asking about the business rates and the general maintenance. The building needed to be in an acceptable state before it was handed over.

[6] **Village Green:** Tom Samson had planted the three new trees and was continuing to look after the trees.

Action Point: Clerk to make sure letter of thanks had been sent to Mr Samsom

[7] **Bus Shelter:** The refurbishment had been scheduled for 23rd March 2026.

[8] **Transport:** Two of the potholes had been filled. There had been some flooding.

Signed

Date

The rail line had been closed because of flooding. Ballast had been washed away. The bridges needed to be checked by divers when the weather was better. There were plans to make the line more resilient. There were plans to extend the platforms and install extra passing places to future proof the line.

[9] Finance:

Current Account Balance as at 1/10/2025£25,090.73

RECEIPTS

None

PAYMENTS MADE

Mr M. Leach [Grasscutting] £220.00

Mr W Jones [Hedgecutting]£216.00

Mr T Samson [Fencing Sundries].....£13.49

Village Hall [Rental]£135.00

Current Account Balance as at 30/1/2026.....£24,506.24

Cheque Issued

Information Commissioner£52.00

Business Reserve Account Balance as at 30/12/2025£12,035.36

Interest:

January.....£9.40

Business Reserve Account Balance as at 30/1/2026.....£12,044.76

REQUESTS FOR PAYMENT:

MDDC [Public Conveniences]£830.00

[This request has been put on hold]



[10] Planning: Prior Approval for the erection of a single storey replacement extension, extending 4.68m to the rear, maximum height of 3.95m and eaves height of 2.45m 2

Sharphays, Copplestone EX17 5LF Ref. No: 26/00064/PNHH

The Council had no comments.

Signed

Date

[11] **Emergency Planning and First Aid:** There were no available keys to the Village Hall.

It was necessary to have a relief station at Morchard Road. The Devonshire Dumpling were unwilling but Waterbridge Golf Course had agreed. Possible use of the toilet block was discussed.

[12] **Defibrillators and First Aid:** The contract with South Western Ambulance would end on 16th November 2026. It was decided to keep the existing defibrillators until they needed to be replaced. They would need to be registered on "The Circuit"

Action Point: Mr Austin to write to register.

First Aid Course was fixed for 21st March. Cost would be £450 plus VAT.

Action Point: Course to be advertised on Facebook and WhatsApp.

[13] **Quotes for E-mail services:** The Council were happy to apply to Active Council.

Action Point: Mr Clark to continue with the application.

[14] **Concerns raised by Councillors:** There had been many complaints about the water supply. There was often low pressure and brown water. This needed to be reported.

Mrs Letch reported on the progress of Council reorganisation. She remarked that in the USA, there was a speed limit of 15 mph in school zones.

[15] There were no members of the public to comment.

[16] **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 10th March

Future dates for 2026:

Tuesday 14th April, Tuesday 12th May, Tuesday 14th July, Tuesday 8th September, Tuesday 13th October, Tuesday 10th November and Tuesday 8th December.



Signed

Date