

Otterton Parish Council

Minutes							
Date & Time	11 th September		Location	Otterton Village Hall			
Councillors Present	Initials			Also Present	Initials		
MS Melanie Martin	MM	Parish Councillor		Members of the public	7		
Mr Richard Witherby	RW	Parish Councillor					
Mr Roger Pellow	RP						

Apologies	Initials	Reason for Absence	Absent without Apology	Initials	
Belinda Shoemaker	BS	Holiday			
Jerry Fry	JF	Personal reasons			
Briony Sharp		Holiday			

In Attendance	Initials	Capacity	Minutes to
F Mills	FM	Clerk	Councillors, website, notice board

Ref	Main meeting agenda item, comment & decision	Action Owner & deadline
1	Welcome & Apologies received as above.	
2	Co-opting of potential Councillors/ None Items to be taken as part 2: it was agreed that the Recruitment of Clerk, agenda item 14 would be taken as part 2	
3	Declarations of Interests: None	
4	<p>Minutes: The minutes of the meeting held on 6th July were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Matters arising not featured on the agenda: <i>To consider any matters arising from the minutes, not elsewhere on the agenda.</i> <i>Matters arising: Placements of tables outside the Kings Arms.</i> <i>Difficult to determine ownership letter to CDE/DCC. JB/Clerk to action</i> <i>Speed watch equipment – Progress.</i> <i>Progress with tap on green. The clerk stated her frustration at the delay in installation due to requirements of SWW for a Section 50 certificate. OPC request progression asap.</i> <i>Chapter 8 Training – no progress at present.</i> <i>Movement of bin on green. It was agreed that due to the lack of communication from EDDC that the bin would be moved by the OPC. (EDDC ref number 543349781)</i> <i>Surface work – Ropers Lane. RP requested that a report is made to Highways through JB Stating dismay at quality of workmanship on new surface of Ropers Lane. Wide spread disappointment reflected in the room.</i> <i>Disabled parking space. To be progressed.</i></p>	Clerk

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<p>5 The chair confirmed the arrangement for public discussion: All members of the public are welcome and comments on items on the agenda will be heard. If you would like to add an item to the agenda, please contact the clerk at least 7 days before the meeting. Public questions by email/letter or in person: No further questions from the public. Jubilee playground: A question was raised regarding a possible different/new access for the playpark. Request for residents to be taken into account if changes are made. Highways/gullies Maunders Hill need clearing. Note to Jess Bailey. Bench opposite the Mill needs work. DCC re cycling signs on River request for JB to address.</p>	
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6	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p>Dear Councillors, I would like to make the Council aware of some issues and proposals. Steps to the riverside footpath by Otterton Road Bridge. As the current wooden steps to the down-riverside footpath are in poor, a few weeks ago I proposed to Iain Ure and your Chairman that Devon County Council be asked to replace them with a ramp in order to enable wheelchair and pushchair access. Quite independently, I understand that DCC are now proposing to build a stone ramp to replace the steps. I would ask the PC to support this plan and encourage DCC to also improve the quality of the footpath.</p> <p>As a member of the Otter Valley Association Executive Committee, I also made them aware of this proposal and they have agreed to make a donation toward the scheme once they are aware of timescale and costs as they support improving public access.</p> <p>Water testing.</p> <p>A few months ago, I became registered as a citizen scientist with Westcountry Rivers Trust. Since then, I have been testing the river opposite the Mill and below Otter Farm at Colaton Raleigh as well as Bicton and Colaton Brooks at the point where they enter the Otter above the road bridge and Otterton Brook in Fore Street. Hundreds of citizen scientists undertake this testing to enable WRT to monitor water quality in waterways across the South West. I input results on a monthly basis. I am supported in this testing by Otter Valley Association who pay WRT for the cost of the testing equipment. WRT use this information in order to look for anomalies that would raise concerns about pollution. At this point, testing is very basic but it is hoped that over time, it will become more detailed. Immediate concerns regarding pollution should be reported to the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Flooding risk.</p> <p>We are all aware of recent flooding in neighbouring villages and the increased risk of exceptional weather events. As Otterton Brook responds rapidly to heavy rainfall over Mutters Moor, I am concerned that the village might also experience flooding. At a recent meeting between representatives of the Otter Valley Association and Clinton Devon Estates, I raised this concern with them as local landowners and asked whether they would support installing ‘leaky dams’ across the Brook as it comes off Mutters Moor in order to slow down water flow. They were supportive of the idea. Could I ask the Council to also discuss this proposal with CDE.</p> <p>Petanque strip: On a much lighter note, when we visit East Budleigh village park, it is interesting to see the popularity of the petanque strip. I know that currently, the focus is on improving the children’s playground but I would suggest that a similar strip on our village Green would be a welcome addition to village activities. The Green would seem more suitable for a strip than the playing field as it is flat which I would think would make installation relatively straightforward. As well as making more use of the Green, perhaps this could result in ‘friendly’ competition between the 2 villages.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Geoff Porter.</p> <p>Movement of notice board – Clerk to seek agreement to move tables when notice board moved.</p> <p>Planting at notice boards. Agreement. MM & RP to progress.</p>	Clerk
		MM/Clerk to cost.
		Clerk
		RP/MM

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7	Chair's report: LORP completed with path diversion. Renovation of play equipment at Lime Kiln Play Park. Sea Change fete successful, garden to be redesigned and volunteers sought to help. 2025 sea front toilets to be redeveloped, minimal expenditure	
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- 8 Footpath : Otterton Footpath and Rights of Way Report for September 2023**
1. The rights of ways are generally in good condition. In some places nettles are encroaching on the rights of way but they will die back soon.
 2. The footpath post at the top of Passaford Lane in the plantation has been knocked over during forestry works. CDE will re position it in the near future.
– the track along the bottom of the plantation is a permissive footpath
 3. A fallen tree is blocking Colliver Lane Bridleway CDE forestry department will deal with this.
 4. LORP The new footbridge along the Otter is due to be placed in position in the next few weeks. The breach in the embankment will then be made. Once complete all The path changes will have to be formally made by legal order.
I am chasing CDE to arrange for the Centenary Parish Boundary stone to be recovered from store and positioned along the new South Farm Road.
 5. The damaged river bank just north of Clamour Bridge has been repaired. However, the promised meeting to discuss the long term future and maintenance of the riverside footpath has not been held (due early summer)
 6. CDE is to submit an application for funding an Otter Valley Landscape Recovery project – Otterton Parish Council is invited to attend the Stakeholder group.
The briefing paper refers to the long term solutions to erosion along the Otter (see 5 above).
 7. Otterton Brook - The debris grid protecting the culvert at the Sidmouth end of the village is completely covered. This could lead to flooding of the road if not sorted
– this has been a long term issue.
 8. Footpath 13 – Ladram Road end of the extension of Brendon Lane is difficult to pass along due to overgrown leylandii from adjacent property.
 9. In my March report I noted that the steps off Otterton bridge onto the river footpath needed to be replaced. DCC had this in mind but lacked funds. This work will now to proceed as soon as a contractor is found.
The DCC footpath officer has suggested and discussed replacing the steps with a stone ramp with CDE and the tenant farmer and also suggested and discussed replacing the next two wooden kissing gates with pedestrian gates (located slightly west to avoid the low/ wet ground the kissing gates are currently sat in).
 10. The Clerk has been notified by DCC that the footpath from the Triangle to Bicton Gardens will be closed for bridge maintenance from 6 th to 26th September.

Tree Report

1. Ash die back continues to affect trees owned by the Parish Council at Stantyway. However, the disease has made very little further progress over the last year, which is a welcome development.
2. The strategy of modest annual removal is working nicely.
Natural regeneration of both new ash and other species is filling the gaps thus minimising any visual impact.
3. Should the dieback become more aggressive, which has happened elsewhere in the Parish, then an alternative strategy will be developed.
4. There are some dead small / medium size trees (probably elder) along the Piscoombe Lane boundary, a small dead tree near the changing rooms, a couple of unwell medium size trees (probably Elm) along the Stantyway Road boundary, and an Ash tree south west of the pitch of concern.
5. In my opinion (I am not a professional) the trees can be left as they are until next year. However, I suggest the budget is carried over into the next financial year.
Note – Ash , Trees become very brittle when attacked by die back which makes proactive work on problem trees more urgent.
6. **The Tree Council organised an on line briefing for Tree Wardens in August by DEFRA on their consultation on Protecting Hedgerows (ends 20th September). Cross compliance for farmers where they get direct payment for buffer zones etc. ends at the end of the year. The consultation is on rules needed to replace the future of maintenance of hedgerows (hedgerow protection – removal - is covered by existing d. domestic legislation (Hedgerow Regs 1997)
Iain Ure 2nd September 2023. Otterton Volunteer Footpath and Tree Warden**

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9	Report from Councillor Charlotte Fitzgerald copied separately.	
10	Jubilee Playpark. Reindeer Run to take place 2nd December. Red Arrows collection at Stantyway went well with collections by volunteers well received.	
11	Ladram Bay: Not in attendance & NTR	
12	Allocation of responsibilities & reports from Councillors: Where there is nothing to report the following abbreviation will be used (NTR) Village Green & Hall. New topsoil on Green which can be taken by residents. Community shop & War Memorial: Plans to refurbish the shop in near future. Stantyway recreation ground & Football Club: NTR Raleigh Federation: Change of Head – Anne Pelosi, previously senior teacher to become Head. Jubilee Play Park: SEE ongoing issues with 106 funding Cemetery: Clerk has requested a quote for refurbishment of notice board from Neil Simpson. Contracts & Finance: NTR Devon Air Ambulance (DAA): NTR Footpaths and Public Rights of Way: See agenda item 6 above	
13	Cllr JESS BAILEY – DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL (OTTER VALLEY) Encouraged by setting up of speed watch team. Acknowledges need to repaint lines on road. Suggestion that PC pay for own scheme 20MPH –cost of traffic orders £10/15K which is unrealistic for OPC. RP to update matrix. Homelessness grant process has stalled. Consultant Review a concern. Concerns regarding finances of DCC but reassurances given that Council is sustainable. Concerns Section 19 analysis of flooding. Martin Hutchings, flood authority, amend emergency plan. Cllr Henry Riddel: Suggested possible salvage of equipment from B/S Lime Kiln play park. Football club Youth Pitch needed for B/S and area	
14	Financial matters: It was unanimously agreed that all payments listed on agenda 11.9.23 should be paid.	Clerk to action
15	Further actions: Declarations Received. Recruitment. Local advertising only	
16	106 Funding: In the region of £8073.00 (Sport) £1683.00 (Recreation). Ongoing	
17	Items for next agenda: 20MPH, noticeboard tables outside pub, Jubilee playpark.	
18	The next meeting will take place on Monday 2nd October 7.30. <i>Otterton Church Harvest Supper - 10th October 2023</i> <i>Boundary Walk – Saturday 11th November 2023</i> <i>Stream Clean -14th October 2023</i> <i>Reindeer Run – 2nd December</i>	Clerk to action

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The meeting closed at 9.30

Proposed meeting dates 2nd October, 6th November, 4th December

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