STOKE CANON PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Stoke Canon Parish Council was held in The Bridge on Thursday 3rd September 2026 at 7.30 pm.

MINUTES

The Meeting commenced at 19:30pm

57/26 Present – Cllr Kate Scott-Clarke (Chair), Cllr Mike Kemp (Vice Chair), Cllr Kevin Wraight and Cllr Fabian King (EDDC). As the Council is not quorate it has been agreed with East Devon District Council Electoral Services that Cllr King (EDDC) will stand in as a Parish Councillor until such times as the Parish Council is quorate again.
Also present 10 members of the public and the Clerk.

58/26 Apologies - To receive any apologies for absence. Cllrs Boustred and Gent (DCC) gave their apologies ahead of the meeting. These were accepted

59/26 Declarations of Interest Under the Code of Conduct
Councillors are reminded of the requirement to declare any interest, including the type of interest, and reason for that interest, either at this stage of the meeting or as soon as they become aware of that interest.
None were declared.

60/26 Minutes
To adopt the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd July 2026 as a true record.

PROPOSED: Cllr Scott-Clarke **SECONDED:** Cllr Kemp **RESOLVED.**

61/26 Public Question Time
Up to 5 minutes **Public Question Time** for members of the public to bring forward any issues not on the agenda (where a matter is already on the agenda members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak when that item is considered, within the framework of the Council's standing orders). Where a decision is required, the issue will be placed on the following agenda.

- Chestnut Close broken drain. Highways told the resident they would come and sort it but then said they would only come when there is a working team in the area. Also all the drains in the village are full of silt.

Signed:
Dated:

Last July a camera was put down the drain and contractors reported there was damage but nothing is being done.

- Cllr Kemp reported that there are legal proceedings against Network Rail, EDDC and DCC. This is on-going. It is not just drains but ditches not being cleared on private land, the Railway embankment is not being maintained. The PC was not notified about the work by EA on the embankment. We need a co-ordinated approach from EA, Highways and Network Rail. Cllr Kemp has spent a lot of time trying to engage with all agencies but it is taking a lot of time. He also spent some time with a local person who has knowledge of how the ditches should be cleared along Green Lane and surrounding areas and this has highlighted why there are problems.
- Why are the verges and kerbs not being cleared? Cllr Kemp explained that in 2015 Councils banned the use of glyphosate and they have not been cleared for a long time. Workers need to have a Chapter 8 certificate to do this and the Community Payback Team do not have this. They are now not allowed to work by the roadside. This appears to have been extended to limit what they are allowed to do even more recently.
- Road Closures and bus services. There doesn't seem to be enough notice given to Parish Councils or bus services regarding the recent road closures.
- Cllr King reported that Highways are having a lot of problems with a local landowner and getting the ditches cleared as they are not responding to correspondence. MOP knows someone who might be able to help. They will look into this and report back.

62/26 Lead Councillor Updates

To receive an update from the Lead Councillors on the following:

- Highways- Cllr Derek Boustred. See Appendix A. With regards the recent road closure they was a very disjointed approach from Highways, signs not clear, repairs are not good, bus companies not told where diversions are. All agree there needs to be a more joined up approach.
- Play Park – Cllr Kate Scott-Clarke – A new climbing frame is needed. Cllr Scott-Clarke has been looking at grants to help with the costs of this. It has been reported that there have been instances of dog mess in the park itself. The gate needs to be re-sited. The Parish Council will look at getting an automatic shutting gate. Check to see if we need a new sign that makes it clear dogs are not allowed. There is also a problem in the school field with. There is very little to Council can do to enforce this. People can report instances on the Devon County Council website but they normally require details of the owners.
- Footpaths and Planning -Cllr Mike Kemp – sorted out the claim for the P3 grant. Footpaths again people are not picking up their dog poo. Cllr Scott-Clarke has

put receptacles for bags around the village. None of the footpaths are in need of cutting back at the moment.

- Finance and new website – the Clerk. New website should be ready beginning October. The Precept has now been received so the finances are in good order.

63/26 Planning Matters.

To discuss any planning applications received since the last meeting.

26/0894/LBC - Osmond House 4 Chestnut Crescent Stoke Canon Exeter - Ground floor drawing & dining room: carefully lift and remove existing floorboards and joists and replace, any salvaged to be reused elsewhere in the building; reduction of ground level where necessary beneath suspended floor to allow for build-up for the proposed breathable floor construction; installation of foam glass gravel sub-base across the floor area while maintaining appropriate distances from wall bases & foundations; installation of limecrete slab will be laid on top of the foam glass layer. – **STATUS – no Objections**

64/26 Financial Matters

To receive the accounts summary to 31st August 2026 (previously approved by Cllrs Maunder and Scott-Clarke).

Note: Payments approved by Councillors K Scott-Clarke and Cllr M Kemp in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

1 x payment to PCC for hall hire of £34.00 on 07.07.2026
2 x Payments to Exeter Garden Maintenance of £324.00 and £192.00 (29.07.2026 and 21.08.2026)
1 x Payment to B Hurkett for grass cutting for £100 on 20.08.2026
2 x Payments to North Devon payroll for wages on 07.07.2026 and 29.07.2026
1 x Payments to Yu Energy for electricity charges total £4.95 on 09.07.2026
2 x Payments to Santander for bank charges of £4.99 on 09.07.2026 and 20.08.2026

No payments were received:
The bank balance as at 31st August 2026 was £11,589.29

Approval sought for the approval of EDDC invoice for dog and waste bin collections which has increased this year again to £1060.00. Whilst the councillors feel this is extortionate there are no other suppliers we can go to for the service so feel we have no option but to pay this.

PROPOSED: Cllr Scott-Clarke **SECONDED:** Cllrs Wraight and Kemp **RESOLVED**

65/26 EDDC Update
Cllr King gave an update which can be found at Appendix B below.

Signed:
Dated:

66/26 DCC Update
To receive an update from Cllr Henry Gent and Cllr Nat Vanstone, Devon County Council. Cllr Gent sent his report and this was distributed to Councillors.

67/26 Other information/correspondence received for possible action/discussion

- Email regarding Leylandii in Bavant Close – Cllr Boustred is going speak to the landowner
- Email regarding drains not being cleared throughout the village – see agenda item 6
- Email regarding Stoke Road Closure that was not notified – see agenda item 6
- Flood Management – Cllr M Kemp – see agenda item 6
- Refuse Collections – Cllr K Wraight – reported there is a trail of devastation behind the truck after the collections. Others confirmed the same. Cllr Wraight will report on the EDDC portal.
- Works in Field by Level Crossing – see agenda item 6
- Update regarding anti-social behaviour locally – Cllr K Wraight – All appears to have gone quiet. No further instances for a couple of weeks. Cllr Wraight reported that he tried to get someone from Stagecoach to discuss and had no response. The police also have had no response from them. Police have been doing patrols over to Brampford Speke and back along the footpath.
- The village flood plan will be added to the new website. Cllr Kemp will check the contents are still relevant. A suggestion was raised to perhaps have an evening when parishioners can discuss the flood plan. Cllr Scott-Clarke advised that DCC will come and do a flood risk survey for individual properties and that there are grants available.
- We have had 5 people express an interest this evening in joining as Parish Councillors. This is amazing news. Cllr Kemp will post some posters through doors to see if anyone else is interested.
- A lot of people concerned about continued speeding going through the village. The Parish Council have done everything they can within their powers with Devon County Council Highways. The Chair read a statement from Cllr Henry Gent (DCC) advising his request to have a speed limit reduced on Stoke Hill recently has been rejected. The Chair advised to move this forward there needs to be a community speed watch survey completed but realistically but it is very hard to get speed limits reduced. Cllr Wraight will put in the forum for volunteers to come forward to run a survey.
- Power cuts locally- Cllr Wraight spoke to National Grid and there was a fault in another area which was affecting Stoke Canon. They have been working on it.

68/26 Date of the next meeting(s) The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 5th November 2026 at 19:30hrs– The Bridge.

Meeting closed @ 20:45pm

Signed:
Dated:

Appendix A

Highways Report September 3rd 2016

Since our meeting in July there has been a lot of work done on the A396 with three road closures.

1. 4th - 6th August A396 shut to remove earth and associated debris from the carriageway following a land slip over the winter following prolonged wet conditions .

2. 17th - 28th August work started near the mill to correct the sideways movement of the road towards the river.
This work is a long way from completion and currently there are traffic lights controlling traffic flow to allow work to continue.

3. Monday 31st August

The A396 was closed at Bickleigh to allow for work on the street lights

All the above have caused a major upheaval for buses who have had to make major detours via Upton Pyne and the motorway. This has added a considerable amount of time for journeys to Exeter and Tiverton.
Cars and heavy vehicles have been cutting over Stoke Hill to reduce journey times resulting in chaos on several occasions.
A parishioner recorded 400 cars an hour using Stoke Hill during peak travel times.
Unfortunately all these closures have been unavoidable.
The road surface into Exeter and Pinhoe has been marked in several places for repair and hopefully this will be sorted out soon.

The drainage system in Chestnut Crescent has been partly investigated by Network Rail but there has been no activity from Highways.
The drainage ditch between the 6 gullies and the pumping station is choked with soil and vegetation and urgently needs clearing either by the land owner or the Environment Agency.
The EA are currently raising the height of the bund adjacent to the footpath to Brampford Speke. This is to repair damage caused by farm animals and to give us added flood protection. We have had no information about these works from the EA and any information has been obtained from site workers.

Signed:
Dated:

Our Highways Officer Ricky Coultan has moved to another job and so currently we are without a neighbourhood Highways Officer. I should like to thank Ricky for all his help and wish him well in his new job. Hopefully his position can be filled soon.

The probationers are now unable to work on the roadside and so roads like River Close have not been cleared of weeds.
Dean Clarke will contact if this position changes
That concludes my report for July to September 2026.

Appendix B

Exe Valley Monthly Report, Aug-Sept 2026 - EDDC Cllr Fabian King Housebuilding and Planning Authorities – from 31st October 2026, the power for Ward Councillors to require planning application cases to be called in for committee consideration will no longer be possible. This is intended to smooth the way for more housebuilding, etc. It moves a significant amount of the planning issues away from the Planning Committee by increasing the delegated powers of the Planning Officers in local government. This change was made in June by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government exercising powers under the National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions.

Local Government Reorganisation – on 16th July (on the eve of the parliamentary recess) the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government chose to form a new Unitary Council for Greater Exeter, i.e. the current city of Exeter with the addition of 49 towns and villages – including Exe Valley. The other unitaries are to be The Rest of Devon and the enlarged existing unitaries of Plymouth & Torbay. This proposal quite clearly creates a division between Town and Country. And this is mirrored within the Greater Exeter unitary area. An important issue for Exe Valley and rural communities within Greater Exeter is that the voice for urban issues will be louder than for rural concerns.

Signed:
Dated:

Neighbourhood Area Committees (NACs) are promised to overcome this, but they have had mixed results in existing unitaries so far. In due course the emergence of a new Strategic Authority and Mayor for our region will require an active Councillor for Exe Valley to pull their weight at the new Unitary Council so as to ensure we have a say for what matters to Exe Valley. I recommend that our Parish Councils hunt around for a choice of high calibre candidates to stand for the next elections in May 2027, so as to secure good democratic representation. New Warding arrangements for elections of representatives for the new Unitary Council have been proposed and the existing Exe Valley Ward will continue as it is. Consequently, instead of our current District Cllr and 2 County Cllrs, there will in future just be one Unitary Cllr for Exe Valley. I believe this is very good news, but the choice of Cllr is vital for Exe Valley to continue being involved in the new local government arrangements. South West Water set a hose pipe ban on 8 th August and this is likely to remain in place for a few months so as to protect water reserves and to build up for next year. Latest reports predict that the alarmingly hotter El Niño will break all records next year, giving rise to 2027 being hotter than this year, even as Greenland warms up more which will further disrupt the jet streams affecting our weather. Melting Arctic ice pours fresh water into the ocean, slowing the currents that keep the UK mild. While a sudden Hollywood-style freeze is unlikely, a weaker Gulf Stream means more unpredictable, extreme weather for Britain. These weather phenomena make the provision of a successful water utility of huge importance to the South West and Exe Valley. Meanwhile, SW Water is facing a very large group legal action: • Solicitors Leigh Day is leading a massive group legal claim against South West Water and its parent company, Pennon Group Plc. • The lawsuit targets alleged wide-scale sewage and storm overflow pollution damaging coastal and river communities. • Originally started on behalf of residents and businesses around Exmouth, the claim expanded significantly across Devon and Cornwall (including towns like Dawlish, Sidmouth, Teignmouth, Newquay, and Penzance) with thousands of affected residents,

Signed:
Dated:

swimmers, and business owners joining The latest news in the Guardian, Saturday 29th August, is that SW Water is rated as the worst polluting water authority in the UK. The article starts with “SW Water is doing more harm to the environment than any other water company in England, according to a new analysis, with more sewage discharged in Devon, Cornwall, Dorset and Somerset than anywhere else.”

Signed:
Dated: