

Clerk's report for SPC full council meeting on 02.08.24

Reminders

- Training: Safeguarding Training MUST be completed by 9th September. All other training must be completed before the end of September. Please let me know if you need new logins or passwords etc.

Audit and Finance

- VAT: 1st Quarter VAT return for £324.53 submitted
- P3 grant: We have STILL NOT received any monies from DCC – they have not paid the basic maintenance grant that the PC is entitled to of £150 or any additional funds requested back in February. I have followed this up repeatedly and been given various excuses about emails not being received. I sent another request for an update on 26.08.24, which I received a delivery receipt for. Given that being part of the P3 (Parish Paths Partnerships Scheme) is clearly of no benefit to the PC or its parishioners at present, it might be worth considering withdrawing from the scheme moving forward (i.e. at the start of year end 25-26) and letting DCC manage the footpaths at their own cost. DCC will then have to also deal directly with the many complaints the PC receives from parishioners. Here is a link to how the P3 scheme is meant to work: [Parish Paths Partnership scheme - Public Rights of Way \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/parish-paths-partnership-scheme) in case it is of any interest.
 - I have not yet received the external audit report. It must be issued by PKF before 30th September deadline. They had some queries in July about variances in the Asset Register, which I was able to easily answer as they are actually explained at the bottom of the Asset Register itself, but I received an email on 27.08.24 saying that Box 9 had not been restated on Form 2 – I can assure you it has and I am currently in discussions with them about this. I am 100% sure that the Internal Auditor and myself are right and that the External Auditor (PKF) are wrong. Given PKF admit to two huge mistakes on their report last year (I have this in writing), I have little faith in them and will argue the case using the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Guidance, which I have followed precisely. I am therefore not anticipating any issues when the External Audit report is eventually issued.

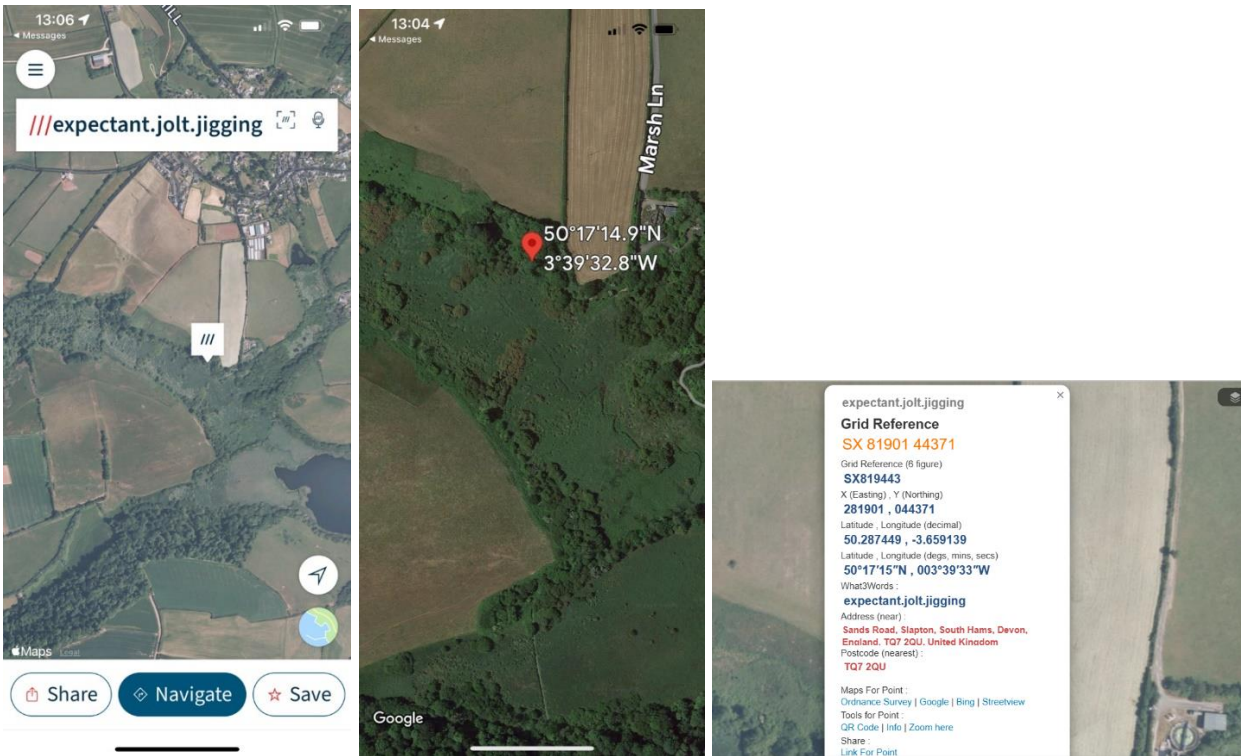
CSG

- 1 x agenda, attendance at meeting on Wed 31st July and minutes
- 1x Community Cinema on Sat 17th Aug (various cinema tasks, meetings and calls)
- Designed and arranged printing/laminating of CSG Poster for Hazel Hurdle workshop and Halloween Event

Poplar Tree along Footpath 11

- I emailed the FSC regarding the possibility of a site visit/meeting to resolve ownership of the tree on 26.06.24 and the FSC replied that this was a good idea on 01.07.24 but I have heard nothing more as I think the FSC staff have been on holiday etc. and I did not follow it up. However, in the meantime, I have established the following and shared it with the FSC in an email on 26.08.24
 - Standing on the tree, the What 3 Words is expectant.jolt.jigging and this gives an OS grid ref of SX81901 44371, which corresponds to the Latitude and Longitude that were also taken standing on the tree.
 - Land registry searches confirm the land adjacent to the National Nature Reserve on the tree side of the footpath is owned by Mark Harvey (see land registry docs DN590754). I also have the title deeds for the owners of the land north of the footpath (see land registry docs DN501359), which show their ownership does not extend beyond the footpath. I am awaiting copies of the NNR's title plans from land registry.
 - Now, I am not the best map reader (I got lost during my DofE 😊) so forgive me if I am wrong but it does seem that the tree is actually in the National Nature Reserve. However, if it is not, then I have recommended that the FSC contact Mark Harvey directly to discuss with him.
 - I also contacted DCC's PRoW team for advice. Paul McFadden of PRoW, who admits he is no expert, has looked at the photographs Kieran shared together with additional photographs taken by me and wrote, "*Best thing is to get an expert in. In PRoW we mainly use the services of Matthew Shute of East Devon Tree Care - [Home - Devon Tree Consultant | Tree Inspections Devon \(eastdevontreecare.co.uk\)](https://www.eastdevontreecare.co.uk). He is very experienced, used to be a tree surgeon but focusses on survey work now. Uses a form of risk assessment that takes account of the likelihood of someone being affected by a tree failure, as well as the likelihood of a failure itself. And I find his prices impressively modest.*"

- I have explained to the FSc that I am not sure what else I can do on behalf of either the PC or FSC but if there is anything or if they think a discussion with a Cllr or two would be useful then they should let me know.



Land Registry can be emailed to Cllrs separately if required.

Highways: Start to Deer Bridge

- Kate Palmer has kindly been keeping me updated:

Sent: Tuesday, July 2, 2024 12:57 PM

- 2 photos of drain lid problem, not done 4 1/2 " deep
- One sunken drain by the Mill 4 " deep not done
- 1/2 a pot hole mended??
- They have been 3 times with hot tarmac & not done the above. It is painful.



Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:19 AM

- 4th visit made with tarmac from DDC to my road.
- This time attempted to fill in beside the metal cover.
- Didn't clean out any mud (full), only filled 1/2 [of the] hole [around the drain] & [got] tarmac ON part of the drain cover because they never cleaned it off. Shoddy work.
- 4" deep sunken drain still remains outside the Millers house. Have to go less than 5 mph over it as it's so severe!
- Plainings left on CWS beside the road from previous job.

- I responded on both occasions, sharing equal despair at the standard of work and waste of public funds. I also stated that I didn't feel there is any point in the PC sending the above observations to our Neighbourhood Highways Officer but I confirmed that I would draw them to Cllrs attention. I didn't explain why it was not worth reporting to the Neighbourhood Highways Officer but, as the PC knows, the Highways

Neighbourhood Officer would not engage in any discussion about the poor state of the road from Start to Deerbridge and instead made the Parish Clerk report entire stretches of road as individual potholes via the online portal, which the pothole team later declined to fix because they were too big. She also wouldn't engage in a discussion about operatives saying that they had unblocked Townsend Cross Drain when photographic evidence and eye witness accounts from the day after confirmed this not to be the case!

Highways: Parishioner concern about oversized vehicles and damage to property

- I received an email from a parishioner in July concerned about oversized vehicles driving down Brook Street from Prospect Hill and a photo showing a Sainsbury's van scraping their wall. The parishioner asked whether it might be possible to place signage on Brook Street and also on Little Lane. Given there is a TRO in place from 1974, which would allow this, I emailed the Neighbourhood Highways Officer about it and this is the response:

Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 2:40 PM

Hello Bella

Sorry for the delay in responding.

I have discussed this issue with a colleague and he has advised that as the entrances to the Parish are already covered by the width restriction, there is no requirement for the smaller roads to be included or additional signage required.

The TRO does cover Little Lane - its Point 5 on the Schedule.

Nothing that is over 6ft 6" should be entering the village from any direction.

The only route we are not sure about is the one coming in from Deer Bridge, and I will double check that the next time I am in the Parish. If this route is lacking, then I will check with my Traffic Colleagues to see if I can arrange for a sign to be installed above the 20 sign on the approach to the junction.

It needs to be remembered that these delivery vehicles are only delivering because items have been ordered, maybe the residents need to be reminded that they should advise the delivery company of the width restrictions within the area, Amazon do only seem to have one size of vehicle it seems.....

Regards

Lisa

- The signs cost about £15. Posts and clasps will come to about another £40 or so (i.e. for about £165) [Vehicle Width Restriction Road Sign 629A | In Stock \(startsafety.uk\)](#). Installation will cost a bit more on top of that.