

INSTOW PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Instow Parish Council
On Thursday 20 November 2025
Held in Instow Village Hall Quay Lane Instow EX39 4JR

In attendance.

Council. Jane Bunclark, Mike Foster, Chris Hopkins, Paula Lopez, Susie McCrum, Vice Chairman Mary Jane Scott, Chairman Dom Yeadon, Jo-Ann Middleton Clerk.

North Devon District Councillor. Becky Coombs.

Visitors. Two

The Chair opened the meeting and invited those present to observe a minute's silence in memory of Michael Green in recognition of his contribution to the parish.

231/1125 Apologies for Absence.

Nick Arthur (prior commitment), Eliot Johnson (prior commitment), County Councillor Frank Biederman (County Council Meeting). Resolved to approve these apologies.

232/1125 Declaration of Interests – None.

233/1125 Public Presentation.

a)

Carolyn Maynard attended to underline the shared interest in addressing sand accumulation. A major clearance was carried out last month; however, sand has returned as expected. Her observation: Areas near the boathouse and slipway where sand was removed have remained relatively clear compared to other sections where sand continues to block drains, near the Commodore Hotel concerns raised that blocked drains worsen flooding and accessibility. Suggestion to move sand further down the beach to help retain water and prevent it blowing back. An Environmental team was seen working on the beach on Thursday 20 November 2025, lowering sand levels near Marine Court and creating a ridge toward the sea.

b)

Lenice Forman spoke about New railings have been installed on the slipway while appreciated, their utility and aesthetics were questioned. Thanks were expressed for the fixing of the light in Marine Car Park. Reports of severe water pooling making paths impassable without wellies. What progress has been made on clearing blocked drains? Council acknowledged the issue and confirmed relevant authorities are aware and working on solutions.

234/1125

To Approve the request to vary the order of business

None

Reports

235/1125 Reports County & Ward Members.

North Devon Council – North Devon ward Cllr Becky Coombs.

Local Government Reorganisation Update provided on upcoming council restructuring:

Emergency meeting scheduled for **26th November** 2025 regarding postal vote and district reorganisation. Proposal: Merge four districts into five; outcome depends on council vote.

If approved, parish councils may gain more responsibilities as district and county councils consolidate. Parish councils likely to become the main public contact point for local issues. Uncertainty remains; further updates expected next year.

Jetty Update Discussion on the Ferry Terminal / Jetty and related activities. Numerous bodies are involved; situation is sensitive. A site visit may be arranged to establish what is happening, but details remain unclear at present. Ferry is still located at the end of the pier.

Car Park Correspondence: A committee will be reviewing the possible transfer of assets from North Devon Council to parishes including the Marine Parade car park.

Parish expressed interest in being included in discussions. Potential costs and contributions were mentioned; aim is to protect local interests ahead of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Bollards have been installed in the Marine car park on Thursday 20 November 2025.

Allocation criteria stipulated for Instow residents only. Not for 2nd homes or holiday lets. Six bookings have been taken to date managed by North Devon Council. Council asked to report any discrepancies to ensure promises are upheld.

Mooring Byelaw: requested help from North Devon ward Cllr Coombs, who will report back to the clerk, to enable who to contact for enforcement.

b) Devon County Council Councillor Biederman.

Parking & Congestion: Awaiting update from Frank Biederman no progress reported.

236/1125

Minutes of the Meeting for Instow Parish Council

Council resolved to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16 October 2025 and the Chair was authorised to sign these as a correct record.

237/1125

Any matters arising from the minutes.

IPC purchase of a memorial bench, clerk to confirm delivery date.

238/1125

Committee Minutes

None

239/1125 Tracker update

Reviewed progress on open actions on publicly discussed matters.

https://www.instowparish.com/data/uploads/367_1936120435.pdf

Parking in Instow awaiting meeting with DCC See Minutes **235/1125**

Car Park Lease Cllrs Arthur, Johnson, Scott to arrange a meeting with Ken Miles of NDC

Boats on Beach Member of the public has kindly moved the abandoned boat further down the beach and plans to relocate it again when conditions allow. On inspection noted complex ropes and attachments; further investigation required.

Beach Safety Significant progress reported.

The Environment Agency has agreed, subject to legal covenants, to allow installation of an AOL (lifesaving equipment) on the beach. Nick confirmed via email to the Chair there are no covenants restricting access or installation. Christie's have provided written consent (emails received). Copies of land registry documents and Christie's emails will be sent to confirm agreement. Proposed timeline: Work to be carried out in **January, 2026** unless objections arise. Council noted this as a major positive development.

Mooring Byelaw request help from North Devon ward Cllr Coombs, she will report back to the clerk, to enable enforcement. See minutes **235/1125**

BT Telephone Box

Confirmation contract from BT regarding the telephone box to house defibrillator.

Defibrillator Clerk confirmed cost for two new defibrillators one to be located in the Phone Box near Marine Car Park, with the second one sited the other end of the Parish opposite Land End toilets in the bus stop in a locked housing. £4700.00 + VAT

Bus shelters condition Parish has declined to take on new bus shelters scheme.

Request submitted to District Council for financial assistance as per their offer to refurbish two existing shelters. Chair to contact via email. Awaiting response.

Sewage leaks Update from Steve May regarding sewage issues, confirmed leaks.

Action: Steve to document evidence (including photographs) Include sewage compliance in upcoming planning considerations Suggestion: Use <https://what3words.com> for precise location. Report documents & issue to the clerk when leaks have been identified.

Cllrs Hopkins to speak to Steve May & his contact, explaining action requested.

Lighting Contractor DS Electrical has not yet completed the work, light by the toilet block in Marine Car Park. Quote remains unchanged. Clerk to chase again. Clerk to obtain a quote ask for a for battery / or a recommend light for the numerous bus stops.

Emergency Plan Update

Councillor Yeadon informed the council that he is preparing a detailed update on the Emergency Plan, which will be presented at the next parish council meeting scheduled for **11 December 2025**.

240/1125 Correspondence

- a) Height Barrier Damages beyond repair. Personnel verify the individual's details. Quotation received £2853.28 to install a new barrier, clerk to inform & communicate with personnel to progress installation.
- b) Children play area/park built in Instow, council discussed in depth, conclusion no available location to progress further, clerk to inform member of the public of the outcome.
- c) Personnel contacted IPC ref 80518 planning application via email 20/11/2025 <https://planning.northdevon.gov.uk/Planning/Display/80518> to be discussed under planning **241/1125 (b)**

Planning

241/1125 Submitted Planning Applications.

The Council would submit the following observations:

List of planning applications

- a) **81016 Sea Thrift 2 Elm Terrace Instow Bideford Devon EX39 4HR**
Extension to the rear of the dwelling End Consultation 27/11/2025
Support.

b) **80518 Johns of Instow 4-5 Marine Parade Instow Bideford Devon EX39 4HY**

Demolition of ground floor structures and erection of flat roof extension together with internal alterations, fenestration alteration & alterations to external stairs and entrance and erection of greenhouse

Object

Instow Parish Council – Strong Objection to Revised Planning Application

The Instow Parish Council (IPC) wishes to register its **firm and unequivocal opposition** to the revised planning application. The plans currently displayed on the website are dated **25/10/25**, which means they were submitted **after** the IPC meeting in September where the original proposal was discussed. These amended plans were **not** considered by IPC at that time, and therefore any previous comments relate only to the original plans and **cannot be taken as endorsement of this new proposal. Key Objections**

Takeaway Section – Increased Traffic and Parking Pressure

The inclusion of a substantial takeaway section will inevitably attract transient traffic for collection, exacerbating parking issues in an area already suffering from severe limitations. This is wholly inappropriate for the location.

Loss of Community Shop Functionality

The grocery section has been drastically reduced and merged into a smaller deli area, while the post office appears to have been removed entirely. This undermines the very concept of a community shop and will negatively impact residents, particularly those who rely on postal services.

Change of Use – Café Dominance The proposal shifts the focus from retail to hospitality, effectively creating a large café with a small deli attached. This constitutes a **material change of use** and must be addressed as such.

Excessive Seating – Parking Chaos

A 52-seat restaurant/café is excessive for this location and will create significant parking problems. Instow is currently working with DCC to reorganize parking for residents. The current short-term parking designation outside Johns exists because it is a community shop. If this becomes a café/restaurant, that justification disappears. Johns must clearly state where customers and staff will park, as it cannot be in front of the shop or in side streets earmarked for residents.

Noise Mitigation – Soundproofing Essential Robust soundproofing between the café and adjacent homes is non-negotiable, especially if evening use is contemplated.

Kitchen Location and Ventilation

The proposed kitchen, positioned close to residential gardens, raises serious concerns. It must be fully soundproofed and ventilated without reliance on open windows or doors. Ideally, the kitchen should be relocated within the main building.

Strict Opening Hours Clear and enforceable restrictions on operating hours are essential to prevent the premises from becoming yet another takeaway outlet, which would fundamentally alter the character of the area.

Dry Store Height

The height of the proposed dry store must not exceed the existing wall height. Anything higher will block light to neighbouring properties situated less than 1.5m away.

Impact on Listed Building

One neighbouring property, Cobbles, is listed. Any development within its curtilage must not adversely affect it. The planning officer responsible for listed buildings must review and approve compliance.

External Stairs – Invasive Positioning

The external staircase is currently less than 1m from a neighbour's window. This is unacceptable and must be repositioned. **Note: Discussion noted confusion overdue date. Portal indicates one date, while email correspondence suggests final decision will be made 21.11.2025 (extended from 20.11.2025). Council acknowledged uncertainty and agreed to monitor outcome closely. Clerk to email Senior Planning Officer responsible to this application planning department and Chief Executive of North Devon Council.**

c) **80824 Hillrise Millards Hill Instow Devon EX39 4JS**

Removal of existing pitched roof, southern and eastern extension, internal remodelling, and replacement flat roof .

Object - Not Approved.

The IPC has serious concerns regarding the proposed development, which we believe must be addressed before any approval is granted. Grounds for Objection.

Septic Tank Capacity

The proposed dwelling is substantially larger than the existing property. A larger septic tank will be required to manage the increased load. Failure to upgrade the system could result in overflow or runoff into neighbouring properties, which would be unacceptable and potentially hazardous.

Accuracy of Submitted Documentation Numerous details within the site documentation are incorrect. These inaccuracies must be rectified prior to approval to ensure compliance and clarity.

Structural Stability and Safety The site is located on a terrace supported by a retaining wall, which has previously collapsed. The NDC Building Department should carry out a thorough inspection of the site and review the structural plans, particularly regarding the weight and footprint of the proposed building. It is essential to prevent future subsidence or, in the worst case, slippage down the hillside. **Building Height and Visual Impact** The proposed building is approximately 1 metre higher than the previous ridge line. This increase will have a significant visual impact and may affect neighbouring properties. The overall height should be reduced, potentially by lowering the entire site by 1 metre, to maintain the character of the area and minimise disruption.

Conclusion For the reasons outlined above, the IPC strongly recommends that this application is not approved until these issues have been fully addressed and verified by the appropriate departments.

d) **78993 Land at Yelland South Quay Lower Yelland, Barnstaple EX31 3EZ**

Outline application for up to 200 dwellings and 0.5ha of Commercial, Community and uses (Classes E and F), associated open space, infrastructure and access with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) (resubmission of 77453)(Amended Description)

Formal Objection Submission to the Infrastructure Planning.

Objection to Proposed Development – Significant Concerns Regarding Flood Risk, Sewage Infrastructure, and Compliance with Conditions

1. Flood Risk

The Parish Council strongly objects on the grounds of an unresolved and serious flood risk. Current proposals for flood prevention, such as constructing barriers or similar structures, will merely displace water to other areas, thereby exacerbating flooding elsewhere. This approach is neither sustainable nor acceptable and fails to address the root cause of the problem.

2. Sewage Infrastructure Deficiencies

There are already documented sewage overflows on fields adjacent to the proposed site. The existing main sewage system, which transports waste from Barnstaple and surrounding settlements to Abbotsham, is demonstrably inadequate and prone to failure during periods of heavy rainfall. Until this critical infrastructure is comprehensively upgraded to prevent breaches, no further development should be permitted. Proceeding without these upgrades poses a significant environmental and public health risk.

3. Non-Compliance with Car Park Condition

The car park, which was a stipulated condition for development on the former Yelland Power Station site, has not been delivered. This facility must be reinstated and constructed immediately, particularly as permission has already been granted for residential building works to commence. Until the car park is completed, the Parish Council urges North Devon Council to suspend all ongoing work on the site to ensure compliance with agreed conditions.

4. . Impact on Local Character and Amenity

The proposed development is incompatible with the established character of the area.

Its scale, design, and density would undermine the visual harmony and distinctiveness of the locality, adversely affecting the amenity enjoyed by existing residents.

Conclusion In light of these unresolved and critical issues, the Parish Council formally requests that the application is refused or suspend further development approvals.
A robust and sustainable flood mitigation strategy is implemented.
The sewage infrastructure is upgraded to prevent overflow and system failure.
The car park condition is fulfilled in full prior to any further construction.
Failure to address these concerns will result in significant environmental, infrastructural, and community impacts.

e) **81059 Caynham Anstey Way Instow EX39 4JF**

Single storey extension to rear of dwelling & associated landscaping works.

Support

f) **81050 Yerrold Lane End Road Instow Bideford Devon EX39 4LE**

Conversion of flat roof to pitched roof on part of outbuilding, construction of wall with door for access to rear.

Support

242/1125

Stone Pizza

Council decision to inform Stone Pizza the kind donation of £200.00 would be allocated to 'Go Green project' for Instow Village Hall.

243/1125

Community Orchard

Council approved a grant up to the maximum of £500.00 – Clerk to inform.

244/1125

Councillor Training

- a) Council approved website training for Cllr Lopez
- b) Begin a Good Councillor training for all current councillors. Subject to confirmed mileage costs £378.75 to be held at Instow Village Hall. Thursday 23 April 2026 10:30-13:00.

245/1125

Road Warden Scheme including training

Name of Instow Parish Neighbourhood Watch coordinator Joanne Sway

Contracts for Road Warden Scheme (Dom, Elliot, Paula)

Action: Clerk forwarded paper copies of DCC contracts to relevant parties for review.

Training can be scheduled for January 2026.

246/1125**Finance**

- i. Payment of Accounts. Approved as per minute 246/1125

Payment of Accounts.

Council resolved to authorise the payments specified in the Clerks finance sheet and reproduced below.

Finance table 1

Finance 17th October 2025 - 17th November 2025 Invoices & Credits			
Ref Number <i>Internal</i>	Statutory Power	Payment now due & Description	Total
1	LGA 1972 s111 & s.112	North Devon Council (SD11635925) – Staff costs Salary recharge	£ 1,114.29
2	LGA 1972 s111	Clerks Monthly Expense See attached breakdown	£ 50.00
3	LGA 1972 s111	Hall Heating for Parish Council Meeting <i>Pay as you go</i>	£ 10.00
4	LGA 197 Section 135	Paul Fletcher – Pavement Cleaning 20/10/2025 -17/11/2025 31hrs	£ 378.51
5	LGA 1972 (Misc. Prov.) Act 1957, s4 & Act 1953, s4	Julie Braddick – Toilet Block, 10 Bus shelters Inc. Cleaning materials	£ 786.00
6	Local Government (Misc. Prov.) Act 1953, s4 Act 1953, s4	Peter Parker & Sons – 6 Bus Stop cleaning	£ 90.00
7	LGA 1972 Section 137	Flowbird (UI00021059) Airtime and transaction charges	£ 135.84
8	LGA 1972 Section 137	North Devon District Council - Dog bins collection	£ 380.48
9	Public Health Act 1936, s125	Southwest Water Authorised October 2025	£ 832.33
10	LGA 1972 s142	Webmaster Ltd .gov emails	£ 126.00
		Total	£ 3,903.45
Ref Number <i>Internal</i>	Statutory Power	Direct Debits Already Paid	Total
	LGA 1972 Section 137	AIMBS Payment for car park transactions	£ 104.06
	Pensions Act 2008	Nest (Clerk)	£ 72.03
	BSCS LGA 1972 s111	Bank Charges	£ 8.56
		Total	£ 184.65
		Total Outgoings	£ 4,088.10
		Monies In	
	LGA 1972 Section 137	Card Payments	£ 2,661.00
	LGA 1972 Section 137	Cash >17/10/2025 Car Park	£ 566.95
		Total	£ 3,227.95
		Bank Accounts	
		Treasurers/ Community	£ 90,254.57
		Business	£ 8,711.46
		Deposit & Investment	£ 55,379.25

- i. After all payments are accounted for the Community account will be in credit at £87,183.45
- ii. After all payments are accounted for the Business account will be in credit at £8,711.46
- iii. After all payments are accounted for the Deposit and Investment Account will be in credit at £55,373.25

Invoices Council approved.

- a) Marine Car Park Charges Annual review – Council all approved no increase for 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027.
- b) Bus Stop Cleaning – Council approved £140.00 per month for bus stop cleaning for JB.
- c) Clerks remuneration national increase from NALC Council confirmed back pay from April 2025 and the 3.15 % increase approved.
- d) Defibrillator council agreed costs min 239/1125 refers.
- e) Council approved sand/leaf blower for handy man to clear dry sand from the front of Marine Parade including areas nearby. Cllr Hopkins to obtain quotes, forward to clerk and circulate for approval. Note: Battery charged leaf blower would be a better option to control noise issues.

247/1125

Chairs Communication

IPC Christmas Carols Concert Sunday 14 December 2025 18:30 Venue: Commodore Hotel followed by Village Hall. A fun evening of singing carols accompanied by the Two Rivers Wind Ensemble, followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the Village Hall. Everybody welcome. Free. If inclement weather all held at Instow village Hall

Freeport The various bodies and agencies who have interests in the Taw and Torridge Estuary recently met to discuss ending the Freeport status of the estuary. Part of the changes will be the clear up of the 200 plus boats abandoned between Bideford and Barnstaple.

248/1125

Any other Agenda Items for the Next Meeting

- a) Confirm Committees / Working Parties/ Terms of reference
- b) Staffing Committee
- c) Finance / Revenue Committee
- d) PO box address for Clerk

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

249/1125

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 11 December 2025 at 7:00pm venue Instow Village Hall (note week earlier than normal).

Further meetings will take place in **2026** on **3rd Thursday of each month.**

January 15, February 19, March 19, April 16.

Annual Parish Meeting & Instow Parish Council Meeting including the AGM **Thursday 21 May 2026**

Note:

January & February meetings will move to The All-Saints Chapel due to work at Instow Village hall for the 'go green project'.

The Meeting closed at 20:52

Signed..... Date2025