

INSTOW PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Instow Parish Council
On Thursday 11 December 2025
Held in Instow Village Hall Quay Lane Instow EX39 4JR

Present,

Nick Arthur, Jane Bunclark, Mike Foster, Chris Hopkins, Susie McCrum, Vice Chairman, Mary Jane Scott Chairman.

In attendance,

Jo-Ann Middleton Clerk.

Members of the public.

None

The Chair opened the at 19:00

250/1225 Apologies for Absence.

Eliot Johnson (prior commitment), Dom Yeadon (prior commitment), Paula Lopez (Prior Commitment). Resolved to approve these apologies.

251/1225 Declaration of Interests – None.

252/1225 Public Presentation - No attendee's

253/1225 To Approve the request to vary the order of business - None

Reports

254/1225 Reports County & Ward Members.

None received.

255/1225 Minutes of the Meeting for Instow Parish Council

Council resolved to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 November 2025, with the agreed change of AOL (lifesaving equipment) to Bollards in minute 239/1125 and the Chair was authorised to sign these as a correct record.

256/1225

Any matters arising from the minutes.

IPC purchase of a memorial bench, clerk confirmed due to space, at delivery address delivered delayed to January 2026

257/1225 Committee Minutes

None

258/1225 Village Hall 'Go Green Project'

The chair informed the Cllrs of the request for a loan. All Cllrs. agreed this was not possible to sanction.

259/1225 Tracker update

Reviewed progress on open actions on publicly discussed matters.

Note Tracker updated

Parking in Instow awaiting meeting with DCC

The Sands Planning application Cllr Becky Coombs to update in January 2026 IPC meeting.

Car Park Lease Cllrs Arthur, Johnson, Scott to arrange a meeting with Ken Miles of NDC Transfer of Assets Cllr Becky Coombs, to update after the NDC meeting in January 2026

Beach Safety Significant progress reported. – Bollard to be erected once Environment Agency has conformed the recommended specification. Clerk to report back at January 2026 meeting.

Mooring Byelaw NDC have made contact regarding parameters. Nick Arthur to update at January 2026 meeting.

BT Telephone Box & Defibrillator The clerk confirmed she was ordering two defibrillators and associated hardware.

Bus shelters condition Quotes received from Cllr Hopkins. Deferred confirmation to January 2026 meeting

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 to 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

Update deferred until January 2026 meeting as Councillor Yeadon had approved absence from December's meeting.

260/1225 Correspondence

- a) Children play area/park. Instow Parish Council stated as no suitable location and possibilities of vandalism and groups for young personnel IPC would not pursue this request any further. Clerk to inform the member who contacted the clerk.
The same member of the public asked Christmas lights in Instow. Clerk to inform this would be approved by IPC if they organise the fundraising to enable this to happen then contact the Clerk of the progress. Possible advertise in Parish news for volunteers.
- b) Member of the public is concerned about the step through to the beach near the Boathouse. **Cllrs Hopkins to investigate**

261/1225 Planning Applications.

The Council would submit the following observations:

List of planning applications

- a) 80155 <https://planning.northdevon.gov.uk/Planning/Display/80155>
Erection of a car port with storage space above at Windy Ridge Instow Bideford Devon EX39 4LU end Consultation date is 05/01/2026 – All Cllrs present approved.
- b) 80518 Johns of Instow 4-5 Marine Parade Instow Bideford Devon EX39 4HY
Although not on the agenda all councillors discussed the reply, we received from NDC planning department after IPC submitted an objection to this application also to note Instow Parish Council obtained an extension to the dead line.

The reply for NDC Planning department. After we replied with an objections and concerns. "I apologise for the delayed response and for making the planning decision a day early. They explain that the extension was granted until 21st November, but the recommendation for approval was made on 20th November to meet statutory deadlines. All objections and consultee comments were considered.
Key points addressed:"

- **Traffic & Parking:** No significant impact expected; DCC not consulted as no material changes proposed.
- **Community Shop:** Shop remains functional despite reconfiguration; post office perception noted.
- **Shift to Hospitality:** Falls under Class E(b); changes could occur internally without external works.
- **Seating & Parking Concerns:** Proposal supports economic growth; existing parking remains unchanged.
- **Noise & Ventilation:** Environmental Health raised no objections; mitigation measures accepted.
- **Opening Hours:** No changes proposed; restrictions cannot be imposed unnecessarily.
- **Dry Store Height & Heritage Impact:** Considered acceptable; conditions applied for listed building.
- **External Staircase:**
 - b) Similar to existing arrangement; no significant privacy impact.
The decision is justified as the benefits to Instow's economy outweigh the concerns raised.
 - c) IPC concerns, to this planning application - 80518 Johns of Instow 4-5 Marine Parade Instow Bideford Devon EX39 4HY

Dear Sirs, as you kindly honoured our request to an extension of the 21/11/25 so we could discuss the application at last night's Instow Parish Council meeting (20/11/25). IPC has discussed the planning applications, and our objections, are all documented below. I have also completed via the portal 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 1. 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.

2. 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.
3. 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. CAUTION: This email originated from outside North Devon Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.
4. Excessive Seating – Parking Chaos A 52-seat restaurant/caf   is excessive for this location and will create significant parking problems. Instow is currently working with DCC to reorganise 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.
5. Noise Mitigation – Soundproofing Essential Robust soundproofing between the café and adjacent homes is non-negotiable, especially if evening use is contemplated.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. External Stairs – Invasive Positioning The external staircase is currently less than 1m from a neighbour's window. This is unacceptable and must be repositioned.

262/1225 Car Park

Solar Panel managing the working of the ticket machine. Sign needs to be replaced as bad weather removed the sign.

263/1225 Road Warden Scheme including training

Clrs all decided not to take up the scheme at present

i. Payment of Accounts. Approved as per minute 264/1225

ii. **Payments of Accounts**

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

Finance 18 November 2025 - 10 December 2025 Invoices & Credits			
Ref Number Internal	Statutory Power	Payment now due & Descriptions	Total
1	LGA 1972 s111 & s.112	North Devon Council (SD11641950) – Staff costs Salary recharge	£ 1,114.29
2	LGA 1972 s111	Clerks Monthly Expense	£ 50.00
3	LGA 1972 s111	Hall Heating for Parish Council Meeting <i>Pay as you go</i>	£ 10.00
4		Mary Jane Scott - Michael Williams cleaning up around the Lime Kiln which is just beyond the Yacht Club 24/11/2025	£ 20.00
5	LGA 197 Section 135	Paul Fletcher – Pavement Cleaning 21/11/2025 end December 2025 - 31hrs	£ 378.51
6	LGA 1972 (Misc. Prov.) Act 1957, s4 & Act 1953, s4	Julie Braddick – Toilet Block, 10 Bus shelters Inc. Cleaning materials	£ 805.00
7	Local Government (Misc. Prov.) Act 1953, s4 Act 1953, s4	Peter Parker & Sons – 6 Bus Stop frames and glass cleaning	£ 90.00
8		Tony Ross - Maintenance for toilet repairs	£ 75.00
9		Green Bin - For the Chapel paid by IPC	£ 60.00
10	LGA 1972 Section 137	Flowbird (UI00021957) Airtime and transaction charges	£ 101.05
11		Crown Estates - Foreshore at Instow 00007992 Rent (100) 01-Jan-2026 to 31-Dec-2026	£ 750.00
12		J & D Sparrey Limited Repair for light in the Car Park	£ 198.65
13		Metric	£ 72.00
14		Metric	£ 100.80
		<i>Total</i>	£3,825.30
Ref Number Internal	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	£ 7.52
		<i>Total</i>	£ 183.61
		Total Outgoings	£4,139.16
	LGA 1972 Section 137	Carol Services Festival Items	£ 129.25
		BT Telephone Box Purchase	£ 1.00
		<i>Total</i>	£ 130.25
	Monies In		
	LGA 1972 Section 137	Car Park Card Payments > 21.11.2025	£ 1,272.00
	LGA 1972 Section 137	Car Park Cash > 21.11.2025	£ 751.15
		<i>Total</i>	£2,023.15
	Bank Accounts		
		Treasurers/ Community	£88,643.55
		Business	£ 8,711.46
		Deposit & Investment	£55,379.25

Finance table 1

- i. After all payments are, accounted for the Community account will be in credit at £83,626.32
- 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

- a) **264/1225** Invoices for approval and payment **Council approved.**
- b) **265/1225** Budget April 2026 – March 2027 **Approved**

266/1225 Chairs Communication

Carol service 14.12.25

267/1225 Any other Agenda Items for the Next Meeting

None

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Meetings will take place in **2026** on **3rd Thursday of each month (except December 2026 meeting one week earlier)**

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

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

Note (a)

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

Note (b) No meeting in August

The Meeting closed at 20:46

Signed..... Date2025