

## **BUDLEIGH SALTERTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of the Foreshore & Footpaths Committee held in the Council Offices, Station Road, Budleigh Salterton on Monday 18 August 2025.

The meeting commenced at 7.45pm

### **PRESENT**

Cllr S Cook (Chair)

Cllr P Jones

Cllr P Manfield

**In attendance:** Mrs A Gater-Wildgust (Town Clerk) and one member of the public.

### **25.162 Public Speaking Time**

No member of the public wished to speak.

### **25.163 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr A Chaplin, Cllr P Lewis and Cllr D Walsh.

### **25.164 Declarations of Interests**

There were no interests declared.

### **25.165 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Foreshores and Footpaths Committee held on 23 June 2025 had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was unanimously agreed that they be signed as a true record.

### **25.166 Chair's Report**

The Chair reported that:

#### **Maintenance**

EDDC had recently allocated temporary additional staffing to Budleigh, which led to noticeable improvements along the seafront. These efforts were well received by both residents and visitors. However, EDDC Streetscene reported they remained 36% below standard staffing levels, which continued to impact street cleaning, grounds maintenance, beach work, and other public realm tasks.

#### **Cliffside from Rockfish to 50 Degrees**

Concerns persisted over the growing number of weeds and brambles overtaking the Hottentot fig flowers. EDDC had been informed and had sought advice from their Health and Safety Officer due to the unstable, sloped terrain.

#### **Signage**

The EDDC Dog Warden conducted a walk-through of the seafront with Councillor Alan Chaplin. Several signage-related actions were requested, though not all were expected to be completed within the current season:

- "Pick it up" stickers were installed.
- New "Dog on Lead" signage was required along the Coast Path to Rolle Road.
- Green "Dogs Allowed" signs were needed at beach entrances from Rolle Road and Park Lane.
- Large, visible signage was requested to indicate the start of the dog exclusion zone on the beach.
- Some signage from Lime Kiln car park to the seafront was incorrect and required correction.
- Existing dog lead stencils were worn and needed refreshing.
- Two new "No Cycling" signs were installed near Rockfish and the Club; another was needed at the Lime Kiln entrance.

A Blue Flag information board was also installed near Rockfish, including a note recommending no swimming within 24 hours of heavy rainfall.

### **Seafront Benches**

#### **Bench Audit**

A full audit was conducted from Rosemullion to the Lime Kiln car park. Of the 111 benches:

- 75 required attention (70 needing painting, 4 needing both painting and repairs).
- 19 wooden benches were in good condition.
- 17 were plastic, one required repainting.
- One bench was concrete and wood, in good condition.

Plaque analysis revealed:

- 8 plaques were under 10 years old.
- 9 were between 11–15 years.
- 51 were over 15 years old, with the oldest dating to 1965.

#### **Bench User Survey**

60 bench users (42 visitors and 18 residents) were surveyed. The feedback showed that this sample was in support of repairs and repainting:

- 92% believed it would improve their experience.
- 67% felt the current state negatively impacted the town.
- 83% said the benches were very important.
- 4% felt repairs wouldn't be a good use of funds.

Comments highlighted their importance for rest, scenic enjoyment, accessibility for older users and those with health conditions, and as a community feature.

### **Budleigh Beach and Coast Management Plan**

Councillor Geoff Jung (EDDC Portfolio Holder for the Coast, Country and Environment) met with the Town Clerk and Councillors to outline the objectives of the new Beach and Coast Management Plan. An Advisory Group was expected to form in September 2025, including a public meeting and a representative from BSTC.

### **Cliff Collapse and Coast Path Closure**

BSTC made formal representations to both EDDC and the South West Coast Path Association regarding:

1. The closure of Budleigh Salterton Footpath 11 and Exmouth Footpath 1 from 26 July to 3 October.
2. The lack of signage and alternative routes for beach access west of Steamer Steps. As of 11 August, no diversion signage was in place. The EDDC Beach Safety Officer advised:
  - Closing the beach section might set a precedent for future closures.
  - Barriers could easily be bypassed.
  - There is a legal expectation that individuals exercise reasonable caution.BSTC confirmed they would continue monitoring the issue, with resident and visitor safety as a top priority.

### **25.167 Matters arising**

Min 25.116 regarding the path next to the Public Library was referenced and a follow up note was made for Cllr Walsh to feed back on this issue

It was noted that the Town Handyman (TH) currently undertakes approximately 12 hours of work per week for Budleigh Salterton Town Council, covering a range of locations throughout the town.

While the majority of public spaces and infrastructure fall under the responsibility of either East Devon District Council (EDDC) or Devon County Council (DCC) and the Town Clerk continues to report issues to the relevant

authority or supports and signposts residents to do so it was acknowledged that there were occasionally delays in response or action.

In such cases, where appropriate, the Town Handyman may be requested by the Town Clerk to carry out minor works or maintenance tasks on an ad hoc basis, subject to availability.

#### **25.168 Footpaths that the Committee is responsible for monitoring**

To clarify the following:

- i. It was clarified that the F&F Committee is responsible for monitoring and advocating for the footpaths on the foreshore.
- ii. It was further clarified that East Devon District Council (EDDC) and Devon County Council (DCC) were the entities with overall responsibility for paths in Budleigh Salterton
- iii. It was noted that the relevant entity should be notified of issues with footpaths.
- iv. Funding Opportunities  
The following two schemes were referenced, and it was agreed that further investigation would be required should BSTC wish to take advantage of either. Cllr Jones and the Town Clerk agreed to investigate further, with a view to bringing a proposal to the Town Council for consideration.
  - Devon County Councils Road Warden Scheme
  - Devon County Councils Highway Community Enhancement Fund

Road Warden Scheme -

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/opportunities/road-warden-scheme/>

Highway Community Enhancement Fund -

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/what-can-be-applied-for/>

#### **25.169 Cliff Fall – Path and Beach closure**

- i. Details of the closure of the South West Coast Path were received. It was noted that there was no signage present on the footpath to indicate the closure.
- ii. It was determined, in light of the additional cliff falls on 17th and 18th August, that a letter should be sent to Devon County Council (DCC) to query whether these events have impacted the South West Coast Path.  
The Town Clerk (AGW) agreed to write to DCC requesting an update on the current situation following the recent cliff falls and to ask what measures are in place to warn the public that the path runs over an area affected by cliff instability.

#### **25.170 Seafront - Winch / Abandoned Boats and Painted Roundels**

This item was noted and rolled over to a forthcoming agenda for follow-up by Cllr Chaplin.

#### **25.171 Seafront Benches**

- i. Details of the bench audit were received
- ii. Details of the recent survey relating to seafront benches, carried out by members of the F&F Committee were received
- iii. An updated quotation for the repair of seafront benches was noted as follows:  
'Decorating and minor repairs to benches: £95.00 + VAT per bench.  
Repairs and brackets: £30.00 + VAT for a carpenter.  
Repairs will be identified prior to any work being carried out.'

(Quotation provided by Montgomery Coates. Estimated total cost for decorating and repairing 75 benches: £8,000 + VAT.)

- iv. Consideration was given to any measures that BSTC can take to support the maintenance of seafront benches in light of the above information. it was:

**RESOLVED:** that the F&F would develop a detailed proposal for a future agenda for repairs and replacements. The proposal would be developed by Cllr Manfield for agreement at a future F&F meeting.

It was noted that EDDC had a very small team, with only one person responsible for repairing benches across the entire district.

**25.172 Any Other Business at the Chairman's Discretion**

It was noted that there were ongoing issues with dog fouling, and a further concern was expressed regarding animal control

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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Chair

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Date