Minutes of the Combe Martin Parish Council Meeting, held on 9th November 2026 at 7pm at Combe Martin Community Centre.

Present: Cllrs. Seldon (Chairman), Cass, Lethaby, Masters, Molloy, South, Watkins, and Worth.

Also in attendance: Andrew Wyer (Clerk) and 5 members of the public.
103/26 Apologies were received and **accepted** from Cllrs. Optix, and Smallridge.
Apologies were also sent from County Council Councillor Davis.
104/26 Declarations of Interest – Cllr Lethaby **declared** that as a District Councillor, the views he gives (and how he votes) at this meeting will not necessarily be the same as he does at a District Council meeting.
105/26 Public Participation questions:
Concern about the river wall. CMPC and Church trying but responsibility is with DCC and they know it. (Cllr Worth has sent an email to DCC today with photos.)
Thank Martin, Tom, Andy for clearing the tree branch that fell from the church yard into the river.
Thanks to Tom and family for looking after the war memorial.
Thanks to Tanya and Andi for Remembrance Sunday service.
Plans to extend river wall on the beach? River wall would have significant impact on water quality results. (Some money in Council reserves specifically for this. Need an estimate of total cost to include in the next budget.)
DCC Grant available for Community Work.
106/26 Minutes – The Minutes for the Council meeting held on Monday 12th October 2026 were **approved** and signed.
107/26 Clerks Report – The report had been distributed prior to the meeting, but the Clerk added that cash donations and the bucket collection for the Fireworks totalled just under £1500. Bank transfers (from businesses) were £950 and £50 came via the PayPal QR code. This will all be transferred into the Fireworks reserve to pay for next year's display. The report and fireworks update were then **noted**. The Council **resolved** to make the recommended transfers and payments from Earmarked Reserves.
Recommend an MC to introduce/count down to the fireworks.
108/26 County Cllr & District Cllr reports – Cllr. Davis (DCC) had sent her report, and it had been distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting. It is attached as Appendix 1.
Cllr Lethaby reported that NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) has just come through, which will move much of the planning decisions to planning officers, rather than to Councillors.
109/26 NDC planning: The application was made by the Parish Council, so it declined to comment on its own application.
82240 – Extension to existing play area at Hollands Park, Combe Martin
110/26 Exmoor NPA: **None**

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111/26 Planning Decisions: The Council **noted** the decision:
82035 – Demolition of the remnants of a dilapidated dwelling and erection of a dwelling at Meadow Dean, Comers Lane, Combe Martin.
112/26 Finance – The Council reviewed the list of invoices to be paid and then they **approved** these payments, totalling £19054.89
113/26 Finance – The Council **noted** the "Receipts", "Payments", and "Dashboard" for October.
114/26 Kiln Car Park Toilets – There has been no response from NDC to our feedback on the proposed Heads of Terms. They had promised to get a response to us in time for this meeting. The Council **resolved** to defer this item.
115/26 Kiln Car Park Toilets – The Council **resolved** to defer the cleaning decision to next month.
116/26 Men in Sheds – The Council **resolved** to set up the Men's Sheds charity as a CIO. Items could feed into a "Combe Martin in Bloom". Initial charity Officers just to stand until first AGM.
117/26 West Challacombe Consultation – The Council **resolved** to respond to the consultation by saying that they felt the land should have stayed in agricultural use. During the hot summer there was genuine concern that the overgrown grasses posed a fire risk to the adjacent houses. We do not believe that the local Fire Brigade can handle a "wildfire" at that location.
118/26 Road Warden Scheme – The Council **resolved** that to sign up to the scheme and to put 3 or 4 people forward for the Chapter 8 training.
119/26 Staff Christmas Bonus – The Council **resolved** to give each member of staff a Christmas Bonus of £60.
120/26 Correspondence – The Council **noted** the correspondence:

1. Parking at Spurway Gardens.
2. An email to DCC about the state of the river wall at the bottom of Adam's Hay.
3. Two Freedom of Interest requests.

121/26 Date of next meetings –
Monday 23rd November 2026 – (Budget meeting).
Monday 14th December 2026 - Council meeting 7pm at Community Centre

The meeting closed at 20:10pm.

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Appendix 1.

County Councillors Report

November 2026

Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution for Devon update

Devolution; Chancellor John Healey confirmed in his Budget that the Government was minded to approve a bid for a Mayoral Strategic Authority for Devon, Torbay and Plymouth. Devon's first Mayor, in Spring 2028, will have devolved spending powers to shape transport, housing, training and planning policies.

The new authority would represent a population of 1.25 million people with an economy worth over £33.1 billion. It would give the region more powers, more investment and a stronger voice nationally, alongside England's other mayoral areas.

This link is a helpful explainer https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2026-document/budget-2026-html#growth-in-more-places

Local Government Reorganisation - the announcement today by the minister said that Decon Torbay and Plymouth is one of the nine areas that will have the proposal reconsidered, the decision announced in July is withdrawn.

He said;

'I can now set out the plan for the final phases of the review. The review will now focus on those 15 areas that are due a "minded-to" decision. Those are, in no particular order:

• The nine areas I just mentioned. (Devon is in this group)

• The four areas with decisions withdrawn in September.

• Cambridgeshire & Peterborough; and

• West Sussex

To be clear, all options and proposals in these areas will remain under consideration and I will approach all decisions with an open mind. As such it should not be assumed the same proposal will automatically be selected. It is important the process is allowed to run its course and allow full and proper consideration. We will move faster where we can and some of the remaining areas may receive an outcome before others. I commit to coming back to this House with updates for another set of areas by Christmas – and every area will have outcomes by early next year.

Turning to local elections, as we set out in September, elections scheduled for May 2027 will now go ahead to existing councils. This means that elections to new councils will be May 2028, followed by vesting day in April 2029. This is for all areas, apart from Surrey. '

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Some Highway matters

Fencing repairs under 2-way lights on the A39 Shirwell Road - 9 - 10 November 2026

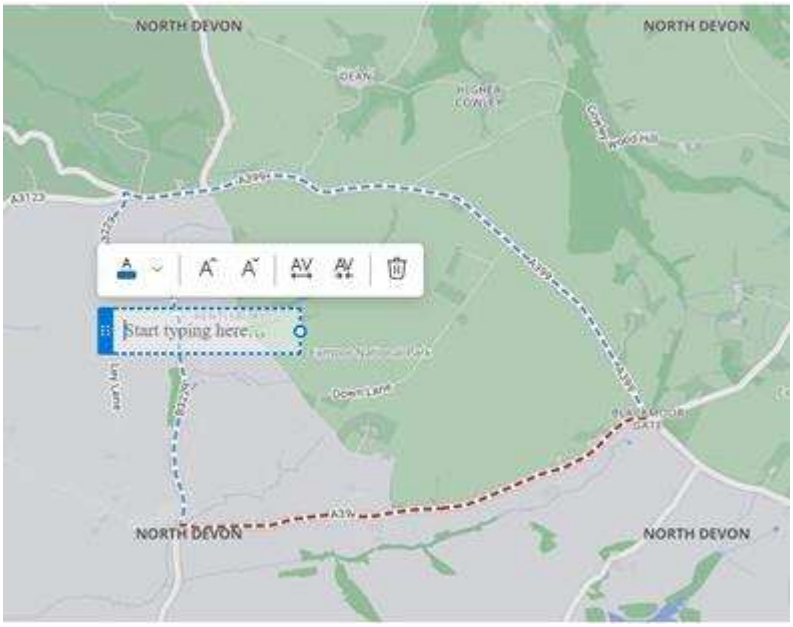


A39 Kentisbury Ford to Blackmoor Gate - Monday 23rd - Thursday 26th November 2026

Resurfacing works on the A39 between the Kentisbury Ford junction to Blackmoor Gate junction, these works will be taking place between Monday 23rd - Thursday 26th November 2026. During these dates the road will be closed between the hours of 07:00 - 18:00

Prior to these works there will be gully cleaning, I don't have a date for that but it will only require some temporary stop start boards.

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Storm Season is Here…….

Many residents only need these numbers occasionally, but when flooding, fallen trees or dangerous road conditions occur, having them readily available can save valuable time.

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Andrea Davis

County Councillor

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