

CLERKS REPORT AUTUMN 2022

1. STRATEGIC SITES

a. **Hillside Gardens Allotments**

Further to the site meeting Cllr Gent and I attended with Barratts in February 2022, in which plans for delivering the Phase 1 allotments were discussed and agreed, there has been no action through the summer. This has been the subject of much frustration and unanswered emails; however, the reason has been given as a reluctance to disturb nesting birds and the works are now 'live' again. We await a revised delivery plan.

b. **(In)Considerate Constructors**

We received reports and photographs of Maddick Road (from Hawkins Road to the Westclyst Primary School) being used as a parking facility and delivery point for site vehicles associated with the Nursing Home, and as a consequence becoming strewn with nails/screws that damaged several residents, parents, and teachers tyres, including putting the school minibus out of service, causing children to miss swimming lessons etc.

A complaint was lodged with the EDDC Planning Enforcement Officer as this contravention of the CEMP for the Nursing home.

c. **Bloor Homes (Pinn Court) Residential Home**

We have received a letter from Bloor Homes outlining the lack of commercial interest in the delivery of a Residential Home on the Pinn Court site. Current planning permission on the plot of land immediately adjacent to Pinn Hill is for a bed nursing home; given the lack of interest the developers have notified us of their intent to apply for residential housing on this plot of land instead. It will need to come through the planning system as a stand-alone Full application and Council will have the opportunity then to make representations; note this letter is likely to be submitted as 'proof of community consultation' as part of that application.

Given the need for a community facility at Westclyst and lack of community engagement in the pre-app stage for this change of use, an email has been sent to Bloor Homes requesting to open a dialogue around the potential for this alternative use of part of the site. At the time of writing this report, we are awaiting a response.

Recommendation: If Council has a particular view on the change of land use proposal, it should make it known now rather than wait for the planning application to be validated and published for public consultation.

d. **Tithebarn Dog bins**

Following a period on inaccessibility due to site fencing, the dog bins along the old Tithebarn Lane are now once again accessible by the public. However, the service has not been re-started, resulting in overflowing bins. This is a prime

example of a multi-developer site with one party not communicating with another and is typical of the issues the parish council gets left to pick up in absence of anybody else coordinating delivery. Cllr Gent and I have been lobbying East Devon for a dedicated Officer to oversee such matters as they are part of strategic development (EDDC's remit) rather than community governance and development (Parish Council's remit). The outcome is that the 'rest of the West End of East Devon' has been added to the workload of the Cranbrook Plan lead officer; while this is welcomed, there is a concern whether this will be sufficient.

2. PLAY AREA

a. **Maintenance.**

The major overhaul by Alastair Guy Playgrounds has now been completed, including: new swing brackets/bearings, anti-wrap chains, & seats; new zip wire cable and end stop, with improvements on the original design to provide an additional secondary precaution that will arrest forward movement should the spring break, thus reducing the likelihood of the user being able to travel far enough to hit the end framework; new roof to the tree house; replacement of the swinging log steps in the trim trail with a vertical climbing / weaving obstacle; full dismantled inspection and service of the omni-directional basket swing bearing; replacement of the overhead rope monkey handholds from the totem poles with an improved design, stopping short of the structure for the zip wire, thereby removing the hazards associated with having a solid object in the fall area; timber treatment of anti-fungal, water repellent/dispersant wood stain (Protek stable coat) to improve lifespan of the natural wood; service of the mono hinge gate and adjustment to the close speed.

b. **Inspection.**

The annual inspection has been carried out this year by PSS+ live, the company that provides our play inspection software and advises on compliance. This enables all inspections to be recorded in the same place, and should an accident occur, it will be easy to 'pull up' the history for any piece of apparatus. The inspection has been very thorough and has identified some matters that must have previously existed but had remained unreported. This will enable us to adjust our inspection and maintenance schedules as appropriate, ensuring the council's play / recreation assets are well-maintained and are as safe as can be for the user.

Recommendation: that the annual figure for ongoing maintenance requirements of play equipment, including then outdoor gym equipment, be adjusted as the equipment ages.

Reason: to ensure public safety and to maintain council's community infrastructure assets

3. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

a. **Broadclyst**

One of the more recent episodes has been the deliberate dumping of household furniture near the bridge at ScratchArse Lane, one piece of which was subsequently set on fire. The Ottery Police team have received names and addresses of those responsible and are following up. It is disappointing to see that this behaviour by a few individuals is continuing despite their increasing ages. One would have hoped for a little respect, common sense, and decency, especially as each individual when spoken to on a 1-2-1 basis recognises they are doing the wrong things and making poor lifestyle choices.

b. **Westclyst**

We have received reports of increasing ASB in/around the play / skateboard area by the speed camera, including damage to trees and the deliberate breaking of glass to grind into the ramps. Again, police are aware. We have also received a report of a loud, late night party by adults in the toddler play area. Unfortunately the report was made too late for us to join them. *#livingthedream*

4. PAVILIONS

a. **Football**

The 22/23 season has 'kicked-off' in both senses, with the first home matches being played and a complaint from the cleaner about blue line paint being walked through the meeting room on the carpet. It is unlikely to come out, although we will try with the industrial cleaner, and so an invoice for replacement tiles will be levied against the Club.

On a positive note, we are delighted to welcome Broadclyst FC's new girls U12s team and wish them an enjoyable season.

The goal mouth works over the summer were tested by the extreme weather. The groundsman reports that he is happy overall, considering the heat and drought.

b. **Warm room scheme**

There has been much talk in the local council sector this autumn about the provision of 'warm rooms' this winter, where members of the local community can go to spend time in a place where they do not need to put the heating on. We have considered how this might work in Broadclyst Parish, and one place that it could be provided is in the Pavilions. We do not feel the layout and furniture at the Pavilions is suitable for people to sit for long periods of time, however, we do feel it lends itself as a suitable alternative workspace for small businesses / cottage industries working from home to 'hot desk', saving the additional expense of having the heating on at home all day. Looking at current daytime bookings, the room could be made available during the day on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

The other community facility that offers a 'Warm Room' opportunity for members of the public to use could be the community hall at Broadview. As this is not a building that is currently open to the public or under our control, it is not easily or readily available, however we have opened a dialogue with its current owner/operator, East Devon District Council. If this scheme was to go ahead it would have to be around any existing long-term bookings, and would require a reliable rota of volunteers to take responsibility for opening / securing and supervising the premises whilst in use.

The lack of public / community hall amenities in the strategic development sites and satellite villages in the parish does not make this scheme possible to deliver in other areas.

Recommendation: to consider if this is something Council wishes to pursue, making the necessary resolutions and delegations if it is agreed that the scheme should be trialled.

Reason: to support the community and local economy during the energy crisis

5. CLIMATE CRISIS

a. **Planning and Environment Committee Remit**

With the status of the development policies in the Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan, and its hopeful adoption in early 2023, the role of the Planning and Environment Committee will shortly change. Representations on non-contentious, non-strategic planning applications are likely to be processed under Officer/Chairman delegation, with planning committee meetings becoming a rarity for controversial and strategic applications that sit outside the Development Plan for Broadclyst Parish.

It is therefore an ideal opportunity to consider the work of this committee going forward and the expansion to include Climate emergency / carbon reduction work as part of its Environmental work. Council's standard Terms of Reference (ToR) for its Committees permits the invitation of experts to give opinion and (with the exception of the Finance and Staffing committees), also allows non-councillors to enjoy non-voting committee membership.

Recommendation:

- i. to update the remit of the Planning and Environment Committee to include work relating to the climate emergency and council's carbon reduction commitments
- ii. to update its ToR as necessary
- iii. to establish its delegations
- iv. to consider its branding /re-naming (Climate Committee?)

Reason: to ensure that the council is utilising its human resources and that of the community efficiently and effectively as it responds to the climate emergency crisis.

- b. In line with Council's ban on glyphosates and climate emergency pledge, we are trialling a new 'green' herbicide.

c. **Energy**

The contract for electric came to an end recently and we have researched alternative suppliers / contracts, including switching to the same green supplier as the public toilets. After evaluating usage with the standing charges and p/kWh rates, it is clear that the most cost-effective option (as at 23.09.2022) is to stay on the open tariff with our current supplier than to switch.

Recommendation: to keep the electricity supplier for the Pavilions under review and move to a fully green energy provider once the market is in our favour.

Reason: to evidence careful use of public money whilst observing Council's pledge to reduce its carbon footprint.

d. **Alternative / Sustainable energy sources.**

When assessed in the early 2000's for solar panels, the project was actively discouraged by the National Trust on grounds of the proximity of the building to the Conservation Area (CA) and that solar panels would not be in keeping with the surrounding built environment and setting of the Pavilions. There was also some concern around alterations to the building that would have been necessary, given the technology available at that time.

However, time, technology, and circumstances have since moved on, and with the granting of permission for solar panels on the roof of the Victory Hall - which lies entirely within the CA - and the support for renewable energy sources in the emerging Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan, it is time to review and reevaluate the feasibility of such a project.

Recommendation: to delegate to the new Climate Committee (inviting support and input from the Broadclyst Environmental Group) to revisit the project and to bring a high-level report to Council to indicate whether a detailed proposal should be commissioned, and quotes sought.

Reason: to evaluate delivery of one objective of the overall aim to reduce the Council's and its' buildings carbon footprint.

e. **EV charging points at the Pavilions.**

Another project for the new committee...! The Pavilions is central to the village and its usage as a car park for school runs / short-term stays for groups/classes at the Pavilions, lends itself to offering EV charging points.

Recommendation: to delegate to the new Climate Committee (inviting support and input from the Broadclyst Environmental Group) to research and consider the project and to bring a high-level report to Council to indicate whether a detailed proposal should be commissioned, and quotes sought.

Reason: to evaluate potential delivery of a project that will help deliver the Council's aim to reduce the carbon footprint of the private car.

6. OFFICE BROADBAND

Council received notice from its current office broadband provider in August 2022, with the service terminating early October 2022. We researched available options for providers, speeds, and cost.

Cost comparison:

Provider	Speed	Cost per month	Notes
Current	Up to 50 Mb	£65	Discontinued from 2 October 2022
Alternative 1	Various packages available	£250-300	Lease line - direct line to one office not available
Alternative 2	3Mb download; 1Mb upload	£27.99	Unworkable speed
Jurassic Fibre	100Mb package	£36; offer price £25 (if order placed by 30.09.22)	Lead time, but fibre already in building
Mobile dongle	10Mb download; 11Mb upload	Contract currently paid by 3 rd party	Temporary measure between contracts

Discounting the poor speed options offered by one provider, and discounting a lease line option, Jurassic Fibre has been selected as the provider of FTTP at the office. An order for the 2-year contract was placed on 29.09.2022. Should the Council's office relocate in that period, the service can be transferred to the new premises (if the new premises are in a Jurassic Fibre area), transferred to the incoming tenant should they so wish, or terminated on vacation by paying the whole contract value (with no further early termination fee).

Recommendation: To note Council's new provider of Broadband in the office, noting the Clerk has delegation set out in Financial Regulation (FR) 10.1 (obtaining value for money) and 11.1.a I (exemption for then supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage, and telephone services). To update Council's preferred supplier list to add Jurassic Fibre and remove Taurus.

Reason: To demonstrate compliance with Council's procurement procedures; to demonstrate compliance with FR 10.1.