

Minutes of the Northam Burrows Management Committee Meeting held on 28th May 2026.

Present: Cllrs Bell (Chair), Edwards, Hames (Deputy Chair), Hodson, Leather and Cllr Newman-McKie (Mayor – ex-officio).

In attendance: Cllr Bach, G Langton, Town Clerk, M Day, Burrows Ranger, M Evans, Secretary of the Royal North Devon Golf Club.

1. To elect a Chair for the committee

The outgoing Chair was no longer a member of the committee, so Cllr Hames, as the outgoing Deputy Chair opened proceedings by asking for any nominations for Chair. Cllr Hodson proposed Cllr Bell be Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Edwards. There were no other nominations and Cllr Bell was unanimously elected.

2. To elect a Deputy Chair for the committee

Cllr Bell took the Chair and asked for nominations for Deputy Chair. Cllr Edwards proposed Cllr Hames continue as Deputy Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Hodson. There were no other nominations and Cllr Hames was unanimously elected.

3. To receive and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Whittaker tendered her apologies.

4. To agree the agenda as published

It was agreed to bring the reports from stakeholder bodies forward, with the report from the RNDGC to be received first.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Hodson (all in favour).

5. To receive reports and observations (if any) from:**a. Royal North Devon Golf Club**

Mark Evans, the Secretary of the Golf Club reported that the biggest problem the Club is facing is the erosion of the course by the sea, which had not been on the agenda of this committee in recent months. The effect was so great that the Club had approached Natural England for permission to move holes 6 and 7 further inland. To do this would necessitate some clearance of the land. The Club had cleared some patches of bramble growth over the winter to help maintain access for people and livestock.

Mark Evans raised a second concern, that the burn from Basset's Bridge to the River Torridge is silting up, especially at the bridge points. The resultant seawater buildup was affecting the playing surface by damaging the grass.

Cllr Hames thanked Mark Evans for his report, noting that brambles provide an important habitat. He went on to ask if Michael Day, the Burrows Ranger could outline the burn and bridge maintenance plan?

Michael Day explained that the effect of the bridges on the water flow across the Burrows at high tide needed to be considered, the result of them could be positive or negative. This matter would be addressed with Torridge District Council (TDC)'s Coastal Engineer on his return from parental leave.

b. Torridge District Council

Michael Day reported that the recent hot weather had contributed to a busy start to the season, though there had been three parties on the dunes which required cleaning up after. Evidence of the participants had been reported to the police. He reported that the beach continued to have Blue Flag status.

Chair's initials

TDC had commissioned a feasibility study into the future of the Burrows, with a focus on the likely effects of climate change. It was hoped this would inform the way forward when the current stewardship scheme ends in 2028. The stickers warning dog owners/walkers about the dangers posed to livestock and wildlife by dogs on the Burrows appeared, so far, to be having a positive impact.

Cllr Hames thanked Michael Day for his report and asked in dog waste bins could be installed on the Burrows?

Michael Day responded saying that dog waste could be disposed on in general waste bins.

Cllr Bell noted that one of the criteria for Blue Flag status was access for all and noted that crossing the pebble ridge with a wheelchair could be problematic – could a permanent solution been considered?

Cllr Hodson noted that a Bailey Bridge had been installed in the 1960s.

Michael Day noted that a permanent structure could not be installed, there not being sufficient bedrock in which to sink the foundations. In the 1960s the Bailey Bridge had been installed but required numerous significant repairs before its removal approx. five years later. Natural England would not support a fixed structure, with the likely effects on the movement of the pebbles that make up the ridge. The current sleeper trackway would be repaired again in June. Disabled access is provided at the slipway onto the beach but is unfortunately covered by the tide twice a day.

It was **agreed** to write to Torridge District Council to request an alternative access to the current, unstable sleeper track bridge be investigated and installed.
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, seconded: Cllr Hames (all in favour).

Mark Evans left at this point (10:35am)

c. Graziers' representatives

None were present.

6. Public Participation

None were present.

7. Chair's Announcements

There were none.

8. To receive any dispensations and disclosable pecuniary or other interests

Members were reminded that all interests must be declared prior to the item being discussed.

9. To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of Northam Burrows Charity Management Meeting held on 26th March 2026

The minutes were **confirmed** as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Leather (majority in favour, two abstentions, not present at the meeting).

Chair's initials



10. To receive an update on actions.

Action	May 2026
1 Dung beetle workshop	Burrows Ranger, with the support of Charity staff, to arrange the workshop, the ideal month being June. All Graziers had been contacted with an alternative of two Saturdays (27 th June or 4 th July), starting at 10:30am, with a field component at 1pm. ONGOING
2 To consider works on the Burrows. • Improving access to FollyFoot stables from the Burrows to move the horses away from the road access point at Sandymere.	The Auditor considered the work to be aligned with the Charitable Objects of the Charity (object 2). The committee would hear from the TDC Coastal Engineer at a future meeting with detail of the project and its costing to enable it to make a final decision. ONGOING
3 To consider works on the Burrows. • Installation of a new footbridge to improve crossings of the stream.	The ranger reported that the landowner was in a position to instal the necessary bridges. No further action for the Charity to consider. COMPLETE
4 Increase horse counts to 4/year, advising graziers	First count had been arranged. COMPLETE
5 Advise horse graziers of their responsibilities regarding keeping their animals on the Burrows common AND Remind graziers of the need to provide animal counts each month and to respond to emails when received.	Graziers contacted. COMPLETE
6 Remove roads that were not in the Ancient Manor or Parish of Northam, those being: Riverside Court, numbers 30 on (numbers 1 to 29 were within the Ancient Manor and Parish) Riverbank Cottages, numbers 6 on (numbers 1 to 5 were within the Ancient Manor and Parish) Newbridge Close, numbers 26 on (numbers 1 to 25 were within the Ancient Manor and Parish)	The properties are to be informed and an up-to-date list of eligible roads is to be published on the website. ONGOING

11. To consider the cost of Manor Passes and to note the accounts for Manor Passes

The Town Clerk introduced the report to members. Cllr Leather proposed the cost of a pass be increased by £5, to £25 for 2027. There was no seconder.

It was resolved to keep the cost of a Manor Pas at £20, in recognition of the pressures of the cost of living.

Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie, seconded: Cllr Edwards (majority in favour).

Chair's initials

Action point: Publicise the freezing of the cost of a Manor Pass for 2027 in recognition of pressures on the cost of living.

12. To note the accounts for 2025-26

The accounts were noted as follows:

Reconciliation		2025-26					
in (= sum of 1 to 4)	current account	petty cash	120-day	90-day	inst access	total	
1 balance 01.04.25	£ 130,638.21	£ 22.50	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 130,660.71	
2 transfers in	£ 11,500.00	£ 20.00	£ 50,000.00	£ 15,000.00	£ 50,000.00	£ 126,520.00	
3 receipts	£ 31,722.53	£ -	£ 998.48	£ 252.20	£ 191.60	£ 33,164.81	
4 grants	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
5 total	£ 173,860.74	£ 42.50	£ 50,998.48	£ 15,252.20	£ 50,191.60	£ 290,345.52	
out (=sum of 6 to 12)							
6 VAT	£ 1,522.29	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 1,522.29	
7 maintenance	£ 2,443.22	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 2,443.22	
8 transfers out	£ 115,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 11,500.00	£ 126,500.00	
9 admin	£ 10,482.93	£ 5.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 10,487.93	
10 grants made	£ 39,917.80	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 39,917.80	
11 Refunds given	£ 40.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 40.00	
12 Square Charges	£ 570.50	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 570.50	
13 total	£ 169,976.74	£ 5.00	£ -	£ -	£ 11,500.00	£ 181,481.74	
overalls							
14 uncleared payments	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
15 outcome (= 5 minus 13 plus 14)	£ 3,884.00	£ 37.50	£ 50,998.48	£ 15,252.20	£ 38,691.60	£ 108,863.78	
16 bank balance 31.03.26	£ 3,884.00	£ 37.50	£ 50,998.48	£ 15,252.20	£ 38,691.60	£ 108,863.78	
17 difference	£ 0.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 0.00	

Chair's initials



13. To consider grants budget for 2026 and closing date for the application window.

It was **agreed** to have a flexible grant fund of around £13,690 to allow the Charity to make larger awards this year if a project was deemed suitable.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Leather (all in favour)

Action point: The properties would be informed and the revised list published on the website.

Cllr Hodson left the meeting at this point (11:15am)

14. To note any business for future agendas:

Cllr Bell requested the effect of coastal erosion be included on future agendas.

The meeting closed at 11:25am

Signed..... Date.....

DRAFT

Chair's initials