

Minutes of the Northam Burrows Management Committee Meeting held on 16th July 2026.

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

In attendance: Cllr Tait, G Langton (Town Clerk), T Stewardson (Community Engagement Officer), M Day (Burrows Ranger)

1. To receive and approve apologies for absence

All members were present.

2. To agree the agenda as published

The published agenda was agreed, though the repeated item to confirm the minutes would not be taken.

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

3. To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of Northam Burrows Charity Management Meeting held on 28th May 2026

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

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (majority in favour, one abstention, not present at the meeting).

4. Public Participation

None were present.

5. Chair's Announcements

There were none.

6. 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.

7. To receive reports and observations (if any) from:

a. Torridge District Council

Michael Day reported that the continued hot weather had contributed to a busy summer season so far, but the land was now very hot and dry. He anticipated graziers may need to remove their animals as forage and grazing became harder to find.

He thanked Tina Stewardson for arranging the dung beetle workshop with Dr Clive Turner. Dr Turner was pleased with the management of the animals on the Burrows in general, though he considered worming products to be the biggest cause of the periodic reductions in dung beetle numbers. He was concerned that the drop in recorded dung beetle numbers after shearing was not the result of worming because the sheep were not routinely wormed at the same time as shearing. Michael Day and the Town Clerk had briefly discussed the possibility of commissioning further research.

It was **agreed** to review options for further research and ascertain the likely cost of this, to be reported back to a future meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, seconded: Cllr Whittaker (all in favour).

Action point: Enquire further into this.

Tina Stewardson reported that she and the Rangers had completed the first horse count of the year. One grazer had removed their animals from the Burrows without informing the Charity in advance. They had been written to reminding them of their responsibilities.

Chair's initials

b. Royal North Devon Golf Club

Mark Evans, RNDGC secretary was unable to attend.

c. Graziers' representatives

None were present.

8. To receive an update on actions.

Action	May 2026
1 Dung beetle workshop	Graziers and representatives of NTC attended the workshop on the 4 th July 2026. The Charity Sec requested the slides to share with members (not yet received). COMPLETE
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.	On the agenda ONGOING
3 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
4 Write to Torridge District Council to request an alternative access to the current, unstable sleeper track bridge be investigated and installed.	Letter sent in early July. Response awaited. ONGOING

9. To receive an update on and costs of the new access to the Burrows project from the TDC Coastal Engineer and consider whether to fund the project

The Torridge Coastal Engineer provided the committee with four quotations, showing costs without accommodating the spoil from installing the track on the land and with accommodating 75% of the spoil. The Burrows Ranger explained that the project should be managed and administered by the Charity, with a recharge being made to the landowner for the gate and bridge, at an estimated cost of £9,000-11,000.

The committee considered the applicability of spending the charity's fund on private land, for want appeared to be the benefit of that landowner/grazier. The Burrows Ranger explained that this would benefit the users of the common by making the main access point safer for pedestrians and vehicles, in addition to the animals that congregated there. By moving the gate the animals were taken through, the herd would learn to congregate in a new location.

Chair's initials



Cllr Leather proposed that the Charity instruct the contractor that had provided the lowest quote, providing the landowner where the track was to be installed would accommodate 100% of the spoil from the works on their land. This was seconded by Cllr Hames.

Cllr Edwards proposed an amendment, which was not agreed by Cllr Leather. Cllr Edwards made a counter proposal, that before any contractor was instructed, the Town Clerk request confirmation from the Charity Commission that the planned spending and works were permissible within the charity's scheme and Charity Commission rules and guidance more generally. This was seconded by Cllr Bell.

The second proposal was voted on first, with 2 in favour and 5 against – Cllr Edwards proposal was not approved.

The first proposal was voted upon, with 5 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention, Cllr Leather's proposal was approved.

Action point: approach the landowner regarding accommodating the spoil in advance of instructing the contractor.

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

10. To receive an update on the charge to be made for the sale of manor passes 2026

It was noted that Northam Town Council resolved, at the meeting of its Finance & HR committee on the 8th July 2026, to increase the charge made to the Burrows Charity in respect of staff time in administering the Burrows Manor Passes for 2026.

The increase the staffing and administrative charge in 2026 would be to £7,689 (£9,226.80 inc VAT) and apply a percentage increase each year in line with the salary increment awarded.

There was a comfort break from 11:20 to 11:25. The Coastal Engineer left the meeting at this point.

11. To consider grant applications

The Charity had received 21 grant applications (see table). The total requested was £57,243.08.

The grant application form stated the fund would be in the region of £15,000, with no single grant award to be over £5,000. The Charity's grants policy states that the maximum single grant award made to one organisation or to one project will be ¼ of the fund.

Cllr Whittaker left the meeting at 11:50am

The committee considered which applications to take forward to consider in further detail (see table). It was **agreed** to defer this further consideration to a meeting on a date to be arranged.

Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie, Seconded: Cllr Hodson (all in favour)

Action point: Arrange a special meeting.

12. To note any business for future agendas:

None raised.

The meeting closed at 12:10pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair's initials



	Applicant Name	Ward	GRANT REQUEST 2026/27	Agreed in Principle?	Proposed By	Seconded By	For the agreement in principle decision	Against	Abstained
1	Appledore Baptist Church	Appledore	£ 5,000.00	Y	Cllr Hames	Cllr Edwards	5	2	0
2	1st Edgehill & Torridge Scout Group	Northam	£ 2,000.00	Y	Cllr Leather	Cllr Whittaker	5	2	0
3	Bideford and District community archive	Northam	£ 340.00	N	Cllr Leather	Cllr Hodson	7	0	0
4	Northam Care Trust	Northam	£ 5,000.00	Y	Cllr Leather	Cllr Hames	4	2	1
5	North Devon Down Syndrome Group	Parish wide	£ 1,200.00	N	Cllr Bell	Cllr Edwards	7	0	0
6	Westward Ho! Community Association	Westward Ho!	£ 2,400.00	Y	Cllr Leather	Cllr Hodson	7	0	0
7	ND Forum for Autistic Spectrum Conditions ADHD	Parish wide	£ 1,500.00	N	Cllr Leather	Cllr Whittaker	7	0	0
8	Bideford , Littleham, and Westward Ho! Cricket Club	Westward Ho!	£ 5,000.00	Y	Cllr Whittaker	Cllr Hodson	4 Chair's casting vote	3	1
9	The Maritime Players	Appledore	£ 500.00	N	Cllr Leather	Cllr Whittaker	5	0	2
10	Fotwhop	Westward Ho!	£ 168.00	Y	Cllr Leather	Cllr Whittaker	5	2	0
11	Northam Library, Libraries Unlimited	Northam	£ 2,000.00	N	Cllr Leather	Cllr Hodson	2	5	0
				N	Cllr Whittaker	Cllr Newman- McKie	3	4	0

Chair's initials

12	South Western Ambulance Charity	Parish wide	£ 1,389.00	N	Cllr Hodson	Cllr Leather	7	0	0
13	Appledore Hall Trust	Appledore	£ 3,896.08	Y	Cllr Leather	Cllr Whittaker	4 Chair's casting vote	3	1
14	Northam Lions Football Club	Northam	£ 5,000.00	N	Cllr Hodson	Cllr Leather	6	1	0

Cllr Whittaker left the meeting at 11:50am

15	St Marys Hall	Appledore	£ 2,500.00	Y	Cllr Leather	Cllr Newman-McKie	5	1	0
16	Northam Methodist Church	Northam	£ 810.00	Y	Cllr Leather	Cllr Hames	5	0	1
17	Friends of Northam School	Northam	£ 5,040.00	N	Cllr Leather	No seconder	-	-	-
				Y	Cllr Hodson	Cllr Hames	4	1	1
18	Bideford Amateur Rowing Club	Bideford	£ 5,000.00	N	Cllr Leather	Cllr Hodson	6	0	0
19	The Appledore Book Festivals Schools Outreach Programme	Appledore	£2,000	N	Cllr Leather	Cllr Edwards	2	4	0
				Y	Cllr Hodson	Cllr Newman-McKie	4	2	0
20	Exclamation Youth Theatre	Westward Ho!	£ 1,500.00	Y	Cllr Hodson	Cllr Leather	5	0	1
21	North Devon Hospice	Parish wide	£5,000.00	N	Cllr Newman-McKie	Cllr Leather	3	2	1

Chair's initials