

**Uffculme Parish Council**  
**Minutes of meeting held**  
**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at Ashill Village Hall**

**Meeting Open – 19:02**

**25.07.01 Apologies for absence**

**Chairman:** Phil Cornish

**Present:** R Kingdom            T Edwards    M Bodger (19:06)   P Blackman    S Levick  
K Poynton (19:06)   S Horne        Peter Cornish      A Logue (19:06)

**Apologies**        P Hallchurch

**25.07.02 To approve of the Minutes of Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025**

The minutes were agreed as an official council record. (1 x abstention)

**Public Session**

There were 11 member of the public who participated in the public session. The highways issues at Reeds Cross were discussed, with concerns for public safety being raised. Clerk advised that the Lead of the Traffic Management Group was now involved and that signage is next to be discussed going forwards.

A representative from Uffculme Library Friends provided a verbal overview of the provision and provided an update on the expected service cuts, and requested Uffculme Parish Council support the continuation of “one of the smallest public libraries” when the time comes.

**25.07.03 County Councillor’s Report**

Councillor Clist did not provide a written report ahead of time and was in attendance, verbally advising the following:

- 1     10 year, £156m budget agreed at Cabinet for Children’s Homes
- 2     £86m in pothole initiative, which focuses on all holes, not just “big ones” is approved.
- 3     Strategic Plan is currently in discussions.
- 4     DCC has a reduction in grant funding available for rural families.
- 5     Essential skills project for 16year old plus – funded through prosperity fund.
- 6     Councillor Clist attended a Care leavers’ award ceremony, with 215 awards given

Feedback was provided, regarding positive input and support given in matters concerning the parish

Clerk again requested a written report be provided ahead of future meetings from Councillor Clist.

**25.07.04 District Councillor’s Reports**

The Lower Culm Ward Councillors provided a written report ahead of time (appended). There were no questions raised for the Councillors.

Councillors Bradshaw and Clist did not provide a written report. Councillor Clist was in attendance and verbally advising the following:

- 1     Tidcombe Hall appeal had been allowed – which was a 118 paragraph long report. This is due to a lack of 5 year land supply and the current “tilted balance”.

**25.07.05 Parish Council Vacancies**

The Clerk advised that there are currently 2 live vacancies. Anyone interested in applying are encouraged to email the Clerk directly to register their interest.

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**25.07.06 Finance**

**25.07.06.01 To approve June Financial Statement**

The June financial statement was approved as official council minutes.

**25.07.06.02 To confirm Exercise of Public Rights Dates**

The Clerk advised the Public Rights Dates for 2024/2025 were announced on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025, commencing on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 and ending on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

**25.07.06.03 To receive Internal Auditor Report 2025 (AGAR and report)**

The Internal Auditor's Report 2025 was received as a report by the Council (appended).

**25.07.06.04 Clerk's Expenses**

The Clerk's expenses were received (appended). Proposed by Councillor Blackman, Seconded by Councillor Edwards, majority in agreement.

**25.07.06.05 Replacement Laptop**

A report was received (appended). Accept quotation Proposed by Councillor Logue, Seconded by Councillor Phil Cornish, all in agreement.

**25.07.06.06 Pension Scheme**

A report was received (appended). Approve recommendations contained within. Proposed by Councillor Kingdom, Seconded by Councillor Edwards, all in agreement. Clerk to enrol as of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025.

**25.07.06.07 Grant Request – Community Picnic**

A grant request was received (appended + design). Subject to UPC logo also being used - Proposed by Councillor Logue, Seconded by Councillor Levick, all in agreement.

**25.07.06.08 Grant Request – Coldharbour**

A grant request was received (appended). It is to be requested that area that is being covered is identified and confirmation gained that access to recordings (by police) will be available, if required by the Council - Proposed by Councillor Kingdom, Seconded by Councillor Edwards, majority in agreement (2 x abstention).

**25.07.07 Business Arising**

**25.07.07.01 Hillhead/Broadpath**

Clive Tompkins (Estates Manager for HOLCIM) had been contacted to update on Uffculme Parish Council allocated Councillor contacts. There are 7 representatives from the Council currently – 3 of which sit outside of the current Members, as historical Council contacts. It was agreed for those 3 to be resident representatives, as opposed to Council representatives going forwards. Proposed by Councillor Kingdom, Seconded by Councillor Phil Cornish, all in agreement. It was also confirmed that not all Council allocated members need to attend all meetings. The next meeting is due to take place on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July at 1.30pm.

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**25.07.07.02 Mole Valley Feed Mill**

No updates were provided. Next meeting due to take place in September. There have been no recent reports of instances to raise with MVFM.

**25.07.07.03 Uffculme Men's Club**

The June meeting was attended. Windows quotation to be considered by UPC for grant funding. Issues surrounding cigarette butts has been raised and the club are looking into this and a solution. There is £25k in the bank currently, so doing well.

**25.07.07.04 Uffculme Bowling Club**

Fundraising is going well, no further updates were provided.

**25.07.07.05 Green Team**

No updates were provided.

**25.07.07.06 Allotments**

No updates were provided.

**25.07.07.07 Parish Maintenance Update**

Points raised included as follows:

- Banister on the steps to the river walk (by the Feed Mill) is in need of repair
- Clay Lane has potholes
- The top of Coldharbour one way system has seen vehicles not adhering to the one way system (residents to the entrance of the road). To be monitored.
- Sewerage and wider impact to be considered with new building applications.
- Public toilets have maintenance items needed (general wear and tear). Clerk to arrange repair.
- Lucombe Park has a footpath block with temporary barriers.
- FP308 now cleared
- UUC signs are to be erected within the Parish.

**25.07.07.08 Traffic and Speeding Issues/Community Speed Watch**

Lucombe Park junction – speeding signs being pushed back as they are not currently suitable. Road markings and signage to be reviewed and raised with MDDC/DCC as appropriate. Community Speed Watch update verbally provided by Councillor Logue, with a written copy of the report to be circulated to Councillors (appended).

20MPH signs still to be arranged in the rural villages.

**25.07.07.09 Schools Update**

No updates were provided.

**25.07.07.10 Uffculme Village Hall**

No report was received, however, it was raised that a quiz took place recently, raising a good level of funding.

Ashill Village Hall update was provided, advising that flooring replacement is due to be requested for grant funding in this financial year.

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**25.07.07.11 Magelake Committee / Repairs**

No updates were provided.

**25.07.07.12 Youth Working Group**

Report verbally delivered (copy appended). DCC and SPACE keen to support youth work.

The youth offender, who was due to attend the meeting as part of their restorative justice initiative, was not in attendance.

**25.07.07.13 Community Crisis (previously Ukrainian Crisis)**

No updates were provided.

**25.07.07.14 Play Areas**

Clerk to gain 3x quotations for exercise bars. Consultation to take place once received. It was raised why dogs are not allowed in the playparks in Uffculme – this is through choice as where children play. Remedial works for Ashill were raised – they are with the contractor and due to be carried out before the school holidays.

**25.07.07.15 Community Road Warden Scheme**

No feedback had been received from the NHO regarding equipment listing and how to order for Road Warden Scheme. It was suggested to contact Sue McGeever (Clerk) for advice. Clerk to action. Pothole at Bridwell to be added to tracker – Councillor Clist also to discuss this issue with NHO.

**25.07.08 Police Report**

4 months of data had been received, with the report being verbally presented (copy appended).

**25.07.09 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk submitted a report and Highways Tracker (appended).

It was raised whether mirrors could be used in The Square for the assistance of road users – Clerk to liaise with Councillor Hallchurch to gain a Highways perspective on this.

**Meeting Close: 20:41**

**The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September, subject to confirmation by the Clerk.**

# MDDC Report for June 25 – July 25

For regular updated news please follow <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/news-items/>  
Could local council please email or call with any work they would like us to uptake.

## Tidcombe Hall Development Appeal Ref: APP/Y1138/W/24/335800

Update from Cllr Gwen DuChesne

On 24 June 2025 we received the Planning Inspectorates decision in relation to the Tidcombe Hall appeal and that the Inspector has found in favour of the appellant (and against Mid Devon), granting outline permission for the development of the site (for up to 100 dwellings). The whole appeal is available to read on line. One of the grounds for allowing the appeal is that we could not demonstrate sufficient land housing supply for 5 years. This will become increasingly difficult now that the government has increased housebuilding targets. Personally I find it frustrating when permission is given and the homes still aren't built. For MDDC there is a further blow as the costs of the appeal proceedings - limited to those costs incurred in contesting the second reason for refusal - will have to be paid by MDDC.

Looking for the positives, expectation is that 30% of the residential units will be affordable as a mix of shared ownership and social rented. And, in addition, there is a Statement of Intent outlining how the hall and its gardens and outbuildings could be restored and converted into residential use. This includes the removal of modern alterations, the reinstatement of lost features such as the loggia, and the retention and addition of planting. While the principles are high-level, it would be possible to secure sympathetic works via suitably worded conditions tied to the overall proposal.

### Other news:

The Council Cabinet Meeting in Cullompton Tuesday 17 June – we move around in order to give local residents in the area an opportunity to attend in person. Residents are always welcome.

**MDDC Tenant Satisfaction Survey** went live you can find it on [Let's Talk Mid Devon](#)

**Local Government Reorganisation** there is a survey on [Let's Talk Mid Devon](#) to help shape the future of local government in Devon. I'd be interested in others views on the survey.

### Consultation - Mid Devon District Council Local Validation Checklist.

Since 2008 local planning authorities have been required to publish a list of information they require to “validate” the planning applications they receive. This validation list forms two components, the national requirements, including the application form, the fee, certificates etc and secondly, specific local validation requirements known as the “Local List”. The Government requires local planning authorities to review the “local list” every two years.

**The proposed Local List is open to public consultation from 30 June 2025 until 5pm on 8 August 2025**

- [Mid Devon District Council Local Validation Checklist](#)

You may comment upon the draft list by email to [DMConsultations@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:DMConsultations@middevon.gov.uk). After the consultation period, the Local Planning Authority will consider all the comments received and amend the Local List as appropriate. Once approved this will form the basis on which

planning applications are deemed valid by Mid Devon District Council. Please note, although it will not be possible to respond to specific comments all comments will be recorded and fed into the consultation process.

You will receive an acknowledgement of your correspondence by email and your response will be held on our database for audit purposes.

**Training/updates available to all Town and Parish Council's in the District 28 July from 5:30pm.**

MDDC has offered the above to include information on the New Housing Targets for Planning Authorities, Planning and Infrastructure Bill and the New Plan for Mid Devon. There has been good take up on this but some spaces are still available. The training can be in person, via teams or by briefing note. If you are interested please contact **Angie Howell** at [ahowell@middevon.gov](mailto:ahowell@middevon.gov)

**Let's Talk Mid Devon**

I keep putting in the links for Let's talk Mid Devon, and would encourage everyone to have a look on this site it – it's really easy to navigate around. For those who have not already registered for the site please consider doing so. I had a look before writing this and there were links to:

Information about **Mid Devon Green Enterprise Grant 2025 – offering businesses grants up to £5k towards investments to shrink their carbon footprint.** This scheme offers capital grants of up to 50% of the cost of investments. The scheme is to help deliver savings in greenhouse gas emissions by investing in energy efficiency or renewable energy or by saving water and other resources or material Grants can be from £500 to £5000! Have a look at the full information to find out if the scheme suits you.

**Residents Financial Support – resources to support residents financially.** From aid with food and energy expenses to navigating the cost of living, our resources offer a lifeline for those seeking assistance within their community. Learn about childcare provisions, expert budgeting advice, and aid with rent and council tax payment

**Climate and Sustainability – a project showing the work we are doing to reach our carbon neutral ambitions.** This page talks about what Mid Devon is doing – and there is a lot going on from Transport and waste to homes and insulation.

**Plan Mid Devon 2023 – 2042 this will guide development in the district over a 20 year period.**

**My Mid Devon – this is the destination for personalised online services and information** You can even get a weekly reminder for which bins are being collected.

[Let's Talk Mid Devon](#)

**Grants**

We would like to highlight that we have a few live grant schemes open for application or expression of interest at the moment. Town and Parish Council's might be interested to apply (if eligible) and / or pass the information onto the relevant organisations / businesses in their area:

[Business Grants and Financial Support - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk)

**Love your Town Centre funding** – (Shopfront Enhancement Scheme (town centres only) and Creative Communities)

'Love Your Town Centre' is a flexible funding mechanism offering small grants through a competitive bidding process with four strands aimed at improving the town centre

**New Grant Scheme NOW OPEN - Community Commercial Hubs - CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

A Capital grant scheme to support the creation of or improvements to community delivered commercial space\* located in Mid Devon's towns and villages. This could include but are not limited to – the creation or improvement of community retail spaces, pubs, cafes and workspace i.e. hot desk facilities, work hubs and industrial space. These can be 'standalone' spaces or incorporated into multi use centres such as town, village and community halls.

**New Grant Scheme NOW OPEN - Improving our Visitor Economy Assets - CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

A **capital** grant scheme to improve Mid Devon's Visitor Economy assets (tourism, cultural or heritage assets).

**Green Enterprise Grants (2025) - NOW OPEN**

This scheme offers capital grants of up to 50% of the cost of investments that shrink the annual carbon of your enterprise. Projects that deliver savings on carbon / greenhouse gas emissions either directly or from e.g. saving energy, water or other resources / materials

Kind Regards  
Cathy Connor  
Andrea Glover  
Lower Culm Councillors  
06/07/25

**Uffculme Parish Council**  
**June 2025 Income and Expenditure Summary**

**Current Account**

**Balance at 31 May 2025** **1,830.99**

**Income Received**

04/06/2025	Devon County Council Road Warden Scheme	297.62	
			<b>297.62</b>

**Expenses Incurred**

03/06/2025	Gemma Cole June Wages	1,103.38	
16/06/2025	Jess Lucas Bins - May	125.00	
24/06/2025	Tamar Telecom Clerk's Phone	14.42	
27/06/2025	Jess Lucas Grass Cutting Contract	1,712.50	
30/06/2025	Wix.com Business Email - 2025-2026	1,209.60	
30/06/2025	Lloyds Bank Account Fee	4.25	
			<b>4,169.15</b>

**Transfers to/from Reserve Account** **5,000.00**

**Balance carried forward to 1 July 2025** **2,959.46**

**Reserve Account**

**Balance at 31 May 2025** **159,863.12**

**Income Received**

09/06/2025	Lloyds Bank Interest	122.09	
			<b>122.09</b>

**Expenses Incurred**

-  

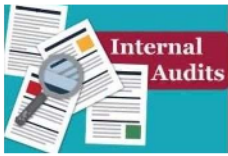

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**Transfers to/from Reserve Account** **- 5,000.00**

**Balance carried forward to 1 July 2025** **154,985.21**





Gemma Coles  
Parish Clerk

16<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Dear Gemma,

**Uffculme Parish Council End of Year Audit June 2025**

Parish & Town Auditing Services have been appointed to undertake the internal audit for Uffculme Parish Council. The End of Year audit was completed on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

I can confirm that I am independent of the Parish Council.

As stated in the Letter of Engagement letter, the scope of our work is limited to completing the audit testing and enquiries we deem necessary to complete Section 4 of the Annual Report for Local Councils in England. We do not provide assurance over or accept responsibility for areas of work not included in this scope, unless specifically agreed with the Council during the financial year. In providing internal audit services we are not conducting a financial statement audit in accordance with standards and guidelines issued by the Audit Practices Board and our procedures are not designed to provide assurance over the reliability and quality of your financial statements. This will be undertaken by the Council's appointed External Auditor.

We are required by the Annual Internal Audit Report included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These controls are included in the following report.

Thank you for all the information you have provided. I would be grateful if you could present this report at the next available meeting of Full Council.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Russell, Internal Auditor



## **A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.**

The Council maintains its financial records using spreadsheets.

The internal audit has confirmed that income and expenditure balances to the cashbook and is reconciled to the bank statements on a monthly basis. During the review it has been confirmed that there is a clear audit trail from the accounts to supporting documentation such as invoices.

The Council is provided with monthly financial updates that include a list of payments. They are also provided with balances at the bank and on a monthly basis.

The opening balances in the cashbook agreed back to the 2023/24 accounts.

A sample of invoices have been inspected against the accounts for payment. No material differences were identified.

The accuracy of the year-end bank reconciliation details has been verified and accurate disclosure of the combined cash and bank balances have been stated in the AGAR, section 2, line 8. (£146,515).

As the parish council now has balances of over £100,000 it must have an investment policy in place as required by the regulations. **Recommended that this policy be developed and adopted during this financial year.**

**The Council has met this control objective.**

## **B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.**

Councillors are provided with the list of payments to be made as part of the agenda. This list is also published on the website. Payments are agreed at Full Council and then paid via electronic banking with Lloyds Bank. **It is recommended that quarterly internal audits are undertaken by an appointed Councillor and that invoices are initialled.**

Financial Regulations are very old and require a complete review. The Procurement Act 2023 has been enacted and new financial limits are now in place. This has amended the various thresholds that were in place prior to leaving the EU. Please note that from 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025, both above and below threshold notices for new UK procurements will need to be published on Find a Tender: [Find a Tender](#)

Standing Orders are based on a more recent version of the NALC template but the current limits do not match between this document and Financial Regulations. Standing Orders Section 18 needs to be updated to reflect the revised limits.

**It is recommended that Council reviews Financial Regulations as soon as possible using the latest version of the NALC template to ensure that its financial limits and tender process meets the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.**

**It is also recommended that Council reviews Standing Orders to ensure they reflect the recent legislative changes and that the financial limits match between the two documents.**

All other payments under Box 6 of the AGAR has increased from £98,390 to £124,635. An explanation of variance will be required.

Invoices are presented to Full Council for payment and listed on a Schedule of Payments.

A sample test has been undertaken and the following is confirmed:

- Payment agreed to the invoice.
- A sample of Payments have been checked against the bank statements to verify accuracy.
- Expenditure is appropriate.

The Council does not have a debit or credit card in place.

The Council is not registered for VAT and should submit a VAT claim on an annual basis. However, there is no record that a VAT claim has been made or received. **Recommend that this be addressed and a VAT claim is made on a VAT 126 form for the financial year.**

**The Council has met the requirements of this control objective.**

**C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these**

The Council now has a Risk Register in place and it is uploaded onto the Council's website. **Recommend that this be reviewed on an annual basis.**

The Council is insured with Clear Councils on a standard local council package for employer liability and public liability. Adequate cover is provided and the policy was in date at time of audit.

Council is responsible for a play area and has independent play inspections carried out on a monthly basis by Mid Devon District Council. Copies of the inspection reports have been reviewed. An annual inspection is also carried out by an independent inspector.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored and reserves were appropriate**

Council maintains its accounts using a spreadsheet system.

Council had initial balances of £146,515 at the beginning of the year and these have decreased to £126,331.

End of year bank balances are as follows:

ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
Lloyds Current	£4,124.51
Lloyds Reserve	£122,207.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>£126,331.55</b>

The Council has Earmarked Reserves in place and these have been updated and uploaded onto the Council website as part of the budget report. The Earmarked Reserves amount to £56,800.

The precept for 2024/25 of £99,950 was approved by Full Council on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 (Minute 24.01.06.03)

The Council approved the precept of £103,836.49 for 2025/26 at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (Minute 25.01.06.03).

Budget Monitoring reports are currently not presented to Council. **It is recommended that Budget reports are presented on a quarterly basis to enable Council to monitor income and expenditure against budget allocations.**

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked and VAT was appropriately accounted for.**

Precept as stated in box 2 is £99,950. This has been agreed to third party documentation provided by central government.

Income per box 3 to the accounts is £16,027 compared to £77,552 in 2023/24. An explanation of variance will be required.

A sample has been tested during the year from the cashbook. The transactions were selected randomly and included items from each month of the 2024/25 financial year. No material differences were identified.

The Council generates income from the cemetery, grants and bank interest.

The Council manages the cemetery. Samples of the various forms are available on the website and have been reviewed.

No VAT claim appears to have been made or received during the financial year.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**F – Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.**

The Council does not operate a petty cash account. **Not covered.**

**G - Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.**

Staff costs per box 4 to the accounts were £10,462 in 2023/24. This year the cost of salaries is £11,526. It has been confirmed that this amount relates only to staff salaries.

A signed copy of the Clerk's contract has been provided and noted.

Payroll is undertaken by an external provider.. A sample of payroll has been reviewed. It has been verified that gross pay was calculated correctly and all payments to HMRC have been submitted.

Currently the Clerk is not in a pension scheme.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**H - Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.**

An asset register is in place and is uploaded onto the website. The Fixed Assets box 9 stated £751,021 for 2024/25. There have been no movements during the year.

The Council does not currently have any loans outstanding.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**I – Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.**

All the Bank Accounts are reconciled on a monthly basis and reported to Full Council.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**J - Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.**

Uffculme Parish Council prepares its annual accounts on a receipts and payments basis as required as it has a turnover of less than £200,000 per annum

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**K: If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick “not covered”).**

The Council was subject to a limited assurance review. **Not covered.**

**L: The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation**

Smaller authorities should publish:

- All items of expenditure above £100 (published as receipts and payments)
- End of year accounts (published)
- Annual governance statement (published)
- Internal audit report (published)
- List of councillor or member responsibilities (published)
- Details of public land and building assets (published on the website)
- Minutes, agendas and meeting papers of formal meetings (published on the website)

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**M – In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).**

The Council published Sections 1 & 2 of the AGAR and the internal audit report.

The Public Notice is published on the Council’s website. Dates were 27<sup>th</sup> June to 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024. This does not meet the 30 statutory days notice requirement. It ran for 31 days, not 30 days

The Council formally minuted the public notice at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 (minute 24.07.06.02)

**The Council has not met this control objective.**

**N: The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)**

The Council has published AGAR documentation from 2016/17 onwards and meets the 5 year publication requirement.

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities must publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24, approved and signed
- Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24, approved and signed

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities must publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate
- Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

All the above items have been published on the website.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**O – (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.**

The Council is the sole trustee for the following charities:

War Memorial Recreation Ground (301000) – Accounts submitted in May 2025 118 days late. Reporting is currently up to date.

Magelake Hall and Recreation Ground (300999) – Accounts submitted in May 2025 209 days late. Reporting is currently up to date.

**Recommend that Council endeavours to meet the required date to submit its accounts as Sole Trustee.**

**The Council has met this control objective.**

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Uffculme Parish Council

<https://www.uffculmeparishcouncil.gov.uk/> WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).		✓	
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
<b>O. (For local councils only)</b> Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
	✓		

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken: 16/06/2025  
 Name of person who carried out the internal audit: Paul Russell

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: [Redacted]  
 Date: 16/06/2025

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).  
 \*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

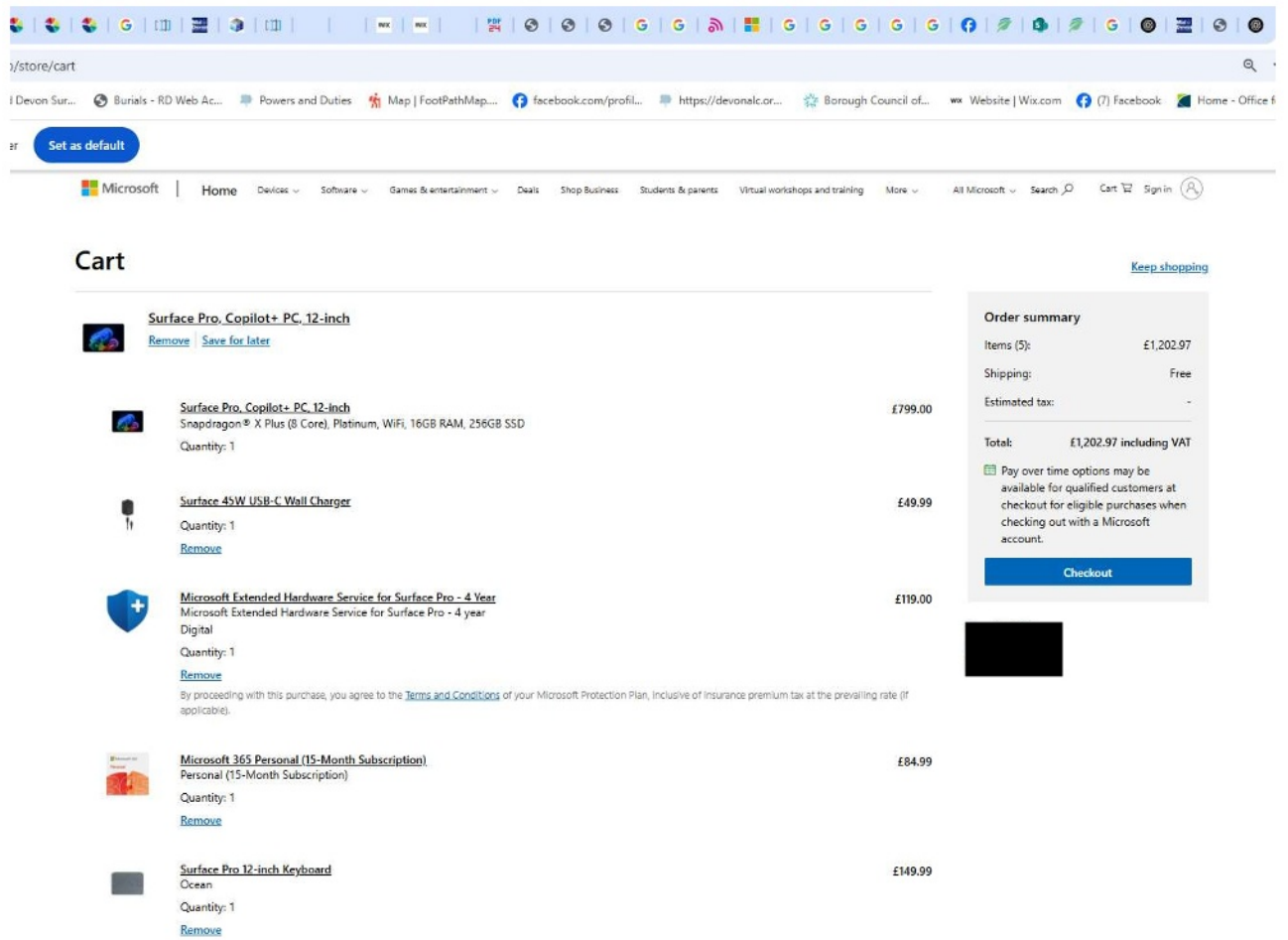


**Gemma Cole**  
**Uffculme Parish Council Expenses**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Gross</b>
10/03/2025	Tesco	Stationery	13.55	-	<b>13.55</b>
01/04/2025	Amazon	Bin bags - Litter Picker	4.99	1.00	<b>5.99</b>
30/06/2025	WH Smiths	Stationery	20.68	-	<b>20.68</b>
			<b>39.22</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>40.22</b>

## Laptop Replacement - 2025

The current laptop was purchased in 2018 at a cost of £1,169. It is now dated and in need of replacement. Below is a quotation for a replacement direct from Microsoft – the total cost is £1,202.97:



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Store cart page. The cart contains five items:

Item	Price
Surface Pro Copilot+ PC, 12-inch	£799.00
Surface Pro Copilot+ PC, 12-inch (Snapdragon® X Plus (8 Core), Platinum, WiFi, 16GB RAM, 256GB SSD)	£799.00
Surface 45W USB-C Wall Charger	£49.99
Microsoft Extended Hardware Service for Surface Pro - 4 Year	£119.00
Microsoft 365 Personal (15-Month Subscription)	£84.99
Surface Pro 12-inch Keyboard	£149.99

The order summary on the right shows a total of £1,202.97 including VAT. A 'Checkout' button is visible at the bottom of the summary.

Budget item for allocation would be taken from “Admin Expenses - PPS, Data Protection, Councillor Exp, Subs, etc”, which has a total allocation for the year of £2,888.

## Overview

Under the Pensions Act 2008, UK employers are legally required to provide a workplace pension scheme and automatically enrol eligible employees. This is referred to as automatic enrolment.

Eligibility for automatic enrolment typically includes:

- Aged between 22 and State Pension age
- Earning over £10,000 per year
- Ordinarily working in the UK

Employers must reassess and re-enrol eligible staff every three years.

### Minimum Contributions:

- Employer: 3% of qualifying earnings
- Employee: 5% of qualifying earnings
- Total: 8% minimum contribution

While these minimums meet legal requirements, higher contribution schemes - such as those used in the Local Government sector - offer significantly more value and long-term benefits.

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### Benefits of Higher Employer Contributions

Offering pension contributions above the legal minimum provides a range of advantages:

- Improved Retirement Security: Employees build a more substantial pension pot.
  - Stronger Employee Loyalty: Demonstrates employer commitment to staff wellbeing.
  - Enhanced Job Satisfaction: Employees feel valued, increasing motivation and morale.
- 

### Suggested Scheme: Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a defined benefit, statutory public service pension scheme. It is available to:

- Local government workers
- Non-teaching education staff
- Police staff
- Voluntary sector employees
- Environment agency personnel
- Contractors engaged with qualifying employers

The LGPS is governed by regulations set by Parliament, ensuring consistency and security for members across the UK.

### Contribution Example

Under the LGPS, Uffculme Parish Council would contribute significantly more than the statutory minimum. For example, based on the Clerk's current employee's earnings, the employer contribution for LGPS would be 21.9% (primary rate 21.3% / secondary rate 0.6%). The estimated Employer Contribution would equate to £3,127.71 per annum.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that Uffculme Parish Council formally adopts the LGPS as its pension scheme of choice for eligible staff. Doing so not only ensures compliance and financial stability but also reinforces your commitment to being a responsible and forward-thinking employer, by investing in employees' long-term financial wellbeing, reinforcing your commitment as a responsible employer.

[Redacted]

**From:** Claire Nichols [Redacted]  
**Sent:** 17 June 2025 10:42  
**To:** Gemma Cole  
**Subject:** Parish council request

Hello Gemma,

[Redacted]

£100 towards resources for warm space expenses for the smoothie bike and ancillary costs plus crafts for families  
Five banners to advertise the event (ken white signs £55.00+vat each)

[Redacted]

Kind regards

Claire

--

**Claire Nichols**

[Redacted]



# COMMUNITY PICNIC

FREE ENTRY

Family friendly activities  
will be available

Friday 8th August  
12 til 3pm

Bring your own picnic

Coldharbour Mill Paddock  
(by the chimney)



[REDACTED]

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**From:** Martin Halse [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 July 2025 11:37  
**To:** Gemma Cole  
**Subject:** Funding request

Good morning Gemma,

Coldharbour Mill Trustees would like to request assistance from Uffculme Parish Council with the installation costs of CCTV at the museum.

The total project costs are £5,964.58 plus VAT totalling £7,157.50.

The Council has been good enough to consider requests to the value of £5000 for a number of years now including for the last two years with payments of the same each year towards the Museums and Estate Grant for projects totalling £585,000, it had been anticipated that we would request three awards of £5000 for these projects but they were delivered under budget and hence only two requests and grants were made.

This would deliver CCTV coverage of all the external areas of the heritage sites buildings, car park and Mill yard, but also allows for the system to be expanded in future years by adding more cameras inside the buildings.

Over the years the council has considered paying for a whole project as it can reclaim VAT whereas the charity cannot, I am unsure whether this is still possible but if it was as with previous projects the charity would pay the council the net difference.

We do have just over £1000 of funding towards the project, so if the council was minded to award £5000 for this project we can immediately make up the net value, however we do have two donors who could make up the VAT element if the charity were to commission the project itself.

A couple of months ago the mill was hit by a small spate of vandalism with several windows and listed window frames being smashed, and two doors being smashed and broken, fortunately no access was gained into the Museum and the police whilst very helpful were unable to take matters further as there was no footage of any activity due to the lack of CCTV.

Last night we suffered more vandalism of doors and windows though not as extensive as last time.

The trustees would be very grateful if councillors could consider this request, should they however require any further information or of course to visit the site I would be very happy to meet with them.

Kind regards

Martin

Martin Halse  
Chief Executive

Andrew Logue



### **Youth Working Group**

Awaiting response to youth surveys sent to Uffculme School and Uffculme Primary School.

As survey responses may only arrive in the next school year, I would propose starting discussions with interested parties (charities, churches, interest groups) to canvass their opinion on local youth provisions and the availability of venues/potential venue fees.

Additionally, I would like to put out a call for councillor/community suggestions (social media/website survey?) for simple UPC-funded projects. This could include robust park exercise equipment (see equipment in Willand Orchard Way play area/Sampford Peverell Lower Orchard green space with no moving parts) and walking/cycling trail and distance markers for established routes. This could allow us to create a list of potential suppliers and cost estimates in advance.

### **Police Working Group**

I have updated the crime data spreadsheet and graphs for incidents within Uffculme (LSOA: Mid Devon 003A) based on monthly data releases going back to May 2021. As of this report, the most recent data are from April 2025 (see graphs at end of report).

I've not yet finalised duplicated spreadsheets for adjacent LSOA zones (which broadly correspond to parish/ward boundaries) to determine crime types per capita. In the interim, I have indicated reported crimes within Uffculme as a percentage of Mid Devon crime totals, with the priority crimes (violence & sexual assault, criminal damage & arson, ASB) ranging from 2-3%. For reference, Uffculme parish accounts for 2.93% of Mid Devon's current population (ONS mid-2022 estimate).

There are still multiple issues with outcomes reporting, while crimes like violence and sexual assault, criminal damage and arson, or antisocial behaviour can appear disproportionately high as many "lesser" crime incidents do not appear in this data if the victim does not press charges or the incident goes through the community resolution process.

The Community SpeedWatch (CSW) coordinator for the Uffculme & Lucombe Park has yet to see any new volunteers since the Annual Parish Meeting, but I have kept her informed of the UPC enquiries into a vehicle activated speed sign (VAS).

As per her suggestion, the APM poster I have modified to be an online resource will include a how-to section for signing up to CSW (given the age of the website and user interface), and I'll prepare similar guides for other services for those uncomfortable or unfamiliar with browser- or app-based reporting (DCC Roads and Transport/FixMyStreet for potholes, incident reporting using the Police online service/ CrimeStoppers).

### **Traffic Working Group contribution**

There are ongoing parishioner concerns regarding Uffculme Rd (B3440)/Bridwell Crescent junction and Reeds Cross intersection near Ashill.

*(This could be duplication of Councillor Hallchurch's reporting)*

*The Lucombe Park junction was designed for a 30 mph zone (43 m sightlines in either direction, 2.4 m from give way line). Road markings and speed limit signs were not installed to plan, approx. 50 m further out towards Langlands Business Park. Road markings were removed, 30 mph signs were briefly covered but since restored.*

*There is potential confusion for drivers coming from Willand due to limited signage and "credibility" issues (straight road with long sightlines, no obvious sign of village boundary). Anecdotally, drivers coming from Uffculme direction often accelerate onto the straight past the bus stop corner towards the junction.*

*A speed check done pre-September 2024 indicated mean speeds of 36 mph, while the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was 43 mph (suggesting a 40 mph limit is closer to what drivers would consider "credible", with most drivers within 5 mph of this value on either side)*

*Ashill resident have reported eight collisions within the last two years at the Reeds Cross intersection, which has faded road markings and is a national limit zone allowing speeds of up to 60 mph despite the narrow roads and limited visibility at the intersection.*

Despite ongoing concerns, DCC/Highways acts on identified collision clusters. Validated traffic data, from 2019 to 2023, show no such cluster near the Lucombe Park junction nor Reeds Cross. When including the latest unvalidated mid-2024 DfT release, there is still no data for Reeds Cross.

Displaying 25 years of verified data using the CrashMap service (which uses verified DfT data, 1999-2023) reveals a pattern of collisions along Uffculme Rd and Commercial Rd reinforcing the argument for stricter speed limits in and around the village, but there are still no incidents reported for Reeds Cross (see images at the end of the report).

This represents an ongoing issue with how collision data is collected and published. The majority of collisions are reported to insurers but not the police, while collisions reported to the police that do not involve casualties are not recorded in the DfT datasets. As such, a succession of "near misses" is unlikely be acted upon until several collisions involving casualties has occurred.

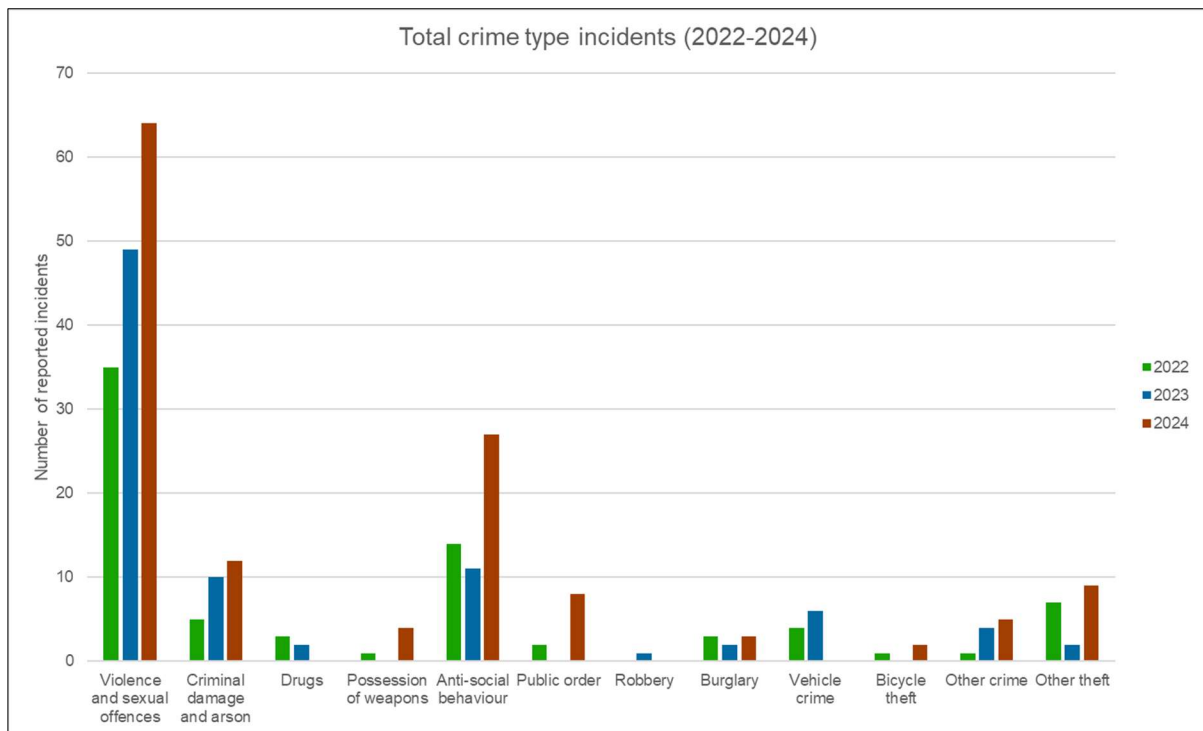
At present, community-driven initiatives, like reestablishing a SpeedWatch team or creating a basic collision reporting mechanism (to compile incidents with location, date, time, consequences, images), may be the best option for accumulating evidence to push the DCC/Highways into action.

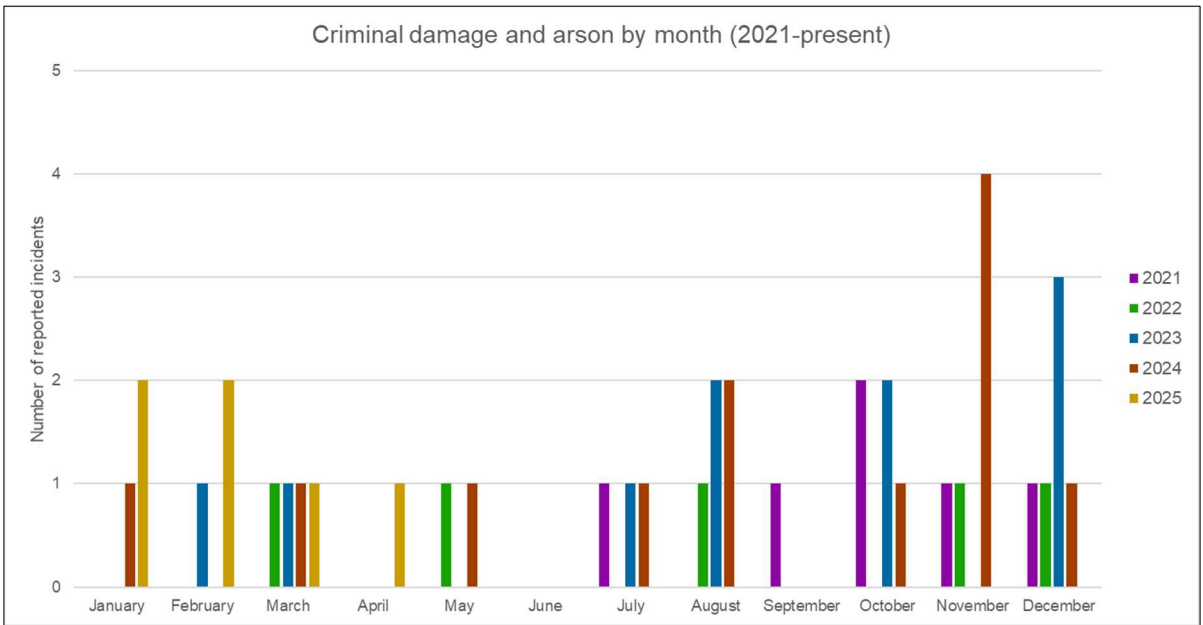
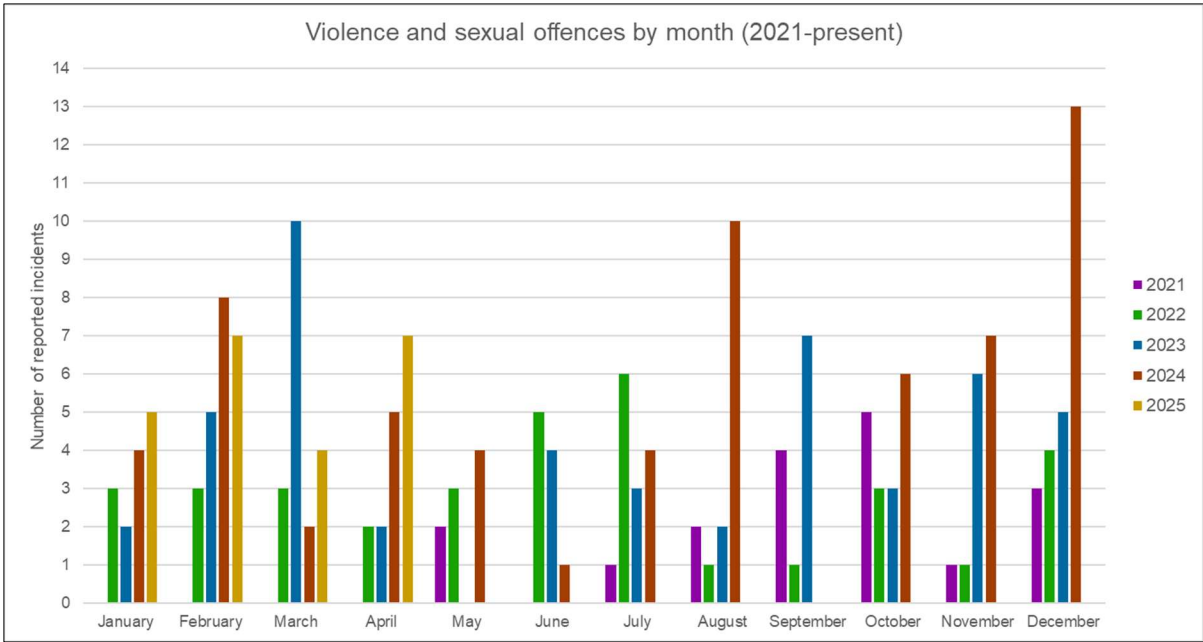


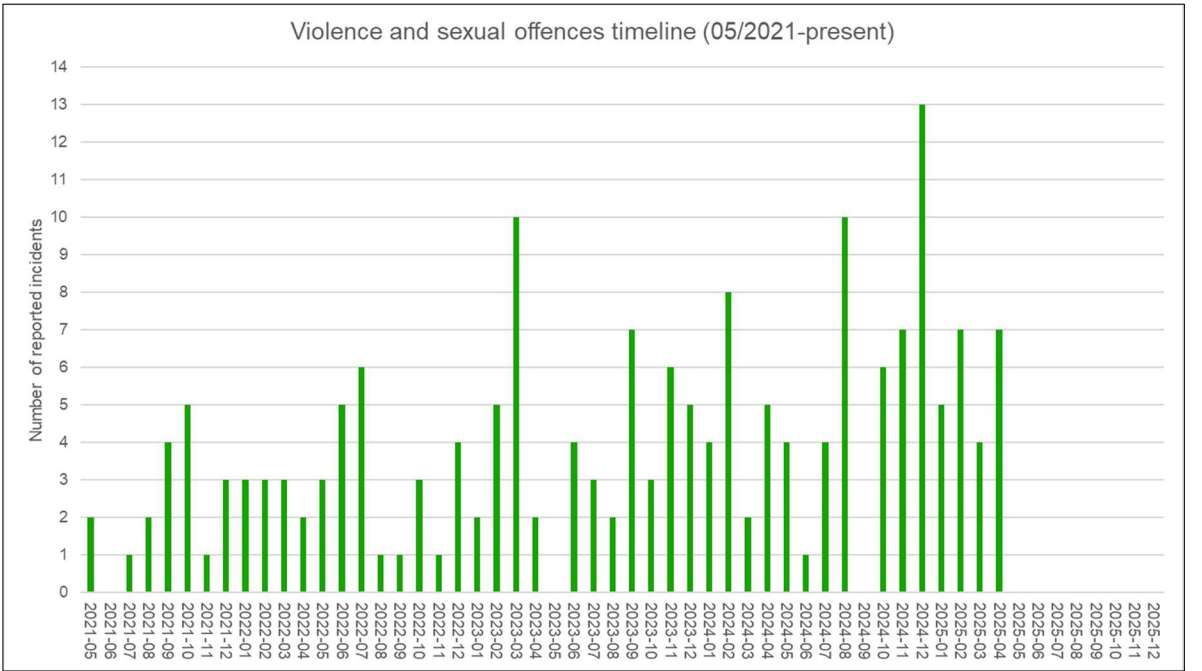
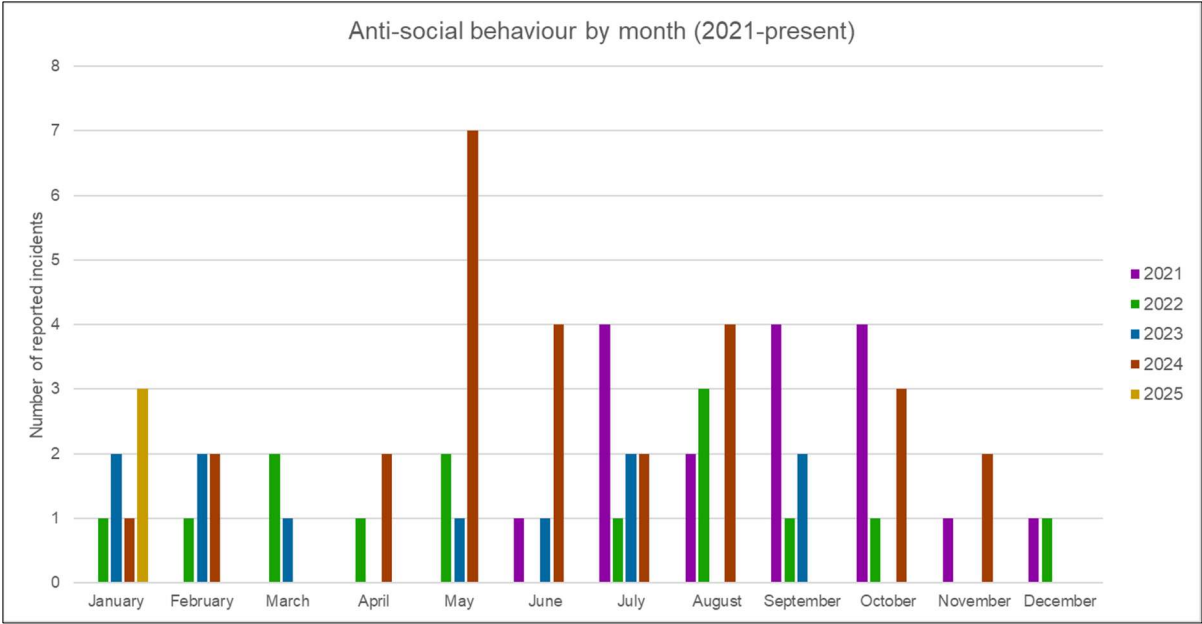
## Police Working Group Figures

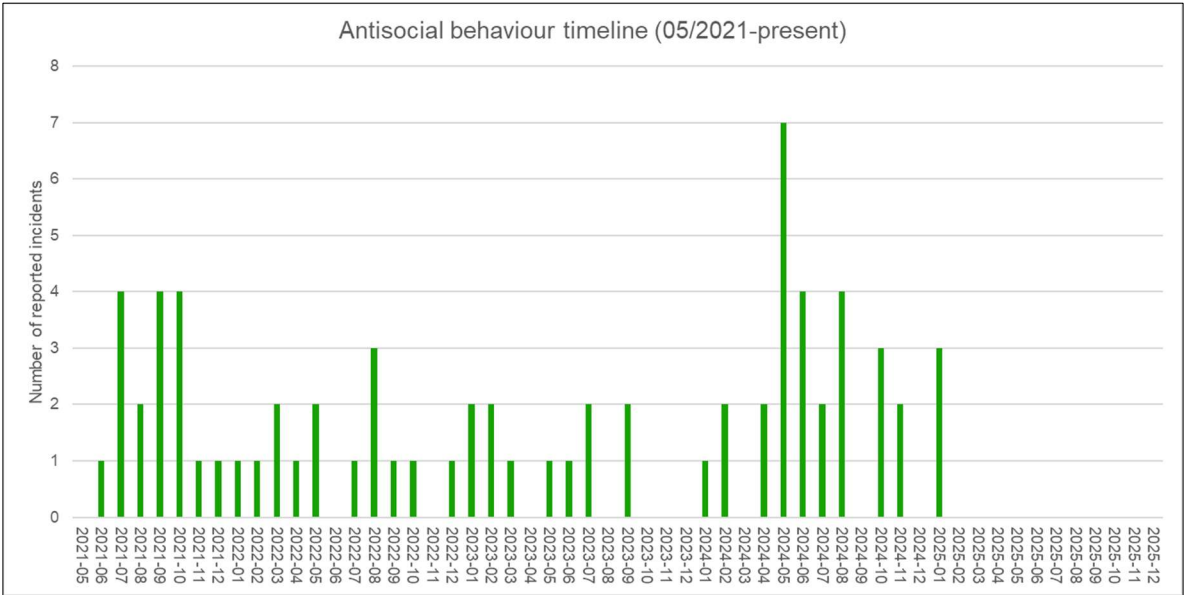
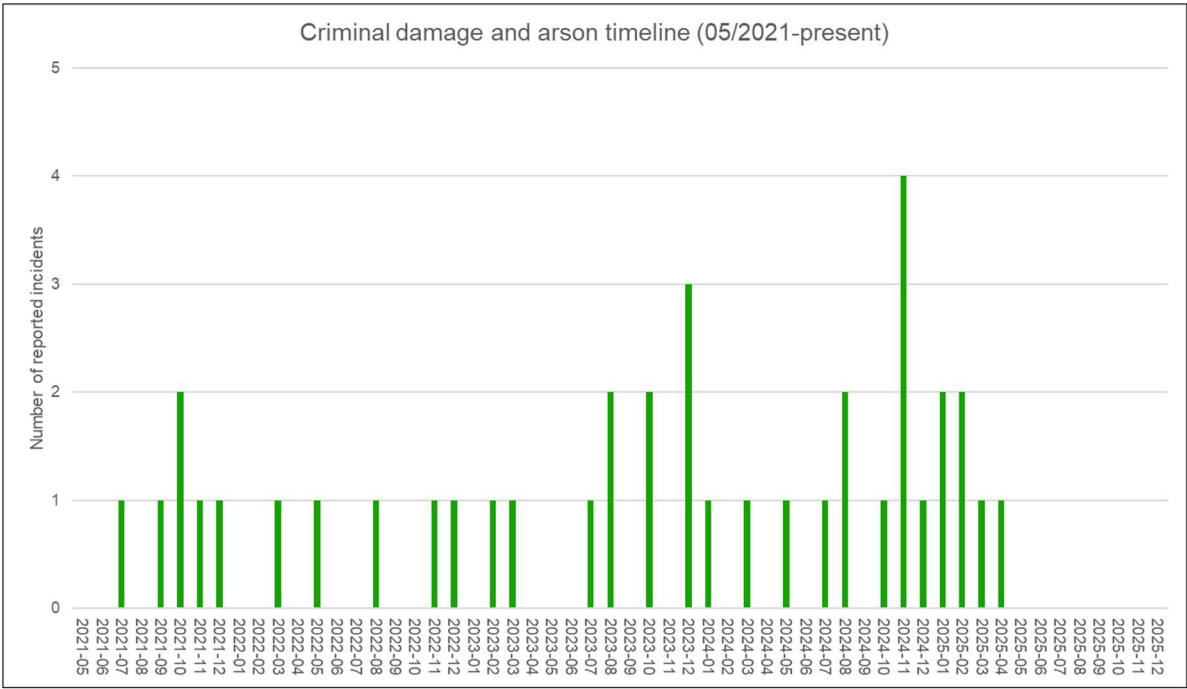
Year	Yearly totals (from May 2021 to present)												
	Violence and sexual offences	Criminal damage and arson	Drugs	Possession of weapons	Anti-social behaviour	Public order	Robbery	Burglary	Vehicle crime	Bicycle theft	Other crime	Other theft	
2021	18	6	0	0	17	6	0	2	1	0	2	3	
2022	35	5	3	1	14	2	0	3	4	1	1	7	
2023	49	10	2	0	11	0	1	2	6	0	4	2	
2024	64	12	0	4	27	8	0	3	0	2	5	9	
2025	23	6	2	0	3	3	0	4	1	0	2	2	

Uffculme Parish crime as percentage of Mid Devon totals from May 2021 to present (Uffculme parish accounts for 2.93% of the Mid Devon population)												
Violence and sexual offences	Criminal damage and arson	Drugs	Possession of weapons	Anti-social behaviour	Public order	Robbery	Burglary	Vehicle crime	Bicycle theft	Other crime	Other theft	
7086	1797	362	169	3551	1062	56	608	408	40	380	1086	
2.67%	2.17%	1.93%	2.96%	2.03%	1.79%	1.79%	2.30%	2.94%	7.50%	3.68%	2.12%	







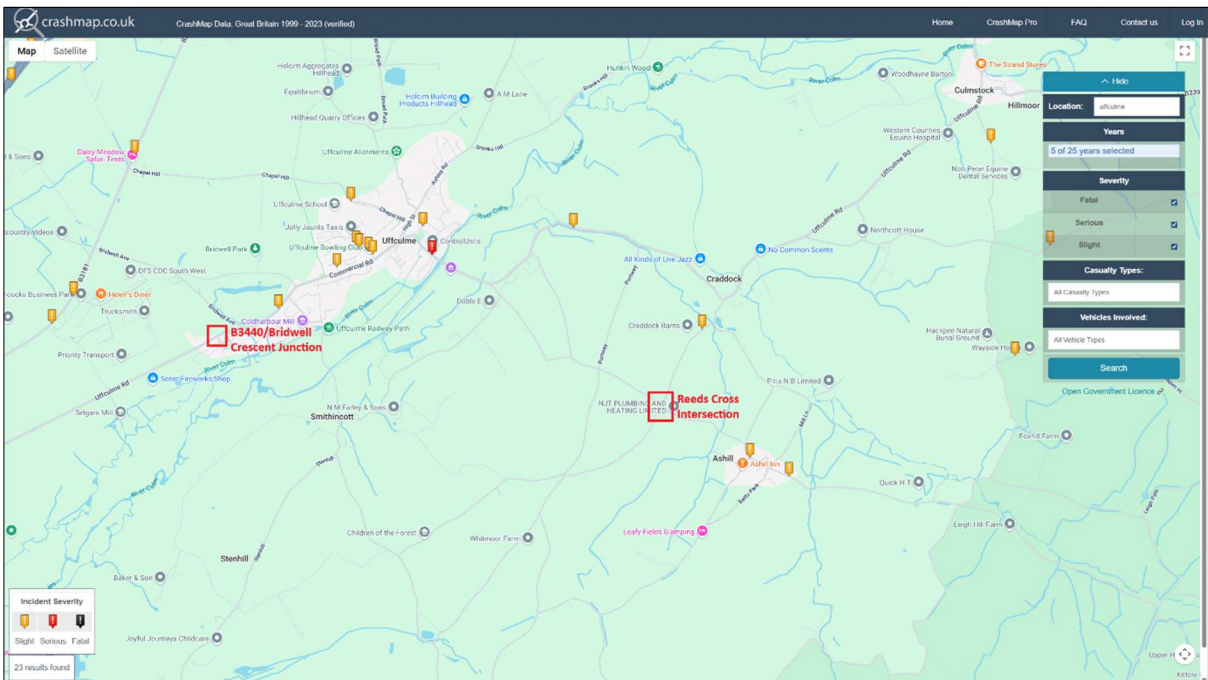


# Traffic Working Group Figures

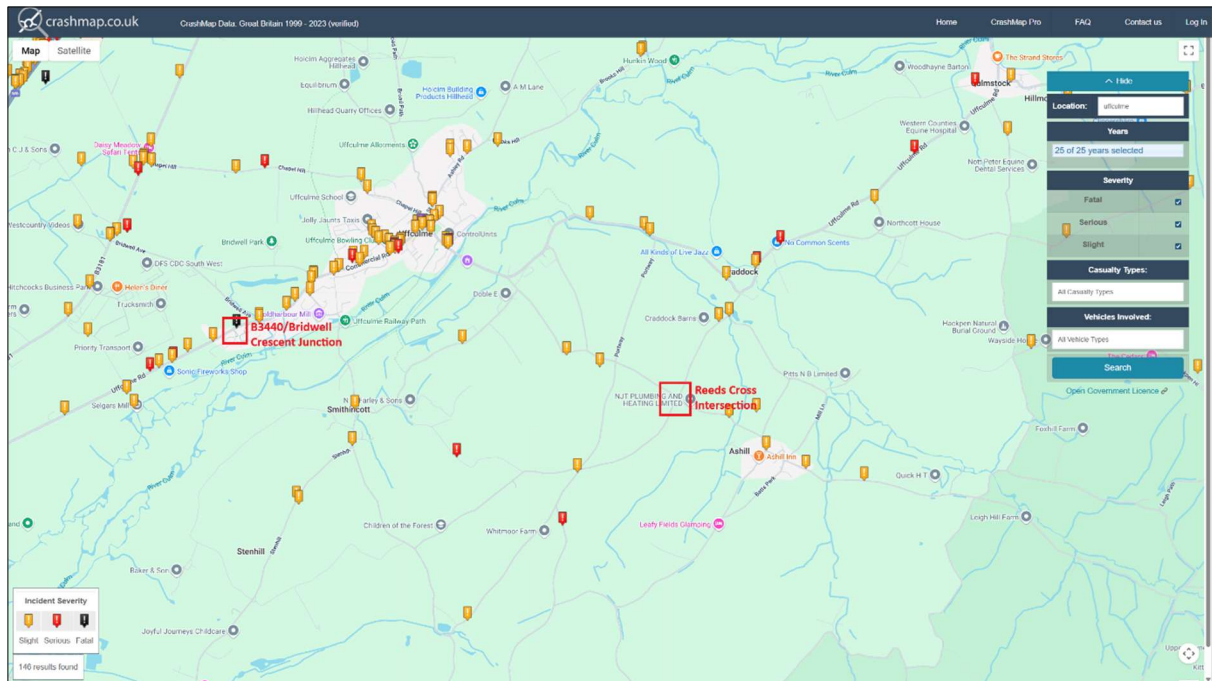
DfT validated data 2019-2023 + mid-2024 unvalidated data



CrashMap (using DfT validated data 2019-2023)



# CrashMap (using DfT validated data 1999-2023)



## **Clerk's Report – 07/07/2025**

### **HATOC and Highways:**

Updates on the latest tracker are updated with the NHO's latest responses. There are now 12 "live" items included on the tracker (also circulated separately as part of the meeting's documents pack) including the following items:

- VAS Signs
- Length Restriction HATOC request
- Keep Clear markings
- Yellow Lines
- Disabled Bay
- Give way markings
- Road Warden Information
- Give way markings on Crossroad
- Property Damage
- Give way markings on corner
- Zig Zag markings
- Overgrown nettles and brambles

### **Asset Register**

The Asset Register is currently very outdated and in need of a full review. The Clerk would appreciate assistance from Councillors, with local knowledge, to assist in the completion of this task.

### **Playparks**

The remainder of the maintenance work is due to be completed ahead of the school holidays. The majority of works that were needed have already been completed.

Item Number	Item	Location	what3words Location	Action	Phase
1	VAS Signs	Uffculme Village	///melon.month.bystander ///streetcar.figs.snored	VAS signs required within Uffculme Villge. Entrance from Commercial Road and also from Bridge Street. Please provide information and pricing to proceed with this. 02/06 - Email sent by NHO for it to be considered in the next SCARF meeting.	Outstanding
2	Length Restriction HATOC request	Chapel Hill	from: ///grandson.guardian.screches To: ///inclines.hatter.butternut	Information and evidence now collated from residents, detailing instances of damage due to long vehicles. To be proceeded through to HATOC 02/06 - NHO All noted, will put forward the case when the next HATOC submissions are requested	Outstanding
3	Keep Clear markings	Bridge Street	///universe.flamenco.easy	"Keep Clear" markings excessively worn outside St Mary's Church. Need to be repainted 02/06 - NHO Email sent to the traffic orders team.	Outstanding
4	Yellow Lines	Square Corner	///sheepish.blossom.novelist	White hash markings excessively worn. Request to replace with double yellow lines. 02/06 - NHO Email sent to Cllr Simon Clyst to confirm he supports the change to the APM's#	Outstanding



5	Disabled Bay	The Square, Uffculme	///sheepish.blossom.novelist	Location of the disabled bay promised to Uffculme to perhaps be sited outside Square Corner, as opposed to outside NISA (where there is one already) in order to overcome the issues of item 4 02/06 - NHO I cannot approve a disabled bay at the location as it would narrow the carriageway and cause issues for HGV's. I will submit an application for double yellow lines.	Outstanding
6	Give way markings	The Square, Uffculme	///zips.gourmet.apart	Excessively worn. To be repainted 02/06 - NHO Email sent to the traffic orders team.	Outstanding
7	Road Warden Information	Parish Wide	n/a	NHO to provide welcome pack and information on how to obtain equipment <a href="#">19/05/25 - pack and info provided.</a> <a href="#">Passed to Terry to coordinate with volunteers</a> 02/06 - Information on how to order items is not present - referred back to NHO	Outstanding
8	Give way markings on Crossroad	Ashill	///healthier.drizzly.capillary	Road markings have been repainted just to one side of the junction. The second side still remains outstanding. 02/06 - NHO Email sent to the traffic orders team 06/07/2025 - lines have now been painted. Officers to discuss signage after annual leave w/c 21/07	Outstanding

9	Property Damage	Bridge Street	///hospitals.successor.digress	<p>There have been multiple instances of property damage collated from residents in the section. It is believed due to large vehicles mounting the pavement, due to limited space to maneuver around the corner, in part due to parked cars outside of St Mary's Church and outside the front of The Square. Potential for a bollard to be installed to be investigated please, to protect buildings and to deter drivers from mounting "building protect" pavements.</p> <p>02/06 - NHO to review when next in area</p>	Outstanding
10	Give way markings on corner	Ashill	///goodnight.host.thudding	<p>Excessively worn. To be repainted</p> <p>02/06 - NHO Email sent to the traffic orders team.</p>	Outstanding
11	Zig Zag markings	Uffculme Primary School	<p>from ///highbrow.crashing.speedily to ///tallest.prongs.poetry</p>	<p>Request was raised previously to have the zig zag markings outside of the primary school extended, both sides of the road. Believed to have been signed off and awaiting markings. Can you please confirm?</p> <p>02/06 - NHO Email sent to the traffic orders team.</p> <p>07/07 - Consultation period 1st July until 22nd July</p>	Outstanding

12	Overgrown nettles and brambles	Chapel Hill Footpath	from ///anchorman.expansion.inefficient to ///factually.occurs.divided	The footpath to the secondary school is excessively overgrown with vegetation. Can you please arrange for this to be cleared? 02/06 - NHO This footpath is included in our grass/ verge cutting program so is scheduled to be cut back.	Outstanding
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