



Calstock Parish Council
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Environment and Climate Emergency Committee Meeting, 16 September 2025

Minutes of Calstock Parish Council's Environment and Climate Emergency Committee which was held on Tuesday 16 September 2025 in the Tamar Valley Centre at 1900

Those present were:

Councillor Committee Members: Richard Newton Chance (Chair); Phil Spurr; Ben Marley, Dorothy Kirk.

Community Members with Voting Rights: Peter Bloomfield, Gill Court.

Councillors: Jon Tilbury

Community Members: Andrew Brown, Ken Finn, Kate Goodman, Sue Stringer, Adrian Springer, Janine Falle

Staff: Clare Bullimore (Clerk, minutes); Peter Gadd (Outside Services Leader).

Speaker: Eli Sherlock, FWAG

1. Apologies

Cllr Jim Wakem, Cllr Mark Warwick, Alison Freshney.

2. Public Participation

Members of the public were present and participated during the meeting.

Sue and Adrian Springer were present to discuss the changes to Gunnislake Railway Station Car Park. They volunteer as part of Friends of Gunnislake Station Car Park and have installed planters with pollinators and shrubs. They are concerned about the amount of signage GWR have put up and that there are now fewer users of the car park as parking charges have been introduced. It was agreed that the Clerk will:

- ask GWR what the rationale was for introducing the parking charges
- ask if there will be a review to consider the impact the charges are having on local people and whether there is any data to show if the charges are reducing the use of the railway
- ask who is maintaining verges and putting the notices up.

3. Declarations of interest

None received.

4. Approve minutes of last meeting 19-08-2025

The minutes from 19-08-2025 were approved. Proposed: Phil Spurr; Seconded: Gill Court – approved by all present at the last meeting.

5. Matters Arising:

- Renewable Energy Issues – Community Capacity Fund Feasibility Study – Clare is having a meeting on Thursday 18-09-2025 to progress this and will report back.
- Query submitted to South West Water re spill data correspondence from the briefing paper – still awaiting a response.

6. New Correspondence/Clerk's Information – none.

7. Presentation from Eli Sherlock, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)

Eli Sherlock gave an informative presentation and the slides will be disseminated with the minutes.

8. Town Farm Field - update

It was explained by Phil Spurr that a change of use planning permission is required for the proposals listed in the FiPL application and for the public to have full access to the whole site. The cost (and time to complete this in order to still carry out the projects) is prohibitive. However, some elements of the FiPL funding can still be drawn down within a hectare i.e. tree planting, hedgerow creation and fencing. Further thought can be given to the overall site and planning compliance in due course. The Steering Group are due to meet on 23 September 2025. The Terms of Reference for the Steering Group were and proposed by: Phil Spurr, seconded by Richard Newton Chance and agreed by all.

9. Flood Warden – parish representative

<https://www.cornwallcommunityfloodforum.org.uk/> This item was deferred to the next meeting.

10. Tree Warden – parish representative (see link below)

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/trees-hedges-and-woodlands/the-cornwall-tree-warden-scheme> This item was deferred to the next meeting.

11. Suggested equipment for Parish Council to manage grassland

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPfG-pR_Ofs

Ken Finn explained that Tamar Grow Local is exploring funding to get some additional equipment that could be shared across landowners. Match funding, insurance and storage of the equipment is still to be determined. It was agreed that, in theory, the Parish Council may support the acquisition of a machine that cuts and collects grass but a formal proposal is required.

12. Drip Drip report

Ken Finn reported on some of Drip Drip’s findings: mainly some dry spills recorded in Harewood Road during the dry period of July. They are building a new website which will publish daily outputs and emanate Waterfit Live – this will capture spills within 10km of Calstock.

13. News and feedback from relevant conferences/workshops

Andrew Brown – Calstock Arts. Calstock Arts hosted Merlin Hanbury-Tenison on Thursday 11th September who spoke in detail about his wife, Lizzie, and his attempts to revive a fragment of temperate rain forest on the side of Bodmin Moor. Merlin described how both of them had decided to move back to Cornwall onto the farm owned by his father, the explorer Robin Hanbury-Tenison, who now in his late eighties was in attendance with his wife. Merlin described how soil samples amongst his woodland showed it was over 3,000 years old and detailed the complexity of the forest which has developed over this time period. He described how he is extending the rainforest, but in conjunction with his development of a new business where visitors connect with nature through staying in the forest. <https://www.cabillacornwall.com/>

Merlin is also working with neighbouring farmers who need to mitigate the effects of the reduction in government subsidies, who are looking to bring nature back onto their farms and develop regenerative farming methods using the Landscape Scale Recovery Scheme. The aim is to work to a ‘rainforest landscape’, a system where peat, scrub, meadows, rainforest and rivers are all restored together. More information is available in Merlin’s book ‘Our Oaken Bones’.

14. Other reports and information

None

15. Summary of Accounts and consideration for budgetary requirements 2025-26

To consider the budgetary requirements at the next meeting

16. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 21 October 2025, 1900.

The meeting closed at 2025.

Signed: Date:

Calstock Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
 Cost Centre 7

10 September 2025 (2025-2026)

Environment & Climate Emerg

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
57	Forest for Calstock Parish							(N/A)
60	Public engagement, publicity & r	8,300.00	7,300.00	-1,000.00	5,000.00	680.64	4,319.36	3,319.36 (24%)
62	Precept	4,000.00	4,000.00					(0%)
68	Food Action							(N/A)
SUB TOTAL		12,300.00	11,300.00	-1,000.00	5,000.00	680.64	4,319.36	3,319.36 (19%)

Summary

NET TOTAL	12,300.00	11,300.00	-1,000.00	5,000.00	680.64	4,319.36	3,319.36 (19%)
V.A.T.					118.14		
GROSS TOTAL		11,300.00			798.78		

Agri- environment Schemes

FWAG

What changed?

Overview of SFI

Example Actions

Capital Grants

Application Process

How this applies to Calstock



Elinor Sherlock – Farm Environment
Adviser FWAG SouthWest



What we do...

- Since 1969, FWAG's vision – a thriving environment for both farming and wildlife
- Whole farm approach – to achieve a balance
- We provide advice, support and facilitation to a variety of groups to access funding



FWAG

SOUTH WEST

FARMING & WILDLIFE
ADVISORY GROUP



Our services

- Our team of expert advisers offer a range of services to farmers and landowners across the South West. These include support with agri-environment schemes, compliance, farm advice, habitat surveys and management.
- Run events, competitions and projects across the South West



How FWAG can help

Provide professional, tailored, expert advice on:

- How to access grants and funding
 - Support and completion of grant applications/associated admin
 - Management advice
 - Compliance
 - Farm Plans
- ...and much more



What changed?

- Left the EU
 - No longer subject to EU rules and regulations
 - We don't access EU subsidies
- Therefore, Basic Payment Scheme is gone
 - Final delinked payments will be in Dec 2027
 - Cross Compliance gone
 - but legal standards to protect environment, and animal health and welfare still apply i.e. carry on as if Cross Compliance was still in place
 - Hedgerow regulations 2024 now law – cutting dates and margins still apply
<https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/2024/05/23/hedgerow-regulations-now-law/>
- Opportunity for Government to create own agri-environment schemes i.e. Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS)

Environmental Land Management Schemes

Defra's response to the removal of BPS and the replacement of previous agri-environment schemes such as Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier

- Pay farmers for environmental goods and services alongside food production
- One-off grants for productivity, innovation, research and development

Three strands to ELMs

1. Sustainable Farming Incentive

- Farm level, 102 actions available, achievable alongside food production, flexible, open year-round, 3 - 5 year agreements

2. Higher Tier (Previously Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier)

- Open to those who have been invited/working with Natural England

3. Landscape Recovery Areas

- Landscape-scale, groups of farmers, longer-term

Sustainable Farming Incentive

SFI Versions

- SFI Pilot – November 21- December 2024
- SFI 2022 – All agreements terminated early for SFI 2023
- SFI 2023 – Limited to the 23 options contained in the SFI 2023 handbook (v6). Agreements relate to handbook version at time of agreement start date.
- SFI expanded offer 2024/25 – 102 actions available – closed on 18th August 2025 due to budget constraints
- SFI 2026 – details to be released, looking at April 2026

SFI Expanded Offer

- Payment for actions to carrying out good environmental management.
- Non-competitive scheme – guaranteed agreement
- Agreement length 3 - 5 years depending on actions applied for
- 102 actions to choose from – many brought over from Countryside Stewardship and some brand new
- Open all year round and can be applied for at any time of the year
- Payments are made quarterly. The first payment is made within the 4th month of the agreement
- You'll receive the first 3 instalments by an automated BACS transfer. You must submit an annual declaration before you're paid the fourth instalment.
- You have control over the actions you choose

More information

Where to find information on SFI and actions

- Scheme information, terms and conditions and a printable pdf version of all actions available can be found at:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-farming-incentive-scheme-expanded-offer-for-2024?utm_source=e-shot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=RPA+News+170624
- New search tool ‘find funding for land or farms’ to search actions and links to action prescriptions : www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms

SFI Actions

- We can't possibly cover all actions here
- We'll discuss one action to point out some important features
- All the available Actions are laid out this way so you can check easily if you can comply before you apply
- [Find funding for land or farms - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

SFI actions (v1.1b – August 2024)

The following information includes all the SFI actions in the expanded SFI offer which you can apply for without specialist advice or prior endorsement. There have been some changes made since these were initially published in May 2024 (identified in each action under 'changes made in v1.1 of this action').

It also includes one endorsed SFI action (GRH6: Manage priority habitat species-rich grassland) which is available for applications from summer 2024. More endorsed actions will be made available later in 2024.

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Example of SFI Action

CLIG3: Manage grassland with very low nutrient inputs

Duration - 3 years

Payment - £151 per ha per year

Action's aim

- flowering grasses and wildflowers from late spring and during the summer months
- a variety of plant heights by autumn
- some covering of flowering grasses and wildflowers left to go to seed
- tussocky grass allowed to develop

The purpose of this is to:

- provide nectar and shelter for invertebrates and a food supply for farmland birds
- support an integrated pest management approach if located close to cropped areas
- minimise nutrients being carried in surface water runoff to watercourses



Where you can do this action

You can do this action on agricultural land located below the moorland line that's:

- an eligible land type (as defined in section 5.1 'Eligible land types for SFI' in the SFI scheme information)
- registered with an eligible land cover on your digital maps
- declared with a land use code which is compatible with the eligible land cover (TG01 and PG01)



What to do

You must minimise the use of nutrient inputs on the grassland entered into this action by applying no more than either:

- 12 tonnes per ha of cattle farmyard manure
- equivalent amounts of available nutrients as fertiliser or in other organic manures as an alternative to cattle farmyard manure

You must also do the following on the grassland:

- graze it with livestock or cut it in a way that can reasonably be expected to achieve this action's aim
- minimise bare ground, so the soil is covered by vegetation and is not directly exposed to the elements
- There must be an intact grass sward throughout the year, without compacted areas or poaching. You can carry out supplementary feeding of livestock on the grassland, but you must make sure this does not cause poaching.



You must not do the following on the grassland:

- apply digestate or any other industrial by-product, including paper waste
- carry out mechanical activities, including hay and silage cutting, in a way that may disturb breeding birds or damage nests as birds, nests and eggs are protected by law
- carry out drainage works
- plough, cultivate or re-seed it
- apply pesticides, except for herbicides to weed wipe or spot treat to control injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, or nettles
- allow areas of scrub to develop on land with historic or archaeological features

If you cut the grassland for conserved forage, you must:

- not graze or cut it for a continuous period of at least 7 weeks during the spring and summer months before taking the forage cut, to allow the sward to develop flowering grasses and wildflowers
- in each land parcel, leave an uncut margin around the edge of the area entered into this action when it's cut for conserved forage, to help provide shelter for invertebrates
- After you've cut the area for conserved forage, you must manage it in a way that can reasonably be expected to achieve this action's aim.

If you're already managing grassland with very low nutrient inputs, you can use it to get paid for this action if it:

- meets this action's requirements
- is not already being paid for under another environmental land management scheme agreement option, such as Countryside Stewardship (CS) option GS2 (permanent grassland with very low inputs (outside SDAs)) or GS5 (permanent grassland with very low inputs (SDAs))

When to do it

You must do this action each year of its 3-year duration.

How to do it

It's up to you how you do this action, as long as you:

- follow this action's requirements – these are identified by a 'must'
- do the action in a way that could reasonably be expected to achieve this action's aim
- You may find it helpful to read the 'advice to help you do this action', but it's not part of this action's requirements.

Evidence to keep

You must keep evidence to show what you've done to complete this action, such as:

- field operations at a land parcel level and associated invoices
- photographs or other documentation
- If it's not clear that you've done this action in a way that could reasonably be expected to achieve its aim, we may ask for this evidence. You must supply the evidence if we ask for it.



Endorsed Actions: e.g GRH6 (£646/ha/year)

Manage/create/restore priority habitat
species-rich grassland

- Requires written approval to confirm land is suitable or has potential
- Must get endorsement before action is included in SFI agreement
- Endorsement from Natural England or approved adviser
- More endorsed SFI actions to come



Supplemental actions

- Can only be done in combination with a 'base' action
 - You can usually only apply for one supplemental action with a base action
- If you enter land into a base action, you can apply for the relevant supplemental action
 - at the same time (same SFI agreement)
 - later (different SFI agreement)
 - the supplemental action will last for its own duration (which may be different to the base action)

Base action

CLIG3: Manage grassland with very low nutrient inputs (LIG1 or LIG2 in the SFI23 offer)

Supplemental actions you can do with the base action

GRH7: Hay making supplement* (GRH11 can also be done on same area as GRH7)

GRH8: Hay making supplement (late cut)* (GRH11 can also be done on same area as GRH8)

GRH10: Lenient grazing supplement

GRH11: Cattle grazing supplement (non-moorland)* (GRH7 or GRH8 can also be done on same area as GRH11)

SPM2: Keep native breeds on grazed habitats supplement (50-80%)

SPM3: Keep native breeds on grazed habitats supplement (more than 80%)

(*same or less than area in base action)

Process

Before you start, know your landcovers

Arable: as defined on RPA landcover

- Includes temporary grass and fallow arable

Improved grassland is 'improved' by regular re-seeding, fertilising, herbicide application

- maintaining field drains
- Conserved forage more than once a year
- High % ryegrasses+ white clover, low % wildflowers + sedges

Low input grassland

- no reseeded for at least 15 years
- low or no fertiliser, manure /slurry, herbicide
- field drains maintained infrequently if at all
- (hay meadows may be more actively drained)
- conserved forage max once a year

- To apply for an SFI agreement, sign into the Rural Payments service.
- From Business Overview, select the 'Apply for Funding' link and then select 'Apply for a new agreement'.
- Follow the screen guidance to complete your application.
- You can save your application and come back to it later.
- You must check each section before moving onto the next.

Capital Grant Offer

- Separate scheme. Can be applied for alongside SFI/on same field parcel
- 70 capital items available such as hedge laying, hedge planting or fencing
- Agreement length 3 years to complete work
- No limit to the value of capital items that can be included in the application
- Application made through RPA account
- Payment made once work is completed and claim is submitted
- List of grants available at: <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants>
- Capital Grant manual here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-grants-2024>

Capital Grant Offer

A few capital items available

- BN1 – Stone-faced bank repair - £67.25/m
- BN2 – Stone-faced bank restoration - £163.26/m
- BN5 – Hedgerow laying - £13.52/m
- BN6 – Hedgerow coppicing - £5.33/m
- BN7 – Hedgerow gapping-up - £17.22/m
- BN8 – Hedgerow supplement – casting up - £4.39/m
- BN11 – Planting new hedges - £22.97/m
- FG1 – Fencing (post and wire) - £6.34/m
- FG2 – Sheep netting - £7.47/m
- LV7 – Livestock troughs - £152.92/trough
- *RP4 – Livestock and machinery hardcore tracks - £44.63/m *requires CSF approval



BN5: Hedgerow laying

How much will be paid

£13.52 per metre (m). The payment rate is for the total length of boundary under the option (not for each side of the boundary).

Where to use this item

Available for Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier, Higher Tier and Capital Grants on planted boundary lines of shrubs that are:

- over 20m long
- less than 5m wide between major woody stems at the base
- formed of at least 80% native shrubs
- can only be used when the applicant has “management control” of both sides of the boundary.

Where this option cannot be used

In Mid Tier agreements, lengths of hedge managed under this option are not eligible for the revenue option [BE3 – Management of hedgerows](#), or capital items [BN6 – Hedgerow coppicing](#) and [BN7 - Hedgerow gapping-up](#) but may be eligible for other capital item payments

How this item will benefit the environment

Lengths of hedgerow will rejuvenate with new growth to form a continuous hedge.

Requirement

You must:

- carry out work between 30 September and 31 March when the hedge is still dormant
- remove old fencing and wire
- cut and pull out bramble, clematis or other scrambling plants
- cut out elder plants and prevent re-growth of stumps
- partially cut through stems near ground level, laying the pleachers (cut stems) over at an angle from horizontal to form a stock-proof barrier
- remove the uncut heel from each pleacher
- keep pleachers in position by crooking, staking, or staking and binding
- keep all existing hedgerow trees
- remove all cut material from the immediate site after completion of the work
- control weeds during the first growing season after laying
- prevent livestock and grazing animals from damaging the hedge by setting fencing at least 1.2m from the centre of the hedge or, if there is a bank, as close to the base of the bank as possible
- trim the hedge for 3 years after laying, allowing the hedge to become taller and wider at each cut

If you need to fell trees, [check if you need a felling licence](#) from the Forestry Commission. If you do, make sure it is in place before you start to fell, otherwise you may be prosecuted.

Do not:

- lay hedges downhill
- obstruct or block [access to open access land](#)
- disturb breeding birds

How this applies to Calstock Parish Council

- Previous advice received from Mike Ingram regarding:
 - Recreational
 - Churchyard
 - Countryside
- Just focussing on Countryside for now:
 - Block A Heath
 - Block B Pasture/field allotments
 - Block C River Floodplain field

Note none of these sites have been visited, information may change after site visit

Block A - Heath

Potential SFI Actions include:

- GRH6 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/grh6-manage-priority-habitat-species-rich-grassland-endorsed>
 - SCR2 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/scr2-manage-scrub-and-open-habitat-mosaics>
 - GRH11 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/grh11-cattle-grazing-supplement-non-moorland>
 - CHRW2 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw2-manage-hedgerows>
- Actions here could include scrub management and restoration of unimproved grassland.
 - Grazing will be the best option to manage the site, could be difficulties with dog walkers and cutting and removing vegetation may end up being the most practical.
 - Creating a mosaic of grassland and scrub would be a good management option.

Block B – Pasture field/allotments

Potential SFI Actions include:

- GRH6 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/grh6-manage-priority-habitat-species-rich-grassland-endorsed>
 - SCR2 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/scr2-manage-scrub-and-open-habitat-mosaics>
 - GRH11 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/grh11-cattle-grazing-supplement-non-moorland>
 - CHRW2 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw2-manage-hedgerows>
- This sounds like a permanent pasture field and should be maintained as such either through continued stock grazing and /or hay meadow management.
 - The above options of GRH6/SCR2, GRH11 and CHRW2 could be used on this site.
 - Capital Grants may also be useful.

Block C – River Flood Plain Field

Potential SFI Actions include:

- GRH6 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/grh6-manage-priority-habitat-species-rich-grassland-endorsed>
 - SCR2 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/scr2-manage-scrub-and-open-habitat-mosaics>
 - GRH11 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/grh11-cattle-grazing-supplement-non-moorland>
 - CHRW2 <https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw2-manage-hedgerows>
- Continue with hay making and go for the restoration of grassland option.
 - There maybe other things you can do here like creating ponds/blocking drains/hedgerow management/tree planting etc and talking to Environment Agency about where this would be most practical (based on their possible future use of the site) would be a good step.
 - They might also advise on permissions/compliance with regards water management.

Any Questions?

