# **CASTLETON PARISH COUNCIL**

## MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025, 7.03pm Village Hall, How Lane, Castleton

These Minutes are hereby approved as a true and accurate record of the above meeting following Resolution of the Council at its Monthly Parish Council meeting date to be confirmed.

Signed ...... Chair of meeting

In attendance: Cllr. A, Darlington (Chair), Cllr. J. Simm (Vice Chair), Cllr M. Eyre, Cllr. J. Judge, Cllr. N. Spooner, Cllr. J. Stannard.

Also present: T. Dale (Clerk) and 8 members of the public.

01/02/25	Apologies received from Cllr. S. Adshead, Cllr. J. Collins, Cllr. C. Farrell, PCSO. W. Brockett, PC. A, Simpson.
02/02/25	No pecuniary interests declared.
02/02/25	Reports: A: County Councillor's Report: Cltr J. Collins provided the following update: Local Government Reorganisation: Informally it has been said that joining Manchester is not going to happen. HPBC have been arranging a meeting with parish and town councils but despite chasing a date is not yet available. On 19th March the Borough Councillors will be informed of the proposals Derbyshire intends to put to the government, after discussion with the Districts Councillors. This, however, is two days before the deadline, so there do not seem to be any plans for consultation with members even though opposition parties have pushed for this. Visitor management in Hope Valley: The Borough Councillors are working with District Councillors for Derbyshire Dales to organise a "summit" with the MPs, Councillors, the Peak Park, landowners etc. to develop a plan for visitor management. D: Police Report: PC Alex Simpson provided the following report: A report on crimes committed in the last 28 days was given. On 7/2/25 a drugs warrant was executed in Castleton. Four males were arrested for being concerned in the supply of class A drugs. The males have been balled whilst the investigation continues.  Other crimes and incidents of interest in the Hope Valley On 7th February a large number of logs were stolen from a works site on Carr Lane in Hope. On 1*February one report of parking issues. On 22nd February three reports of parking issues at Mam Tor. Additional there was one call for off-road bikes being ridden on The Brinks (Edale) and one call reporting vehicles being driven at speed and backfiring through Castleton. On 24th February Castleton Community Speedwatch volunteers completed their training. There is now a Speedwatch group set up for Castleton with thirteen trained volunteers. It's hoped that another five volunteers will be trained at a later date. Local Hope Valley officers have been changing their weekend shifts to help parking enforcement manage the parking at Mam Tor. The last few weekends have been much quieter,
	Local Officer held a bike marking event on 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2025.
	E: Chair Report: None this month.
04/02/25	Public Participation:
	Resident 1 wished to raise three issues.
	1. Cycle Lanes: The resident had observed surveys around Castleton scoping out possibilities for cycle

lanes. The concerns were not only the capacity within the village but also the costs being spent on this project. It was thought that it would be a challenge to find anywhere suitable within the village and would be extremely concerning if there was to be a cycle lane going up Winnats Pass, although could understand that many are interested in the challenging terrain of this route. Regardless the resident wanted to know why there had been no consultation with the Parish Council or residents.

Cllr. J. Simm responded that this initiative was introduced last year and the likelihood of lanes being introduced was slim. At a meeting last August on Active Travel, we were informed that the majority of the funding for the scheme may have been spent on consultants.

Peak District National Park are also consulting on a 'high level network of routes for active travel in the National Park'. The consultation uses interactive mapping to let the Park know about important places and suggestions for improvements of walking and cycling routes, and that it was important that residents take part in and complete the consultation.

Resident 2; responded that there is already a cycle route through Pindale and that they had not seen anybody use it.

Resident 3; commented that they had see cycle routes in other areas around the village that are not used and questioned the spend when it's not used/required.

Resident 4; explained that this is a government initiative under "green and clean" encouraging county councils to introduce things such as cycle lane. However, before a lane can be introduced, they need to perform a costing exercise until then it would not be known if it was doable. Within Hope it would be difficult to narrow roads or close footpaths and the same can be said for Castleton.

- 2. Buses going up Winnats Pass: Raised concerns on the number of wide vehicles, mainly buses, using Winnats with DDC ignoring its own rules on weight/size restrictions.
- 3. Camper Vans: The resident wished to make the current Parish Council aware that many years past there was a zoom meeting on this issue and the attendees were told at that time it would take a year to resolve. This didn't happen so pressure needs to continue on authorities.

## 05/02/25 | Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Relating Thereto:

A: The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 were then considered, the minutes were approved. (Prop JJ, 2nd ME, unan).

#### 06/02/25 | **Finance**

A: The Council's monetary assets are shown below, and the Chair examined and approved the bank reconciliation and the latest current account statement, signed at the end of the meeting:

	Current Account	NS&I
Balance brought forward 01/04/24	13,472.08	18,671.94
Total Income	16,980.36	0.00
Total Expenditure	14,632.41	0.00
Balance	15,820.03	18,671.94
Last Statement Balance 14/02/25	15,860.03	18,671.94
Less un-presented cheques	40.00	0.00
Add uncleared deposits	0.00	0.00
Available Balance 27/02/25	15,820.03	18,671.94

- B: To approve and instruct the payment by cheque, of presented invoiced items, including the following:
  - i) T. Dale Clerk's salary, allowance, milage and expenses £409.39
  - ii) Castleton Village Hall Room Hire £30.00
  - iii) DALC Subscription £528.20

In addition, it was agreed to include late submission from the following:

- i) F. J. Marrison Burial Ground Maintenance £170.00
- C: To note the income and receipts of the Council:

None this month

All payments, receipts were agreed. (Prop JS, 2nd NS, unan).

## 07/02/25 Council Matters:

A: Following Jon Pearce MP attendance at the last meeting it was agreed to identify the actions taken and to set up a follow up meeting for updates and next steps. (AP - Clerk)

The session with Jon Pearce covered four topics, one of which was visitor management. As minuted at the last meeting a letter from the Parish Council regarding visitor pressure was sent to Jon Pearce MP, Peak District National Park Authority, National Trust, Derbyshire County Council, High Peak Bough Council, Duchy of Lancaster and the Police. (Annex A).

In addition, there are multiple meetings being arranged to discuss the impact of visitors with various

organisations. We hope that information on these meetings will become available to the Parish Council as they progress.

B: Information on the Local Government reorganisation was provided with the agenda, Annex B.

As noted earlier, under the Borough Council report Derbyshire County Council intends to put their proposal to the government, after discussion with the District and Borough Councils two days before the deadline, therefore a consultation will not be taking place. The Parish Council felt this was unacceptable and disappointing, a letter to be sent to this effect. (**AP – Clerk**)

Chair advised that item P on the agenda to be brought forward for discussion.

Standing Orders suspended

P: The Chair expressed the Parish Council's thanks to the Castleton Christmas Group for all their efforts over the Christmas festival. Cllr Simm also wanted it noting that the competition for children and the window dressing was very impressive.

Representatives explained that there were a number of competitions that went very well, best dressed house etc. The feedback the group have received from both businesses and residents has been positive with others committing to join in next year.

The Parish Council were asked it they felt anything could be improved. Cllr Judge advised that she would like to see more unity in the lighting, either coloured lights or plain, as long as they were all the same. Along the main street it stood out more when they had different lighting, and it was appreciated that it was up to each household, with the group unable to legislate.

In addition, it was questioned whether the flashing decorations were appropriate.

The Christmas Group were asked if there was anything that did not go well. They advised that the trees ordered were not those that were delivered. Whilst the provider of the trees felt they were doing the group a favour by providing larger trees, they proved to be an obstacle in some places, a complaint about trees obstructing access on the pavement by the Nag's Head was noted and the option of removing branches to reduce the depth of the trees suggested for future years.

The Group asked if the Parish Council would support Castleton Christmas in encouraging conformity of tree lighting amongst businesses, the Chair advised that this couldn't be the case.

The Chair asked the group about the requests concerning the Jubilee Tree, the group advised that they had carried out a poll of residents, and 20%, of the 25% who responded, were concerned about light pollution. The group felt that there was not enough detail given and that further consultation would be required. The Chair advised that the Parish Council was the custodian of the memorial, that it was not just about aesthetic but what the memorial is about. It was also advised that planning permission may be required as it is a conservation area.

The Chair requested a vote on support for lighting of the Jubilee Tree, no Councillor voted in favour. *Standing Orders Reinstated* 

Four Residents left the meeting

C: An update on the Castleton Public Transport Survey 2024 and Bus strategy currently being developed was provided with the agenda, Annex A. Cllr Simm advised the Parish Council that the Castleton Public Transport Survey 2024 has been forwarded to the East Midlands Mayoral Authority, as they will become responsible for bus strategy and delivery. Cllr Simm will be attending a meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> March with the parishes of Hope and Edale, Derbyshire County Council and Centre Bus, to consider not only publicity but improvements to the service.

Standing Orders Suspended

It was noted that it seems the mayor is in favour of Bus Operators providing the service rather than public control. There were questions raised on which services are subsidised, a resident in attendance has a list of all services and offered to provide this to Cllr Simm.

Standing Orders Reinstated

D: The Parish Council's response to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) had been sent but there has been no response to date. Response to be chased.  $(\mathbf{AP} - \mathbf{AD})$ 

E: A request for signage to advise no HGV access to Pindale Road via Market Place had been submitted to Highways, following reports of HGVs trying to go up Pindale road. F: A brief update on speeding prevention items was given. The Speedwatch training was attended by thirteen volunteers and went well, another training course will be set up shortly. With regards to a requirement for another co-ordinator it was felt that this was not required, as all was going very well in this regard.

G: Following a meeting on the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) project attended by the Chair and arranged by PCSO Will Brockett on the 27<sup>th</sup> February. The Chair updated the Parish Council that the aim is to ringfence the Hope Valley with ANPR cameras. Breedon have kindly financed some cameras already,

which cost £4,400 each. The six Hope Valley councils are being asked to help fund four more cameras, two of them now, which means £1,468 per council. The concept can be justified on the basis that as well as helping to catch criminals it is also a deterrent. The Chair asked Councillors to support in principle. (Prop AD, 2<sup>nd</sup> ME, unan). The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had an earmarked donation for traffic safety of £750 that could be used to part fund, if required.

H: An update on parking Clearway signage was provided. Fourteen signs have now been purchased and installed. Three on the old lower road and eleven near Dunscar Farm.

There have been recent issues with parking at Spital Bridge, it was suggested that the Parish Council consider purchasing blue signage, as previous, as a way of addressing the issue prior to the implementation of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

Cllr Eyre, confirmed that following the session with Jon Pearce, all correspondence previously sent to Robert Largan on the parking issues within Castleton and information relating to the multi-agency meeting held have been sent to Jon.

On request from Cllr Judge the Chair agreed to move item L forward Standing Orders suspended.

L: Following last month's meeting it was agreed that options for humane management of moles on Goosehill Green would be explored. Cllr Judge initially considered the placement of sonar equipment; however, this was not actioned but in hindsight it was thought this would be an issue with mowing schedules and possibly a trip hazard. Cllr Judge has arranged with a couple of residents to look after the green.

The residents explained that they have been flattening out the mole hills, that as moles are territorial it would suggest there is only one mole present, that after the recent tunnel the mole activity will slow down and that they would not expect to see any other hills until autumn. It was agreed to continue this activity and monitor the situation.

Standing Orders Reinstated

Cllr Judge left the meeting

The discussion/update on wild flower areas was deferred to the next meeting.

I: Confirmation was given that the ten litter signs on lower Mam Tor Road have been installed. The National Trust has also confirmed that their additional signage on litter has been ordered and will be placed on arrival. National Trust were also able to confirm that black bags are left for pick up on verges following volunteers litter picking at Mam Tor, Odin Mine and the surrounding area. They seek to collect the bags promptly, so they do not attract any further litter.

K: An update on flood management planning was given by the Chair. In making Castleton more flood resilient flood wardens are currently getting quotes to put non-return valves on drains in the stone wall along Waterside. Desilting at Newhall bridge and at a heap of river debris just upstream of Trickett Bridge will hopefully happen mid-year but this might now be delayed. The NFM (Natural Flood Management) project is moving forward with a scoping study on local landscapes. Three of the flood wardens attended an Environment Agency training event in Matlock and picked up some useful tips. Community Response Planning was also raised and should go on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting. (AP – Clerk) M: An update on a litter bin at the bottom of Arthur's Way on Buxton Road was provided. The bin was removed sometime between 2017 – 2021. It was discovered that during Covid the bin was removed to by the benches near Goosehill Bridge to provide a second bin there. The bin has now been returned to Buxton Road and the bins will be monitored, if capacity proves not fit for requirements, then a bigger bin may be installed. Suspend Standing Orders

N: The Chair asked a former Councillor who was in attendance if they were aware of who owns the noticeboards by the bus terminal? It was thought that the inner board and contents were previously owned by the now defunct Chamber of Trade, whilst the actual installation, post and surround was unknown, possibly belonging to HPBC. If HPBC owns the noticeboard then it may not be possible to obtain funding under the Regeneration Fund, which is currently available.

Standing Orders Reinstated

A resident left the meeting

O: Following on from a previous meeting and the agreement to allow memorial plaques on a tree within the burial ground, the Parish Council were asked what size of plaques were allowable and should there be a cost attributed, or a donation requested. It was agreed that the plaque should be no bigger that four by four inches and that donations should be requested. The Clerk asked if a photograph of the tree and surrounding areas could be made available. The update on wild flower section at the burial ground was deferred until the next meeting.

Q: A brief discussion regarding the April, May, Annual Parish Council (due to Garland Day) and Annual Parish meeting dates. It was agreed the Clerk will circulate dates to be agreed and communicated at the next meeting. (AP – Clerk)

	A resident left the meeting		
	R: There was nothing to note or urgently required to discuss and/or resolve.		
08/01/25	Planning:		
	A: The following applications were discussed, and the Clerk instructed to report the Council's views to PDNPA:		
	None this month.		
	B: To note any planning decisions as notified by the Peak District National Park Authority:		
	None this month.		
	Following last months meeting authorising a procedural complaint to be submitted to PDNP Planning regarding appeals notice - Land adjacent to How Lane, Castleton, the clerk advised the Parish Council a response had been received from the Planning Inspectorate.		
	In summary the Parish Councils has concerns of video and audio evidence being overlooked by the Inspector. "The Planning Inspectorate cannot accept video or audio evidence in appeals by the written representation procedure. Furthermore, I have reviewed the document section of the LPA's questionnaire and none of them are video files."		
	"There are statutory provisions available for a local planning authority, or any other aggrieved party, to challenge an appeal decision in the High Court, if they believe the Inspector has erred in law. If successful,		
	the appeal would normally be returned to the Planning Inspectorate for re-determination. However, such a challenge needs to be lodged within six weeks of the decision date."		
	No further action will be taken.		
09/02/25	Correspondence and DALC Circulars:		
	A: The following correspondence, received and pre-circulated to Members by email, was noted and		
	discussed:		
	i) DCC – Community News, Parish and Town Liaison Forum Invitation and Agenda.		
	ii) DALC – Newsletters, February Forum.		
	iii) Democratic Services – Various.		
	iv) NALC – Events, Newsletters, Bulletins.		
	v) PDNP forum – Minutes.		
	vi) HVCA –Newsletter.		
	vii) HPBC – Regeneration Fund, Possible Funding Opportunities.		
	viii) PDNP Foundation – Newsletter.		
	ix) HP Green Party – Housing Event.		
	x) HP & HV Community Rail Partnership – Newsletter.		
	xi) Robert Largan – Help keep High Peak in Derbyshire.		
	Chair advised the Parish Council that she will be attending the Parish and Town Liaison Forum and asked if any other Councillors were interested. At the time of the meeting Councillors could not commit.		
10/02/25	Items for the Peveril Post:		
10/02/23	No items for Peveril Post.		
	Meeting closed 8.50pm The next Parish Council Meeting will take place at 7.00pm on Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 at The Village Hall,		
	How Lane, Castleton.		
	How Lane, Casacton.		

## Visitor pressures in Castleton and the Hope Valley

Castleton and its spectacular surroundings have become a lot more popular post-pandemic and are drawing more and more visitors. There are numerous associated problems.

- 1. Illegal parking is becoming a regular phenomenon and congestion and obstruction is the result. The last few weeks, since Christmas, have seen extreme examples of chaotic parking around Mam Tor, Winnats and Rushup Edge. Castleton village regularly becomes completely overwhelmed by visitor parking on good weather weekends and holidays even without the added pressure of events or random social media marketing.
- 2. There are an increasing number of organised sporting events, to which not only participants but spectators are drawn, most relying on cars and therefore the already inundated local parking.
- 3. Increased littering shows a general lack of respect for the village and the landscape surrounding it. In terms of conservation, how long can Mam Tor cope with the current footfall?
- 4. Messaging from the agencies (PDNPA, DCC, NT) who should be managing this problem is weak and focuses on encouraging more and more visitors to top destinations such as Mam Tor. The focus of messaging should be changed with cautionary advice at the front end.

These points are all expanded upon below, but in the end, all solutions come back to getting the right message out before visitors make a decision to set off here. All agencies (NT, PDNPA, DCC) have a responsibility to recognise that there is a drastic and urgent problem with visitor management and must agree the tone and mechanisms of messaging. There needs to be an altered focus from actively marketing and encouraging, to limiting visiting especially by car and behaving considerately while visiting destinations which are also communities. The fact that there are similar issues in other parts of the country indicates that a national response from government is also warranted.

Problem 1: Too many visitors are coming out and expecting easy parking.

Official signage such as road marking and clearway signs are often not understood or ignored, with resulting carnage as seen on Rushup Edge and Winnats top. The current fines are too soft, towing away vehicles is a good deterrent but all measures are resource (police and DCC CSO) hungry. Deterrence measures including fines need to increase dramatically in order for a strong message to reach the wider world by social media and for messaging by the agencies to carry any weight.

Castleton Parish Council with funding from DCC has coordinated supplementary unofficial clearway signage for the top of Winnats Pass and time will tell if this helps reduce illegal parking there. Other deterrents to illegal parking include physical barriers such as large stones or timber posts. However, none of these measures will directly reduce numbers of visitors already here and wanting a parking space.

More car parks for the top of Winnats/Rushup have been suggested. Does Mam Tor have the capacity for the extra visitors that will bring - Is extra car parking capacity the solution? There will always be more visitors wanting to park unless they are discouraged at source with strong messaging.

In Castleton, on the lower Mam Tor Old Road and near Blue John cavern, overnight parking in campervans is hugely reducing parking capacity for day visitors at weekends and holidays, and causes littering including, very regularly, that of human waste. A pending TRO will reduce the amount of free parking at both locations and will thereby remove a proportion of campervans parking. However, an alternative measure that should be strongly considered is to introduce a National Park ban on sleeping overnight in vehicles parked on a highway. This would also deal with the additional hazard caused by so many camping vans parked close together and end-to-end, sometimes with gas bottles outside or with open fires.

Alongside these measures accessible and reliable public transport could radically change the picture and Castleton has been working hard with a number of groups to improve services. The number 62 bus route has been welcomed but needs to be more frequent and publicised much more widely. Arguably the seasonal open top double-decker bus is not part of a public transport solution. Rather it is a hazard, as the numbers of larger vehicles on this narrow pass is increasing, so the safety of this service including for other road users should be reviewed.

Problem 2: Too many events are being organised with organisers ignorant of parking issues.

Since 2018 Castleton Parish Council has been attempting to keep track of organised events likely to disrupt daily life of its residents or working people, initially because cycling events sometimes closed Winnats Pass, without any consultation. Large walking and running events, often run as a business, and which are potentially a problem especially because of the need for parking, are now increasing in frequency. By engaging with organisers and requesting sight of plans and risk assessments we have sometimes been able to help them while also reducing the local impact of some of these events.

So far in 2025 nine running or cycling events have been identified as going through Castleton between February and September. Four of these (three cycling, one running) will go up Winnats, and four (all running) will rely on village parking. As a community we don't object to events in principle, but we'd like the organisers to minimise disruption to residents and other visitors.

Our experience is that organisers don't understand that parking capacity is not limitless, even in Castleton. Most event organisers realise that landowners need to be consulted for permission to run an event on their land. Therefore landowners should be the ones to deliver the message (NT, DCC, PDNP, Duchy of Lancaster) that if all appropriate bodies are not consulted <u>including parish councils</u> and their advice taken on board their event will not be allowed. PDNP tries to deliver advice on its website but no one is forced to accept it, and only some events sign up to be listed on their portal. Recently a walking event on Mam Tor advertised on Facebook Tor was moved by the NT to a different location. The fact that the NT took control is laudable and we need more of this positive management.

The different agencies need to come together to have an agreed policy on the management of events, big or small, commercial or charity, and how to message the need to consult to ALL event organisers.

Problem 3: The landscape and its archaeology is being trashed by littering and eroded.

Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, TV documentaries and newspapers continue to draw crowds to the Peak District. Littering is noticeably worse in and around Castleton and the landscape is suffering.

Because this is not only a Peak Park problem, it requires a national campaign on how to behave in the countryside or indeed in any holiday destination. Enjoy our beautiful places but "Leave no trace" should be a message in schools across the country and on every possible media outlet, via TV, cinemas, pubs, holiday cottage literature, etc.

Currently the Peak District is persistently marketed as a top visitor destination. There needs to be a change in focus – to responsibly take care of landscape, not an invite to come out and wreck it. There needs to be a balance between health & wellbeing accessible for all, and respect and conservation. Whose responsibility is it to achieve that balance? It has to be PDNPA, NT, DCC who own the area and have a duty of care for it.

Given the current demand and footfall, how is Mam Tor, its archaeology and its surroundings to be conserved longer term? Have impact and risk assessments with current visitor numbers been undertaken to fully understand the problem and what this will mean in three, ten, 20 years?

Problem 4: The messaging getting out to visitors is focused wrongly

How can random "Come see sunrise from MamTor" messages on social media be responsibly filtered to reduce volumes of visitors? The police are using social media to share their experiences with illegal parking around Mam Tor and to encourage more consideration. In the meantime, "be considerate" messaging emanating from those agencies responsible for managing our landscape and villages is too weak and poorly coordinated to deal with the onslaught of visitors that we now face.

It could be argued that the agency websites are never going to be most effective places to put over "be considerate" messages. How many of our visitors have actually looked at either the websites or the messages? Viewing a selection of these messages on the agency websites, the NT messages stood out best,

e.g. <a href="https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/peak-district-derbyshire/kinder-edale-and-the-high-peak/mam-tor-circular-walk">https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/peak-district-derbyshire/kinder-edale-and-the-high-peak/mam-tor-circular-walk</a> where the message to plan ahead for a Mam Tor walk is direct and prominently displayed on the page.

PDNPA subscribes to Visit Peak District & Derbyshire (<a href="https://visitpeakdistrict.com/">https://visitpeakdistrict.com/</a>) for marketing of the Peak District National Park. VPDD is commercial and provides advertising to any Derbyshire business. It does include some messaging on responsible behaviour, but it comes across as an afterthought and should be much more prominent. Its front webpage is currently the view along the ridge from Mam Tor, at sunrise. The good behaviour message should be there upfront on that page.

As a general principle, all the agencies should reach a consensus on the tone of messaging. They also need to demonstrate consensus on visitor policy, and exactly what message they are delivering. Times have changed, and what worked even five years ago is now redundant.