

WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2nd Aug 2022 AT 7.30PM

Present:	Chairman Cllr Della Cannings (DC), Cllr Margaret Piper (MP), Cllr Stephen Owen (SO), Cllr Amanda Townsend (AT), Cllr Alan Cook (ABC)
In attendance:	Anne Oliver Parish Clerk, DCC/EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey, 3 members of the public attended the meeting
Apologies received from:	Cllr Peter Bennett (PB), Cllr Alison Carr (AC),

AGENDA – ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

ltem (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
22/232	Welcome and Chairman's announcements The meeting started at 7.30pm. Chairman DC welcomed everyone and reminded everyone that the meeting was being sound recorded.
	 The Chairman gave a report to the meeting: congratulated the West Hill Gardening Club on their Jubilee display of red, white and blue plants outside McColls. Cllrs thanked the club for keeping the plants in good condition during the pro-longed drought and appreciated the work of everyone involved. Action: Chairman to write to the Garden Club to congratulate the group and thank them for their hard work. thanked everyone involved in the installation of the new climbing frame in the playpark. It was already proving very popular. A few minor items will be completed in August. the Parish Council had received further correspondence, some of which was unpleasant, from a vexatious complainant during July. Later in the meeting Cllrs would be considering a paper, available on the website, which sets out options proposed by the resident for resolution of their issues with the Council. The chairman hoped that progress will be made as the ongoing campaign was resource intensive and diverting the Council from serving the community.
22/233	Apologies. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence. Apologies from Cllrs PB and AC were received and accepted.
22/234	 Public question time (3 minutes) From 7.30pm residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for further consideration at the discretion of the Chairman, before the start of the Parish Council meeting. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself. This item included issues submitted to the Clerk prior to the meeting. Footpath Warden Eileen Perkins raised concerns about the footpath between School Lane and Potters Close: it was overgrown and needed cleaning. Also some of the overhanding branches appeared to be dead and could be dangerous. The Clerk confirmed that DCC Highways were responsible for the path. The Chairman noted that members of the public could report such problems directly to DCC by phone or via their "report a problem" webpage.
	Action: The Clerk to report the footpath and overhanging branches to DCC Highways
22/235	District and County Councillors' reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting) DCC/EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey (JB) gave her monthly report to the meeting:



	1.	 East Devon Local Plan Review – The EDDC Strategic Planning Committee is scheduled to meet on 9th August to Receive presentations from invited developers and agents promoting major sites at Tier 1 & 2 settlements Site Selection for the emerging East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040 – interim findings at Tier One and Tier Two settlements, including Ottery St Mary. Details, including the live streaming of the meeting, are available on the EDDC website Agenda for Strategic Planning Committee on Tuesday, 9th August, 2022, 9.30 am - East Devon. The Committee meeting on 6th September will consider Tier 3 + 4 settlements including West Hill. Action: WHPC Strategic Planning Working Group to review the papers for the EDDC Strategic Planning Committee meeting on 6th Sep and to register to speak, if appropriate.
	2.	Straitgate Farm : The Planning Appeal Inquiry will start on 4 th Oct. A Freedom of Interest request has shown that data on the 7year mineral supply data, supplied to the DCC for consideration of the planning application, was incorrect.
	3.	Buses : Bus operators are now operating a much reduced service to Ottery St Mary, with minimal impact on West Hill. Action: WHPC to write to DCC to express Cllrs concerns about the reduced service, impact on connectivity, employment and also the resultant increase in car use.
	4.	Neighbourhood Plan: Ottery St Mary are seeking to review the current West Hill and Ottery St Mary Neighbourhood Plan. Action: WHPC Strategic Planning Working Group to consider the implications and prepare a paper for Cllrs consideration in September.
	5.	Bendarroch Road : DCC's Highways and Traffic Orders Committee have agreed that double yellow lines will be installed in part of Bendarroch Road near the junction of St Mary's View.
	va	r DC asked for an update on EDDC recruitment campaign to fill the several Tree Officer cancies. cancies. c tion: EDDC Cllr JB to provide an update on EDDC Tree Officer staffing levels.
21/236	De	eclarations of Interest
		 Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
		b. To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature. To declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda and their nature (Councillors with DPIs must leave the room for the relevant items).
		 DC declared That she was conscious of items 22/254 and 22/259 as the resident has raised many issues with WHPC over many years, however she would approach every item on the agenda with an open mind, free from bias or pre-determination based on the facts available at the meeting.
		rs MP, AC, SO and ABC made the same declaration.
		 rs DC, MP, AT and SO declared no further interests. r ABC declared personal interests in two planning applications Item 22/239 22/1543/FUL as a neighbour and would not take part in discussion 22/1342/FUL as a professional acquaintance of the agent.
	CI	rs accepted the declarations.



22/237	 Confidential/exempt items. In consideration of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted): to agree any items to be dealt with after the public and press have been excluded. Proposed confidential items 22/259
	The Chairman advised that two urgent matters had arisen and would be raised under the Clerks report item 22/248(5): a Personnel matter and also communications from the vexatious complainant with the Clerk.
	 Cllrs resolved to a. consider item 22/254 in public as far as possible but to use 22/259 to complete discussions in confidential session, as appropriate. b. consider urgent items raised under 22/248(5) in Part B confidential session.
22/238	Minutes:To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 5th July 2022 previously circulated.Cllrs approved the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.The Chairman signed the minutes.
22/239	Planning Applications received
	22/1342/FUL Westleas West Hill Ottery St Mary EX11 1UX Agent Andrew Long Architects Ltd Single storey side infill extension, single storey rear infill extension, porch to front with
	alteration to fenestration Cllrs supported the application.
	22/1543/FUL Dene Lower Broad Oak Road EX11 1XH Applicant Mrs Duffy Single storey front, side, and rear extensions (with remodelling and alteration to fenestration) and erection of detached garage. (Partial demolition of existing house and garage.)
	Cllrs noted the comments submitted by the public. Cllrs expressed concern regards the adverse impact on trees within the site and streetscene. They acknowledged the Arboricultural Report provided with the application and supported the mitigating actions set out.
	22/1584/FUL Mount Houlditch Farm Toadpit Lane EX11 1LQ Applicant Mr J Brennan Demolition of two barns and three outbuildings and the construction of a residential annexe ancillary to the main dwelling house, a pool house also ancillary to the main dwelling house and an extension to the house for a home office. Cllrs supported the application in principle but noted the concerns set out in the Ecological Report. Cllrs supported the recommended mitigating actions set out in the report.
	Cllrs acknowledged that a significant number of trees were to be planted and asked for the trees to be indigenous species in keeping with the character of the village. Cllrs also noted the presence of Japanese Knotweed on the site (along the southern boundary adjoining West Hill Public Footpath No 7). The former landowner was notified of this by Devon County Council and WHPC and was requested to take action to prevent the spread of the weeds. Cllrs asked that this is brought to the attention of the new owner.
	To confirm decision made under delegated powers to enable EDDC deadline to be met:
	• 22/1094/RES Hasta La Vista Windmill Lane EX11 1JP Applicant Mr G Webb Reserved matters application for access, appearance, layout, scale and landscaping pursuant to outline planning permission 19/2834/OUT



West Hill Parish Council
Cllrs raised additional concerns: the submitted arboricultural report is out of date, additional access onto Windmill Lane unacceptable.
Cllrs confirmed the planning comments.
The Chairman noted, during July 2022, Cllrs had a raised a concern regarding a Cllr's previous Declaration of Interest relating to this property. Action: The Chairman to write to the Cllr to clarify the Declaration of Interest made at the WHPC meeting in June 2022.
• 22/1443/FUL Trelowen Higher Metcombe EX11 1S Applicant Mr + Mrs Kelvie Single storey front, side, and rear extensions (with remodelling and alteration to fenestration) and erection of detached garage. (Partial demolition of existing house and garage.)
Cllrs supported the application. Cllrs confirmed the planning comments.
Planning decisions received for information (*denotes WHPC differed)
22/0847/FUL Longreach Lower Broad Oak Road EX11 1UF Status: Approved Part two storey, part single storey side extension, alterations to fenestration, cladding and associated works Noted
 Other Planning matters To note the public consultation on the Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan (deadline for response 8th Sep 2022): Noted, no comments from WHPC To consider a request for financial support for the Straitgate Action Group Clirs considered a further request for funding towards the group's costs. Clirs declined the request as the Council's Financial Regulations. To note a request from Ottery St Mary Town Council who propose a review of the current Ottery St Mary & West Hill Neighbourhood Plan The Chairman reported that Ottery St Mary had unexpectedly notified WHPC of their intention to review the current Ottery St Mary & West Hill Neighbourhood Plan within their Regeneration programme. They had asked whether WHPC wished to take part in the review. The Chairman suspended Standing Orders and invited former Chairman, Margaret Hall (MH) to speak. Margaret gave Clirs a brief overview of the history of the current Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and how it led to the creation of the WHPC. She advised Neighbourhood Plans can become out of date and should be reviewed. if WHPC chooses to develop a separate plan for West Hill nei will require a lot of work over several years and there will be associated costs. However there may be many advantages to having a dedicated NP for West Hill as it could strengthen the Council's response to planning applications. As a West Hill New old sit alongside the East Devon Local the linkages and the review process/timetable needed to be understood. Clir ABC noted that West Hill was directly affected by the services and infrastructure available in Ottery St Mary. MH agreed but advised that the NP didn't focus on infrastructure and service provision.



WHPC Groups + Initiatives

22/242	Village Hall Pedestrian Link: To consider the joint Village Hall Trustees/WHPC working
	group recommendation
	 To submit an application to EDDC to vary the layout of the path within the Village Hall site
	2. To approve associated costs, if appropriate
	3. To notify the landowner, the Village Hall Trustees, if appropriate.
	Cllrs considered a paper previously circulated which set out proposed changes to the layout of the path within the village Hall site: to include additional safety barriers and to avoid a sluice valve. EDDC had advised that this required approval via a variation to the approved planning application. The process for this is similar to the planning application process and includes public consultation. Cllr DC emphasised that there would be no change to the entrance point onto West Hill Road or the roadside features. Also the Stage 2 Road Safety Audit would be delayed until the variation was approved. The working group also proposed to commission tree protection plans to meet a planning condition.
	Clirs resolved
	1. To submit an application to EDDC to vary the layout of the path within the Village Hall site
	2. To approve associated costs for the revised drawings, application fee, TPP+AMS,
	and updated ecological report: £1,398.00 + vat
	3. To notify the landowner, the Village Hall Trustees.
22/243	Community Engagement Crount
22/243	Community Engagement Group: 1. To consider a programme of 2022-23 events
	Cllr MP outlined a programme of events for 2022-23. This included publicising the
	Parish Council election in May 2023, the role of a Parish Councillor and encouraging
	residents to consider becoming a Councillor.
	Clirs
	a. Approved the programme of events
	b. Resolved the Community Engagement Group would submit a paper to the
	October WHPC meeting: Hi-Viz jackets for the Pre-School and new intake at
	the Primary School.
	2. To consider arrangements for a September WHPC newsletter. If appropriate.
	Cllrs resolved to publish the next edition of the WHPC newsletter to all households in September.
	3. To review the WHPC attendance at the Village Fete.
	Cllr MP led a brief discussion on the Parish Council's attendance at the Village Fete. Cllr DC congratulated the PTFA on the success of the event and thanked Councillors for volunteering to attend on behalf of the Council. Cllrs agreed several learning points for future events including layout of the tables, public engagement and publicity.
22/244	Arboretum Group: To seek approval to print a Tree leaflet and the cost of printing
	Cllrs considered a paper circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr ABC gave an update on the tree/West Hill walks leaflet prepared by the Arboretum Group. He advised
	 the Parish Council is entitled to include an OS map with the appropriate attribution on
	the leaflet
	 Print costs were £240 for 1000 copies plus £75 design/layout charge.
	Cllrs ABC had a printed leaflet but unfortunately, Cllrs were unable to view the leaflet prior to
	the meeting and could not approve the leaflet. Cllrs thanked the group for their work so far.



	Action: a. Cllr ABC to provide a copy of the leaflet to each Cllr for comments prior to the
	September WHPC meeting.
	b. The Arboretum Group were asked to consider
	i. the inclusion of a simpler, easy to understand map linked to the text.
	ii. ownership of the leaflet
00/047	iii. arrangements for distribution
22/245	Strategic Planning Group : To receive, if appropriate a verbal update on the progress of the EDDC Local Plan Review.
	See item 22/235. No further questions were raised
22/246	Road Safety Group:
22/240	1. To consider various recommendations.
	Cllrs discussed a paper circulated prior to the meeting, making recommendations on
	Hi-Viz – Cllrs did not accept the recommendation. See item 22/243
	Remembrance Day – see point 2 below
	• B3180 Speed limit – Cllrs were unclear what the working group was proposing as
	details had not been provided. They were also aware that DCC Cllr Bailey had raised concerns at a senior level with DCC Highways, DCC HATOC and Simon Jupp MP
	with little success, to date.
	Standing Orders were suspended
	DCC Cllr JB gave a brief update on her actions to date and advised that there was little more
	that the working group could achieve.
	Standing orders were resumed
	Clirs did not support the recommendation.
	• VAS – Cllrs could not agree the revised VAS schedule as it had not been provided. The Chairman advised that the costs of re-locating the VAS devices was already
	published each month.
	Action: The Clerk was asked to provide a schedule for August 2022 and the Working
	Group was asked to provide an itemised schedule for consideration at the September
	WHPC meeting.
	• Overgrown vegetation : - the Chairman advised that this was a matter that should
	be referred to DCC Highways via their "Report a Problem" webpage or by phone. It
	was outside the scope of the groups Terms of Reference.
	A member of the public left the meeting
	2. To consider a proposal to close the slip road adjacent to the War Memorial.
	Cllrs discussed a paper circulated prior to the meeting which briefly outlined process
	to close the slip road. This would enhance the War Memorial area and simplify
	arrangements for the annual Remembrance Service. The process would be lengthy
	and complex. It would require consultation with the public and relevant bodies plus
	approval from Highways and EDDC (for listed building consent).
	Comments included
	• Like the idea in principle but given the process and timescale it's un-
	achievable before the next (Parish Council) election.
	• Experience has taught us that these things always take longer than expected.
	• The process will be very complicated and requires the involvement of
	Highways.
	 The benefits are disproportionate to costs and benefits. Is this a priority?
	The Chairman raised additional concerns:
	 costs for altering the junction



		West Hill Parish Council
		• will the RBL want to close West Hill Road to ensure that the Remembrance
		event takes place in silence?
		 could be committing the next Council to a lengthy, expensive project
	A otionu -	The Read Sefety Crown to write a formal letter via the Clark to
		The Road Safety Group to write a formal letter via the Clerk to
		the RBL to seek their views on their ongoing requirements for a road closure for the duration of the Remembrance Service
		DCC Highways to seek their view on the feasibility of the scheme and indicative costs
22/247	Finance	e Working Group:
		To receive 1st Quarter 2022-23 Financial Report: Noted and accepted
	2.	To approve the WHPC Asset Register: Approved and signed
		Action: The Finance Group to consider the disposal of the Snow Gritter and other inherited assets.
	3.	To approve additions to the WHPC Insurance Schedule: Noted and approved
		To resolve to use CIL monies for the Queens's Platinum Jubilee Bench
		Cllrs resolved to fund the purchase and installation of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee bench (£672.88 and installation £204) from CIL monies.
	5.	To approve arrangement for the payment of the new playpark equipment invoice.
		Approved. Cllrs resolved to pay the invoice, £14,176+vat, if appropriate, before the agreed S106 monies have been received from EDDC.
	6.	To approve the transfer of fund between the WHPC deposit/current account.
	0.	
		Cllrs resolved to transfer \pounds 14,176+vat between Council accounts to facilitate the payment.
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Other Matters

22/248	Clerks	Clerks Report:		
	1.	To confirm decisions taken under Delegated Powers:		
		 Playpark – to avoid trip hazard Lengthsman to use soil to fill the gaps around the safety matting created by the dry weather - estimated cost £70+vat Playpark - minor repairs to the playboat £70+vat Both noted and approved 		
	2.	 Action points from previous WHPC meetings a. Remembrance Service 2022 – Road closure – awaiting DCC Highways response b. WHPC response to Straitgate Appeal submitted c. Community First Responder team (CFR) – South West Ambulance Service Trust have provided detailed costing for the approved purchase of an additional kit for the West Hill team ref 22/218: £3,099.28 incl VAT, rather than the estimated £3,500. d. Leisure East Devon (Ottery St Mary) Action: Cllr ABC to establish if the group still existed. 		
		All noted		
	3.	Matters arising a. Playpark Maintenance – bench + access gate		



	 The Clerk thanked the Village Hall Trustees for acting quickly to replace a lock and chain on a safety gate.
	 b. One of the older benches in the Playpark was relocated to facilitate the installation of the new climbing frame. The bench is in poor condition. Action: The Lengthsman to be asked to provide a condition report for the next WHPC Meeting.
	c. Maintenance scheduled for August: Timber treatment and hedge cutting.
	 b. Visit to Infocus (West Hill) Cllrs accepted an invitation to visit the Infocus project in West Hill.
	c. Queen's Platinum Jubilee Bench The site for the installation of the Queens's Jubilee bench and covid memorial
	tree at St Michael's had been agreed. Installation costs for the bench, £204+vat are higher than expected due the sloped site.
	Cllrs approved installation costs of £204.00 +vat All noted
	 Resident Communications A Higher Broad Oak Road – West Hill Road Junction
	Following a resident's report of a "near miss" the Clerk had contacted Highways to ask them to write to householders requesting the overgrown hedges to be cut back.
	b. Glass and Fire Risk Following a residents's concerns of fire risk of sunlight on broken glass during the
	drought period the Clerk had placed a notice on the picnic benches in Broadoak and on the website.
	5. Any urgent matters arising a. Land for sale
	 Clirs considered the land currently available in West Hill and the possible options for it's use, possibly a community orchard.
	Cllrs noted the land for sale but didn't think it offered any community advantage.
	 Personnel Matter: Communications with the Clerk Cllrs noted recent correspondence to the Clerk and resolved to consider this in confidential session, Part B.
	A member of the public left the meeting.
22/249	External Audit: To note an objection submitted to the External Auditor regarding the 2022-23 Accounts and Governance.
	The Chairman explained that following the Internal Audit the 2022-23 Accounts and
	Governance reports (AGAR) are submitted to the External Auditor for review. During the Period for the Exercise for the Public Rights, a resident submitted an objection to the External Auditor regarding the Internal Audit and Auditor. On receipt, the Auditor considered 3 of the 5 points
	ineligible and advised they would consider the eligibility of the remaining objections. The Chairman advised the Council of the potential outcomes of the objections. WHPC awaits the
	response to the External Audit. The Chairman advised that Clirs wished to be open and transparent on this matter. The
	Chairman and Clerk had provided further details in a briefing paper available on the WHPC website (see Council meeting 2 nd Aug 2022).
22/250	West Hill Playpark:1. To receive, a verbal update on the installation of new equipment.
	Cllr AT gave a brief report on the event on 26 th July 2022 to mark the installation of the new Climbing Frame in the West Hill Playpark. Children from West Hill Primary School, Headteacher Cheryl Boulton, Village Hall Trustee Mike Harris and DCC/EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey joined Cllrs to celebrate the re-opening of the playpark.



	A few minor items, including the installation of a roof panel on each tower, will be completed in August.
	 To receive, if available, a report on an inspection of the playboat. Clirs noted
	 a safety concern reported by the Lengthsman and asked the Clerk to seek advice from EDDC. However, the Clerk advised that EDDC had not responded to previous requests.
22/251	Airport Consultative Committee: To receive a report of the 20 th July 2022 meeting. Cllrs noted Cllr ABC's report of the latest committee meeting. No issues were raised.
22/252	Office Police and Crime Commissioner: To note a report on the 7 th July 2022 seminar for Councillor Advocates across Devon and Cornwall. Cllrs noted Cllr DC's report of the latest seminar. No questions were raised.
22/253	 Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests: To record the receipt of an FOI in July 2022. Cllrs noted the residents' request for information regarding the Council's Audit, AGAR and that this was noted that this was the second FOI request within 60 days, Cllrs also noted the response to the resident. To record the closure of an FOI submitted in June 2022 The Chairman advised that WHPC has responded, in part, to the request and sought clarification of the remaining points. No response had been received so the request was deemed closed. However WHPC has revisited the request and provided further information as appropriate. One matter was outstanding.
	Cllrs unanimously agreed to extend the meeting beyond 2 1/2 hrs.
22/254	Seeking Resolution with a Resident
	The Chairman wished the Council to be open and transparent on this matter, as far as was possible, in order for the community to understand what the Council was dealing with and also how the Council's finances may be impacted. In particular, The Chairman wanted the community to be aware that the resident's "dispute" with the Council is continuing and the potential costs, possibly including legal costs, seemed likely to increase.
	 The Chairman gave a progress report on the attempt to seek the resident's view on a process to resolve their issues with the Council the resident had proposed four options with conditions to be agreed by Council. identify the issues to be resolved with the Council
	A briefing paper, prepared by the Chairman and Clerk, had been published on the Parish Council's website giving further information including possible next steps.
	Cllrs noted the residents' intention to proceed with a private criminal prosecution however the details of this were unclear including whether if it was to be against the Council.
	Cllrs did not make further comment in Public session and wished to discuss the matter in confidence (see item 22/259).
22/255	Police Matters: To receive the monthly West Hill crime stats: May 2022 if available (for information) Noted
22/256	Financial matters: 1. To consider and approve the Schedule of Payments for WHPC 2 nd August 2022 The Clerk presented an additional invoice: PLG Services - VAS transfers £91.20



	 All noted and approved. 2. To confirm a transfer £5,000 between WHPC accounts: Noted, approved and signed 3. To receive if available: WHPC Finance Tracker, Bank reconciliation June 2022: Noted, approved and signed
22/257	Councillor questions, reports and items for future agenda Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. <i>Councillors are</i> <i>respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.</i> No matters raised.
22/258	Next meeting: To confirm arrangements for the next WHPC ordinary meeting Tuesday 6 th September 2022 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

Part A closed at 22.08pm

A member of the public and DCC Cllr Jess Bailey left the meeting.

Part B opened at 22.08pm

Confidential/exempt items. In consideration of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted): to agree any items to be dealt with after the public and press have been excluded.

 Clirs considered recent correspondence with the Clerk and their duty as an Employer: a. Clirs unanimously resolved to block communications sent to the Clerk from a named resident. b. Clirs unanimously resolved to write to the resident advising of their decision and tha future correspondence should be sent via The Chairman. c. CONFIDENTIAL minute 22/259 Seeking Resolution with a Resident Clirs considered the 4 options for resolution proposed by the resident. Following a lengthy discussion two options were considered in-practical and one was considered unacceptable Clirs resolved to re-state their desire for resolution of the resident's issues with the Council. to explore the remaining option - mediation with the resident. To provide details o mediation services, processes and costs to Council for consideration at a Counci meeting.	22/248 (5)	Personnel Matter + Communications with the Clerk
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		c. to write to the resident advising of the Council's decision and to invite the resident to provide details of mediation services.

Part B of the meeting ended at 23.05pm

The Clerk was unable to record the close of the meeting for technical reasons due to the length of the meeting.

The meeting resumed at 23.05pm and closed at 23.06pm.

Signed: Anne Oliver, Clerk to the Council 8th Aug 2022