

Penshurst Parish Council Meeting Monday 4th August 2025 - MINUTES

Minutes of the Penshurst Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 4th August 2025 at 7pm in Penshurst Village Hall.

Present: Councillor Andy Campbell (Chairman), Councillor Diane Broad, Councillor Sally Jolly, Councillor Norman Furnell, Councillor Bruce Townsend, Councillor Duncan Howard, Councillor Jonathan Horsford, Councillor Richard Gerard-Sharp, Rachael Turner (Clerk & RFO).

Also present: Sevenoaks District Councillor Richard Streatfeild. 1 Member of Public and PC Donegan attended part of the meeting from 8pm.

1. Apologies for Absence received from: Councillor Robert Rees and Kent County Councillor Robert Mayall
2. Declaration of interests in agenda items – none declared at the meeting.
3. Minutes of the 9th June 2025 Penshurst Parish Council Meeting were duly approved.
4. Matters Arising:
 - (i) **Bus Shelter Refurbishment** - works are scheduled to be done. The bus stop at Smarts Hill is also being checked for any required works.
 - (ii) **Highways Meeting Report** – awaiting response from Highways on the following:
 - 1) Junction at the top of Smarts Hill has narrowed due to mud/leaves and needs reinstating
 - 2) White lines at the T junction in Penshurst (outside of village hall) have all but disappeared and need replacing. This is a risk as drivers are not stopping there and pulling straight out onto the road. Does give way signage need hi-lighting? To be added to HIP.
 - 3) Sewerage issue in Fordcombe overflowing onto road. This has been going on for over a year and there are concerns about public health. Clerk to raise with Environmental Health and would appreciate if Highways could also address Southern Water to try to get solution
 - 4) Ongoing water leak Leicester Square 5163484 - the missing cover has been replaced, so part of the fault under this reference has been fixed. The outstanding problem is the leak and consequent road subsidence near Leicester Square.
 - 5) Ongoing water leak Spring Hill 880778
 - 6) Layby opposite Spring House, Spring Hill, Fordcombe TN3 0SE. What3Words: WEEDS.STEAMS.ENVISAGE - dip at edge needs filling.
 - 7) Drain outlet between Black and White Cottage, Spring Hill, TN3 0SE and Spring Hill Farm TN3 0SB. Apparently there are 3 drains which are blocked solid. The water runs out and washes over the road. Please can someone from Drainage take a look.

During the Highways meeting, the quality of works was raised. KCC confirmed they carry out quality checks on works by third parties. KCC also clarified they are responsible only up to the kerb and not the verges or hedges beyond that.

Councillors questioned the frequency of the post works checks as often the quality, particularly with drainage, was poor and often not long lasting.

- (iii) **School/Village Green Vehicular Damage** – It was agreed the solution may be to widen the entrance way. Cllr Campbell to seek three quotes for the works for consideration.
- (iv) **Chafford Park concerns re noise and windows** – During July Councillors reported there had been events with a tannoy and amplified music outside that caused noise nuisance to local residents. Some have the noise app to use but it works infrequently. Reports have been made to SDC but nothing has been heard back. There has also been signage directing guests down Chafford Lane which is not the correct route to the venue. It had also been noted on the website they are advertising dining for up to 150 when the limit is 100. Clerk to write to SDC highlighting concerns from residents regarding the noise pollution, road safety concerns over the use of Chafford Lane for guests and the advertised increase in number of guests.
- (v) **Kingdom** – District Councillor Streatfeild reported that Enforcement are in discussions with the Management and believes that noise control has been implemented. Noise now only appears to be an issue when people or bands are outside or on the roof.

5. **Open Session** – no points raised. No MOP present at the time.

6. **Kent County Councillor Robert Mayall** – apologies received and report read out:

KCC are Reforming Kent's Roads, starting with a major £67 million investment in the county's 5,400 mile road network. The money will be used to tackle potholes, renew road surfaces and prevent future damage, marking one of the largest investments in Kent's roads in recent years. This year's investment, which is already underway, includes:

- £25 million for renewing and reconstructing roads
- £10 million for preventative measures to stop potholes forming
- £11 million for quick, efficient, and permanent local repairs by our highways teams
- £7 million on addressing the most urgent repairs to keep the roads and paths safe
- £14.2 million in additional funding from the Department for Transport for a dedicated pothole and patching programme – a 65% increase on last year's investment.

The Reform administration has cut Councillors' allowances by 5% and directed it towards Members' Grants to be paid towards good causes in their divisions. Penshurst PC might want to let me know of any good causes I could make a payment for.

The new administration is scrapping the net zero renewable energy program of property modifications which will save £32 million over 4 years. The plan to transition the KCC vehicle fleet to all electric fleet is being scrapped and will save a further £7.5 million.

The plan to move Kent County Council out of Sessions House and into a refurbished Invicta House has

also been scrapped saving £14 million.

The scrapping of unnecessary memberships and subscriptions will hopefully save a further £180,000.

Since taking office in May, the level of Kent County Council's debt has been reduced by £16 million which is saving £2000 a day in interest payment. The intention is to reduce the debt by £33 million by next March.

- 7. Sevenoaks District Councillor Mr Richard Streatfeild** – With regards to Highways, Stewards are allocated to the area so do report any road issues, via the KCC website reporting tool; <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-or-track-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement>. For concerns over quality of works please do raise it with Cllr Mayal and Cllr Streatfeild.

SDC is now led by a minority Conservative administration. The changes to bin collections, likely to be coming in March 2026, will include a change to bi-weekly rubbish collections. There will be changes to recycling too.

Becketts Trust are revisiting previously rejected sites for housing in the area. The planning application for 5 houses at Mitre Farm in Fordcombe has been amended.

Cllr Streatfeild is also dealing with SE Water regarding the Fordcombe sewerage issue

Cllr Streatfeild left the meeting.

- 8. PC 30366 John Donegan** – report was read out and PC Donegan was delayed.
- A speed gun trained officer to conduct speed watch with PC Donegan has been sourced. A list of road names and times that cars are seen to speed on them is to be provided. There were some good returns the first time this was done in Penshurst, hoping longer can be spent doing it this time. Police speed watch is different from community speed watch.
 - Rural patrols/vehicle stops around the Penshurst area to and including Fordcombe have continued. Much of this has been conducted in the late/early hours for 24hr presence

Update on calls to police since last parish council meeting

- 8 calls regarding Neighbour disputes
- 9 calls regarding health concerns/mental health
- 4 calls regarding theft
- 12 Traffic/animal in road/trees in road
- 4 calls regarding violence/threats/Domestic abuse
- 1 call for criminal damage
- 3 calls for suspect events

Penshurst/Fordcombe – continues to be one of our lowest crime areas in the wards covered by PC Donegan.

PC Donegan arrived. He reported that a scam of criminals knocking on doors with false Police id on, usually saying they were from Richmond Police Station, taking residents personal financial details. PC Donegan confirmed the Police would not ever knock on doors asking for personal financial information.

9. Neighbourhood Report – Cllr Furnell had written to MP, Tom Tugendhat, raising concern at the lack amount of monies spent on policing, the lack of police resources for our area and requesting these need to be increased. No response has been received to date. Cllr Furnell will forward the letter on to include Matthew Scott, Kent’s Police and Crime Commissioner.

1 Member of Public arrived.

Cllr Furnell asked about GoPro camera evidence for speeding. PC Donegan confirmed that GoPro camera’s could not be used as evidence of speeding, but could be used as evidence of other traffic offences.

Two people so far have come forward to volunteer to do speed watch. The group would need to be set up via <https://www.communityspeedwatch.org/> and training and equipment would then be organised.

10. Penshurst Village Hall – to consider increasing the funding from Penshurst Parish Council for the Village Hall refurbishment from 25k to £36.5k to meet the full cost of the refurbishment which was closer to the amount originally agreed.

Proposed: Cllr Howard

Seconded: Cllr Gerard Sharp

Decision: Approved

11. Finance/Accounts:

a. Payments: The following accounts were presented for payment at the meeting

Payee	Details of payment	Amount
Evelyn Divall	Final payment and bonus. Original cheque (1226) lost in post so cancelled with bank and reissued	£ 2,566.73
Playsafety Limited	Annual Cricket Ground play plark inspection	£ 124.80
Rachael Turner	Reimburse Defib Store order - AED pads and batteries	£ 178.80
Penshurst Park Football Club	Grant under s137 towards equipment, fencing and pitch maintenance	£ 5,000.00

Masters Building and Development Ltd	Penshurst Village Hall refurb of toilets and kitchen July 25	£ 35,533.58
HMRC 120PR02597105	PAYE/NI July 25	£ 412.61
Rachael Turner	Clerk July Pay	£ 1,019.84
Penshurst Village Hall	For food warmer and fridge as part of kitchen refurbishment	£ 1,057.80
HMRC 120PR02597105	PAYE Correction Month 2	£ 141.95
Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman services Jul 25	£ 100.00
Oast & Oak Services	Fordcombe and Penshurst closed churchyard 18 Jun to 1 Aug 25	£ 750.46
		£ 46,886.57

Duly approved and cheques signed for payment.

Ratification of items of expenditure made between meetings:

July 2025 Payments List		
Payee	Details of payment	Amount
Rachael Turner	Clerk pay June 25	£ 1,019.84
HMRC direct	Clerk tax and NI and ER NI June 25	£ 412.61
Sevenoaks District Council	Bulk refuse freighter 6 25	£ 305.54
Oast & Oak Services	Fordcombe and Penshurst closed churchyard May and Jun 25	£ 794.87
Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman services June 25	£ 100.00

Duly ratified.

b. *Finance Update including bank reconciliation. Duly received and approved.

c. Resolved to approve transfer of funds £25,000 from PPC savings account to main PPC account to meet financial commitments. Approved.

c. Grant Applications: None received for consideration this time.

12. * Annual Risk Assessment – Fordcombe Play Area. To review report and agree action points. Clerk to arrange to meet Cllr Horsford and Cllr Townsend at the park to consider action required. Clerk to seek out weed control contact and quote.

13. Defibrillator – Penshurst. New batteries and replacement paediatric pads ordered by Clerk and now installed. Clerk has cleaned the defib. It was confirmed that 999 should be put on the defib as a contact number, not the code, as emergency services must always be called before using it.

It was agreed a CPR/Defibrillator training session for members of the community was a good idea. Cllr Jolly suggested Kent Fire and Rescue might provide this. Clerk to investigate options.

Clerk to investigate who is responsible for the Fordcombe Defibrillator and establish if any maintenance or parts are needed.

14. Allotments update – two accounts are outstanding for this year. Clerk has chased up payment of these. It has been noted that some allotments have not been maintained. Clerk has written to the appropriate allotment holders asking if they wish to continue with the allotments, and if so, to ensure they are appropriately cultivated and attended to. A waiting list of local residents interested in having an allotment is held.

Cllr Campbell to investigate deer fencing and to obtain quotes.

15. Clerk Report – Items for noting and information

- a) Finance – Clerk now has access to the bank accounts and the address has been changed. The Finance Regulations will be reviewed in the coming months and online banking options will be looked into. All payments now logged on a spreadsheet and reconciled back to bank accounts.

AGAR – end of year audit raised a query which has now been resolved. All documentation is displayed on the website now as required.

b) Housekeeping

- a. Website – Clerk has access to the website and can now add / update as required.
- b. Councillor Email addresses – these have been circulated. Please use going forward rather than personal email addresses. Councillors reported having intermittent issues with access to the emails. Clerk to see if alternative routing can be achieved through an existing inbox such as Outlook.
- c. Lots of sorting through paperwork and getting up to speed (albeit slowly!) with some shredding to do. This will be done securely and will share costs with HPC.
- d. Penshurst Parish Council Logo – It would be good to have one. Clerk to explore options.

- c) Facebook page – Clerk to create PPC page as another source to post information on.

d) Other Information

- a. West Kent Rural Grants scheme – Clerk to circulate information
- b. Family Fun Days – Clerk to circulate information
- c. Here for You – latest leaflet now available

16. Planning:

Planning Applications:

PENSHURST PLANNING APPS SDC Ref.	Address	Summary of application	Deadline for comments
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25/01893/WTPO	Fordcombe Village Hall The Green Fordcombe Kent TN3 0RT	To remove 8 ash trees infected with ash dieback	NA information only
25/01276/HOUSE	The Grove Cottage Grove Road Penshurst Kent TN11 8DU	Replacement of domestic outbuilding with a new detached outbuilding for use as a home gym and office with rooflight. Permeable hardstanding. Ecological Assessment	7 August 2025.
25/01862/LDCEX	Netherwood Smarts Hill Penshurst Kent TN11 8EB	An existing storage outbuilding of 21sqm which sits on a residential plot of land (C3). The structure is built on a concrete base and made of timber.	05 August 2025
25/02027/WTCA	The Old Orchard Penshurst Road Penshurst Kent TN11 8HZ	Various works to trees in a Conservation Area.	NA information only
25/00957/HOUSE	Oakley House Fordcombe Road Penshurst	Construction of Detached Garage and Garden store with log storage. Associated Hardstanding.	Decision: Granted

It was queried if notification of an application for Keepers, Penshurst Road had been received. Clerk to look into.

17. HIGHWAYS

Details	Location	Date reported to KCC	Ref No	Comments	Fault repaired
Bottom of 30mph signpost rusted through	Corner of Glebelands, Fordcombe Road	23/06/2025	885216	Scheduled for repair July 25	yes
Rogues Hill give way bridge tree on right obstructing sight line when coming to Penshurst	Rogues Hill - 2nd bridge out of village towards Bidborough	02/07/2025	886962	Not Highways - have requested Penshurst Estate cut back the tree Cllr Campbell to contact Estate again to request tree is cut back as it is still dangerously obscuring the view for road users, or to offer to do it for them if they	

				don't have time	
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Fordcombe Village Green – water works scheduled for 18 August 25. These are being rescheduled. Details to be confirmed.

Concerns regarding the junction from The Lane, Fordcombe, onto Spring Hill. The junction is obscured due to cars parking making it hard to see when exiting The Lane. Clerk to report safety concern to Highways.

18. Items for noting or inclusion on future agenda at the discretion of the Chairman.

- a) Fordcombe bus shelter bin – is often overflowing with litter strewn across the green. Is it an overflow issue or possibly animals doing this? Clerk to look at potential solutions.
- b) Affordable Housing – English Rural are likely to have an update to share at the next meeting. Clerk to add to agenda.
- c) During road closures busses are not going through Fordcombe. Often passengers are unaware. Could the bus companies do more to publicise the diversions and the fact stops will not be used? Could they put notices at the bus stops? Clerk to contact bus companies.
- d) Given rising numbers, raising awareness of deer and what to do in event of an accident. Useful information can be found at: <https://www.deeraware.com/> . Clerk to print posters to go on parish noticeboards and upload to PPC website.

9pm Meeting closed.

Date of next meeting – Monday 1st September 7.00 pm Full Council in Penshurst Village Hall.

Meeting dates/times can be subject to change, please always check
<https://www.penshurstpc.co.uk/website> for next meeting date/Agenda.

August 2025 Payments List			
Cheque Number	Payee	Details of payment	Amount
1234	Evelyn Divall	Final payment and bonus. Original cheque (1226) lost in post so cancelled with bank and reissued	£ 2,566.73
1235	Playsafety Limited	Annual Cricket Ground play plark inspection	£ 124.80
1236	Rachael Turner	Reimburse Defib Store order - AED pads and batteries	£ 178.80
1237	Penshurst Park Football Club	Grant under s137 towards equipment, fencing and pitch maintenance	£ 5,000.00
1238	Masters Building and Development Ltd	Penshurst Village Hall refurb of toilets and kitchen July 25	£ 35,533.58
1239	HMRC 120PR02597105	PAYE/NI July 25	£ 412.61
1240	Rachael Turner	Clerk July Pay	£ 1,019.84
1241	Penshurst Village Hall	For food warmer and fridge as part of kitchen refurbishment	£ 1,057.80
1242	HMRC 120PR02597105	PAYE Correction Month 2	£ 141.95
1243	Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman services Jul 25	£ 100.00
1244	Oast & Oak Services	Fordcombe and Penshurst closed churchyard 18 Jun to 1 Aug 25	£ 750.46
			£ 46,886.57

I confirm sight of the invoices and cheques drawn in settlement of the above accounts

Signed		Councillor
Signed		Councillor
Signed	Minutes – Final - Penshurst Parish Council Meeting 4 August 2025	Councillor

Rachael Turner, Clerk and RFO
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