

Minutes – Draft

11th September 2025 Hever Parish Council Meeting

The Hever Parish Council meeting was held in Markbeech Village Hall on Thursday 11th September 2025, commencing at 7.30 pm. The Planning Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Angela Haydon (AH) Chair, Councillor Hilary Jones (HJ), Councillor Nick Roberts (NR), Councillor Mark Thomas (MT), Councillor Nick Pepper (NP), Councillor Phil Lindsay (PL), Councillor Stephen Lark (SL) and Councillor Duncan Leslie (DL)

Also Present: Rachael Turner, Clerk & RFO, District Councillor Barnett, County Councillor Mayall¹ and 13 members of the public (MOP).

Absent: Councillor Joanna Wade (JW), Councillor Rick Brookes-Smith (RBS)

- 1) Apologies for absence were received and approved for Cllr Rick Brookes-Smith and Cllr Joanna Wade
- 2) Public Forum.
 - a) A MOP questioned what happened to the monies that were left over from the pond purchase. The Clerk confirmed the monies were kept in a separate bank account and were used for pond related costs. The current balance was £9,396. The Clerk provided a summary of accounts by year since 2021 and offered copies to those who wished to view them. Confirmed accounts were on the website with each meeting pack.
 - b) Another MOP raised concerns over ongoing issues at the pond, including fishing, which had worsened with increased numbers of people fishing, bringing tents, night fishing, throwing in large volumes of bread which was impacting wildlife. Unfortunately, ducks were suffering with hooks and lines on them. There were reports of visitor noise, people urinating, illegal drug taking and drinking and not behaving in an acceptable manner. MOPs had tried to report anti-social behaviour to the Police. Four Elms was getting a bad reputation and people were telling their children to stay away from there. The pond is overstocked and people catch fish too easily. There is dangerous parking on double yellow lines and blocking of driveways by visitors to the pond. This has been reported but nothing seems to be done. When visitors to the pond are asked to move their cars they can become abusive. A solution is needed. Cllr Haydon confirmed this was on the agenda and would be discussed at point 9.

¹ Cllr Mayall arrived at 7.45pm
Hever Parish Council

- c) A MOP asked if affordable housing could be considered around the parish as they felt there was a need and there were places around the village where houses could be slotted in. Cllr Haydon confirmed that the Affordable Housing Survey was carried out last year. The results confirmed that 8 units were required across the parish, however, there were no sites that could be pursued so it was agreed with The Rural and Community Housing Enabling Service (RACE) not to progress it at this stage. An update on the SDC 2040 Plan will be published soon and that is likely to have more information on housing plans. The MOP commented Markbeech could accommodate a couple of units.

- 3) No declarations of interest were made.

7.45 pm County Councillor Mayall arrived.

- 4) Report from County Councillor Mayall – Cllr Mayall referred to the local government reorganisation and confirmed it was planned for the selected option to be implemented in 2028, with the preferred option being either 3 or 4 unitary councils across the county. It was unlikely that there would be any public consultation on the change.

Cllr Mayall confirmed he had brought the gateways that had appeared on How Green Lane to the attention of Highways and was awaiting a response from Nigel Rowe.

- 5) Report from District Councillor Barnett – Cllr Barnett confirmed he had taken Cllr Mayall on a tour of the Parish. At the recent CIL Board meeting funding had been given to Cowden Village Hall.

Cllr Barnett commented that he was Public Realm Commissioner and would do a press release.

- 6) Minutes of the Hever Parish Council Meeting held on the 1st July 2025 were duly approved and signed.

- 7) *Planning: Please see Planning Meeting Minutes

- 8) Finance

a) *Bank reconciliation was approved by all and signed by member of FEC (SL).

b) *Payment for items of expenditure, including ratification of items made between meetings, was duly approved.

c) * Completion of the Annual Audit and receipt of the External Auditor's Certificate and Report was duly noted. The Clerk confirmed this had been uploaded to the website and displayed on boards.

d) 26-27 Budget planning – it was noted the FEC Meeting was booked for 14th October so the draft budget would be available for the November meeting for consideration

- 9) Four Elms Pond update and options for ongoing management were discussed. Clerk confirmed accounts since purchase of the pond had been circulated. Cllr Haydon confirmed that all accounts were reviewed at each meeting and were available to view on the website with the meeting pack.

Cllr Roberts reported he had been having conversations with Sam Dallaway of Edenbridge District Angling Club (EDAC) regarding issues at the pond and acknowledged some behaviour there was not acceptable and a better solution was needed. A draft agreement had been drawn up between EDAC and HPC with the view for EDAC to take over fishing rights for the pond and in exchange they would maintain the pond and monitor users. EDAC runs on a membership fee subscription and they vet people before issuing licences. For residents of Hever Parish a licence for fishing at the Four Elms Pond would be free. To get a licence they would need proof of residency and knowledge of fishing. EDAC currently have a relatively small amount of members currently and are looking to grow numbers. They have plant equipment so will be able to deal with grass cutting and general pond maintenance.

EDAC will also remove some of the excess fish in the pond and relocate them to other ponds that they manage, which will be healthier for the pond and other wildlife. They have three bailiffs who will police the pond. Members of the Parish will be able to continue to visit the pond as well. There will be rules for members to adhere to with regards to parking and behaviour.

Cllr Barnett commented it was unusual to have fishing on a village pond. Cllr Haydon confirmed the pond was for recreational purposes and that included fishing. It would be costly and time consuming to prevent any fishing there and would need a byelaw.

Another issue is the pond is advertised on the internet as a good place to fish for free, which attracts a volume of visitors from outside of the area. EDAC will help to spread the word fishing there is by permit only, but the message will take time to filter through.

It was suggested that number of fisherman at any one time should be limited. Cllr Roberts confirmed experienced fisherman would not overcrowd or want to fish closely to each other.

It was hoped this agreement would see a reduction in anti-social behaviour, would be much better for the wildlife, more considerate parking and would have 4 people to call upon to police it if needed.

Cllr Haydon proposed to accept the proposal which was seconded by Cllr Roberts and was unanimously approved.

It was asked if Highways could repaint the double yellow lines to make them more visible. Clerk to follow up.

Cllr Roberts confirmed if the agreement proceeded, the Pond Contractor would no longer be required.

The potential installation and use of CCTV at the pond was discussed. Signage would be needed. Clerk to clarify requirements.

With regards to the repairs required following the car accident on 21st June, the Clerk had submitted quotes to the insurer – total works estimate £1,800. Fence panels have been repaired, life buoy reinstalled and finger post repair instructed. Concreting and rail works to be completed. A MOP commented it had taken a long time to get the life buoy back up on the stand. Clerk apologised for the delay and confirmed the life buoy was still useable, even though it wasn't on the stand.

Concerns regarding the Four Elms former garage site had been raised with SDC. As a result they are carrying out a site visit to assess concerns about health and safety.

Members of the Public left the meeting, along with Cllr Mayall and Cllr Barnett. 8.30 pm

- 10) Gatwick - Cllr Lark reported that an update should be received from Gatwick in October. CAGNE are running sessions so members of the public could understand how the changes to airspace will affect households. For more information visit <https://cagne.org/online-events-to-understand-the-airspace-above-your-home/>
- 11) Grant Applications:
 - * The Grant Application from Stones was considered. Stones requested £500 towards First Aid training and other general running costs. It was discussed and agreed that under s137 £200 could be awarded towards activities instead of running costs. Clerk to supply other funding options they could apply for and also inform them of the potentially free first aid training with Edenbridge CFR and St John Ambulance. Duly approved.

Note 3.5k spent to date of S137 budget this year
- 12) Highways Update
 - a) Four Elms crossroads - the new yellow backed warning signage has been installed and SLOW line painting has been carried out.
 - b) Double yellow lines near the pond – the lines are worn and are unclear. Could they be refreshed? Clerk to raise with Highways.
- 13) The potential exposure of parts of parish not within the National Landscape Area was discussed. Some Councillors and the Clerk attended a meeting held with Chiddingstone and Leigh as they are putting in place a Neighbourhood Plan. It was a useful meeting. Should HPC consider putting in place a Neighbourhood Plan in the near future? There have been funding cuts so no funds are now available for a Character Area Assessment. Clerk has contacted High Weald to see if they are considering moving the National Landscape boundary to include all of the parish to encompass Four Elms to help protect the area from extensive and inappropriate development. Clerk to request a copy of the survey that has been sent out to residents within Chiddingstone and Leigh.
- 14) Caretaker works – an update from the Clerk
 - a) Contractor asked to carry out repairs/ maintenance on Four Elms play area equipment as identified in the annual risk assessment including removal of the aged and broken early years equipment
 - b) Have requested refurb of the Hever noticeboard

15) Environment –

- a) Litter Pick dates Saturday 4th October was agreed.
 - i. 9.30 am Four Elms (Cllr Haydon and Cllr Jones)
 - ii. 9.30 am Hever (Cllr Lindsay)
 - iii. 1.00 pm Markbeech (Cllr Thomas and Cllr Brookes-Smith)

Clerk to organise banners to advertise litter picks, order more hoops and warning triangles.

- b) Bulk refuse update – Unfortunately SDC have informed us this service is ceasing. Despite it being a paid for service and well used within the communities, they are unable to staff it. Concerns are this will lead to more fly tipping. Clerk looking into alternative supplier to continue service as other parishes in the cluster are also keen to do this.
- c) Tree works
 - i. Four Elms Field and Hever Field – The selected quote for works, with APF Trees being the preferred quote at £1704 + VAT was approved. Three quotes were requested but only two received. Works will take place in December.
 - ii. Hever Churchyard – There are two trees requiring attention in the closed section: a crab apple to fell and to crown lift the yew. The quote was considered and approved, being from RWE £380 +VAT. The Church have offered to pay half so £190 cost.

16) Public Footpaths update – no update at present. Cllr Lindsay raised the blocked footpath in New House Farm Lane. Clerk to investigate.

17) Community Engagement – WhatsApp. Cllr Pepper has set up the group and circulated the QR Code. This can be made available via the Link and on the website/ Facebook and notice boards.

18) Technology – new email and website provider. The current provider is not going to be complying with accessibility requirements going forward for the HPC website. The proposed alternative provider: Vision ICT are a company that deals predominantly with Parish Councils so they understand the requirements. Clerk to share Vision ICT info pack and prepare costings and transition plan for next meeting.

It is envisaged emails would be transferred across too with new gov.uk email addresses for added security and reputation for HPC.

9.00 pm Cllr Leslie left the meeting

19) Clerk report outlining any actions taken since the previous meeting and any other updates.

- a) Four Elms Playground – Clerk asked Four Elms School and Wellyboots Nursery for input into what pre-schooler play equipment would be well received. Clerk to look at options, costs and potential funding.

- b) Four Elms Field Charity – meeting to be scheduled for next month.

- c) Change of HPC bank accounts from Nat West to Unity Trust update.
Signatories to sign forms. Remaining proof of id now received and submitted to Unity Trust.
- d) Family Fun Day – this was a good day enjoyed by all who attended. Numbers were about the same as last year with around 30 attendees.

20) Proposed dates for 2026 HPC Meetings:

Monday 12 January
Tuesday 3 March
Wednesday 6 May (Annual Meeting of HPC)
Monday 18 May (Parish Assembly)
Thursday 9 July
Monday 14 September
Tuesday 3 November

21) Items for information only and correspondence

- a) November HPC meeting has been moved to Tuesday 4th November
- b) Hever Village Hall meeting regarding the new Village Hall – Saturday 4th October 3pm.
Clerk to publicise.

22) Items for noting or inclusion on future agenda at the discretion of the Chairman - none

Meeting closed 9.15 pm

Please note – the date of next meeting has changed to Tuesday 4th November –7.30 pm Full Council, Planning 7.00 pm in Hever Village Hall.

Meeting dates/times can be subject to change, please always check Hever.org website for next meeting date/Agenda.

HEVER PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE – MINUTES

Thursday 11th September, Markbeech Village Hall, 7pm

Present: Councillor Angela Haydon (AH) Chair, Councillor Hilary Jones (HJ), Councillor Nick Roberts (NR), Councillor Mark Thomas (MT), Councillor Nick Pepper (NP), and Councillor Duncan Leslie (DL)

Also Present: Rachael Turner, Clerk & RFO, District Councillor Barnett, 6 members of the public (MOP).

Discussed and view agreed at the meeting:

SDC Ref.	Address	Summary of application
25/02218/FUL	Land West Of Hever Road Hever Kent	Demolition of existing stables and building for residential use and construction of a new American Barn style stable block within the footprint of the demolished existing stables and residential building.
View Agreed: Strongly object		

Payments List:

Payment Date	To whom paid/received from	Particulars of payment for main HPC Account ending 548	Amount paid (gross)	VAT Paid	Amount paid (net of VAT)
17/06/2025	Hever Village Hall	Hall hire 20/5 Parish Assembly	£ 45.00	£ -	£ 45.00
17/06/2025	Royal Mail	PO Box delivery service - annual fee from 21/6/25	£ 445.80	£ 74.30	£ 371.50
30/06/2025	Rachael Turner	Clerk June 25 pay	£ 1,304.01	£ -	£ 1,304.01
30/06/2025	HMRC Cumbernauld	Tax and NI Clerk June 25	£ 271.66	£ -	£ 271.66
30/06/2025	KCC Pension	Pension June 25 R Turner LGPS	£ 501.07	£ -	£ 501.07
30/06/2025	Mr Computing	Live Drive back up 1 yr	£ 70.00	£ 11.67	£ 58.33
30/06/2025	SureKill Pest Control	Pest control services - pond and shed	£ 70.00	£ -	£ 70.00
30/06/2025	Vistaprint (reimburse RT)	Bulk refuse banners x 3	£ 56.67	£ 9.44	£ 47.22
30/06/2025	Digital Printing (reimburse RT)	Bulk refuse banner date stickers	£ 33.54	£ 5.59	£ 27.95
25/07/2025	Playsafety Rospa	Annual safety inspection - Four Elms play area and Hever field	£ 211.20	£ 35.20	£ 176.00
25/07/2025	Mandrake Services - Dave Andrews Magic Gardens	inspections, repairs and maintenance, grass cuts Hever churchyard	£ 1,200.00	£ -	£ 1,200.00
25/07/2025	Edenbridge Voluntary Transport Services	purchase of laptop and funding for journeys as discussed and approved at HPC Meeting 1 July 25, point 10	£ 1,500.00	£ -	£ 1,500.00
25/07/2025	Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)	Course - AH - Local Plan Process 18925	£ 42.00	£ 7.00	£ 35.00
25/07/2025	National Association of Local Councils (NALC)	Course - AH - Navigating the new planning framework	£ 42.00	£ 7.00	£ 35.00
30/07/2025	Four Elms Village Hall	Hall hire HPC Meeting 1st July 2025	£ 24.00	£ -	£ 24.00
30/07/2025	Rachael Turner	Clerk July 25 pay	£ 1,304.01	£ -	£ 1,304.01
30/07/2025	HMRC	Tax and NI Clerk Jul 25	£ 271.66	£ -	£ 271.66
30/07/2025	KCC Pension	Pension Jul 25 R Turner LGPS	£ 501.07	£ -	£ 501.07
		TOTALS	£ 7,893.69	£ 150.20	£ 7,743.48

Hever Parish Council Pond Account Payments and Receipts (412)			
From 31st May to 1st August 2025			Amount Paid
02/06/2025	Damian Gravely	Pond contractor	£ 100.00
02/07/2025	Damian Gravely	Pond contractor	£ 100.00
		TOTAL	£ 200.00