

**MINUTES OF YALDING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 01 APRIL 2025 AT 7.00 PM IN YALDING VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT

Geraldine Brown (Chairman)
Tim Chapman (TC)
Andy Sanders (AS)

Leila Bates (LB)
Ken Gough (KG)
Kelly Woods (KW)

DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO RECORD PROCEEDINGS

There were none declared.

PUBLIC SESSION

Mr J Shead attended the meeting to speak about planning application 25/501027

There were three other members of the public present who did not wish to speak.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Jamieson, Stead and Westgate sent their apologies due to sickness; they were accepted.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF COUNCILLORS IN ANY ITEM

2.1. DECLARATION OF CHANGES TO THE REGISTER OF INTERESTS

None were declared.

2.2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

KG and TC declared an interest in agenda item 12.1 as they had bills for payment.

2.3. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None were requested.

2.4. DECLARATION OF ANY GIFTS RECEIVED

None were declared.

3. DECISION TO TAKE AGENDA ITEMS UNDER CLOSED SESSION

Due to principal authority requirements and receipt of sensitive information, it was resolved to take item 22 in Closed Session.

4. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 04 MARCH 2025

It was proposed TC seconded KG and unanimously resolved that the minutes be signed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

5.1. £10,000 FLOOD PRIZE STILL TO SPEND

The Chairman has met with Grant Booker from Kent Fire & Rescue Service (KFRS) to look at locations for flood gates and awaits his feedback. KFRS have asked for additional information. Grant Brooker has retired from general duties but is still heading-up flood actions. KG has contacted Laddingford Engineering and is going to supply some measurements following which site meetings will be held and quotes prepared. Peter Waring Environment Agency (EA) has suggested that Yalding Parish Council (YPC) purchase heavy duty plastic sheets to be used with sand bags, The Chairman will investigate.

5.2. TREE SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT

The tree work is almost complete.

5.3. REPAIR/REPLACE LITTER BIN ON THE LEES VILLAGE END

The Chairman is going to report that it was Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) operatives that damaged it.

5.4. REQUEST FOR A LARGE LITTER BIN IN THE AREA OF HAMPSTEAD LOCK

The Chair will ask John Edwards if he will support a bin in this location.

5.5. LEES CAR PARK

KG does not want to be a point of contact this year, DS suggested that the out of office rota be reinstated so that every Councillor only has to be potentially disturbed once every nine weeks.

5.6. HIGHWAYS' IMPROVEMENT PLAN (HIP)

The Clerk is adding the following items to the HIP:

- Double yellow lines outside Lyngs Farmhouse
- Bend sign Lees Road by Beultside
- Safe access to Laddingford bus stop

5.7. RUBBISH ON YALDING HILL

The Chairman will send out a Parish News and put in the parish magazine how residents can report litter and rubbish to MBC.

5.8. BOOT SCRAPER AT THE KINTONS BRIDGE

Councillors felt that this would not solve the problem due to studs in boots. The football club will be asked to make sure that the players are using the overflow car park and therefore not needing to park on Vicarage Road.

5.9. REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT

It was agreed that the Code of Conduct was appropriate for adoption and The Chairman would take it back to Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) in order to get parishes to advertise it in the press jointly.

5.10. CHILMINGTON WATER TREATMENT PLANT

The Chairman suggested YPC should write a letter to the EA supporting the comments already put forward.

6. POLICE MATTERS

The Chairman now has contact details for both officers. Residents must be encouraged to report everything either on 101/online or 999 if urgent. They are recruiting more officers.

7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Webb did not attend the meeting and did not send his apologies, no report was received.

8. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Russell joined the meeting at 20:45.

Councillor Couch attended the meeting and had previously sent a report that was circulated.

Councillor Summersgill sent his apologies.

9. BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

A reminder that this should be considered in all of the items that follow on the agenda.

10. PLANNING

10.1. TO DECLARE ANY LOBBYING OR FORMAL REPRESENTATION

There was none declared.

10.2. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

To confirm the amendment to planning application 25/500521/FULL, Pear Tree Cottage, Queen Street was responded to in line with a Scheme of Delegation and the response is included at the end of the minutes of this meeting.

10.3. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Planning responses are recorded at the end of the minutes.

10.4. YALDING ENTERPRISE PARK (YEP)

10.4.1. UPDATE

The next phase will commence soon, YEP are still awaiting the decision on the office block application.

10.4.2. AQUA CHIMP OPENING

Everyone who attended had a great time at the open day. The official opening is next weekend ready for school holidays.

10.5. APPEALS

- 24/502389/FULL - Willow Farm Lughorse Lane - the appeal hearing will be held on 30 April 2025 at 10:00 at The Business Terrace, Maidstone House; The Clerk has requested YPC to speak.
- 24/502003/FULL – The George – An inspector has still not been appointed so there is still no decision if an informal hearing will be allowed.

10.6. ANY OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

There were no other planning matters.

11. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

11.1. MOTION TO APPROVE THE REVISED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Financial Regulations were updated in line with the latest model, circulated and reviewed by all Councillors.

The Chairman proposed, KW seconded and it was resolved unanimously that it be adopted.

11.2. MOTION TO APPROVE THE REVISED SPEEDWATCH POLICY

The Speedwatch policy was updated, circulated and reviewed by all Councillors.

The Chairman proposed, LB seconded and it was resolved unanimously that it be adopted.

12. FINANCE

12.1. MOTION TO PAY BILLS

It was proposed KW, seconded LB and resolved by all to make payment of bills totalling £11,866.69 exclusive of VAT as per attached list. KG and TC declared an interest as they had bills for payment and did not vote.

JW and AS will authorise them electronically.

12.2. CONFIRM RECEIPTS

A list of receipts, as attached, totalling £425.09 was circulated.

12.3. MONTHLY SPEND AGAINST BUDGET REVIEW

There was an over spend on the parish magazine of £240 due to the colour copy for the VE Day advertising this will be moved to the event budget.

The events budget is £628.43 overbudget, this is due to paying deposits for the VE Day street party during the year 2024/25 but is contained within the budget for 2025/26.

12.4. BANK BALANCES AS AT THE END OF FEBRUARY 2025

The cleared bank balance for the end of February 2024 was confirmed:

- NatWest £41,767.59

- Unity Trust £23,198.96

12.5. BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR FEBRUARY 2025 HAVE BEEN SIGNED

It was confirmed that these have been signed as correct.

13. OPEN SPACES

13.1. REPORTS FOLLOWING VISUAL UPDATE INSPECTIONS OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND

13.1.1. THE LEES

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.2. THE LEES PICNIC AREA

Inspection complete, no new issues.

The barrier is still out of order, waiting for the engineer, therefore the car park has not been able to open.

13.1.3. YALDING VILLAGE GREEN AND VERGES

No update, although there are no concerns

13.1.4. JUBILEE FIELD

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.5. LADDINGFORD VERGES

Inspection complete, no new issues

13.1.6. THE KINTONS

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.7. FOWLE HALL GREEN

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.8. THE TATT

Inspection complete, no new issues.

The roadway has been scraped and levelled, the vegetation has been cut back, including the Himalayan balsam and the fence has been repaired.

The Clerk will now arrange for two annual cuts and a path cut monthly and will talk to Medway Valley Countryside Partnership (MVCP) with regard to tree planting, fitting bat and hedgehog boxes and updating the interpretation board, all of which is in the budget.

13.2. EQUIPMENT INSPECTIONS

13.2.1. JUBILEE FIELD

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.2.2. THE KINTONS

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.2.3. DIFIBRILLATORS

Inspection complete. Batteries have been replaced in the defibrillators at Laddingford and Yalding Post Office.

13.3. OTHER ISSUES

13.3.1. LAND AT THE KINTONS

The Chairman suggested that a use be assigned to the woods as it is such a large unused area. AS felt that it should be left as it is to let people roam. If any Councillors have any ideas please put them forward for consideration.

13.4. REQUEST TO USE PARISH LAND

There have been no requests to use parish land this month.

14. HIGHWAYS

14.1. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC)

- **REVIEW THE HIGHWAYS LIST** - The list has been updated and circulated. Councillors to advise any additions.
- **WATER ON VICARAGE ROAD** - The Clerk has written to The Highways Safety officer who has replied to say she is going to visit with her team. She has advised that the issue be added to the HIP.

Highways have suggested it is reported to Highways every time there is a problem with water on the road. It was agreed to ask residents to report Highways concerns via the KCC report a fault portal, the link will be sent out on Parish News and in the parish magazine.

14.2. OUTSTANDING ISSUES FROM THE GLEBE DEVELOPMENT

• TRAFFIC CALMING ON VICARAGE ROAD

The Clerk has asked them when the condition will be discharged, a reply has not been received but Vistry have made it clear they consider the matter closed. It is now up to MBC planning to chase if they require the condition to be discharged, to seem unlikely they will.

• PARKING ON THE SITE

Vistry insist that adaptations to the green space at the front of the site to introduce additional parking will not be possible. They have stated that that they consider the matter closed and cannot help any further.

The Clerk has written again pointing out the money saved on traffic calming. Vistry replied saying the reason they consider the matter closed is due to the following:

- The scheme has been built and completed in line with the planning approval.
- The scheme has long since been completed with all residents moved in and settled.
- The area of landscaping that Councillors are looking to convert to parking is no longer within Vistry Group's Ownership.
- The land is under the ownership and control of the residents' management company and their managing agent.
- Vistry Group could not and would not enforce residents to agree or make changes to their land.

The Clerk has written back to ask them to confirm if this is the case the decision should be in the hands of the residents. They replied just restating their case above, they seem to reluctant to confirm that the residents can decide.

It was agreed to write to the management company.

14.3. TOWN BRIDGE

14.3.1. TO REVIEW THE NEXT STEPS ON THE TOLL BRIDGE INITIATIVE

It was agreed to wait until after the KCC elections to engage with them. An informal meeting will be arranged with some Councillors and HS to go through issues that will need to be resolved. HS has written requesting the meeting.

14.4. OTHER HIGHWAY ISSUES

There were no other highways issues.

15. FLOODING

15.1. GENERAL UPDATE

The Highways Manager has agreed to replace damaged road closed signs but has asked for an inventory of current signs held by the parish.

A complete review of flood actions in Yalding and Laddingford to include flood wardens, flood gates and road closures has commenced. The flood wardens list will be updated and a request sent out for new ones.

Watertight/EA have arranged to inspect an ad-hoc selection of Property Flood Resilience measures to see how they are being managed by residents.

STORAGE OF SAND BAGS

The Chairman will investigate putting a box behind the pumping station at the Tatt and re-look at using the old substation on Benover Road.

15.2. SUBSTATION UPDATE

The matter is still ongoing. YPC will write to Golding Homes and MBC. The Chairman will also chase UKPower

16. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NhP)

A meeting was held on 5 March, DH is now preparing the final draft for approval by YPC, The Steering Committee and MBC. He will add the community assets as agreed at the last meeting.

17. EVENTS

17.1. VE DAY 80TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

17.1.1. STREET PARTY 4 MAY 2025

All is progressing well.

The event will be 2pm to 10.30pm, with the road closure 12 noon to 12 midnight.

Volunteers are needed.

The Clerk and The Chairman will continue to work up further plans.

17.1.2. NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS THURSDAY 8 MAY 2025

All progressing well

- The VE Day 80 flag will be raised by the Vicar on Sunday 4th May and will remain in place all week.

- **6.30pm** – bell ringing, confirmed

- **Starting approximately 8.45 pm:**

Light the Lamps of Peace

VE Day 80 Proclamation – Michael Steward has agreed to read

Light Beacon

Pipes – The piper is booked

The Tribute – The Vicar will read

Play and sing 'I Vow To Thee My Country.' Hopefully with the help of the piper and the Church Choir

The Clerk and The Chairman will continue to work up plans.

17.2. ANNUAL PARISH MEETINGS 20 MAY 2025

The Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting will take place on 20 May 2025. The plans are in hand. The Parish Report is about 35% complete, The Clerk asked that Councillors check the list for any omissions and also asked them to read all the policies on the website in preparation for reoption.

18. CONSULTATIONS

Two new consultations has been received this month.

- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Local Plan: Public Consultation on the proposed Main Modifications – 30 April 2025 – The Chairman will review.

•Marden Neighbourhood Plan Review Document - Regulation 14 – 25 April 2025 – Noted

The Proposed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Consultation is out, The Chairman will circulate.

19. CORRESPONDENCE

19.1. KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (KALC) AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL (NALC) CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED

- NALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 06,13,20,27 March 2025
- KALC bulletin – 12 March 2025
- KALC News – March 2025

19.2. OTHER GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED

- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local Development Scheme Update March 2025
- MBC - Guidance for Parents in relation to the Netflix's drama Adolescence
- List of Maidstone Events

19.3. EMAIL FROM A RESIDENT ABOUT SPEEDING IN YALDING

Highways are the responsibility of KCC not YPC. Speed bumps are not fitted on a bus route as the bus company will not operate where there are speed bumps. The Clerk will reply to the resident accordingly.

19.4. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BEFORE THE MEETING

There was no other correspondence.

20. OTHER PARISH BUSINESS

20.1. TO AGREE ANY WELCOME LETTERS THAT NEED TO BE SENT

There were none.

20.2. THE WALNUT TREE PROJECT – TO DISCUSS ANY PROGRESS

It is understood that The Walnut Tree is now under offer from a private buyer.

20.3. REQUEST FROM THE CRICKET CLUB TO INCREASE AMENITY AREA

The Cricket Club would like to install a marquee with glass doors to go onto the kiosk or just a top but to be kept up all year round. The Chairman felt that will attract anti-social behaviour and suggested they just have 6 x 3m waterproof pop-up gazebos that can be taken down after matches, Councillors agreed.

20.4. TO DISCUSS THE POTENTIAL FOR A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY VILLAGES PROJECT

Ken Scott, Chairman of Building a Dementia Friendly Maidstone gave a talk on dementia friendly villages. He reported there are several things that can be implemented.

Councillors agreed that this was something that YPC would like to pursue. KW agreed to take a lead.

20.5. DEBRIEF WITH RESPECT TO SOUTH EAST WATER (SEW) INTERRUPTION

Communication was good, The Chairman has been in dialogue with MBC's Emergency Planning Officer, in particular about bottled water supplies, who has said SEW have asked for a period of grace to fully recover from the event.

20.6. TO DISCUSS COUNCILLORS RESPONDING TO EMAILS

Please can Councillors respond to all emails from Clerks and Chairman especially if it is urgent, but so that we know you have received the email. Can you also "Reply All" to emails.

21. PARISH MATTERS

- KW briefed with regards to a potential farmers market at The Chequers.

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

25/500521/FULL
(Amended plans)

Pear Tree Cottage, Queen Street
Erection of single storey rear/side extension and changes

OBJECT AND CALL-IN WITHDRAWN

YPC withdraw their objection and call in provided a condition is applied to any permission requiring the gap to be maintained in perpetuity to safeguard the free flow of flood water

25/501027/FULL

Hatchgate, Mill Lane
Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of a new self- build dwelling, garage & associated landscaping

OBJECT

The application site is within a Flood Zone 3 and is inaccessible at times of severe flooding with flood water approximately 1m deep in places on Mill Lane. Councillors therefore do not believe there should be an increase in the occupancy of this property, there should not be an increase in the number of bedrooms as this would put additional residents at risk from flooding and it could put emergency services and other lives at risk.

The application fails to demonstrate safe access and egress to a flood zone 1 at times of severe flooding, it is the planning authority's obligation to approve such a route.

It is imperative that the Environment Agency is consulted.

If the planning officer is of a mind to approve Councillors ask that it be called into MBC planning committee.

25/501185/FULL

Lees Lodge, Lees Road, Yalding
Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of replacement single storey garden room.

NO COMMENT

The Chairman and KG to declare an interest as this is a neighbouring property to them.

25/501180/FULL

Knaves Acre, Kenward Road
Erection of part two storey part single storey rear extension to replace single storey extension and change from flat roof to pitched roof on front dormer including changes to fenestration (previously approved 22/502467/FULL)

NO COMMENT

25/501220/FULL

Chapel House, Laddingford
Erection of a single-storey rear extension (amendment to approved planning permission 24/503619/FULL, being change of the external material of the walls from all brick to brick with timber cladding to match the existing).

NO COMMENT

25/501198/LBC

Chapel House, Laddingford
Listed Building Consent to replace the external material on existing rear extension from brick to brick with cladding to match existing.

NO COMMENT

25/501076/FULL

Mereworth House, Laddingford

Removal of existing fence and replacement with a 1-metre-high picket style fence to the front boundary of the property.

NO COMMENT

MBC PLANNING DECISIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

25/500244/TCA

St Peter And St Paul's Church

Conservation area notification: Birch (two trees but as they stand so close together, they are considered as one canopy) - reduce and re-shape. Remove 3 x lower limbs that severely threaten the integrity of the listed building and adjacent wall but enhance the shape of crown to improve visual amenity.

NO OBJECTION RAISED

25/500100/FULL

1 Orchard Cottages, Lughorse Lane

Section 73 - Application for removal of condition 1 (agricultural occupancy condition) pursuant to 90/0397 for - Removal of condition (ii) from planning permission MK3/63/488 dated 23 December 1963.

GRANTED

25/500067/LDCEX

1 Little Fowle Hall Oasts, Luck's Lane

Lawful Development certificate Existing use of land as (C3) residential garden land.

REFUSED

25/500337/FULL

Selves, Vicarage Road

Erection of a single storey rear extension with an adjoining outbuilding with internal alterations. Erection of a detached timber frame garage/carport with storage above.

GRANTED

24/505015/LDCEX

Flambards, Laddingford

Lawful Development Certificate for existing change of use of paddock to residential curtilage.

GRANTED

23/505139/OUT

Land North & South Of Kenward Road

Outline application (all matters reserved other than principal means of access to the highway) for the removal of existing polytunnels on land north of Kenward Road and the erection of up to 112no. dwellings (Class C3), associated infrastructure and landscaping, together with the change of use of land south of Kenward Road to provide informal/recreational open space, sustainable urban drainage features, landscaping, and ancillary works/infrastructure.

ALLOWED ON APPEAL

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.07

Signed.....

Date.....