



LYMPNE PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting of Lymپne Parish Council

held on Wednesday 9th
September 2026 at 7pm
in the Committee Room,
Lymپne Village Hall

Present: Cllr Mike Boor (Chair), Cllr Peter Murphy (Vice Chair), Cllr Michael Potter, Cllr Claire Yates, Cllr Michael McAuley, Cllr Judith East, Cllr James Sinclair

In attendance: J. Lawrence (Parish Clerk); Cllr Jeremy Speakman (Folkestone & Hythe District Council)

1. Apologies for Absence

All present

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Acceptance of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th July 2026 and the specially convened meeting held on 5th August 2026 were considered, subject to the following amendments:

- The grant figure recorded in the minutes was corrected to £2,000 (comprising £1,000 for the Millennium Wood and £1,000 for the Wellbeing Garden), having previously been recorded as £1,000.
- A typographical correction was made to a minute recording the Council's general planning policy, to confirm that comments submitted via social media (Facebook, Instagram and similar platforms) are NOT to be treated as a legitimate form of feedback to the Council on planning matters.

Subject to the above amendments, the minutes were agreed as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

4. Public Session

A letter was received from Mr David Jones raising concerns about poor visibility for both drivers and pedestrians at the point where the footpath from the Ridgeway meets Aldington Road. It was noted that a villager had recently had to intervene to stop a young child running into the road at this location.

Members confirmed they had inspected the site during the recent Parish Walkabout and agreed that the junction presents a safety concern, and that the official footpath crossing point nearby suffers from similarly poor visibility.

It was agreed that:

- a simple design for a physical measure (posts and a short run of fencing, intended to slow pedestrians rather than to stop them outright) would be produced for the junction;
- this work would be carried out at the same time as the contractor's works to the Trim Trail, expected to start towards the end of September;
- a warning notice was considered but not favoured; members preferred a physical measure to additional signage, which was felt unlikely to be effective on its own.

- It was also suggested that the hedges and trees be cut back to improve visibility.

5. Chair's Report / Updates

- Otterpool Park - no update to report.
- The Chair had been contacted by the media for comment regarding the (now removed, temporary) overflow car park arrangement at the racecourse, and declined to comment.
- Santa's Grotto has been confirmed for the Christmas Fair on 6th December. This year it is proposed to hold the Grotto and children's activities inside the Harry Margary Hall, rather than outdoors, following poor weather in previous years.
- Members had attended meetings regarding Local Government Reorganisation; this remains on hold nationally, pending Government decisions.
- A meeting had taken place regarding trees donated by the Castle for use as children's play equipment and the possible use of tree slices as stepping stones was discussed, for siting in the Wellbeing Garden.
- A final price is awaited for elements of the Wellbeing Garden project, comprising: a drought garden; a sensory garden; raised beds for children; and community fruit trees.
- The Chair was contacted by the Daily Mail for comment and declined to discuss the matter by phone, offering instead to meet on site; no further contact was received.

Cllr James Sinclair (Wellbeing update): no one attended the drop-in session this week, though a resident was assisted informally. Footfall remains steady. The "Men in Shed" project - intended to repair household items and provide a space for men to meet and talk - is to run a trial in the Committee Room in the coming weeks.

Cllr Peter Murphy: the proposed History Walk has been well received, though it is unlikely to be ready before next summer. Work continues on putting together a Community Resilience Plan for Lympe, including maintaining links with the wider Emergency Plan and compiling a call list.

It was noted that a long-standing resident's 90th birthday falls on 23rd November 2026; members agreed this should be marked appropriately, including a mention in a future newsletter.

7. Clerk's Report

- Insurance: following review of the renewal quotation, it was agreed to proceed with a long-term (three-year) agreement rather than a year-on-year renewal, holding the price for the period. It was confirmed that public liability cover extends to Council equipment as it is added to the Wellbeing Garden (including the pond).
- The Millennium Wood liability position - the Council's responsibility being limited to a defined stretch of approximately 70 metres, under the arrangement with the landowner - was discussed; the Clerk to check the wording of the relevant agreement/notice and the relevant insurance documents for public liability.
- It was agreed that a disclaimer should be obtained in respect of the tree trunks (donated by the Castle) sited in the play area, given their weight and the possibility of movement; once installed on Council land, this equipment becomes the Council's responsibility.
- Green Grant application: no response has yet been received; a decision is expected by the end of September, the awarding body having reported a high volume of applications this round.
- Youth Club personal information storage has been resolved.
- The Horsefield car park application is to be resubmitted; the Council awaits a resubmission. A pre-application notification was received from a developer regarding land off Aldington Road, adjacent to the Village Hall. There was some initial confusion as the notification referenced "the Street" rather than Aldington Road; the Clerk has confirmed with the agent that no application has yet been submitted, but that the Council was correctly notified as an adjacent landowner.
- The Asset Register was updated following the Parish Walkabout..
- An attempt was made to gain unauthorised access to Castle land overnight on the Saturday before the meeting. A foreign-registered vehicle had been seen photographing the site during the day. The site was secured with gates locked and hourly patrols in place; at approximately 01:45 the perimeter gate was

forced by hand, triggering security lighting and cameras; a vehicle was seen leaving but its registration could not be captured. The site was fully secured again by approximately 02:10. Folkestone Police confirmed that a group had been evicted from the Stop 24 site earlier the same night. The incident was reported to the police and to the local neighbourhood policing team. Members agreed to look at temporary, and potentially permanent, height barriers at all site entrances to reduce the risk of recurrence.

8. Invited Speaker

Cllr Jeremy Speakman (Folkestone & Hythe District Council) gave his report, including:

- an update on Folkestone Town Centre regeneration scheme in Folkestone, funded through Levelling Up money (in the region of £20 million);
- an update on the watersports/leisure development at Greatstone, including solar panels and green roof systems; sea defence repair works are also progressing;
- beach management: a mixed start to the season overall, with a very busy Bank Holiday managed well. Ongoing campaigns encourage use of the bulk bins and taking litter home. Disposable barbecues on the beach and grass verges remain a persistent enforcement problem, particularly with larger visiting groups; enforcement officers currently have limited powers (a fine of £60, reduced to £30 if paid within 14 days) and no power to confiscate items, and would welcome additional police support;
- District Council elections are due in May 2027;

9. Correspondence and Communication

- Correspondence was received from Lympne Castle notifying the Council of a temporary track installed along the bottom of their land.
- A precept notification was received from Folkestone & Hythe District Council: the Council's precept requirement for 2027/28 must now be submitted by 8th January 2027 (earlier than the previous deadline of 30th January), to align with the District's earlier billing timetable. The statutory deadline remains 30th March. The Council must therefore finalise its budget at the December meeting.
- The playing field litter bin: it was reported that Folkestone & Hythe District Council appear to be continuing to empty the bin despite the Council no longer being invoiced for the service. It was agreed to leave the matter as it stands for now and to monitor it, resuming payment only if the District Council resumes invoicing, or raising it again if emptying stops.

10. Youth Club

Members considered options for the future of the Youth Club in Lympne. Cllr. Clair Yates

- The recent notice in the Green Sheet prompted approximately seven people to get in touch about volunteering; a follow-up meeting was held, which five people attended to find out more.
- Cllr Yates agreed to send further information to those interested, so they are clear on the nature of the role and the commitment involved, and to ask them to confirm what they are able to offer.
- Cllr Yates had also met with John from Project Salus, an established youth provision, to ask whether any of their existing staff might be interested in additional hours. Project Salus has staff on zero-hours and short-hours (three-hour and six-hour) contracts who may be interested; John was approaching two members of staff informally that evening, with a response expected the following day.
- Members agreed that, rather than reopening quickly, priority should be given to reopening on a basis that can be properly maintained and sustained, even if this means a slightly later start.
- It was noted that approximately £4,500 remains in the current year's Wellbeing/Youth Club budget.
- The proposed staffing model is a paid coordinator (3 hours per week) and one paid helper (2 hours per week), supported by volunteers (approximately 5 hours per week of volunteer time).
- A rate of £15 per hour was proposed (approximately £75 per week in paid hours), for the remaining period of this financial year (in the region of 20 weeks, allowing for school holidays).

- On-costs were discussed, including holiday pay (approximately 12%) and employer's National Insurance if the relevant threshold is reached. The Clerk to look into producing a suitable term-time working contract, most likely by adapting an existing Council staff contract.
- Estimated costs for the remainder of the financial year: approximately £2,000 in labour costs plus approximately £1,000 for other Youth Club running costs, giving a total budget request of approximately £3,000; this would leave approximately £1,500 of the existing allocation available for other Wellbeing project spend.

RESOLVED: that the Council finance the Youth Club until the end of the current financial year, with a view to reviewing the budget for future years, at an estimated cost of £2,000 in labour costs and £1,000 in other Youth Club costs (total approximately £3,000). Seconded by Cllr Peter Murphy. Carried unanimously.

- It was agreed that, once plans are confirmed, the Council would look at asking Folkestone & Hythe District Council to sponsor an event for the children (for example laser tag or a similar activity), with a good-news story for the newsletter once details are firmed up.
- It was also agreed that any volunteers assisting with set-up and clearing away each week should be thanked.

11. Local Government Reorganisation - Asset Transfer

Not required at this time, Local Government Reorganisation being on hold nationally pending Government decisions. No further action was taken on this item.

12. Parish Walkabout Day - Review

Members reviewed the recent Parish Walkabout and agreed it had been a useful exercise. The following actions were identified:

- The playground at Manor Farm Close was found to be in a poor and potentially hazardous condition. As this falls under the responsibility of Folkestone & Hythe District Council rather than the Parish Council, the Clerk to write to the District Council to ask for a review.
- Belcaire Close road: its condition was discussed, but members agreed there is limited scope for the Parish Council to take action and did not propose funding repairs at this stage.
- The unofficial path alongside Aldington Road: recent hedge-cutting works by a contractor had removed much of the overgrown hedging and low level growth creating a suitable mplace for pedestrians to walk safely along Aldington Road. Members agreed to improve the surface of the path itself (currently uneven, with exposed roots) using a brushcutter, to provide a safer alternative to walking in the road at this point

Other actions arising from the Walkabout: two battery-powered mobile sprayers have been purchased and will be used to clean village signage; a weekly leaf-clearing routine for the school path is to be established through the autumn and winter.- This work is being completed by volunteers from the Castle at no cost to the village.

13. Bus Stop Funding

This matter was discussed but due to the initial outlay prior to receiving the grant it was not deemed feasible at this time and it was agreed that no further action would be taken at this time.

14. Audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Clerk reported that the external audit of the 2025/26 accounts had concluded with no matters raised and no issues identified. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been published on the Parish notice board and on the Council's website, as required. Members noted that the process moves to a fully digital format from next year. No further action was required.

15. Planning

The following applications were considered:

- 26/1109/FH/CON - Port Lympne, Aldington Road, Lympne, CT21 4PD - approval of details pursuant to condition 5 (external lighting) of planning permission 25/0051/FH. For information only; no comment required.
- 26/1272/FH - Harewood, Aldington Road, Lympne, Hythe, CT21 4LH - works to a sycamore subject to TPO No 18 of 2007 (crown reduction of approximately 1.5-2m vertically and laterally). No objection.
- 26/1361/FH/NMA - Honeypot Farm, Aldington Road, Court-at-Street, Hythe, CT21 4PH - non-material amendment to planning permission 25/1936/FH (window/door configuration, Juliet balconies, omission of apex glazing, solar panels). No objection; the site is isolated and does not overlook neighbouring properties.
- 26/1404/FH - Land rear of 1-3 Keepers Lodge, Port Lympne, Aldington Road, Lympne, Hythe, CT21 4PD - works to a sycamore subject to TPO No 04 of 2018 (fell to ground level). No objection.

The Council resolved to raise no objection to any of the above applications.

16. Finance

a. Bank Reconciliation: the current balance held was reported as £34,593, of which £5,000 is committed to the Affinity Water (pond) works, leaving approximately £29,593 otherwise available. Income of approximately £3,570 (shop rent and advertising) is expected over the coming months.

b. Review of transactions and budget: it was noted that the Council's contribution towards the Trim Trail (in the region of £6,000) has already been paid, with the corresponding grant reimbursement not yet received. The Clerk's salary this month reflects the national pay award of 3%, backdated to April. Other transactions noted included newsletter printing and distribution, grass cutting, Land Registry search fees, and hire of Santa for the Christmas Fair.

c. Payments for authorisation: payments for the month were approved. The Clerk to process the HMRC payment the following morning, with the associated payment to be authorised at the same time.

Payee	Details	Amount
Sandgate Printers	Newsletter	294.00
Colemans	Grass cutting	428.40
Simon Rickard	Santa Hire (Christmas Fair)	190.00
PAYE	PAYE	1562.93
Trooli	Village Hall Broadband	29.99

17. Date of Next Meeting

Agreed as Wednesday 7th October 2026 at 7pm, in the Committee Room, Village Hall, Lympne (the first Wednesday of the month, rather than the usual second Wednesday, as noted on the published agenda).

There being no further business, the meeting closed.

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____