

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

Mrs Suzanna Dry

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Alfriston War Memorial Hall

Old School House

The Tye, Alfriston, BN26 5TL

Tuesday 29th October 024

Draft Minutes of a meeting of Alfriston Parish Council (APC), held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 21st October 2024 at 7.15pm

Present:

Cllr S Daw

Cllr N Parkinson

Cllr S Rabagliati

Cllr J Spring

Cllr J Watkins

In attendance:

Mrs Suzanna Dry – Parish Clerk & RFO

There were approximately 10 members of the public present.

110. Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Watkins Vice-Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that as the Chair Cllr Monteath-Wilson had given her apologies, she would be chairing the meeting this evening.

111. Public Questions

Luke Batchelor offered his assistance to help update the village website. Nick White confirmed APC own the domain name and Cllr Spring mentioned it is currently hosted by Nathan Pope. Cllr Spring offered to put Luke Batchelor in contact with Nathan Pope to discuss further. **Action 1.** Adrian Butcher mentioned Alfriston Hub, alfristonhub@gmail.com, and asked Luke Batchelor to add himself to the circulation list.

112. Apologies for absence

Cllr Monteath-Wilson and Cllr Harris had given their apologies.

113. Update from MP

A report from our new MP, James MacCleary, was read out and is attached to the minutes. ([Appendix A](#)).

114. Update from Cllr Stephen Shing – East Sussex County Council

Cllr Shing presented his report to the meeting, a copy is attached to the minutes. ([Appendix B](#)).

115. Update from Cllr David Greaves - Wealden District Council

Cllr Greaves presented his report to the meeting, a copy is attached to the minutes. ([Appendix C](#)). Nick White stated that the Big Ambitions scheme won't fund consultancy for retail businesses.

116. Declaration of interest

Cllr Daw declared an interest as she is a Church Warden, trustee of Children with Cancer, the Women's Institute and a member of the Patient Participation Group. Cllr Parkinson declared an interest in the Allotments and Cllr Watkins declared an interest in AEG.

117. Minutes

Cllr Spring proposed and Cllr Daw seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the APC meeting held on 16th September 2024, were a true and accurate record. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Chair duly sign the minutes as an accurate record.

Cllr Parkinson proposed and Cllr Rabagliati seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the APC Finance meeting held on 14th October 2024, were a true and accurate record. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Chair duly sign the minutes as an accurate record.

118. Finance

To approve the Statement of Finances for October 2024. A revised Statement of Finances was issued to Cllrs, showing a corrected total figure for payments made since the last meeting. A copy is attached to the minutes ([Appendix D](#)). Cllr Spring proposed and Cllr Daw seconded a motion that these be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**.

119. Coffeehouse Conversations

To discuss date of next coffeehouse conversation – topic to be Environment & Transport. As Cllr Harris who is Cllr for Environment & Transport had given his apologies the Clerk was asked to liaise with Cllr Harris regarding the date for this. **Action Point 2.**

120. East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC) Conference – 4th November 2024.

To Agree two representatives to attend from APC, as well as the Clerk. This is normally the Chair and Vice Chair. Vice Chair Cllr Watkins confirmed she was unable to attend and Cllr Daw agreed to take her place. Cllr Monteath-Wilson is to confirm to the Clerk if she can attend. Cllrs Spring & Parkinson were happy to be reserves.

121. Portfolios – The Tye, Strategic Planning & Highways.

To Ratify changes discussed at the September APC meeting with regard to portfolio responsibilities. A motion to move Traffic Calming from Highways into Strategic Planning, Cllr Spring to take on The Tye portfolio and Cllr Parkinson to take on Strategic Planning portfolio with immediate effect. Cllr Daw proposed and Cllr Rabagliati seconded the motion. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**. The Clerk was asked to make the necessary changes to Cllr e-mail addresses and the website. **Action Point 3.**

122. Report on Highways & Twittens – Cllr Rabagliati

- Update on Village Clock – Clerk to report back. The Clerk reported that the EDF electricity supply to the clock had finally been disconnected on 14th October, meaning there will be no further costs to APC after this date. The Clerk and Cllrs thanked Nick White for continuing to supply the power for the clock at no charge to APC.

- Update on Post Box – Clerk to report back. The Clerk reported that Royal Mail had sent an update in which they advised more meetings had occurred recently where access was granted to view the back of the post box. Alternative sites had been looked at and Dene's Car Park was deemed unsuitable by the Collections Team. Royal Mail will respond with reasons why this site is unsuitable and an update on the current post box. The Clerk will chase for a response if this is not received before the next APC meeting. **Action Point 4.**

Cllr Rabagliati's Report:

SLR Meeting - this had been planned for 4th October but was cancelled by East Sussex Highways. This has now been re-scheduled for Friday 6th December.

Gas Lamp – Cllrs will recall that the supply to the lamp in the village square was disconnected after a leak was reported last November. It emerged that the gas used had not been billed or paid for. British Gas have recently got in touch with me and offered a free survey to assess what is required and the likely ongoing costs to re-connect the lamp. The lamp is an APC asset and liability for costs and future gas use would fall to APC. Do Cllrs want to proceed with this survey in order to make a more informed decision for the future? It was unanimously **AGREED** to request the free survey. The Clerk was asked to contact British Gas and arrange. **Action Point 5.**

The meeting was closed in order to allow Nick White to speak – he confirmed that previously when the lamp was connected to the gas supply it was on and using gas 24hrs a day. The meeting was then re-opened by the Chair.

123. Report on Allotments & Recreation Ground – Cllr Daw.

Cllr Daw's report was attached to the Agenda. The Clerk was asked to

- Update on taking deposits for allotments - Clerk's Report is attached to the minutes. ([Appendix E](#)). Cllrs discussed the merits of this and how it would be managed. The deposit would be held in a separate bank account and used if necessary to reinstate the allotment to a suitable condition when returned to APC. Cllr Daw proposed and Cllr Rabagliati seconded a motion to charge a deposit of £50.00 per allotment to be held by APC. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**. Notice would be given to allotment holders in January 2025, and become payable from January 2026. **Action Point 6.**

- To discuss and decide on ponds in the allotments – Clerk's Report is attached to the minutes. ([Appendix F](#)). The allotment holders who recently installed a pond on their allotment were unable to attend the meeting and gave their apologies to Cllr Daw. With reference to the Clerk's Report, Cllr Daw reported that the allotment holders were happy to carry out a risk assessment and get public liability insurance for the pond and appropriate signs. The family hold 3 allotments all adjacent to one another. Therefore the pond represents one third of the total size of the land with the other two thirds being cultivated. Cllr Spring proposed and Cllr Rabagliati seconded a motion to give consent to the pond in its current form with the allotment holder providing a risk assessment, a certificate of public liability and appropriate signage. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**. The clerk was asked to write to the allotment holders advising of APC's decision and conditions. **Action Point 7**
The Clerk was asked to look into and report back on appropriate signs to be placed on the gates of the Allotments such as 'Allotment Holders Only – All Children must be Accompanied'. **Action Point 8**

Cllrs **AGREED** to add "ponds" in addition to buildings to the Allotment Agreement under section H, requiring written consent from the council, and that this would be given on a case by case basis. The Clerk was asked to update the Allotment Agreement accordingly. **Action Point 9.**

- Update on grant application for another AEG shed at allotments – Cllr Daw. The Chair stopped the meeting in order for AEG to comment. David Lewis from AEG stated that a shed on the allotments is not an ideal solution as not the best place to store the barriers. The barriers are currently stored in David Lewis' garden. They are easy to deploy from here for emergency use and he is happy for this arrangement to continue going forwards. The Chair re-started the meeting. Cllrs **AGREED** to leave the barriers where they were and thanked David Lewis for his assistance.

124. Report on Public Transport – Cllr Harris

Nothing to report.

125. Report on Environment & Countryside – Cllr Harris

Cllr Harris' report was read out at the meeting.

September was the wettest month on record since 1977, with 213mm (8.4") of rain, more than twice the monthly average for September, of 97mm (3.8"). The fields on the east bank of the Cuckmere did of course flood, but the repairs to the embankment south of the White Bridge seemed to have stood up well. There is a slight change in the level of the embankment about 200 yards downstream from the bridge, which means that the overtopping point has moved to that position.

As far as I am aware, there was no serious flooding to houses or the road, though AEG did some sterling pumping work.

De-silting works were meant to have been carried out in September, but somewhat predictably these were frustrated by river conditions. However, the Water Management Alliance sent out an email, copied below, which shows that they still hope to carry out the work this winter (in November), but in particular that the necessary Environment Agency licences remain valid until March 2025.

From Revai Kinsella, Area Manager, Water Management Alliance.

A quick update on our planned silt removal from the Cuckmere.

Unfortunately, the weather has beaten us again. Due to the inside bank being under water for a long time when river levels were high, it became unsafe for us to work from there and have had to cancel the work as planned. We are now planning to use an amphibious excavator in combination with the one we currently have. The amphibious excavator will be safe to work from both the soft bank and river, allowing us to carry out the work safely. Unfortunately there are not many such machines in the country and the earliest we can get one is November. We are therefore planning to retry in November or earlier if the amphibious machine becomes available before then. If the field remains just wet and not under water, we will be able to carry out this work this winter, before all our permits expire in March 2025.

Kind regards

Revai

Public Footpaths - I have reported various faults to East Sussex which either I have noticed, or which have been passed on to me. In particular the state of the stiles on the west bank of the Cuckmere between the White Bridge and the Stone Bridge.

Whilst I am happy to pass on comments/complaints, I would urge anyone to report such matters themselves directly. Searching for 'East Sussex Public Rights of Way' takes you to a very informative site about footpaths in general, and also how to report problems. You do have to register – but only the first time!

126. Report on Strategic Planning – Cllr Spring

- Update on Emergency Plan. Cllr Spring apologised to AEG and Cllrs that his e-mail attaching the draft plan was not received, this will now be re-sent. Cllr Spring explained there are three parts to the plan – A list of key contacts for all parties, how volunteers work in situations and an AEG\APC action plan. Will wait for AEG's feedback and happy for any other comments before reporting back at the next meeting. Once agreed, this can then be put on the APC website and sent out by e-mail.

In the meantime, Cllr Spring is happy to put together a whatsapp group with Cllrs and AEG contacts on to enable information on flooding\emergency plans to be passed on quickly between APC & AEG. This was unanimously **AGREED**. Cllr Spring will collate mobile numbers of Cllrs and AEG members who are happy to be included in the group. **Action Point 10**.

127. Report on Tye – Cllr Parkinson, as sent out with the Agenda.

Cllr Parkinson's report was sent out with the Agenda.

Cllr Parkinson reported that Hailsham Roadways have now carried out the top soil and seeding of The Tye upto the new road edge and hopes that residents are pleased with the results.

Cllr Spring has a drain cover that can be used to replace the damaged one near the WHM. Once replaced the Clerk was asked to write to the grass contractor to draw their attention to it. **Action Point 11**.

Suggestions raised at the coffeehouse conversation on The Tye will be passed on to Cllr Spring, who is now taking over The Tye portfolio.

Cllr Parkinson proposed and Cllr Spring seconded a motion that the remaining amount in the Tye Road Reserves be used to pay for repairs to a wooden bench on The Tye. A quote has been requested, and is expected to be in the region of £150.00. **RESOLVED** unanimously.

To consider ways of gritting footpath on The Tye this winter – Clerk's Report ([Appendix G](#)).

Cllr Daw will approach the Church to see if APC can use the grit bin stored there. Cllrs **AGREED** to obtain quotes on how much it would cost to instruct a contractor to carry out the gritting of The Tye footpaths this winter, and then report back to the next meeting. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotes. **Action Point 12**.

128. Report from Planning Committee – Cllr Watkins

128.1 Applications considered by APC Planning Committee since last meeting:

Ref. No: SDNP/24/04114/TCA 7 West St, Alfriston, BN26 5UX – **Approved**.

Ref. No: SDNP/24/04174/HOUS Little Winton, Alfriston Rd, BN26 5UH – **Approved**.

128.2 Applications notified or awaiting decision from SDNPA

Ref. No: SDNP/24/03011/HOUS Hazeldene, West St,, Alfriston – **Approved**.

Ref. No: SDNP/24/02440/FUL – Former Allotments, North St. - **Awaiting Decision**.

SDNPA working with applicant on alterations to the application taking into account ESCC Highways objection.

128.3 Enforcement updates from SDNPA

Ref. No: SDNP/24/00382/GENER 23 Deans Rd, Alfriston – Extension falls within Permitted Development rights. - **No Breach**.

Ref. No: SDNP/24/00388/LB Clifton House, Alfriston – Satellite dish. No further action required. **Case Closed**.

Ref. No: SDNP/24/01338/DCOND Sunnyvale, Frances Botton, Alfriston. - Extended earthworks. **On Going**.

129. Reports from Outside Bodies

1291.1 Heartstart - Cllr Watkins reported that local volunteers are much needed. There was an incident recently Cllr Watkins & David Watkins responded but really need more responders in the village. Cllr Watkins will arrange some defibrillator training. Please contact Cllr Watkins if interested in the training or becoming a volunteer.

129.2 Alfriston Emergency Group – David Lewis AEG had a busy month. We are currently under an amber notice for flooding. Any volunteers gratefully received as we are desperate for support, not necessarily at the flood sites but also for back-up support.

129.3 Flood Forum - Jon Hurwood advised the Environment Agency have confirmed they will deploy their pump again this year, but it will only be used to keep the road clear and not the Willows Car Park. Last year it cost over £10K in diesel alone to run it and as EA funding continues to be reduced this has to be managed on a risk basis. We need to keep the E.A. on our side as they are doing what they can.

129.4 Neighbourhood Watch – No report.

129.5 Twinning Committee - No report.

129.6 St Andrew's Church - Cllr Daw reported that the harvest festival was wonderful. Lots of food was taken to the food bank and sourced out locally. Archdeacon Martin will be doing evensong on Sunday 27th October, please do come along for this. Remembrance Service is being held on Sunday 10th November. Meeting on The Tye on 11th November.

129.7 Clergy House - No report. Cllr Daw mentioned the Church Choir are singing Christmas Carols at the Clergy House on 30th November.

129.8 Cuckmere Buses - No report.

129.9 Alfriston War Memorial Hall - Adrian Butcher reported they are looking to replace the doves and flat roof with triple glazed ones. Looking for grant money if available. There is a damp problem in the Old School House, trying to address this. Race Night is being held on 8th November and should be a good evening, information has been sent out re tickets.

129.10 Speedwatch - Hannah Parkinson reported that there are fewer and fewer members and are currently only doing session a month. New volunteers would be gratefully received. Once the 20mph speed limit is in place, this may re-activate interest from volunteers.

129.11 Events

- Live Nativity 15th December 2024 - Update from Live Nativity Committee. Liz O'Neil reported that plans are going well. All H&S issues raised by APC have been addressed. Public liability insurance for the animals has been put in place. Trunking for electrics will be covered. Funding has been received from Rager & Roberts and bingo fundraiser held at the OCC. AWMH will be doing refreshments. The church choir will be singing and Catherine Arnold has offered to pay for the salvation army band. All compliance for H&S will be coming APC's way well before the event.

- 80th Anniversary of VE on 8th May 2025 – Cllr Daw - No report.

130. Correspondence to The Clerk – Asking for permission from the council.

Xmas Tree on Market Square – Update on APC's request to ESCC Highways Dept. The Clerk reported that APC's request to put a tree up in Market Square has been chased up with Highways and we have been promised a reply by next week.

Rude Mechanical Theatre Company – Performance on The Tye, Sunday 27th July 2025. Cllrs **AGREED** unanimously to give permission for this. **Action point 13.**

MG Classic Car Event on The Tye 2025 - Response from organisers advising this is no longer viable for their event due to APC conditions . Cllrs **AGREED** unanimously that the organisers must commit to reimbursing costs for any damage to The Tye and that no public parking could be permitted on The Tye itself. The Clerk was asked to re-confirm this to the organisers. **Action point 14.** Cllr Daw will contact other classic car groups who may be interested in a smaller scale event.

A Board Poster Market Square – for Nativity Event on 15th December. Poster from 1st December. This was **AGREED** unanimously. **Action point 15.**

A Board Poster Market Square – for Race Night at the AWMH on 8th November. **AGREED** unanimously. **Action point 16.**

131. Public Questions

The meeting was adjourned at 9.15pm by the Chair before public questions commenced.

132. Date of next meeting – the next meeting will be held on Monday 18th November 2024 in the AWMH at 7:15pm. Mince pies will also be available.

Please see Appendices attached below and/or on the website.

[Appendix A](#)

Please find James MacCleary MP's report for the parish council below.

During the conference recess, I was busy meeting with local groups, nurseries, water quality campaigners, and bus services. I've also been holding surgeries across the constituency to hear your concerns.

Locally to the village, I have met with the Environment agency to discuss flooding in the village and their plans for managing Cuckmere's flooding. I will be having further meetings with the relevant water management board. I will also be discussing the Alfriston Traffic management plan with East Sussex County Council's highways team. Furthermore, I know these two issues are of vital importance to the village.

I recently met with the Chief Executive of NHS Sussex to push for much-needed local investment in healthcare. It's clear that access to quality healthcare is a priority for many, and I'll continue to fight for the resources we need.

I also voted against the government's harmful cut to the Winter Fuel Payment, which affects over 23,000 local pensioners. During this cost-of-living crisis, these cuts are deeply unfair, and I'm calling for their reversal.

I've submitted a response to the National Planning Policy Framework consultation, stressing the need for more local input on planning and greater support for building social housing. I'll be eagerly watching to see if there are any impacts in the new rules for our villages, including of course the potential North Barnes Farm site, which I and fellow Lib Dems oppose.

If you'd like to discuss any issues or concerns, please get in touch to book a surgery appointment james.maccleary.mp@parliament.uk

[Appendix B](#)

East Sussex County Councillor Stephen Shing Report to Parish Council October Meeting 2024

COUNTY HALL SITE County Hall which is East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) headquarters in Lewes was constructed in 1968 and its status is now being reviewed. Despite ongoing investment during the last 50 years, the investment needed to maintain business as usual within this premises for the next 10 years has been calculated to cost around £8.4 million.

The scale of investment could be reduced in the short term, but electrical systems, lifts and its water drainage systems now require extensive maintenance which could impact on the operational running of the building if not undertaken. At present, the ESCC's Capital Programme includes a non-schools planned maintenance budget for 2024/25 which it is fully committed to, but going forward some dedicated funds could be set aside within this budget to undertake minimal investment if ESCC wishes to remain at County Hall until 2032.

Premises occupancy figures for County Hall has been low in recent years. In 2019, its average occupancy level was 45%. Since the lockdown, County Hall is not well occupied compared to other offices and for 2023, the occupancy level decreased to 22% and in 2024, occupancy levels peaked to 29% in March. Through the week, occupancy levels are lowest on Mondays and Fridays at County Hall.

As the utilisation of the offices is below optimal levels, some initial work has been undertaken to look at the future space requirements, reflecting the civic accommodation, administration base and

frontline service delivery. The suggested space requirements could equate to 3,500 sqm which is significantly lower than circa 15,000 sqm of the current County Hall.

ESCC owns the freehold but there are business rates, reactive maintenance, utility bills, insurance and other costs which are required to operate the facility. These costs equate to approximately £1 million per annum, and this does not include the staffing costs for Facilities Management staff who manage the building. If a new, more efficient building was considered, the estimated property running costs would be lower. As energy prices have increased over the last couple of years, the energy efficiency of the heating system is poor despite some windows being replaced and Solar PV panels being installed on the roof in two tranches.

As part of an asset value review, work has been undertaken to look at the opportunities to reduce property costs and free up assets for disposal to secure a capital receipt. The work undertaken by ICC is to consider if a new County Hall could be provided and partly funded by disposal of surplus land. The constraints of the actual site impact on the potential capital receipt, meaning that the cost of a new (or redeveloped) County Hall would be in excess of the capital receipt secured from the remaining of the site for residential development. The following options were considered.

Option 1 Remain at County Hall.

Option 2 Retain the County Hall structure but refurbish some of the existing space for a new office/civic accommodation with residential conversion for the remaining blocks and re-develop the remaining site for residential homes over the wider campus.

Option 3 Retain the County Hall structure but completely refurbish all of the accommodation for residential homes. A new County Hall would be located on the campus site and the remaining space would be re-developed for housing development.

Option 4 Demolish County Hall structure and provide a new County Hall on the site with the remainder of the site being re-developed for housing development.

Option 5 Re-locate to office accommodation in the Lewes area, if available, and redevelop all of County Hall campus, including primarily residential development.

Option 6 At a future date (circa 2030-32), re-locate County Hall services and civic accommodation to Sackville House, owned by the Council, and then re-develop the whole County Hall campus site. Sackville House is currently let out to a number of tenants where the majority of leases end around 2030.

SPENDING GAP ON SERVICES FOR ESCC ESCC's 'The State of the County' report was published shows a forecast financial deficit of £55.3 million rising to £83.6 million by 2027/28. There are unallocated financial reserves of £16.7 million. Even with their scenario modelling there is a budget gap of around £26.6 million for the next financial year. ESCC is therefore seeking opportunities within all its departments to reduce this budget gap, which includes a review of their capital programme to reduce borrowing by scaling back projects as the cost of borrowing, which is £750,000 for every £10 million borrowed, has an impact on the revenue budget. There is also a high degree of uncertainty regarding future funding, including from central Government. If there is no additional funding from central government to ESCC, this could potentially result in a reduction of essential services or a very high council tax increase just to maintain current levels of service. Neither of the potential outcomes are ideal.

The Proposed Adult Social Care and waste Savings

Phoenix Centre - Lewes: Proposal to close the day service for older people with physical and mental health needs, and to support people to access alternative services in the community Phoenix Centre – Lewes.

Linden Court - Eastbourne and Beeching Park – Bexhill, Proposal to close the Linden Court day service for people with a learning disability, and to merge with the Beeching Park day service or to support people to access alternative services in the community.

Steps to Work (including Shine Car Wash at County Hall, Lewes) - Countywide Service: Proposal to close the service, which helps people with a learning disability to prepare for, access, and retain employment and to support people to access alternative services in the community.

Hookstead Day Service – Crowborough and St Nicholas Centre – Lewes: Proposal to close the Hookstead day service for people with a learning disability, and to merge with the St Nicholas Centre day service or to support people to access alternative services in the community.

[Appendix C](#)

Report – Alfriston PC - Monday 21st October 2024

1) Survey launched on fly-tipping

A survey has been carried out to find out if a campaign to help prevent fly-tipping from blighting the beautiful Wealden district has been successful - and that householders know their responsibilities when it comes to disposing of waste correctly.

More than £20,000 – delivered by the Rural Payments Agency on behalf of DEFRA – was awarded to Wealden District Council earlier this year to fund projects that increase the awareness of the Household Waste Duty of Care.

One of those projects was a three-month advertising campaign called “Have you been dumped?” aimed at helping householders to understand and make the right decisions when getting someone other than the council to dispose of their waste. The advert has appeared at petrol stations, on buses, on social media, on the radio and more.

It also focussed on making everyone aware of the need to use a registered waste carrier when disposing of their waste.

Failure to take adequate steps to check they’re registered could lead to an unlimited fine and a criminal record if the waste is found fly-tipped.

Fly-tipping is an illegal offence usually carried out by those who are not registered with the Environment Agency to carry waste. Householders can directly help reduce fly-tipping by ensuring they always ask to see a Waste Carrier Licence when they have rubbish to dispose of. Last year the council cleared 677 fly tips across the district at a cost of just over £49,000.

2) Alfriston flooding - repair work to river bank

Work has of course been taking place at Alfriston as the winter approaches to try and prevent severe flooding. The banks of the Cuckmere River in Alfriston and the flood embankments in place to protect the village and allow the land to be farmed have been repaired by the Water Levels Management Board. I understand that a huge quantity of material was brought in to carry out the required work and I also understand that the work has been carried out to a good standard. De-silting work was scheduled to commence on 23rd September along the stretch between the white bridge and Deans Place Hotel.

The Environment Agency keep the mouth of the river clear from shingle blockages at the Exceat beach and installed a mobile pump at Alfriston to help move surface water, groundwater, and occasional fluvial flood water into the Cuckmere

Earlier this year hundreds of residents were left without water, as flooding caused issues with a Southern Water treatment plant. Flooding last winter not only caused damage to the riverbanks, roads and footpaths but also meant that roads into the village had to be closed leaving residents and businesses cut off. This severely affected local businesses as well as residents. Hopefully this winter will see reduced or eliminated problems.

3) Free marketing event for new businesses in Wealden

Two new business support programmes will be running until March 2025, available to businesses based in the boroughs and districts of Eastbourne, Lewes, Rother and Wealden.

‘Ready To Grow’ is a training programme for early-stage business owners who have been trading for less than three years. The programme offers a series of free connected workshops (in-person and on-line), providing advice and expertise on the practicalities of running a business, including finance, marketing, HR and more and also includes a free 1:1 business advisor session.

‘Big Ambitions’ provides up to 18 hours of expertise for businesses who are growing, and likely to employ additional staff within the next 6-12 months. This will include one-to-one diagnostic action planning and specialist support

The programme is being delivered by Digital Islands, a specialist provider of business support services, in conjunction with East Sussex County, Wealden District, Lewes District, Eastbourne Borough and Rother District councils. ‘Ready To Grow’ and ‘Big Ambitions’ are both funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and will run until 31 March 2025.

More information about the ‘Ready To Grow’ and ‘Big Ambitions’ programmes and how to sign up can be found online at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/support/organisations / [East Sussex Business Hub](#)

The Business East Sussex Growth Hub is a free, independent, and publicly funded business support service for businesses across East Sussex.

“Whether you are starting up, looking to grow, or are seeking to overcome challenges to your business, we can help. Our team of business experts are dedicated to helping you find the right support, helping your business grow and helping to make East Sussex a great place to run a business.”

David Greaves
21st October 2024

Appendix D - Revised Statement of Finance for October 2024

Alfriston Parish Council Finance Report 14th Oct 2024			
<i>Authority is sought to make the following payments:-</i>			
BACS	October Payroll		£1,778.60
BACS	Barcombe Landscapes (Grass cutting Tye & Rec Jul-Aug)		<u>£768.00</u>
<i>Total:</i>			£2,546.60
<i>Authority is sought to make the following payments made since last meeting:-</i>			
87	CARD	HP Instant Ink - Printer Ink	£11.99
88	BACS	September Payroll	£1,778.40
89	BACS	Mileage Reimbursement	£78.30
90	BACS	AEG - Donation re Car Boot Sale	£115.00
91	BACS	Alfriston Cricket Club - Donation re Car Boot Sale	£140.00
92	BACS	Inland Revenue - HMRC	£318.07
93	CARD	Tax Return Services - 123 Sheets	£47.40
94	CARD	Tax Return Services - 123 Sheets	£1.06
95	DD	Bank Charges	£20.00
96	CARD	G. Garnett - R.A	£20.00
97	CARD	Tesco - Office stationery	£19.75
98	DD	O2 APC Mobile Phone Bill	£15.31
99	DD	Nest Pension	£152.88
100	CARD	Tesco - Cable ties for road signs	£8.13
101	BACS	Interbiz - Payroll Services	£24.00
102	BACS	AWMH - Hall Hire	£32.00
103	BACS	Wealden D.C. - Bins Qtr2	£660.00
104	BACS	Biffa - Wheelie Bins	£237.89
105	BACS	Sue's Garden Maintenance	£80.00
<i>Total:</i>			£3,760.18
Summary of Bank Balances as of 10th October 2024			
	Business Current Account		£4,717.68
	Business Savings Account		<u>£71,293.24</u>
	TOTAL:		£76,010.92
	Signed by:		<i>G.C. Dry</i>
	Suzanna Dry - Clerk & RFO		
	Councillor who checked the invoices for the above payments:		

RESERVE INFORMATION FOR 2024/25

Project	Closing Balance	Budget 24/25	Expenditure	Income	Balance	Notes
General Reserves	£10,401.11			£4,763.07	£15,164.18	
Tye Rd Surface	£20,000.00	£5,000.00	£723.70		£24,276.30	£172.88 spent on paint, £350.92 pot hole repairs, £199.90 pot hole repairs
Playground	£763.07	£500.00	£1,263.07		£0.00	£1263.07 moved to General Reserves, as agreed *
NDP	£500.00		£500.00		£0.00	£500 moved to General Reserves as agreed. *
High St Traffic Plan	£10,000.00	£5,000.00	£3,000.00		£12,000.00	£3,000.00 moved to General Reserves as agreed*
Election Costs		£500.00			£500.00	
CIL money		£502.07			£502.07	
Total	£42,166.25	£11,000.00			£52,442.55	

* As agreed in June's Finance Meeting.

[Appendix E](#)

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

Date: 18th October 2024

Report Subject: TAKING DEPOSITS ON ALLOTMENTS

By: Suzanna Dry, Clerk & RFO

The purpose of this report is to give councillors information on the procedure for taking deposits for allotments.

Background

APC has not previously taken deposits on allotments, but is now experiencing vacant allotments being left in disrepair when handed back to the council. Although there is a clause in the lease to say plots must be handed back in a suitable condition, this can be difficult to enforce. It is then costly to clear these allotments before they can be leased out again. If a deposit was held for each plot, this would either be returned to the plot holder at the end of the lease, or if necessary, used to reinstate the plot back to a suitable condition to be leased out again.

Analysis

Having sourced advice from the SLCC (Society for Local Council Clerks) I can report on the following steps that APC would need to take in order to start taking deposits:-

- 12 months notice is required to be given to allotment holders i.e. give notice Jan 2024, to take deposits in Jan 2025.
- Amend Allotment Lease to include paying a deposit.
- A separate document is required to confirm amount of deposit paid, date it was paid and signature of allotment holder.
- Deposit sums must be held in a separate bank account with records of date, name and plot they refer to.
- Any interest accrued on this account can only be spent on allotments.
- At the end of a lease, the deposit held would then be either repaid to the plot holder or used to restore the plot to a suitable condition to be let out again.
- Deposit amounts vary on average between £50-£100.

Recommendation

APC to discuss and decide whether to take a deposit on allotment plots, at the October monthly meeting. A decision will be needed on the amount of deposit and date this will come into effect.

[Appendix F](#)

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

Date: 18th October 2024

Report Subject: VIABILITY OF PONDS IN ALLOTMENTS

By: Suzanna Dry, Clerk & RFO

The purpose of this report is to give cllrs information on the legislation, public liability and Health & Safety requirements for ponds in allotments. The Clerk was given advice from APC insurers.

Background

Cllr Daw has advised of the presence of a pond on one of APC's allotments – photo attached. The pond takes up the whole allotment and measures 2ft deep. There are several factors for APC to consider when deciding on whether to give permission for ponds.

Analysis

Presence of Ponds in Allotments - Although legislation does not prohibit ponds on allotments, the Allotment Act 1908-195 states that allotments must be used to cultivate the land. Ponds therefore normally only take up a small proportion of any allotment.

Health & Safety \Public Liability - The allotment holder will need to carry out a risk assessment and have public liability insurance for any structure they put on the allotment. APC insurers are very clear on this and that APC hold a copy of the risk assessment & insurance certificate on file. The Clerk has a template risk assessment that can be given to the allotment holder to complete and is advised that public liability insurance for allotment ponds can be added to a household insurance or taken out through the National Allotment Society.

Signs on entry gates - APC should consider putting signs on both entry gates advising of the presence of ponds and that all children must be accompanied. The gate near the playground currently has a sign stating 'Allotment Holders Only'.

Recommendation

That APC decide on whether to give permission for the pond in its current form.

All future requests for ponds will need to follow the same decision process.

Copy of APC Allotment Tenancy Agreement attached for info.

[Appendix G](#)

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

Date: 18th October 2024

Report Subject: GRITTING OF TYE FOOTPATH

By: Suzanna Dry, Clerk & RFO

The purpose of this report is to give Cllrs options on how to manage gritting the footpath on The Tye this winter.

Background

The Tye footpath used to be gritted in winter months by AEG (Alfriston Emergency Group). Unfortunately as AEG did not have public liability cover this had to be stopped in 2023. We therefore do not currently have anything in place.

Analysis

As APC are responsible for maintaining the Tye, we have a duty of care to ensure public safety. I have taken advice from our insurers who confirm that APC must have a plan in place to ensure the footpath is gritted in heavy frost or icy conditions. Records must also be kept on how this is managed.

As APC do not employ any maintenance staff, there are two options:-

1. Employ an outside contractor to attend and carry out the gritting on our behalf - obviously this will be costly.
2. Volunteers can be used, but in order to come under the council's insurance they must volunteer for the council directly. And there would need to be a big enough team of volunteers to ensure adequate cover on all days when the weather dictates. This is to ensure no days are missed when gritting is needed. APC would need to provide the grit & equipment required and carry out a risk assessment.
- 3.

I have asked other Clerks in the Wealden District how they manage their footpaths, some engage a small maintenance firm and others have councillors\volunteers who undertake this using grit provided.

Recommendation

Under Agenda Item no. 127 at the October Council Meeting, APC discuss and decide on a plan to manage gritting of the Tye footpath this winter.

DRAFT