

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee Held on Wednesday 2nd July 2025 commencing at 7pm at Benians Pavilion

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| MEMBERS PRESENT: | Cllrs Gebbett, Coulson, Rymer, Davies, Medhurst and M Pullen |
| IN ATTENDANCE: | Victoria Ursulean |
| Members of the Public: | Four |
| APOLOGIES: | None |

25.44 OS ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Gebbett stood down as Chairman of the committee and proposed Cllr Davies, which was seconded by Cllr Coulson. Cllr Rymer proposed Cllr Medhurst, which was seconded by Cllr M Pullen. A split vote was noted, however Cllr Gebbett, as current Chairman, had two votes which meant that Cllr Davies was voted in as new Open Spaces Chairman.

Cllr Rymer proposed Cllr Medhurst as Vice Chairman, which was seconded by Cllr M Pullen. By unanimous vote, all Cllrs were in agreement.

25.45 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

25.46 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Resident One requested permission to have his food truck in the car park at the Pavilion. He explained that he would like to bring the community together through food and he would be providing a service. He currently does work within the community, helping with Lunch Club and raising money for the Village Hall. He had already sought permission from the bar owner, has a food hygiene certificate and mentioned that he would like to run two Fridays per month. At the conclusion of his speech, three members of public left the meeting.

With no further items raised, the Open Session ended at 7.10pm

25.47 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25.48 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with one abstention due to not being on the committee at the time, it was: **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7th May 2025.

25.49 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/REVIEW

25.49.1 To consider erecting a memorial tree with a plaque on the cricket field

A resident had made a request for an English Willow tree to be planted on the cricket field with a plaque for her late husband who had played cricket and maintained the field for many years.

On the proposal of Cllr Coulson, which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the installation of an English Willow tree on the cricket field.

25.49.2 To consider replacing Tulip tree on Jubilee Green

Due to the damage caused to the Tulip tree on Jubilee Green a recommendation had been sought from an Arboriculturist as to whether it would regrow. It was suggested that there was a 50/50 chance. Cllrs were in agreement that the tree should be replaced but to wait until the autumn and to enquire in to grants.

On the proposal of Cllr Coulson, which was seconded by Cllr M Pullen, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to replace the tree in the autumn.

25.49.3 To consider the cost for removal of sockets on the cricket pitch and re-seeding goal mouth areas

The Assistant Clerk explained that the FA now encourage the use of portable goals so the sockets in the cricket field would no longer be required. Cllrs felt it was an expensive exercise and the sockets could just be filled in and the grass reseeded.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to fill in the sockets and ask the Contractors to reseed the area.

25.49.4 To consider allowing a food truck to park in the play area car park

Following on from the open session, all Cllrs were in agreement that having a food truck to service the area was a good idea. They discussed having a three-month trial period and creating a food truck policy within their Open Space policy. Cllrs said that the food truck owner would have to be responsible for any waste and that a monthly charge may be incurred following the trial period.

On the proposal of Cllr Davies, which was seconded by Cllr Rymer, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to allow a food truck to serve two Fridays per month, 5pm-8.30pm, on a three-month trial basis.

25.49.5 To consider resident request for tree maintenance at Badger Close.

Several residents in Badger Close had requested maintenance of trees and shrubs along the badger run. Cllr M Pullen noted that annual maintenance had been agreed but that more quotations should be looked at. Cllrs agreed that this could be attained via email.

On the proposal of Cllr Davies, which was seconded by Cllr M Pullen, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to request further quotations and agree on one via email for work required to the badger run.

25.50 OS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

25.50.1 To discuss Christmas lights quotations

The Assistant Clerk and Cllr Gebbett had met with another Christmas light company who had sent a quotation to the committee.

The meeting was closed at 7.58pm to ask Cllr R Pullen the budget for Christmas lights. He confirmed it to be £4000.

The meeting was reopened at 7.59pm. Cllrs discussed the list of items which had been quoted for, including a Christmas tree, the bus shelter and the Cherry tree.

On the proposal of Cllr Coulson, which was seconded by Cllr Gebbett, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the quotation for providing Christmas lights on the Christmas tree, bus shelter and Cherry tree at Oakgreen Parade.

25.50.2 To discuss the addition of gravel at the back of Swelling Hill Pond provided by the Angling Club

The area at the back of Swelling Hill Pond gets very muddy in winter months and the Angling Club had requested permission to use Cotswold stone on the area to create a pathway. Some Cllrs suggested there should be edging around the stone and it should be compressed, whilst others were in agreement that this method should be tried and if failed, edging and scalplings could be used.

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbette, which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, and with one abstention it was agreed to allow the Angling Society to use Cotswold stone to create a pathway at the back of Swelling Hill Pond.

25.51 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

25.51.1 To approve noticeboard costs for the recreation ground

As was recommended at the previous OS committee meeting, the Assistant Clerk had gained quotations for noticeboard costs for the recreation ground. Cllrs wanted to provide details of events and clubs that meet and utilise the grounds. Cllr Gebbette suggested asking the Men's Shed and Cllr M Pullen stated that he would request a price for some second-hand boards.

25.51.2 To approve the cost for installation of electricity for tennis gate technology

The Assistant Clerk had gained three independent quotations for supplying electricity to the tennis courts gate. This is the initial step that must be taken before the technology can be installed.

On the proposal of Cllr Coulson, which was seconded by Cllr Gebbette, and with all Councillors in agreement it was RESOLVED to use contractor three to install electricity for the tennis gate technology.

At 8.25pm Cllr Coulson left the meeting to get a drink. At 8.26pm, Cllr Coulson returned.

25.51.3 To approve a quotation for installing lights at the bus stops

Cllrs agreed to defer this item awaiting a third quotation. Due to the cost currently quoted, it was suggested to look for a grant.

25.51.4 To approve quotation for filling revetments at Swelling Hill Pond

The revetments around the pond require filling to stop erosion to the banks.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement Contractor Two was selected to fill the revetments around Swelling Hill Pond.

25.51.5 To agree the installation of a memorial bench at the cemetery

A resident had requested the installation of a memorial bench at the cemetery in front of the ashes plots along the hedge line of Brislands Lane. Cllrs discussed replacing broken benches at Swelling Hill Pond in the future or possibly installing benches with up to three plaques.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with one abstention, it was agreed that a memorial bench can be installed in the cemetery.

25.52 OS AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS

25.52.1 To note area update

The Assistant Clerk said that the work to the skate park had been completed and been well received.

| Location | Action Required | Status | Notes |
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| Badger Close | Boundary Encroachment | In progress | Clerk to research further. |
| | Badger Orchard | In progress | Water bags removed – to agree bramble treatment. |
| | Badger Run upkeep | In progress | Tree and hedge cut to be agreed. |
| Cemetery | Cemetery inspection | | Completed. |
| | Memorial bench | In progress | |
| Lymington Bottom Green | New bench – FM Care. | Complete | Installed 04/10/2024 |
| Oak Green parade | Flower bed maintenance | Ongoing | Awaiting signage. |
| | Repainting of car parking spaces. | To do. | To review spacing and repainting – future meeting. |
| Recreation Ground | Containers | In progress | Site meeting to be arranged. |
| | Skate Park | Pending | Completed |
| | Tennis courts gate tech | In progress | |
| | Football pitch/club | Ongoing | Ongoing Liaison with Club regarding use. |
| | Footway along football pitch | Ongoing | |
| | Water refill point | In progress | Serviced February 2025. |
| Climate change mitigation | Earth bund next to Scout Hut | Complete | Completed on 28 th March 2025 |
| | New bench along hedge line on cricket pitch | In progress | |
| | Solar Panels at Benians Pavilion | Pending | Awaiting information from Benians Committee Chairman following site visit |
| | Nature boxes | Pending | Placed – awaiting EHDC promotional video. |
| | Parish Trees | Completed | Inspection on 7 th July 2025 |
| | Bus stop maintenance | In progress | New panels for Gospel Hall installed w/c 23/9/2024. Clean booked 10/24. |
| | Bus stop lights | Agenda item | |
| | Silt removal project | Completed. | |

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| Swelling Pond Hill | South of pond/car park area. | In progress | Adverse possession claims in progress |
| | Fencing replacement and small pond fencing. | Completed | |
| | Car park remedial works. | In progress | Contractor accepted. |
| | Wildflowers | Completed | Planted November 2024 |
| | Steps | Pending | In progress |
| | Revetments | Pending | |
| | Pathway | Pending | |
| Kingswood Copse | Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife. | In progress | Plan decided at meeting – Clerk to follow up. |

25.52.2 To receive an update from the Playground working party.

At the Village Picnic a questionnaire had been circulated along with photos of the current playground equipment to see what the community would like to have in the play area. Seventeen forms were completed along with a sticker chart for play equipment and Cllr Davies had updated a spreadsheet with the results. Statistics and a chart had been sent to Full Council to display the results. One issue that came to light was the lack of public toilets and shade! Cllr M Pullen said that he would add the details of the questionnaire to the newsletters at both local schools.

24.71 OS EVENTS

24.71.1 Fireworks

The Assistant Clerk had met with a representative from the school's PTA to discuss progression of the firework event. Everything was in hand and the number of ticket sales could be increased to 1800.

24.72 Meeting closed at 8.53pm

24.73 Next meeting: 6th August 2025