

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Space Committee
Held on 1st October 2025 at Benians Pavilion, at 7.07pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllrs Davies, M Pullen, Gebbett and Coulson
IN ATTENDANCE:	Victoria Ursulean Assistant Clerk
	No members of the public
APOLOGIES:	One

25.78 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Medhurst sent his apologies due to work commitments which were duly accepted by the committee.

25.79 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Assistant Clerk mentioned that a complaint had been made about a volunteer who had been carrying out some maintenance at the recreation ground. The resident said that some rude comments had been made regarding her sister's dog. The Clerk had sent an email of apology and also spoken to the volunteer. It was also noted that a resident's dog had been barking non-stop for over a week and the Assistant Clerk had received a complaint. Cllrs suggested reporting it to EHDC or the estate's management company. Some quotations to install a small earth bund next to the Oak tree on the football pitch and also to concrete in the wooden posts next to the Pavilion had been distributed to Cllrs. It was thought that the work could be carried out by volunteers from the Council.

25.80 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

25.81 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Davies, with one abstention due to not being at the meeting, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the **3rd September 2025**.

25.82 OS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

25.82.1 To discuss funding options for the Tulip tree

Cllrs heard that various options had been looked into, and a price sought from a local garden center. Cllrs mentioned that the current tree had sprouted some new shoots and may possibly regrow. It was suggested that a new tree should be planted nearby anyway and that the Council could fund it themselves.

25.82.2 To discuss tennis court lighting

The tennis club had made a complaint about the level of light emitted from the new LEDs. An electrician had been asked to investigate the light levels. He determined that light levels were low and quoted to replace them for lighting at LTA standards. Cllrs agreed that the lights needed to be up to LTA standards but were concerned about the cost. They asked the Assistant Clerk to get further quotations and to contact the company who installed the LEDs in March.

25.82.3 To discuss dog fouling behind the tennis courts

The Council had received a number of complaints regarding dog fouling behind the tennis courts and that this happens during the early hours of the morning. Cllrs discussed various options to deter this including CCTV and contacting someone at EHDC.

25.82.4 To discuss the continuation of the current food truck and allowing another food truck to trade here.

The current food truck had attended the recreation ground three times since starting the trial period, which will come to an end on 17th October 2025. The Council had not received any feedback from the community and Cllrs asked if the bar manager could be contacted to get some insight into residents' thoughts on it.

Another application had been received for a further food truck. Cllrs agreed that if positive feedback is given, that another food truck could be given permission to trade at the recreation ground on alternate Fridays and that a further three month trial should be started with both food trucks. They referred to our newly created 'food truck policy' which states we would charge £50 per month. It was observed that the fireworks event will be held on a Friday and that they should be made aware that they cannot trade on that night.

25.82.5 To discuss the re-establishment of the cricket square

Cllrs discussed a meeting with a cricket development manager being held during a working party meeting.

They were aware that Ropley women's cricket club were interested in using our grounds and that other clubs were looking for grounds to use. Cllrs also discussed the possibility of Four Marks having a team again.

25.83 OS ITEMS FOR DECISION

25.83.1 To approve the cost for work on priority two trees

On the proposal of Cllr Coulson which was seconded by Cllr Gebbett, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to ask contractor one to carry out work to priority two trees at the Recreation Ground and Swelling Hill Pond.

25.83.2 To approve the revised cost for work to the Oak tree on the football field

As above, Cllrs agreed to use contractor one.

25.83.3 To approve supporting St. Michaels Hospice Light Up a Life Community Trees

On the proposal of Cllr Coulson which was seconded by Cllr Davies, and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to support St. Michael's Hospice Light up a Life campaign this Christmas.

25.83.4 To approve the cost of tennis court nets

A resident had offered to supply and install nets to divide the tennis courts at cost price which amounted to £800 + VAT. Cllrs requested further quotations.

25.84 OS CORRESPONDENCE

25.74.1 Email from resident

A resident who has been carrying out voluntary work had sent in an email stating various issues, one being the gate on the football field and that it required some maintenance. Cllrs questioned if the gate is owned by the Council, which the Assistant Clerk said she would investigate. If ours, Cllrs agreed to the repairs.

The volunteer had made various suggestions, one of which was regarding the path at the back of the allotments which the Cllrs also queried ownership on. Cllrs felt very grateful to this volunteer for being so helpful in maintaining the footpaths and dog bin areas at the recreation ground.

25.85 OS AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS

25.85.1 To note area update.

LOCATION	ACTION REQUIRED	STATUS	NOTES	WORK COMPLETED
Badger Close	Boundary encroachment	In progress	Clerk to research further	
	Badger Orchard	In progress		Lengthsman cut back weeds Aug '25
	Badger run upkeep	In progress	Trees behind 33 to be cut back 10th Oct	Trees behind 36 cut back Sept '25
Cemetery	Inspection	In progress	Carried out on 29/09/25	Memorial bench installed Aug '25
Lymington Bottom Green				Memorial bench installed Oct '24

Oakgreen Parade	Flower bed maintenance	Ongoing		
	Repainting of parking spaces	To do	To review spacing and repainting – future meeting	
Recreation Ground	Containers	To do	Removal of items to be decided	Skate park repainted June '25
	Football clubs/pitch	Ongoing	Ongoing liaison with clubs	Tennis court gate tech installed July '25
	Water refill point	Ongoing	Last service - Feb '25	Earth bund next to Scout Hut March '25
				Memorial bench installed on cricket pitch Aug '25
Swelling Hill Pond	South of pond/car park area	Ongoing	Adverse possession claims	Silt removal completed 2024
	Steps	In progress	To make steps safe	Fencing replacement and small pond fencing completed
	Pathway	In progress	Angling club to lay gravel to pathway Sept '25	Wildflowers planted Nov '24
	Car park remedial works	In progress	Contractor accepted	Revetments filled Aug '25
Kingswood Copse	Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife.	In progress	Plan decided at meeting – Clerk to follow up.	Woodland Trust donated hedge plants Nov '24
Climate change mitigation	Solar Panels at Benians Pavilion	In progress	Awaiting information from Benians Committee Chairman following site visit	Nature boxes installed
	Parish trees	Complete	Report completed 7th July 2025	
	Bus stop maintenance	Ongoing		New panels for Gospel Hall installed w/c 23/9/2024. Clean completed 17/08/25.
	Bus stop solar lights	In progress	Awaiting further quotations	

25.85.2 To receive an update from the Playground working party

The Assistant Clerk said that she had a meeting with an Independent Play Inspector who had reported that all of the current equipment could be moved and reused when creating the new play space. He had suggested metal feet being used in the ground and affixing the equipment above them to avoid any issues with decay. Currently awaiting the report which will be forwarded on to the committee when available.

25.85.3 Badger Close update

Tree works had been booked in for the 10th October for 33 Badger Close. Cllr M Pullen suggested that we look at the badger run and if it is clear enough for the badgers to use, and that this should be maintained once per year. It was also suggested to use a wildlife camera in the badger orchard to check on the badgers usage of it.

25.85.4 Kingswood Copse update

A resident who maintains the Copse for us had sent in a report. Cllr M Pullen offered to meet with him to discuss any issues.

25.86 OS EVENTS

25.86.1 Fireworks

A meeting with the PTA was held with two Cllrs in attendance. All items already organised were discussed and the issue of lights was raised. The school PTA will be providing large lights at the entrance and exit and also within the toilets. It was thought that if tickets sell out, the number can be raised to 2000 depending on our insurers permitting this. A small donation to the PC was requested and agreed upon. Cllrs asked if a marquee for queuing at the food/drink stalls could be erected. Cllr M Pullen requested another meeting which the Assistant Clerk agreed to arrange.

25.86.2 Memorial Sunday

The Church of the Good Shepherd had been in touch to say that a service will be held at 10.40am at the church with a procession to Lymington Bottom Green.

25.86.3 Christmas Carols

The Assistant Clerk had received communication from interested parties to say that the 6th December at 4pm would be a suitable date and time to hold the carol event.

Cllr Coulson agreed to sourcing some mulled wine and mince pies. Cllrs Coulson and Gebbett said that they could both attend the event.

25.87 Meeting closed at 9.05pm

25.88 NEXT MEETING: 5th November 2025