



Marsham Parish

email:clerk@marsham-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF MARSHAM HELD IN MARSHAM CHURCH, ON MONDAY 11th MAY 2026 at 7pm.

PRESENT:

6 Electors, Chairman of the Parish Council Craig Rouse and Clerk to the Parish Council Kay Montandon

1. WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chair welcomed those present and extended a warm welcome to the new families who have moved to the village in the last 12 months.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 12th MAY 2025

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the last Annual Parish Meeting and signed by the Chairman.

3. TO RECEIVE THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Good evening everyone, and thank you for attending this year's Annual Parish Meeting.

It gives me great pleasure to present this year's Chair's Report.

I'd like to begin by welcoming the families who are new to Marsham. We hope you're settling in well and already feeling part of our community.

Over the past twelve months, the Parish Council has continued to work on behalf of all Marsham residents to maintain, improve, and protect the character of our village. I want to thank my fellow councillors, our clerk, and the many volunteers whose contributions make such a difference.

I'd also like to acknowledge the work of the Village Hall Committee, the volunteers who care for Marsham Heath, and those who support the Church. Your time and commitment are genuinely appreciated.

Council Membership and Governance

The Parish Council meets every month except December and August — December because of festive events, and August because many people are away.

We meet on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Parish Church. Members of the public are always welcome to attend. If you wish to speak, you're given three minutes to raise a subject or concern relevant to the village and to the powers of the Parish Council.

Occasionally, we do have to ask the public to step out briefly if confidential matters need to be discussed.

We currently have six councillors out of a possible seven, so we do have one vacancy. All councillors are volunteers — nobody is paid for this work.

Our Clerk, Kay, is our governance expert. She advises us on what we can and cannot do, ensures our decisions are lawful, and helps us remain transparent and accountable. I'd like to extend our thanks to Kay, and also to her predecessor Rachel, for their work and guidance.

If anyone here would like to get involved in village life, please do consider joining one of the organisations that support Marsham — the Parish Council, the Village Hall Committee, or the Church, which is also looking for volunteers.

All governing bodies, including ours, are subject to increasing scrutiny. We are audited every year to ensure that our decisions are in the best interests of the village, that we spend your money responsibly, and that we act without fear or favour.

Key Responsibilities

Highways, Traffic and Safety

One of our most important responsibilities is monitoring traffic speed through the village using the SAM2 device — the flashing speed sign you'll have seen around Marsham. We move it to a different location roughly every month.

The device records the number and speed of vehicles 24 hours a day. It cannot issue tickets, but we send a full report to the Norfolk Police Speed Safety Team every month.

Let me share some key findings from the most recent report, covering a 13-day period in April.

- A total of **5,231 vehicles** passed the SAM2.
- The **85th percentile speed** — the speed most drivers naturally choose — was **34.2 mph**, which is above the 30 mph limit.
- The highest recorded speed was **65 mph**, captured on Thursday 23 April at 9:25 a.m.

- **1,914 vehicles**, or **36%**, exceeded the speed limit.
- The average speed of those exceeding the limit was **34 mph**, which significantly increases the risk of serious or fatal injury in the event of a collision.

Daily counts of speeding vehicles were:

Mon 277 | Tue 231 | Wed 153 | Thu 344 | Fri 343 | Sat 333 | Sun 233

We continue to press the County's Camera Safety Team for further support, because the level of speeding we record is simply too high.

Planning and Development

Each year, the Parish Council reviews around 20 to 25 planning applications. Our focus is always on the impact to the village — infrastructure, safety, sewage, water supply, and roads.

We also contribute to the County's strategic housing plan when required, and we meet with the Chairs of neighbouring councils to share information and concerns.

Grass Cutting

The Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that grass in certain parts of the village is cut and maintained. This responsibility is shared with County Highways and the Church.

Grass cutting is not cheap. Costs have almost doubled since 2020–21, rising from **£3,900** to **£7,500**. Although we receive a grant from the County Council, it has only risen modestly — from **£2,500** to **£3,170** over the same period.

Because of these rising costs, we have had to make some difficult decisions about how we maintain certain areas, and in some cases rely more on voluntary help.

Street Lighting

You may have noticed that the village streetlights have changed. Over the last few years, we've replaced the old sodium lights with new LED units. This has taken time and money, but we are already seeing a significant reduction in electricity costs.

As mentioned in the Village Magazine, we expect monthly electricity bills to fall by around half.

A small number of lights have had to be removed because they were too old to modernise or structurally unsafe. Removing a single light can cost around **£2,000**, and more if it needs replacing.

Allotments

The allotments are currently fully booked. We are working towards installing a permanent mains water supply to avoid allotment holders having to transport water to the site.

Children's Play Area

The play area at George Edwards Close is independently inspected every year, and the Parish Council is responsible for addressing any issues raised. We also carry out weekly visual inspections to ensure it remains safe for children to use.

Special thanks to Dan Smith Auto's at the top of the village, who have volunteered to support the PC if there are any repairs required on the play area.

Projects

A quick update on two ongoing projects:

- We are working to extend the footpath between Church Street and Alison Street. We are currently gathering cost estimates.
 - We are also exploring the possibility of purchasing and mounting one of the original Marsham ploughs at the bottom of Le Neve Road as a heritage feature.
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Closing

Thank you once again for attending this evening and for your continued support of the Parish Council and the wider community. I have one other thank you. That is to Kay and Wingy for the excellent job they did repairing the posts at the top of Le Neve Road, congratulations on their article in the village magazine.

I'm happy to take any questions.

4. ELECTORS' COMMENTS

Residents made reference to damage to the village sign in recent days. The possibility of environmental projects to be undertaken in the village was also mentioned.

The meeting was closed at 7.21pm