

# Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR)

Parish – Warbleton Parish Council

Date: Tuesday 24 February 2026

Location: Dunn Village Hall, Rushlake  
Green TN21 9QD

Time: 11am

ESCC Attendees: Sam Crowhurst,  
Customer Service Manager and Jo Reed  
Traffic Safety Officer

WPC: Councillors Andy Long, Katy  
Waterman, David Turton and Jeanne  
Peterson (Clerk)

## DRAFT MINUTES – Meeting Notes are in red

1	Welcome, apologies for absence and introductions.
2	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 April 2025 were accepted as a fair and reasonable record subject to the year date of the prior meeting being changed to 2024.
	<b>General questions</b>
	<b>a) Is it still the case that pothole repairs are guaranteed to last for minimum 2 years?</b>
	ESCC reported that a temporary repair is expected to last 28 days and a permanent repair one year (a two year guarantee comes from completion by utility works). Once assessed a dangerous pothole is made safe immediately then a permanent repair is made after 28 days.
	<b>ACTION ESCC: The above timeline will be confirmed.</b>
	If a repair is reported as failed then further repairs will be carried out if reported, but the Steward does not actively check.
3	<b>b) Given the requirement for a pothole to have been reported in order for vehicle damage compensation claims to be eligible for consideration, what stance is adopted for pothole repairs that have not lasted the minimum guaranteed period, but haven't been re-reported?</b>
	There is no further cost to ESCC if a repair has failed, the contractor foots this. However, damage claims are currently reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and claims are not generally settled where a repair has failed.
	WPC felt this was unreasonable given that no additional cost was incurred by ESCC.
	<b>ACTION ESCC: Clarification will be sought on the fact that it appears unreasonable that a claim will not be honoured due to a failed repair.</b>
	<b>c) Please can we have an update on rescheduled dates for patching repair works along the B2096 Battle Road, Punnett's Town that were postponed from late February 2024 until October 2024 due to the South East Water works. We are unsure if the patching works were ever re-scheduled and implemented?</b>

	<p>There is currently only one section on the B2096 with officially approved works and that isn't the one causing concern for parish residents (A267 to Three Cups) To date there is no indication for anything solid in the programme for this section of road but that was reported as constantly under review. It was noted that there were no surface repair failures in the areas where South East Water had replaced the pipelines. Remaining surface failures were the responsibility of ESCC.</p> <p>d) Following on from the above, since the water company has finished its works, large sections of the B2096 remain in a very poor state from the junction with Chapel Lane all the way to Heathfield Community College – what is the anticipated timeline for the road surface to be repaired?</p> <p>Covered in c) above.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><b><u>Review of outstanding road markings, signage &amp; issues</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>SLR October 2024 - APPENDIX 1</b></li> <li>ii. <b>SLR April 2025 - APPENDIX 2</b></li> </ul> <p>Due to lack of attention on the outstanding issues there had been further deterioration as demonstrated in Appendix 1 and 2.</p> <p>It was confirmed by ESCC that all previously reported and outstanding issues had now been re-reported. Contract Management will assess each issue for review. Repainting of lines and road markings are categorised using a traffic light assessment with those at junctions taking priority when a 50% loss of clarity is evident. Once weather conditions improve it was hoped that a lot more markings would be repainted. The council was asked to continue to report issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. <b>Osborne House car park delineation line.</b> This was Item 11 of the meeting April 2025 and the area was shown to an attending officer. How can we progress with installing appropriate delineation to ensure some safety for residents?</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: Traffic Safety will send WPC details of how to apply for Access Protection Marking.</b></p>
<p>5</p>	<p><b><u>Dirty Road Signs</u></b></p> <p>Please would it be possible for the steward to note these as part of their regular checks through the parish? <b>APPENDIX 3.</b> To note in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Marklye Lane, near junction with Flitterbrook Lane</li> <li>ii. 30 mph signs on approach to the green from Marklye Lane</li> <li>iii. National speed limit/30 mph signs on Cowbeech Road between junctions of Back Lane and Kingsley Hill.</li> <li>iv. Finger post on Cowbeech Road, opposite junction with Kingsley Hill</li> </ul> <p>WPC voiced concern that the burden fell to the public to report on all issues, as well as signage, and that safety, and risk mitigation were at risk due to the financial constraints of the County. ESCC were not upholding their statutory duty to keep roads in East Sussex safe despite publishing that safety is their concern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Being a street name sign, this was confirmed as the responsibility of Wealden District Council</li> <li>ii. This sign had been reported and cleaned.</li> <li>iii. The national speed limit signs on Cowbeech Road have been noted to report by ESCC.</li> <li>iv. It was thought that the Parish Council is responsible for cleaning finger posts, but ESCC will check this.</li> </ul>

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**ACTION:**

**WPC to continue to report local issues through the online system.  
WPC to report the dirty road sign on Marklye Lane to WDC.**

**WPC was advised that should it wish to take their concerns further it would be to make representations to either or both Andrew Turner and Rupert Clubb.**

**Drainage**

**Rookery Lane – APPENDIX 4:** Please see attached images. The bottom of the lane flooded the night of January 26th . On January 27th the road was closed off.

**a)** Please could we have confirmation whether any remedial action was taken or whether the road was closed whilst the water drained away naturally?

ESCC reported that the water was left to drain away, the problem could be structural or drainage but investigation is not currently listed for action by ESCC.

A previous landowner had refused point blank to allow any works on their land to install stilling ponds to help prevent the flooding. ESCC have no right to go onto private land unless there is a hazard to the public.

WPC asked whether this could be revisited with the latest owners.

**ACTION: ESCC to follow up and liaise with Asset Management to instigate a potential drainage solution at this site.**

**b)** The closure signs and barriers were left out after the road was clear of water. The signs were then moved out of the way to open the road, but placed at the side of the road where they remained a hazard to traffic for at least a further 24 hours (certainly they were still there late afternoon on the 28 th). Please advise.

6 The contractor should go back to the site to remove signs within 24 hours. If any are noted as remaining following works, this can be reported to Network Management.

**ACTION: ESCC to send the contact details of Network Management to the clerk.**

**c)** The same stretch of road flooded again on the night of Feb 3rd , just one week later (please see attached images). Please can Highways confirm what remedial action (if any) was taken in this instance?

**d)** We feel it would be beneficial to have a long-term solution here as this is a long-standing problem area. Please see attached documentation dating from December 2009.

Can Highways confirm if these ponds were actually implemented or what action has been taken over the years? From the attached video (please have the sound playing to hear the commentary), it is clear that the proposed stilling pond sites appear to be very overgrown and the images show that the barriers/grates seem to be quite blocked and obstructed.

We feel more regular maintenance is required here or works to provide a permanent solution so that resources can be channelled elsewhere in times of adverse weather when emergency response teams are stretched.

**e)** Please can we be informed of regular maintenance timings for drainage within the parish and advised of when these works were carried out over the last year?

**In reference to Rookery Lane see notes and Actions above in a) and b).**

**f) Other particular problem drainage sites APPENDIX 5 are:**

- i. **Cowbeech Road**, at the fingerpost opposite the junction with Kingsley Hill.  
what3words: mysteries.glance.bridge
- ii. **Marklye Lane**, heading into the village from property called “Hornicks” all the way down to the stream at the bottom bend
- iii. **Marklye Lane**, outside the property “Beechcroft”.
- iv. **Iwood Dip** on Bodle Street Road; Marklye Lane near the junction with the Green (outside property named “Beechcroft”). What3words:lavished.demand.spite

We feel more regular maintenance would be conducive to preserving emergency resources and would help prevent deterioration of the roadway.

The Cowbeech Road site is logged by ESCC to be jetted out as part of a cyclical drainage programme.

**ACTION: ESCC to find out how frequently the cyclical checks are made and if possible, look particularly into issues at the flooding hotspots as already reported by WPC**

**g) Reporting flooding to ESCC**

Flooding at the above areas noted in **f)** was reported to ESCC and acknowledged 08.12.205 as:

*Your case reference is DGD007148*

*You kindly informed us that the location is: Cowbeech Road, where the fingerpost is opposite the junction with Kingsley Hill. This one has flooded the road with recent rainfall. Iwood dip on Bodle Street Road, this has also flooded the road recently. End of Rookery Lane just before the STOP road.*

On 11.12.2025 the council receive the following response:

*You have received an update to your case: DGD007148*

*Good morning.*

*Thank you for contacting East Sussex Highways.*

*We couldn't locate any defects at the location which has been plotted. To assist us with investigating your report, please use the what3words link to provide us with a precise location.*

<https://what3words.com/>

- i. The problems are clearly evident from the pictures we sent, even if the water isn't present by the time the steward gets out to inspect the site. **APPENDIX 6**
- ii. The council believes that the location information it provided was sufficient – it is not always possible or safe to stop and get a what3words location.
- iii. Going back to the point of the need for more regular maintenance, perhaps future problems could be avoided or mitigated – for example, had the Rookery Lane drains and grates been cleared when we could see an issue developing in December 2025, it might not have required a road closure on January 27th 2026.

WPC was surprised and frustrated that ESCC responded with “no defects” found at the flooding sites as reported above when sufficient location details had been provided. ESCC noted that steward attendance does not always tally with the automated system so a site visit may be delayed.

**(Emergency) Road Closures**

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**a)** We feel emergency closures are sometimes used when the repairs are not emergencies. For example:

- i. a bridge repair on Flitterbrook Lane in 2025.

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ESCC reported that work gangs on the road do not necessarily get the whole picture, so can look at a situation and make the decision as “assessed and found to be an emergency”. ESCC can only report what they have been told.

- ii. We are still awaiting a response regarding road tarmacking on Chapel Lane – this was not emergency but was due to a burnt out car months prior (July 2025). The road repair took place 30th September 2025 under emergency permit gc25-159026-159032-tlo1. Please advise as to why this was logged as an emergency repair and the statutory two weeks prior notice of road closure was not given?

It may have been a category 1 defect as to why the road closure was put in place as an emergency. WPC consider this to be an abuse of power when it is clearly not an emergency situation, and asked how they could take this further? It was suggested via Andrew Turner.

b) On 26<sup>th</sup> January, the B2096 was closed at the top end of Rookery Lane, presumably as an emergency. Whilst we fully understand the need for emergency works, the lack of diversion signage was particularly problematic, for example:



The “diverted traffic” points quite clearly to the road that is shut!! Traffic travelling Eastbound on the B2096 was also then faced with a hairpin turn on to Rookery Lane, which would not have been feasible for some of the farm traffic and HGVs travelling these roads. There were no diversion signs coming from Battle towards Heathfield – just after The Swan pub there was only a sign saying “Road Ahead Closed”, **after** the junction to turn off for Dallington. The lanes of Padgham Lane and Colliers Green are not comparable or a suitable diversion for the B2096, but a lot of traffic was using them in the absence of an official diversion route – it was quite unsafe.

Please advise as to the lack of a diversion in this instance.

Usually, a diversion route is set up at the same time as proposed road works but in this instance there was no prior warning which appeared to be another abuse of emergency powers to close the road without appropriate provision for vehicles.

**ACTION: WPC to voice its concerns to Network Management**

## **Furnace Lane**

Please could the steward inspect the bollards for repairs needed at what3words torch.sketches.indicated **APPENDIX 7**  
There also seems to be excessive mud/small landslide to edge of carriageway.

8

It was confirmed that the landslip and bollards issue has already been raised and logged with ESCC for attention.

<p>9</p>	<p><b><u>Speed limit sign positioning, Back Lane</u></b></p> <p>We believe the national speed limit signs to be misleading in their positioning for drivers heading Northbound along Cowbeech Road, on the approach to Back Lane. <b>APPENDIX 8</b></p> <p>Drivers see a 30mph sign (on Cowbeech Road), but also a single national speed limit sign at Back Lane, due to the other one being obscured by hedging. It therefore appears as though the national speed limit applies again to Cowbeech Road.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Traffic Safety to make a site visit and report back to WPC</b></p> <p>Can the national speed limit signs be moved back? Alternatively, as it is impossible and would be incredibly unsafe to travel along Back Lane at any speed, would it be more appropriate for the speed of that road to also be included in the 30mph zone?</p> <p>Traffic Safety only has the provision at the minute to look at signage and to push speed management for A and B roads. Back Lane is on the list but not a priority to reduce speed as this is considered self-limiting due to the nature of the road. It is a long process to change a speed sign, anything up to two years.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p><b><u>Marklye Lane, tree branch</u></b></p> <p>This was logged twice as an emergency (ref. TRE005429) and then had to be escalated to our SLO for action as the steward deemed no action necessary, despite repeated reports that it was jutting into the carriageway.</p> <p>Action was then taken swiftly – thank you very much.</p> <p>In the interest of improved understanding, please could you advise as to why it had been deemed “safe” by the steward in the initial instance?</p> <p><b>ACTION: ESCC Highways to note the council’s feedback on this issue. And that the Steward’s response had initially been inadequate to the situation.</b></p>
<p>11</p>	<p><b><u>Extended areas requiring pothole repairs/resurfacing –</u></b></p> <p>There are a couple of areas within the parish that we feel would benefit from full resurfacing rather than patching, as follows and as shown in <b>APPENDIX 9</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Victoria Road. From the bridge over Nunningham Stream, to just past property named “Chilthurst”. Also, from what3words rezoning.historic.rental to reefs.briefer.tapers (near Garth Cottage). Also from Autopint Engineering, The Causeway, Bodle Street, to Causeway Cottage.</li> <li>ii. Iwood Lane. The road is more of a track and has no proper surface in parts. Please inspect from Egypt House/New Egypt Farm, heading towards Bodle Street Green (what3words: mixer.fidgeted.blocks -&gt; proceeds.marker.inflates)</li> </ul> <p>ESCC confirmed that the above areas have now been raised for the Highways Steward to look at but until the new maintenance programme is published no specific timing can be discussed. WPC is very concerned about the ongoing deterioration of the roads and knock on effect with drainage, the impact of heavy vehicles and the damage done to vehicles having to go over the surface. The condition of these roads has been reported a number of times; In March 2023 it was reported that Highways had asked for a full resurface for at least a mile on Victoria Road. Iwood Lane was first discussed in February 2024 with a note that Highways were to take action.</p> <p><b>ACTION: ESCC to let WPC know the outcome of the Steward’s assessment and when these works are likely to come onto the maintenance schedule.</b></p>

## Marklye Lane/The Green dip in road

There is a very bad dip at the top end of The Green, near the junction with Marklye Lane. Please could we have an update as to the current status for repair as the dip has been marked for repair and we have already advised that the issue is likely due to water pipes running underneath the road surface?

This has been reported a number of times in previous SLR meetings.

**ACTION: ESCC to look into it and report back to WPC.**

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## Overhanging branches on power lines Padgham Lane/Colliers Green

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Quite an extensive stretch of branches close to and/or resting on power lines, please could steward inspect and log as appropriate. What3words incur.written.noting

**ACTION: ESCC Steward to attend site and raise the fault.**

## Roads Unsuitable for HGV Traffic

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- a) The attached picture shows the bridge damage on Flitterbrook Lane **APPENDIX 10**. This has been repaired now, but is an example of why we need "Unsuitable for HGV" signage at both ends of the lane. We believe it was repaired and then very shortly after sustained the damage in the picture. It's fine now, but signage would help avoid future damage and associated repair costs.
- b) Furnace Lane: Attached as **APPENDIX 11 & 11A** are the details of an incident as reported to ESCC by WPC as another example of the need to install "Unsuitable for HGV" signage. A further response is still awaited from Traffic Safety team.

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	<p>ESCC reported that not every road/lane can be signed as not suitable for access, but potentially these roads can be looked at again in the new financial year. Annual Traffic Safety budget is 56K for the whole of the county so is limiting.</p> <p>The council expressed an interest, if viable, to install its own signs to prevent further incursion onto to unsuitable roadways and subsequent damage to vehicles.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Traffic Safety to send information of BS Standard signage which WPC could apply and pay for subject to an approval order.</b></p>	
15	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>Deer Signs</b> have been requested numerous times, from as far back as 2021 without result. <b>ACTION: WPC to provide Highways with suggested locations for the signage and ESCC will install the signs.</b></li> <li>ii. <b>Pothole</b> adjacent to the pub at Rushlake Green. The previous repair has failed and vehicles are now driving onto the side of the green to avoid it. <b>ACTION: ESCC to assess</b></li> <li>iii. Pothole outside Dunn Village Hall, one has been marked but the other not. <b>ACTION: WPC to report this unmarked pothole separately to make sure it has been logged as it doesn't appear on the list</b></li> </ul> <p><b>The meeting closed at 1pm</b></p>	
16	<p>Next meeting – date, time and location</p> <p><b>ACTION: ESCC and Clerk to liaise to set a date for late August/early September</b></p>	