



Nuthurst Parish Council
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Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held at Mannings Heath Village Hall on Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr C Kenny, Cllr V Court, Cllr Rymarz, Cllr W Bayley, Cllr S Newell, Cllr S Catterall.

Apologies: Cllr D Cotton, Cllr J Harris.

Clerk: Lisa Wilcock.

There was 8 members of public present.

Meeting commenced: 1930hrs

018-26/27 Apologies

Apologies were accepted in advance of the meeting from Cllr D Cotton, Cllr J Harris.

019-26/27 Election of Chair

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously resolved that Cllr D Cotton be elected Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing municipal year.

It was noted that Cllr D Cotton was unable to attend the meeting. The Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office will therefore be signed at a later date.

020-26/27 Election of Vice Chair

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously resolved that Cllr Colin Kenny be elected Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing municipal year. The Vice-Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed.

021-26/27 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Rymarz declared an interest in Agenda Item 13.

022-26/27 Review Appointment of Members to Committees and Council Representation

Members considered appointments to committees and representative roles for the municipal year 2026/27.

Resolved that the following appointments be agreed:

- a) Planning Representative – all Councillors.
- b) Finance and Policies Committee – all Councillors except Cllr S Newell.
- c) Staffing Committee – all Councillors.
- d) Complaints Panel Chair – Cllr D Cotton, Cllr C Kenny.

After 20 years, the current Tree Wardens decided to step down. In addition to commenting on planning applications, the Tree Wardens oversaw parish trees and various issues such as tree disease, which has been reported as necessary. New trees have also been planted as part of their service to the Parish Council.

- e) Tree Wardens – Kate and Paul Kennett.
- f) Neighbourhood Plan Working Party – Cllr D Cotton, Cllr P Rymarz, Cllr S Catterall, Cllr V Court.
- g) Streetlights – Cllr D Cotton and Streetlights Ltd.
- h) Defibrillators – Cllr Rymarz, Cllr D Cotton.
- i) Salt Bins – Cllr V Court.
- j) Noticeboard – Cllr V Court.
- k) Speedwatch and SIDs – Cllr D Cotton, Cllr S Catterall and Roger Cato.

- l) Footpaths and Bridleways – Cllr S Newell and Cllr C Kenny.
- m) Playground Inspection – Cllr D Cotton, Cllr Rymarz.

023-26/27 Policies and Code of Conduct

Members reviewed the Council's governing policies and procedures.

Resolved:

- i) To approve the Council's policies and procedures.
- ii) To continue to adopt the NALC Model Standing Orders.
- iii) To continue to adopt the NALC Model Financial Regulations.
- iv) To continue use of the Council's Risk Assessments.
- v) To continue receiving agendas and reports electronically via email.
- vi) To adopt the Tree Policy.

024-26/27 Public Session

Members of the public addressed the Council regarding the Tree Warden role and suggested that any new volunteers could participate in an advisory capacity without formally acting through the Council. It was also requested that agendas be displayed in bus stops again.

The Chair thanked members of the public for their attendance and comments.

025-26/27 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 22nd April 2026 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

026-26/27 Reports

County Councillor Report – Alex Jeffery

Alex introduced himself to the Council. He advised that he wished to focus on the quality of highway repairs and rural bus services across the County. *The Clerk has arranged a meeting with Alex regarding the access point for the pump works in Gaglewood and will report back.*

District Councillor Report – Dennis Livingstone

- **Local Plan Inspector** – Housing need and housing requirements indicate the need for 20,000 dwellings over the plan period, including additional strategic and smaller sites. A briefing meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 26th May at 5.30pm, with the aim of the Local Plan being ready by the end of the year. Some work involving Parish Councils may take place during August. Housing allocations from Worthing and Crawley are being added to the figures.
- **Local Government Reorganisation** – A second consultation is in progress regarding proposals for unitary authorities across West Sussex. Residents are encouraged to complete the survey. Current proposals suggest that the coastal districts would form one authority, with the remaining districts forming another. This remains at consultation stage. Brighton is proposed to gain an area from Lewes District Council.
- **Planning and Compliance** – Members were reminded that unapproved works are being undertaken in some areas. Anyone with knowledge of such works should inform the District Council. Details of how to report concerns are available on the Nuthurst Parish Council website.
- **Neighbourhood Plan** – It was suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan should include retirement housing options, as there is currently a lack of suitable provision in the area.
- **Governance Review** – The review is available online and members of the public are encouraged to respond. Details are available on the Parish Council website. The survey closes on 22nd June.
- **Friday Lates** – These events will commence from 5th June between 6pm and 8pm at the bandstand in the Car Fax. Details of performances can be found on the Horsham District Council website.

027-26/27 Review Appointments and Representatives on Outside Organisations

Resolved that the following representatives be appointed for 2026/27:

- a) Carbon Busters – Cllr W Bayley, Cllr D Cotton.
- b) Cricket Club – Cllr V Court.
- c) Police – Cllr D Cotton, Cllr C Kenny, Cllr P Rymarz.
- d) WSALC – Cllr D Cotton, Cllr C Kenny, Cllr V Court.
- e) HALC – Cllr D Cotton, Cllr C Kenny, Cllr V Court.

028-26/27 Playground

- a) The playground inspection report was received and accepted.
- b) Council carried the playground improvements/maintenance to the next meeting.

029-26/27 Grant Applications

a) Copsale Hall – £12,000 Grant Application

Members considered the deferred application together with clarification received regarding the insurance claim. **Resolved** to approve the grant application for £12,000.

- b) **Resolved** to ratify the following grants as scheduled:
 - i) The Cricket Club – £1,000
 - ii) PCC St Andrew’s – £400
 - iii) Link Magazine – £450
 - iv) Copsale Hall – AiRS subscription grant
 - v) Mannings Heath Village Hall – AiRS subscription grant
 - vi) Link Magazine – Additional £50

Resolved to approve the additional £50 grant, bringing the total grant awarded to £500.

030-26/27 Planning Applications

a) DC/26/0636 – Hawthorns, Bar Lane, Southwater, West Sussex RH13 9DL

Resolved that the Parish Council strongly objects to the revised four-pitch proposal for the following principal reasons:

- The site has been identified by Horsham District Council as unsuitable for allocation due to its unsustainable countryside location and harmful landscape impact.
- Bar Lane is a narrow rural lane with poor visibility and unsafe access onto the A24. Increased traffic would raise highway safety concerns.
- No transport assessment, ecological survey, landscape assessment or contaminated land investigation has been provided.
- The proposal conflicts with Policy 1 of the Nuthurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan, which does not support countryside development at this location.
- The site is remote from local services, schools, healthcare and sustainable transport links.
- Parts of the site lie within Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3 and Bar Lane is known to flood during heavy rainfall.
- The development would adversely affect the setting of nearby Grade II listed buildings and neighbouring properties.
- The site adjoins ancient woodland and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

Conclusion

The Parish Council therefore objects to the application as being contrary to Policies 1, 2, 4, 23, 25, 26, 31, 38 and 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 1 of the Nuthurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan. Given the significance of the issues raised, the Parish Council requests that this application be considered and determined by the Planning Committee.

b) DC/26/0661 – Tudor Cottage, Nuthurst Road, Maplehurst, West Sussex RH13 6RD

Resolved that the Parish Council raise no objection to the application, subject to the works being carried out in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing property.

c) DC/26/0647 – 6 Heath Close, Mannings Heath, West Sussex RH13 6EE

Resolved that the Parish Council raise no objection to the works as described but make the following observation: prolific stem growth from the lower trunk may indicate poor tree health, potentially linked to previous over-pruning. The trees appear to be mature oaks which may survive for many years despite signs of decline.

d) **DC/26/0552 – Clovelly, Nuthurst Road, Monks Gate, West Sussex**

Resolved that the Parish Council raise no objection to the application, as the proposal is not considered to result in significant harm to the surrounding area or neighbouring properties.

031-26/27 Planning Applications Since Publication of the Agenda

Members considered the following planning applications received since publication of the agenda:

a) **DC/26/0612 – 16 The Birches, Mannings Heath**

The Parish Council raises no objection.

b) **DC/26/0755 – Top Paddock Farm, Kerves Lane, Horsham**

The Parish Council raises no objection, subject to Horsham District Council being satisfied that the access track is required for agricultural purposes and that there is no unacceptable impact on the rural character, drainage or local environment.

032-26/27 Appeals

a) **DC/25/1044 – 6008091 - Erection of 4no. detached four bedroom houses with double garages and on-site parking. Land Adjoining Nuthurst Street Nuthurst West Sussex RH13 6GR** The notification of appeal was noted.

b) **DC/26/0279 – (Pemberley Appeal)**

Members considered the recommendation for comment on the appeal.

Resolved that the Council submit the proposed comments to the Planning Inspectorate.

Nuthurst Parish Council – Appeal Response

Appeal Reference: 6008220

Planning Application Reference: DC/26/0279

Site: Pemberley, Copsale Road, Maplehurst, RH13 6QY

Introduction

Nuthurst Parish Council strongly objects to this appeal and raises serious concerns regarding a number of misleading and inaccurate statements within the application, particularly within the Planning Design and Access Statement.

Of particular concern is the failure to properly acknowledge the close proximity of the site to the Grade II listed Sheepwash Farmhouse, a heritage asset dating from the 17th century or earlier. The application site historically forms part of the setting of this important listed building.

The Parish Council also notes that policy references within the applicant's submission—both to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF)—are selectively quoted and misapplied. Where relevant, the proposal fails to comply with these policies.

Principle of Development

The site lies outside any defined Built-up Area Boundary and is therefore within the countryside. It is not allocated for development within either the HDPF or the Nuthurst Neighbourhood Plan (NNP). Horsham District Council can demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, and therefore there is no justification for development in this location.

The proposal conflicts with the overarching spatial strategy directing development towards sustainable locations within defined settlements and is contrary to Policies 1, 2, 3, 4, 26 and 40 of the HDPF, Policy 1 of the NNP, and the NPPF.

Unsustainable Location

The proposed live-work dwelling (accountancy use) does not represent an essential rural use. It is a relocation of an existing business from a sustainable town centre location to an isolated countryside site, increasing reliance on private vehicles. The proposal therefore represents unsustainable development, contrary to local and national policy.

Isolated Dwelling in the Countryside

The proposal fails to meet any of the criteria set out in the NPPF for isolated homes in the countryside:

- The applicant is not an essential rural worker
- The building is not a heritage asset
- The building is not redundant (currently used for stabling and storage)
- The proposal is not a subdivision of an existing dwelling

- The design is not of exceptional quality

Backland Development

The proposal constitutes inappropriate backland development, which has previously been rejected within the Parish. The development would appear incongruous, out of character, and harmful to the rural setting.

Impact on Heritage Assets

The development would harm the setting of the Grade II listed Sheepwash Farmhouse due to its proximity and inappropriate design.

This is contrary to Policy 34 of the HDPF and the NPPF, which requires that harm to heritage assets be clearly justified by public benefits. No such benefits have been demonstrated.

Design and Character

The proposed dwelling is of an industrial appearance, incorporating materials such as fibrous cement roofing and extensive glazing, which are wholly out of keeping with the local vernacular of brick, tile, and traditional materials.

The proposal fails to comply with:

- Policy 33 of the HDPF
- Policy 10 of the NNP
- The Nuthurst Parish Design Statement

It would erode the rural character of the area and appear visually intrusive within the landscape.

Loss of Agricultural Use

The barn is currently in active use for equestrian purposes, including stabling and storage. Its conversion to residential use would likely result in pressure for replacement agricultural buildings, leading to further development harm.

Highways and Sustainability Concerns

Relocating a business to this rural site would increase vehicle movements, including client visits, with no adequate parking provision identified. This would exacerbate traffic and environmental impacts in the countryside.

Relevant Precedent

The Parish Council draws attention to the refusal of application DC/19/1198 (New Brook Farm), which shares strong similarities with this proposal. The reasoning for refusal in that case applies equally here and remains highly relevant.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, Nuthurst Parish Council strongly urges the Inspector to dismiss this appeal. The proposal represents unsustainable, inappropriate development in the countryside, which would harm the rural character of the area and the setting of a designated heritage asset, and conflicts with both local and national planning policy.

033-26/27 Financial Matters

Resolved:

- i) To approve the bank reconciliations for April 2025 for NatWest, Unity Trust and Hinckley & Rugby accounts.
- ii) To approve the NatWest bank transactions for April 2025.
- iii) To approve the addition of councillors to each banking provider as appropriate.
- iv) To note the budget report for April 2025.
- v) To approve the Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) Report.
- vi) To receive, note and approve the Internal Auditor's Report for 2025/26.

034-26/27 AGAR 2025/26

- a) **Resolved** to approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement, which was signed by the Chair and Clerk and RFO.
- b) **Resolved** to approve Section 2 – Accounting Statements, which were signed by the Chair and Clerk and RFO.
- c) The dates for the Notice of Public Rights were received and noted.

035-26/27 Direct Debit Schedule

Resolved to note the following Direct Debit arrangements:

- i) Conrad Energy – Streetlighting electricity supply.
- ii) Vodafone – Mobile phone services.
- iii) HugoFox – Website hosting and support.
- iv) Netcom IT – IT support and email provision.

036-26/27 Subscriptions

Resolved to renew the following annual subscriptions:

- Horsham Association of Local Councils (HALC)
- West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC)
- Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)
- Royal Mail PO Box service
- Parish Online

037-26/27 Community Resilience Hub Initiative

Members considered the report following the meeting with WSCC.

It was proposed to accept the invitation and discuss forming a joint resilience hub with neighbouring councils including Shipley, Lower Beeding, West Grinstead and Cowfold, so that Parish Councils can support one another during emergencies.

It was further proposed that Nuthurst act as a pilot site and that emergency preparedness information could potentially be distributed through Link Magazine, which had been offered.

Resolved that the invitation be accepted and neighbouring parishes invited to join the scheme.

038-26/27 Community Governance Review

The commencement of the district-wide Community Governance Review consultation running from 9 May to 22 June was noted. It was further noted that details had been published on the Parish Council website.

Resolved that the Parish Council submit a response to the consultation in line with the proposal to move the boundary in Lower Beeding to include the area around Holme Farm.

039-26/27 Dates of Future Meetings

Resolved to approve the schedule of meetings through to May 2027.

Members noted that the Clerk would be on annual leave from 1st June to 12th June inclusive.

Resolved that the June Council meeting be moved to 24th June 2026.

2057hrs – Confidential Session

Resolved that pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1(2), the public and press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

040-26/27 Staffing Matters

Members noted the Clerk’s annual appraisal and considered the associated recommendations.

Resolved to enrol the Clerk and RFO on FiLCA training and award a one-point salary increment backdated to 1st April 2026.

The meeting closed at 2109hrs.

Signed: Date:.....