

LONG MAN PARISH COUNCIL

www.longmanpc.org

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly

held at Wilmington Village Hall on Friday 16 May 2025 at 6.30pm

Present: Councillors: Tyler Butterworth (Chair), Claire Church (Vice-Chair), Ann Osborne and Jeanne Peterson (clerk).

County Councillor Stephen Shing, Ruth Zacharewicz (Chair, Wilmington Village Club).

21 members of the public.

1. The Long Man Parish Council Chairman, Tyler Butterworth, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Annual Report from Long Man Parish Council

Cllr Butterworth thanked the parish councillors and clerk for their work during what had been a great year; Cllr Church for her remarkable input to move forward with things, and Cllr Osborne for the delicious nibbles this evening. Councillors unable to attend were Michael Bridges, Lizzie Chisholm & Helen Baulcombe.

A short update followed on what the council has been doing this last year on behalf of the parish:

- Support for community groups and charities has continued through the council's grant scheme, and when possible members attend local group meetings for example the Cuckmere Community Bus and the Cuckmere Flood Forum.
- It was good to learn that the estuary has been de-shingled and the sluice gates now work.
- The council has considered sixteen planning applications during the year, and these are reported during the council meetings and on the council's website.
- A welcome to Lauren Tilbury, the PCSO newly allocated to the parish. The Rural Crime Team also hope to raise their profile and awareness by setting up a series of street surgeries and LMPC has expressed its interest to support this initiative.
- The council continues on behalf of Wilmington residents to liaise with National Highways on the issues surrounding the Wilmington junction and the A27. These efforts are reported via the council's website and meeting minutes.
- There has been more feedback made possible via the new parish magazine and thank you to OJ for that and for taking on the production of the publication.
- Looking at the council's assets, there has been a new replacement bench installed at Adesfield in Wilmington and a new notice board in Milton Street. The Wilmington phone box has been adopted by LMPC and a repair and maintenance programme will shortly be in place.
- With the ongoing dry weather there are likely to be water restrictions. The council is attempting to secure an agreement with SE Water and find a site which can be used for local emergency water distribution. It was noted that Darren was marvelous at helping last year to get water to the parish from Alfriston.

- The parish Emergency & Resilience Plan has been completed to the stage where four community volunteers are now needed to work with a member of the council to form the central co-ordinating team, as well as complete the final stage of the plan.
- The exact process of devolution for county and district councils remains unclear with no specific information available, although East and West Sussex have submitted papers to the government. It is unknown whether or how this may affect parish councils.
- Thanks also to Ruth, Chair of the Village Club for allowing the council to use the hall facilities.

3. Annual Reports from the County and District Councillors

a) County Councillor Stephen Shing

Cllr Shing reported that it is his 24th year in the service of East Sussex County Council, and he was delighted to attend this Annual Parish Meeting.

A copy of his report is attached to these minutes Appendix 1.

b) District Councillor David Greaves – was unable to attend the meeting.

4. Long Man Tree Warden – Alison Cotton

Over the last 6 years, SDNPA's 'Trees for the Downs' project has granted the parish a total of 348 disease resistant elm trees, plus other species, many of which are doing well. The National Park has now requested information about the health of the trees, so that they can analyse the success of different species over time.

In reality this means that 31 households or landowners have received emails from me asking them to fill in the online reporting form... please take this as a gentle reminder, if you are still putting it off.

This planting includes 2 Elms in the churchyard and 10 on land around Wilmington Junction. I have applied for 15 more for the junction area next Winter, to add to the Call for Nature initiative. This project has enabled us to collaborate with the landowner Wealden District Council, to improve the biodiversity of the roadside and meadows, as well as developing much needed screening for villagers from the lighting and other aspects of the junction. In an effort to mitigate these roadside factors, residents adjacent to the green, recently planted over 100 trees and shrubs in the South-East quadrant of the junction.

Although this planting met with a demand from WDC to remove most of the trees, the subsequent meeting has allowed some progress to be made towards a common goal, and it is hoped that a Commons Management Committee can be re-established.

WDC Countryside Officer, Jo Heading, who has worked hard on the junction planting project with us, has initiated a tree safety survey for the trees around the Old Forge and Tom Treacle pond, and we will put our heads together to plan an additional area of planting in this quadrant, to improve screening and habitat, incorporating some of the trees provided by the earlier resident's planting.

5. Wilmington, Milton Street and Folkington Village Club – Ruth Zacharewicz (Chair)

The Village Club at the Village Hall in Wilmington was created for social and recreational purposes for all residents of Wilmington, Folkington and Milton Street. The hall is held in trust for residents and has no endowed income stream so the upkeep of maintenance and running costs rely on funds raised from hall rental charges, grants and fundraising. Around £5,000 a year is needed to cover these costs. There are currently no major maintenance issues.

2024 celebrated the 100 years Anniversary of the Village Club which was founded in 1924. The hall was originally a re-purposed army hut, but the current hall was built in the 1990s.

There have been various events during the year, as well as the AGM in February and the club took over the publishing of the parish magazine. The hall can be used for private hire, practice sessions and meetings.

Ruth thanked the members of the Village Club Committee for their work during the year, and noted that anyone can join them should they wish.

The Chair invited any questions:

One resident raised their view about the caravan positioned in plain sight at the lower vicarage garden. An approach had been made to the Vicar to suggest that it would be nice if it could go somewhere else, perhaps nearer to the house where it couldn't be seen. The attempted disguise with awning had not improved the outlook.

A shepherds hut as an alternative was suggested which would suit a downland village much better.

There is no problem with the idea of raising funds for the church but it is an Ancient church and buildings, and although there is a legal right to have it, several attendees felt that, aesthetically, it had a negative impact on the village.

The Chair thanked the audience members for their contributions. Following the recent council meeting LMPC now has both sides' comment on record. While the legal position is that they are entitled to have a caravan, the council can look into how communications can move forward with both sides.

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Following a short break for refreshments, attendees returned to their seats and the guest speaker was introduced.

Dr David Rudling gave a fascinating illustrated talk about "Roman Rural Settlements in Sussex". Dr Rudling is a leader in this area of archaeology having directed the Plumpton Roman Villa Project.

These Minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed:

Position:

Date: