

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH
COUNCIL ON
MONDAY 6TH JULY 2026 IN THE HALL, ELHAM VILLAGE HALL
STARTING AT 7.30pm.

121.26 Those Present: Councillors: K Lamb (Chair), C Chapman (Vice Chair) B Swan, G Clements, J Osbourne, C Francis, S Jacob and four members of the public.

Apologies: K Allen

122.26 To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), Other significant interests (OSI's) or a voluntary interest relating to items on the agenda.

A member who declares a DPI in relation to any item on the agenda will need to leave the meeting for the whole of that item and will not be able to speak or take part unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted.

A member who declares an OSI will be able to speak on the item but will be required to leave the meeting for the vote.

Councillors may also declare a voluntary interest if they are unsure of their position. Inclusion and voting will be decided at the time of the declaration unless this has been discussed with the clerk prior to the meeting.

None declared

The meeting was adjourned for 123.26.

123.26 Public Contribution

A Member of the Public (MOP), speaking on behalf of the Elham Environment Group, outlined the group's aspirations to enhance biodiversity and create a more wildlife-friendly environment within the parish, in line with Folkestone & Hythe District Council's environmental objectives. The discussion included hedge management and the need to consider nesting birds and the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The Group also expressed an interest in planting a mixed hedge and additional trees within The Gore and advised that it is engaging with Elham Cricket Club on similar environmental initiatives.

The Chair noted that these matters had been considered previously by the Council and explained that, given the ongoing development and future plans for The Gore, it may not currently be the most suitable location for further tree planting. The Chair also reminded the Group that the Council was still awaiting the management plan previously requested. In response, the Group agreed to provide further information, including drawings, a detailed management plan and a mission statement, to support future discussions.

MOP – thanked Cllrs Chapman and Jacob for attending the Public Exercise of Rights meeting held on 3 July 2026, during which two residents exercised their right to inspect the Parish Council's financial records for the 2025/26 financial year. It was noted that

this matter will be included as an agenda item for consideration at the August Council meeting.

MOP – asked whether the Parish Council would support the Community Shed Team in replacing the damaged bench on The Gore. Councillors agreed to the proposal and warmly welcomed the offer.

The MOP also suggested that, once a new Clerk is appointed, the Parish Council may wish to consider holding a regular resident surgery, on either a fortnightly or monthly basis, to provide an informal opportunity for parishioners to raise and discuss matters of local interest.

The meeting was reconvened to discuss 124.26 onwards.

124.26 Minutes

1. The Ordinary Meeting of the Parsh Meeting held on 1st June 2026 were **approved** and signed as a true record by the Chair of meeting.
2. The C&A Committee meeting held on 18th June 2026 were **approved** and signed as a true record by the Chair of the Meeting.

125.26 Chairman's Report - *(Please note, no decisions can be made on items under this heading).*

No report, as all topics to be covered by Agenda items

Committees

1. The Terms of Reference were **agreed** and **approved** for the following committees:
 - Staffing Committee
 - Wellbeing Advisory Committee
 - C&A Committee – was deferred to Parish Council on 3rd August 2026

126.26 Finance

1. The Accounts from June 2026 were **agreed** as true record and were signed by the Chairman of the meeting.
2. The Bank Reconciliation from June 2026 was **agreed** as true record and was signed by the Chairman of the meeting.
3. The June 2026 invoices were **agreed**, and payments were approved. *Please see appendix 1.*

127.26 Planning

1. The following applications were considered and comments agreed:
26/0802/FH – Little Droveway, Droveway, Stelling Minnis, CT4 6AJ - Change of use of part existing equestrian barn to an equine veterinary office with

mezzanine floor level (ClassE(e)), together with ramp and balustrade to SW elevation and the retention of external doors – **No Objection**

26/0757/FH - Elham Church of England Primary School, Vicarage Lane, Elham CT4 6TT - Works to trees subject to TPO No 01 of 1955 Elham RDC comprising of T2, T3 & T6 Beech crown lift by 5 metres removing 5 lower branches approx. 9 metres laterally and 3.5 metres vertically – **No Objection**

26/0924/FH - Ottinge Court Farm, Canterbury Road, Ottinge CT4 6XH - Erection of a replacement farm building for cattle following demolition of the existing structure. **No Objection**

26/0950/FH - Rigdens, The Square, Elham, CT4 6TJ - Listed Buildings Consent for removal of internal wall and access to existing chimney for wood burner – **No Objection**

2. The following application was received since the agenda was issued, comments agreed: **None received**

3. To **note** any decisions made by Folkestone and Hythe District Council

26/0622/FH – 2 Railway Cottages, Duck Street, Elham CT4 6TP - Lawful development certificate (proposed) for garage conversion to habitable room, alterations to fenestration & demolish of porch and relocation of front door. **FHDC Decision – Lawful**

26/0523/FH – The Croft, Canterbury Road, Elham, CT4 6UG- Single storey front extension including front porch. **FHDC Decision – Approved with Conditions**

26/0534/FH (LBC) - Monks Cottage, 3 Cullings Hill, Elham, CT4 6TE - Listed Building Consent for the installation of EV charging point – **FHDC Decision – Approved with Conditions**

26/0575/FH & 26/0577/FH (LBC)- 1 Old Water Farm House, Duck Street, Elham, CT4 6TW - Listed Building Consent & Planning for replacement window and door to front and side elevation. **FHDC Decision – Refused**

26/0647/FH - 1 Lime Villas, High Street, Elham CT4 6TA - Installation of 2 no. rooflights following the removal of existing rooflight to rear elevation - **FHDC Decision – Approved with Conditions**

128.26 Highways – the Chair stated that he was meeting the KCC Highways officer on 7th July 2026 to discuss the following issues:

- War Memorial – possibility of raising the kerb and adding railing for H&S purposes. To be discussed at meeting on 7.7.26.
- The Square – The Chair reported on a recent meeting with a Kent County Council highways and safety officer to discuss ongoing parking concerns within The Square. One potential solution suggested was the installation of a “**KEEP CLEAR**” road marking outside the Kings Arms to discourage obstructive parking and improve access for emergency vehicles. It was noted that this measure would be relatively low-cost, have minimal environmental impact, and has been shown to be a simple yet effective solution in other locations.
- Kent County Council’s Highways Improvement Plan (**HIP**) provides an opportunity for the Parish Council to identify and submit local highway concerns and improvement proposals. It was agreed that residents would be invited to

submit their highway improvement suggestions and priorities, which will be reviewed and incorporated, where appropriate, into Elham's HIP submission. The initiative will be promoted via the Parish Council noticeboards, Facebook page and website, with a deadline of **31 July 2026** for the submission of suggestions.

129.26 Defibrillator (C&A) – Elham Primary School approached the Parish Council to enquire whether it would be willing to assume responsibility for the defibrillator located at the school entrance. The device was originally funded through a grant, and the school has confirmed that ownership can be legally transferred to the Parish Council. Members agreed in principle to take responsibility for the unit, including meeting the associated electricity costs (approximately £25 per annum) and ongoing maintenance expenses.

The Council's current provider, Hopkins, have undertaken a survey to identify potential opportunities for expanding defibrillator coverage within the village. It was agreed a second quotation will also be obtained to inform future decision-making. In addition, Cllr Swan agreed to investigate potential grant funding opportunities to support any future expansion of the scheme.

130.26 Community Orchard (C&A)

It was agreed that Cllr Clements would approach the Community Shed regarding the production of identification tags for the orchard. A further key issue discussed was the provision of water for the Community Orchard. Various options were considered, including seeking permission from a nearby resident to access a water supply or transporting water to the site using a bowser. Various options to be investigated.

131.26 Church wall – Still awaiting additional quotations for the rolling Maintenance Plan. The Chair will follow up with a number of contractors, as securing a maintenance programme remains a priority to ensure the wall is preserved and maintained in good condition.

132.26 The Gore (C&A) – The Community Payback Team continues to make good progress at The Gore, carrying out general tidying works and preparing the containers for both internal and external painting. It was agreed that a new padlock would be purchased for the portable toilet and that the existing skip would be replaced. The committee also agreed to obtain a further quotation for repairs to the pavilion roof, as the contractor who had previously provided a quote is no longer contactable. Rental income from The Gore is currently suspended while the refurbishment works are underway. Once the container facilities have been upgraded and brought back into use, they will again provide a valuable source of revenue.

It was reaffirmed that Play for Elham will continue to raise funds for improvements and equipment at the King George V (KGV) Playfield, ensuring that such enhancements do not become a financial burden on residents through the parish precept. Fundraising will remain a key priority for both The Gore and the KGV play area, supporting their ongoing development and long-term sustainability.

133.26 King George V (C&A) – quote reviewed and **agreed** to proceed with works on roadside trees.

134.26 Grounds Maintenance – awaiting a Management / strategy plan from the Environment Group – to be deferred to August Parish Council meeting

135.26 Staffing – Following a meeting of the Staffing Committee, it was agreed that the vacancy for a new Parish Clerk would be advertised through the NALC website. The Committee also discussed the potential for separating certain responsibilities, with the possibility of appointing a dedicated bookkeeper to undertake data entry and financial reporting functions. In addition, Cllr Jacob has been reviewing a range of parish council-specific accounting software packages designed to provide more detailed and relevant financial information, helping to improve reporting and overall financial management. We also will be looking at more time effective processes. It was agreed that a starting point would be 8 hours per week, with view to increasing if required.

136.26 To hear verbal reports from

County Councillor – C Hespe – no report available at time of meeting.

District Councillor - J Butcher, S Scoffham – see below.

Report from District Council Cllr Stephen Scoffham

Tree planting

The Shepway Tree Project is an emerging campaign to plant trees across all parts of the Folkestone-Hythe District over the coming year. Environmental groups, council officers and interested parties attended an inaugural meeting on 16th June to consider setting up a Steering Committee to co-ordinate activities, led by Geoge Kirby (Kent Men of the Trees). One of the main aims is to support local initiatives which have community support. This will be crucial as maintaining trees once they have been planted is a key issue. As the relevant portfolio holder, this is a campaign which I am keen to promote, and it has a direct bearing on climate change and biodiversity.

Nailbourne project

I have been having early discussions with Southeast Rivers Trust and community representatives about the Nailbourne. The Nailbourne is in poor condition ecologically and heavily canalised which means that flood waters are not delayed upstream in heavy rain. It also creates a very special environment as creatures and organisms can survive when the river is dry, waiting for periods when the water starts to flow again. As a first step it is envisaged that wardens will adopt a section of the Nailbourne and survey the plants and creatures as a ‘citizen science’ project. There are opportunities to engage

schools along the Elham Valley and celebrate the folklore and customs associated with the 'woe waters' I will circulate further information about what is envisaged and how you can get involved as it becomes available.

UNESCO Geopark bid

The inspectors from UNESCO and now in the process of assessing the Geopark submission and visited the Warren last week. It is understood they will report informally in the autumn and that the outcome will be announced publicly in the spring. Folkestone-Hythe is at the heart of the geo-park which stretches from the outskirts of London to St Omer in France and it makes sense to start building up our offer. I have been in discussions with the Kent Downs National Landscape team about the potential for a geo-walk between Folkestone and Dover which would include the museums in both towns. In the medium term, there might also be scope for a geo-walk around Elham. I am also working closely with councillor James Butcher on plans for sustainable tourism which would align with the Geopark status and bring visitors to our area. The July 14th celebrations being organised by Ann Leva align with this agenda.

Recycling

This year's recycling rate is broadly similar to previous years. Those who attended the Friendship Lunch in May will remember the excellent talk by Dan Welsh about which materials could be recycled. Encouragingly the figures for food recycling across the district remain very positive. We have also been working on increasing recycling in bins from communal properties with some success. Special arrangements are in place for litter clearance when large crowds are attracted to local beaches. Coping with this surge in demand is a significant challenge.

Report from District Council Cllr James Butcher

North Downs Forum

The North Downs Forum was set up to connect local councillors, community groups, and other interested individuals across the North Downs area. We have over 60 people on the mailing list, with 25-30 people at the last couple of meetings.

We're now getting some joint projects underway:

- looking at the feasibility of a community energy company for the North Downs area
- a project to protect, restore, and promote the Nailbourne, as a rare and valuable ecosystem
- promoting and connecting the various walking initiatives in the area (e.g. the three new camino routes and the geo walks being established as part of the Geopark)
- a food growing initiative, linking the Thoughtful Food group in Lyminge, Knowler Farm in Stelling Minnis, other environment groups, local allotments, and the South Kent Coast Food Partnership

At our July meeting we heard from Kent Coast Volunteering who run a community transport service in our area, an affordable way for people to get to medical appointments, and a befriending service, which offers regular social support to isolated

older people. KCV would like help to promote their services in North Downs and are keen to hear from potential volunteers.

Our next meeting is 19.00, 24 September 2026 at Knowler Farm, Stelling Minnis.

Sustainable Tourism

F&HDC recently ran a sustainable tourism workshop led by specialist consultancy Travel Forward, aimed at local tourist attractions and hospitality businesses. The focus of the initiative is two-fold: firstly, to attract visitors with an interest in the landscape and ecology of our area, and secondly to encourage more sustainable approaches to travel and hosting visitors – so an opportunity for hospitality businesses in our area to get involved and benefit.

New Local Plan

At today's District Planning Forum for town and parish councils the planning team outlined the process for developing the new local plan – slides from the session will be circulated, and we're looking at having a follow-up session for town and parish councillors across North Downs. The plan will set planning policies and identify sites, so an important process to contribute to.

Funding

A reminder that the ward grant scheme for 2026/7 is now open, with your three district councillors each having a budget of £5,000 to support local projects. And as reported last time, the Green Grant scheme with a £250k pot is open, although the closing date is 17 July for the first round of funding (with a second round if funds remain unallocated).

120.26 Correspondence

All correspondence received covered within the agenda items.

121.26 Date of next meeting and Close - The next meeting will be the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish on 3rd August 2026 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.59pm.

Appendix 1 – Approved Invoices and Payments

June 2026 invoices approved on July 2026 meeting

Payee	Cheque No.	Amount	VAT	Net	Comments
Reliable Networks	ONLINE	£55.68	£9.28	£46.40	Microsoft License
Reliable Networks	ONLINE	£94.98	£15.83	£79.15	Speed battery
Friendly Seed Company	ONLINE	£66.00	£11.00	£55.00	Maintenance
Zurich	ONLINE	£1179.52	£0.00	£1179.52	Insurance
Westbrook Carpentry	ONLINE	£704.00	£0.00	£704.00	Maintenance
G Clements (Screwfix)	ONLINE	£40.98	£6.83	£34.15	Maintenance
	Total	£2141.16	£42.94	£2098.22	

