

FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the Meeting of **FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL** held on Monday 12th January 2026 in the Village Hall, High Street, Fletching from 6.30 – 8.47pm

PRESENT: Councillors R Hannay (Chairman), N Collum, G Garland, D Greenish, C Logan, K Minch, L Schofield and D Woollven.

Also in attendance: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs (Clerk and RFO) and Councillor R Galley (ESCC).

Members of the Public in Attendance: 9

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Borton and Councillor Coleman (WDC).

26/1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest RECEIVED in respect of items on the agenda, as required by the Members' Code of Conduct.

Minute 26/11 - Councillors Hannay and Minch as trustees of the Fletching Memorial Hall Charity.

In accordance with the FPC Code of Conduct:

- Councillor Hannay, as an elected trustee, left the room during the discussion of the item; and
- Councillor Minch, as the Parish Council's representative on the management committee, took part in the discussion on the item but did not vote.

26/2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 8th December 2025 were a correct record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

26/3. MATTERS ARISING

The Actions List as prepared and circulated by the Clerk was noted. Updates were given as follows:

Burial Ground – it was confirmed that a successful meeting had been held with WDC and that the Parish had proved use of the access for over 20 years. The next step is for the Clerk to request Wealden for a Deed of Easement.

Wilderlands – Cllr Greenish reported that he had investigated obtaining legal advice in respect of the situation and had been offered a preliminary look by a consultant, free of charge, who would advise on the next steps to take. It was **AGREED** that this offer be accepted and that Cllr Greenish work with the local residents to establish the timeline of events at the site.

Note: Councillor K Minch arrived at 6.35pm during this item.

26/4. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Councillor Galley reported that he had no further information on the Local Government Reorganisation for Sussex. Also, that it was not yet known what the proposed Council Tax increase was likely to be for East Sussex.

He updated councillors on a very useful meeting that had been held earlier in the day with Cllr Logan, the Clerk and Steve O'Connell the road safety lead for Sussex Police in respect of speed issues on the A275 at Sheffield Green. It was noted that there three areas to take forward both by Cllr Galley and the Parish Council. These relate to drainage/flooding issues in the area that affect both the Trading Boundaries property and the crossroads where the A275 meets North Hall Lane and Ketches Lane; highways signs on the A275 that need to be cleaned and trees that are obscuring the signs to be cut back; and the possible installation of a vehicle activated sign (VAS) to warn motorists about the upcoming junction.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk contact other parishes in the area and ESCC Highways to establish the costs and process etc for installing a VAS and report back to the Parish Council. Cllr Galley to

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follow up on the drainage issues and the Clerk to follow up on getting the signs cleaned and foliage cut back.

26/5. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Councillor Coleman was unable to attend the meeting in person but her update, circulated prior to the meeting, was noted.

26/6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

The following applications were discussed. See Minute 26/14 below for further information.

- i. WD/2025/2726/F Byerly, Bell Lane, Fletching TN22 3YB
- ii. WD/2025/2815/F Piltdown Antiques, Goldbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XL

26/7. WORKING GROUPS / EXTERNAL GROUPS

- i. *Neighbourhood Plan*: Cllr Hannay reported that the consultants had been tasked with producing the next draft of the Neighbourhood Plan that should be available for consideration at the next meeting.
- ii. *Fletching Recreation Ground Committee (FRGC)*: the Clerk reported that there had been a small leak in the pavilion roof which was due to be mended. There had been very little internal damage.
- iii. *Village Hall Committee of Management*: Cllr Hannay reported that the bookings had increased since the new caretaker had taken over and that ongoing improvements were being made where possible.

26/8. CORRESPONDENCE / CONSULTATIONS RECEIVED

It was noted that there had been no correspondence or consultations received since the last meeting. However, it was reported that the draft Wealden Local Plan was due to go out to consultation again in early February following a Wealden Cabinet meeting on 14 January and a Full Council meeting on 29 January. The initial draft consultation response would be an item on the next meeting's agenda.

26/9. FINANCE AND ASSETS

- i. The invoices and payments for January 2026 were **AUTHORISED** and the Council's current financial position and bank reconciliation were noted.
- ii. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Level 1 Allowances as recommended by the report of the Wealden Parish Independent Remuneration Panel.
- iii. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the budget and precept for 2026/27. The precept was set at £48,659 for 2026/27.
- iv. The Chair signed the precept request which was due to be submitted to Wealden DC by 13th January 2026.

26/10. SPLAYNES GREEN PHONE BOX

The proposals as put forward by Cllr Garland were circulated prior to the meeting. She explained that she wanted to create a small community nature hub to support local engagement with wildlife and the green spaces that would provide a simple, low maintenance resource for residents, families and walkers. Councillors were very supportive of the initiatives planned and considered the proposals a very fitting use of the newly refurbished phone box. It was noted that Cllr Garland would oversee the project and liaise with the Clerk over expenditure. She would also engage with other members of the community as appropriate.

Note: Cllr Garland left the meeting at 8pm at the end of this item.

26/11. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDS

A briefing note on the purpose of CIL and how much had been received to date by the Parish Council, was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. It was noted that there was £45,199.64 CIL funding still available to be spent on projects within the parish.

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Request for CIL Funds from Fletching Village Hall Management Committee

This following part of this item was chaired by Cllr D Greenish as Cllr Hannay left the room in line with the FPC Code of Conduct (see Minute 26/1 above for details).

The Clerk, acting in their capacity as the secretary for the Village Hall Management Committee, presented a request for a commitment from the Parish Council of £20k from CIL funds as a contribution to the 20% of project costs required to enable a CLIF application to be made to Wealden DC.

Councillors discussed the request and also heard from Dr David Knight, a Trustee, and Becca Cooke, the new caretaker, who were both in attendance for this item. Assurance was given that the funds would not be transferred to the village hall until confirmation was received of the application to CLIF being successful. Accordingly, it was agreed that the renovation of the village hall was a very worthwhile cause and councillors were encouraged by the enthusiasm of the new management committee and caretaker in taking the project forward to make the village hall a focal point once again within the village.

It was **RESOLVED** that a commitment be given to the Fletching Village Hall Management Committee that £20k would be made available to the village hall renovation project as part of the 20% project costs requirement of the Wealden CLIF application criteria. The funds to be transferred once confirmation received that the application was successful.

26/12. BURIAL GROUND

The following application was **APPROVED**:

- i. Memorial: Mary Lynch (plot 964)

26/13. ENFORCEMENT – PLANNING AND DRAINAGE

- i. *Wilderlands*: This item was dealt with at Minute 26/3 above.

26/14. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - RECEIVED

It was **RESOLVED** to make the comments as set out after each application in respect of the following:

i. WD/2025/1669/F + 1670/LB Moons Oast, Sharpsbridge Lane, Piltdown TN22 3XG

Replace existing central roof with new. Convert roof space to habitable accommodation. Insert roof lights. Replace all modern sash windows with casement window. Replace doors. Replace all existing asbestos rainwater goods with metal.

This response covers both the planning application and the Listed Building application. The Parish Council takes the view that the principal issues here relate to the listed building application which will be subject to the advice of the District Council's Heritage Officer.

The Parish Council accepts that the property is subject to significant disrepair which justifies the work being proposed. The proposed work is sympathetic to the listing.

There is no objection to the proposals to (i) convert the roof space to habitable accommodation (ii) insert roof lights and (iii) replace existing windows with replacement windows. As regards the latter, it is noted that none of the existing windows are original, having been installed in the 1970's.

*The Parish Council **SUPPORTS** these applications.*

ii. WD/2025/2636/F Woodland House, Batts Bridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XR

Erection of a single storey timber framed flat roof garden room.

This application is described in the applicant's Design and Access Statement as:

"The proposed garden room is a thoughtfully designed, single-storey structure that combines functionality with modern aesthetics. It will be a well-insulated timber frame structure with a grey rubber roof for durability. The exterior will be clad in high-quality composite cladding to the boundary facing elevations and timber cladding to the front elevation, ensuring a robust and visually appealing finish on all sides. Measuring 4m by 6m, the garden room will include a single

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door and one fixed window with a ventilation system for airflow, all framed in contemporary grey uPVC. Inside, the space will be fully insulated, plastered, and painted.”

*Although Saved Policy DC19(4) of Wealden Local Plan 1998 requires that any annex should normally be attached to the main dwelling (to avoid the risk of any future division to create a separate dwelling), the Parish Council can **SUPPORT** the application if conditions are imposed to ensure that the materials used are first approved and that use, occupation and ownership of the annex are at all times to be ancillary to the main house.*

iii. **WD/2025/2726/F Byerly, Bell Lane, Fletching TN22 3YB**

Detached garage with two dormers and two velux windows to facilitate home office on first floor, with external staircase access.

This is described in the application as a “Detached garage with 2 dormers and 2 velux windows to facilitate home office on 1st floor, with external staircase access”. There is no supporting Design and Access Statement but it is said that the new building will be a brick structure with timber cladding and a clay tile roof. It is a substantial building comprising three garages.

It is well set back from the public road and we are told that the neighbours (who will be most affected by the new building) are supportive. The site is somewhat awkward but the area chosen for this development is the most sensible as it fronts the shared access lane.

*Although Saved Policy DC19(4) of Wealden Local Plan 1998 requires that any annex should normally be attached to the main dwelling (to avoid the risk of any future division to create a separate dwelling), the Parish Council can **SUPPORT** the application if conditions are imposed to ensure that the materials used are first approved and that use, occupation and ownership of the annex are at all times to be ancillary to the main house.*

iv. **WD/2025/2815/F Piltdown Antiques, Goldbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XL**

Demolition of former shop and construction of two residential flats.

*The Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application – see attached appendix to the minutes for details.*

26/15. PLANNING APPLICATION – APPEAL RECEIVED

It was **RESOLVED** that no further comments be made at this time for the following appeal:

i. **WD/2025/0103/F Alexandra Cottage, Batts Bridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XP**

Three-bedroom chalet bungalow to replace garage.

26/16. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – APPEAL DECISION

Planning Appeal decisions received since the last meeting:

i. **WD/2025/0767/F 1 Oak Tree Cottages, High Street, Fletching TN22 3TD**

Removal of existing single-storey projection and construction of two storey side/rear extension and alterations. (ALLOWED 10 December 2025).

26/17. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DECISIONS

Planning decisions **RECEIVED** from Wealden District Council since the last meeting:

Applications Approved

i. **WD/2024/19846/LB Sheffield Park House, Sheffield Park TN22 3QZ**

Installation of emergency lighting, fire safety signage and adaptations to fire doors. (APPROVED – 15 December 2025)

ii. **WD/2025/2573/F Chapel Cottage, Shortbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XD**

Proposed rear extension to existing detached residential annexe. (APPROVED 19 December 2025)

iii. **WD/2025/2231/F Moons Farm, Sharpsbridge Lane, Piltdown TN22 3XG**

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All weather equestrian arena and stable block with associated landscaping. (APPROVED – 6 January 2026)

Applications Refused – none since the last meeting

Applications Withdrawn

i. **WD/2025/2597/LB Clinton Lodge, High Street, Fletching TN22 3ST**

Proposed pair of iron railings to front entrance steps. (WITHDRAWN 24 December 2025)

26/18. ITEMS FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE

It was agreed that the following items be included for the next edition of the Parish Magazine:

- Local Plan consultation
- Britain in Bloom – Fletching being selected to be a finalist
- Parish Council precept and value for money including parish council responsibilities (item for March magazine)

26/19. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- Wealden Local Plan consultation
- Campaign to report pot holes

It was requested that Councillors contact the Clerk with any items they wish to be considered at the next meeting.

26/20. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Parish Council is due to be held on Monday 9th February 2026 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall.

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Appendix

FPC Meeting 12 January 2026 – Comments for Planning Applications

WD/2025/2815/F Piltdown Antiques, Goldbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XL

Demolition of former shop and construction of two residential flats.

This site currently comprises a single-storey building until recently used as a shop or showroom for the sale of antiques. The applicant states that the property has been vacant since 2022. The building would appear to be in a poor state of repair although no survey has been submitted with the application to indicate the extent of disrepair or to show what would be required to be done to the building to put it into good repair.

The proposal is for the existing building to be demolished and replaced by a new two-storey building comprising a ground floor and first floor flat. Each flat would comprise 2x bedrooms, 1x bathroom, an entrance hall/utility room and an open-plan kitchen/dining/living area. The Design Statement submitted in support of the application states a GIA for each flat of 70.38m² although the submitted drawing gives a figure of 61m². The site is small and constrained and fronts the A272. The proposed new building would take up most of the site. Access to the ground floor flat would be through a door, effectively from the main road but with an alternative side access and the first floor flat would be accessed by external steps. There is what is described as “amenity space” to be shared by the flats which is on the north-east side of the building but this area will also be the location for the access steps to the first floor flat, a bicycle storage facility, bin storage and most likely combined Air Source Heat Pumps and Air Conditioning Units as recommended by the Noise Impact Assessment submitted with the application. The site is immediately adjacent to a bus stop (so that buses, such as they are, would be stopping immediately outside the property). The proposal is for this to be a car-free development (to the extent that there would be no on-site car parking) with the occupiers being required to rely on movement on foot or by bicycle and public transport.

*The starting point for any residential development within Piltdown must be the four appeal decisions (the **Appeal Decisions**) handed down between August 2023 and October 2025. They are:*

- 1. Lower Field, Little Barkham Farm – 23rd August 2023 – (APP/C1435/W/22/3297438) (AD 1)*
- 2. Upper Field, Little Barkham Farm – 23rd August 2023 - (APP/C1435/W/22/3297916) (AD 2)*
- 3. Equestrian Menage (Sand School), Little Barkham Farm – 16th January 2025 - (APP/C1435/W/24/3340301) (AD 3),*
- 4. Land at rear of Roselands – 17th October 2025 - (APP/C1435/W/25/3365307) (AD 4)*

The main issues covered by the Appeal Decisions were whether various sites within Piltdown were suitable for residential development, having regard to location, the proposed land use and the amount of development. The Appeal Decisions were wholly consistent in finding the following principles to be applied:

- There is no defined development boundary for Piltdown. It is a rural unclassified settlement and lies within the countryside for planning purposes. AD1/AD2 Decision Letter (DL) para 5; AD3 DL para 9; AD4 DL para 9.*
- Relevant Saved Policies of Wealden Local Plan 1998 and policies under the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 will apply so that residential development in the countryside will be resisted save in exceptional circumstances: AD1/AD2 DL para 6; AD3 DL paras 8, 19 & 30; AD 4 DL para 21*
- There are limited services and facilities within Piltdown: AD1/AD2 DL para 8; AD3 DL para 10; AD4 DL para 9.*
- Notwithstanding the access to a bus service (limited) and/or to the bicycling option, occupiers of housing will likely choose to travel by car: AD1 DL para 9; AD2 DL para 11; AD3 DL para 11; AD4 DL paras 10, 11, 12 & 13.*
- Piltdown is not a sustainable location for new housing: AD1 DL para 10; AD2 DL para 12; AD3 DL paras 8, 9 & 19; AD4 DL paras 20.*

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Subsequent applications for planning permission for residential development in Piltdown have been refused. Reference to applications that pre-date the Appeal Decisions are historic, not relevant, out of date and no longer of any weight.

The applicant concedes that the proximity of the site to the A272 means that road traffic noise is a material issue. A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted with the application. However, this simply shows that:

- the noise environment is seriously compromised – the base position being **HIGH RISK**, where planning permission should be refused unless mitigation is achieved*
- at this stage, only assumptions of mitigation and reductions have been made*
- work is not concluded as regards potential overheating which will be a particular problem*
- noise of M & E P has yet to be addressed*
- any outside amenity space, assuming it can be created, would clearly be compromised by noise.*

The applicant relies on the Castell-y-Mynach Estate case as referred to in the Design and Access Statement to argue that the previous use has been abandoned and this application for planning permission should therefore be considered on that basis. However, it is not clear how that improves the position of the applicant. The Parish Council does not accept that the evidence meets the criteria for abandonment but in any event considers that Saved Policy DC8 of Wealden Local Plan 1998 applies whether or not the use has been abandoned.

*For all these reasons, the Parish Council **OBJECTS** to the application.*