



Minutes of the Meeting of Rottingdean Parish on Monday the 7th of September 2026 at the Whiteway Centre

Present. Cllr Nixon (Chair), Cllr Lawrence, Cllr Evans, Cllr Levins, Cllr Cherry, Cllr Snow, Cllr Course, Cllr Dawes

Public Gallery. Ward Cllr Fishleigh, Ward Cllr Earthy, Chris Grinsted, Bernard Turnbull, Caroline Lane, Dyllis Brown, Peter Litton, Phil Boucher, Patsy Dixon, Clive Dixon and 8 other residents.

Public Questions.

Dyllis Brown asked for an update on discussions with Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) about transferring the Grange to the community, and whether BHCC was considering disposing of the building. **Cllr Nixon** said that he and the Clerk, together with Rottingdean Heritage, had met BHCC officers in March. They had agreed that the first step in considering a lease transfer was to find an acceptable way to manage current and future maintenance liabilities. A building survey was due to take place in September to assess the cost of bringing the Grange into good repair, after which a further meeting would be held. **Cllr Nixon** said BHCC's aim was to transfer the Grange to the community on a long lease. This was important to provide clarity for RH, whose current lease on part of the building expires in three years.

Phil Boucher asked whether the details of the lease and arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of the arrangements would be made public. **Cllr Nixon** said that, in his experience, leases of this type remained confidential, but that this would be a matter for BHCC and RH.

Bernard Turnbull reported that this year's Rottingdean Arts (RA) concerts had been a significant success, attracting around 2,500 attendees and generating a surplus to support repairs to the Terraces. He also noted that the defibrillator currently located at Molly's Café needed to be moved and would be placed on the wall beside the barrier at the top of the

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slipway. Mr Turnbull asked the Parish Council (RPC) to consider his proposals for refurbishing the Terraces and improving slipway access for people with mobility issues. He also said that RA had arranged a meeting with the new seafront manager and invited RPC to take part. **Cllr Nixon** said that that RPC would consider the proposals which Cllr Dawes would follow up and report back to the Council.

Action. Cllr Dawes to consider the proposal for repairing the Terraces, making the slipway more accessible and provide advice to Councillors. To be discussed at October SCAG.

Action. Cllr Dawes to attend the meeting with the new seafront manager and report back to the Council.

A resident asked for an update on the proposed High Street pavement repairs. **Cllr Nixon** said the High Street upgrade plans were available on the Parish Council website. The plan included the replacement of the existing brick paving with red bricks with a more abrasive surface. The plan had been agreed by the BHCC, Chief Executive and BHCC councillors. RPC was awaiting the traffic management study (TMS) report, now expected by the end of September, before detailed planning for carriageway and pavement repairs could proceed. This would allow the current design to be amended if needed to reflect any options arising from the study. BHCC have been tasked to ensure that any foreseen works by utility providers are fully explored and completed before resurfacing.

Phil Boucher said he had received responses to his Freedom of Information requests from RPC and BHCC, and that it was clear there were no plans for the management of Beacon Hill nature reserve or financial management for proper environmental studies. He said management of the reserve was a joint responsibility between BHCC and RPC, and that this represented a fundamental failure of a Council responsibility for which RPC should be held accountable. **Cllr Nixon** said that, in addressing the statement made by Mr Boucher, he also wanted to put on record a number of corrections to Mr Boucher's recent social media posts:

- Firstly, it was important to clarify that management of the reserve was not a joint responsibility. Paragraph 5.2 of the Stewardship agreement with BHCC stated that BHCC retained responsibility for overall management policy, approval of current and future management plans, and general management and funding of the grass-cutting contract.
- At Mr Boucher's request Cllr Nixon read out the key role of RPC as set out in the Stewardship agreement that was the administration of the Beacon Hill Nature Reserve Stewardship Group and within budgetary considerations, to consider whether joint funding of any approved environmental and other improvements is appropriate

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- Mr Boucher had considered that the word “joint” referred to sign off of the management plan by RPC. But Cllr Nixon explained that this was, as stated in the document, purely for co-funding of agreed activities such as notice boards.
- The BHCC management plan for the reserve was reviewed each year by the Stewardship Group, where RPC and other members could make suggestions and challenge proposals. However, final decisions rested with BHCC. Minutes of these discussions were published and available on the RPC website.
- Each year, volunteers from the Stewardship Group carried out studies to assess the health of the reserve, including counts of butterflies, birds, insects and plant species. A report on the reserve’s condition was then published on the website.

In terms of Mr Boucher’s recent social media posts, **Cllr Nixon** said a number of corrections needed to be put on record.

- The Beacon Hill management Plan was discussed at the meeting of the 1st of June and 6th of July. It was not discussed at the meeting on the 3rd of August.
- On 1 June all the questions raised by members of the public were, as always, recorded. Cllr Nixon had said at that meeting that he would endeavour to arrange a meeting with residents and City Parks, and this was recorded as an action.
- A meeting with the Rangers had been held in July to share all of the feedback and ask for a wider meeting as promised. They had acknowledged the feedback which along with the many e mails received would be taken into consideration in the development of the plan for 2026/27.
- On 1 July all the questions raised by residents were recorded. The action to endeavour to arrange a meeting was reviewed. Cllr Evans had advised that the Ranger, having received an FOI request and many emails, did not consider a public meeting necessary (page 3 paragraph 5.1).
- Cllr Evans also explained at that meeting that responsibility for developing the management plan rested with BHCC, City Parks, and that the plans were discussed each autumn at the Beacon Hill Stewardship Group meeting, the minutes of which were published.
- The work of 3rd Party volunteer groups was reported each year in the annual Nature Report published on the Parish Council website

Cllr Nixon said he would be happy to meet with Mr Boucher to discuss his concerns.

Action. Clerk to set up a meeting with Mr Boucher to discuss Beacon Hill stewardship.

Chris Grinstead asked whether a management plan was in place for the village pond. He described the pond as a jewel in the village crown and said that, during the recent drought, it seemed unacceptable simply to let it dry out. He asked if there were any steps that could be taken for the future to provide an acceptable source of top up the water level. **Cllr Nixon** thanked Mr Grinstead for his help with the recent pond oil contamination, particularly his assistance with the ducks. He said advice had been sought from the maintenance

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contractor, Peter Birchall ("Pete the Pond"), who had looked after the pond for more than 20 years. Pete and his team every 3 months to manage wildlife and vegetation. Pete had advised that, although a prolonged drought could affect some wildlife, many species could respond naturally to falling water levels: wildfowl could move to other water sources, many aquatic insects could fly away, others could burrow into the wet mud, and newts, frogs and toads could usually find damp shelter. The main risk was to fish. However, the fish, that were non-native species, were not normally introduced to wildlife ponds because they could eat or disturb other wildlife. Some fish had therefore been rehomed so that, once rainfall returned, the pond ecosystem could recover more quickly and sustainably. **Cllr Nixon** added that Pete had inspected the pond when the oil contamination had been reported and concluded that the contamination was unlikely to be fresh oil from a recent road spill. It was more likely to have resulted from older run-off oils and natural vegetation oils trapped in the pond silt over many years, then released following relocation of the silt during the drought and the torrential downpour on August 20th. **Cllr Nixon** said that RPC and residents can benefit from greater knowledge of the dos and don'ts to ensure that the pond reaches its full potential as a Wildlife haven. Pete had volunteered to come and give a talk about the pond to residents, which was to be organised

Action. Cllr Evans and Cllr Dawes to organise a presentation on the pond for residents by Pete and explore if any improvements are possible to existing and future water sources.

Peter Litten said that this year's village fair looked to be the most successful yet, with visitors up by 30%. This had enabled the organisers to provide funding to a number of charities including the RNLI. They were now considering the timing of next year's events and whether avoiding the same date as the Pride celebration was sensible, given that this may attract more visitors than could be accommodated. **Cllr Nixon** said that the Council had agreed that the Fair had been very successful and had formally recorded its thanks to the organisers and volunteers in the minutes of the August meeting. Mr Litten also reported that many of the wooden posts around the Green were in a poor state of repair. **Cllr Cherrie** agreed to follow this up.

Action. Cllr Cherrie to look at the condition of the posts on the Green and provide advice to the Council.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Poole

2. **Declarations of interests**

None

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3. **Agreement of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on the 3rd of August.** The minutes were agreed as drafted and signed by the Chair as a true record of the discussion.

4. **Matters Arising**

The Chair reported that, following the recent flooding at the junction of the High Street and the A259, he, Ward Councillors and Cllr Trevor Muten had inspected drains around the Village. Many were blocked by debris run-off from Whiteways Lane. Further investigation found that two substantial storm drains on Whiteways Lane were blocked by a build-up of silt, probably over a number of years. The matter was being reported to BHCC engineers, but the drains had still not been unblocked. The Chair and Ward Councillors were continuing to pursue the matter with BHCC.

5. **Action Log.** The Clerk provided the following update on outstanding actions
- i. 0108. **The Clerk** to circulate the correspondence from BHCC about the alignment of electoral cycles. Completed. Closed
 - ii. 0208. **Clerk/Cllr Lawrence** to write to BHCC proposing the process for managing Kipling Garden Section 106 expenditure. **Cllr Lawrence** said she had written to Nicola Hurley, head of planning at BHCC seeking advice on whether planning consent would be required for the proposal to extend the stage in Kipling Gardens. Carried Forward

6. **Finance Update**

- i. Payments and invoices. The Clerk sought authorisation for the following payments

VAT		
HMRC August	£779.56	
C Hayes Salary August	£866.37	
Affordable Waste (DD)	£154.04	
Gary Steel	£100.00	
Sam Cocks (Grass cutting)	£600	£120
Total	£2499.97	

Payment was proposed by Cllr Levins seconded by Cllr Cherrie and approved by unanimous vote. The Clerk advised the Council that the Clerk's salary included 11 additional hours spent on the organisation of the Village Fair, St Aubyns planning, building and field maintenance, the village survey, High Street engagement work and dealing with village pond related matters.

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ii. Bank balances. The Clerk advised the Council that, at the end of September, the total cash at the bank stood at £575,257.59, which, after deduction of the St Aubyns maintenance fund, left a balance of £174,636.44 available to the Council.

iii. August Accounts. The accounts were presented and the Clerk noted that On 16 August, £16,625 was transferred from the St Aubyns maintenance fund to the Unity Trust Account in respect of St Aubyns maintenance expenditure for 2025/26 as follows.

- Building Insurance. £284
- Building Maintenance. £6,816 (including Chapel window repair and protection)
- Field Maintenance. £9,028 (Mowing, Hedge Trimming (£5850) Bin emptying (£2159), Field repair (£700), Bark (£320)
- Other £497 (Utilities)

In addition, the Clerk said that during August an invoice of £24.00 for room hire became due and payment was made to the Whiteways Centre under paragraph 6.6 of the financial regulations.

7. Major Projects

i. **St Aubyns.** Members of the Working Group provided the following update.

- **Cllr Evans** said that the group had discussed the following
 - The Field had survived the drought with only one tree lost which he was to talking to Brighton Permaculture Trust about its replacement.
 - The wildflower meadow had been cut and the group had agreed a proposal for supplementary planting to enrich the meadow, along with provision of water butts at the pavilion and cutting a gap in the bund facing Vaughan Williams Way where an informal path had developed.
 - A review of the plan to make more use of the Chapel and Pavilion was on going.
 - There were also two sorbus trees that needed to be replaced, which had been planted by the site developer Fairfax and had a five-year guarantee that Cllr Evans was to follow up.

Action. Cllr Evans to follow up the replacement of sorbus trees in St Aubyns Field

- A proposal had been discussed to reduce the height of the hedge along Newlands Road to a point where it was easier to maintain. A quote for £950 (plus VAT) had been obtained from the Field maintenance contractor. Cllr Evans proposed that Councillors agree to the expenditure. **This was seconded by Cllr Course and agreed by unanimous vote.**

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Cllr Nixon said the residents of houses on Newlands opposite the hedge should be notified, and Cllr Evans agreed to post a notification through their letter boxes.

- **Cllr Lawrence** said she had sought the advice on the additional planting that would include yellow rattle important in suppressing grass growth and cowslip that would extend the flowering season. This would cost £370 and with the costs of water butts would amount to sum of £600. Cllr Lawrence then proposed that Councillors agree to expenditure of up to £600. **This was seconded by Cllr Course and agreed by unanimous vote.**

ii. **High Street.**

- Upgrade. **Cllr Nixon** said that detailed planning of the upgrade was awaiting the outcome of the TMS, expected soon, but that work on the upgrade originally expected to start in late spring 2026 was not likely to take place until later in the 2027/28 financial year.
- Survey. Cllr Course said the survey had achieved 332 responses and highlighted key points of the summary circulated.
 - Respondents are generally very regular users of the village centre. Nearly three quarters use its shops, cafés, pubs or services either most days or several times a week, and the great majority use them at least weekly. Very few use the centre only once a month or less often.
 - Walking is overwhelmingly the most common way of reaching the village centre, selected by nearly 90% of respondents. Driving is a distant second, with bus travel even less common.
 - There are two very strong wishes: a pharmacy (85%) and a bakery (65%) and a desire for Banking services
 - A key concern was premises being left empty or unused (over 80%), followed by traffic problems (70%) and the loss of shops or services (slightly over 60%).
- The next step was to publish an article summarising the results followed by more detailed results posted on the website.
- Cllr Course had put together and circulated a proposal to test whether it was possible to attract a pharmacy company to set up in the Village. This step-by-step approach would involve first contacting Community Pharmacy Surrey and Sussex, which represents community pharmacy contractors locally, Brighton and Hove's Public Health team, the relevant NHS commissioners and potentially some local pharmacy providers. Progress would be monitored by SCAG, which would provide advice to the Council. **Councillors agreed the proposal.**

8. **Planning**

- i. Applications Received in August. In Cllr Poole's absence the Clerk took the meeting through the following applications.

BH2026/01875. Coppers The Green Rottingdean Brighton BN2 7DD

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Erection of front entrance porch. No objection

BH2026/01697. 5 Tudor Close Dean Court Road Rottingdean Brighton BN2 7DF Replacement of a later non-original window with a traditionally detailed fixed timber window to match adjacent historic windows, and retrospective consent for removal of a later metal security grille. No objection

9. **Advisory Group Meeting Updates**

i. **Strategy and Communications. Cllr Nixon gave the following update**

- Cllr Lawrence was continuing to work with Ward Cllr Earthy to share the BHESCo-Ovingdean-Decarbonisation-Plan with Rottingdean residents to gauge interest in taking a similar approach in the Village.
- The Council had been formally asked by BHCC for a view on the placement of an enforcement camera to police the 'No Right Turn' restriction at West Street. Ward Cllr Fishleigh was lobbying BHCC to also enforce the yellow box at the junction. BHCC had said that had some technical issues but it was something they might consider in the future. In discussion Councillors acknowledged the merits of an enforcement camera to police the yellow box but agreed to treat this as a separate issue.

Councillors agreed to support the proposal but that the response to BHCC should state that the signage needed be improved and residents should be given adequate notice before an enforcement camera was installed.

Action. The Clerk to respond to BHCC stating the Parish Council's support for the enforcement camera at West Street and requesting improved signage and advance notification to residents.

- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy The Clerk summarise the key intention of the policy that had been circulated. The policy aimed to define the different types of anti-social behaviour (ASB); provide advice for residents on what to do and who to contact if they witnessed or were victims of ASB and enable a record all incidents reported that would be discussed in the Local Action Team meeting and in discussion with the local PCSO. **Adoption was proposed by Cllr Snow seconded by Cllr Cherrie and agreed by unanimous vote.**

- ii. **Village and Community. Cllr Lawrence** said she was continuing to coordinate the Section 106 funded Kipling Gardens projects. She also wanted to record her thanks to local residents who had made several small infrastructure repairs around the Village small for example the round bench around the green.

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iii. **Natural Environment**

- **Cllr Evans** noted that the pond had now fully recovered from the drought and the oil was dissipating. He also said that when Pete the Pond had inspected the pond at the time of the drought, he had advised that it had not reached a point where any wildlife or plant life was in distress. **Cllr Nixon** said there were important lessons to be learned from the experience and suggested that Cllr Evans and Cllr Dawes arrange to discuss future pond maintenance and resilience.

Action. Cllrs Evans and Dawes to contact Pete the Pond to discuss future pond maintenance and resilience.

- **Cllr Dawes** said he had been copied into a proposal from a resident for a pier or jetty to cover the rainwater overflow pipe on Rottingdean Beach. He had considered the feasibility of such a scheme, but there were serious issues with the idea. For example, the tides would mean that the structure would be underwater much of the time, a number of steel posts would be needed to secure the structure, and various permissions and licences would be needed to build and operate a pier. He estimated the costs would exceed £120,000 and incur ongoing maintenance costs, and that this was not something that the Parish Council should take forward.
- **Cllr Dawes** said he was to attend the meeting with the new BHCC seafront manager and would report back to the Council.

iv. **Built Environment.** Cllr Cherrie said that, in the margins of the SCAG discussion, he had agreed to follow up the missing duck safety sign that was previously at the junction of Falmer Road and Dean Court Road. He had contacted BHCC, who had advised that the sign had been damaged and removed, and had agreed to replace it.

10. **Communications.** Councillors agreed that a social media post on the meeting should include an update on the wildflower meadow, an update on the pond, and a report that the Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Policy had been adopted.

The meeting closed at 21.47. The next meeting is on the 5th of October,

Chris Hayes, Parish Clerk

September 2026

Signed

Date