

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
Held on 4th March 2026 commencing at 7.00pm at Benians Pavilion**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllrs Davies, Medhurst, Gebbett, M Pullen and Coulson
IN ATTENDANCE:	Victoria Ursulean Assistant Clerk & Debbie Batley Clerk
	No members of public
APOLOGIES:	None

26.23 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
None

26.24 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Correspondence had been received from a resident regarding the new noticeboards. They were concerned that the positioning of the noticeboard next to the Pavilion was not accessible for all and too close to the car park. Cllrs noted the complaint and mentioned that the noticeboard would be moving once work on the Pavilion started, and also said that there is a noticeboard on the other side of the Pavilion which is accessible.

Correspondence had also been received from Manor Colts requesting to roll the pitch on the cricket field. Cllrs were happy for them to carry this out.

Cllr Medhurst noted that the sign on the patch from Gradwell Lane had been broken and requested a new one.

Cllr M Pullen mentioned that a resident had requested the repainting of parking spaces at Oak Green Parade.

Cllr Medhurst also requested that the wooden walls in front of the shops and behind the car park should be fixed as a priority.

Cllr Gebbett raised a query over some tree works that had been carried out along Blackberry Lane 18 months ago, and the debris had never been removed. The Assistant Clerk would look into this.

With no further items raised, the Open Session ended at 7.14pm. Standing Orders were applied.

26.25 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
There were none.

26.26 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr Davies which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with one abstention (due to being absent from the meeting), it was: **RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 4th February 2026.**

26.27 OS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

26.27.1 To discuss future plans for tennis

The Assistant Clerk had a meeting with the LTA, notes had been distributed to all Cllrs. As part of our contract with the LTA we are obligated to offer some free tennis events and Cllrs discussed ideas to proceed with this. Cllr Coulson suggested offering a free day to residents on Universal Credits, and other Cllrs considered one day per month for free use which would have to be booked via Clubspark. It was also thought that the tennis courts should be publicized more frequently, and also to ask the tennis coach if he would put on any sessions.

26.27.2 To discuss ideas for infrastructure projects

Cllr Davies stated that the green area along Station Approach would benefit from some picnic benches to make better use of the space.

26.28 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

26.28.1 To approve the Assistant Clerk's recommendation for a Contract Gardener

The Assistant Clerk had conducted three interviews for the contract gardener position. The suitability of each were outlined and discussed. Cllrs suggested that the contract should be offered on a three month trial basis pending references, and one Cllr would like to meet him onsite.

On the proposal of Cllr Davies which was seconded by Cllr Coulson and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations to employ a contract gardener.

26.29 OS AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS

26.29.1 To note area update

The Assistant Clerk noted that the noticeboards had been installed. It was mentioned that the Lengthsman is due at the end of this month and ideas on jobs to give them was requested.

The Tulip tree had been ordered and the Assistant Clerk asked if Cllrs wanted to order compost and stakes as well. They agreed that they would need these items as well.

Cllr Medhurst asked if quotes could be obtained for priority three tree works as noted in the Tree Survey.

Open Space committee	Area Update	Feb-26
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LOCATION	ACTION REQUIRED	STATUS	NOTES
Badger Close	Boundary encroachment	In progress	Clerk to research further
	Badger Orchard	Ongoing	Cllr to install nature cameras
	Badger run upkeep	Ongoing	
Cemetery	Inspection	Ongoing	Carried out on 29/09/25
		In progress	Remedial works to area in front of Block E
		Ongoing	New memorial bench application
Lymington Bottom Green			
Oakgreen Parade	Flower bed maintenance	Ongoing	Gardener interviews held 25/02/26
	Replacement of sleepers in the car park	In progress	Quotes being obtained
	Repainting of parking spaces	To do	To review spacing and repainting – future meeting
Recreation Ground	Containers	To do	Removal of items to be decided
	Football clubs/pitch	Ongoing	Ongoing liaison with clubs
	Water refill point	Ongoing	Last service - Feb '25
Swelling Hill Pond	South of pond/car park area	Ongoing	Adverse possession claims
	Steps	In progress	Quotes being obtained
	Pathway	In progress	Angling club laid gravel to pathway Dec 2025
	Well	In progress	Quotes being obtained
	Car park remedial works	In progress	Contractor accepted
Kingswood Copse	Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife.	In progress	Plan decided at meeting – Clerk to follow up. Hedge whips planted by gardener in January 2026.
Climate change mitigation	Solar Panels at Benians Pavilion	In progress	Awaiting information from Benians Committee Chairman following site visit
	Parish trees	Complete	Priority two tree works to be carried out Jan '26.

	Bus stop maintenance	Ongoing	Clean booked for May 2026.
	Bus stop solar lights	In progress	Grant application sent Nov '25.

26.29.2 To receive an update from the Playground working party

Cllr M Pullen said that a meeting would take place with himself, Cllr Davies and the Assistant Clerk to plan the layout of the new play area now that the area has been defined. It was thought that the playground would be worked on prior to the Community Building.

26.29.3 Badger Close update

Cllr M Pullen was in the process of testing some cameras which will be installed in the orchard to see if any wildlife has been using the area.

26.29.4 Kingswood Copse update

Cllr M Pullen mentioned the placement of the new hedge whips and suggested investigating if any of the trees would benefit from being coppiced.

26.29.5 Footpath working party

Cllr Davies agreed to deliver leaflets to properties backing onto the worst affected footpath.

26.30 OS EVENTS

26.30.1 Village picnic

The Assistant Clerk had investigated the cost of insurance for the dog show (£131.29) and the cost of rosettes (for 4 sets of the 2 tier rosettes with paw print inner tier and personalised tails it works out @ £22.82 including postage). She had acquired a District Councillor grant for the inflatables totalling £1200, and also a £250 grant from Four Marks News towards First Aiders which cost £324.

Cllrs Coulson said that she would organise the dog show again and Cllr Smith had mentioned co-ordinating the car show at a Full Council meeting.

26.30.2 Great British Spring Clean

The annual litter pick co-ordinated by Keep Britain Tidy is organised for the 28th March 2026 10am – 12 noon. A voucher from the Co-Op for £20 had been obtained for refreshments for the event.

26.31 OS NEXT MEETING: 1st April 2026

26.32 OS Meeting closed: 8.24pm

Signature

Date