

HILDENBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Pavilion and Recreation Ground – Riding Lane – Hildenborough – TN11 9HY
Telephone: 07818 329029 email: clerk@hildenboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk
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OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MINUTES on Wednesday 25th March 2026

In Attendance

Cllr Wynne, Cllr Sklavenitis, Cllr Gabriel, Cllr Haugh, Cllr Wills, Cllr McNeil.
Louise Jenner RFO & Parish Clerk

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Cllr Connor**
- 2. DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST – None were declared**
- 3. APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – Held on 28th January 2026**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th January were approved unanimously and signed.

- 4. CLERKS REPORT – Noted**
- 5. Local Maintenance renewal of x 3 monthly contacts**

Councillors agreed and approved x3 monthly contracts and noted to look towards a yearly contract covering all season's work.
- 6. To consider quotations and installation costs of providing a gate for the middle entrance/path to the Recreation Ground.**

Councillors reviewed the quotes received and agreed to proceed with the gate provided by Steelway Fabrications totalling £800.00 and the installation quotation from Unique Fencing which includes reusing the existing side panel, totalling £340.
- 7. To consider the cost and installation of a safety sign for the new middle path gate location.**

Councillors reviewed the quotes received and agreed to proceed with the sign from Your Parking Signs with a post kit totalling £142.55 and the additional cost of £88.60 for installation labour and materials.
- 8. To consider the cost of replacing the Recreational Ground Motorbike Rocker or replacements parts for fitting and repair.**

Councillors reviewed the quotations received and agreed, to proceed with the repair of the item, along with the combined cost of labour quoted by Unique Fencing to deal with item 8 and item 9 (for total cost see item 9). Replacement part approved from Online Playgrounds for £390.00.
- 9. To consider the specialist repair cost of the Rotator at West Wood Park.**

Councillor reviewed the specialist repair quotation which includes the broken bearing part being taken to a specialist company. The Parish clerk has previously contacted many playground manufacturers including those in America to seek a

replacement part since the provider has gone into liquidation, none being found previously. Councillors approved the combined price of £730.00 from Unique Fencing for repairing item 8 and 9.

10. To consider the cost to repairs or replacement the Village Green wooden posts.

Councillors agreed and approved the cost of £128.94 to fix and replace the Village Green posts, with our local contractor carrying out the works. Councillors discussed the addition of reflective strips to the posts could be a helpful for those parking at night. The Parish Clerk to seek costs and report back.

11. To consider the specialist's quotation for replacement part for Nest Swing at West Wood.

Councillor considered the specialist replacement part from the online playground company totalling £768.33 + delivery and VAT and recommends that the Full Parish Council approve this item for replacement at the next Council meeting.

12. To consider the cost and labour to mark out area for the plant survey behind the tennis courts. Councillors considered and approved the costs of wooden markers and the labour cost totalling £121.66.

13. Update on the Noble Tree Road and Rings Hill lamp posts repairs.

The KCC approved repairer had visited the two sites listed above and refused to repair until the vegetation was cut back. Cllr Sklavenitis offered to remove the vegetation around the lamp posts requiring repair.

Councillors reviewed the full lamp post list which includes 32 posts under Parish ownership. Requested that all 32 posts be checked and the Parish Clerk to report back at the next meeting.

14. Consider request from Justin Jones fitness group, new equipment storage.

Councillors discussed at length their concerns regarding safety to members of the public to have large tyres being stored at the base of a tree. Councillors reviewed the steps taken by Justin to secure the items but ultimately felt that due to the risk posed to the public, mainly children, they could not agree to Justin Jones request to have these items left outside and unattended.

15. CURRENT PROJECTS

15.1 West Wood, Ash die back funding application request; social media post, newsletter and keys article for resident information.

– Update within Clerks report. Awaiting a confirmed date from Landscape Service and an update regarding the approval from TMBC. Councillors discussed the timing due to nesting birds.

15.2 Progress report on Recreational Ground Footpath.

Arnold Tarmac attended the site this week to roll the grass edges to the new footpath. Unfortunately, in several areas — particularly at the lower end near the tennis courts — the ground remains too wet. The contractor will continue to monitor conditions and will return to complete the rolling as soon as the ground is suitable.

HPC has now received 50% of the S106 funding back from TMBC.

Councillors noted reports from members of the public that pedestrians have been forced off the path by speeding cyclists. While the path is open to all users, pedestrian do have priority. Councillors agreed the Parish Clerk to obtain prices for Pedestrian Priority signage and include a reminder about pedestrian priority in the next edition of the Keys Magazine.

Councillors also observed that some benches are positioned very close to the path and that several are now too low. The Parish Clerk confirmed that quotations are being sought to address this, an update will be provided at a future meeting.

15.3 West Wood field (in front of football goal area) Veri drain treatment.

– In the process of seeking costs to report back at a future meeting.

15.4 Updates on projects in conjunction with Medway Valley Countryside Partnership for the following areas:

i) Refurbishment of Recreation Ground Pond

Councillors reviewed the costings for the proposed viewing platform provided by the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership and agreed that the full cost, including chestnut palling fencing, to be presented to the Parish Council for consideration.

ii) Recreation Ground Wetland areas

– Tennis Club update following meeting.

The Tennis Club confirmed they would support the two areas not to be mowed for 2026 to allow Medway Valley Countryside Partnership to complete a plant survey for the proposed wetland area.

Councillors reviewed the images of the new footpath where it passes the tennis courts, noting the ground was still too wet for Arnold Tarmac to complete the levelling of the soil between the edge of the footpath and the tennis courts.

iii) West Wood Pond

– HCS requested addition of a gate to the viewing platform.

Councillors reviewed the costs submitted by the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership for the proposed viewing platform and gate. It was agreed that, at this stage, the viewing platform at the Recreation Ground should be prioritised and completed first. Councillors felt it sensible to wait until the Ash Dieback works and the chipped footpath works in West Wood have been completed before proceeding with this project.

iv) Village Green hedgerow and habitat improvement project.

– Update within Clerks report.

Woodland Trust grant application successful, plant delivery due in November. Medway Valley Countryside Partnership are prebooked to oversee the planting with a volunteer group.

16. NEW PROJECTS FOR 2026-28

Refurbishment of War Memorial, stone cleaning, pathway repointing

Three quotations have been received; the Open Spaces Committee recommends the Parish Council proceeding with Military Grave Restorers, as offering the best value at £1800. Kent County Council maintain the War Memorial Maintenance Fund from which The Parish Council will apply to have the above costs re-imbursed.

Refurbishment of Village Green Water Fountain, stone cleaning, paving repairs

Three quotations have been received, and the Open Spaces Committee recommend to the Parish Council they proceed with Military Grave Restorers, as offering the best value at £669.64. The Parish Council will also seek further funding opportunities and potential grant information for historic monuments from Historic England and other organisations.

Councillors proposed contacting Tony Atkins to advise him of the planned works and to ask whether, once the restoration is complete, to formally reopen the site and give a short talk on the Water Fountain's history.

Unused area by doctors' surgery – Keys Magazine – Resident Suggestions

- Suggestions received – Parking, Community Shed, Community Youth Garden

Councillors reviewed the suggestions received to date, which included car parking area, a community food swap shed, and a community youth garden. Members discussed how best to utilise the unused space and agreed that all three ideas could be incorporated into the Hildenborough Infrastructure Plan. It was noted that, in the future, it may be possible to accommodate all of these proposals alongside the previously discussed community orchard. All 3 suggestions could be used to help shape the long-term plans for West Wood.

CCTV upgrades Recreation Ground.

Councillors agreed to add the item to the parish council infrastructure plan.

17. CORRESPONDENCE

- Parking resident letter – Foxbush – Noted

18. MEETING CLOSED – 20.50

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Cllr Wynne, Cllr Sklavenitis, Cllr Gabriel, Cllr Connor, Cllr Wills,
Cllr McNeil, Cllr Haugh**

Next Open Spaces Meeting 27th May 2026

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