

MARESFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee

**Held at 7.00pm on Monday 23rd March 2026 at The Chequers,
Maresfield**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Graham Shaw (GS)	Chair
Terence Brady (TB)	Treasurer
Richard Wane (RW)	Secretary
Jo Lawrance (JL)	
Bruce Milton (BM)	
Tom Merchant (TM)	
Caroline Shaw (CS)	
Tracie Coe (TC)	
Jane Hendy (JaH)	
Jeremy Hendy (JeH)	

PRESENT: GS, TB, RW, JL, BM, TM, TC, JaH, JeH

APOLOGIES: CS

1. QUORUM, CONFLICTS AND PREVIOUS MINUTES

- A quorum (of at least four Trustees) was achieved. GS gave CS's apologies and noted that she will stand down at the AGM but is happy to keep her Facebook administrator role.
- RW disclosed that he has added an entry to the conflicts register as he is now doing some work in the warehouse for Uckfield Foodbank.
- The minutes of the February Committee meeting were APPROVED.

2. MEMBERSHIP

TC has followed up with members for whom we have no email or who have not renewed. These have produced minimal responses but did result in three renewals. Those who have not responded will now show as 'lapsed' members in the membership system.

We now have 111 memberships equating to 133 members. The Committee AGREED that we will continue to allow The Chequers to be a member for free based on them providing us with a meeting room for no charge.

TC raised a question about how to get more members. RW suggested that we at least try to link all stories on FB to the MCG website to draw more traffic to engage people to see what we do. JeH noted that if we had a series of talks this might attract more potential members. We might also consider a hard mail drop to houses – particularly new ones.

We discussed revisiting the paper on how to grow membership that TM had circulated some time ago

AP1: TM will send RW the membership paper and RW will circulate.

RW asked about progress on Gift Aid and TC noted that this remains on her 'to do' list.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

TB provided the account balances, which remain healthy.

- Quiz. TB will confirm the exact amount raised from the quiz for Uckfield Foodbank in due course. RW will put together a note on the quiz for use across FB etc.

AP2: TB to confirm the exact amount raised for the Foodbank and RW will draft the appropriate news item for communication.

- History website expenses. JeH has incurred various expenses for the production of the new history website, as follows:

- domain registration for maresfield.org (10 years Nov 2025-Nov 2035 (via Namecheap) at £98.76
- 1 year Wordpress site hosting (Fasthosts Business Plan) £75.47 (annual)
- Photo Gallery plugin for site: (Freemius Galleryberg) £45.68 (annual)
- Filtering plugin site (Content Views Pro) £30.74 (one off)

Total: £250.65 (some of which is in US\$ due to the provider)

The Fasthosts hosting was on a discounted rate for the first year and will renew at £131.89 per year on 10 March 2027 and the photo gallery plugin is also an annual license at about £178 per year. Additional plug ins may be needed as we get closer to finishing and launching the site.

The Committee APPROVED these expenses.

TB also noted we will soon need to re-consider the funds we had put on a one year deposit. He will bring back more complete information in due course, nearer when renewal is due.

The end of year accounts process will commence from 1 April. If we do not have complete accounts we will show a draft set at the AGM. TB and JL will liaise over asking our accounting expert (Helen) to review the numbers.

AP3: TB/JL to work on ensuring we have our accounting expert ready to review the year end accounts.

4. FOOTPATHS GROUP

- Walking booklet. BM has been visiting the printer regularly but it is still not done. JL will assist.

- Bench. Disappointingly JAAK are not responding to our requests. BM will continue to chase. In the meantime the signpost repair work continues.

- Church community event (July). BM will meet with the Church to find out what level of support might be needed from the Footpaths Group.

AP4: BM to continue to work on the booklet and bench.

5. EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Buxted Symphony Orchestra (BSO). GS summarised his email as sent. He understood that the Church doesn't want anything, including no hire fee. They would be happy to help promote the event too. RW noted he had some concerns about the event, as sent via email. These were mainly around whose event it would be (to cover off items like insurance and serving of alcohol (GS noted it would be MCG's event) and also about the alignment of the event with MCG's aims.

Questions were raised about whether we could act as sponsor – the event being the BSO's – given our lack of experience of organising something like this. Also, whether we could offer members discounted tickets; and whether the event might be a bit 'niche', as well as around timing (season and date, with November suggested) and audience capacity.

AP5: GS will consider the BSO concert further and revert with more details.

- Litter Picking

The event is set for next month.

AP6:

TC to mail members about the event, set for Saturday 11th April from 10am to 12noon.

CS to post on Facebook.

JL will ask Alex to co-ordinate the roads.

BM to purchase new little pickers as necessary and to check we have bins bags from Wealden.

- Village Hall Centenary

JeH will be in touch as needed with Pat Bowles about the event to mark the Centenary of the Village Hall (set for 23rd April 12-3pm) in which he will touch on some of the historical information about Maresfield.

- History Website

JeH noted the website progress as reported to the Committee in a separate email. The site is now at a point where it can go 'live'.

There was discussion about how we might promote the website's launch. (e.g. via Ashdown radio, through FB, member mailing, our existing website etc – as well as the Parish Magazine). We might also line up a few stories that will link to the site.

The Committee noted with great appreciation the website being developed by JeH and circulated for preview.

AP7: JeH and RW will consider a communication plan on how we might promote the new site.

AP8: TM will remove the existing Maresfield history content on the main website.

6. GOVERNANCE

RW had circulated the plan for the AGM, together with the provisional agenda and pre-event communications to members. The launch of the new history site should be a focal point to hopefully drive attendance of members – with 20 needed for a quorum.

RW asked Committee members to confirm to him whether they were willing to stand again for the next year. GS noted that CS has said she will stand down from the Committee.

AP9: RW will adjust the notice and pre-event messaging.

AP10: ALL please confirm to RW that you are happy to be nominated to stay on the Committee for the next year (i.e. after the AGM).

7. PLANNING

We noted that the application for Mill House Farm remains outstanding. TC has spoken with a member about the Limestone Way application. We also noted that we await any application for the land known as MA1.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Bio Diversity. RW has been in touch with Izabela Kennedy of Hoot Ecology who will be conducting a Public Access Ecological Appraisal as outlined in the Proposal document circulated around the Committee. The provisional dates for the bird surveys are 17th April, 15th May and 19th June which will be conducted following British Bird Survey guidelines. All three surveys will follow the same methodology and are spaced to record different species at various stages of the breeding season. The bird and accompanying habitat assessment (from May - August) will be carried out from public rights of way only.

- Annual Parish Council Report. RW thanked those who had commented on the submission for the Report which has now been submitted.

- Insurance. TB reported that the renewal notice for our insurance has been received and premium is rising to £536 (from £460). The Committee AGREED to renew it.

- PA cabling. JeH proposed we purchase some new, longer cabling and cable strip protection for the PA. The Committee AGREED for JeH to make the appropriate purchase.

- Conservation Area. TM noted that the Conservation report is still outstanding. We might at some stage look at how to extend the current Conservation Area.

AP11: RW will share the report with TM together with correspondence that has passed with Cllr, Ian Tysh since the document came to light almost a year ago.

Traffic Survey. JeH referenced the traffic survey message and results he had sent around and showed us the equipment he has used to provide the survey. The aim is to see if we can use the data for input into planning decisions. JeH has bought a 'Telraam' unit which is being used to monitor traffic from his garden over Straight Half Mile (SHM). Outdoor and indoor units are available, the former being more expensive. We discussed whether the Parish Council might have an interest in the data. We also noted that there are not many properties where the use of a unit might be suitable. After further discussion, we agreed to approach another resident with a view to them installing a unit in their garden, overlooking School Hill. With the one already on SHM we might then look to cover Batts Bridge road and Underhill as well, so that we can monitor all three main entries/exits to the village.

The Committee AGREED to purchase two units (including the one purchased by JeH) to see what data we can gather.

AP12: JeH to approach the resident on School Hill about installing a unit.

The Meeting ended at 21:05 pm.

The next Committee meeting will be on **Monday 20th April at 7pm** in The Chequers.

Previous Action Points (rolling list)

AP: TC to send out the letter requesting an email to the 28 residences without an email address - and revert on Gift Aid.

The first point is closed - see March minutes. Gift Aid remains an open topic for action.

AP: BM will continue to work on the bench supplier.

AP: GS will follow up to get some clarity on what it is we are being asked to do in relation to the St. Barts event.

BM will follow up.

AP: RW noted that he would like to run through the AGM process at the next Committee meeting. *Closed: Reviewed and in progress.*

AP: Please respond to the cyber security policies sent around by JeH

AP: RW will confirm back to Izabela Kennedy that we wish to undertake the proposed Bio-Diversity Survey, including the option bird survey.

Closed. RW followed up with Izabela and circulated information to the Committee.

AP: RW to follow-up with Cllr Tysh on the Conservation document and further on the bio-diversity survey.

RW will follow up with TM (and has diarized to follow up with Ian Tysh).