

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH OF CLYMPING

Minutes of the **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** held on
Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 6.30pm at the Church Hall, Clymping

PRESENT: Councillors Colin Humphris (Chairman), Henry Burrell, Jane Mules, Anne Miller & Tim Hibbert, District Councillor Amanda Worne, ten members of the public & Nadine Phibbs (Clerk).

1. **WELCOME** - The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting of the Parish of Clymping and explained the safety procedures.
2. **APOLOGIES** – There were apologies from Councillor David Miranda, County Councillor Jacky Pendleton.
3. **MINUTES** - The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14th May 2024 were received and signed as a true record
4. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT** - The Chairman reported on 2024 – 2025 (1st April – 31st March) as follows:

Introduction

Welcome to this Annual Report for 2024/25.

I would like to thank all our councillors who contributed to the Parish work through the year, the residents who contributed to our Working Groups, the residents who turned out to help with projects around the village, and our District Councillors and County Councillor who have supported us.

Councillors

Through year the Council had 6 elected councillors of our complement of 7: Cllrs Henry Burrell, Tim Hibbert, Colin Humphris, Anne Miller, David Miranda & Jane Mules. One vacancy remains.

Meetings

The Parish Council held 6 full meetings. Our Transport Working Group, Environment Working Group, the new Community Working Group and the Planning Working Group of the Parish Council also met to prepare recommendations for Council to consider. Details are available in the Council Minutes see www.clymping.org.uk .

Planning

The Council considered 46 Planning Applications through the year objecting to 14. Of these objections, 5 related to the Ford Landings proposals for 1500 houses on Ford Airfield where they raised concerns over matters of direct impact on our village. A particular frustration is the ongoing closure of Footpath 175 across the airfield between the village and Ford/Yapton. This appears to be a victim of the planning system despite approval of an alternative route by WSCC Byways.

Generally, we objected to applications that we felt contravened our Neighbourhood Plan policies: that would cause excessive traffic impact on our overstretched roads, could create noise and disturbance to residents or failed to achieve a good design to protect the character of Clymping.

Foreman Homes' proposals for 300 homes remains a major concern especially the lack of approved plans for surface water drainage and for the removal of sewage. Council is also concerned about the apparent lack of willingness of Foreman Homes to engage with us on this development. Council wants to explore alternative options to the proposed community building preferring further upgrading of existing community facilities in the village.

The project to upgrade the A259 junctions from Flansham to Littlehampton through Clymping is much closer to fruition. At the time of writing, residents will be aware of the start preparatory works by the contractor engaged by the county council for the project, although final approval is yet to be given. Talks are also underway between county and Foreman Homes over the detailed design of the new Church Lane roundabout, a condition of the original housing approval. The proposals also include a new roundabout at the Oystercatcher and upgrades to the Ferry Road junction and the Tesco roundabout.

The Rampion 2 Offshore Windfarm received development consent from the Secretary of State on April 4th 2025. Council played an active role throughout the examination of the proposals by the Government Inspector seeking commitments from the developer to minimise impacts on the village such as noise, vibration, dust, works traffic, and lasting damage to agricultural land. The focus will now shift to the detailed plans for a works compound, the drilling and trench operations, and transport through the village.

Council is very aware that with similar timing for the three major developments, Foreman Homes, the A259 project, and Rampion 2, there is a potential for major travel disruption for residents.

Finance (pre-audit)

For the year the Council raised **£19,00.00** through our Precept which is collected as part of your Council tax payments. Total income was **£38,050.29** due to additional income from VAT recovery, bank interest and Community Infrastructure levy (CIL) funds of **£13,816.91**. CIL arises as we have an approved Neighbourhood Plan. This CIL money can be used for allowed projects within the village approved by Council.

Total expenditure was **£30,631.19**. Our main expenditure items (pre-audit) were to run the Council **£8,067.35 (inc. wages £5,945.16 & other items £2,122.19)**, Grants were made to village organisations **£2,145**, Environment matters including pond works **£5,679.18**, the purchase of one village defibrillator **£2,367** and **£10,500** as our share of the total cost with ADC for the new play area at the village hall.

At the end of the year the bank account stood at **£73,326.14**, comprising a General Fund of **£55,766.60**, and reserve funds **£17,559.54** held to be used on specific activities including work on planning the village future, drainage and flooding, improving our village appearance, possible future elections, winter management and resilience.

Of the General Fund, Council is working on projects to improve road safety and drainage along Horsemere Green Lane, a further defibrillator installation and a grant to the Village Hall to help refurbish the kitchen, leaving a sensible contingency for the unexpected.

Principal Activities

1. Clymping Beach

The erosion of the beach continues apace and remains a flooding concern to the local landowners and business owners. They have invested in further reinforcement of the shingle bunds alongside the works undertaken by the Environment Agency. For the wider village the more immediate concern is the loss of the beach as an amenity. Council is engaging with Arun District Council on beach/bathing safety given the extensive concrete and metal debris scattered across the beach. Due to the loss of the car park, we have requested adjustment to the parking signage and restoration of the parking restrictions along Clymping Street.

The shoreline constantly changes, and Council continues to work with the landowners, and authorities to keep this under review.

2. Waste Fire

The fire at the Arun Waste facility on Baird's business park caused major disruption in the village. Fortunately, no one was injured but the fire was a major economic cost for the landowner, and many were very worried about the health implications of the smoke and emissions. Given other similar mixed waste transfer facilities in the village and vicinity, Council is keen to understand the lessons learned from this. We therefore invited WSCC Fire Service and the Environment Agency to the Annual Village meeting to speak about this and answer concerned residents' questions.

3. Highways

Unfortunately, our second application for Community Highways funding to WSCC to upgrade Horsemere Green Lane was unsuccessful. The Transport Workgroup has therefore identified several smaller projects the parish could fund directly itself. We will be raising these with the county highways team, Vistry, the developer at Ford, and hopefully also Foreman homes to move forward.

4. The Village Environment

The Environment Work Group has continued its work of planting around the village including restocking the wildflower meadow on Horsemere Green Lane. Further pond management was undertaken to ensure it has a healthy and diverse ecology of plants, insects, and pond life. It remains quite heavily silted, and Council will be undertaking silt removal as the final stage of drainage improvements along Horsemere Green Lane.

It's good to see "Wild about Clymping" continuing to flourish with local support and grants attracted from environmental organisations. The film night showing of "Rewilding" that featured the experience of the Knepp estate in Sussex was a sell-out, underlining village interest in the natural environment.

5. Community

The new workgroup involving councillors and residents has undertaken important work on an emergency response plan for the village. The plan is due to be published shortly providing advice and guidance on what to do in an emergency.

Public Defibrillators are available at the Village Hall, Climping Park and Waterford Gardens with additional installations in the village under consideration.

Community social activities included coffee mornings, films, a summer event and a skittles evening.

6. Council Representation

Council was represented on the Arun District Association of Local Councils and the West Sussex Association of Local Councils who are actively promoting the role of town and parish councils in the future unitary authority and Sussex mayoral structure. This is a profound local government change eliminating the current district and county councils.

And finally

Our thanks go to Nadine Phibbs our clerk for her hard work and the experience she brings to supporting Council and the community.

5. COMMENTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

There were no comments.

6. REPORTS AND QUESTIONS REFERENCE TO THE FIRE AT ARUN WASTE SERVICES LTD

Reports from:

Ade Carter, District Commander, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Matthew Eaves, Waste Regulation Team Leader (Sussex), Environment Agency

Ade Carter, District Commander, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service advised that this was a significant fire with numerous fire engines and fire fighting equipment including water carriers and plant machinery in attendance. The fire required a multiple agency approach lead by the Fire Service and a major incident was quickly declared. The likely cause was thought to be a hot exhaust within the building but due to the fire and the building collapsed investigations of the cause was hampered.

Unfortunately, due to the significance of the fire and the building collapsed, the fire took a number of days to extinguish. The A259 was closed for most of day one so that water could be transported to the site safely. It was recognised that this was highly disruptive for the community.

Matthew Eaves, Waste Regulation Team Leader (Sussex), Environment Agency provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled Arun Waste Services Ltd, Timeline of regulatory inspections. The presentation stated that fire safety issues had already been highlighted at the site up to two years before the fire. It had been decided to serve an enforcement notice in April 2024 as insufficient action had been taken to comply with permit conditions. The fire occurred shortly before the enforcement notice would have come into force. The company are now in liquidation.

The presentation was followed by some questions:

Concern was raised regarding the contents of the fire's black cloud over the site and village. A dampened mist was used to suppress the particles within the smoke to reduce any health risk.

Have lessons been learnt following the incident.

Should a similar incident happen, it was accepted that better communication particularly with residents was needed.

It was noted that there are 130 waste sites across East & West Sussex, most of which meet regulations and hold a Fire Prevention Plan (FPP). Arun Waste Services did not hold an adequate FPP.

Concern was expressed by the site's landlord that he was not informed of the non-compliance of the Enforcement notice before the fire.

At the request of the Parish Council, Matthew Eaves agreed to send the site assessments for all the waste sites with Clymping and immediate surrounding area.

A report has been produced by the Fire Services regarding how the fire was managed.

Ade Carter & Matthew Eaves were thanked for their attendance at the meeting.

7. RESOLUTIONS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN – none received.

8. PUBLIC Question Time –

There were no further questions.

9. CLOSE - The Chairman closed the Annual Meeting of the Parish at 7.30pm

Minutes to be considered at the next Meeting of the Parish and signed as a true record:

Chairman:.....

Date:.....