



Puttenham Parish Council

MEETING MINUTES of Puttenham Annual Assembly held on Monday 19 May 2025 at Marwick Village Hall, School Lane, Puttenham

Attendees: Councillor Mike Blundell Jones – Chairman
Councillor Will Yule – Vice Chairman
Councillor Rob Creer
Councillor Debbie Mitchell
Councillor Jane Perowne
Mrs B Weddell - Clerk

Cllr Sallie Barker, Anna de Filippis and one members of the public were in attendance.

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Cllr Matt Furniss

1. Reports from County and Borough Councillors

Cllr Barker reported that the Local Government Devolution is progressing. Surrey County Council had proposed two unitary authorities with an easy/west and east and eight of the Boroughs and Districts had proposed three. It will be the government decision. In the meantime, Guildford Borough Council is working closely with Waverley.

2. Report from the School Head

Mrs de Filippis reported that it was coming up to a year of the school being in the Good Shepherd Trust. A consultation regarding the closing of St Mary's in Shackleford consultation would finish that week. She said that parking had greatly improved since the installation of the new car park, which had eased traffic issues generally. They were continuing with enrichment activities, including the allotment and forest school.

2. Chair's Annual Report

The Chair gave his report, which is appended to these minutes. He thanked the members of the parish council for their help during the year.

3. Councillors' Annual Reports

Annual reports from individual councillors are appended to these minutes.

Chairman's Annual Report

The most highly productive year the Parish Council has ever had, and we have now become known as the Council that gets things done!

Thanks to the best and most hard-working team of councillors, the Parish has ever had.

So, a massive thank you to Will Yule, Jane Perowne, Rob Creer and Debbie Mitchell.

Together with 2 new GBC Councillors – Matt Furniss and Sallie Barker (who is now also Mayor of Guildford) – we hope to make more positive inroads to GBC and improve its poor services and response times, which has sadly been lacking for a number of years.

Unfortunately, we have had to increase the parish precept to account for the GBC services that they used to provide.

However we still hold GBC grants that we will expire by March 25, which they still have to honour, despite their lack of funds for:-

War memorial	£7778
Bus shelter	£1925
Basketball	£2250

After the retirement of Col. Leslie Clarke due to ill health in September, we have welcomed Beverley Weddell into the role. She is a highly qualified and very experienced Parish Clerk and she has already made a huge difference since she joined us in October.

Your Fund Surrey – Community Projects

Our application to YFS for the new Community Transport Hub was finally approved after 3 ½ years of negotiations for £185,000 with £10,000 coming from the PC and local community and started in early March and opened for use on 1st May. Making a large, tarmacked car park and access lane with passing places, together with Car Electrical recharging points and a cycle shelter.

We are still waiting for the electric recharging points to be connected but like everywhere these contractors are in huge demand.

Recreation Report

Football Club:

Puttenham FC has seen remarkable progress over the past year, securing victories in four matches against Elstead and one against Aldro Dads. With triumphs in each game, we now proudly display two trophies at the Good Intent. These matches not only bolster the local pub but also foster a strong camaraderie among the Puttenham dads.

Despite the challenges of winter, we've managed to keep the games going every week, thanks to the lights and new equipment like the spiker, roller, and harrow provided by club subs and the Parish Council. The pitch is showing continued improvement, and we anticipate further enhancements in grass quality and drainage over the next year. We have a solid team in place, and we eagerly await an upcoming dry summer.

Our active roster boasts 35 to 40 local players, with an average of 14 to 18 players on the field throughout the year. This past Christmas, we spontaneously organised a Dads, Sons, and Daughters match on Christmas Eve morning, drawing over 30 participants, much to the delight of the village youth and spectators. This successful event is now slated to become a regular village tradition, open to all.

Looking ahead, we have several social events lined up for the summer, including an inter-match 5-a-side tournament with a BBQ and refreshments afterward.

Tennis:

The Tennis Club counts approximately 30 members, with court bookings managed online and annual subscriptions of £40 for Puttenham Residents paid via Stripe. A local coach now leads a ladies' group midweek, and a mixed group meets on Monday evenings. For further details on membership and coaching, please reach out to Will Yule.

Cricket Nets:

The newly established cricket net has become a popular spot for village youth, available for hire to residents for £45 annually. For inquiries, please contact Will Yule.

Playground, Outdoor Gym & Skate Park:

These facilities remain well-used by villagers of all ages, with the recent addition of a transport hub making access easier for older members of the community. Regular inspections and maintenance ensure their upkeep.

Equipment:

With particular thanks to Matt Furniss the Parish Council has invested in a new Ride-on Lawn mower as the one kindly donated to us by Billy Bissett has now given up the ghost. This will ensure the large grass areas around the football pitch and bonfire field can be economically maintained properly throughout the year.

Acknowledgements:

Special recognition is due to Rob Creer, whose tireless efforts have maintained the grounds surrounding these facilities in impeccable condition. Visitors have likened the quality of our football pitch to renowned venues like the Theatre of Dreams and The Emirates. Rob's ongoing dedication to clearing and maintaining these areas will continue throughout the growing season over the next six months.

Puttenham Downs and School Dew Pond Report May 2024

Puttenham Downs and Dew Pond

PPC is now managing the areas to the left and to the right of the Hogs Back Café and continue to create a Chalky Downland.

In October 2023 the organisation Buglife, agreed to pay for the area to the right of the café to be cut and collected, and then in November also agreed to finance the same work for the area to the left of the café. Hamptons Estate carried out the work very successfully and we hope to have the same set up for Autumn 2024.

Further trees affected by Ash Die Back have had to be removed from the Downs due to safety concerns.

Additional fruit trees were added to the Orchard during the last year, with the existing trees bearing fruit in 2023.

In August / September 2023 a new dew pond was installed up on the Downs. This was allowed to fill up naturally with rainwater and due to the weather, this did not take very long! In January 2024, the ARC (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation) Trust, came and levelled the pond as well as buried some of the exposed liner. ARC also cleared some of the vegetation on the Downs and made scrub piles in the woodland, creating more wildlife habitats.

Due to the wet winter, the pond has been near enough full for the last few months. In May 2024, pond plants and weed from ponds where no invasive species are present, have been introduced to the pond which will hopefully encourage pond life to inhabit it. Pond skaters have already been spotted on the pond.

There is also evidence that wildlife is using the pond.

September 2023 was a busy month as the Butterfly Conservation Society came for a day to manage the existing scrapes, which have been planted with Kidney Vetch, which is essential in the breeding cycle of the rare Small Blue Butterfly. New scrapes were also created.

As well as the annual cut and collect program, a possible project for 2024 is the installation of a rainwater collection system on the Café with the option of adding an irrigation system, to the fruit trees and dew pond.

School Lane Dew Pond

In January 2024, the ARC Trust came and carried out some management around the School Lane pond, including clearing branches, overhanging it. Due to the icy conditions, it wasn't possible to clear any of the invasive New Zealand Pygmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*).

Great Crested Newts have again been confirmed as being resident in the pond.

Communication Update

Overall, the Parish Council is committed to keeping residents informed and updated on all issues and events within the Parish.

The website works well as a communication tool, together with the Chairman's monthly report in the Parish Magazine, which is particularly useful for Parishioners with no computer access.

Important news and information between Council meetings is flagged up on Facebook's Puttenham Community Board and also on the Housewives of Puttenham WhatsApp Group. The website is in the process of some adaptation in the area of Governance and Regulations where some information requires updating or adding.

Marwick Hall Update

Following decades of dedication to the welfare and upkeep of The Marwick Hall, Patrick Yarnold, Caroline Yarnold, John Webster and Maggie Forwood have stepped down as Trustees of the Hall. Jackie Webster remains as a guiding influence for the new Trustees now in place. We are enormously grateful to them all for their hard work over such a long period.

Caty Goodwin has taken the role of Trustee Chair, and Adam Calver, Simon Pritchard, Will Yule and Jackie Webster are also Trustees.

The Hall is in good shape financially and physically and there is a new key system in place. Bookings are made by email, as before and the key code is issued to hirers within a time frame. There are plans for Wi-Fi to be introduced and the re-introduction of the Safari Supper, which is a popular and much-loved institution.