

# The Orchards' and Margaret Marsh Parish Council (Group)

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## Minutes of the 177<sup>th</sup> meeting of Full Council Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025, at 6:45pm at Manston Village Hall

These minutes do not constitute a true record until ratified at the next meeting of the Parish Council.  
Minute item numbers run consecutively throughout the Parish Council year.

**Present:** Cllr G. Stokes (Chair), Cllr C. Christensen, Cllr D. Woodruffe

**In attendance:** B. Barker (Clerk), Cllr J Somper and four members of the public.

The meeting started at 6:45pm

### 1/25 Election of Chair

Cllr Stokes announced he would be stepping down as Chair. Cllr Christensen was proposed by Cllr Stokes and seconded by Cllr Woodruffe, with all in agreement. Cllr Christensen then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### 2/25 Election of Deputy Chair

Cllr Stokes was proposed as Deputy Chair by Cllr Christensen and seconded by Cllr Woodruffe, with all in agreement. Cllr Stokes then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### 3/25 Chair's welcome

The Chair thank fellow Councillors for their support and welcomed everyone to the meeting

### 4/25 Public Participation

No items were raised by members of the public present.

### 5/25 To receive and consider apologies for absence

None received

### 6/25 To receive and consider applications for co-option to the council.

In line with current governance arrangements for The Orchards and Margaret Marsh Grouped Parish Council, the joint parishes should have up to seven councillors - see data below\*.

- i An application was received from Mr James Elliott. It was **RESOLVED** to **APPOINT** Mr Elliott to fill the vacancy for East Orchards and Hargrove. Cllr Elliott then signed the Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting as a Council member for the rest of the session
- ii An application was received from Mr Andy Tebbutt-Russell. It was **RESOLVED** to **APPOINT** Mr Tebbutt-Russell to fill the vacancy for West Orchards. Cllr Tebbutt-Russell then signed the Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting as a Council member for the rest of the session
- iii As a result of these co-options, two vacancies remain.

Parish	Revised No. of councillors	Electorate 2021	Est Electorate 2026	Est Electors per councillor 2026	Current Councillors	Vacancies
East Orchard	4	115	119	40	3	1
Margaret Marsh	1	31	32	32	1	0
West Orchard	2	59	60	30	1	1

[\*Data not presented at the meeting but referred to and included here for clarity]

Signed Chair .....

Date.....

iv Elector representation across the parishes is as follows:

- Member for Margaret Marsh: Cllr Gary Stokes
- Members for East Orchards and Hargrove: Cllr Cliff Christensen, Cllr Daniel Woodruffe, and Cllr James Elliott,
- Member for West Orchards Andy Tebbutt-Russell,

**Action: Clerk to send information and policy pack, etc. to new Councillors**

**Action: Clerk to send DC Register of Interest (ROI) updates to all new Councillors**

**7/25 To receive any declarations of interest and consider any requests for special dispensations under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011**

i There were no declarations of interest from Members in relation to items on the Agenda.

**8/25 To receive and resolve to approve the Minutes of the 2024 AGM held on May 13<sup>th</sup> 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as true records of the 2024 AGM held on May 13<sup>th</sup> 2024. The minutes were duly signed by the Council Chair.

**9/25 Annual items for review:**

- i It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the adoption of the Code of Conduct
- ii Members were reminded of the pledges made within the Code of Conduct in terms of Civility and Respect

**10/25 To resolve to approve the re-adoption of all existing policies:**

All councillors **RESOLVED** to **READOPT** the following policies:

- Standing Orders 2025
- Scheme of Delegation 2025
- Financial Regulations 2025
- Co-option Policy 2025
- Grant Awarding Policy 2025
- Privacy Notice 2022
- Planning Procedure Policy 2022

**11/25 To resolve to adopt the following updated policies:**

All councillors **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the following policies:

- Equality and Diversity Policy 2025
- Freedom of Information Policy 2025
- Data Protection Policy 2025

**Action: Clerk to post new policies onto Council website**

**12/25 Parish Council Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024-2025 legal documents**

- i The Certificate of Exemption AGAR 2024/25 (page 3) was duly signed by the Chair and RFO in the presence of all Members.
- ii Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 (page 5) was duly signed by the Chair and RFO in the presence of all Members.
- iii Accounting Statement 2024/25 (page 6) was duly signed by the Chair and RFO in the presence of all Members.
- iv The Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25 (30 April 2025) carried out by Nicola Phillip was reviewed by the Council.
- v The Asset Register 2024/25 was agreed and duly signed by the Chair
- vi The Bank Reconciliation for full year 2024/25 was agreed and duly signed by the Chair

Signed Chair .....

Date.....

- vii The Elector's Rights Statement, prepared under Regulation 15(2.b) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, was duly signed by the Chair and will be published on the website along with the full AGAR report and audit documentation. The AGAR public inspection period was confirmed as 3rd June to 12th July 2025

viii It was confirmed that the O&MM website had moved to a .gov.uk domain address in line with JPAG/SAPPP guidelines.

**Action: Elector's Rights Statement to be posted to the council website and parish noticeboards**

**Action: AGAR and Financial Reports to be posted to the council website**

**13/25 To receive and approve the Minutes of the 176<sup>th</sup> meeting held on Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup> 2025**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true record of the 176<sup>th</sup> meeting held on Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup> 2025. The minutes were duly signed by the Council Chair.

**14/25 To receive and consider the Clerk's Report on past subject matters arising from the minutes:**

*The Clerk submitted a written report before the meeting. See OMM 177 Report Pack - Appendix 1-A.*

- i **Clerk's computer:** The budget for 25-26 includes provisions for a new laptop, business software, and cloud storage.

**Action: Clerk to prepare report to help identify the most cost-effective provision for this.**

- ii **Flooding:** It was noted that flooding continues to be an issue across the parishes and that, following the resignation of Cllr Boid, a new Flood Warden is required. Cllr Andy Tebbutt-Russell has volunteered to take on the role of Flood Warden for the Council. All councillors remain committed to being vigilant and liaising with residents to pre-emptively address and resolve issues as they arise.

**Action: Cllr Tebbutt-Russell volunteered to act as Flood Warden and will report at the next meeting**

**Action: Clerk to send details of Dorset Council Flood Alters, etc., to Cllr Tebbutt-Russell.**

- iii **Parish litter picks:** Cllr Woodruffe has been liaising with DC regarding potential locations for litter bins and whether it is possible to secure additional bins for the parish group. Furthermore, consideration is being given to where to position the litter pick provisions around the parishes, with placement near the various parish noticeboards being the preferred sites.

**Action: Cllr Woodruffe volunteered to continue as the champion for parish Litter Pick and will report at the next meeting**

**15/25 To receive the Chair's report:**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and for the new Councillors joining the Council.

As an annual review had been given as part of the Annual Parish Meeting, the details were not repeated (See OMM 177 Report Pack – Section 2 - Appendix 2-A). No other issues were raised.

**16/25 To receive a report from County Councillor: Cllr Jane Somper**

*See OMM 177 Report Pack – Section 2. Section 2 - Appendix 2-B*

Cllr Somper presented the annual report for the Beacon Ward and Dorset Council.

Cllr Somper noted that she and fellow rural councils continue to push hard for increased funding for local rural transport and planning enforcement. Attention was drawn to the community highway officer, Patrick Carpenter, who patrols local roads, identifying potholes, damaged verges, and blocked drainage, as well as the waste collection team led by supervisor Darren Johnson.

It was noted in the discussion that concerns had been raised about some local planning applications, but due to a lack of resources, little or no action had been taken. Cllr Somper reminded the council that while an enforcement case is being investigated, the planning officers cannot discuss it publicly in case there is legal action, but she agreed that an acknowledgement of their examination of the issue would be helpful.

Signed Chair .....

Date.....

**17/25 To receive Parish updates:**

- i East Orchard: nothing to report
- ii Margaret Marsh: Cllr Stokes updated the meeting that he had undertaken the risk assessment for the 2025-26 insurance report. The pond is currently well protected by fencing and warning signs. Consideration will be given at future meetings as to how to progress with the pond.
- iii West Orchard: Cllr Woodruffe noted that he had attended a Palm Sunday service at St Lukes and had the chance to talk to residents about the current vacancies for this parish.

**18/25 To discuss any Highways issues:**

- Potholes on East Orchards Road and other roads were discussed. It was noted that a road truck with a low camera had been seen around the area, which might mean that the roads are being surveyed.
- Cllr Elliott volunteered to champion roads and footpaths on behalf of the council and residents.
- Members of the public are encouraged to report any new faults or existing defects to Dorset Council at [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/report-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/report-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement)

**Action: Cllr Elliott agreed to champion roads and footpaths for the and will report at the next meeting**

**19/25 To comment on Planning Applications:**

*See OMM 177 Report Pack - Appendix 1-B.*

**20/25 Financial Matters**

*See OMM 177 Report Pack - Appendix 1-C*

**20.a/25 Bank Reconciliation:**

Bank reconciliation for 1<sup>st</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> April 2024 was **APPROVED** and **SIGNED** by the Chair

**20.b/25 Payments made and payments for invoices received:**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the payments with all in agreement. These payments will be paid via bank transfer.

**20.c/25 2025 Asset Register**

The 2025 Asset Register had been agreed as a part of the 2025 AGAR

**20.d/25 Parish Council Insurance for June 1<sup>st</sup> 2025-May 31<sup>st</sup> 2026**

Following a review of alternative providers, it was recommended that the Zurich insurance policy through Community First remained the best value for the council. It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the renewal of this insurance policy. The Councillors considered whether to commit for one or three years and agreed on a one-year commitment at £244.80 to maintain flexibility in case anything changes.

**20.e/25 Data Protection Fee**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** registration of the Council with the ICO and pay the £40 fee.

**21/25 Council Banking**

Changes to the Unity Trust Bank, including access and authorisation of signatories, were minuted at the 176<sup>th</sup> meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2025.

**Action: Clerk and Cllr Woodruffe to complete required banking paperwork**

**22/25 Communications:**

- i Cllr Woodruffe agreed to continue championing communication and social media for the Council and reviewed the social media options identified to date. Cllr Tebbett-Russell volunteered to work with Cllr Woodruffe on exploring communications opportunities.

**Action: Cllr Woodruffe and Cllr Tebbett-Russell to report on Communications at next meeting.**

- ii The clerk confirmed that the website and email accounts had been transitioned to the Gov.uk domain. The council has access to the previous email address for 1yr to facilitate change.

**Action: Clerk to circulate new address to all Parish Council contacts.**

Signed Chair .....

Date.....

**23/25 Training:**

No new training undertaken.

**Action: Clerk to send new Cllrs links to DAPTC training portal.**

**24/25 Correspondence:**

None received

**25/25 Matters pertinent:**

Cllr Somper noted that she would be preparing a briefing paper on proposed changes to the Integrated Care Board and NHS Dorset. No other matters were discussed.

**26/25 To note any decision/actions taken by Parish Clerk**

As per "Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, Part 3, Paragraph 6-10" Record of decisions and access to documents (for reporting purposes only). None reported.

**27/25 To record any items for the next meeting agenda:**

None received

**28/25 To record date of the next meeting:** Date to be confirmed.

**Action: Cllrs to liaise on scheduling 2025-26 meetings.**

**Action: Clerk to check availability of Manston Village Hall and confirm meeting date**

**The meeting closed at 7:30 pm.**

These draft minutes will be approved as a true record of the meeting when signed by the Chair.

Signed (Chair) \_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Recorded by: Beverly Barker: Clerk & RFO to the Parish Council

Email: Parish Clerk [clerk@orchardsandmargaretmarsh-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@orchardsandmargaretmarsh-pc.gov.uk)

**Further information:**

Parish Council information is available at [www.theorchardsandmargaretmarsh-pc.org.uk](http://www.theorchardsandmargaretmarsh-pc.org.uk). Please report issues regarding highways and footpaths to Dorset Council: Dorset Council Website: [at www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/)

Signed Chair .....

Date.....