

# ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

[www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk)

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

Mrs Suzanna Dry CILCA

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Alfriston War Memorial Hall

Old School House

The Tye, Alfriston, BN26 5TL

14<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## **Minutes of a meeting of Alfriston Parish Council (APC), held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 7.15pm**

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### **Present:**

Cllr J Watkins (Vice Chair)

Cllr R Embry

Cllr S Daw

Cllr A Harris

### **In attendance:**

Mrs Suzanna Dry – Parish Clerk & RFO

There were approximately 8 members of the public present.

### **245. Chair's Welcome**

In Cllr Monteath-Wilson's absence, Cllr Watkins as Vice-Chair chaired the meeting.

### **246. Public Questions**

A question was raised about the village post box and what is happening with this. The Clerk advised that since the planning application for a new post box in the village store had been approved in January, APC have been in touch with the project managers for Royal Mail who will be coordinating the work. We are advised that contractors have been instructed to carry out the works and are in the process of booking this in. The works are not straightforward and there may be a couple of stages to them. The project manager will keep us updated as work progresses.

### **247. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Monteath-Wilson, Cllr Parkinson & Cllr Spring.

### **248 . Declaration of interest**

Cllr Daw declared an interest as she is a Church Warden, trustee of Children with Cancer and the Women's Institute. Cllr Watkins declared an interest as she is a member of AEG & Heartstart.

### **249. Minutes**

Cllr Harris proposed and Cllr Embry seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the APC meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025, were a true and accurate record. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Chair duly sign the minutes as an accurate record.

Cllr David Greaves of Wealden D.C. presented his report to the meeting. A copy is attached to the minutes. [Appendix A.](#)

## 250. Finance

250.1 To approve the Statement of Finances for March 2025 as attached to the Agenda. Cllr Embry proposed & Cllr Daw seconded a motion these be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**.

250.2 To approve Section 1 of the Annual Return for 2024/25. Cllr Harris proposed and Cllr Daw seconded a motion these be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**.

250.3 To approve Section 2 of the Annual Return for 2024/25. Cllr Daw proposed and Cllr Embry seconded a motion these be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**.

250.4 To confirm sight and approval of the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2024/25. Cllr Harris proposed and Cllr Daw seconded a motion these be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**.

250.5 To confirm sight and approval of the Year End Internal Audit Report for 2024/25. Cllr Harris proposed and Cllr Embry seconded a motion these be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**.

## 251. APC Mail Box

The Clerk sent a report on options to Cllrs, which is attached to the minutes. [Appendix B](#).

These were discussed and it was unanimously **AGREED** to continue with the internal post box in the AWMH and request that the AWMH Committee check the mail when management are away, so that there is no disruption to the post. Also to continue to keep APC informed when management are away. **Action Point 1**. Cllr Watkins has a key to the post box and can check the post when the Clerk is away.

## 252. APC Events

VE Day Afternoon Tea - This is now being held on Bank Holiday Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May. Cllr Daw advised the risk assessment has been done and will be printed off this week.

Cuckmere Valley Sustainable Event - Cllr Spring confirmed in his report that this has now been put back to next year.

Car Boot Sale for W.I. - This event has been cancelled.

## 253. Report on Highways & Twittens – Cllr Embry

### 1) ESCC roadworks

These have been rescheduled to take place between the 2nd and 13th June. These include:

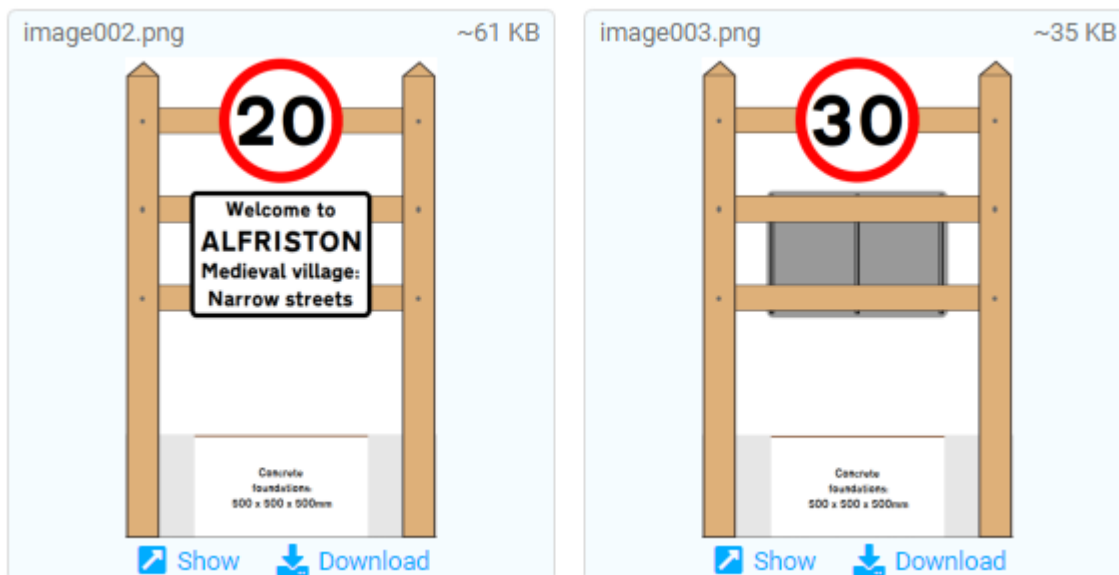
- the erection of new/replacement gates on the north and southbound approach to the village denoting the change to a village-wide 20mph speed limit. All existing 30mph signs throughout the village will also be replaced with 20mph signs;
- repainting of yellow lines through the village centre from The Willows Car Park to The Tye. Lines are to be in heritage primrose paint (colour 310) and a width of 50mm;
- Historically the routing of any diversions has caused some issues, but as the closures/diversions are overnight we do not anticipate any problems.

*Note that the dates provided for the meeting were as per the email correspondence from Balfour Beatty, but have been amended to 2<sup>nd</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June in the physical letter that has been sent out to residents following the APC meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> April.*

## 2) Additional Signs

Previously there had been discussions of secondary signage as not all of the information desired was able to be included on the new gates to the village. Suggestions included brown 'tourist' style signs, which would act to enhance the behaviour modification by highlighting / reinforcing the village's environment, culture, and attractions.

The finalised wording on the gates is '20mph Welcome to Alfriston, Medieval village: Narrow Streets':



It is my personal opinion that this wording is sufficient, and that additional signage would be 'overkill', potentially spoiling what it is that we are trying to preserve. Also, any additional signage would have to be funded by the APC which I do not believe is an effective use of funds. Therefore, it is my recommendation that we do not pursue this. Cllrs discussed and **AGREED** unanimously not to pursue the additional signage.

## 3) Speedwatch

Later in the year once road users are familiarised with the changes to the speed limits approaching and throughout the village, Speedwatch will be reintroduced.

## 4) Parking issues

We do not expect any update on the decriminalisation of parking in Wealden until a Unitary Authority is set up. Residents affected by parking issues should report them to Operation Crackdown on [www.operationcrackdown.org](http://www.operationcrackdown.org) or call 101.

## 5) Exceat Bridge Project

The two lane bridge is now fully funded and the project will be going ahead as originally planned, with the aim to start construction in Spring 2026.

## 254. Report on Allotments & Recreation Ground – Cllr Daw.

### Allotments

Last week it was reported to me about glass by the gate next to the AEG shed, Chris and I found the glass and on removing the glass we found it to be long sheets about 4ft long and about 3 ft wide we felt this was too dangerous to put in our car to take to the tip without safety equipment so we have laid it against the side of the AEG shed. On removing our thoughts were a recycling bin or tip, it does need urgent attention. The Clerk was asked to arrange removal of the glass. **Action Point 2.** The rubble still remains although the Clerk has sent e mail to the allotment holder giving them until 30<sup>th</sup> May to get this removed. Sue Woodgate has mowed the pathways at a cost of £60.00 which the PC

have agreed to pay so thank you Sue. There is now a notice board on the AEG shed with rules and regulations of the allotments. Allotment Water Reading: 01848.

#### Playground

Thank you Anna Franklin for your correspondence regarding a Playground committee, we do not need a committee, but a monthly update would be helpful from the WhatsApp group please. We have our yearly Rospa inspection in June.

#### Recreation ground

I attended the Alfriston Cricket Club committee meeting earlier this month and very happy to report we have a good team but they are always looking for new members, it was decided that the pavilion needs decorating on the outside and the inside needs to have a deep spring clean - any offers of help would be most welcome. Once this is done I will do an inspection as it should be done once a year. Thank you to the Cricket Club Committee for their hard work we are so lucky to have such an active club.

#### **255. Report on Public Transport – Cllr Harris**

We have recently received notice from East Sussex County Council of the changes in bus services following a grant received by them of £41.4 million. I have read through the proposals, and as far as I can tell there is no change to any of the bus services servicing Alfriston – either improvements or cuts. Full details of the proposals affecting other parts of Wealden District can be found on the East Sussex C.C. website at <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roads-transport/public/bus-service-improvement-plan/bus-service-changes>

#### **256. Report on Environment & Countryside – Cllr Harris reported**

Cllr Harris attended the recent Flood Forum Meeting along with John Hurwood.

I have been notified by Southern Water of two incidents since our last meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March, both relating to what they define as “genuine storm overflow releases that are likely to have impacted water quality at Seaford”. These took place on 15<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April after rainfall of just over ½” and approximately ¾” respectively. I find it somewhat alarming that in this fairly dry period, the drainage system cannot cope with a fairly small amount of rain.

On weather statistics, we have had 1 ½ inches of rain this month, compared with 2 ½ last year, and in the six weeks since the last APC meeting, 2 ½ inches have fallen, compared with 4 inches for the same period last year. Rain has fallen on 8 days, compared with 25 last year.

River Bank downstream from the White Bridge. We received late notice on 15<sup>th</sup> April from the Water Management Alliance of the closure of the footpath from 16<sup>th</sup> April for up to 21 days to allow for spreading more topsoil and re-seeding. In fact the footpath reopened after only a few days after the work had been completed. There are however notices asking the public to keep off the top of the bank and walk along the bottom to allow the seed to germinate and take. The lower ground currently is quite firm. In spite of the late notification, I would like to record that Revai Kinsella of the Water Management Alliance does an excellent job in keeping information flowing and in responding rapidly to enquiries.

Nothing to report on Public Rights of Way – I did come across a small tree blocking the path near the campsite – but was able to pull it to one side!

#### **257. Report on Strategic Planning – Cllr Parkinson**

Cllr Parkinson's report was attached to the Agenda. The Clerk read out the report and asked Cllrs for their comments. Cllrs were happy with the draft Emergency Plan and had nothing to add. Cllr Watkins will get in touch with Cllr Parkinson regarding the emergency number. **Action point 3.**

## **258. Report on Tye – Cllr Spring**

Cllr Spring gave his apologies and sent in the following report:

### **1. Final Road Surface Repairs.**

I surveyed the last small pot hole and sunken part of the road. The Pothole is easy to repair but the sunken part is where a utility is feeding a property which is part of the reason why it has sunk. Where as previously I said we could do this repair without outside help, the fact there is a service directly below that could easily be damaged, it would be prudent to get a specialist company to do the works. This week I will discuss with our Clerk the speediest and best way to take this forward. It should not be too expensive and not take long. On this note I will contact the property owner adjacent to the repair to offer my apologies and arrange to remove the materials he has kindly been storing for us.

### **2. Yellow Line Painting.**

I plan to get the line painting in the turning circle completed during this window of fine weather.

### **3. Water fountain investigation.**

I took over from Neil with him saying that at the coffee house conversations a drinking water fountain on the Tye was a desirable asset. I have made investigations into costs to find out how much a new Heritage style fountain would be . The installation is not the biggest part, it's the year on year cost of maintenance including water testing. I will share the costs with my fellow councillors and bring to the next meeting. But am not hopeful that it's a viable option without a grant that supports the upkeep. I will continue to explore.

### **4. Show case event.**

Following a recent meeting with Matthew Jackson one of the key sponsors for this event, we agreed that it would be better to plan for a date next year rather than put something together quickly now. This will enable an event to be created that the village will be proud of, that showcases our beautiful village to its best. Thanks to all my fellow councillors for their enthusiasm for such an event. Watch this space.

### **5. Gritting, frost.**

We made it through. Planning to improve for next year from lessons learned.

Update on Damaged Bollard - The Clerk has contacted the company that supplied the concrete bollards and asked them to quote to remove and replace the bollards. We have not heard back so this will be chased up. **Action Point 4.**

Overflowing Rubbish Bins - Cllr Daw advised that the bins on The Tye are overflowing with rubbish. The previous owners of The Shot café provided a bin for their customers, which did help the situation. Cllrs agreed to ask The Clerk to write to The Shot and ask if they can provide a bin for their customers to use. **Action Point 5.**

## **259. Report from Planning Committee – Cllr Watkins.**

259.1 Applications considered by APC Planning Committee since last meeting:

**Ref. No: SDNP/25/00973/NA** - Pyewacket, 19 Deans Rd, Alfriston, BN26 5XJ. **No Objection**  
Non material amendment – change in cladding material and construction of recycling store.

259.2 Applications notified or awaiting decision from SDNPA  
None notified.

259.3 Enforcement updates from SDNPA - None

## **260. Reports from Outside Bodies**

260.1 Heartstart - Cllr Watkins advised a second defibrillator awareness evening is being planned for September by the Eastbourne Community First Responders. A First Responder has been recruited for the village and is being trained.

260.2 Alfriston Emergency Group - No report.

260.3 Flood Forum - John Hurwood & Cllr Harris attended the Flood Forum meeting this afternoon. John Hurwood advised the Environment Agency have given notice they will not provide a pump going forwards. Wealden D.C. are being approached to see if they will fund it. The E.A. have to have spare pumps and it is possible Alfriston will have use of a spare pump. Last year it cost the E.A. £10,000 in fuel alone for the pump at Alfriston. E.A. will look at various organisations who could help fund the fuel costs.

260.4 Neighbourhood Watch - No report.

260.5 Twinning Committee - Report sent out with the Agenda and read out at the meeting.

260.6 St Andrew's Church - Sad news that Christian is leaving the Church on 25<sup>th</sup> May, there will be extra cake in Church on this day! Cllr Daw is arranging a collection for him. Tickets for the Music Festival in June are selling well.

260.7 Clergy House - Report read out at the meeting and attached with the minutes. [Appendix C.](#)

260.8 Alfriston War Memorial Hall - No report.

260.9 Speedwatch - No report, currently on hold.

260.10 Events - Cllr Daw will give the Clerk contact details of the group organising the Dog Show and Blessing of the Animals on Bank Holiday Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August. **Action Point 6.**

## **261. Correspondence to The Clerk – Asking for permission from the council.**

Wedding Catering Vehicles on The Glebe – 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025. One van at a time and for disabled parking on the hardstanding outside the hall. Cllrs **AGREED** for catering vehicles on the proviso that it is only one at a time, but did **NOT AGREE** to disabled parking outside the hall. This space is for drop off and pick up of disabled guests only. The Clerk was asked to write and advise accordingly. **Action Point 7.**

## **262. Public Questions**

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.25pm and opened the floor to public questions. The meeting was then re-opened at 8.27pm.

**263. Date of next meeting** – The next meeting will be held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025 in the AWMH at 7:15pm

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.30pm

Please see Appendices attached below and/or on the website

## **Report –Alfriston PC - Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

### **1) Plan submitted for proposed local government reorganisation in East Sussex**

(Information as at 25<sup>th</sup> March'25) An Interim Plan for the proposed shake up of local government has been submitted on behalf of all the councils in East Sussex. The government wants unitary councils to replace two-tier government in areas which have both county and borough or district councils.

The Interim Plan drawn up by the six local authorities in East Sussex – East Sussex County Eastbourne Borough, Hastings Borough, Rother District, Lewes District and Wealden District councils - suggests a single unitary authority as a leading option but it makes clear council leaders remain open to presenting alternatives if the government changes its criteria, and if evidence and strong public support suggest other options.

If created, a new authority or authorities would replace ESCC and the five boroughs and districts in 2028. A consultation on the Interim Plan will be held for residents across East Sussex over the coming months. All six councils have agreed the extra work to develop a new local government structure in East Sussex should be funded by the government as it cannot be met from existing council resources.

In a letter to the government minister Jim McMahon, the Wealden council leader said that all six council leaders have worked collaboratively to deliver an Interim Plan as requested and that government criteria limits the option to mean there is only one option – a single unitary authority for East Sussex. Final detailed proposals for unitary government in East Sussex will be submitted to the government in September.

For further information please contact:

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### **2) Wealden District Council launches WhatsApp channel**

A WhatsApp Channel has been launched by Wealden District Council offering those who live, work, study or visit the district another convenient way to find out what's going on in the local area. With WhatsApp being one of the world's most popular messaging platforms globally, residents can now receive updates about the latest news, events and services in their communities, directly on their smartphones.

WhatsApp channels offer users a secure and private way to follow what matters to them, subscribing for free to news from their favourite organisations.

The launch is part of ongoing efforts to improve the delivery of services to residents and create more meaningful, and efficient engagement with communities. Followers can set notifications to read messages in real time, and if they choose, respond with a simple emoji or vote in a poll. Channel followers are also easily able to share WhatsApp channel posts to individual contacts and WhatsApp groups to help keep their friends, families and local communities informed. Don't forget to press the bell icon to be notified when a post goes out.

The WhatsApp channel admins and followers don't have access to information about individuals such as names, profile photos or numbers. The new WhatsApp Channel offers no change to getting in touch or sharing your views with the council.



Scan the QR code below to head to the page:



Subscribe here - [Wealden District Council launches WhatsApp channel - Wealden District Council](#)

### **3) One You East Sussex roadshow returns to Wealden**

Wealden District Council is supporting 'One You East Sussex' to bring free NHS Health Checks back to towns across Wealden.

One You East Sussex provides a free holistic lifestyle service for residents of East Sussex, helping people make simple changes that can lead to a longer, healthier, and happier life. The service helps residents to lose weight, be smoke free, move more, eat well and drink less. The service also delivers NHS health checks.

COLIN, the service's mobile health check van, and practitioner team will be offering NHS health checks to residents who qualify. The dates, locations and eligibility criteria are below. Residents are encouraged to book their NHS health check in advance as spaces may not be available on the day, by email or calling 01323 404600. Appointments take between 30-40 minutes and results will be discussed on the day.

#### **Dates and locations**

- Wednesday 30 April – Heathfield, Station Road East car park
- Friday 2 May – Crowborough, Croft Road car park
- Wednesday 7 May – Uckfield, Luxford Field car park
- Friday 9 May – Hailsham, Vicarage Lane car park
- Wednesday 14 May – Crowborough, Croft Road car park
- Friday 16 May – Heathfield, Station Road East car park
- Wednesday 4 June – Hailsham, Vicarage Lane car park
- Friday 6 June – Uckfield, Luxford Field car park
- Wednesday 11 June – Heathfield, Station Road East car park

#### **Residents wanting to book an NHS health check must meet the following criteria:**

- Be aged between 40-74.
- Are not currently prescribed blood pressure or cholesterol medications.
- Do not suffer from diabetes OR heart/circulatory/kidney conditions or previously suffered from any cardiovascular events.
- Be an East Sussex resident.
- Have not previously had an NHS health check in the last five years.

If residents are unable to attend any of these dates, One You East Sussex will be returning in September and October. Further information including dates and how to book will be provided in the summer.

#### **4) From the 12 May 2025 mobile payments will not be available on the Wealden Council Payments app.**

The app was used to pay for Council Tax, benefit overpayments, rent, debt recovery, parking fines and sundry debtor invoices.

It is being removed due to the system upgrade which will no longer support the app. Residents wanting to make payments can do so by visiting the webpage [here](#). (use this as the website link). There is a message on the app letting users know about the app not being in use from 12 May 2025. The council apologies for the inconvenience.

#### **5) Council Tax**

Collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates continue to be strong. To help explain council tax to residents a new informative video has been created which can be viewed on our youtube channel - [https://youtu.be/lkeUrGOFYVU?si=i\\_aFzeVNoMhC7X92](https://youtu.be/lkeUrGOFYVU?si=i_aFzeVNoMhC7X92)

#### **6) Devolution**

The council's response to the Sussex and Brighton devolution consultation ([Sussex and Brighton devolution consultation - GOV.UK](#)) has been submitted. It can be read here - [Wealden DC response to Devolution Consultation.docx](#)

#### **7) New Plan to Boost Neighbourhood Policing Nationwide**

Last week, the government announced a new set of measures aimed at improving visibility, responsiveness, and trust in local policing. As part of the broader "[Plan for Change](#)", the [Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee](#) sets out a commitment to ensure all communities across England and Wales have consistent, visible police presence and support, with a focus on prevention and public confidence.

Central to the announcement is the introduction of 13,000 additional neighbourhood police officers by 2029. This represents an increase of more than 50% in neighbourhood policing capacity. The plan also includes a series of standards intended to ensure every community, regardless of location, receives a minimum level of service. Under the new Guarantee, each neighbourhood will have named and contactable officers, supported by dedicated teams focusing on local issues. There will be guaranteed police patrols during peak times in town centres and other high-traffic areas, including Friday and Saturday nights. The government states this will address concerns about rising antisocial behaviour and visible street crime, which saw significant increases in recent years.

A new role – antisocial behaviour lead – will be introduced in every police force to help coordinate responses with local businesses and residents. These leads will be responsible for tailoring action plans to local circumstances and working with communities to develop targeted solutions. The initiative also introduces new accountability mechanisms. A Police Standards and Performance Improvement Unit will be created to measure and monitor performance across forces. An online tool will be launched, enabling members of the public to view how their local police force is performing and to compare services across the country.

Additional legislative measures are being progressed through the forthcoming **Crime and Policing Bill**. These include powers for police to issue Respect Orders aimed at tackling persistent antisocial behaviour, seize vehicles causing disruption, and search properties for stolen goods to remove those that have been geolocated – without requiring a warrant. The Bill also proposes changes to perceived immunity for low-value theft, such as goods valued under £200.

Chief Constable Sir Andy Marsh, CEO of the **College of Policing**, welcomed the plan, highlighting the importance of neighbourhood policing in reducing crime and building public trust. The College is set to introduce new training from June 2025 as part of the Neighbourhood Policing Pathway. This will support officers and staff in developing the skills needed to engage effectively with communities, tackle antisocial behaviour, and support crime prevention. According to the government, this is the first time in fifteen years that a universal policing standard is being established across all communities. The reforms aim to reduce variation in local policing experiences – described as a “postcode lottery” – and ensure a consistent presence of police in both urban and rural settings.

David Greaves

28<sup>th</sup> April 2025

#### Appendix B - Clerk's Report on APC Post

### ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025  
Report Subject: APC MAIL  
By: Suzanna Dry, Clerk & RFO

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The purpose of this report is to give Councillors options for the delivery of APC mail going forwards.

#### Background

In Jan/Feb APC did not receive any mail for one month, as this was delivered in the normal way to AWMH but not forwarded on to the APC post box in the hall, as the hall management were away. APC were unaware that post was not getting through at this time. Unfortunately, this coincided with a co-option process and affected applications that were sent in by mail. APC wish to ensure this does not happen again.

#### Analysis

The following options to be considered:-

- Have an external Post Box for APC on AWMH external wall. This has been requested by AWMH Committee but has been refused.
- 
- Have APC mail sent to the Clerk's home address. This is not a recommended practice as it means that the Clerk's home address would then have to become the APC address and be published on every document and every e-mail APC send out. Also when the Clerk is away on leave, there is no way of accessing mail.
- Apply for a PO Box Number from Royal Mail. Mail is addressed to the PO Box No. and is then directed by Royal Mail to a selected address. Having taken advice from the

professional body this is not good practice as a council's address should be an actual address and not a PO Box No. Also this service costs £445.00 p.a. And again, if re-directed to the Clerk's home when the Clerk is away there is no way of accessing mail.

- Keep the internal Post Box at AWMH and have a member of the AWMH Committee check the mail when management are away. So that any APC mail is put in the APC post box, and there is no disruption to mail being received. This has already been offered by AWMH.

#### Recommendation

That APC agree to continue with the internal post box and ask the AWMH Committee to ensure mail is passed on when management are away.

#### Appendix C - Report from Clergy House

It has been a busy start to the season at the Clergy House as we have welcomed over a thousand visitors in the first few weeks of opening. We have been very fortunate with the weather as the garden and the views of Cuckmere looking glorious in the sunshine.

Yesterday, in the garden, the bird song was beautiful hearing amongst others a Song Thrush, Great tit, Wren, Chiff Chaff, Blackcap, Kestrel and Nuthatch. It really is a garden that is full of life. We are holding a Dawn Chorus event in the garden on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May at 5.30am and on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May at 1.30pm a Reconnect with Nature Spring well-being walk from the garden to the Cuckmere River. To check costs, availability and how to book please see our website at

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/sussex/alfriston-clergy-house/events](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/sussex/alfriston-clergy-house/events)

Thank you



Holly Jones  
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