

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
Steep Parish Council
Held on Monday 12 January 2026 at 7.30pm
in Steep War Memorial Village Hall**

Present: Councillors Alison Driver (Chair), Shannon Askew, Robin Hollington, Charlotte Duthie, Andrew Howard, Barry Haywood and Terry Cook.
District Councillor Nick Drew
Sam Marchant (Clerk)
3 members of the public (MOP).

Minute Ref	Item
26/1	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Andrew Inkley. County Councillor Russell Oppenheimer was not in attendance.
26/2	Declarations of interests Cllr Hollington declared an interest as his business was the supplier of the Councils email accounts. Cllr Howard stated he would be representing Steep Marsh in conjunction with a member of the public.
26/3	Approval of minutes To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1 December were reviewed; they were then approved and signed by the Chair.
26/4	Co-option of new Councillor An application for the role from Paul Nayton was received. My Nayton was asked to leave the room whilst a vote was taken. Vote by show of hands resulted unanimous approval. Cllr Nayton was formerly invited and welcomed to join the Council for the rest of the meeting.
26/5	Public Comment Steep Marsh water runoff. Discussion points: A resident raised the issue of contaminated water runoff from the Brickyards in Steep Marsh. Complaint had been made to the Environment Agency however further evidence was required for action to be taken. Water testing approximately £1500 via official testing. Potential to involve MP if issue deemed an environmental incident.

Action:

Clerk to enquire about environmental grant opportunities from EHDC
AD to receive response from the Environmental Agency
AI, BH, AH and AD to take forward
Testing to be discussion further at the February meeting

Traffic and speed cameras (Steep Marsh)

Discussion points:

A resident raised traffic and speed cameras for Steep Marsh.
Lack of previously promised signage from HCC at two entrances; these should have been in place by April 2025. A complaint had been raised due to this by the resident.
Enforcement of heavy vehicles issues.
Coordination with HCC and the County Councillor were needed.

Actions:

CD to work with resident on traffic/signage issues; Cllr Drew to support; Cllr Oppenheimer to be contacted.
February agenda item.

Land North of Church Road

Discussion points:

A resident informed Cllrs that the land in question had been withdrawn from auction in order to give residents the opportunity to raise funds to purchase.
A letter had been distributed to residents of Steep in order to raise funds for the land to be held in trust and kept as a green area or agricultural use.
Thursday 15 January had been given as a deadline.
The land had been rejected by the SDNPA for planning and was outside of the settlement boundary.
The PCs support was welcomed.
Asset of Community Value could be a viable option however timing may be restrictive.

Actions:

Research into Asset of Community Value process.
February agenda item.

26/6

County Councillor Report: to receive a report
Cllr Oppenheimer's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. (Appendix A)

26/7

District Councillor Report: to receive a report
District Cllr Nick Drew provided a verbal report including:
Significant increase in potholes over the Christmas period.
Residents were asked to report potholes to the County Council via the website and the Ourhants app.
Request made for a list of all planning compliance and enforcement locally which are ongoing and a clear timeline.

District Local Plan to include traveller sites – ongoing works to include site and clarify appeal positions.

AH asked for an update on the response expected aft the PC had written a letter of appeal regarding the Steep Marsh microbrewery application.

ND reported that planning correspondence had been delayed due to the Christmas break.

Actions:

ND to pursue planning feedback and timelines.

Clerk to chase outstanding correspondence (by February).

26/8

SSEN Transformer (AD): to receive an update

AD explained the position of the project for Cllr Nayton’s benefit.

Discussion points:

Only one site option had been provided by SSEN.

Wider benefits discussed: undergrounding cables, village beautification, fire risk reduction and access.

Mixed views were expressed regarding benefit to the Village including the Village Hall.

Actions:

AD to obtain details on the three other sites previously discussed (ongoing) February agenda item.

26/9

New Housing Development: suggested road name The Green, other suggestions welcome

Discussion points:

Proposal to consult residents via newsletter.

Actions:

Proposed name ‘The Green’ and call for suggestions to be included in the Newsletter with suggestions to be sent to the Clerk.

February agenda item.

26/10

Roads and Traffic (AI/CD): Church Road 20mph: to update (AI)

Discussion points:

No formal update.

Signage still awaited.

Safety concerns raised regarding school access.

Actions:

AI To contact HCC for update (January).

CD to approach the school to support case (January).

District Councillor Nick Drew to reinforce concerns with RO and HCC (January).

26/11

Steep Marsh (AH/BH):

a) Water runoff from Brickyards (AH)

Discussion points:

Need for funded testing to evidence contamination.

Actions:

£1500 testing proposal to be added to February agenda.

AD to chase EA for response.

Clerk to investigate grant funding available.

b) Traffic survey & cameras (AH)

Discussion points:

Independent traffic survey likely required for enforceable data. Costs and scope discussed.

Actions:

AH to provide proposal with scope, intended use, and at least 2 quotes for February meeting.

February agenda item.

c) Planning letter response SDNP/25/02138/FUL Microbrewery (AH)

Discussion points:

Response awaited.

Actions:

Clerk too chase response.

26/12

Combined working group (AD/CD/RH): to appoint contract designer (AD)

Discussion points:

Contractor unavailable this month.

Smaller projects to continue.

S106 funding investigation ongoing.

Proposed to combine previously received design for public consultation.

Actions:

BH to continue investigating S106 funding and provide recommendations.

RH to speak to local contact for initial ideas on public open space/VH land.

26/13

Common (SA/TC/CD/AI): to receive a written report (SA)

Discussion points:

SA had circulated report.

Drainage and gate/fencing works were now complete.

Actions:

CD to arrange padlock.

Clerk to ask contractor to remove debris.

- 26/14** **Steep Church Parking Agreement:** to appoint Cllr to draft
Discussion points:
Agreement not progressed. Vote: 1 for, 1 abstention, 6 against.
- Actions:**
None (may be revisited if required)
- 26/15** **Footpaths (AI/CD):** to update on progress (AI)
Discussion points:
Muddy conditions noted; Footpath 28 issue with new fencing in place.
Available grant funding reduced.
- Actions:**
CD to remain in contact with landowners and Countryside Services.
- 26/17** **Grant Opportunities (AI/CD):** to receive plan (AI)
Discussion points:
Deferred due to absence.
- Action:**
February agenda item.
- 26/18** **Village Hall/SWMMVHC (AH):** to receive a verbal report
Discussion points:
No report.
- Action:**
None.
- 26/19** **Standard Operating Procedures:** to adopt (AD)
Discussion points:
Further clarification required; not adopted at this meeting.
- Actions:**
RH to clarify comments.
SOPs to be refined and used as guidelines in the interim.
- 26/20** **Policies/Procedure for review**
a) Complaints Policy
Discussion points:
Reviewed.
- Actions:**
Approved.

26/21

Finance and Admin:

- a) To approve the HSBC bank reconciliations to 10 December 2025
Unavailable due to late bank statement.
- b) To approve the Lloyds bank reconciliations to 31 December 2025
Approved.
- c) To approve Finance Summary Actuals vs Budget and list of Payments & Receipts report (Appendix B)
Approved.
- d) Bank signatory/authoriser: to remove AD and appoint replacement

Discussion points:

Bank signatory change agreed.

Actions:

RH/Clerk to remove AD as signatory and appoint BH

26/22

Budget Proposal: to approve

Discussion points:

Further works needed.

Action:

February agenda item.

26/22

Grant Applications:

- a) Steep & Stroud Newsletter

Discussion points:

Unanimous approval.

Actions:

Clerk to action.

- b) Hounds for Heroes

Discussion points:

Not approved

Actions:

Clerk to inform applicant.

- c) Steep Cricket Club

Discussion points:

Planning permission may be required.

Breakdown of other funding avenues not provided.

PC unable to give a large amount.

SDNPA funding possible.

Not approved (£15,000) smaller contribution an option.

- 26/23**
- Actions:**
Clerk to inform applicant.
Smaller contribution an option for 2026/27.
RH to review grant application form to include more detailed response regarding breakdown of funding requested and local use of proposed project.
- APM Speaker:** to receive suggestions
- Discussion points:**
Various speakers suggested.
- Actions:**
Suggestions to be sent to the Clerk.
- 26/24**
- Items for the next agenda:** to receive items
Items to be included in the next agenda were identified as:
Pre project Overview Form (AD/BH).
Budget
SOP document
Road naming
Review of action list.
War Memorial works update (CD/SA/RH - contacts)
S106 report/update with recommendations (BH)
Neighbourhood Plan benefits (AD)
Grant application form revisions (RH)
- 26/25**
- Date and time of next meeting:** Monday 2 February 7:30pm
The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Monday 2 February 2026 at 7.30 p.m.
- The meeting closed at 9:30pm.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ALL PARISH COUNCILS IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS

2 JANUARY 2026

Happy New Year to you. I hope you all had a joyous and restful Christmas.

1. Government currently consulting on May 2026 elections.

The Labour Government has invited Hampshire County Council to make formal representations regarding the capacity constraints which the May 2026 elections could create, and the potential impact of those constraints on the progress of local government reform in Hampshire.

My view and the view of the Leader of HCC is that democracy is far more important than administrative convenience, so elections should go ahead this May. A Full Council meeting and a Cabinet meeting has been hastily scheduled for the next two weeks to debate and agree our position. Our general view is that the Government has created this problematic situation, and so Ministers themselves should take a decision about the elections.

In any case, Councillors are inherently conflicted when it comes to any decision to extend their current term. I note that the Electoral Commission agrees with this point. I thought this was rather a good statement from their Chief Executive:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/media-centre/electoral-commission-responds-potential-election-postponements>

Finally a reminder that the deadline for the Government's LGR consultation is 11 January. If you have not already done so, please take 15 minutes to respond to the consultation at this link: [Consultation on Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Citizen Space](#)

2. Enhancement to Connect to Support website

To meet our statutory duties, the County Council provides information and advice for families, young people, and those with special needs. This advice has hitherto included the Families Information and Services Hub (FISH) and the Local Offer. In order to streamline our web presence for the benefit of residents, I would like to let you know that both FISH and the Local Offer have now moved to the Connect to Support Hampshire (CTSH) website.

The website is managed by HCC to meet statutory requirements under the Care Act 2014 and will now serve as an **all-age information hub** for care and support, offering one website for

Appendix A

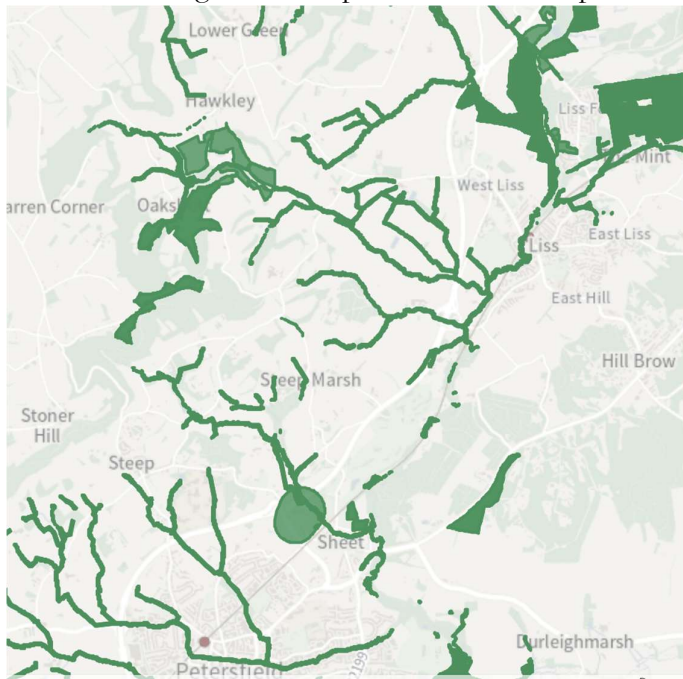
residents and professionals to access information regardless of age, rather than different locations as previously. You can access the website via this link: [Connect to Support Hampshire](#).

3. Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire published

You may recall that HCC consulted on its Nature Recovery Strategy last year. On 8 December 2025, HCC published its final Strategy. The plan aims to restore nature, protect precious habitats, and create more opportunities for people to connect with the outdoors. This new strategy brings together expertise from organisations and authorities across the region and sets out practical steps for how Hampshire can ensure a minimum of 30% of land and sea is secured for biodiversity by 2030.

To achieve these shared goals, everyone needs to keep playing their part in nature recovery. This strategy sets out how, together, we can protect and enhance our natural environment. The strategy has been designed to help guide land use choices, inform planning decisions, and encourage investment in nature-based solutions to wider environmental challenges such as climate change and flooding.

The Strategy introduces a new acronym of “ACB’s”, which stands for: **Areas that Could Become** of Particular Importance for Biodiversity. We seem to have quite a lot of ACBs in Petersfield Hangers. I have pasted the ACB map for our area below.



The full strategy is available to read here:

[Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire | Environment | Hampshire County Council](#)

4. Update: Love Lane Space for Nature

You may have noticed this attractive natural bench which is now installed at the Love Lane space for Nature. This bench was donated by a resident of Love Lane who was selling her

Appendix A

house and no longer needed the carved oak bench. The carved wooden bench is incredibly heavy; I actually did not think that the Hampshire Monday Group would be able to get it across the road and up onto the bank. But somehow they managed it – there is seemingly no challenge they cannot meet.



I continue to chase Hampshire Highways regarding the pile of rubble. I have been promised that it will be cleared several times. I will keep chasing until it is gone.

Following the clearing of laurel and scrub, the copse is going to take some time to re-establish. I have sprinkled some wildflower seeds around the steep areas where people cannot easily walk, so there is chance of them sprouting. It will be interesting to see what comes up in the Spring.



RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers

Financial Report

Jan-26

Below is a summary of Actual v Budget 2025/2026

Summary of Cost Centres – Payments

	Actual	Budget	Variance
Steep Common & War Memorial	5,371.77	5,800.00	428.23
Community Projects	7,728.61	31,700.00	23,971.39
Overheads	19,575.10	27,533.00	7,957.90
Grants	5,700.00	6,200.00	500.00
Council Projects	0.00	5,050.00	5,050.00
Lengthsman	5,318.30	7,700.00	2,381.70
Insurance Claim - ASW & SID Replacement	3,078.99	0.00	-3,078.99
Total	46,772.77	83,983.00	37,210.23
VAT	4,264.03		
Summary of Cost Centres – Receipts			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Precept	46,000.00	46,000.00	0.00
Grants	250.00	26,500.00	-26,250.00
Bank Interest	321.77	600.00	-278.23
Lengthsman	7,700.00	7,700.00	0.00
Insurance Claim - ASW & SID Replacement	2,828.99	0.00	2,828.99
Defibrillators			
Total	57,100.76	80,800.00	-23,699.24
VAT	2,229.01		
Total CiL Monies Held to Date	2,638.12		
PC Combined Bank Balance 31 December 2025	62,727.32		

Steep PC payments 11 November - 10 December 2025 HSBC

	Organisation	Amount	Method	Date Paid

Steep PC cleared payments from 1 December to 31 December 2025 Lloyds

1	Arborlec Services Ltd - Tree Work	2,778.00	Online	01.12.2025
2	The Play Inspection Company - Play Equipment	113.94	Online	01.12.2025
3	Hart Landscaping - Lengthsman	870.00	Online	01.12.2025
4	Remembrance Refreshments	110.00	Online	01.12.2025
5	Sam Marchant - Stationary	25.00	Online	01.12.2025
6	HMRC - Employee/Employer	418.58	Online	01.12.2025
7	Sam Marchant - Clerk Salary	1,155.70	Online	01.12.2025
8	Inspired-IS - Email/Microsoft	85.80	Online	18.12.2025
9	Lloyds - Bank Charge	8.50	Online	19.12.2025
10	Petersfield Town Council - Dog Bin collections	70.51	Online	22.12.2025
11	Steep Village Hall - Hall Hire	176.00	Online	22.12.2025
12	Sam Marchant - Stationary	29.99	Online	22.12.2025

Appendix B

13	Arborlec Services Ltd - Drainage Works	8,695.20	Online	22.12.2025
14	Steep Village Hall - Precept Grant	2,500.00	Online	22.12.2025
15	Sam Marchant - Clerk Salary	1,155.70	Online	31.12.2025
16	HMRC - Employee/Employer	418.58	Online	31.12.2025
	Total	18,611.50		