

**BODIAM PARISH COUNCIL****Clerk:** Lynsey Willard**Telephone:** 01580 830935**Email:** [clerk@bodiamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@bodiamparishcouncil.org.uk)

34 Levetts Lane,

Bodiam,

E. Sussex, TN32 5UL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on  
Monday 20 April 2026 at 6.30p.m. in Bodiam Parish Room Garden**

Please note these are draft minutes until formally approved at the next Parish Council Meeting.

**Present: For Bodiam Parish Council:** Councillors: - (Chair) Cllrs Linda Stevens, (Vice chair) Tim Porter, Graham Peters, Darren Page & Nick Gilbert.

**In attendance:** RDC Cllr Tony Biggs, Clerk: Lynsey Willard & 1 member of the public (MoP).

**78/2026 Apologies:** ESCC Cllr Paul Redstone& RDC Tony Ganly

**79/2026 Disclosure of Interests**

Cllr Stevens declared a personal interest in Bodiam Pre School.

Cllr Porter declared a personal interest as his wife runs Bodiam Pre School

Cllr Page declared an interest as a neighbour of Silverdale Stud

Cllr Peters declared a personal interest as a Trustee of the Parker& Ashcombe Trust, also a personal interest as the Church Warden, a Trustee of the Rural Rother Trust and patron of Bodiam Pre School also the Chairman of HUIFC has occasionally completed paid plumbing work for him.

**80/2026 Minutes of the Parish council Meeting 16 March 2026**

The minutes which had previously been distributed were approved and signed by Cllr Stevens (Chair) as a true record.

**81/2026 Matters arising**

Action points from the previous meeting cleared or, on this agenda. The recreation ground gates have been replaced. The carpenter will be replacing the railing around the pavilion veranda at the end of April, and the weather boarding will be replaced when the weather is warmer. The new noticeboard is awaiting delivery.

Cllr Page mentioned that a complaint had been raised with the Monitoring Officer against him about not declaring an interest in Silverdale Stud. An investigation was completed and it was found that all declarations had been made appropriately so the complaint has not been upheld.

**82/2026 Public Questions** – One question asked. The grounds look fantastic and the gates have been replaced, has that been made possible by the fact the football club are paying to use it? It was agreed that the grounds look well maintained because of the club using the pitches and the ground contractor making regular cuts.

**Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....**

**83/2026 Councillors' meetings with outside bodies**

No meetings attended

**84/2026 Planning - Applications****RR/2026/0031/FULL Bodiam Castle, Castle Hill, Bodiam, TN32 5UA**

Installation of two electric vehicle charging stations and feeder pillar and associated underground cabling. **Supported by Bodiam Parish Council**

**85/2026 Enforcements & RDC planning website**

RDC confirmed that their website meets the minimum requirement. Cllr Gilbert raised that this may be the case, but the user experience is shocking. The councillors agreed that it should be raised with RALC.

**Action 1:** Cllr Gilbert to draft an email to RALC about the RDC Enforcement and Planning pages. This will be forwarded by the Clerk to RALC. Clerk will also ask if any other Parishes have had similar experiences.

**86/2026 East Sussex County Council report**

Councillors have received the previously circulated report from ESCC, and the full report can be read on the Bodiam Website. Concerns were raised about the Newenden Bridge closure planned for June to September 2027 – to be carried forward to May agenda. Work must be done when the water table is low, but it is going to cause severe congestion with the diverted traffic.

**87/2026 Rother District Council Report**

Councillors have received the previously circulated report from RDC, and the full report can be read on the Bodiam Website. Cllr Biggs is going to find out what the uptake has been for the new waste food collection service.

**88/2026 Levetts Lane Woods**

The Parish agreed previously that they were not in a position financially to take on the woods on Levetts Lane as part of RDC assets devolution program. Cllr Peters questioned whether RDC would allow a Community Interest Company to take over responsibility for the woods. It was agreed that the Parish could make the introduction.

**Action 2: Clerk** to share the Asset Devolution point of contact with Cllr Peters so he can write to them about the proposal of a Community Interest Company taking over responsibility of Levetts Lane woods.

**89/2026 Pavilion & Recreation Ground**

New gates have been installed at the entrance to the recreation ground. Several leaks were identified when the water was turned back on this spring. The Chair of HUIFC is a trade plumber so these were quickly fixed and then a couple more were identified later when the hot water was turned on. One of these was in the shower unit and it was agreed by the plumber that best and most cost-effective solution would be to cap the water off before the showers as they are not used. The invoice for the first set of repairs has been submitted with this month's payments. The second invoice is expected next month.

**Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....**

**90/2026 Hawkhurst United Junior Football Club**

The club started playing again in Bodiam from Thursday 16 April and have paid the invoice for the first four weeks. The ground contractor has got the ground in a good state and completed the first cut with a pickup of grass and is cutting weekly throughout April. As the weather was not suitable for cutting in the autumn or early spring the extra £600 that was reserved to pay for these cuts has been carried forward to this year. The football club will be paying for any extra cuts through the parish account.

**91/2026 Review of Pavilion Legionnaire risk assessment**

The Legionnaire risk assessment was reviewed for 2026 and signed. The risk is low as the cold water is run straight of the mains.

**92/2026 Parish Assembly Planning**

This year's assembly will be held in Claremont Senior School's Sixth Form building Wednesday 22 April 2026. It will be run in the form of a local knowledge quiz and picture quiz. A survey will be run via a QR code, on Microsoft Forms, to identify pockets of poor internet speeds in the parish. Light refreshments will be supplied by the council.

**Action 3:** Clerk to check with Claremont about glasses and plates for the Assembly.

**93/2026 Environment and Village Maintenance**

All four village projects have been arranged with contractors. The new noticeboard is waiting for delivery.

**94/2026 Trees and footpaths**

All in good order now.

**95/2026 Crime and Disorder**

There was a break in reported at the Castle.

**96/2026 Internal Audit 2025/26**

The Annual Internal Audit Report was completed on 10 April 2026 and passed with no issues raised. The auditor is retiring this year so a new auditor will have to be found for next year.

**97/2026 AGAR – Certificate of Exemption 2025/2026**

The exemption report has been signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chair as the parish expenditure and income does not exceed £25,000.

**Action 4:** Clerk to add minute reference and send off Certificate of Exemption no later than 30 June 2026

**98/2026 Approval of Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)**

Clerk and Chair signed section 1 of the AGAR – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

**Action 5:** Clerk to add minute reference to Section 1 of AGAR

**Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....**

**99/2026 Approval of Annual Accounting Statement**

Responsible Finance Officer signed Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return which was then approved by the Chair confirming end of year balance £21,478.

**Action 6:** Clerk to add minute reference to Section 2 of AGAR

**100/2026 Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Annual Governance & Accountability Return**

The Notice will be displayed on the village noticeboards and added to the website giving notice for the public to be able to exercise their right to view the accounts between the 3 June and 14 July 2026.

**101/2026 I.T. Policy**

The I.T policy has been reviewed and signed by Cllr Stevens. It was agreed that as A.I. becomes more commonly used we should consider adding a section on A.I. usage.

**Action 7:** Clerk to explore with the Clerk network how A.I. is being included in I.T. Policies.

**102/2026 Finance – Account interest**

The savings account earned £376.21 in interest this year.

**Action 8:** Clerk, to explore if the council must pay tax on savings interest.

**103/2026 VAT**

A VAT 126 form has been completed and sent off to reclaim the £1318 paid in VAT 2025/26

**104/2026 New DD set up**

A new direct debit form has been signed and sent off for ICO – Data Protection Fee. This payment method will save the council £5 each year.

**105/2026 Receipts**

<b>Dated</b>	<b>Method.</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1.4.26	Payment received	Rother District Council	1 <sup>st</sup> half of Precept	£8189
4.4.26	Internal transfer	Bodiam Parish Council	Transfer from current account to savings account	£6000
13.4.26	Invoice paid	HUJFC	Invoice 1 – 4 weeks fees – 16.4.26 – 12.5.26	£440
17.4.26	Internal transfer	Bodiam Parish Council	Transfer from Savings account to current account	£2111.92

Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....

**106/2026 Payments**

<b>Dated</b>	<b>Method.</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
17.3.26	Unity Online	Millbrook Design and Print Limited	2 x banners for 2026 Parish Assembly	£108
17.3.26	Unity Online	The Parish Notice Board Company	Village green notice board 1st deposit	£699
21.4.26	Unity Online	Lynsey Willard	Clerk/RFO Salary April 2026	£513.85
21.4.26	Unity Online	Lynsey Willard	Expenses - Files & Stamps	£10.26
21.4.26	Unity Online	East Sussex County Council	Urban Grass cutting - 4 extra cuts	£225.91
22.4.26	Direct Debit	HMRC PAYE	Clerk/RFO PAYE Months 1,2 & 3	£393.25
21.4.26	Unity Online	Heartenoak heating and plumbing solutions	Pavilion plumbing repairs	£126.24
1.5.26	Direct Debit	Information Commissioners Office	Data Protection Fee	£47
21.4.26	Unity Online	Bodiam Pre School	S137 donation to Bodiam Pre School	£120
21.4.26	Unity Online	St Michael's Hospice	S137donation St Michael's Hospice	£170
21.4.26	Unity Online	Bodiam Primary School	S137 Donation to Bodiam Primary School	£80
21.4.26	Unity Online	Rural Rother Trust	S137 donation to Rural Rother Trust	£85
21.4.26	Unity Online	The Sara Lee Trust	S137 Donation to The Sara Lee Trust	£80
21.4.26	Unity Online	Bodiam Church Expenses	S214 for Upkeep of Churchyard	£240
16.4.26	Direct Debit	EDF	April Invoice	£17.64
30.4.26	Auto Payment Unity	Unity bank	Monthly charge for Unity bank	£7.00
21.4.26	Unity Online	Parker & Ashcombe Almshouse Charity	Room hire for previous year	£12

**Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....**

21.4.26	Unity Online	Mr. C Forman	Replacement of recreation ground gates	£1200
21.4.26	Unity Online	123Reg/Lynsey Willard	Office 365 renewal - reimburse Clerk	£201.46
21.4.26	Unity Online	ESALC Ltd	NALC & ESALC subscription	£136.19

**107/2026 End of Year Finance Reports & Bank reconciliation**

The Clerk/RFO presented the bank statements with the monthly financial reports and budget reports for end of year 2025/26, which were signed at the meeting by Cllr Page.

**108/2026 Monthly Finance Reports & Bank reconciliation**

The Clerk/RFO presented the bank statements with the monthly financial reports and budget reports for April 2026, which were signed at the meeting by Cllr Gilbert. All financial documents and invoices are circulated to Councillors for inspection before the meeting.

**109/2026 Information for Councillors**

Newenden Bridge to be included on next month's agenda

**110/2026 Date of next meeting**

Monthly Council meeting, either 11 May 2026, the Parish Room at 6.30pm or 18 May 2026, the Parish Room at 7.30pm

**Action 9:** All councillors to confirm availability for either the 11 May or the later start time on the 18 May.