



FELBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month (except January and August)
at 7.30pm in Felbridge Village Hall

Minutes of the Felbridge Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd October 2025 **at 7.30pm in the Committee Room at Felbridge Village Hall**

Present:

Cllr. Jeremy Clarke (Planning Chairman)
Cllr. Jane Groom
Cllr. Stephen Hall (Chairman)
Cllr. Bridget Huntington
Cllr. Nigel Lea
Cllr. Ian McBryde

In attendance:

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
County & District Councillor Lesley Steeds,
District Cllr. Nicholas White
Cllr. Alex Horwood
2. **DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS**
None in addition to those which were previously disclosed
3. **APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th September were approved and signed.
4. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**
Nothing new to report.

5. FINANCE

(i) Receipts and Payments for September 2025

Date	To / From	Description	Amount	Current Account	Deposit Account
31 Aug		Brought Forward		6185.97	£35500.46
		Receipts			
30 Sept		Total Receipts		0.00	194.37
		Transfers			
30 Sept	Deposit to Current a/c			8000.00	-8000.00
		Sub-Total		14185.97	
		Payments			
3 Sept	WRH	Bus Shelter Cleaning	£45.00	-45.00	
3 Sept	Hire-a-Loo	Temporary Toilet Hire	£132.85	-132.85	
3 Sept	Bridget Huntington	Litter Picking Materials	£31.18	-31.18	
3 Sept	PKF Littlejohn	External Auditor Fee	£378.00	-378.00	
3 Sept	Clerk	Office Equipment	£140.96	-140.96	
9 Sept	NEST	Pension Contribution	£225.36	-225.36	
30 Sept	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Fee	£6.00	-6.00	
	Payroll	Payroll (2 months)	£2948.80	-2948.80	
		Total Payments	£3908.15	-£3908.15	
		Bank a/c totals c/f		£10277.82	£27694.83
30 Sept	Available Funds - Current a/c plus Deposit a/c			£37972.65	
30 Sept	Allocated Reserves (includes restricted expenditure CIL funding) - Community Funding £2.4K; Playground Fence/Path £5K; Traffic Calming £5K			-£12400.00	
30 Sept	General Reserve (available funds - including budgeted expenditure - minus Allocated Reserves)			£25572.65	
Current and Deposit Account statements circulated to councillors on 1 October 2025, along with the record of receipts and payments, for transparency and confirmation of accuracy					

(ii) **External Auditor Report:** All audit documents for the financial year 2024-2025 have now been uploaded to the website in line with statutory requirements.

(iii) **Remembrance: Resolved:** It was agreed to purchase 10 x large poppies from the Royal British Legion to be placed on Felbridge Village Green. **Funding Approved:** Expenditure of up to £60 approved.

6. VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

(i) **Highways Grass Verge Cutting:** Latest Urban cut took place at end September. A Rural cut is scheduled for October/November.

7. COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

Rowplatt Lane – Aware of level of resident concerns regarding speeding traffic on Rowplatt Lane and continuing to liaise with Surrey Highways.

Unitary Authorities – The government will take a decision in October as to whether there will be two Unitary Authorities in Surrey (as proposed by SCC) or three (as proposed by most District Councils). After this announcement there will be a decision taken on the number of councillors and the boundaries for each area.

8. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr. White: Followed up the issues with the Star Junction traffic lights issues affecting residents

Cllr. O’Riordan No report provided

9. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS/UPDATES

A22/A264 Corridor Project: Cllr. Clarke reported that cameras relating to the project are now in place at regular intervals on both the A22 and the A264. This suggests that Atkins have been contracted to deliver the project in advance of the consultation which was to have taken place with parish councils.

Limes Pond Fence: Cllr. Mc Bryde has submitted a report to TDC that another section of fence has collapsed.

Litter Picks: Cllr. Huntington has completed litter picks on the A22.

Limes Pond: A resident from The Limes has reminded TDC that the Limes Pond is overdue for clearance. TDC have responded to say they will schedule these works.

Coronation Planter: Cllr Groom has cleared the planter and reports that the selected plants are doing well.

Tree on Copthorne Road: Cllr. Groom will report a fallen branch to Surrey Highways.

Councillor Training: Cllr. Groom has completed her new councillor training course.

Rubbish Bin Collection: Cllr. Hall has reported overflowing bins in the playground area to TDC on several occasions. TDC responded and sent operative to empty the bins.

10. SURREY HIGHWAYS/RIGHTS OF WAY/TDC MAINTENANCE REPORTS

Drainage Ditch along Crawley Down Road: Has still not been cleared.

Evelyn Chestnut Trees: Works to remove basal growth have been completed.

Playground Replacement Fence and Path Repairs: Damaged fencing has been replaced and works to the path alongside completed. As anticipated, the weeds which were left have affected the playground base and the contractor advises that wetpour will be needed to seal the join between the path and base. TDC have been asked to deliver these works asap in order to avoid further damage. **Action:** Clerk to monitor.

Overgrown Hedges on Crawley Down Road Reported to TDC in early September by the Clerk and also reported by residents. TDC say works will be completed in October/November.

11. PLANNING

(i) Applications in Felbridge

Applications considered at the Planning Meeting on 18th September:

2025/962 The Stables, Wards Farm, London Road, Felbridge, Surrey, RH19 2QZ

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council strongly object to this proposal.

This site is triangular in shape within the Green Belt. It is currently an open field with deep vegetation boundaries, it abuts open countryside to the east, southeast and north (beyond the rural access track along that boundary), to the south is mature woodland within the curtilages of Camden House and The Laurels. While the inability of Tandridge District Council to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply results in a tilted balance towards the planning decision, it does not in itself represent the 'very special circumstances' to overcome inappropriate development within the Green Belt. This is confirmed in the dismissed appeal for Semper Fidelis (APP/M3645/W/25/3358831).

To satisfy NPPF para 155 the application must utilise Grey Belt land that would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt and demonstrate that it is in a sustainable location.

The recent introduction of 'Grey Belt land' into the NPPF means that it is still not absolutely defined and inspector's decisions have been sided more towards 'grey belt' being previously developed land or patches of open land surrounded by development. FPC believe that this open field contributes to the openness of the Green Belt in this area beyond the northern edge of the Felbridge settlement boundary. It is not surrounded by existing development.

The comparison sites provided in the applicant's planning statement are both previously developed land with extant buildings that were to be demolished to make way for additional housing, therefore the applicant has not demonstrated that the land is grey belt using these examples. We would also draw attention to Semper Fidelis a short distance to the north where the Inspector (APP/M3645/W/25/3358831) concluded that the replacement of existing buildings on Green Belt land with dwellings would lead to significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt, and that this land was not 'Grey Belt'.

“10. The form and layout of the proposal would thus see new built development introduced to the site which would have a substantially greater spatial impact than the existing development. There would be an adverse spatial impact due to the scale of development in this location, leading to significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

11. I therefore find that the proposal would not satisfy the exception set out at paragraph 154g) of the Framework. For the avoidance of doubt, I am content that no other exception set out under paragraphs 154 and 155 of the Framework is met by the scheme. Moreover, it is not the appellants’ case that the provisions of paragraph 155 (which relate to grey belt land) are satisfied, and I have no reason to take a different stance. Thus, the proposal would be inappropriate development that would, by definition, be harmful to the Green Belt. In accordance with the terms of the Framework, I attach substantial weight to this harm.”

Another key element in the Permission in Principle decision for this site is its sustainability. The applicant provides a sustainability matrix. FPC wish to identify a number of issues with the data presented;

Footpath access. FP263 runs along the outside of the eastern boundary of the site but then crosses the field to the south of the site and is unlit, as is the main access from the A22. The Inspector for the Semper Fidelis appeal (referenced above) identified the unlit footpath access as a negative factor for the sustainability of that site. With reduced funding at County level for countryside access FP263 is regularly overgrown and impassable.

Distance to nearest bus stop. The nearest bus stops north and south bound are at the Premier Inn, but this is for Metrobus service 485 to Newchapel/East Grinstead which only provides 4 buses per day. The interconnecting bus stops for the 281, 291 and 400 services are located on the A264 just west of The Star and provide 3 buses per hour in each direction throughout the day. The distance from the centre of the site to the poorly served 485 stops are 618m southbound if using FP263 and 679m if using the access road from the site. The distances to the well serviced stops on the A264 are 718m and 779m and the westbound stop requires crossing the A264 which has no pedestrian phase at the Felbridge junction to assist with crossing this very busy road. These distances are far beyond the applicant’s distance of 480m which appears to be taken from the end of the access road at the junction with the A22.

Distance to nearest school. The distance from the centre of the site to the entrance gate of Felbridge Primary School is 1.28km and Imberhorne Secondary School is 1.42km. However, it has to be emphasised that the significant recent developments approved along Crawley Down road make it highly likely that this site would lie outside the catchment area for Felbridge Primary School as all the 400 new houses are closer to the school than this site and therefore would take precedent in the school admission policy.

The location of the site is very comparable to Gibbshaven Farm site on Crawley Down Road where a far wider range of facility distances were considered. The Inspector (APP/D3830/W/16/3156544) considered the ‘walkable’ distance of 800m [from the Government’s Manual for Streets] but also the “much lesser distance recommended to encourage walking in other commonly referenced authorities such as that of the Institute of Highways and Transportation” before concluding (paragraph 19). "So, taking account of the locally available facilities, I find that for most daily needs; employment, schooling and food shopping, there would be a need to travel beyond easy walking distance. The use of sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and public transport would be feasible for many purposes and encouraged by the Travel Plan but, even so there is likely to be a considerable dependence on car use". Whilst the use of cycles/e-Bikes may make non car-based transport more attractive, there are no cycle paths along any of the local roads in Surrey, and there is only a southbound partial cycle lane along the A22 towards East Grinstead with no similar provision for northbound cyclists. Contrary to the applicant’s sustainability matrix, the A22 rises very significantly for cyclists approaching this site from both the north and south. There is also a procedural matter in that Planning in Principle applications cannot relate to habitats sites. This site is very close to the 7km zone of influence for the Ashdown Forest SPA, the zone maps show an ‘approximate line’ of the zone and it would appear that this site is within 100m of that ‘approximate’ line. If this site was deemed to present an impact either alone or in combination with other developments in the area then mitigation would be required. Mitigation is normally provided by funding towards SAMM/SANG provisions. However, since the PPG advises that it is not possible to impose conditions or to secure planning obligations to a grant of Planning in Principle, in this case there would be no mechanism to secure the required mitigation. Without this mitigation the proposed development, either alone or in combination with other development in the area, could have an adverse effect.

Even if the site is deemed to not have an impact on Ashdown Forest in combination with other development, the above statement regarding the inability to secure planning obligations on a Planning in Principle application is relevant to this site in relation to Highways. The A22/A264 Felbridge (Star) junction immediately south from the access to the site has already been declared to be 'Severe' by Surrey Highways. As such local developments have been approved with obligations to provide funding towards the 'A264/A22 corridor project' which aims to mitigate the significant impact resulting from over 1,100 houses that have been constructed in the local area since the junction was deemed to be severe. It is therefore imperative that this site provides a contribution towards that project to mitigate its cumulative impact upon the severe junction very local to the development. As it is not possible to secure planning obligations on a grant of Planning in Principle, the impact upon the Local Highway Network will not be mitigated and as such the application should not be granted Planning in Principle. FPC are also concerned as to whether there are adequate sightlines to access the A22 from the site and the lack of passing spaces if a vehicle was entering the site and met a vehicle leaving the site. This would potentially lead to a vehicle having to wait or reverse onto the A22 in a hazardous location. This entrance onto the A22 was the location of a serious traffic accident in 2019 and a fatality in 2018.

2025/781 Dormer Cottage, Woodcock Hill, Felbridge, Surrey, RH19 2RD

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council do not have an objection to a replacement dwelling on this site in accordance with the design that has been proposed for the dwelling. However, this is a prospective application that relies upon tree surveys and ecological studies which were carried out in 2024 on a site which has since been cleared. We therefore believe that the application should be rejected until such time as the planning proposal specified reflects the current state of the site and what will be done to return it to the biodiversity score it had in 2024. The detailed tree report attached to 2024/1144 should be used to determine the replanting necessary to reinstate the trees of an equivalent size to the ones which were removed that had been identified for retention in line with the ecology and arboricultural reports supporting the previous application. Overall, the application should be rejected until such time as the application documents reflect the true nature of the proposal in that it has to remediate the site from a biodiversity desert back to a sustainable part of the Green Belt.

2025/747 Larksfield, Domewood, Copthorne, Surrey, RH10 3HD

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council have no objection to the proposed replacement dwelling but would raise concerns about the close proximity between the two-storey building and the eastern boundary which is not in character with the development at Domewood.

2025/960/TPO Mere, Domewood, Copthorne, Surrey RH10 3HD

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council have no objection but would request that a replacement tree be placed in the rear garden as that would be sufficiently distant as to not cause future harm.

2025/969/TPO Lok Lum, Domewood, Copthorne, Crawley, Surrey, RH10 3HD

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council consider that the crown reduction on the NNW of the site is not going to increase the light and question whether this is adequate justification for the removal of protected trees but would defer to the Tree Officer's opinion.

2025/1032/TPO 1 Glendale, Felbridge, Surrey, RH19 2QN

Resolved: No Action

2025/975/TPO Pinewood, Herons Lea, Copthorne, RH10 3HE

Resolved: No Action

Applications considered at the full Parish Council meeting:

2025/733 Land to the rear of 86 Copthorne Road, Felbridge, RH19 2NU

Resolved: No Comment

2025/1037 48 Copthorne Road, Felbridge, RH19 2NS

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council objects to this application. We do not believe that a 7.5m access point is necessary at this location and consider a 4m entrance is sufficient in line with nearby properties.

Considered at the Planning Meeting on 19th August 2025

(ii) **Adjoining Planning which may affect Felbridge** Nothing which directly affects Felbridge

(iii) **MSDC Development on Felbridge Border** Nothing new to report.

13. CLERK'S REPORT

Star Junction Roadworks: New sensors have now been placed into the road surface and the traffic lights are now working properly again.

Rowplatt Lane Safety Review: Highways have still not responded to FPC's request for information on costs. Cllr. Steeds has been asked to follow up.

Noise Complaints – Village Hall: Complaints regarding volume of noise from a live band playing at a party. Questioned why FVH does not have a website with a number to call at the time of such issues. Advised that FVH is run by a separate Management Committee who were made aware of the correspondence.

Temporary Toilet: The supplier has been advised that the end date for this year's hire will be 31st October.

14. BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING

Budget planning for 2026-27

Annual Village Meeting 2026

15. DATES OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL AND PLANNING MEETINGS

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 6th November. A planning meeting is scheduled for Thursday 16th October.

The meeting closed at approximately 2020.

Patricia Slatter

Clerk to Felbridge Parish Council

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