



Minutes of the Tourism, Trade and Traffic meeting held on Tuesday, 30th of September 2025.

THESE MINUTES WILL BE ADOPTED AT THE NEXT FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON MONDAY, 20TH OF OCTOBER 2025

Members:

Members (P = present)

Mr. Bob Bishop	Mrs. Susan Pepper	p	Mrs. Lynn Wylde	p
Mrs. Christine Hopkins	Mr. Gary Fox		Ms. Anne Cullen	p
Mrs. Patricia Banks	Mr. Donald Darbishire(C)	p	Mr. Bernard Bennett	
Ms. Helen Rutherford	Mr. David Royle		Mr. Ian Bliss	

Also in Attendance:

Graham Wells (Parish Clerk), Niamh Morrison (Assistant Parish Clerk), Jane Wilkinson (Go New Forest), Linda Scott (Visit Milford), Rachel Lewis (Hurst Castle), Tim Wedgewood (South Lawn Hotel), Donna Moseley (Paddle on the Green), Jon Crouch (The Cave), Emma Hardy (Milford-on-Sea Music Festival), Clara Flintoff (Magical Milford), Sue Frasier (Milford Charitable Trust).

1. The Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Tourism, Trade and Traffic Committee

Cllr Pepper proposed Cllr Darbishire as Chair for the Tourism, Trade and Traffic Committee. Cllr Cullen seconded this proposal. All members voted unanimously in favour. Cllr Darbishire was voted as Chair of the Tourism, Trade and Traffic Committee.

Cllr Darbishire proposed Cllr Pepper as Vice-Chair of the Tourism, Trade and Traffic Committee. Cllr Cullen seconded this proposal. All members voted unanimously in favour. Cllr Pepper was voted as Vice-Chair of the Tourism, Trade and Traffic Committee.

2. Introductions

Cllr Darbishire welcomed everyone. Introductions were made (clockwise) around the meeting table of all who were in attendance.

3. Apologies

Cllr Bob Bishop.

4. Tourism

Jane Wilkinson informed the meeting room that she is new to the board of Go New Forest and is also on the board of New Forest Escapes (a small independent business). Their aim is to provide support for small independent businesses throughout the New Forest and surrounding area. Visitor statistics to their website were available for viewing, these provided an understanding of who is landing and what they were looking for.

Linda Scott (representing Hurst) provided an overview of the visitors' footfall to Hurst which had increased by 6% on last year. The biggest challenges they faced this year was inaccessibility to Hurst as they have been fully reliant on everything reaching the site via ferry. Other challenges were ongoing maintenance and the re-organisation of English Heritage, which resulted in a loss of contacts for Hurst. She reported that a series of events were organised which proved very popular, and they will be hosting a Halloween event in October. It was confirmed that repair works on Hurst Spit was due to start imminently (October) and it is believed that funding has been secured for next winter to carry out further beach recycling.

Linda Scott continued to brief the meeting room on Visit Milford-on-Sea, which currently have 41 members. They promote eateries and accommodation within the village and attractions that are available in the surrounding area. She reported that they have in excess of 3,500 followers and they would like to encourage the local shops to join. It was queried if the Parish Council to assist in the sponsorship of local shops to this platform providing there would be a discounted offer.

5. Hotels and Country Parks

Tim Wedgewood of South Lawn Hotel reported a healthy increase on customers and how the hotel has evolved in the last 12 months. He believes his customers are looking for a more superior experience and they have invested in further refurbishment and made upgrades with garden rooms and a new website. They were awarded the Number 1 for Best Dog Friendly Hotel which has had a huge impact on his business and reported that this September has been their busiest on record. As well as tourists they also host 14 local clubs monthly. He highlighted the importance of the local traders in the village and their significant offers for visitors.

6. Shops, Cafés and Hostelrys

Donna Moseley of The Paddle on the Green reported that it was a successful summer, and the good weather attributed to business. Increasing overheads are impacting all businesses.

Jon Crouch of The Cave reported business was in general good for him this year however lunch demand was down. He had liaised with the majority traders prior to the meeting and reported that it was mixed across the board. Shorefield Country Park had their busiest year on record which has a positive impact on the eateries and bars within the village, particularly in the evening time.

Discussions were held regarding what draws people to the village centre. The brass band that occasionally use the Village Green for practice is enjoyed by many and it was suggested that the Village Green could be offered to others to do the same. Emma Hardy works with local youth groups, bands and musicians who could potentially also use the Village Green for practice.

7. Milford-on-Sea trader's feedback on Milford-on-Sea Music Festival

Cllr Darbshire reported on feedback that was received in the Parish Office on the 2025 Milford-on-Sea Music Festival. The overall feedback was extremely positive and that it is a great event. There were concerns raised about road closures, layout and lack of communication from the festival organisers. On continuing to report on the 2025 event, Cllr Darbshire reported that the Parish Council requested that organisers prioritise Milford-on-Sea traders for the event. Items arising from the 2025 festival would be dealt with at a separate meeting.

Linda Scott reported that the visitor numbers were significantly low to Hurst and suggested that the traffic diversion was responsible for this. She asked that the festival organisers give more thought into this element as it had a negative impact on both residents and businesses.

Emma Hardy, representing Milford-on-Sea Music Festival, confirmed that their committee are looking at a restructure of the festival and that there would be a meeting planned in November to commence the roadmap for the 2026 festival. They aim to run a successful festival and one that will benefit everyone. All would be invited to attend the November meeting. She confirmed that they would be more volunteers to ensure a smooth event, better security and vastly improved communications. The festival will only be promoted locally and that there is only one contact for the event which is:

info@milfordonseamusicfestival.org

Cllr Cullen reiterated that the only responsibility the Parish Council have in the running of the festival is to provide the provision of the Village Green. Cllr Pepper followed on to report that the Parish Council carry out due diligence for all events including organisers submitting public liability insurance and risk assessments upon booking an event.

Sue Frasier confirmed that Milford Charitable Trust had received their donation for 2025.

8. Events

Clara Flintoff confirmed that she would be involved in overseeing the installation of Christmas lights and the switch-on event this year as Tracy Haupt and Diane Brushwood have decided to no longer oversee this item. Clara reported that she has spoken to traders to confirm tree orders and that there would be less trees on the Village Green this year. The switch-on event will be held on Friday, 5th of December with Santa's Grotto opening at 4pm with light switch-on and sing-along at 5pm, with the event finishing at 6pm. There will be no church involvement this year, Total Voice Choir and the School Choir will be leading the sing-along this year.

Sue Frasier confirmed that they have secured two key sponsors for the event and one of the reasons behind fewer trees and lights is due to costings. They are looking for outdoor matting for the Village Green and Tim Wedgewood of South Lawn Hotel made an offer of some materials he had that are currently not in use.

9. To discuss any current issues in the Tourism, Trade and Traffic matters and any support the Parish Council can provide

Traders discussed amongst themselves different ways they could communicate with each other, including setting up a Whatsapp group to share information with each other.

Graham Well, Parish Clerk, informed attendees that the Parish Council have decided to replace all the bins throughout Milford-on-Sea and confirmed that the replacement bins on the Village Green would be sealed units with an open/closed lid. He also confirmed that there had been some discussion on the recent loss of the David Long blog and who could potentially take it over.

Cllr Darbshire reported that he had received an update from District Councillor Fran Carpenter on the parking restrictions being imposed on Salt Grass Lane. Hampshire County Council will start programming the works in with the intention for scheme to go live this winter.

It was reported that recent road works in the village had caused disruption. Cllr Pepper informed attendees that these remain unfinished and they are expected to return to complete the necessary works. The Parish Council, once received, will communicate details of these on their website.

It was reported that at this moment there is no update on the planning application for a new convenience store on Keyhaven Road. As soon as the parish office have any information this will be shared.

10. Any recommended assistance or advice required from Hampshire County Council and New Forest District Council

Linda Scott reported that there is no free parking in Keyhaven. Volunteers at Hurst have been significantly affected by this. She queried if there could be some exemption allowed for certain groups to park for free in the carpark. The Parish Clerk would make this enquiry to New Forest District Council for the volunteers of Hurst Castle.

Cllr Darbshire thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 11.40.

Chair..... Date.....