

Minutes of a Meeting of Huish Episcopi Parish Council held at Huish Episcopi Primary School on Monday 15 September 2025 at 19:00hrs.

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) – Julia Gadd (Chair), Arwyn Harris, Edward Keirle, Peter Porter, Jane Redfearn, Val Saunders, John Wood (7).

In attendance: J Ferguson – Parish Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENT (15 minutes) – 20 members of the public were present and points made included: Disappointment with the recommendation from SC Constitution and Governance Committee that the merger of Huish Episcopi and Langport parishes should be taken forward.
Speeding on Field Road. Cllr Wood addressed the comment explaining that a SID was installed in that location and data could be viewed here: [Wearne and Huish Episcopi Speed Record](#).

OUTSIDE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

- **Somerset Councillors (SCllrs)**

Cllr Stanton spoke frankly about how the 2 parishes needed to move forward, working closer together to become one larger parish representing the whole Huish Episcopi and Langport. This was endorsed by the Chair of HEPC who was committed to working closer and amicably with Langport Town Council and sincerely hoped that all differences could be put aside and the 2 councils move forward as one community.

Cllr Wilkins reported that the recent road closure under the railway bridge had been a success with traffic being managed well throughout the period.

- [Avon and Somerset Police](#)
- Sedgemoor Land Recovery Project presentation (Appendix 5)

19:45 - Meeting opened.

25/71 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s85(1)).

Cllr Crumb – Work commitments. Accepted.

Cllr Horsgood – Prior engagement. Accepted.

25/72 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

25/73 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** and sign the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 21 July 25.

25/74 To **REQUEST** a public apology from Langport Town Cllr Dromgoole on behalf of the residents of Huish Episcopi for his comments made on Social Media in support of the Community Governance Review, stating *"Huish has been getting an increasingly free-ride on Langport's back and it will shortly become completely unsustainable"*.

Reason and justification for the request, since April 25 HEPC have granted £36,250 to community groups in the combined area.

Cllr Dromgoole offered an apology which was accepted by HEPC.

25/75 CHAIRS REPORT

a. Report from SC Constitution and Governance Committee meeting.

As announced in the public session, the recommendation had been made at the recent SC Committee meeting for the 2 parishes to merge in 2027, the final decision would be made by SC at a full council meeting in December 2025. Committee decision available here:

- [Constitution and Governance Committee Summary of Decisions](#)

b. Report from JCC Meeting:

Huish Episcopi Parish Council

Clerk: Julie Ferguson

Tel: 07783 475200 E-mail: clerk@huishepiscopi-pc.gov.uk

- i. To **CONSIDER** instructing a consultant to carry out a car parking assessment provision, cost share to be agreed with LTC.

RESOLVED: To instruct a Specialist Traffic and Car Park Consultant to look at options for additional car parking in the local area.

- c. To **CONSIDER** any proposals coming from the Sedgemoor Land Recovery Project presentation. No recommendations were made at this time.

25/76 CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE. Noted.

- a. SALC Cllr Training events
- b. Levels and Moors Rural Loneliness Project
- c. Remembrance Day Service 2025 invitation to Cllrs to attend
- d. Thank you from Landmark Langport for contribution towards Langport Town Hall windows
- e. NJC LGS pay agreement 2025.
- f. Request for comments on an application from Huish Academy for S106 funds for Sports Hall enhancements and Tennis and Netball Court improvements.

RESOLVED: To **SUPPORT** the application.

25/77 PLANNING – Decisions REPORT. Noted.

- a. [25/01443/PAMB](#). Prior approval Notification for the proposed change of use and conversion of one agricultural building into 3 No. dwellings (Use Class C3) and associated building operations. Agricultural building at Land OS 5734 Aller Hill TA10 0DD. Refused. Noted.
- b. [22/00135/REM](#). Reserved Matters application for approval of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following outline approval 20/00131/OUT for the proposed erection of 1 No. Dwelling. Land West Of Frog Lane Langport Somerset. Approved.

25/78 PLANNING – Applications.

- a. [25/01986/HOU](#). Proposed garage and workshop building to provide ancillary accommodation. Providence Pibsbury Langport Somerset TA10 9EJ.

RESOLVED: To **SUPPORT** the application.

25/79 FINANCE – To NOTE July & August 25 receipts. Noted.

July & August 25 RECEIPTS			
Rec.	Payee	Particulars	Amount
1	HMRC	VAT Refund	£ 2,283.17
2	GREENSLADE TAYLOR HUNT	FBT - 5 ACRES	£ 248.94
	TOTAL		£ 2,532.11

25/80 FINANCE – Payment Schedule.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** August & September 25 payment schedule

Huish Episcopi Parish Council August 25 Payment Schedule			
Inv.	Payee	Particulars	Amount
1	Timeback Accounts	Inv. 7191	£ 6.00
2	Somerset Landscapes Ltd.	Ranger July25 Inv. SLL35969	£ 1,366.20
3	Langport Town Council	Hall Hire Fee - CGR	£ 177.50
4	Staff	Salaries and expenses	£ 1,288.96
5	PKF Littlejohn	External Audit Fee	£ 378.00
	TOTAL		£ 3,216.66

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Huish Episcopi Parish Council September 25 Payment Schedule			
Inv.	Payee	Particulars	Amount
1	Timeback Accounts	Inv. 7230	£ 6.00
2	Somerset Landscapes Ltd.	Ranger Aug25 Inv. SLL36065	£ 1,092.96
3	SALC	SALC/NALC Annual Fee	£ 1,112.80
4	Staff	Salaries and expenses	tbc
	TOTAL		£ 2,211.76

25/81 FINANCE – To **NOTE** the External Auditor Report for FY 2024-25 and **CONSIDER** any 'except for' matters (Appendix 1). **Noted.**

25/82 FINANCE – To **CONSIDER** a letter from Yeovil Town Council asking for financial support for the Octagon Theatre Project (Appendix 2).

It was decided to invite YTC to submit a grant request for a smaller amount than the suggested £25K with more detail on how the funds would be used.

25/83 FINANCE – Grant request from Langport Church Community Trust (Appendix 3).

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the grant request from Langport Church Community Trust for £1500.

25/84 FINANCE – Grant request from ESS Education and Support Services (Appendix 4).

RESOLVED To **APPROVE** a grant request from ESS Education and Support Services for £1000.

25/85 PARISH MATTERS – To **CONSIDER** damage caused to wildlife habitats due to hedge cutting (Cllr Saunders).

After some discussion, Cllr Saunders agreed to bring back to a future meeting some recommendations to be taken forward.

25/86 REPORTS – To receive reports:

a. Committees or Working Parties

Cllr Saunders reported that work on the website was continuing.

Cllr Porter reported that the Memorial Field AGM had been held and they were still waiting for S106 funds to be released for the new changing rooms.

b. Parish Councillors

Cllr Wood had circulate a report from the 'SID Warriors' announcing that the team of 4 dedicated parishioners had been moving the 2 SIDs around the various approved locations for 5 years and in that time they had seen a significant drop in speeding on the parish roads. The PC thanked the 'Warriors' for all their efforts in that time.

Cllr Redfearn was hoping to meet with the Head of Huish Academy and asked for Cllrs to advise of anything that needed to be raised at the meeting.

c. Allotments

Cllr Redfearn reported that it had been agreed for the Ranger (SLL) to clear the plot that had seen an eviction by the PC following the recent allotment inspection. The plot would hopefully soon be ready for a new holder to take on.

25/87 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

- Recommendations for hedge cutting in the parish (if received).

25/88 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – Monday 20 Oct 2025 at 7.00pm, Huish Episcopi Primary School, Langport, TA10 9RW. All agenda items to be notified to the clerk by Fri 10 Oct 2025.

20:45 – Meeting Closed.

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2024/25In respect of **Huish Episcopi Parish Council – SO0146****1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority**

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

NONE

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

17/07/2025



Yeovil Town Council

Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ

Website : www.yeovil.gov.uk

Amanda Card Chief Executive / Town Clerk

Julie Ferguson
Huish Episcopi Parish Council

Via e-mail:
clerk@huishepiscopi-pc.gov.uk

Date: 2nd September 2025
Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Ask for:
E-mail: amanda.card@yeovil.gov.uk

Dear Julie Ferguson

Financial Support for the Octagon Theatre Project

We are writing to request your consideration of funding to support the redevelopment of the Octagon Theatre in Yeovil.

As the principal theatre serving Somerset and Dorset, the Octagon has welcomed over 120,000 audience members annually and played a vital role in enriching the cultural life of our communities while contributing significantly to the local economy. We are aware that many residents of your parish value and regularly attend performances at the venue.

The theatre closed in May 2023 in preparation for a major redevelopment project initially budgeted at £29.01 million. Due to the financial constraints faced by Somerset Council, this original scheme has been scaled back. A revised, yet impactful project is now being developed, with a current budget of approximately £15 million, funded through:

- **£10 million** from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
- **£3.75 million** (in principle) from Yeovil Town Council
- **£1.75 million** from other secured or anticipated sources (including fundraising, ticket levies, and Section 106 contributions)

The overarching aim remains to transform the Octagon Theatre into a “**cultural hub**” for Somerset, Dorset, and the wider region. The venue has already been designated as an **Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation** and appointed as the **Music Education Hub Lead Organisation** for Somerset and Dorset, with ongoing funding from Arts Council England and the Department for Education. These developments demonstrate the significant educational and cultural benefits the theatre will deliver for residents across the region.

Somerset Council will continue to lead and manage the redevelopment project, but as you will be aware, the Council has declared a financial emergency and cannot provide additional funding. Yeovil Town Council has stepped forward to take over the theatre's long-term management once redevelopment is complete, demonstrating its commitment to the theatre's future. YTC's proposed funding is currently subject to public consultation.

As part of this consultation, we have received strong feedback from residents in various parishes expressing support for the theatre and suggesting that their own parish councils might wish to give a one-off capital contribution toward its future, following the framework below:

Council annual precept	Suggested one-off capital contribution
Under £5,000	£1,000
50,000 £250,000	£25,000
£250,000 - £500,000	£50,000
£500,000 - £1million	£100,000
Over £1million	£200,000

We are therefore inviting local parish and town councils to join us in securing the future of the Octagon Theatre. Your support would form part of a broader collaborative effort to sustain and enhance this valuable regional asset.

We would be pleased to attend a future meeting of your council to discuss this proposal in more detail and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for considering this important opportunity. By working together, we can ensure that the Octagon Theatre continues to serve and inspire our communities for generations to come.

Yours faithfully



Cllr Andy Soughton
Leader of Yeovil Town Council
Chair of Finance & Policy Executive



Cllr Graham Oakes
Chair of Culture, Events & Promotions



Amanda Card
Chief Executive / Town Clerk



Adam Burgan
Director of Culture, Events & Promotions

Huish Episcopi Parish Council

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COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION FORM

REGULAR FUNDING

(of amounts greater than £1,000 p.a)

Name of the organisation	Langport Church Community Trust
Address of website, if available	https://angellangport.chessck.co.uk/
Bank account details	(as appears on statements) [REDACTED] Name - Langport Church Community Trust
Name of person(s) submitting the application	John ford
What is your position in the organisation?	Trustee and treasurer
Contact address, including phone number & email address	[REDACTED]
Geographical area covered (delete as appropriate)	Huish and langport
Aims, objectives or activities of the organisation	To provide short term food bank support for those referred to us by official agencies. We have a restricted Food Bank fund within our charity no 1106686
Do you target a specific age range? If so what is it?	Age Range__all____
Do you target disabled groups?	n/a
How much funding are you applying for?	£1500
What is the funding to be used for?	For the purchase of food and essential supplies
Please clearly state how the funding you are applying for will benefit residents of Huish Episcopi?	Providing short term relief for those in need, referred to us by GP's, schools, Village Agent (who attends weekly), Citizens Advice, etc. We do not provide a walk in service. Enquirers are signposted to the above agencies before we provide support
Do you currently receive funding from other sources and, if so, from where and how much?	Our current costs are – Rent of two store rooms (paid internally to our charity) £2500 3 Non trustee Staff part paid/ part volunteers £3000 Purchases - Tesco and ASDA deliveries to our store and direct to clients, Inkind Direct for toiletries and hygiene products - £8,000 We obtain supplies from Inkind Direct at 10-20% of RRP, and purchase protein/ meat foods, locally where. We collect dry

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	food donations from Tesco, OneStop, the Vets and others. A number of trustee volunteers deliver to homes as required. No trustees are paid.
Are you applying to other funding organisations for support and, if yes, who are they?	Yes, national when identified, and Langport Town Council Our restricted Food bank fund currently stands at £5k so we are funding to cover late 2025 into 2026. We anticipate further increased demand with the pressure on employment, wages and cost of living, with potential tax increases in the Autumn budget

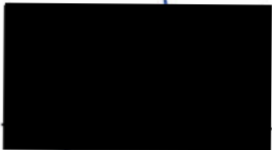
Please return this form to Julie Ferguson - Parish Clerk email or post (details above)

The following documents must be included with your application form. Scanned or electronic copies are acceptable. Incomplete submissions will be returned for completion.

Document	Please indicate to show that you have included it
A copy of your constitution	yes
A copy of your certified audited accounts for the last two years. In the case of smaller organisations, income and expenditure statements for the last two years certified by a qualified accountant may be submitted instead. Where such statements have not been certified, they must be signed by two persons from within the organisation who have been appointed to act as auditors	Yes
A business plan or something similar that sets out what activities you have planned over the next three years and how they will be funded	N/A I have attached a current statement from our volunteer, Victoria who manages, with help, the Food Bank
Last 3 Months of bank statements	yes

Successful applicants will be required to sign a Service Level Agreement with Huish Episcopi Parish Council.

Please refer to the Council's Community Grant Funding Policy for full details of our terms and conditions.

Signature of applicant 

Date12/8/2025.....

COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION FORM

ONE-OFF GRANT

(of amounts of £1,000 or less)

Name of the organisation	ESS Education and Support Services
Address of website, if available	www.myess.co.uk
Bank account details	[REDACTED]
Name of person(s) submitting the application	Emma Rowe
What is your position in the organisation?	Engagement & Fundraising Manager
Contact address, including phone number & email address	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Geographical area covered (delete as appropriate)	Langport and surrounding towns and villages for community Hub. Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire for Educational Side of the Charity.
Aims, objectives or activities of the organisation	ESS provides bespoke educational packages that support vulnerable young people who are disengaged, or at risk of disengaging with mainstream education. ESS aims to reengage these young people with mainstream education or help them gain employment depending on what is suitable for them. ESS Education and Support Services also provide support, advice and guidance for the families of these young people by providing workshops, training etc in support of social, emotional and mental health, employability and life skills to help create a safe, stable household. As part of this ESS Education and Support services are opening a commercial café as a community hub at Old Kelways in Langport. This hub will be a safe space for local residents to gather socially and seek support for various matters. ESS will shape the activities provided around the needs and wants of the community.
Do you target a specific age range? If so what is it?	Young people aged 10-25 and their families on the educational side. Any local resident of Langport and the surrounding area for the Community Hub.
Do you target disabled groups?	ESS are an inclusive, equal opportunity charity, and whilst we do offer support to those with learning difficulties and/or conditions, we do not discriminate against and will support everyone if they have a disability or not.

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How much funding are you applying for?	£1000
What is the funding to be used for?	To go towards the purchase of a minibus (we already have 16k raised but need to raise 20k to secure funding).
Please clearly state how the funding you are applying for will benefit residents of Huish Episcopi?	The minibus project is of vital importance to our community because it directly addresses the significant challenges posed by living in a rural area like Somerset, where many residents experience limited access to public transport. This service will provide a lifeline for vulnerable young people and individuals with disabilities who struggle with conventional transport, enabling them to access the full range of ESS services. We know this is a critical need because a lack of transport has been identified as a major factor contributing to social isolation, anxiety, and the feeling of being "captive" in small villages, which negatively impacts individual growth and mental health, particularly in the wake of the pandemic. By removing this barrier, the minibus will directly combat loneliness, promote community unity, and allow those affected by the current financial crisis to access crucial education and support in budgeting and healthy eating, leading to improved life skills and self-reliance. This project builds on ESS's existing strengths and positive track record. Our commitment to equality and providing fair access to resources—such as education, social empowerment, and mental health support—is a core value that this minibus will powerfully extend. Furthermore, the vehicle will not only serve our beneficiaries but also create new volunteer opportunities for individuals who have previously been unable to help due to their own transport limitations. This initiative therefore strengthens our community by expanding our reach and reinforcing our proven success; as a charity, we know our services work, with 100% of our service users in 2023/2024 returning to education or employment. The minibus will simply allow us to share this successful impact with a wider range of people. The minibus project will also leverage the positive relationship between our students and their learning mentors, integrating this support into the transport process. Secondly, it will extend our existing commitment to the wider community by making the minibus available to local groups and charities, reinforcing our collaborative and supportive ethos. For example, we know that several of the community groups that meet at our community hub, such as the friendship group, would love to go on a group outing but struggle as many are unable to drive or lack transport. We'd love to be able to offer our minibus out, along with our volunteer driver, to help remove this barrier. This project therefore not only enhances our core mission but also strengthens our network of community support. In order to ensure the sustainability of running the minibus ESS plan to work with the community, our young people and guardians to design a series of fundraising events throughout the year. This will help cover all running costs of the vehicle. In addition to this The

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	Bluebell will donate £1 from every sale towards the upkeep.
Do you currently receive funding from other sources and, if so, from where and how much?	Other than the income from the charity no funding is currently being received.
Are you applying to other funding organisations for support and, if yes, who are they?	In regard to the minibus we currently have 16k raised but are required to raise the remaining 4k to secure these funds. 14k of this comes from various grants, including the Somerset Community Foundation, the Clarks Foundation and The Nuclear Restoration Fund. The rest has been fundraised via sponsored walks and events at The Bluebell. We have also been in touch with several Mason Lodges in the area.

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Please return this form to Julie Ferguson - Parish Clerk email or post (details above)

The following documents must be included with your application form. Scanned or electronic copies are acceptable. Incomplete submissions will be returned for completion.

<i>Document</i>	<i>Please indicate to show that you have included it</i>
A copy of your constitution	Included
A copy of your certified audited accounts for the last two years. In the case of smaller organisations, income and expenditure statements for the last two years certified by a qualified accountant may be submitted instead. Where such statements have not been certified, they must be signed by two persons from within the organisation who have been appointed to act as auditors	We only have one years' worth of accounts as we haven't yet been running for two years. Please see attached.
A business plan or something similar that sets out what activities you have planned over the next three years and how they will be funded	We are currently in the process of re-writing our business plan as ESS has evolved so much over the past 12 months.
Last 3 Months of bank statements	Included

Successful applicants will be required to sign a Service Level Agreement with Huish Episcopi Parish Council.

Please refer to the Council's Community Grant Funding Policy for full details of our terms and conditions.

Signature of applicantEmma. Louisa. Rowe

Date27/08/2025