

WINCHELSEA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (WRA)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - SATURDAY 18th OCTOBER 2025 @ 11AM

MEETING MINUTES

Committee Members in Attendance:

Glen Marks, Chair (GM)

Georgia Benn, Secretary (GB)

Julie Gurr (JG)

Jane Taylor (JT)

Sarah Andrews (SA)

Richard Plumb (RP)

Apologies:

Dave Richards

Ian Menzies

David Dickson

1. Welcome and Introduction

- Glen Marks (Chairperson) welcomed members to the WRA's fourth AGM.
- Apologies were made for committee members unable to attend.
- Apologies were also given for Peter Cosstick who had been due to speak. Peter will be holding an open session 11am – noon, on 8th November at the Court Hall, where he will be available to answer questions about the Winchelsea Corporation.
- GM explained that there would be some changes in the running order of the agenda to facilitate timings and questions.
- GM welcomed Simon Everitt – NT Ranger and Helena Dollimore MP Hastings and Rye to the meeting.
- GM reiterated the role of the WRA for new members. The WRA exists:
 - To represent the interests and views of members to the local parish council, district, and county councils and to other relevant authorities or institutions. A strong communal voice helps get our views across more effectively.
 - To seek to improve conditions, services, and amenities for residents of Winchelsea
 - Promote good neighbourliness and community enjoyment
 - GM confirmed that WRA now have over 230 members

2. Formal Approval of AGM 2024 minutes

- GM confirmed that the minutes of the previous AGM were available to read on printed copies around the room and also on the Winchelsea website on the WRA page.
- The committee had approved the minutes and, as there were no comments from the floor the minutes were passed.

3. Guest Speakers

Simon Everitt (SE)– National Trust (NT) Ranger

Simon updated members on a number of initiatives taking place in the town over coming months:

- Tree work will be taking place around the town, shortly. This is mandated by National Highways (NH), as well as NT's own tree management plan. Areas affected will be A259, opposite the Winchelsea Lodge, the cricket pitch, Lookout Cottage and Wickham Rock Lane.
- The allotment wall on Rookery Lane will be subject to a programme of on-going repairs. As the wall is a monument, it requires heritage masons and sign off by Historic England. As such restoration will happen slowly, meter by metre as the funding allows.
- Salutation Cellars will undergo some restoration as well as the addition of new LED lighting. Any questions can be referred to Friends Of the Ancient Monuments FOAM@winchelsea.com.
- SE raised the issue of visitors and /or residents leaving gates to permissive pathways open, which can now allow livestock to escape. NT will be modifying some gates to prevent this.
- NT will be moving out of the office on Mill Road and hope to move to Mill Farm Barn. This will be a good central location which allows towns people to continue to visit.
- SE reported that the first of the cattle had been sent to market and new cows were due to come in.
- Questions for Simon can be emailed to ra@winchelsea.com.

Helena Dollimore (HD) MP, Hastings & Rye

- HD thanks GM for her invitation to the meeting and praised the residents of Winchelsea for scale of volunteering, money raising activities, and other events held by the town
- Since her visit to last year's AGM, HD confirmed that she has dealt with in excess of 15 thousand cases on behalf of constituents, covering a vast range of issues.

HD provided an update to members on a number of initiatives she is working on which impact the town and its residents:

- **Potholes:** HD asserted that East Sussex has the worst roads in the country. The Government have allocated £7m to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to repair roads. Two historic issues have been: a failure on the part of ESCC to provide reports on how road money has been spent, and a practice of patching up potholes rather than undertaking quality repairs which last. HD noted that ESCC accounts showed a plan to spend less on road repairs than the allocation. HD will be monitoring this situation. HD urged residents to report potholes, which are under-reported in East Sussex versus other counties, via 'FIX MY STREET' on Google. More reports mean a greater share of the financial allocation for road repairs.
- **Road Safety:** HD recognised the problem of speeding on the A259 and in and around Winchelsea. She also recognises that National Highways (NH) are not being sufficiently responsive to the issue. HD made members aware that the District Commander for Hasting and Rother, Chief Inspector Simon Yates, has purchased two speed monitoring machines, which can be used by volunteers to track speeding. HD urged members to create a regular program of volunteers to monitor speed as it can have an influence on driver attitudes. HD also raised the issue of proper advertising of the recent closures on the A259 around Winchelsea. HD will be raising the issue with NH. HD announced that the Government is planning a new road safety strategy, likely to be launched in late 2025. HD will be feeding in information concerning rural roads, particularly those which have a default 60mph speed limit. HD commented that it not the case, as many people believe, that the must be a fatality on a road before a speed limit can be challenged or changed, HD will also be raising the issue of unsafe loads, which kill a surprising amount of people in East Sussex. Again HD urged members to report road safety issues when they see them.
- **Public Transport:** HD is campaigning for the return of international trains from Ashford International Station. The station which cost £80m of taxpayer money is ready to be used and it is a scandal that it is still sitting unused and empty. HD has called on the government to support the re-opening. The Rail Regulator will decide at the end of this month. On the subject of buses, HD will be holding a meeting with Stagecoach in Hastings. Please write and email to HDs office to request an invitation.

- **Heritage:** HD commented that as a Labour and Co-operative MP, she was gladdened by, and supported, the plan for the community ownership of the Little Shop. HD reported that next year the Bayeux Tapestry will be coming to the UK to be exhibited at the British Museum. Given the artwork's connection with East Sussex, HD is campaigning for East Sussex to take a role in its exhibition. HD is also working with the British Museum to ensure availability and accessibility of tickets for local people.
- **Southern Water:** HD continues to hold Southern Water to account, for water shortages and flooding in Hastings and Rye, via the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee. HD will be holding a 'Evening with Fergal Sharkey,' a prominent campaigner and environmentalist, on 14th November 5.30pm- 9pm. Tickets can be bought via HD's website.
- Questions for Helena can be emailed to helena.dollimore.mp@parliament.uk. Please remember to include your full name and postal address.
- GM thanked HD for her informative update and her time.

4. Financial Update and Accounts

- The following information was prepared by Ian Menzies, Treasurer and read out by GM:
 - The results for the year to 31st March 2025 show a reduction in reserves of £90. This was because we did not charge a subscription for 2024/25 but still incurred expenses.
 - Overall cash reserves declined from £1321 to £1230, which does include some early payments of subs for 2025/26.
- GM made the point that WRA do incur costs – such as public liability insurance, and we like to keep a small reserve to support our work throughout the year.
- GM confirmed that WRA are now collecting subscriptions of £10 per person, for the year to 31st March 2026. Members were encouraged to pay, if they had not already, by seeing either RP or GB, after the meeting. Members could also check their payment status after the meeting with RP or GB.

5. Election of Committee Members

- GM reminded members of the 8 elected committee members - GM, DR, DD, IM, RP, JT, JG, SA.
- GM thanked the committee for their work of the previous year. committee.

- GM confirmed that seven of the eight current committee members are prepared to stand again in the coming year. DR would be standing down due to other commitments, GM thanked DR for his service to the committee.
- GM confirmed that GB had been co-opted into the committee earlier in the year and would replace DD as Secretary, while DD will continue as a committee member.
- Members voted in favour to elect the standing committee members to serve until the next AGM.
- Two vacancies exist on the committee and members were encouraged to express interest in serving as committee members.

6. Chairmans Report

- **Monks Walk Toilets:** GM reminded members of RDC's proposal to offer the toilet block for lease to a business on the understanding that the business kept an open toilet for public use. GM updated members on the actions of Icklesham Parish Council (IPC) who requested a review of the planned lease proposal and successfully argued for it to be overturned. IPC has now submitted an 'Expression of Interest' for the freehold of the premises. Which may mean that IPC own and run the toilets in the future. WRA have been involved each step of the way – lobbying RDC in support of devolution to IPC and attending IPC meetings to express our support. GM thanked John Clarke for his previous work lobbying for the toilets and confirmed that GB will be the committee member responsible for toilets. GM confirmed that the process is likely to take some time, but WRA will remain involved.
- **Shop Update:** GM apologised to members that, given time constraints, there would not be time for a full update from the Shop Group. GM confirmed that the Shop Group had reported excellent progress in transitioning the shop to community ownership. GM advised members that a full update on progress could be found on the Winchelsea website or by visiting the Little Shop where a new leaflet is available.
- **Database Update:** GM confirmed that the committee has recently undertaking a review and update of the member database to ensure more accurate and secure information. Members were encouraged to contact ra@winchelsea.com if they need to update any of their information, particularly to provide email addresses.
- **Traffic Update:** GM handed over to JT to provide the update. JT made the point that the WRA has a reputation for dealing in well researched information and facts and has done since the association was founded.

JT reiterated to members that the role of the WRA with regard to all matters concerning traffic safety is to keep members involved in the process, present the options and the facts. The WRA do not decide on outcomes. JT proceeded to articulate the current status, with commentary on how we have arrived there, specifically what residents of Winchelsea said and voted on over the last couple of years: Winchelsea has long been used as a bypass for the A259 resulting in high volumes of traffic, speeding and antisocial driving through the town.

The current WRA was formed in 2019, galvanised by the result of East Sussex County Council and Highways England road safety audits and end to end traffic counts. There was a full town meeting in the church in 2019. Residents voted overwhelmingly for drastic measures to stop the rat runners. As a result, WRA recognised it needed to act. In 2021, residents voted for NRT/NLT, but this option was blocked by NH because its guidance at the time required complete reconstruction of the A259/ Strand Hill junction. A second public vote was carried out by IPC in 2023, informed by an independent consultants' report on possible options. The choice was closure of Strand Hill, one way up Strand Hill or do nothing. The result was 61% voted for closure, 4% one way. A 2: 1 majority on 75% turnout of the full town. This vote was achieved despite public threats by the shop owner to close the shop. The WRA recognised that closure was a compromise, and that NRT/NLT was residents' preferred choice. WRA pushed National Highways to do better, and after months of negotiation with National Highways and East Sussex County Council, National Highways agreed to take on the NRT/NLT without significant alteration to the junction and picking up the majority of the cost. Throughout, WRA have worked to the criteria of: Does it work? Can we afford it? JT pointed out that the solution that has been arrived at by NH: costs 'peanuts' versus the costs of lighting and construction needed to implement other road calming solutions, such as sleeping policemen, is it feasible in a conservation area, and NH/ESCC agree to it. JT stated that NH has scheduled the NRT/NLT to be implemented during their 2026/27 schedule of works. JT made the point that throughout the process WRA have sought to keep members and residents informed and have produced a great deal of information. If members wish to see any of that information again, it can be provided. JT then made a number of observations about recent concerns regarding the road and the shop: JT acknowledged that everyone in the room supports the shop. JT disputed that was any evidence to date which conclusively showed that the road closure would affect the shop.

She acknowledged that reports of reduced takings when Strand Hill was closed most recently, were of concern, but that it could not be concluded that reduced takings could be explained solely by the closure of the road; that closure also coincided with the start of the school holidays, and there had also been significant road works affecting traffic coming in from Hastings. JT made the point that there are many other factors affecting shop viability. JT also made the point that NRT/NLT would not impact on visitors to the town or any of its events. JT concluded that the town now had an effective traffic calming and safety solution and the timeline for its implementation would give the shop group and supporters plenty of time to devise a plan to viability.

7. Questions and Discussion

- GM confirmed that all questions and answers would be published as part of the AGM minutes, including questions received by email before the meeting. GM handed over to the floor:
- Jeremy Naylor
Proposed a vote of thanks for JT for all her hard work on road safety.
- Jerry Moss
Question: How do you enforce NRT/NLT?
Answer: JT stated that the evidence shows that over time people simply comply with the road traffic signs.
- Sue McGeown (SMcG)
Thanked JT for her work and acknowledged that speeding is a problem. SMcG asserted that NRT/NLT was flawed as a solution. SMcG was concerned about the impact on the shop and believed that those living north of the High Street would see an increase in traffic. SMcG proposed a twofold solution of 20mph through the town and traffic calming measures.
Question: Why has WRA not pursued these solutions?
Answer: JT acknowledged that 20 mph and other traffic calming options were not a new issue and had been considered. JT referred to recent research by RoSPA which report that 20 mph are most effective where there are other road calming measures. The various road calming options can require up to six figure sums to implement because they require lighting and construction. Only particularly types of road calming measures are suitable for roads used by buses. JT also commented on the difficulty of enforcing 20mph. SG made the point

that there are examples across the country where it has been effective. GM confirmed that 20 mph would be looked at again by WRA.

- Hilary Roome (HR)

HR pointed out that a number of historic towns using rising bollards. HR also supported the use of 20mph through the town. HR pointed out that circumstance in the town have changed and proposed another vote.

- John Clarke (JC)

JC stood up to answer Hilary's points. JC noted that other options carry enormous costs. JC voiced his support for the current solution and made the point that changing that based on a deficit in the shop was a 'big ask.'

- Angela Gilbey (AG)

Thanked Jane for her work. AG made the point that returning to 'square one' would be costly and time consuming. AG asserted that road safety is paramount.

- Ali Casey (AC)

AC made the point that the last vote was two years ago, and the world has changed. AC asserted that if you reduce traffic, you reduce shop trade. AC pointed out that trade in the shop was reduced by 1/4 to 1/3 when Strand Hill was closed.

Question: do we still think the majority want NRT/NLT? Should it go to another vote?

Answer: no answer given, as another member began to talk.

- Octavia Tancredi (OT)

OT wished to make the point that while the shop is important, the shop does not 'trump' safety. OT also pointed out that Winchelsea is a conservation area, meaning road safety is particularly important.

- June Grindley (JG)

JG wished to make a point in her capacity of Co-Chair of the Conservation Society, that NRT/ NLT will preserve the Stand Arch which is a Grade I listed building.

- David Page (DP)

Question: is the NRT/NLT now in the hands of NH? Have we as a town lost control of NR/NLT?

Answer: JT confirmed that it is NH's own safety audits that identified the problems with safety. WRA had ensured members and the wider town were consulted and able to comment and join public votes on how to manage them. NH met residents and our MP in July and confirmed its intention to progress NRT/NLT.

- Alfred McKenney (AMcK)
AMcK wished to relate his experience of a recent visit to Whitby in which a small local shop had been kept open due to passing traffic on the road. AMcK asserted that reduced traffic on the road will affect the shop. AMcK expressed concern that the current solution 'trumping' other solutions just because it is lower cost.
- Ian Rowlands (IR)
IR wished to make the point that the road will have an effect on the shop. He acknowledged that the current data is not robust, but it is the only data available. IR made the point that the NRT/NLT solution is just the best of a bad bunch. IR also made the point that in a democracy people have the right to change their minds.
- Howard Norton (HN)
HN wished to make the point that shop viability is precarious and that the road brought in only casual spend which could not be depended on.
- John Spencer (JS)
JS requested that the WRA take up the issue of the 40mph speed limit on Monks Walk. JS commented that school children are dropped off on Monks Walk to cross the road to the school.
- Heather Little (HL)
HL wished to raise the issue of additional traffic using the A259 if NRT/NLT is implemented.
- Linda Bass (LB)
LB expressed her support NRT/NLT and wished to urge members not to let the issue of NRT/NLT become divisive.
- Laurie Rutman (LR)
LR wished to express his thanks to JT for her perseverance on road safety and acknowledged that all other options had been reviewed and rejected.
- Julie Gurr (Committee member) advised that, as a daily walker on Strand Hill, it is not safe walking dogs alongside the traffic and described a recent incident of dangerous driving.
- Sarah Andrews (Committee member) read out a prepared statement making the point that while members are united in the need for traffic calming and a wish to retain the shop, members should not jeopardise one goal for the sake of another.
- Questions and comments raised by email before the meeting can be found in the appendix.

8. Any Other Business

- GM invited John Spencer (JS) to give an update on the activities of The Marsh Link Action Group (MLAG)
 - JS stated that MLAG are a voluntary group who aim to maintain and bring back rail services to area. MLAG interface with Southern Rail on a quarterly basis. MLAG also support the reintroduction of international services from Ashford.
 - JS asked members wishing to volunteer to contact him directly.
- GM asked the members to propose any other priorities for the WRA.
 - JS's comments on 40mph at Monks Walk are noted as a possible option for WRA involvement.
 - GMs comment of 20mph speed limit is noted as a possible option for WRA involvement.
 - JT mentioned Councillor Simon McGurk's work on improving cycling routes and cycling safety, via Sussex Greenways, as a possible option for WRA involvement.
- GM closed the meeting.

Appendix 1

Questions received from members relating to road safety and traffic

◦ **Alistair Howitt**

Should the WRA oppose plans for the no L turn / R turn proposals?

Background: We are new(ish) residents in Winchelsea and are aware two significant issues affecting all residents: 1. The use of the town as a cut through for drivers who do not stop in the town. In the confined streets their speed may be within 30mph limits but do pose a risk to pedestrians crossing the roads and other road users. 2. The almost miraculous survival of the Little Shop, which is soon to be taken over by the community. The proposed new restrictions to the Strand Gate approach will effectively stop through traffic in the town. Do we really want this? It could turn us into an isolated backwater and deny us and visitors the wonderful approach to the town which Strand Gate provides. The proposed solution is the wrong answer to the first problem above and very seriously threatens the viability of the shop. We have been informed that that no L turn/R turn is for safety reasons. But there are absolutely no safety concerns turning left off the main road to Strand Gate and although the right turn can be tricky it is no worse than many other entries onto main roads locally. There are many towns and villages throughout the countryside whose retail and hospitality businesses have been decimated by being bypassed, and it would be tragic for the residents of Winchelsea if the same were to happen here. I do understand that in the past other options such as 20mph speed limits, traffic calming measures and remodelling the Strand Gate junction have been considered but rejected on grounds of practicality or cost. This proposal I understand is attractive because of its low cost and based on a false premise of improved safety. We need a solution which maintains and manages traffic through the town more effectively and does not pose an existential risk to local businesses, in the way which this proposal does.

Answer:

The role that the WRA has played in road safety has been to support both National Highways (NH) and East Sussex County Council (ESCC) in finding a solution to Winchelsea being used as a de facto bypass for the A259. There have been several WRA iterations over decades, each attempted to find a solution. The current WRA was formed in 2019, galvanised by the results of East Sussex County Council and Highways

England road safety audits, and end to end traffic counts. There was a full town meeting in the church in 2019. Residents voted overwhelmingly for drastic measures to stop the rat runners. As a result, WRA recognised it needed to act.

There have been two subsequent public votes. In 2021, residents voted for NRT/NLT. NH blocked this because its guidance at the time required complete reconstruction of the A259 junction. WRA persevered for a second-best option with the support of residents. A second public vote was carried out by Icklesham parish council in 2023, informed by an independent consultants' report on possible options. The choice was 1. closure of Strand Hill, 2. one way up Strand Hill or 3. do nothing. The result was 61% closure, 4% one way. A 2: 1 majority on 75% turnout of the full town.

We recognised that closure of Strand Hill was a compromise and that NRT/NLT was residents' preferred choice. WRA pushed NH to reconsider. After months of negotiation with NH and ESCC, NH agreed to take on the NRT/NLT work and pay for most of the cost.

We appreciate that residents have different experiences depending on car use and where they live but it is not accurate to state that there are no safety concerns with turning left up Strand Hill. Tanyard Lane has no safe sight line to the left or right, vans have been stuck in the ancient Strand Arch, and walkers have experienced cars mounting the pavement. The left turning traffic comes off a bend and over a hill. Vehicles come up the Hill and through the Town, with the most recent traffic flow figures showing c. 14000+ vehicles driving through every month, with evidence of speeding above the sign-posted limits. One of the reasons National Highways eventually gave the plan higher priority was because cyclists made several complaints about dangerous driving up the Hill and through the Town. National Highways has a high benchmark for taking on road safety works. It does not act unless there is a genuine safety issue.

You are absolutely right to say other options have been considered and, in some detail, with research across county councils and road safety agencies. The published criteria used across all our public votes have been a) do they work b) can we pay for them c) will it be allowed in a

Conservation Area and d) will NH and ESCC agree to them. NRT/NLT best meets these criteria.

We appreciate your concern that the planned changes threaten the viability of the shop. We would like to reassure you that the WRA supports the need for traffic calming and the wish to retain a viable shop.

We acknowledged that reports of reduced takings, when Strand Hill was closed most recently, are of concern, but given the data available we cannot conclude that reduced takings are a result solely of the closure of the road; that closure also coincided with the start of the school holidays, and there had also been significant roadworks affecting traffic coming in from Hastings. There are many other factors affecting shop viability. Any traffic calming solution will take time to implement and always includes a stage of consultation. This timeline should give the shop group and supporters plenty of time to gather data, and to devise a strategy and plan for viability. The WRA will do all we can to support them.

We are committed to ensuring that any road safety measures improve our town. The town has a number of access points which will allow visitors to continue to enjoy it. Road safety will not affect visitors to the church, museum, ancient buildings, and scenic walks. We will continue to hold cellar tours, open garden days and local events, all of which are popular as a destination visit. Our aim is to reduce and make safer the thousands of vehicles who drive through the town as a cut through but deliver nothing to the town.

◦ **Alfred McKenney**

I request a full general update on the proposal which according to Oct Parish magazine has been adopted by National Highways Agency. The outline of this proposal and the process including consultation and the evidence base which led to this adoption is unclear to me.

Answer:

Alfred Attended the meeting, and his question was read out. We hope that the presentation, the main points of which are recorded in these minutes, answered this question.

- **Rosemarie Roberts**

I'd like to pose two linked questions for the committee please, as an RA member; 1. What is the position of the highway's authority on the NRT/NLT turn proposal at present? 2. Do the majority of the committee wish to continue with this proposal?

Answer:

1. NH met residents and our MP in July 2025 and confirmed its intention to progress NRT/NLT.
2. At the time of the question five members of the committee did not support the NRT/NLT proposal while four members were in support.

- **June Grindley**

Do we know the number of cars going through Winchelsea, particularly through the high street, on a daily basis and how that varies with time and season? Do we know how many of those are non-resident? Do we know how many are speeding?

Answer:

The primary source of traffic numbers and speed is drawn from Black Cat data i.e. the small black boxes that are attached by the IPC Clerk at different times and locations in the Town and Rookery Lane.

WRA has regularly included data in our updates to members. We understand IPC has delegated the data management to an IPC councillor and there have been lengthy delays in accessing relevant data.

For context, East Sussex County Council's 2018 Origin and Destination survey in Winchelsea reported that '56% of vehicles southbound and 50% northbound through Strand Gate were non-residents cutting through to re-access the A259. In both directions, 94% of the non-stopping drivers entered or left at Monks Walk.

In June 2023, IPC reported a daily average 1850 vehicles with 70% driving up Strand Hill. We do not have data for vehicles driving down Strand Hill.

The most recent data reports on Monks Walk and St Thomas junction cover five days including a weekend and omitting Thursday and Friday. We do not know why these days are chosen. We show the volume and % speeding.

Monks Walk

18-22 July (first week school holidays).

4450 vehicles

21% speeding over 40mph limit

10-14 May (school term)

8658 vehicles

18% speeding over 40 mph limit

St Thomas' junction

8-12 February

8103 vehicles

14% speeding over 30 mph limit

10-15 January 2025

7636 vehicles

12% speeding over 30 mph limit

We do not have similar data on times of day but anecdotally, there are peaks at 7-9.30 am and after 4pm, which appear to be primarily commuter and contractor vehicles.

We cannot know which vehicles are driven by residents.

We hope this is helpful. The black data is held on the Icklesham parish council website. WRA will continue to report it to our members.

- **Chris Chappell**

In my opinion the proposed 'no right – no left turn at the bottom of Strand Hill should not be a priority for the WRA, a much greater safety priority is the lack of pedestrian crossings across the A259 [particularly outside the New Hall], and 40mph limit, past the public conveniences,

[where parents drop off and pick up children]. Why hasn't the WRA made any meaningful progress on either of these two issues?

Answer:

The focus of the WRA on measures to reduce traffic through the town is in response to stated member priorities. At our last open meeting, we reported that WRA had collated data and photographic evidence on the several unsafe locations on the A259, highlighting the crossing to the New Hall. This has been sent to our MP and the Department of Transport. In July, WRA representatives met our MP and community police officer at the site to assess driving speeds. At the AGM, the issue of the 40 mph at the school drop off point was raised and you will see that it has been noted as a potential area for our input. Your concerns about the crossing at New Hall are noted and we are aware of a recent pedestrian accident at the site. The issue of the drop off point and the crossing will be raised at our next meeting.

◦ **Chris Chappell**

Your constitution states that the WRA “should work cooperatively and collaboratively with all the existing organisations in Winchelsea including with the Parish Council” why have you chosen not to work with, consult, or even update Winchelsea ward councillors regarding your proposal for road safety in the town?

Answer:

WRA have worked with IPC over several years in our negotiations with NH and ESCC. IPC withdrew interest after NH initial decision to block NRT/NLT because of the cost of new construction, which has since been reversed. IPC has continued to produce its black cat data but has shown no recent interest in road safety in Winchelsea. However, we do recognise that there is an opportunity to work more closely with our local Parish Councillors and would propose that we establish a schedule of regular meetings where we can share information.

Appendix 2

Questions received from members relating all other matters

- **June Grindley**

How many homes in Winchelsea are lived in full time?

I think it would be useful to know the number of second homes in Winchelsea and the number of those which are used frequently and of those used very rarely in order to have a better handle on the number of (active) residents.

Answer:

Winchelsea has around 250 homes. While we do not have exact data, The Office of National Statistics 2021 census on holiday homes (defined as homes where people spend 30 days or more at an alternative address), reported 1600 holiday homes across East Sussex, of which 38%, or 610, of those were in Rother. The highest proportion relative to local housing stock were recorded in Winchelsea and Rye.

Rother District Council published data in June 2025 showing Icklesham Parish Council (which covers Icklesham, Winchelsea, Winchelsea Beach, and Rye Harbour), as having 122 second homes and 16 short term holiday lets.

- **John Fuller**

Would Winchelsea benefit from Winchelsea RA becoming Winchelsea Parish Council? Is this a desirable objective? What are the costs, benefits & realities of this happening?

Answer:

There is no current plan for the WRA to seek to become a Parish Council for Winchelsea. Whilst we acknowledge that there are clear differences in the situations and needs of the towns and villages represented by Icklesham Parish Council, we have not undertaken any formal review process to establish the benefits to Winchelsea of pursuing a Parish council of its own. There is a clear process which includes garnering community support, submitting a petition for community governance to the local authority, and then participating in a review and consultation with the local authority. The process can take a year or more depending

on support and complexity. The cost associated with this is not likely to be high, nor does there appear to be a direct fee. There are however costs associated with running a new Parish Council.

◦ **Chris Chappell**

I wrote to the WRA on August 28th regarding your proposal for the bottom of Strand Hill. After more than six weeks, I have still had no response from the WRA. I've been a member of the WRA since its creation, and as a ward councillor I have supported your association on many occasions, so it saddens me that my opinions [and those concerns raised by some of the residents I represent] seem of little interest to the committee. My question is a simple one, do you think this behaviour is acceptable, and why haven't you bothered to respond to my email?

Answer:

The WRA has issued an apology to Chris Chappell for this oversight. A response will be given within the next few days.