

Forest Row Parish Council

Clerk: Mr D O'Driscoll
Email: parishclerk@forestrow.gov.uk

(Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)



To: All members of PLACE COMMITTEE:
Cllrs. Matthews (Chair), Gilbert, Killick, Rainbow,
Scott, Summers & AM Waters

Community Centre
Hartfield Road
Forest Row
East Sussex
RH18 5DZ

Your attendance is required at a meeting of
the **EXTRA-ORDINARY PLACE**
COMMITTEE to be held on **TUESDAY 24th**

Tel: 01342 822661
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FEBRUARY 2026 at 7.00pm
in the Garden Room of the Community
Centre

Date: 16TH February 2026


Mr D O'Driscoll
Clerk to Forest Row Parish Council

A G E N D A

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/ DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR THIS MEETING
4. TO POSTPONE CONSIDERATION OF:
 - 4.1 RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 20TH JANUARY 2026
 - 4.2 REVIEW OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING
 - 4.3 CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
5. CONSIDERATION OF PURCHASE OF OAK TREE FOR FUTURE PROJECTS
6. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

Backing paper - Place Committee Extraordinary meeting 24.02.26 7pm

Cllr Andi Jaffay, member of Heartspace working group

FRPC has been offered substantial amount of oak by a community member, who has a huge fallen tree in her garden. FRPC would usually buy outdoor furniture for the community off the shelf, or would commission benches to be made by a Carpenter, who would naturally incorporate the cost of wood into their fee.

This is an unusual situation, in that FRPC would need to pay for the slicing and moving of the oak, and would then have the raw materials for The Shed to make outdoor furniture from. This extraordinary meeting has been requested, in order to decide whether to spend some funds on securing the donated oak.

The benefits to the village in the story of the giant oak:

We have been talking about this oak tree for several months within the Heartspace working group. The story is meaningful because the old oak fell down in a storm and was a very old tree. Perhaps a couple of hundred years ago. It carries the wisdom in some way, of time, in the village.

So it carries a very different meaning to the village to younger trees, which we may just decide to cull after a tree survey.

This giant oak fell naturally, and the thought of it not being burned, or made into woodchip, but to be re-fashioned as furniture, or fingerposts, or planters.. Or all of these, in and around the village, for use for decades to come, is very special. It is much more a Forest Row fitting story, than buying in wood from elsewhere, or chopping village trees to use. This is why it's inspired several of the working group to see if we can in any way take this opportunity as a gift to the village.

The practical aspects:

It's apparently as large as the oak next to the skatepark (the trainers oak), so it's a great deal of wood. 3 m3 of waney edged slabs. Edouard would perhaps want some of this, if we don't use him to cut and move it, as he sourced it and secured it as a gift from the oak owners to the PC.

How is it so different cost wise, if we were to pay for the slicing and moving of the wood, to paying a craftsman to create benches (where they'd incorporate the price of bought in wood)? The Shed may make the benches for free as they've said they're willing to make items for PC projects, so we'd spend less this way.

If we are holding high value and allowing things through like architects' drawings which cost £500 each, we can surely value this wood, that could provide what we need for so many benches, fingerposts, planters, and other community projects. With The Shed involved, this could actually save the Council a lot of money otherwise spent on off the shelf items.

Edouard's estimate is similar to Tree Spanner - who I've now messaged with the job spec. They'd already been to the house previously to see this tree. Their estimate is £3.5k.

The need for haste is that the lady whose oak it is wants it moved before Spring. As it takes several weeks for a contractor to be booked in and complete the work, we need to decide if we want to spend on securing the oak now.

We also need to balance this with the need for funds to cover drainage on The Green. Amanda has acquired 2 quotes for this.