

St Mary Hoo is a village and civil parish in Kent

Digital phone switchover – what you need to know

The UK is moving from analogue landlines to digital services. Here's what it means for you:

The UK's telephone network is being upgraded.

Traditional landlines that use the old copper network are being replaced with digital phone services that use your broadband connection.



IMPORTANT

What does this mean for residents?

- Your landline may be switched to a digital service
- Calls will use your internet connection instead of a phone line
- Your phone provider (e.g. BT, Sky, Virgin) will contact you before any changes
- Most people won't need to do anything straight away



St Mary Hoo Parish Council

32 Goodwood Close, High Halstow, Kent ME3 8SU
Tel 07771 644 562 Email: Clerk@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk

Working with and for the Community

Minutes Resume

Parish Council Meeting

Date: Tuesday 19 May 2026
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Green Room
Recreation Hall
The Street
High Halstow ME3 8SQ

Present: Cllr Nick Craddy
Cllr Richard Turner
Cllr Femi Alakija
Cllr Shane Back
Cllr Paul Khatkar

Chairman
Vice Chairman

Linda Atkinson

Clerk

MOP

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**A full version
of all
Minutes are
on the
Parish
Council
website**

- 1 Election of Chairman** - Cllr Craddy.
- 2 Election of Vice Chairman** - Cllr Turner.
- 3 Apologies for absence**¹ - All members present
- 4 Declarations of interest** - None.
- 5 Public Session** - no discussion
- 6 Councillors matters** - No issues presented from 4 councillors. Cllr Craddy discussing threatening correspondence received from a resident.
- 7 To appoint representatives**
 - KALC - Cllr Richard Turner

- Police Liaison - Cllr Nick Craddy
- Rural Liaison - Cllr Paul Khatkar

8 To appoint working Group Members

- Finance - Cllr Femi Alakija
- Planning - Cllrs Craddy/Khatkar/Turner
- Amenities - Cllr Richard Turner
- Transport - Cllr Paul Khatkar
- Personnel - Cllrs Craddy and Turner

9 To appoint other posts

- Footpaths Officer - Cllr Femi Alakija
- Tree Warden - A resident has shown an interest
- Pond Warden - Mr Darren Summerfield

10 To agree Minutes of previous meeting - Agreed

11 Planning - no applications, decisions

12 Finance - payments approved.

13 Policies - approved.

14 New projects - approved and discussed.

15 Council's land and property

- Nature reserve - tidy up was noted. Bench to be installed
- Pond - no report
- Public rights of way - no report
- Tree Warden - no report

16 Date of next meeting 16 June 2026

17 Meeting closed - 7:55



Dear Councillor Craddy

Thank you for your patience, and please accept my apologies for the delay in responding. I have needed to consult with a number of internal teams to fully consider your enquiry and the points raised.

By way of background, the roundabout was originally designed by Motts and constructed in 2010. The layout and features are likely influenced by its function on an abnormal load route, which typically requires minimal obstruction and the ability to accommodate larger vehicle movements. This may explain why the central island was left as a hardstanding rather than landscaped, unlike some of the other roundabouts on the route.

It is also important to note that the existing layout provides a low-maintenance, low-risk solution, which is a key reason for its current design. Introducing additional features would increase both risk and ongoing maintenance requirements, which would need to be fully addressed before any proposal could be considered.

In principle, the Council would not object to improvements being explored; however, there are a number of important constraints that significantly limit what is likely to be acceptable. In particular:

- **Road safety:** The roundabout is located on a rural 40mph A-class road, and anything introduced within the central island has the potential to create distraction or increase risk. The safest position is to minimise features within the highway, particularly in higher-speed environments.
- **Type of features:** More passive treatments, such as grass or low-level planting, may be acceptable in principle. However, features such as illuminated installations (including a lit Christmas tree) would increase risk through distraction and are not supported at this location.

Roundabout

- Design requirements: Any proposal would need to be developed by a suitably qualified and insured designer, and would be subject to technical approvals, including safety audit and design checks. The outcome of this process may further constrain what is acceptable.
- Maintenance and liability: Any change would require a clear and sustainable approach to ongoing maintenance, together with clarity on responsibility for future liability.

There are also practical and financial considerations. Any changes would require the preparation of a detailed design, technical approvals and ongoing maintenance arrangements, all of which carry cost. The Council does not have budget available to support this type of enhancement. At present, there is no identified Section 106 funding that would be applicable, and any suggestion to redirect such funding would need to meet strict legal tests, which this proposal is unlikely to satisfy.

In addition, the Council would not support proposals that rely on connection to existing highway electrical infrastructure, such as street lighting. Any installation would need to have its own independent power supply, with all associated installation and ongoing energy costs met by the promoting party. Notwithstanding this, illuminated features are not recommended or supported at this location.

In terms of existing comparisons, while there is planting on other nearby roundabouts, this requires active management to ensure visibility and safe operation are maintained.

The Fenn Corner roundabout has been designed to minimise these maintenance and safety risks.

Buckingham Palace garden party celebrates parish and town council excellence

Parish and town councillors, clerks and council staff from across England attended a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace last month, following our nominations. The invitation recognised the outstanding contribution parish and town councils make to their communities, with attendees including Star Council Award winners, community leaders and individuals championing initiatives ranging from climate action to coastal communities.

Around 8,000 guests gathered in the Palace gardens for the event, hosted by Their Majesties The King and Queen and members of the Royal Family.

For many attendees, the occasion was a rare opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the parish and town council sector on a national stage.

NALC (National Association of Local Councils) play an important role in ensuring the work of parish and town councils receives the recognition it deserves.

Through the allocation of garden party nominations, we are able to highlight the dedication, innovation and public service demonstrated by councillors, clerks and council staff across the country.

Representatives from Exmouth Town Council attended after the council won our 2024/25 Star Council Awards Climate Response of the Year.

The clerk, Lisa Bowman, said the event was a reminder of the importance of collaboration, community leadership and public service. Cllr Olly Davey described the atmosphere as warm and welcoming.

Among those attending was Penzance Town Council's James Hardy, NALC 2024/25 Star Council Awards Clerk of the Year winner. He described the day as a fantastic experience. He welcomed the opportunity to meet guests from across public life and the voluntary sector.

TEAM
EFFORT



Other guests reflected on the sense of appreciation shown to attendees throughout the day. Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils' Sue Campbell described seeing the Royal Family in person as a memorable moment.

2024/25 Star Council Awards Councillor of the Year winner, Cllr Richard Collins, praised the organisation of the event and the opportunity to celebrate public service alongside thousands of guests from across the UK.

The nominations demonstrate the breadth of talent and commitment within the parish and town council sector.

From supporting communities and protecting local environments to delivering services and strengthening local democracy, those recognised at Buckingham Palace represent the vital contribution parish and town councils make every day.



Please support your Parish Council
We work on your behalf...

St Mary Hoo Roundabout

Continued from page 5

With regards to the original design information, the drawings we hold are owned by a third party and, on legal advice, we are unable to share these without the appropriate consent. In addition, given their age, they cannot be relied upon without further verification, and any proposal would require appropriate site investigations and surveys.

Overall, while there may be very limited scope to explore low-risk, non-intrusive enhancements, the range of acceptable options is likely to be quite restricted. Any proposal would need to be developed in outline first, at the promoter's cost, so that we can review its suitability and provide further guidance.

I appreciate this may be disappointing, particularly given the time you have waited for a response, but it is important that we clearly set expectations regarding what is likely to be feasible at this location.

I hope this provides a helpful overview, but please do let me know if you would like to discuss further.

Kind regards

Medway Council

NO TO ANY FIRE STATION CLOSURES ON THE HOO PENINSULA

CLIFFE AND GRAIN FIRE STATIONS ARE AT RISK OF CLOSURE

THE KENT FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE CONSULTATION IS SET TO RUN FOR **12 WEEKS** FROM 25th JUNE 2026

ALL THREE FIRE STATIONS FORM **ONE SAFETY NET** FOR THE HOO PENINSULA

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

PLEASE SHARE THIS POSTER | SPEAK TO YOUR NEIGHBOURS | SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN | RESPOND TO THE CONSULTATION WHEN IT OPENS

OUR COMMUNITIES. OUR SAFETY. OUR CHOICE. KEEP ALL THREE STATIONS. KEEP US SAFE.

Your comments
on the above
communication
are welcome



Many of you will have noticed the roadworks and road closure notifications for July issued by BT Openreach.

This is coupled with the recent UKPN works to replace old utility poles which Openreach share with UKPN.

For a long time, we have had issues here with rural broadband, or rather the lack of it, but now Openreach are forced to renew their infrastructure and we expect that will mean modern fibre cabling. After all, you wouldn't put an old engine in a new car. Co-incidentally our Editor placed the PSTN (Public Service Telephone Network) switch off notification on the front page even as I was considering my Chairmans Chat for this month. I will go on to detail what changes we can expect shortly, but will add one important thing to the PSTN switch off and the conversion to digital.

Old copper telephone lines were supplied with power from the telephone exchange, with batteries and back-up generators, so if we had a power cut the 'pone still worked. Fibre service is not self-powered. As we are very used to power outages in St Mary Hoo I would advise that if you get migrated to fully digital fibre then buy a simple UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) they are about £100 each, but will maintain your Internet and telephone connection for about 6 hours. The is especially important for any resident who has one of the "Telecare" assistance necklace equipment that mobility impaired and assistance needs.

Anyway:-

BT along with Southern Water and Medway have permission to close our roads on the schedule:





Chairman's chat June 2026

☰ Fenn Street, Saint Mary Hoo, Rocheste X

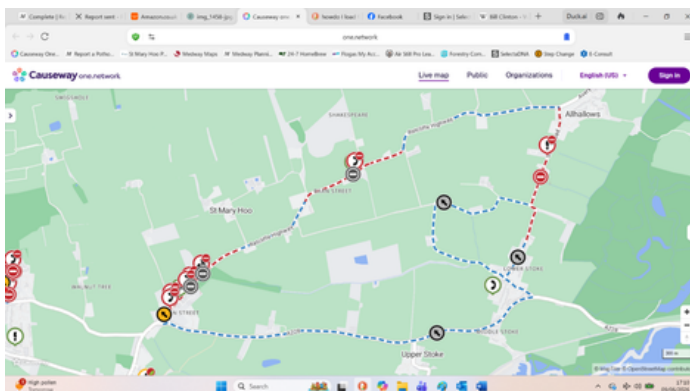
📅 Next three months ▼

Multiple items near this location X

-  **Ratcliffe Highway**
📅 Jul 13
BC11700000000339734... Granted
Openreach
-  **Ratcliffe Highway**
📅 Jul 31 - Aug 4
LQ002SWAT14518273-04 Granted
Southern Water Services
-  **Fenn Street**
📅 Aug 24 - Aug 25
JL418744959-02 PAA Granted
Medway
-  **Ratcliffe Highway**
📅 Feb 27, 9:55 AM - Jul 12, 6:00 PM
UK Power Networks
-  **Ratcliffe Highway**
📅 Jul 30 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Obviously, this is going to cause us inconvenience. The Parish Council have very little influence on these programs, the school bus service is our usual go-to, but if Arriva Bus were more community minded it shouldn't be.

The Openreach upgrades should be a good stepping stone for St Mary Hoo to get some decent Fibre Broadband, Openreach will have to spend some money upgrading the new poles, and the new Estate on Fenn Corner is only wired for Fibre, so provision will have to be made to connect them up.



Say no to
Fire Station
closure on
Hoo
Peninsula





The Parish Council attempted to force the issue a few years ago using something called "The Fibre Community Project".

Cllr Paul Khatkar was very active in this petition in early days.

Cllr. Paul is going to revive this push; we are much further along than we were then and there is now fibre provision at Fenn Corner.

Fibre rollout is expensive, and will ultimately be driven by commercial needs, so we need as many of you as possible to register with Openreach as interested in a fibre connection.

We will be shortly inviting all interested resident to register with Openreach, if enough residents sign up – for interest in high-speed fibre only- then it becomes commercially viable and we may get some progress.

In conjunction with this, the Government has recently announced their intention to shut down the Freeview and Freesat services.

This will mean that unless you subscribe to Sky (or similar) you will not be able to view TV unless you have a high-speed Internet connection, which you will have to pay for.

So, not a lot of local news this month, but I hope valuable news, and I hope to have more local chat next month.

Nick.

Parish Council meeting

The third Tuesday
of every month
7:00 pm
High Halstow
Recreation Hall
Green Room



Cllr Nick Craddy	Chairman	Nick.Craddy@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk
Cllr Richard Turner	Vice Chairman	Richard.Turner@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk
Cllr Femi Alakija	Councillor	Femi.Alakija@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk
Cllr Shane Back	Councillor	Shane.Back@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk
Cllr Paul Khatkar	Councillor	Paul.Khatkar@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk
Cllr Femi Alakija	Footpaths	Femi.Alakija@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk
Cllr Chris Spalding	Ward Councillor	Chris.Spalding@Medway.gov.uk
Mrs Linda Atkinson	Clerk	Clerk@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk

If you would like to advertise in this publication, please email Clerk@StMaryHoo-pc.gov.uk for costings and deadline dates.