



St Nicholas-at-Wade with Sarre Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11th August 2026 at 7.30pm in The Bell Meadow Pavilion, St Nicholas at Wade

Present: Councillors - D. Divers (Chairman), M. Fentiman, M. Lawrance, D. Tweedale, S. Smyth, A. Andrews, E. Dore, L. Ageros, A. Roberts

Also, Present: Community Warden Gary Groombridge, District Cllr Abi Smith, Sara Archer – Parish Clerk plus 1 member of public.

42/26-27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from KCC Cllr Luke Evans, District Cllr Peter Evans, PC Owen Crush.

43/26-27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

44/26-27 PREVIOUS MINUTES

RESOLVED: To approve minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on 14th July 2026. These were proposed by Cllr Tweedale, seconded by Cllr Lawrance, all were in agreement and therefore signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

45/26-27 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Divers advised he had received an email from Cllr Abi Smith suggesting that David Peerless, who is leading a campaign against the abuse of planning law by landlords such as St John's College Cambridge, based on its misuse of the 17th Century trust, was invited to the next PC meeting to give a presentation on his campaign. David would be invited to attend the meeting in September, to present at 7pm.

46/26-27 CLERK'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk advised that she had been contacted by a concerned resident regarding the flytipped caravan at Wantsum Way. TDC were in the process of removing the waste and caravan itself.

The Clerk confirmed she had reported the inaccessible footpaths along the Ramsgate Road, and A28. KCC had advised that they were not scheduled to be cleared as they were not used regularly.

Following the last meeting, the Clerk had circulated information regarding the suggested traffic calming measures on A28. It appeared it was not currently a viable scheme.

A resident had been in contact regarding the proposed planters for Sarre. Details of the size, and potential locations were shared.

The offer of used tennis balls for the court had been made, which would be gratefully accepted and made accessible for users.

The Clerk advised of the new Code of Conduct policy to be adopted from the TDC model. This would be prepared for the next meeting.

It had been noted that a parked van was obstructing the access to the noticeboard in Sarre. The owner would be contacted and asked to move the vehicle accordingly.

The Clerk was pleased to report that the Pride in Place Grant of £5000 had been awarded. Arrangements would be made for the equipment to be sourced and project undertaken as soon as possible.

47/26-27 COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Tweedale reported he had been in contact with Southern Water regarding the apparent leak on the footpath adjacent to A28. The company had advised they were not responsible for the leak.

Cllr Roberts advised that of an issue she had been addressing. In 2023, the Forestry Commission investigated suspected illegal clear-felling on a wooded embankment in Sarre. Their own officer confirmed a breach had occurred and

recommended prosecution. However, due to the Commission's staffing shortages, the case sat unresolved until the two-year statutory time limit for prosecution expired, and it was formally closed in 2025.

Cllr Roberts has since established, through case law (*R v Wickford Development Company Ltd*), that the expiry of that criminal time limit does not prevent the Forestry Commission from using its separate power to issue a Restocking Notice, requiring the destroyed woodland to be replanted. A conviction is not required for this. The Commission were asked directly whether it would use this power, given that its own investigation had already established a breach. It declined, citing the Regulators' Code and limited resources.

In practice, this means a government body found evidence of an offence and is still choosing to take no action at all, not even requiring the woodland to be restored. With less than 4% tree canopy cover in Thanet, one of the lowest in the country, this sets a troubling precedent, if landowners and developers know that a stretched regulator will not enforce restocking even where a breach is proven, there is nothing to stop this happening again elsewhere.

It is Cllr Roberts' intention to raise this issue formally with MP, Sir Roger Gale, and to pursue any other route available to press the Forestry Commission to act, including discussions with the Enforcement Officer at TDC. The Council offered its full support to Cllr Roberts.

Cllr Smyth offered her thanks to Cllr Divers and his wife for cleaning the planters. She had been liaising with Cllr Roberts to find suitable sites for the planters, and appropriate planting. The Clerk advised she was awaiting a response from KCC with regard to positioning the planters at the village gates.

Cllr Smyth requested the footpaths in the village were maintained. A significant amount of weeds and harvest debris were collecting on the pathways. The Clerk would contact KCC and the handyperson team.

The telephone box also required attention to be repainted and generally cleaned up.

The Clerk was thanked for the work undertaken to secure the grant funding from Pride in Place.

Cllr Ageros extended his thanks to the handyperson team for maintaining the entrance to the public footpath TE10. It was noted that KCC had attended the footpath which was now accessible.

Cllr Ageros repeated his request for volunteers to help with the maintenance of the existing planters.

48/26-27 THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Smith reported as follows:

Waste management issues

Briefing for councillors last Tuesday: Primarily concerned with how to communicate the issue with residents. Are there many people in flats or otherwise subject to 'simpler recycling' scheme? Please let me know of any specific complaints. The following is excerpted from a statement given to district councillors by TDC's Director of the Environment:

"In recent weeks the Cleansing team has worked hard to increase the number of household waste and recycling collections completed on schedule. Recently, daily collection rates have reached up to 97%.

Although there has been an improvement in the collection rate compared with the period from April-June, this week in particular we have a shortage of HGV drivers which is impacting the level of missed collections.

There are a number of reasons for the shortage and there is a lot of work going on to increase driver availability.

We have prioritised refuse and food waste collections, however this has resulted in paper and card collections being impacted...

We appreciate that you're receiving contact from residents about these issues. Please keep using the dedicated email address: household.collections@thanet.gov.uk Thank you for your continued patience."

Pride in Place grants awarded: Congrats to Sara on achieving a £5000 grant!

TheThanetTrustAssociation.org.uk: David Peerless has been running an almost single-handed campaign against landowner St John's College, Cambridge, which has been selling land acquired through a 1642 will, which it has failed to produce. Please consider supporting him via the links available from his website.

Westgate and Garlinge Action Group Against Housing Development on Farmland will be discussing the forthcoming Thanet Local Plan at its next meeting on Wednesday 26th August, from 7pm at The Bakehouse in Westgate (located between the betting shop and The Carlton cinema, and behind the Bake & Alehouse micropub). It may be of interest to those wishing to know about the future of planning in Thanet.

Controversial tree felling in Sarre: I am following up with officers regarding the removal of 30-40 trees in Sarre, causing concern for residents in seven surrounding homes due to the unstable land left behind. TDC claims it had no powers to act, so reported it to the Forestry Commission, which confirmed an offence had been committed but also declined to act!

Cllr Peter Evans was not in attendance, and had no report to offer for this month.

49/26-27 KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Luke Evans was not in attendance, however, he had submitted the report appended to the minutes.

50/26-27 KENT POLICE REPORT

PC Owen Crush was not in attendance and no report submitted.

51/26-27 COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT

Community Warden Gary Groombridge reported as follows:

- Visual Presence around St Nicholas at Wade.
- I was informed that there is lewd behaviour taking place again at Court Road. I emailed Owen Crush to make him aware.
- I've been helping a resident to contact Orbit housing concerning an issue with their neighbour's fence area and large parasol. It is playing on her husband's mind as he has slight dementia. I've Supported them with this as well being there listening. Things are now moving forward with support.
- Contacted the Orbit housing manager on behalf of another resident. Concerning her garden maintenance, and also foliage coming through from another garden. The Orbit manager was aware of this. And said the resident is responsible for the maintenance herself.
- Sun Inn well-being group
- Continue to connect with and support the residents who attend, give advice, and help them if needed.
- Bell Meadow Pavillion Wellbeing Group Continue to support the residents who attend the group, deal with any concerns etc.
- Continue to attend Men's well-being group at the Church when I can. If anybody needs to speak to me.
- I went on a well-being walk with a resident, around the village. It's important to spend time with people. had a chat with him.
- Supported the Big Minnis Bay, Dip Scripture Union holiday Club on three occasions, I created the Seaside Safety quiz for the Children, and we had 100 footballs to give away . The inflatable event, be a presence
- The Big water event, marshalling the roads. Put cones out along the roads and directed the traffic to help keep the children and Adults safe. 1200 plus people on the day.
- The Minnis Bay Sports day event. Give out prizes to the children attending.
- Birchington Multiagency Event: Organising, planning, and helping another Warden with a Multiagency event in Birchington, 37 Agencies are now attending. This Friday 14th August. 10am-14.00 it will be a great event.

52/26-27 BELL MEADOW REPORT

a) Cllr Fentiman advised that the tennis courts would be completed within the next couple of weeks. Security and a booking system for the facility were being explored. Two pickelball nets had been obtained . Works to the MUGA would be commenced on 7th September following unavoidable delays. Thanks were extended to the working group for the hard work undertaken with the Bell Meadow improvements. Cllr Divers reported that some of the boundary trees adjacent to the play area had been cut back. CW Gary volunteered to approach the residents of the property affected by the trees, to explain this was unacceptable and a hazard to leave the debris in the play area.

53/26-27 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) **TCA/TH/26/0737 Whychways , Old Road, Sarre**
TPO/TH/26/0752 Gate House , Sarre Court, Sarre

Both applications to be deferred to Tree Officer

- b) None noted.

54/26-27 FINANCE

- a) The Clerk presented the monthly bank reconciliation between the cash book and bank accounts.

RESOLVED: To approve the monthly bank reconciliation for July. (Proposed: Cllr Andrews, seconded Cllr Dore).

- b) The Clerk presented the monthly payment schedule which included the following payments:

N. Buchanan - Repayment BMP items	£41.98
Employee salaries, expenses, PAYE	£2084.91
Westgate Security - Alarm service	£102.58
RoSPA Playsafety	£142.80
JRB enterprises - Dog waste bags	£190.98
Lloyds CC - DD	£9.99
Business Stream - BMP	£156.91
Sovereign Sports - Tennis Court payment	£8,572.80
EDF - Electric BMP	£84.66
EDF - Gas BMP	£34.46
M. Terry - Deposit return	£25.00

Hugofox - website hosting fee	£11.99
C. Stokes - Deposit return	£25.00
R. Gardner - Deposit return	£25.00
Unity Trust - Service Charge	£7.00

Receipts

BMP Hire - Ukelele	£17.00
BMP Hire - Rose	£70.00
BMP Hire - Ukelele	£68.00
BMP Hire - Terry	£59.00
Roberts - Headstone	£150.00
BMP - Coffee & Bingo	£60.00
BMP Hire - Gurr	£25.00
BMP Hire - Higgenbotham	£76.00
Cemetery fees	£70.00
BMP Hire - Lasenby	£46.25
BMP Hire - Various	£76.50

RESOLVED: To approve payment of invoices included in the monthly payment schedule for August.

(Proposed: Cllr Andrews, Seconded: Cllr Dore)

55/26-27 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- The size and location of the planters was discussed. It was explained that a decision would not be made on the locations of the planters until advice had been received from KCC. The planter at the noticeboard would be replaced, and the owner of the existing planter was thanked for his kindness and generosity with its upkeep to date.
- It was requested that the speed limit awareness signs were painted on the roads into Sarre village. The Clerk advised this would be something to be addressed by the Highways Improvement Plan when the meetings were reintroduced.

The meeting was concluded by the Chairman at 9:00pm.

APPENDIX

KCC update to cover the month of July 2026 – Cllr Luke Evans

Thanet Way Update

After 12 months of a temporary 50mph speed limit on the Thanet Way, I am pleased to confirm that the necessary repairs have been completed and the national speed limit has now been restored.

I attended the Thanet Way Speed Programme in early July and witnessed an operation carried out with military precision. Highways teams from across Kent worked over two nights to replace lighting, repair and resurface sections of road, clear drains and gullies, cut grass, collect litter, and remove the temporary speed restrictions.

I even had the pleasure of helping Cllr Peter Osborne, Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways, remove one of the 50mph signs. I suspect it may have been one of the most popular sign removals in Kent this year!

Bus Services Update

Many residents will have heard concerns about the future of the 32 and 9 bus routes which basically cover the whole of my division from the borders with Margate division in Garlinge up to Birchington and throughout all my rural villages to the borders with Ramsgate Division. While it is true that both services were under threat, it is important to clarify that Kent County Council was not responsible for the proposed withdrawals. Bus services are operated by private companies which have faced significant financial pressures due to Government policies such as increased employer NIC and the £2 bus fares. Polly Billington MP blaming these route withdrawals on KCC was either a blatant lie on her behalf in a game of political point scoring or she simply didn't know what she was talking about. Either way it is a bad look for an MP.

As soon as I became aware of the situation, I worked closely with Cllr Spencer Dixon, Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways, council officers, and the operators to find a solution.

I am delighted to report that those efforts have been successful and both routes have been saved. While KCC did not remove these services, we have worked hard behind the scenes to help secure their future for local residents.

Kent's First-Ever Fly-Tipping Conference

On 10 July, Kent County Council hosted the county's first-ever Fly-Tipping Conference, bringing together local authorities, the Environment Agency, Kent Police, government representatives, landowners and waste industry professionals to tackle waste crime head-on.

Leader Linden Kemkaran did not hold back on the scale of the problem, warning that fly-tipping "scars neighbourhoods, damages our countryside and places a real financial burden on the people of Kent," and that letting it persist in the same places risks it becoming normalised. The conference has led to a new partnership and the development of a Kent Fly-Tipping Action Plan to keep the momentum going.

Read more here:

<https://news.kent.gov.uk/articles/partners-unite-to-tackle-fly-tipping-and-waste-crime-across-kent>

<https://x.com/LeaderofKCC/status/2075521592088531300?s=20>