



St Nicholas-at-Wade with Sarre Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th February 2026 at 7.30pm in The Bell Meadow Pavilion, St Nicholas at Wade

Present: Councillors - D. Divers, D. Tweedale, A. Andrews, M. Lawrance, L. Ageros, S. Smyth, E. Dore
Also, Present: KCC Cllr Luke Evans, District Cllr Abi Smith & Peter Evans, Community Warden Gary Groombridge, Sara Archer – Parish Clerk plus 2 members of public.

114/25-26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Cllr Mo Fentiman, Cllr Glenn Pugh.

115/25-26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests declared.

116/25-26 PREVIOUS MINUTES

RESOLVED: To approve minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on 19th January 2026.

These were proposed by Cllr Tweedale, seconded by Cllr Andrews, all were in agreement and therefore signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

117/25-26 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Divers advised that he had received a response from KCC following his email to chase the outstanding issues of the incomplete footpath etc at Manor Road. KCC confirmed they have had response from the new representatives at Gemselect Limited and met with them on 14th January to discuss the outstanding works. They are now awaiting a further response and proposals for completion of the footway, including relocation of the UKPN post and tree stump. The handyperson team were thanked for their hard work and rediscovering the drains at Shuart Lane. This gratitude was echoed by the residents at Shuart Lane.

118/25-26 CLERK'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk confirmed she had contacted the fireworks providers and arranged for a later firing time of 7pm, in order to give any trick or treaters a chance to attend both events.

The overgrown public footpath at Court Road had been reported online. It was noted that the last report filed about the overgrowth was in 2022 and remained outstanding.

Following the rediscovery of the drains at Court Road, the Clerk had contacted KCC and requested the drains were cleaned. However, they had responded and assed the gullies and determined they did not require clearing at this time and would be maintained through their cyclical cleansing programme.

The completion of the double yellow lines at the Length remained outstanding and would be finalized as soon as possible. The Clerk had contacted the Ward Police Officer, Community Warden, TDC traffic enforcement and the headteacher at the School, with regard to vehicles parking on the double yellow lines. The situation had been noted and the Community Warden and Enforcement Officers would be attending on an ad-hoc basis. It was disappointing to note that no response had been received from the School again.

119/25-26 COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Cllr Tweedale advised he would report the increase in flyposting of advertisement banners being displayed from the pedestrian bridge at Shuart Lane.

Following the recent highways works at The Length/A28, Cllr Tweedale had removed the detritus swept from the road edge.

A suspected stolen motorbike frame at Sevenscore had been reported accordingly.

It was suggested a litter pick was organised for when the weather improved.

Cllr Lawrance reported he had been approached with regard to the difficulties accessing Bedford Way due to inconsiderate parking. The installation of bollards would be considered and added to the HIP.

The hedge at Sunnyside was encroaching onto the highway. The landowner would be contacted and asked to trim back the overgrowth to the boundary line.

Cllr Lawrance would investigate the installation of solar panels at the Bell Meadow Pavilion, to potentially reduce electricity costs.

Cllr Andrews had noted the recent loss in water pressure in various locations in the Village. Residents were encouraged to contact Southern Water direct to report issues. Cllr Smith also volunteered to follow up the concerns.

It was noted that Enforcement Officers should be requested to monitor the parking on the double yellow lines at Manor Road due to regular parking obstructions.

Sincere thanks were expressed to the residents at Manor Road who removed the overgrown hedge on the blind bend, thus greatly improving visibility and safety for road users.

Cllr Smyth advised she would be reporting the pothole on A253. It was also noted that planning permission had been granted for the land behind Sarre House.

Cllr Ageros had been maintaining the Village Planters and Flagpole garden. An increase in dog fouling in the Village had been noted.

120/25-26 THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Abi Smith reported as follows:

Consultations now open on YourVoice Thanet <https://yourvoice.thanet.gov.uk/en-GB/> include...

TDC's proposed budget for 2026/27 – locals are being asked for their views on the approach for the coming financial year (survey closes: Monday 16 February).

Plans for a Parish (Town) Council for Margate

The proposed 'hub' for Jackey Bakers Recreation Ground in Ramsgate.

SEA Link DCO hearing

It was very disappointing (a) to have registered and written speeches but to find no speaking opportunity and (b) that there was zero participation from Kent County and little from Thanet. Suffolk CC and East Suffolk DC each had a King's Counsel, plus at least half a dozen expert officers.

Meanwhile...

A beautiful, original film was created by young filmmaker Connor Caruthers. It premiered at the Natural History Museum, then at Salt Broadstairs this week. Thanet Green Party and the Save Minister Marshes campaign are exploring more local screenings.

See it (on the small screen) at <https://youtu.be/8tps519SR34?si=0mYfJT4IV7uDEgg0>

TDC Planning re BESS application – I spoke against this development because my concerns about fire risk and potential chemical runoff are not satisfied. I'm afraid they still aren't, but it was approved by the committee.

Two Margate theatres public events

Westwood One Theatre, the new leaseholder of the Winter Gardens is hosting a public engagement event on Tuesday 10 February, 4-7pm and a public drop-in session is happening at the Theatre Royal, Addington St Margate CT9 1PW on Wednesday 11 February 2026, between 3pm and 7pm.

Pie Factory

A £535,000 grant from the Pride in Place Programme capital allocation was approved, to be paid to Pie Factory Music. This will enable them to buy the freehold of Ramsgate Youth Centre, and keep it as a vital resource for young people, BUT the venue was then listed as a Clive Emson auction before the deal could be done...

Woodpiles F/TH/25/0718

I am pleased to say, after "calling in" the application to the Committee, the eyesore stored on land off A299 layby in order to fuel the incinerator at Discovery Park were refused retrospective planning permission by TDC Planning.

Essential safety closure at Margate Lido Promenade

The lower promenade in front of the Margate Lido will be closed to the public, effective from last Friday.

Voluntary and Community Sector Forum

The first meeting of the newly formed Thanet Voluntary and Community Sector Forum is at 11am on Tuesday 17 February, at St Peter's Church Hall, Broadstairs. Free tickets can be booked on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/thanet-voluntary-and-sector-forum-tickets-1981565702358?aff=oddtcreator>.

Cllr Peter Evans reported as follows:

- Walpole Bay tidal pool remains closed due the ongoing repairs needing more attention than originally expected.
- Air Quality survey being conducted in Thanet.
- Jackie Bakers online public engagement consultation open for comments.
- Budget consultation open for comments. Ramsgate Harbour noted as a financial concern for TDC, along with housing provision.
- The proposal to replace the Margate Charter of Trustees with a Town Council was entering the second phase.
- The bid to make the Isle an Isle of Culture had been proposed – If successful, TDC would take responsibility for the award.
- City of Sanctuary – supporting asylum seekers, vulnerable residents etc...

121/25-26 KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Luke Evans read his report as follows:

Budget

I want to start by giving you some context about Kent County Council's budget proposal for 2026–2027—because it's important you know where we started and where we're heading.

When we took office on 2nd May 2025, we inherited a council with £732 million of debt, and that figure was forecast to hit £1 billion within two years. To put that into perspective, taxpayers were paying £84,000 every single day just in interest to service that debt.

The previous administration had set a target of £121 million in savings and increased income for the current year—but when we took over, the council was already £21 million overspent. And if that wasn't enough, we later discovered a ballooning Adult Social Care budget, which we didn't even find out about until August. In the first quarter alone, Adult Social Care was £20 million over budget.

So, what did we do to fix this mess?

We found £100 million in efficiency savings, and we reprofiled another £39 million. The biggest factor in that reprofiling was receding the Climate Emergency, which meant we didn't have to chase unrealistic net zero targets that would have bankrupted the council.

We went further. We reduced the debt by £67 million, and we have another £17 million of debt reductions baked into our budget by March. For context, this is the first time in nearly 15 years that KCC has reduced its debt.

We've also got a grip on Adult Social Care. For the past two months in a row, we've delivered huge savings, and we're confident we can bring our biggest portfolio spend under control.

On top of that, we've set up a Contract Management Review Group, which now goes through every new contract with a fine-tooth comb to make sure the public gets value for money—because frankly, the contracts we inherited were dire.

And because financial responsibility is at the heart of everything we're doing, we've also budgeted to put an additional £30 million back into reserves in the coming year.

Now, here's the really exciting part: based on the new direction we've taken, it looks likely that our 3.99% council tax rise could be the lowest of any council in the country. If it's not the lowest, it will certainly be in the top three—and that's out of 384 council tax authorities in the UK. That is an astonishing achievement when you consider that the previous administration put council tax up by the maximum legal amount for 12 consecutive years—and we've lowered it after just eight months.

This is what real financial responsibility looks like, and it's only the beginning. Together, we're building a stronger, more sustainable Kent County Council for the future.

Sea Link

Cllr Evans read a letter in response to a recent post on the Minster Marshes Facebook Page:

Dear George,

Just to clarify the position unequivocally.

Reform U.K. councillors at Kent County Council have had no involvement whatsoever in the planning, development or approval of the Sea Link project. The scheme was signed off under the previous administration, prior to Reform U.K. taking control of the council.

Since taking office, the only work undertaken in relation to Sea Link has been by council officers acting under instruction from the Secretary of State, and this has been strictly limited to the legal and procedural elements of the planning process. No political endorsement, direction or support for the project has been given by Reform U.K. elected members.

To be absolutely clear, Reform U.K. councillors at KCC do not support the Sea Link project in its current form.

A full and formal statement will shortly be issued setting out:

- The outright rejection of the project by Reform U.K. elected members at Kent County Council; and
- My alternative and far more logical proposal for the interconnector route.

That proposal would see the link continue to Dover Harbour, where a transfer station could have been established on the infilled Granville Docks site. This location would have delivered genuine energy security benefits, avoided unnecessary industrialisation of sensitive countryside, and enabled power transfer along the existing railway corridor to the established Sellinge site for connection to the national grid.

This approach would have minimised environmental harm, made use of existing infrastructure, and avoided the significant planning, transport and landscape impacts now associated with the current scheme.

Any suggestion that Reform U.K. councillors are responsible for, or supportive of, the Sea Link project is simply incorrect.

Yours sincerely,

David Wimble Cabinet member for economic development

I would like to add that when this statement was released on the SMM FB page it had over 250 likes within a couple of hours but now the statement has been taken down so it looks like we us Reform UK Clls haven't bothered responding which is untrue. For site admins to act like this it clearly shows that they have a hidden agenda. If we stick to the facts though the guilty parties are easily identified. The Conservatives started the Sea Link project nearly 3 years ago and the Labour Party are carrying on with it.

The Secretary of State could stop Sea Link tomorrow if he wanted to but he won't because his party, just like the party before his, is ideologically married to Net Zero.

Reform UK will keep fighting for residents, defending our countryside and coastline, and protecting local wildlife from a project that local people do not want.

122/25-26 KENT POLICE REPORT

PC Andy Howe was unable to attend the meeting, and no report submitted.

123/25-26 KCC COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT

CW Gary Groombridge reported as follows:

- Continue to do Visual Presence around the Villages
- I reported some fly tipping to the street scene enforcement officer, concerning a bike frame that had been dumped near Cottington Road, Cliffsend. This was reported to me by one of the Parish Councillors from St Nicholas at Wade.
- Continue to support and attend the Wellbeing group in the Bell Meadow Pavilion at St Nicholas at Wade, speak to the residents and support with any issues and concerns.
- Continue to support and attend the Wellbeing group in the Sun Inn at St Nicholas at Wade, speak to the residents and support with any issues and concerns.
- Reported some potholes and road damage around St Nicholas at Wade. I Received reference numbers and responses.
- I reported in an abandoned caravan full of rubbish and old car tyres, that was left in a layby off the A299 leading up to the Minster Mount Pleasant roundabout. This has an abandoned vehicle notice now attached to it. Still waiting for it to be removed.
- Continue to support one of the Residents over at St Nichas at Wade concerning a problem with her Orbit property,
- I have carried out some visual presence outside the Primary School at St Nicholas at Wade, concerning people parking on the new double yellow lines that have been installed. (I will continue be a presence when I can)
- Attend the Parish Council Meetings when I can.
- Check for fly tipping around some of the Roads around the villages that can't be accessed on foot (Using my van)
- The Community Warden Team is involved in the Safety in Action Week at Dreamland in Margate, for primary school age children from the schools in the Thanet Area. I have put the information together for the team to use. This included a five-question quiz on Community safety, Phonetic alphabet charts so the children can spell their names through some walkie talkies. We also had stickers to give out at the end.
- Continue to support and attend the Men's Wellbeing group at the Church Café, in the Church at St Nicholas at Wade, speak to the residents and support them with any issues and concerns. Hold a fun quiz.

124/25-26 BELL MEADOW WORKING GROUP REPORT

Cllr Divers advised that work to improve the tennis courts was due to start in May once the weather had improved. A suitable lock on the gate was being explored to protect the new facility.

A number of events were being explored, including a classic car show in June, and Sports Day in July, along with a St Georges Day event in March.

The lights and urinal sensor had been repaired, along with the emergency lighting and repairs/service made to the boiler.

125/25-26 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) No new applications received.
- b) F/TH/23/0535 – Permission Granted
F/TH/25/0708 – Permission Granted

126/25-26 FINANCE

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

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

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

S. Archer - Repayment BMP monitor & tablet	£302.98
SNS - Domain Hosting	£123.51
Employee salaries & expenses	£1912.44
Lloyds DD	£197.28
EDF - BMP Electric	£98.74
Hugofox - Website domain	£11.99
EDF - BMP Gas	£46.31
Mazars - Audit fee	£378.00
Cartridge People - Printer inks	£289.90
Electric works BMP	£600.00
Unity Bank - Service Charge	£6.00

Receipts:

BMP Hire - Ukelele	£91.00
E. Dore - BMP Hire	£80.00
M. Savage - BMP Hire - Choir	£12.00
BMP Hire - Party Hire	£44.50
Nationwide interest	£987.06

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

(Proposed: Cllr Lawrance, Seconded: Cllr Andrews)

c) Following the recommendation made by the handyperson team and circulated to Councillors, the purchase of a second hand Stihl long reach hedge trimmer and Stihl strimmer was considered. The equipment was for sale for £450 and would greatly benefit the handypeople.

RESOLVED: To approve the purchase of the Stihl long reach hedge trimmer and strimmer for £450.

(Proposed: Cllr Divers, Seconded: Cllr Lawrance)

127/25-26 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No concerns raised.

The meeting was concluded by the Chairman at 8:33pm.