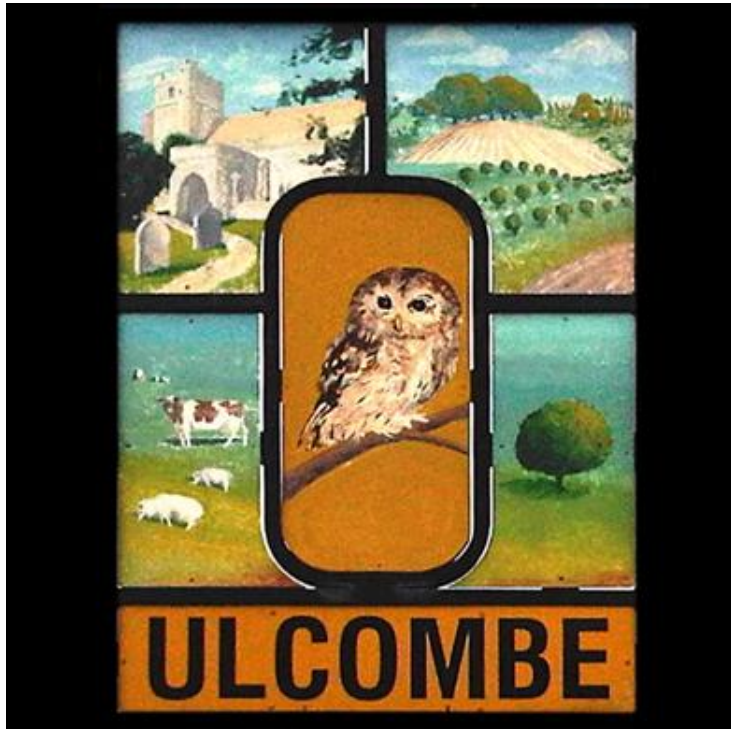


**ULCOMBE**  
**Annual Parish Report**  
**2025-2026**



**Produced by Ulcombe Parish Council**

**June 2026**

## **Annual Report of the Parish Council by the Chairman.**

**Tribute** - I would first like to read out our Parish Council tribute to Terry Shortland.

Many village residents will have known Terry Shortland, who sadly passed away at the age of 80 at the end of last week. He moved to Kingsnorth Manor Farm in Crumps Lane in 1979 with his wife, Ann, and stepson, Will Samuelson, where they ran a dairy and beef farm for 33 years. Terry joined Ulcombe Parish Council in 1992 and was Chairman from 1999 until he retired from the council in 2003. Both Trevor Sharp and I joined the Parish Council when he was Chairman. I know he will be missed by a great many of us who knew him well.

Terry was also a Governor of Ulcombe School and later, Chairman of the Board of Governors of Ulcombe Primary School for many years, stepping down in about 2014. Having a tractor to hand proved invaluable in keeping the parish running smoothly - he was well known for his practical skills when it came to fixing problems, whether on behalf of the council, for the school or coming to the rescue of residents in distress! Terry will be fondly remembered for his good humour, kindness and friendly chats. Our thoughts are with Ann and the family at this very sad time.

### **Annual Report 2025-2026**

Over the past year, the Council has experienced a period of stability as we have continued our efforts to care for the village.

Our ongoing commitment to the community has been reflected in the work carried out across various areas, ensuring that the needs of residents are addressed and that Ulcombe remains a welcoming and well-maintained place to live. By focusing on both immediate concerns and longer-term improvements, we have sought to provide consistent support and stewardship for the village. So, what have we been up to:-

**Planning Applications** - For the period April 2025 to March 2026, we have as a council dealt with approximately 17 applications, mainly relating to household changes and gypsy and traveller sites. There were also a further 2 applications for larger developments, 1 one at Land at Eastwood Road (Esquire

- 20 dwellings). This is the land behind the cricket pavilion. This application was originally supported by the planning case officer at Maidstone Borough Council. However, we addressed the planning committee and managed to persuade the members to refuse this application, which they did so unanimously

The second application is a permission in principle for 9 dwellings at Land at Headcorn Road (Jarvis) (originally 25 but subsequently reduced). The Parish Council and the Borough Council have approved this application.

The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan is still ongoing with a Regulation 18(c) consultation being held in November/December 2025. We await a further consultation at some stage in 2026.

**Police** – PC George Head and PC Chad Maskell continue to look after the village. It is important that all crime is reported so that if a pattern appears to be establishing then resources can be specifically allocated. Please do contact 999 in an emergency or report an issues via 101 otherwise.

Monthly crime figures for Ulcombe can also be found online via the Kent Police website at [www.e-watch.co](http://www.e-watch.co)

**Recreation Ground** – In October, the play equipment refurbishment was completed. This involved the replacement of the seesaw and roundabout, the replacement of wetpour and new signage and small remedial works that had also been identified. This work was funded by the S106 funding from the Grafty Green development.

We also had the pavilion externally restored and painted and it looks so much better.

The play area is also semi-annually inspected by Sovereign Play and annually by Rospa Play Safety as well as a visual check weekly by ourselves.

We have also repeated in recent newsletters as to why dogs are banned from the recreation ground to protect users, especially children, from being attacked and from playing in dog mess.

The Council would also like to express its appreciation to contractor Steve

Waring, whose commitment to maintaining the recreation ground is evident. He consistently ensures the area is kept in good order and is always willing to assist at short notice with various tasks required to keep the grounds safe and accessible for public use.

**Football Pitches** – Headcorn Football Club decided not to continue using the recreation ground for their junior matches this year. We therefore remain open to discuss with other clubs on utilising the pitch going forwards.

**Tommy Silhouette** – We have purchased a Royal British Legion Tommy Silhouette which has been placed near the village sign. These silhouettes serve as a visible tribute to those who have served in the armed forces, offering a poignant reminder of their dedication and sacrifice.

**Defibrillators** – Both defibrillators (Village Hall & Wents Garage) continue to be routinely inspected by Hopkins and remain fully functioning in the event that they are required.

**Finance** - It was agreed to generate a precept for 2026/27 of £27,474 which equates to £64.34 per band D property. There is no change in the parish element of the Council tax for each resident. The Accounting Statement for the year ending 31 March 2026 has been internally audited and will also be externally audited by Mazars LLP in June 2026. In summary:-

Balance as at 31/3/2025	£35,502
Receipts in	£61,765
Payments out	£57,572
Balance as at 31/3/2025	£39,695

**Donations** – We have given donations to the Kent Air Ambulance and the Royal British Legion.

**Communications** – Our website can be found at [www.ulcombeparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.ulcombeparishcouncil.gov.uk). This website is fully compliant with the WCAG (website content accessibility guidelines) and is kept up to date with both Council business and other items of village interest. We continue to use our village noticeboards situated outside the village hall and in The Street (near

the bus stop) as well as the Ulcombe Parish Council Facebook page.

We are keen to engage with residents as much as possible and value any ideas for new projects or village celebrations, as well as listening and address any complaints (hopefully not too many) that you may have. Please do get in contact with our clerk in the first instance or come along to a Parish Council meeting which are held on a monthly basis, usually the first Thursday of the month from 7.15pm at the Village Hall.

**Litter** - We like many other parishes have to deal with the blight of litter. A thank you also goes to our local contractor, Ken Parish who services the core of the village on a weekly basis. We also wish to thank all residents who, as part of their daily routines, make the effort to pick up litter from outside their own homes or whilst walking through the village.

The Parish Council does have litter collecting equipment available (pickers, gloves and bags), please do contact the clerk. Heavily blighted roads can also be reported online to Maidstone Borough Council on

<https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/do-it-online/report-it/top-6/report-a-street-cleansing/report-litter>

**Number 59 Bus** – This service has been funded in the past by the 3 Parish Councils (Boughton Malherbe, Broomfield & Kingswood and Ulcombe), every year going out to try and secure grant funding. Following a rejection of this year's request, a plea to KCC with the backing of County Councillor Emberson, we managed to persuade them to secure the future of this service going forward. This has been achieved by removing two services on a Wednesday from the Number 13 service (Hollingbourne to Maidstone) also run by Nu-Venture. This will start from July (there may be a slight timetable change). It is important that residents continue to use this service as statistics do play a key role when viability is looked at, from an office in KCC!

**Highways:** We have held meetings recently with Kent Highways to try and achieve some better signage to try and control speeding vehicles at both Wents crossroads and at Pye Corner/Eastwood Road. Discussions remain ongoing.

**My thanks** to Julian Coleman for his excellent technical reports to alleviate flooding in Ulcombe which will be discussed with KCC next week. We thank KCC Cllr Emberson for her help in arranging this meeting. We would also like to thank Patrick McGinley for his creation of Ulcombe Water Watch and to all our residents reporting to him on the failures of Southeast Water. We have forwarded these reports to both Southeast Water senior management and to our MP, Katie Lam, who was very grateful for this information.

Also, we extend our thanks to our two Borough Councillors, Martin Round and Ziggy Trzebinski and Kent County Councillor, Sarah Emberson. Sarah has helped a lot in discussions with KCC about our flood, bus, and highway problems. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their input, support and willingness to look after our village. We look forward to the coming year ahead although we do face possible planning problems given our wish to preserve the character of our small village in the face of constant planning application demands.

Most importantly, my thanks to Helen, our Clerk and RFO, who has worked extremely hard in keeping our finances and record keeping in order, as well as our website and Facebook page up to date.

Finally, the **KALC Award**, I am pleased to announce that this year's award goes to Frances Crawford, *"For her generosity and dedication to Ulcombe's community. Her ongoing support has greatly contributed to the success and unity of our village's activities and events"*. Unfortunately, she is unable to be here tonight to receive her award, but we will be presenting this at our next Parish Council meeting in June.

**Peter Titchener**  
**Chairman of Ulcombe Parish Council**

## **A Report by Kent County Councillor, Sarah Emberson**

It's hard to believe that a year has passed since last May, when Reform UK took control of Kent County Council and I was elected as your KCC councillor. As such, I'd like to give you some insight on the things I've been doing and talk about the achievements of the administration.

Those first weeks were very intense. We undertook extensive inductions and training before moving on to committee work. Many of us were new to local government, so it was important to understand both the responsibilities and the constraints we work under. I now sit on several key committees covering the Kent Pension Fund to Local Government Reorganisation, but my main focus is on making sure local voices are heard.

Working with parish councils is a vital part of that. In my division alone there are 17 parish councils, and I attend their meetings regularly. As KCC is the highways authority, highways issues understandably dominate many discussions — from potholes and drainage to speeding and signage. My role is to act as a bridge between parish councils / communities and KCC officers, helping ensure the Local Highways Improvement Plans are progressed wherever possible, while being honest about budgets and timescales.

With roads and safety in mind, not long after being appointed, I attended a Kent Police Speedwatch seminar to learn about the scheme and be able to support the volunteers who give up their time to help slow traffic in our communities. I believe their contribution is invaluable.

I've met many societies, clubs and headteachers and through the Member Community Grant scheme, I've been able to support local groups and schools. We are so lucky to have so many clubs and volunteers in Kent.

At a county level, the new administration inherited a very challenging financial position — with high levels of debt £734m, services under threat and significant savings were required. During our period in office, we reduced debt by £114million, reducing our debt interest by £3362 per day and delivered £115 million in savings, helping stabilise the council's finances while protecting essential services and in February, we announced a reduced council tax levy of 3.99% - a rate lower than 86% of County, Metropolitan and Unitary Councils in

England. We have also managed to save, libraries, country parks, crossing staff, lolly pop ladies to you and I and community wardens, which were all under threat when we came into office.

Roads or should I say their deterioration, have been a major priority. Just by way of an example, for the year ending Jan 2025 approx 2500 potholes were reported to January 2026. This number had increased to 11,600. During the last year, a £67 million investment has gone into highways maintenance, one of the largest programmes of its kind. Around 50,000 potholes have been filled, along with extensive patching and resurfacing. There is a lot more to do, and it must be appreciated that Kent has over 5,500 miles of roads and they've seen decades of underinvestment. While we cannot fix everything at once, safety-critical works are prioritised. On May 1st, a new highways contract and budget went live. This will allow a more extensive programme of permanent repairs to move forward.

We've also worked to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, support local businesses - £55m more of contracts awarded and provided enhanced support for 500 Kent supplier companies, and ensure decisions are driven by value for money. We're leading a Kent-focused response to Local Government

Reorganisation — one that aims to protect local identity and ensure community engagement rather than remote decision-making.

I believe huge progress has been made in a very short time, but there is more to do. We will continue to protect your valued services, emphasise quality, spend money wisely and put Kent residents first.

I remain committed to working closely with parish councils, community groups, listening to your concerns, and making sure your voices continue to shape decisions at County Hall.

## **A Report by Borough Councillors, Round and Trzebinski**

It has been a very busy year for both ward councillors. Martin Round, Mayor of Maidstone 2025 to 2026, has been, since his inauguration, the busiest Mayor yet. Many events to attend, awards to make, charity events and all of the other functions have left him with very little spare time in his diary. Ziggy Trzebinski has therefore taken on a lot of the ward matters that Martin would normally take on.

So, turning to Maidstone Borough Council (MBC), it has been an interesting, if somewhat frustrating year, with a Green and Lib Dem alliance running the administration. MBC is spending £7.5 million on de-carbonising Maidstone House which is only worth £4million. The cost is likely to increase and the start has already been delayed. With a bit of luck, it may not happen and the money can be better spent elsewhere. There have been one or two other odd decisions costing the taxpayer money, but your ward councillors have consistently complained about the lack of money being spent in the rural areas, when the town centre and urban areas seem to get all the benefits. At the same time, the town centre is less and less popular and it needs more investment in businesses rather than flowerpots.

We have also been hi-jacked into debates at full council on fourteenth-century witches, Palestine, rights of rivers and other subjects which are really not related to the smooth running of Maidstone Borough Council. There is an underlying lack of understanding in the new administration of their responsibilities to Borough residents, which should be their main concern.

Turning to our rural areas one of the subjects we are involved in is the appalling littering that we have to put up with. At the April full council meeting, we have proposed a motion for consideration to tackle this along with fly-tipping.

Ziggy Trzebinski sits on the Licensing and the Audit committee, as well as the full council, and attends most of the meetings of the five Parish Councils in the ward, other meetings allowing.

There have been a large number of planning issues, both large and small, in which we both have been involved. MBC finds itself in a very difficult position right now with being well behind on its housing targets, which have also just

increased from around 1,200 a year to 1,400 a year. The consequence of this is that developers will put forward unsuitable sites and get permission to build. If MBC refuses, then they are likely to succeed on appeal if we are behind on our targets. At the same time, we do not want to see any further development in our countryside and push back on developments unless they bring significant benefit to the community, and when we say significant, we mean significant. Unauthorised field invasions are also top of the priority list and we are giving this subject our full attention and engaging with the parties that are required to stop them, including our MP.

Looking forward, we have local government re-organisation coming next year. Not a bad idea to have a one-stop shop so you can go to your local councillor on any subject rather than having to decide if it is MBC or KCC you need to talk to. We feel very uncomfortable with the way it has been handled, however, with Kent having more than 7 options to be considered by the government. We hope they choose the best one for Kent rather than the most politically advantageous to them.

We will continue to look after the interests of all of our residents and please do not hesitate to get in touch with us should you need to.

### **A Report from Kent Police**

PC Chad Maskell and PC George Head are your two neighbourhood police officers who cover Ulcombe and the rural south of Maidstone (Ulcombe to Yalding).

We are aware of the rise of issues with Anti-Social Behaviour, especially with catapults. We plead that these issues continue to be reported via 999, 101, the Kent Police website or anonymously via Crime Stoppers.

## **Reports from Village Organisations and Representatives.**

### **Ulcombe History Society**

#### **Programme**

We have enjoyed a full programme of 8 speakers this year, covering a range of topics: events covered by a Reuter's journalist; PLUTO, the WW2 pipeline under the ocean; the gardens of the Arts and Crafts movement; the Bloomsbury Group; Victorian Architecture; Grinling Gibbons; and an illustrated history of Christmas. Our scheduled speaker for October cancelled, and a future speaker was brought forward to talk about his Father's War.

#### **Outing**

In June, we took a coach to Crossness Pumping Station in Southeast London. This Grade I listed masterpiece of Victorian engineering was designed by Sir Joseph Bazalgette to solve the "Great Stink" of 1858. It served as the southern outfall for London's new sewer system, using massive, ornate steam-powered beam engines to lift sewage into the Thames. A very interesting visit.

#### **Membership**

Membership has decreased this year, standing at 26. However, guest attendance is very good at 39 overall. In an attempt to attract more members, we are displaying our full programme posters in local villages, and placing it in their newsletters and websites.

#### **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations 2027**

Plans are in place for a tea party and guided tour to celebrate on June 20<sup>th</sup> 2027, at the old Ulcombe Village Hall, which now resides at the Kent Life Museum at Aylesford. We are hoping to hire the Kentish Lady so that we can sail to Aylesford from the Archbishop's Palace.

#### **Display of old photographs**

The History Society and Village Hall Committee have collaborated on the display of old photographs of Bygone Ulcombe on the south wall of the hall.

## **Biography of AO Walker**

The society was given 2 copies of this publication by Professor Geoff Moore. This details the life of Alfred Osten Walker, a marine biologist who lived in Ulcombe Place for many years and died in 1925. He is referenced in the History of Ulcombe. A copy is available for any interested parishioners to read.

## **Acknowledgements**

As usual, I would like to thank the Secretary, Bridget Samuelson, for her invaluable support in the smooth running of the Society. She really is our lynch pin, and we are so grateful for all her hard work. Our Treasurer, Derrick Parkes is equally invaluable. Thank you Derrick for your financial skills and constructive suggestions. Thanks to Peter Court for deputising for me, selling the drinks and thanking our speakers, to Bev Martin for arranging our speakers and doing the raffle, and Janet Trotter for taking the register and welcoming people. Also, to Richard Pilborough, who inspects our accounts.

That brings me to John Moore, one of the founder members, who is stepping back after 21 years of organising our outings and trips, 37 in all. Guedelon in 2015 and Ironbridge with Blist's Hill Victorian village in 2010 stick out for me as particularly memorable. You have put a tremendous effort into arranging our visits, John, which can be frustrating as well as rewarding and we really appreciate your contribution to the society. John is staying on the committee, so we will still have his experience to fall back on.

Lastly, I would like to thank you, the members, for your enthusiasm and interest, without whom there would be no Ulcombe History Society.

## **Leila Ware (Chair)**

### **The Committee of The Friends of All Saints, Ulcombe.**

The Friends have not been so active this year due to age, illness and the absence of a priest, but we have continued to receive generous donations and we are able to pay the churches annual insurance premium of £2,527. We are looking for more friends. It is such a beautiful church with an interesting history, we are still hoping to find the crypt.

If you are interested in joining FASU, please contact Molly Poulter on 01622 843876, John Goode on 01622 844709 or Peter Titchener on 01622 843655.

## **Ulcombe Church of England Primary School**

I am pleased to provide this update to the Parish Council, reflecting on my time as Head of School and the continued progress of Ulcombe Church of England Primary School.

Having now been in post for just over a year, I can genuinely say that it has been an incredibly rewarding experience. I have enjoyed so many aspects of the role, from working closely with our dedicated staff team to getting to know the children and their families. One of the most fulfilling parts of this past year has been becoming part of the Ulcombe community. The strong sense of connection between the school, families, and the wider village is something very special, and I feel privileged to be part of it.

We currently have 54 pupils on roll in three mixed ages classes and will be welcoming 7 new pupils into Year R in September, with 6 leavers in Year 6.

This year's achievements include the following: We had our much anticipated Ofsted inspection in June 2025. I am delighted to report that we successfully maintained our 'Good' grading. The inspection process was a valuable opportunity to showcase the strengths of our school and to reflect on our continued development.

We were particularly proud of the positive comments included in the report, which recognised the caring and inclusive nature of our school. Inspectors noted that: "Pupils are safe and happy in this friendly school. The school forms trusting relationships with parents and carers. Staff know their pupils and are sensitive to their individual needs. They show great care for pupils' well-being".

These words truly reflect the ethos of our school and the commitment of our staff team to ensuring that every child feels supported, valued, and able to thrive.

The children have attended various experiences this year in addition to their national curriculum which we have to follow ie:-

Various local sporting events.

Trip to the theatre to watch the Philharmonic Orchestra.

Field Trips to link with geography learning.

A 3 day residential trip.

Trips to places of worship eg. the synagogue.

Music project with English National Opera.

Weekly swimming in partnership with Sutton Valance School.

Young voices - a gathering of lots of school choirs at the O2.

We also have several events to look forward to:-

Sporting events.

Aspire Arts Festival.

Year 6 transition day at Ulcombe Village Hall.

Ulcombe Sports Day.

Celebrating the World Cup starting in June.

Summer fun afternoon organised by the parent association, FUS.

Year 6 Leavers Celebration.

As we move forward, we remain focused on building upon these strengths, continuing to provide a high-quality education, and maintaining our strong relationships with families and the community.

### **Olenka Parsons – Head of School**

#### **Ulcombe Badminton Group**

We are a friendly club with ages from teens to those in their 70s. We regularly have 12+ in attendance with mixed ability. We would always welcome new members and make sure everyone gets to play.

We meet on Friday nights from 8pm to 11pm from October to May. Contact Rhian Banham on 07400 096269 if you want to come along and get some exercise and make new friends.

## **Community Breakfast Report**

We are now well into our 4th year of the breakfasts, and they still seem to be popular. Over the year June '25 to May '26 we have raised £2,230, that is £1,115 to each of All Saints Church Ulcombe and Community Projects. We also did last November's breakfast for charity and we managed to send £400 to Maidstone Churches Winter Shelters, that was £280 raised from the breakfast and £120 from donations on the day.

I would like to thank all my wonderful volunteers who help out, without them there would be no breakfast.

We struggle to give any of the community money to anything as hardly anyone comes forward for funds. We have helped the Village Hall buy a secondhand dishwasher and for a few maintenance things like getting the oven cleaned, but we really want it spent on something for the village. Do you have any idea what this money could go towards? Maybe planters and plants for around the village to make our village look nice or play equipment, adult exercise machines for the green.

Please get in touch with us.

Nicky Bovington on [nicka50@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nicka50@hotmail.co.uk)

Sara Jackson on [jackson64@icloud.com](mailto:jackson64@icloud.com)

## **Ulcombe Village Hall Report**

Last year was another busy one for the Village Hall committee. Alongside the day-to-day maintenance of the Hall and the management of regular and one-off hires, we were again able to organise several fundraising events and made some major improvements to the Hall.

Regular Hall users include Yoga & Pilates classes, 'Community Drop-In' and 'Baby Sensory' mornings, the popular 'Community Breakfast' and meetings of the Ulcombe History Society & Badminton Club. The Hall is also regularly hired by friends who play Pickleball on the Badminton court.

Social events organised by the hall committee, included two quizzes (run for us by villagers Donna & Michael Shalders), a second Murder Mystery evening, the Christmas Bazaar and our usual Christmas social gathering, where neighbours

can chat over a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie and join in carol singing.

Maintenance work last year included replacing all the wooden fascia boards outside and resurfacing both the car park entrance and the floor of the main hall. We thank the Parish Council for their grants towards the resurfacing works.

In addition, we managed to make several upgrades to the Hall, including improvements to reduce our water consumption and electricity bills. We also secured an internet connection (which will benefit hirers, but also allow us to take card payments at events we run ourselves) and the Community Breakfast team, in particular, now benefit from the installation of a commercial dishwasher (towards which they contributed around a third of the cost).

At the suggestion of the History Society, old photos of the village are now displayed in the Hall. History Society members and VH committee members worked jointly to achieve this, and the Society paid for the printing and framing of the photographs.

Externally, improvements have begun to be made in the south-west corner of our grounds. Local resident, Christina Cox, secured the donation from the Maidstone Gospel Hall Trust of 4 fine wooden benches for the grassed area to the south-west of the Hall, which prompted us to enlarge that area by removing a wire-fenced enclosure and cutting back the hedge between that area and the road. Work continues to level that area with a view to grassing it later this year.

We would love to create a patio (or deck) area along the east side of the hall if we can get external funding – but an initial application for National Lottery funding was not successful. We are acutely aware that the path along the east side of the hall is subsiding and we would love to do away with the different levels there.

Another initiative we undertook towards the end of 2025 was to agree to host InPost parcel lockers at the Hall. This was due to give us a guaranteed income of £1200 a year, but the deal went sour when the company belatedly realised they couldn't provide the service, due to the presence of the car park height

More successful was the installation of a clothes recycling bin, which earns us a more modest monthly income.

In 2025, our total outgoings amounted to over £23,000 and our income fell short of this by over £2,300 (notwithstanding the grants and donations we received), so we had to draw on our reserves. So far *this* year, we have run a Bingo evening, a ‘pre-loved clothing sale’ and another quiz evening, which together have raised over £1400, but we need to raise much more, from events and hires, if we are to remain solvent.

Finally, a couple of months ago Nikki Sharp, who had kept our Hall clean and tidy for decades, as well as doing sterling work as our Bookings Secretary, announced that she would be stepping down from the roles. We have been fortunate to find an excellent replacement for Nikki in a relative newcomer to the village, Sam Oliver, and we are about to launch an online booking system which, hopefully, will simplify the booking process for all concerned.

### **Richard Pilborough - Management Committee Chairman**

#### **Ulcombe Community Drop In – A Time to Play**

The ‘Drop In’ opened in September 2022. The group meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month, only closing for the summer break. We serve refreshments and we encourage all members to mix with each other, so everyone feels included. We find that having young children is a tonic for our older visitors. Our sessions are still donation only.

Although the families that were with us originally have now moved on to school; many new families have joined us. One of these families were so appreciative of what we are doing purchased several colourful plastic chairs for the children. We were also able to buy new equipment to encourage the children’s imagination and have been donated items to add to our growing equipment store. We constantly monitor what we provide so it is always fresh and interesting for all.

The ‘Drop In’ is a team effort and we thank our volunteers who help us at these sessions. Trevor Sharp, Christina Cox, Janet Trotter.

Unfortunately, we still do not see many villagers at these sessions, even though we advertise in the village newsletter and on the village WhatsApp group.

The 'Drop In' is for everyone within Ulcombe parish, a place to meet socialise and help alleviate loneliness and isolation.

We now have Zero Waste on Wheels visiting us during these sessions. A mobile refill station delivering eco-friendly refills and plastic-free alternatives.

There is also a Parish Councillor in attendance for any questions you may have.

We look forward to another productive year.

**Wendy Saunders & Nikki Sharp.**

### **Ulcombe Newsletter**

The Ulcombe Newsletter is now distributed to 226 households and continues to be very popular.

There is a generous and helpful group of people who distribute the Newsletter and collect the £3 subscription. The collection of the subscription is not always easy and we beg people to be quick in paying.

It would be helpful if people did not have to be chased and even pay online as advertised in the newsletter. £3 is such a small amount.

It would also be helpful if there were a few more volunteers to help with the monthly distribution.

Grateful thanks go to Frances Crawford for organising the distribution and collection of subscriptions, and to Richard Pilborough, our treasurer, and to Liz Foster, our wonderful editor.

Our income for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 was £2,782.60 and our expenditure was £2,665.24, leaving a surplus of £117.36.

However, total funds including reserves at our year end were £4,107.51, thanks to our regular subscribers and advertisers over recent years. We have therefore decided to donate £1,000 to the Heart of Kent Hospice, a charity that any one of us could find ourselves benefiting from. We hope you agree this is a worthy use

of our excess funds – and give yourselves a pat on the back, because your support has enabled us to do this!

## **Molly Poulter**

### **Churchwarden Report for All Saints Church Ulcombe**

As many of you will be aware All Saints and the Len Valley Benefice has been in interregnum since mid-September 2024.

Revd Dr John Huggins had given formal notice to the Churchwardens of the Benefice in January 2026 of his possible retirement. Unknown to John, he was seriously ill. Diagnoses were made in April, and after surgery in late May this was followed by 6 weeks of convalescence. During this period, John decided to take retirement to enable a full recovery.

The interregnum began in September 2025. Due to various factors, this stalled over the Christmas, New Year period. Since then, it has gained pace and the post should be advertised during late May and early June, for hopefully interviews in July. All we can say, is watch that space

The church building is in fine fettle. Recent work to rectify a blocked downpipe resulted in a major cleaning of drainage pipes, manholes and replacement of paving slabs over the manholes with proper manhole covers. Fire extinguisher and lightning conductor inspections have taken place and certificated.

The Services that you would expect to be disrupted by Revd John's retirement had been well covered by the three retired priests that live across the Benefice. Where there is likely to be a service of communion cancelled due to the availability of a priest, an Authorised Lay Minister (ALM) has been able to step in and cover with a service of Morning Worship.

The ALM's are available to cover Remembrance, Carol Services and Funeral Services. All the major celebrations of the year were met. Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas Morning were led by the PTOs. The Annual Carol Service was led by an ALM.

Ulcombe Primary School continue to attend church to celebrate Harvest Festival, Christmas, Easter and The Leavers Service in July. Year 5/6 visited in

the spring of 2026 and had a guided tour of the building and the various memorials and fixtures. Many were the wonderful, well thought out questions and we hope that they learned much about the ancient building and its history.

There were two weddings in the church in 2025. Both couples have historical connections to the village. We wish them a long and happy married life.

I wish to thank the PCC for their support during 2025 and up to this date.

There have been many difficulties during the interregnum involving All Saints and the four churches of the Benefice. We offer prayer that a candidate is willing to join the Benefice and the life of All Saints and Ulcombe Village.

### **John Goode (Churchwarden)**

#### **Ulcombe Independent Productions**

Ulcombe Independent Productions is a small group of Ulcombe residents who organise various types of events for the village of Ulcombe.

Past events in the last 12 months included:-

A planned village walk was scheduled for July 2025, however, insufficient interest led for this to be shelved, however, it was decided to enter walk into the FASU Auction of Promises which raised some funds for All Saints Church.

Again, a summer event to raise funds for the village hall in August 2025 was also cancelled due to poor ticket sales and insufficient volunteers to run the event, however, residents who had bought tickets agreed that their ticket sale money totalling £125 would be donated to the village hall.

A forthcoming event for your diary:-

Halloween Event on the evening of Saturday, 31 October 2026. A social event to include live bands and a bar.

### **Simon Odam**

## Games Afternoon

The Games afternoon takes place between 2pm and 4pm on the first Thursday of each month at All Saints Church, Ulcombe.

We have between 9 and 12 regular attendees who play a variety of games. This is a good opportunity to socialise with others.

Rhian Banham, Nicky Bovington and Wendy Saunders provide refreshments during the afternoon session which is greatly appreciated by all attending.

We would like to welcome more residents to the session and advertise it in the village newsletter and Ulcombe's Support Group WhatsApp.

**Wendy Saunders, Rhian Banham, Nicky Bovington.**

---

## KALC Community Award 2026

At our Parish Council meeting on 4 June 2026, we were pleased to present the KALC Community Award to Frances Crawford for her generosity and dedication to Ulcombe's community. Her ongoing support has greatly contributed to the success and unity of our village's activities and events. Frances has been involved with many organisations throughout the years including the village hall, the school, the newsletter committee and was also the founder, along with her late husband Malcolm, of the successful Village WhatsApp Group.



Parish Council Chairman, Peter Titchener presenting the KALC Maidstone Award to Frances Crawford

**Ulcombe Parish Council  
Contact Details**

Peter Titchener (Chairman)  
Chairman@ulcombeparishcouncil.co.uk  
Telephone: 07771 892888

Chris Barlow	chris.barlow@ulcombeparishcouncil.co.uk
Tom Boland	tom.boland@ulcombeparishcouncil.co.uk
Sean Charlton	sean.charlton@ulcombeparishcouncil.co.uk
Alana Diamond	alana.diamond@ulcombeparishcouncil.co.uk
Trevor Sharp	trevor.sharp@ulcombeparishcouncil.co.uk

**Parish Clerk**

Helen Anderson  
C/o 16 Chaplin Drive  
Headcorn  
Kent  
TN27 9TN

Telephone: 07944 668802  
Email: clerk@ulcombeparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: [www.ulcombeparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.ulcombeparishcouncil.gov.uk)

and also on Facebook.