



Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

**MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2025
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE, LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND, LANGTON GREEN**

MEMBERS PRESENT Cllrs Norton (Chair), Littlefield, and Turner (Vice-Chair), with Mrs Dooley.

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS PRESENT: There were none. Apologies were received from County Cllr Moreland who was unwell.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were no members of the public present.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs K Neve, Clerk.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Cllr Norton be elected as Chair of the Highways Committee.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Cllr Turner be elected as Vice-Chair of the Highways Committee.

3. TO ENQUIRE IF ANYONE PRESENT INTENDS TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH AND/OR RECORD THE MEETING

The Clerk recorded the meeting for administrative purposes.

4. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Cleaver (holiday), Mr Myles, (prior commitment) and Mr Langridge (unwell).

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were none.

6. DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

Cllr Norton said that he had been contacted about deer on Groombridge Hill and drains in Bird in Hand Street.

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24TH FEBRUARY 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes, previously distributed to all Members, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

8. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

9. REVIEW OF ACTION POINTS

It was agreed that the Action Points would be discussed alongside agenda item 12, relating to the Highways Improvements Plan (HIP).

10. REVIEW OF HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE'S BUDGET

The Clerk said that there had been no recent expenditure and there was an existing ear marked reserve of £30,000. Cllr Norton said that the ear marked reserve may be required to support the HIP priorities should they come to fruition.

11. HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (HIP) (INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF ANY NEW ISSUES BY VILLAGE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT CORRESPONDENCE, RECENT ACCIDENTS, SPEEDWATCH, AND MEDIA)

Cllr Norton reported that he, together with Cllr Turner and the Clerk, had attended a productive meeting with Kent County Council (KCC) Highways regarding progress on the HIP items. Work was ongoing on the plans to be submitted to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) for the £25,000 rural grant fund, which had been allocated to each parish council to implement traffic calming measures in their villages. This funding would be provided by TWBC, and parish councils also had the option to supplement the grant from their own funds. The deadline for application was 31st October 2025.

It was encouraging to note the interest and support for village road safety from our local KCC Councillor, John Moreland, and MP Mike Martin, with whom a useful meeting had been held earlier this month.

a) Langton Green

HIP Item – Langton Green Primary School

- Progress was being made on plans for a pedestrian crossing on Speldhurst Road and land ownership had been established. KCC had confirmed this could not meet TWBC's rural grant deadlines, but the committee agreed it should remain Speldhurst Parish Council's (SPC) top HIP priority and be taken forward by other means

- A scheme to enhance 30mph roundel markings, new SLOW road markings and possible red surfacing on Speldhurst Road was being investigated by KCC as part of the rural grant bid.
- KCC had now installed and funded two pedestrian barriers for which the parish council and school had been pressing for around two years. KCC was also drawing up plans for the proposed new school keep clear markings on the Lampington Row bend at the school's pedestrian access and outside the school's main entrance.
- KCC were requested to investigate public highway extent for the primary school to install bollards in the footway at the school's main vehicular entrance.

Non-HIP Issues

Councillors noted the following correspondence received:

- Speed limit on A264 between Rusthall Road and Langton Green. Cllr Norton would respond to Rusthall Parish Council.
- Disabled Parking at the Village Hall Car Park.
- Official Title Plan of Langton Green Recreation Ground confirming Speldhurst Parish Council ownership of land which could potentially be transferred to Kent County Council in connection with the proposed pedestrian crossing.
- Feedback from residents of Courtenwell regarding the proposed pedestrian crossing.
- Parking at The Hare, Langton Green. The Clerk would follow up with Kent County Council Highways to seek their advice.
- Deer sightings in Langton Green.

b) Groombridge

HIP Item – B2110 Groombridge Village and Bird in Hand Street

- KCC engineers were assessing speed reduction measures for the centre of Old Groombridge (covering Groombridge Hill & Bird in Hand Street) including red surface markings at the 30 mph boundaries and other signage. The aim was to support a bid by SPC for TWBC's rural grant by its December deadline.
- KCC had now installed and funded the replacement No HGV signs at either end of Bird in Hand Street.

Non-HIP Issues

Councillors noted the following correspondence received:

- Deer collision reports in Groombridge. KCC had confirmed that deer signs would be funded by their HIPs budget and could be delivered with minimal investigation and design.
- Redundant SID post on Groombridge Hill. It was agreed no further action was required
- Blocked highway system drains in Bird in Hand Street. Cllr Norton was following this up with KCC.

c) Speldhurst

HIP Item – Etherington Hill / Speldhurst Hill

- There had been a number of crashes at this junction and KCC had been asked to investigate the remodelling of the grass verge; however, this would require kerbing to be altered and new carriageway construction to be installed in place of sections of verge to be removed and there was also the risk of utilities cables / pipes below the verge which would have to be lowered or diverted as well as the BT pole in the verge itself. All of which made the overall cost prohibitive.

- KCC engineers would look at designing a scheme to enhance the existing speed limit and warning signage on Etherington Hill, and this could be complemented with additional 30 roundel markings and red surfacing at the 30mph speed limit gateway. KCC would also request an Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) survey to outline current measured speeds on Etherington Hill. The aim would be to have the design ready for submission to the TWBC rural grant by December if resources allowed. SPC had stressed to KCC the importance of hitting that deadline.

Non-HIP Issues

- Accidents at the junction of Stockland Green Road and Etherington Hill.
- Suggested new road layout in Speldhurst.
- Speeding traffic on Barden Road.

d) Ashurst

The Clerk reported that progress was being made in establishing Ashurst SpeedWatch and expressed thanks to the former Assistant Clerk, Catherine Barrett, for her determination in driving this forward, as well as to the Langton Green SpeedWatch team for their support.

Non-HIP Issues

- Councillors noted that Sevenoaks District Council Environmental Services had inspected the suspected illegal waste transfer site and subsequently referred the matter to the Environment Agency.

12. FOOTPATHS/PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (PROW)

There had been no recent footpath reports. The new Parish Council Administrator, due to start in October, would assume responsibility for footpaths, and a new lead councillor was required. Mrs Dooley expressed an interest in being allocated a footpath, and the Clerk confirmed that the new Administrator would be asked to circulate a list of the current allocations.

13. PROPOSED CYCLE ROUTE

Cllrs Norton and Turner, together with the Clerk, attended a meeting with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to receive an update on the active travel design work covering the Langton–Rusthall–Commons–Town Centre route. The consultants had carried out further work and recently met with Kent County Council to discuss the designs. Cllr Norton noted that many elements of the proposal would support the parish council in achieving several elements within its HIP priorities, which was encouraging. A public engagement event on the proposals was planned, with the Langton Green Pavilion suggested as a possible venue. TWBC would provide some bullet points for us to share on social media. It was important to note that it was as much a safe route for pedestrians as it was for cyclists. The Active Travel was funded by central government.

14. ITEMS REQUIRING FULL COUNCIL APPROVAL

There were not items requiring Full Council approval.

15. ISSUES FOR COMMUNICATION TO THE PUBLIC

Cllr Norton had prepared a Highways update which would be shared on social media.

16. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem - Reminder
 - March 2025 Edition of “Your Speed” (Speedwatch news)
 - Road Safety & Active Travel Newsletters and Update
 - Joint Transportation Board Agenda 7th April 2025
 - Public Transport Forum Agenda 28th August 2025
 - Parish Bus Stop Shelter Grant 2025/26 – Councillors asked if this could be looked into for possible refurbishment of the bus shelter by All Saints’ Church and the Hare. The deadline for applications was 31st October 2025.
 - Potholes
 - Highway Information Pack 2025-26
 - Proposed meeting dates for 2026:
 - Monday 23rd February
 - Monday 29th June
 - Monday 26th October
- **Date of Next Meetings:**
 - Monday 8th December 2025

With nothing further to discuss the meeting ended at 8.41pm.

Chair

HIP ITEMS BY VILLAGE – LANGTON GREEN				
Improve safety around LGPS (LG7/9)				
Date	Action	Owned By	Outcome	Comments
011024	Establish formal ‘landing zones’ for crossing users - SPC to approach Courtenwell developers, who own the land.	Clerk/ Members		240225 - Clerk to circulate letter to residents about proposal to use land asking for their feedback. Members to give feedback by 010325. 220925 - Letter was delivered to Courtenwell residents 04/03/25 and results reported to Highways Committee. (Mixed Response.)

011024	Reduce average speeds sufficiently to meet crossing criteria. - KCC agreed action to strengthen signage & pay for this. - Local SpeedWatch to focus on this vicinity.	Clerk/Cllr Norton		240225 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk awaiting KCC's update on progress with signage following their internal meeting. - Clerk had drafted double yellow lines (DYL) consultation and circulated for feedback. - Asked KCC for plan to accompany consultation - Clerk to ask LG Speedwatch to complete further focus sessions. - Speedwatch asked on 04/3/25 and they arranged a session on 07/03/25 - Clerk to ask KCC if anything further can be done to reduce average speeds. - Email sent to Emma Richmond 04/03/25 220925 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KCC had provided plan to accompany consultation; however, the DYL would not be in place of the pedestrian crossing so not currently being progressed. - A scheme to enhance 30mph roundel markings, new SLOW road markings and possible red surfacing on Speldhurst Road had been suggested by KCC as part of the rural grant bid.
011024	Barriers & Zig Zag Lines. Should be 'quick wins. Agreed specifications by stakeholders? If so, what's preventing implementation?	Clerk /Cllr Norton		240225 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Norton and the Clerk met with the assistant headteacher at LGPS who subsequently wrote to KCC to try and expedite zigzag lines and barriers. - Clerk to confirm that KCC was working on 2 sets of barriers, not one, as referenced in a previous email. - Email sent to Emma Richmond 04/03/25 220925 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KCC had now installed and funded two pedestrian barriers and was also drawing up plans for the proposed new school keep clear markings on the Lampington Row bend at the school's pedestrian access and outside the school's main entrance. - KCC were requested to investigate public highway extent for the primary school to install bollards in the footway at the school's main vehicular entrance
NON-HIP ITEMS BY VILLAGE – LANGTON GREEN				
161224	Follow up on resident letter about road safety on Farnham Lane.	Clerk /Assistant Clerk	CLOSED	240225 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk wrote to Hatton Trust asking them to consider installing Slow Down for Pedestrians signs and lights on their land bordering the road.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Response from Hatton Trust: no plans to add lighting or signs but would let KCC/SPC erect signs on their land they own. Resident updated by Clerk but no response yet. - Mr Langridge to put up SPC's smaller signs in the area. - Mr Langridge also tried to call on resident but no response. - Noted that Clerk had costed a batch of 5 Hi-Viz tabards at £11.99 to potentially offer residents reporting road safety concerns.
HIP ITEMS BY VILLAGE – OLD GROOMBRIDGE				
Improve Safety in Centre of Old Groombridge (OG 1)				
Date	Action	Owned by	Outcome	Comments
011024	Reduce average speeds in village centre (Groombridge Hill & Bird in Hand Street)	Cllr Norton/ Cllr Turner/ Clerk		<p>240225</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Myles had reactivated Speedwatch. Awaiting progress in carrying out a session. - KCC confirmed no additional SID permitted in village centre; Clerk to query this and ask if redundant post could be re-sited further up the hill (see letter in folder). - Emailed KCC and they said no. <p>220925</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KCC noted that a number of speed reduction measures could be explored at Groombridge Hill which could include red surface patches at the speed limit gateway(s), additional 30mph roundel markings, slow road markings alongside any existing warning signs and some additional warning signs such as on Bird in Hand Street.
011024	Agree what further technical measures can be introduced to reduce speeds (eg red/textured road bandings or other virtual/real traffic calming, 20 mph zone etc)	Cllr Norton/Cllr Turner		<p>240225</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk still waiting for update following Planning Advice team meeting. Noted that traffic calming in place just down the road on East Sussex side of Groombridge. <p>220925</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See item above.
011024	Restrict HGV traffic on Bird in Hand (BIH) Street. 'Not suitable for HGVs' sign out of date & only at one end.	Clerk/Cllr Norton	Complete	<p>240225</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk was chasing for an update from KCC on the updated HGV signs. - HGV traffic continued to be better since Mike Martin's letter to the HGV company responsible for most of the traffic.

	Weight restriction needed too? Resolve differences of opinion with KCC on feasibility of latter.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blocked gullies causing dangerous surface water /ice finally cleared by KCC after pressure from residents supported by SPC. Cllr Norton to look into ways of preventing a reoccurrence. 220925 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KCC had now installed and funded the replacement No HGV signs at either end of Bird in Hand Street.
240225	Deer Warning Signs on Groombridge Hill	Clerk		240225 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk had asked KCC if they would install signs. KCC said they needed to know numbers of deer and frequency of sightings and ask for this to be submitted as part of SPC's formal HIP application. - Clerk to contact High Weald Org to ask if they have data that could be used. - Emailed HW on 04/03/25 – Information they have is limited to High Weald area rather than Kent 220925 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KCC had confirmed that deer signs would be funded by their HIPs budget and could be delivered with minimal investigation and design.
211024	Approach Withyham PC about an alternative bridge over River Grom	Cllr Norton		161224 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Norton and Mr Myles had a positive meeting with WPC on 171224. - Assistant Clerk had added bridge to HIP. - Clerk said a positive response was received from KCC's PROW Officer and further discussions to continue with The Pig and Withyham PC. 220925 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No current update.
HIP ITEMS BY VILLAGE – SPELDHURST				
Improve Safety Around Etherington Hill, Speldhurst (SP13)				
Date	Action	Owned by	Outcome	Comments
011024	Arrange for 2 ATCs to survey traffic speeds & volumes.	Clerk		240225 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk to follow up to see if the ATCs had happened yet. - Email sent to Emma Richmond 04/03/25 - Assistant Clerk to follow up with previous Speedwatch volunteers in Speldhurst to try and get Speedwatch going again. 220925 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KCC would also request an Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) survey to outline current measured speeds on Etherington Hill.

011024	Ask KCC engineers for other technical solutions.	Clerk/Cllr Norton		<p>240225</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk still awaiting update. <p>220925</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KCC had been asked to investigate the remodelling of the grass verge; however, this would require kerbing to be altered and new carriageway construction to be installed in place of sections of verge to be removed and there was also the risk of utilities cables / pipes below the verge which would have to be lowered or diverted as well as the BT pole in the verge itself. All of which made the overall cost prohibitive. - KCC said it would be possible to consider designing a scheme to enhance the existing speed limit and warning signage on Etherington Hill, and this could be complemented with additional 30 roundel markings and red surfacing at the 30mph speed limit gateway.
HIP ITEMS BY VILLAGE - ASHURST				
Improve safety on A264 from the junction with Langton Road into Ashurst (A3)				
161224	Establish Speedwatch in Ashurst.	Assistant Clerk		<p>240225</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assistant Clerk said 3 out of original 9 interested residents had indicated they would volunteer. Assistant Clerk to chase them about online training. Agreed to take off HIP if this attempt failed. <p>220925</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress was being made in establishing Ashurst SpeedWatch.
NON-HIP ITEMS BY VILLAGE – ASHURST				
161224	Follow up on increase in lorries using Broad Lane, off the A264 Ashurst Road.	Cllr Littlefield	CLOSED	<p>240225:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The environmental issue on tipper truck activity and burning of toxic smelling waste was passed to Sevenoaks District Council as it is their jurisdiction. - Clerk to share an update when available. - Asked Kate if any update on 06/03/25 <p>220925</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sevenoaks District Council Environmental Services had inspected the suspected illegal waste transfer site and subsequently referred the matter to the Environment Agency.

GENERAL NON-HIP ITEMS				
Date	Action	Owned By	Outcome	Comments
161224	Continue to coordinate parish PROWS.	Assistant Clerk		<p>240225:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assistant Clerk to email councillors reminding them of their allocated footpaths and asking them to keep walking them. - Assistant Clerk had allocated Mrs Dooley a footpath. <p>220925</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new Parish Council Administrator would work on this when she started in October.