

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 11 March 2026

Present: Cllr. S. Tolhurst – Chair
Cllr. P. Holowczycki
Cllr. D. McBeath
Cllr. Rivers-Simpson
4 Residents
Samantha Gray, Clerk

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. M. Baldock, P. Hyde S. Waters and D. Waters, and Borough Cllr. R. Palmer. Cllr. J Hartley was absent.

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations – None.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Proposed by Cllr. Rivers-Simpson and seconded by Cllr. McBeath, the minutes of the Monthly Parish Council meeting held on 11 February 2026 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

4. Visitors/Public Time

1. Residents:

- a) Three residents attended to discuss a planning application on the agenda. The Chair brought agenda item 5.3 forward for discussion:

- 5.3 26/500522/FULL:** Internal change of use of garage into gym for personal training and wellness/fitness use for 1 to 1 personal training and or couples by appointment only. 6 Elm Tree Avenue Iwade Kent ME9 8UD.

Members considered the planning application and **RESOLVED** to object for the following reasons:

- The available parking is not suitable.
- Concerned the size of the business venture is not for 1 to 1 appointments only.
- The design of the business is in a residential area – members suggest a condition to restrict business hours.
- Sound proofing needs to be installed to reduce noise for adjoining dwellings.

- b) Community Speed Watch (CSW) scheme was discussed, the Chair advised that it is in the Parish Councils Action Plan to reinstate the CSW.

2. **County and Borough Councillors:** None attended, report received from Cllr. Richard Palmer – see appendix A.

3. **Police Constable:** None attended, report received from PC Adam Blakeman – see appendix B.

5. **Planning** – applications are viewable on Swale: <http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications>; KCC: <https://cloud2.atriumsoft.com/KCCePlanningOPS/searchPageLoad.do>

1. **26/500335/OUT:** Outline application (with all matters reserved except access) for erection of up to 10 Dwellings with carports car parking, landscaping. Land At Sleepy Meadows Sheppey Way Bobbing Kent ME9 8QX.

Members considered the planning application and **RESOLVED** to object for the following reasons:

- The level of parking is not suitable – there are no visitor parking spaces.
- Members stand by their previous objections as follows:

Members have considered the new documents and note that from a parking point of view, it appears two parking spaces and one visitor space has been issued for each dwelling. The access entrance looks too narrow to accommodate any additional vehicles and other than the turning circle, cars would have to park in Featherbed Lane, causing possible parking access issues.

Members also stand by their previous objections made regarding the countryside gap between Iwade and Bobbing:

15/505488/OUT: Outline Application for residential development for 98 dwellings (access being sought): Land At Church Farm Sheppey Way Bobbing Kent ME9 8PL Planning Inspectorate Report States:

16. There is no dispute that the site is located in an area that is identified as an ‘important local countryside gap’ within the LP policy E7 and SLP policy DM25. The aim of the countryside gaps is to prevent settlement coalescence. LP policy E6 also seeks to protect the quality, character and amenity of the countryside. This is consistent with an aim of the Framework which is to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

“I therefore conclude that the development of the site for 98 dwellings would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would be in conflict with LP policies E6, E7, SH1(6) and SLP policies DM24, DM25, DM31 and ST3(6).”

Swale Borough Council Planning Reference: 14/500144/FULL decision comments:

8.04:

Para 14 – “...the gap between Bobbing and Iwade is narrow and...the pockets of urban and suburban development embedded within it make it especially fragile.”

Para 15 – “...I consider it important that, given its significance as maintaining open land in the Iwade-Bobbing Gap, the appeal site maintains its attractive rural appearance... I am firmly of the opinion that this can be best achieved by ensuring that the greater part of the land is kept open and maintained in a positive countryside use.”

The Planning Officer goes on to state “Given the above, I am firmly of the view that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the countryside and would harm the open and undeveloped nature of the important local countryside gap, contrary to Policies E1, E6, E7 and E19 of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008.”

2. **26/500243/FULL:** Area A Kemsley Fields Business Park Ridham Dock Road Sittingbourne Kent ME9 8SR. Construction and operation of a facility to produce green hydrogen using electrolysis, comprising erection of process and utilities buildings, office and welfare facilities, substation, cooling systems, compressors, hydrogen storage, tube trailer bays and filling station, parking, storage ponds, security fencing, CCTV, lighting, and landscape planting.

Members considered the planning application and **RESOLVED** to object for the following reasons:

Objection – Safety, Hazard Risk & Highway Impact

1. Fire and Explosion Risk from Hydrogen

Hydrogen is an extremely flammable gas with a wide explosive range.

The proposed development includes:

- Large-scale hydrogen production
- On-site hydrogen storage (up to 15 tonnes)
- Compression systems
- Tube-trailer loading bays

Given the nature of hydrogen, there is a **credible risk of fire or explosion** in the event of equipment failure, accidental ignition, or human error.

This represents a significant hazard, particularly in an area already containing industrial uses and critical transport infrastructure.

2. Risk of High-Volume Hydrogen Leak

The application involves high-pressure hydrogen systems and multiple transfer points.

A high-volume leak could:

- Create an explosive atmosphere
- Travel significant distances before dispersing
- Pose risks to workers, emergency responders, and the wider area

The Planning Statement acknowledges hydrogen storage, compression and venting systems, but **does not provide sufficient detail** on worst-case scenarios, leak modelling, or emergency response capability.

3. Risks from Transport, Loading and Unloading

The proposal anticipates up to **20 tube-trailer movements per week**, each involving:

- High-pressure hydrogen cylinders
- On-site filling operations
- Vehicle manoeuvring in a confined industrial area

Transporting hydrogen by road introduces additional risks, including collision, rollover, or accidental release during loading/unloading.

These risks extend beyond the site boundary and onto the public highway network.

4. Potential Closure of the A249 and Severe Impact on Iwade

Due to the above safety concerns, any incident involving hydrogen—whether a leak, fire, or explosion could require:

- Closure of the A249 for public safety
- Diversion of traffic through Iwade including HGV's travelling from the Isle of Sheppey – Iwade has a 7.5 ton weight limit.

Iwade **does not have the road infrastructure** to accommodate diverted A249 traffic.

This would cause:

- Severe congestion
- Safety risks to residents
- Delays to emergency services
- Significant disruption to daily life

The application does not adequately assess or mitigate the consequences of an incident requiring strategic road closures.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, the proposal presents **unacceptable safety risks** and **insufficiently assessed impacts on the local and strategic highway network**. Until these matters are fully addressed through detailed hazard analysis, emergency planning, and highway impact assessment, the application should not be approved.

6. Village Matters

- 1. To consider replacing the planters in School Lane** – Members deferred this item to the next agenda to also discuss the area surrounding the planters. ***Action: Clerk***

2. **To consider installing a duck house in Woodpecker Park pond** – Members agreed to wait until the maintenance work has been completed before making a decision – add to the next agenda.

Action: Clerk

3. **Grovehurst Road junction with A249 – verges, barriers, and small roundabout** – Members deferred to the next agenda when Cllr. Hyde will be in attendance.

Action: Clerk

7. Correspondence

1. **Street Naming and Numbering request – Swale Borough Council** – Members discussed the street names Swale Council have suggested for the Bellway “Willowbrook” site. They agreed to submit the following comments to Swale:

- Ferry Street – too similar to Ferry Road, concerned postal errors will be made.
- Sheepwash Lane – not a desirable name, suggest changing to Shepherd Lane.
- Urn Close – not a desirable name, members will consider a new suggestion.
- Ridham Drive – too similar to Ridham Road, concerned postal errors will be made.

Council members will submit suggestions to Swale Borough by 30 March 2026.

Action: Clerk/all councillors

8. Parish Council Matters

1. **Village survey results – Outline action plan** – Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Rivers-Simpson, members **RESOLVED** to agree the action plan submitted by Cllr. Tolhurst.

2. **Review committee members (H.I.P, Finance, Planning, Recreation, Art and Culture)** – Members **RESOLVED** to appoint the following committee members:

- **Highway Improvement Plan Committee (H.I.P)** – Cllrs Rivers-Simpson, Tolhurst and McBeath.
- **Finance Committee** – Cllr. McBeath.

9. Finance

1. **SLCC membership renewal** – Proposed by Cllr. Rivers-Simpson and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, members **RESOLVED** to accept the membership fee of 200.00p.

Action: Clerk

2. **Councillor training – Nuts and Bolts of parish councils** – Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, members **RESOLVED** to accept the cost of £50.00p + VAT for the training course.

Cllr. Rivers-Simpson would also like to attend the training course.

Action: Clerk/RFO

3. **McCabe Ford Williams payroll fees from April 2026** – Payroll fees will rise by 3% from April 2026. Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, members **RESOLVED** to accept the increased fees and continue with the payroll company for 2026/27.

4. **Festive Lights contract** – The council are looking into hiring festive lights and selling the councils owned lights to Gala Lights to manage costs going forward due to repair costs expected because of the age of the lights.

Agreed action – Meet with Gala Lights to discuss the proposed contract and carry out a residents survey.

Action: Clerk/Cllr. Tolhurst

5. **Lamp column call out fee and temporary repair, column no.2 and no.6, Sheerstone** – Proposed by Cllr. Rivers-Simpson and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, members **RESOLVED** to accept the repair cost of £134.00p + VAT.

6. **Lamp column repair quotation, column no.2 and no.6 Sheerstone** - Proposed by Cllr. Rivers-Simpson and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, members **RESOLVED** to accept the repair cost of £210 + VAT.

7. **Accounts and Cheques raised at this meeting** – Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, members noted the budget figures and the accounts to 28 February 2026. The following payments were agreed, Cllrs. Tolhurst and Holowczycki to log in and authorise payments.

Action: Cllrs. Tolhurst/Holowczycki

EXPENDITURE				
Pay Date	Pay Method	Payable to	Reason	Amount
11.03.26	BACs	L. Ives	Expenses – Tele., home as office – February	£18.00p
11.03.26	BACs	S. Gray	Expenses – Tele., home as office – February	£44.00p
11.03.26	BACs	H.M.R.C.	Tax February	£290.23p
11.03.26	BACs	Steve Wakeling	Handyman Fee 03.02.26 to 24.02.26	£198.00p
11.03.26	BACs	S.L.C.C.	Membership Fee 2026/27 – Clerk	£200.00p
11.03.26	BACs	Swale Borough Council	Printing Observer – April to July 2025	£705.60p
11.03.26	BACs	K.A.L.C.	‘The Nuts & Bolts of Parish Councils’ – Cllr. McBeath	£60.00p
11.03.26	BACs	Everyday Play Ltd	Deposit re School Lane Fencing – Grant RWE Renewables	£1994.10p
11.03.26	BACs	Streetlights	Repairs to Col 2 and 6 Sheerstone (less Credit Note £261)	£153.00p
01.03.26	SO	Staff Salaries	February	£1599.86p
01.03.26	DD	NEST	Pension Contributions February	£78.52p
01.03.26	DD	HugoFox	Website monthly fee	£35.99p
06.03.26	DD	I.C.O.	Renewal of I.C.O. Subscription 2026/27	£47.00p
27.03.26	DD	Npower	Electricity Supply February	£177.85p
31.03.26	DD	Countrystyle	Supply of Waste Wheelie Bin	£43.08p
INCOME				
Pay Date	Pay Method	Received from	Reason	Amount
19.02.26	BACs	RWE Renewables UK	Grant for Community Projects – Trees, Fencing, CCTV, Festive Lights	£45000.00p

10. **Projects – Updates on Current and New**

1. **To organise a litter pick event:** Members agreed to contact All Saints Church to discuss working together on the event. **Action: Cllr. Tolhurst**

2. **Future public events** – The Iwade Barn are organising the following events during the year:

- April to May – Micropub open on the last Saturday of each month
- 4th July Independence Day
- August Bank Holiday Rum & Reggae
- Halloween
- Christmas

3. **Tracker** – Cllr. Tolhurst circulated the updated document to all council members.

11. **Reports from Representatives**

1. **Village Hall Committee** – Members asked the Clerk to pass on contact information for committee representative Cllr. Hartley and confirm the Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 12 May 2026.

Action: Clerk

2. **KALC Area Representative** – Nothing to report.

3. **Western Area Committee** – The meeting scheduled for Thursday 12 February 2026 was not quorate.

12. **Items for the Next Agenda** – No further items to add.

13. **Next Meeting(s)** – Full Council meeting, Wednesday 11 March 2026 7.30 p.m. in Iwade Barn, All Saints Close.

The meeting closed at 9.29 p.m.

14. **Closed Session**

1. **Annual staff salary increases** - Proposed by Cllr. Holowczycki and seconded by Cllr. Rivers-Simpson, members agreed to appoint the RFO's salary to Scale Point (SCP) 28 for 20 hours to be worked per month, with effect from 1 April 2026. Agreed to appoint the Clerk's salary to SCP 25 for 18 hours to be worked per week, with effect from 1 April 2026. **Action: RFO/Clerk**

Appendix A

KCC REPORT March 2026

Parish Newsletter Insert

Kent County Council is expanding Family Hub services across the county, with many services to be delivered through local libraries, making support easier for families to access within their own communities.

Family Hubs provide a single place where families can receive advice, guidance, and early support for children and young people from pregnancy through to age 19, or up to 25 for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Services available through Family Hubs include parenting advice, early years support, youth services, wellbeing guidance, and help accessing local services — all aimed at supporting families early and preventing problems from escalating.

Sittingbourne Library, currently undergoing refurbishment, is expected to reopen in April, offering improved facilities alongside enhanced Family Hub services for residents.

Family Hubs form part of Kent County Council's commitment to keeping services local and accessible by using trusted community spaces such as libraries.

Footnote: Previous administration proposals identified 35 libraries for potential closure. These were not taken forward by the current administration, and libraries are now being strengthened through expanded community services such as Family Hubs.

Potholes remain a problem and the Parish Council can share the Pothole reporting tool.

Report or track a problem on the road or pavement

If the problem may cause an accident, call us on 03000 41 81 81 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday or on 03000 41 91 91 at all other times.

Report a pothole

https://kentcc-self.achieveservice.com/en/service/Report_a_pothole?consentMessage=yes&noLoginPrompt=2

Report a problem with a streetlight, bollard or lit sign

https://kentcc-self.achieveservice.com/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-8a242d77-e3f5-42d9-a305-df46099d31be/AF-Stage-6852e951-6910-4363-b26e-d8a5ff610678/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen&consentMessage=yes&noLoginPrompt=2

Other Reports or to Track a Fault

<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.KHSFaultsGIS.Web.Sites.Public/ReportAFault.aspx>

The web addresses are a bit long but if you could highlight them to residents to use to report issues.

Local Government Reform (LGR)

LGR consultation Link – <https://kentcouncilleaders.org.uk/lgr-consultation/>

Request a deep clean from swale Council

If you have streets that the PC or resident's think need a Deep Clean please complete the online form. This could be asked for in relation to the pigeons mess under the A249 at the roundabout.

https://forms.swale.gov.uk/service/request_street_cleaning

Use this service if your street is littered and your road is highly trafficked.

Before you get started

To request a deep clean, you'll need to email our environmental projects officer at environmentalprojects@swale.gov.uk. You'll need to include:

- the name of the road
- to tell us if the road is in a permit area, if you know
-

For alternative ways to request a deep clean, including by phone, you can visit our contact us page.

What happens next

Once you've requested a deep clean, we'll:

- arrange a litter pick of your street
- keep you updated
- inspect your street and may add it to our next deep clean schedule

Payback periods (years) by proposal

KCC: 1 unitary (Kent + Medway)

1A 3.3

F&H + Maidstone + Sevenoaks
+ T&M + Tunbridge Wells:
3 unitaries (North/West/East)

Option 3A 5.4–6.7

Dover + Swale + Thanet:
4 unitaries (North/West/Mid/
East – no district splits)

Option 4B 7.8–14.3

Medway + Ashford + Canterbury:
4 unitaries with district splits
(North Kent / West Kent /
East Kent / Mid Kent)

Option 4D 7.9–14.5

Dartford + Gravesham:
5 unitaries with district splits
(North/West/East/Mid/South)

Option 5A 14.0 – no pyaback

Ranges reflect different assumptions on disaggregation costs.

Appendix B

Drop-in surgery at

- 10am Saturday 21st March 2026- The Mews Brewhouse, Iwade
- More surgeries to be announced.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ATTEND ANY OF MY SURGERIES REGARDLESS OF WHERE YOU LIVE

Your local beat police officer is
PC 13812 Adam Blakeman

My name is **PC Adam Blakeman**, and I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Beat Officer for Iwade. I am also new to the CSU team, but I bring many years of experience as a Police Constable across a variety of roles. I look forward to meeting the community and working together to keep Iwade safe.

Lets start with what has been happening in the last month

- Officers have conducted high-visibility patrols and have been working closely with the council following multiple reports of fly-tipping in Iwade. Throughout this month, we have also collaborated with the Environment Agency to identify addresses for potential enforcement action and to prevent further incidents
- We have received reports regarding nuisance vehicles in the Ringlet Grove area. Please continue to report any issues through **My Community Voice**, and share **any details you may have about the drivers or bike owners**.
- Counterfeit £20 notes have been circulating in the community. We encourage everyone, especially local businesses to **check notes carefully** when receiving cash.

Now let's look at the top 3 priorities as identified through the MCV survey and what is being done about it:

Bobbing, Iwade, and Lower Halstow top 3 priorities:

1. Fly tipping
2. Catapults
3. E- scooters/nuisance bikes

What am I doing to reduce these problems?

Fly tipping:

- Increase patrol visibility in hotspots.
- Work with council for signage and CCTV.
- Community engagement: encourage reporting via online portals.

Catapults

- Increase patrol visibility in hotspots
- Education by our dedicated schools team
- Seizure of catapults where possible

E- scooters/nuisance bikes

- Increased patrol visibility in hotspots and dedicated operations to combat the issue.
- Education by our dedicate schools team to young riders
- Seizure of E-scooters and bikes where possible

A new survey for the Top Three Priorities will be released on 1st April. Please take a moment to complete it, as your views help ensure our priorities reflect what matters most to you and your community. Sign up here for the survey to be sent to you. [Home Page - My Community Voice Kent](#)
