

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

I hereby give you notice that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held in Shepherdswell Village Hall on Wednesday, 17 June 2026 at 1930hrs.

All members of the Council are hereby summoned to attend for the purpose of considering and resolving the business to be transacted at the Meeting as set out hereunder.

Please note that these meetings may be sound recorded.

Dated 11 June 2026
Jan Hancock, Parish Clerk

AGENDA

To receive reports from the County and District Councillors, Community Warden, Community Beat Officer & Shepherdswell Green Spaces Group. Public questions or comments on agenda and non-agenda items (public participation will be limited to 15 minutes, or otherwise at the discretion of the Chair)

064/2026 Apologies for Absence

065/2026 To **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2026

066/2026 Declarations of Interest

A Councillor who declares a DPI in relation to any item on the agenda will need to leave the meeting for the whole of that item and not be able to speak or take part, unless a relevant dispensation has been granted. A Councillor who declares an OSI will be able to speak on the item, but will be required to leave the meeting for the vote

067/2026 Scheme of Delegation – To **CONSIDER** and **APPROVE** the Council's Scheme of Delegation, setting out delegated authority to committees and the Proper Officer.

068/2026 Section 101 Emergency Committee – To **CONSIDER** and **APPROVE** the Terms of Reference.

069/2026 Parish Clerk's Report

070/2026 Finance

70.01 To **DISCUSS** and **APPROVE** the schedule of payments – please see attached report

70.02 To **CONSIDER** External Audit report from Mazars and **ADDRESS** any issues

70.03 Annual Governance and Accountability Returns (AGAR)

i. To **CONSIDER** the report from the Internal Auditor and address any issues raised

ii. To **APPROVE** the statement of internal control

iii. To **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

iv. To **APPROVE** the Accounting Statements 2025/26

v. To **APPROVE** the appointment of Internal Auditor for the forthcoming municipal year

071/2026 Planning – to **RECEIVE** a report from the Chair of the Planning Committee

072/2026 Working Group Reports - to **RECEIVE** updates from:

72.01 Carbon Footprint Working Group

72.02 Highway Improvement Plan Working Group

72.03 Communication Working Group

073/2026 Community

73.01 Shepherdswell Green Spaces Group – To **NOTE** the minutes of their meetings held on 18 May 2026

73.02 St Andrew’s Gardens Development – To **APPROVE** correspondence written to KCC Highways and DDC Planning.

73.03 Parish Council Assets - To **CONSIDER** and **DETERMINE** the allocation of responsibility for the inspection of Parish Council assets (including health & safety, risk assessment and repairs).

73.04 Donation Request – To **CONSIDER** and **APPROVE** a request from Shepherdswell Green Spaces Group for a donation to the Scouts in recognition of the use of water from the Scout Hut for watering the newly seeded goal mouths at the Recreation Ground.

73.05 Memorial Bench Request – To **CONSIDER** and **APPROVE** a request for a memorial bench on Shepherdswell Village Green

73.06 Village Planters – To **REVIEW** the findings of the recent planter survey and **DETERMINE** the next steps.

074/2026 Date of the next meeting

This will be on Wednesday 15 July on Coldred Village Green at 1930hrs

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 20 May 2026 at 1930hrs

Shepherdswell Village Hall

MINUTES

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Councillors and residents to the Annual Meeting of the Parish council. Cllr Mamjam (Dover District Councillor) was then invited to address the meeting. Cllr Mamjam apologised for being unable to attend meetings recently and updated the meeting on issues she has been supporting residents with, in particular planning enforcement. Cllr Bulaitis raised the issue of the local bus service and lack of it to our villages. Cllr Mamjam agreed to assist in any way she could.

Nigel Baker, Chair of Shepherdswell Green Spaces Group (SGSG) addressed the meeting to provide a update. The AGM was recently held and James Perfect was appointed as the new vice chair. An on site meeting at the recreation ground was held with Councillors regarding the play area project and SGSG are grateful for the commitment the Parish Council are giving to the project. A result of this meeting is the suggestion that the large trees by the play area are pollarded to avoid debris when the new play equipment is installed. The group continue to water the newly seeded goalmouths and suggest a donation to the Scouts for their continued support in supplying water.

47/2026 ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr Hunt proposed that Cllr Mark Watson continued as Chair for the next municipal year, seconded by Cllr Stauffer-Kruse. All AGREED. Cllr Watson then signed a Declaration Of Acceptance Of Office

48/2026 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr Hunt proposed that Cllr Elgar become Vice-Chair for the next municipal year, seconded by Cllr Roberts. AGREED with 1 abstention

The Chair thanked the former Vice-Chair, Cllr Stauffer-Kruse, for his service.

49/2026 IN ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Present: Cllrs Watson (Chair), Marien Elgar (Vice Chair), Bradley Stauffer-Kruse, Keith Roberts, Sue Taber, John Bulaitis, Carole White, Cindy Denyer, Aidan Softley and Barry Crush

11 Members of the public

Clerk: Jan Hancock

Apologies: PC Jon Bowler (Kent Police Neighbourhood Beat Officer) & Juliette West (Kent Community Warden)

50/2026 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 15 APRIL 2026 & 28 APRIL 2026

Cllr Roberts proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2026 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr Elgar. AGREED, with 2 abstentions.

Cllr Hunt proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2026 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr Elgar. AGREED, with 4 abstentions.

51/2026 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE recorded.

52/2026 CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR

Three applications were received for the vacancy of Parish Councillor and have been considered by all members. Two of the applicants were present at the meeting and invited to address members.

Following a vote, **Mr Matthew Thornton** was duly co-opted to Shepherdsweil with Coldred Parish Council and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

53/2026 RE-APPROVAL OF MEMBER'S DISPENSATIONS

Members considered dispensations from Cllrs White, Elgar, Hunt & Roberts. **Cllr Hunt proposed that the dispensations be approved, seconded by Cllr Stauffer-Kruse. AGREED with 1 against and 3 abstentions**

54/2026 KENT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

Cllr Elgar proposed that the Council reaffirm the code of conduct, seconded by Cllr Roberts. All AGREED

55/2026 STANDING ORDERS

Cllr Roberts proposed that members re-adopt the Council's Standing Orders, seconded by Cllr Hunt. All AGREED

Cllr Bulaitis raised a query regarding whether S101 Committee rules should be added to the Standing Orders, this will be reviewed at the next meeting.

56/2026 COUNCILLORS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR 2026/27

Please note that the Chair and Vice Chair are ex-officio members of all Committees

- a) Finance Committee – Cllrs Hunt, Roberts, Stauffer-Kruse & Denyer
Proposed by Cllr Watson, seconded by Cllr White. All AGREED
- b) Planning Committee – Cllrs Stauffer-Kruse, Hunt, Softley, Denyer, Thornton & Roberts
Proposed by Cllr White, seconded by Cllr Elgar. All AGREED
- c) Personnel Committee – Cllrs White, Bulaitis, Denyer, Taber, Thornton & Hunt
Proposed by Cllr Stauffer-Kruse, seconded by Cllr Softley. All AGREED
- d) Representatives

KALC (Dover Area)

Cllrs Watson & Taber

CLT

Cllr Bulaitis

Village Hall

Cllr Taber

Health & Safety Co-ordinator

Cllr Softley

Footpaths & Trees

Cllrs Roberts, Elgar & Denyer

Inspection of Council Properties

To be carried out by the H&S Co- Ordinator

Highways Improvement Plan

Cllrs Roberts & Thornton

Communications Working Group

Cllr White & Taber

Carbon Footprint Working Group

Cllrs Stauffer-Kruse & Roberts

Cemetery Working Group

Cllrs Crush & White

S101

Chair, Vice Chair, Chairs of Planning, Finance & Personnel Committees

e) Planning Applications

Coxhill, Westcourt Lane, Westcourt Downs, The Terrace, The Grange, Carpenters Yard & Coxhill Road -
Cllrs Denyer & Crush

Coldred Rd, Shepherdswell Green, Church Hill, Moorland Road - Cllrs Taber & Softley

Mill Lane, Millfields, Moon Hill, Siberts Close, St Andrews Gardens - Cllrs Roberts & Denyer

Approach Road, Hill Avenue, Hazling Dane, Bernard Gardens & Meadow View - Cllrs Bulaitis & Watson

The Glen, Penfold Gardens, Station Road, Eythorne Road, Long Lane - Cllrs Hunt & White

Coldred, Upton Wood, Waldershare Park & Waldershare House - Cllrs Thornton & Elgar

Lydden Race Circuit and other consultations not included above - Cllrs Softley & Crush

The above representatives were proposed by Cllr Roberts, seconded by Cllr Hunt with all AGREED

57/2026 To CONSIDER and DETERMINE the allocation of responsibility for the inspection of Parish Council assets (including health & safety, risk assessment and repairs).

It was resolved to add this item to the agenda for the next meeting.

58/2026 MEETING DATES FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

Cllr Elgar proposed that the meeting dates for the forthcoming year were APPROVED, seconded by Cllr Roberts. All AGREED

59/2026 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk, along with two Councillors, attended a meeting with Whitfield and Tilmanstone Parish council regarding Whitfield Development Plan.

The new grounds maintenance contractors will begin their new contract on 01 June 2026.

The Community Governance Review team have sent us their recommendations, which are that we should maintain the number of Councillors our wards have.

60/2026 FINANCE

60.01 To **RECEIVE** a report from the Chair of the Finance Committee - a report has been circulated and is available on the website.

60.02 SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Balances as 13 May 2026	£
Current A/C	9832.99
Business A/C	187428.78
INCOME	
Reed Meadow Allotment Association	624.00
EXPENDITURE TO RATIFY	
Hugo Fox – Website	23.99
Staff Wages	1177.43
Service Charge	7.00
NEST – Staff Pensions	67.41
Krystal Hosting – Emails	13.20

Terry Hunt (Fete Insurance)	211.68
Delta Electrical (VH Car park lights)	390.00
Village Magazine	650.00
David Cox (Fete Raffle Tickets)	86.15
Victoria Johnson (Fete Licences)	21.00
EXPENDITURE TO APPROVE	
Small Works Contractor (inv 342)	450.00
Staff Expenses	65.38
Harmers (inv 26859)	744.00
Village Hall Fees – April	94.00
HMRC	189.69
Harmers (inv 26877) pathway & clearance of extension	1434.00
Openstrike (inv 4535) Website Domain	160.00
KALC (inv 14825198163) Training for Cllr Bulaitis	60.00
	3197.07

Members discussed the recent repair work of the pathway at the recreation ground which was felt to be inadequate, covering only half the area and lacking proper battening so not completed to the standard expected. Payment for this work will be withheld until the contractor has completed the works to the required standard.

Cllr Hunt proposed that the schedule of payments be APPROVED, with the exception of the cost of the path, seconded by Cllr Roberts. All AGREED

60.03 Insurance Renewal Quotes – **Cllr Hunt proposed that the insurance renewal costs were APPROVED, seconded by Cllr Denyer. All AGREED**

60.04 Transfer of Agency for the Council's Insurance – **Cllr Hunt proposed that members authorise the Clerk to sign the Transfer of Agency letter on behalf of the Council, seconded by Cllr Denyer. All AGREED**

60.05 Following additional member discussions and site visit, members **CONFIRMED** the Parish Council's continued support for the refurbishment project at Shepherds Well Recreation Ground, including its commitment in principle to allocating £50,000 match funding over three financial years.

61/2026 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Elgar (Planning Committee Chair) updated the meeting on the recent Planning Committee meeting. Minutes available on the Parish Council website.

62/2026 WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Carbon Footprint Working Group – Cllr Roberts reported that the area for the recycling bins is still on schedule. Cllr Stauffer-Kruse reported that correspondence has been received from Kent County Council regarding the installation of electric vehicle charging points, there are still delays. They are very apologetic and will hopefully be able to provide us with an update soon.

Highway Improvement Plan Working Group – Cllr Roberts reported that the questionnaire has been circulated and the Working Group will share the outcome at the next meeting.

Communications Working Group – No Report.

63/2026 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 1930hrs on Wednesday 17 June 2026 at Shepherds Well Village Hall.

Shepherdswell *with* Coldred Parish Council

Scheme of Delegation

1. Purpose of the Scheme

This Scheme of Delegation sets out the authority delegated by Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council ("the Council") to its committees, the Parish Clerk (as Proper Officer), and the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Its purpose is to ensure efficient day-to-day management, lawful decision-making and clear accountability.

The Scheme is reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council or sooner if required.

2. Legal Basis

The Local Government Act 1972, s.101, allows a parish council to delegate its functions to:

- a committee
- a sub-committee
- an officer
- another local authority

The Council may not delegate decisions relating to:

- setting the precept
 - approving the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)
 - borrowing
 - adopting or revising Standing Orders or Financial Regulations
 - adopting or amending policies
 - co-option of councillors
 - matters specifically reserved to Full Council
-

3. Matters Reserved to Full Council

Full Council retains responsibility for:

- the annual budget and precept
 - approval of the AGAR
 - adoption of policies and governance documents
 - major contracts and tenders
 - acquisition or disposal of land or assets
 - appointment of the Clerk and RFO
 - committee structure and membership
 - responses to consultations of strategic significance
 - decisions that are politically sensitive, high-risk or cannot lawfully be delegated
-

4. Delegation to Committees

4.1 Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is delegated authority to:

- monitor income and expenditure
- review the budget and recommend the annual precept
- review internal controls and risk management
- oversee contracts and leases
- approve payments within budget
- review and recommend financial policies

The Committee may not set the precept or approve the AGAR.

4.2 Planning Committee

The Planning Committee is delegated authority to:

- consider and submit responses to planning applications
- comment on consultations relating to planning policy
- monitor enforcement issues and report concerns to the LPA

The Committee may not make decisions outside planning matters.

4.3 Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is delegated authority to:

- oversee staffing matters
- conduct appraisals
- manage recruitment processes
- make recommendations on pay, hours and staffing structure

Formal employment decisions must be approved by Full Council.

5. Delegation to the Parish Clerk (Proper Officer)

The Clerk is the Council's Proper Officer and is authorised to:

5.1 Governance and Administration

- implement decisions of the Council and its committees
- manage correspondence and statutory notices
- sign and serve meeting summonses
- manage the Council's website and publication scheme
- act as Data Protection Officer
- certify copies of Council documents

5.2 Operational Management

The Clerk is authorised to take routine operational decisions including:

- day-to-day management of council services, assets and facilities
- supervision of contractors, volunteers and suppliers
- responding to residents and external organisations
- arranging repairs, maintenance and inspections
- managing bookings, licences and cemetery administration

5.3 Financial Management (as RFO)

- authorise routine expenditure within the approved budget
- manage payroll, invoices and financial records
- submit VAT returns
- manage bank accounts and reconciliations
- ensure compliance with Financial Regulations

5.4 Planning Administration

- receive planning notifications
- request extensions where necessary
- publish agendas and documentation for the Planning Committee

6. Emergency Delegation

In consultation with the Chair (or Vice-Chair if unavailable), the Clerk is authorised to take decisions that:

- are urgent
- cannot reasonably wait for a Council or committee meeting
- are necessary to protect the Council's interests or fulfil statutory duties

All such decisions must be reported to the next available meeting.

7. Delegation to the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

The RFO is authorised to:

- maintain the Council's accounts
- prepare financial reports
- manage the budget and financial controls
- ensure compliance with audit requirements
- advise the Council on financial risk and governance

The RFO role may be held by the Clerk or a separate officer.

8. Limitations

Delegated authority must always be exercised:

- within the law
- within the Council's policies
- within the approved budget
- in accordance with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Council may withdraw or amend delegation at any time.

9. Review

This Scheme of Delegation will be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council or sooner if required.

Adopted on: _____

Signed: _____

S101 Emergency Committee Terms of Reference

S101 Delegation of Powers

1. The Committee is constituted under the 1972 Local Government Act to ensure that in the event of an emergency the Council can function and fulfil its legally obligated responsibilities.

An emergency is defined as an urgent, sudden and serious event or unforeseen change in circumstances that necessitates immediate action to remedy harm or avert immediate danger to life, health or property that may affect the safety of any person or cause harm or damage to any council owned property.

2. The S101 committee will be constituted as follows by office:

- a) Chair
- b) Vice Chair
- c) Chair of Finance Committee
- d) Chair of Planning Committee
- e) Chair of Personnel Committee

The Parish Clerk will be in attendance.

3. The committee will be convened by the Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair acting with the Parish Clerk. In the absence of the Chair or Vice Chair, a Chair of a sub-committee (as named above) may convene the committee in conjunction with the Parish Clerk.

4. This committee will only meet as necessary with the Chair or in his/her absence the Vice Chair acting with Parish Clerk. In the absence of either the Chair or the Vice Chair then a Chair of a committee as named above will act in conjunction with the Parish Clerk.

5. The item or items to be discussed will be only those for which it has been necessary to convene the meeting.

6. Any decisions are made as if they are made by the full council. A quorum will be defined as three members.

7. Councillors not on the Section 101 committee will be notified by email immediately a meeting is called, the subject/s to be discussed and the reason for the meeting. They will be entitled to attend such a meeting but will not be able to vote on any matter.

8. The Committee will be authorised to agree emergency expenditure up to a total of £5000 to put into effect any emergency repairs or any other work to mitigate losses or risk.

9. Members of the Council will be notified by the Parish Clerk of the conclusions of the meeting within 24 hours by email or any other method if emails are not available.

Shepherdswell *with* Coldred Parish Council

Finance Report

17 June 2026

Balances as 10 June 2026	£
Current A/C	3569.39
Business A/C	187428.78
INCOME	
Property rent (3 months)	900.00
EXPENDITURE TO RATIFY	
Hugo Fox – Website	23.99
Staff Wages	1177.43
Service Charge	7.00
NEST – Staff Pensions (2 months)	134.82
Krystal Hosting – Emails	13.20
Coversure (Insurance)	1425.23
AJG Community (Insurance)	2132.86
ICO (already paid £40, should have been £52)	12.00
EXPENDITURE TO APPROVE	
Small Works Contractor (inv)	450.00
Staff Expenses	61.60
Harmers (inv 27030)	672.00
Village Hall Fees – May	142.00
HMRC (2 months)	379.38
SLCC (Clerk training)	10.00
Satswana	180.00
Hello Print (HIP Flyers)	58.47
	1953.45

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

In undertaking the review of the 2024/25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return it came to our attention that in 2025 the Council has not met the requirements of the 2015 Accounts and Audit Regulations to provide electors with a period of 30 working days including the first 10 working days of July, to inspect the accounts. The Council should ensure that in 2023/24 they comply with the Regulations and respond no to the relevant assertion in its Annual Governance Statement as the assertion is retrospective and refers to compliance during the relevant financial year rather than in respect of it.

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

*We do not certify completion because:

Not applicable

External Auditor Name

Forvis Mazars LLP, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 1DF

External Auditor Signature

Forvis Mazars LLP

Date

23 September 2025

Shepherdswell *with* Coldred Parish Council

Dear Sirs

Re: Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council – AGAR 2025/26

The Parish Council has noted the external auditor's comment in the 2024/25 report regarding the public rights period being one day short of the required 30 working days. The Council has reviewed the matter and is satisfied that no further action is necessary, as the variance was minimal and did not affect the ability of electors to inspect the accounts. The Council has ensured that the 2025/26 public rights period fully complies with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Kind regards

Jan Rousell

Parish Clerk & RFO

Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

Shepherdsweil with Coldred Parish Council

www.shepherdsweilcoldred-pc.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2025/26 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			NONE
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority ~~correctly~~ provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.	✓		
P. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

09/06/2026

LIONEL ROBBINS

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

09/06/2026

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

SHEPHERDSWELL with COLDRED PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2025-26

I am pleased to report to Members of the Parish Council that I have completed my internal audit of the Parish Council's records for 2025-26 and have been able to complete the Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR) for the 2025-26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Members should be aware that the audit tests that I undertook during the audit cannot be relied on to identify the occasional omission or insignificant error, nor to disclose breaches of trust or statute, neglect or fraud which may have taken place and which it is the responsibility of the Members of the Council to guard against through the Parish Council's internal control procedures.

As a result of my audit and my discussion with your Clerk I was able to answer 'YES' to all the relevant questions contained in the AIAR for 2025-26.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank your Clerk for the assistance given to me in the conduct of the audit that took place on 9 June 2026.

PREVIOUS AUDITS:

External Audit Certificate 2024-25:

Mazars' certificate for 2024-25 was issued on 23 September 2025 without qualification but with a comment relating to electors' rights [one day too long]. Their completion letter included a "minor scope for improvement" item for levels of reserves. I have been unable to find a minute indicating that the Council has considered the auditor's report and letter (refer Reg 20 Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015).

Internal Audit 2024-25:

The Council agreed its budget and precept for 2025-26 in November 2024 resolving a 5% increase in the latter. For the 2026-27 budget minutes record "Cllr X proposed that Shepherdsweil with Coldred Parish Council agree the proposed budget for 2025/26 [2026-27 is meant] from the Finance Committee and request a raise of 4% to the precept, meaning that the precept income would raise £82,719.52. Seconded by Cllr Y, all AGREED"

I have reviewed the 2026-27 budget and noted that elements required by statute are not present. The Council must ensure that its budget and precept comply with s41 and s49A Local Government Finance Act 1992. S41 requires that the precept be stated as an amount payable by the billing authority, it also states that the precept is the amount as calculated under s49A.

FINDINGS THIS VISIT:

During the audit I carried out sufficient work to enable me to complete the Annual Internal Audit Report. I concentrated on the trail from the annual accounting statement back to the receipts & payments A/c and bank statements while testing transactions to invoices or other supporting documentation. I have also reviewed the Council's minutes for compliance with legal obligations, its general functioning and for mutual consistency with the accounts.

I found the financial records to be accurate and up to date. I found nothing in the minutes to indicate issues around legal obligations, the council's actions or its general functioning except as noted above.

I have nothing further to report.

Lionel Robbins
Independent Internal Auditor
14 June 2026

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	'Yes' means that this authority:
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.	✓		<i>has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

17/06/2026

and recorded as minute reference:

70.0iii-2026 MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

www.shepherdswellcoldred-pc.gov.uk AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
1. Balances brought forward	57,069	89,543	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	75,750	79,538	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	19,156	13,963	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	15,399	16,211	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	47,033	46,745	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	89,543	120,088	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	89,543	120,088	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	141,169	143,324	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?	☒	☐	For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

16/06/2026

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

17/06/2026

as recorded in minute reference:

70.03iv-2026 MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

SHEPHERDSWELL GREEN SPACES GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 18 MAY 2026

1. Attendees

Nigel Baker (Chair), Aidan Softley, Denise Baker, Barry Crush, Luca Jones, David Cox, James Perfect, Sindy Denyer, Bomber Fagg, Lynne Ring, Sue Taber, Julia Harper, Kat McArdle.

2. Apologies

None

3. Minutes of last meeting

Agreed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising

Grounds Maintenance Contract – new contract has been awarded to 'Bourne to Garden' wef early June.

NB proposed that a donation should be offered to Julia Harper and Scouts for their generous offer to provide water for the re-seeding of goalmouths. JH has declined the offer; NB will propose a payment to the Scouts at this week's PC meeting.

Bank Account #2 – members of the group reiterated that the second bank account would be closed at the end of July, once all financial matters for the Summer Fete have been concluded.

5. Project Updates

- Play Area: NB reported that all members of the PC have backed the ongoing development of this project and agreed to provide significant financial support, following presentation of detailed paper to their meeting in May. This was followed up by a site meeting with a small number of councillors, as well as discussion at the PC's Finance Committee. The site meeting included a useful discussion about pollarding the trees alongside the current play area and also moving the perimeter fence slightly in order to maximise the useable space. Final sign off should be a formality at the PC Meeting on 20 May with confirmation of £50,000 support. NB is arranging a further discussion with Playdale to follow up on the wet pour surface. Search for possible funding streams has begun, including National Lottery Community Fund, Roger De Haan Charitable Trust, Biffa Award and Veolia Environmental Trust. It is likely that we will require audited accounts to progress with applications.

- Changing Rooms: very limited progress. Aidan will make one further effort to obtain amended drawings for the interior layout; otherwise, another architect will need to be identified. An interesting discussion about the possibility of engaging with Mears to assist with this project following their help with the container last year – NB will explore with DDC. The existing foundations have been fully cleared of vegetation in the last couple of weeks.

- NB will convene further meetings for the Play Area and Changing Rooms working groups in June.

- Meadow View/Bike Trail – Kat reported that there has been no further progress.

- Recreation Ground – NB reported that the path connecting upper and lower fields has been undertaken; however, the work has not fully addressed the concerns and NB has raised this with the Parish Clerk. NB reported that both goalposts have been moved on the upper field – huge thanks to Peter Moore for his help! Watering of the re-seeded goalmouths continues, with thanks to Lynne Ring and Julia Harper for their help.

6. Future Projects

- Sindy Denyer suggested that the group could look at the Plantation. After a brief discussion, the group felt that this was not something that it could take on. Aidan explained that was not a one-off quick fix, and would require a long term woodland management plan led by the PC in order to make any progress.

7. Summer Fete

- Sindy explained that, with just under seven weeks to go, the key challenge is a lack of volunteers to act as Marshall's, and also sufficient manpower to assist with setting up and dismantling.

- The proposal is to set up on Friday 3 and dismantle on Sunday 5 July.

- An outline of activities and planned location of stalls was provided.

8. Any Other Business

- The planter adjacent to the Play Area has been adopted by Simon Ledger and the Beavers. It has been cleared of nettles and weeds, and is now replanted with numerous plants.

- The Brownies have undertaken further work at the Train Station, celebrating 100 years of Winnie the Pooh

9. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 6 July

Monday 7 September

SHEPHERDSWELL GREEN SPACES GROUP MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 18 MAY 2026

1. Attendees

Nigel Baker (Chair), Aidan Softley, Denise Baker, Julia Harper, Lynne Ring, Luca Jones, Barry Crush, David Cox, James Perfect, Sindy Denyer, Bomber Fagg, Sue Taber.

2. Apologies

None

3. Presentation of Annual Report

NB presented highlights of the group's work since it was launched in October 2024.

The group was launched by Mike Sitton, but he left later that year prior to moving away from the village. NB took over as Chairman in January 2025.

The group is independent of, but works closely with the Parish Council.

The group's Constitution was adopted in February 2025, and describes its key aims to research, inform, advise and challenge the Parish Council on matters relating to public green spaces in Shepherdswell. It also campaigns for the improvement of green spaces and secures funds to improve infrastructure.

Key projects over the past year (all at the Recreation Ground):

- Purchase and installation of a container for Spartans FC to replace the old dilapidated trailer. Funds secured from the Parish Council, Football Foundation, Kent County Council, Dover District Council and Mears. Installed September 2025.
- Plans to significantly refurbish the Children's Play Area. Designs have been prepared and the group is close to securing agreement from the Parish Council to proceed with grant applications and public consultation. The Parish Council will provide significant match funding for this project.
- A working group is looking at options to build changing rooms and meeting space on the back of the existing Scout/Guides Hut.

Additionally, the group has secured agreement from the Parish Council to complete other improvement works at the Recreation Ground, notably repairs to the pathway connecting upper and lower fields, and a new litter bin adjacent to the Children's Play Area.

Finally, members of the group have recently dug out and re-seeded the four goalmouths at the Recreation Ground. Watering is ongoing through the Spring in advance of the summer months and the next football season.

NB expressed his thanks to the group for their support over the last year.

4. Adoption of Annual Report

The report was proposed by Aidan Softley, seconded by Sindy Denyer. All agreed.

5. Presentation of Finance Officer's Report

David Cox presented his report for the period 11 Sept 2025 – 30 April 2026.

Group 1 account has been used for grants for the new container. Group 2 account is currently being used to manage income and expenditure for the Summer Fete.

The report was proposed by Julia Harper, seconded by Sindy Denyer. All agreed.

6. Election of New Executive:

Kat McArdle has resigned from her position as Vice Chairman.

The following members have stood for the forthcoming year:

Chairman – Nigel Baker

Vice-Chairman – James Perfect

Finance Officer – David Cox

Secretary – Luca Jones

It was proposed and agreed that one vote would be taken en bloc.

All those standing were proposed by Barry Crush, seconded by Sue Taber. Unanimously agreed and therefore all elected.

7. Review of Constitution

NB proposed that the Constitution should be amended to remove any reference to the Coldred Village Green, as the local community has its own well-established Forum. This was agreed by all. NB will amend the Constitution to be signed by Officers. An updated copy will be circulated to SGSG members and also to Metro Bank.

8. Questions from the Public

Two residents raised concerns about the dangers of playing cricket on the recreation ground and proximity to the Play Area. They asked whether a high fence or portable netting should be considered to protect the children. Aidan Softley agreed to raise these important concerns at a future Parish Council meeting.

Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council

Highway Plans relating to development at St Andrews Gardens and Mill House/Mill Lane, Shepherdswell

Planning Applications: DOV/25/00908, DOV/22/01207, DOV/23/00235.

Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council is concerned about the highway proposals within the planning applications submitted by Guildcrest Homes Ltd to build 39 houses at Saint Andrews Gardens and 10 houses on the adjoining site Mill House/Mill Lane. It requests a meeting to discuss the matter with you.

The Parish Council's position is based on feedback from a well-attended residents' meeting and discussions within the community. Its points are included in the Council's submissions to the DDC Planning Portal (20 October 2005). They have been raised directly with representatives of the developer, Guildcrest Homes Ltd.

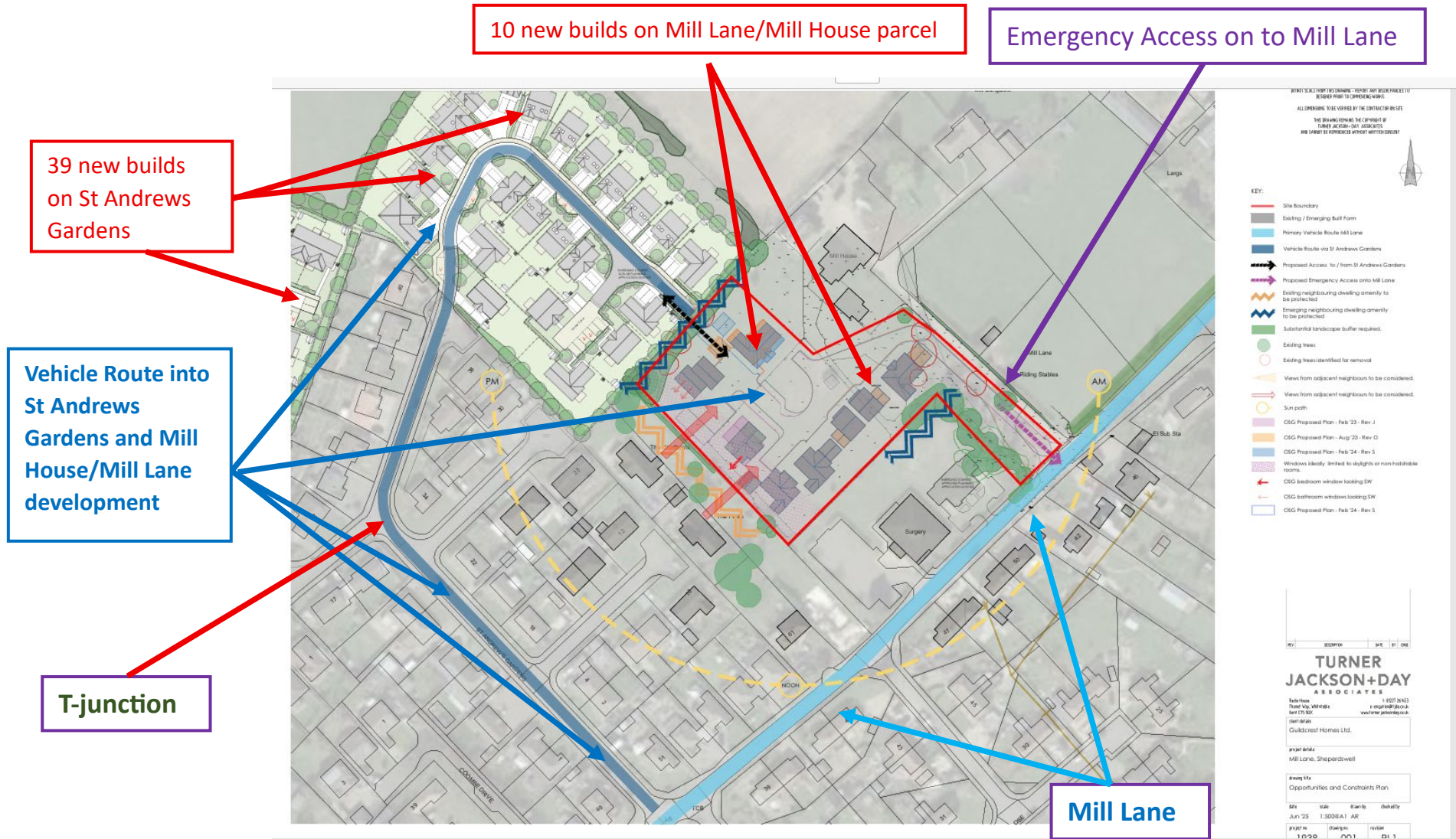
The Parish Council argues that the question of access and appropriate highway plan is of special importance given that the St Andrews Gardens estate is home to a large number of older households, including a significant number of disabled people. It believes that the proposal from the developer does not provide the safest possible environment for residents of the existing and future properties.

The Parish Council considers that Kent Highways and DDC Planning Committee should insist on a secondary access point to the development. It believes that this is not only necessary but feasible.

Flaws in the developer's proposal

Guildcrest Homes Ltd is proposing an access route for the 49 new houses through the main spine of the existing St Andrews Gardens estate. All 106 properties (that is, the existing properties and new builds) would be accessed from this single access road, which leads to a number of cul de sacs. There would be a bollarded emergency access on to Mill Lane. The proposal is shown on the plan on the following page.

Proposed Access: St Andrews Gardens/Mill House Development



The Parish Council considers that this proposal has serious flaws. Amongst the negative consequences are:

- Traffic along the main spine of St Andrews Gardens would be more than doubled.
- Vehicles belonging to and servicing the new 4- and 5-bedroom houses on the Mill House/Mill Lane parcel would have to make a circuitous journey through the St Andrews Gardens Estate to access Mill Lane and the local road network. This is despite the fact that some of them would be situated only metres from Mill Lane.
- The St Andrews Gardens' road network was once described by a previous Planning Inspector as 'tortuous'. There is widespread on-street parking (a point recently recognised by KCC Highways). Doubling the number of vehicles using the network creates obvious potential safety concerns, particularly at the T Junction at the end of the entrance road into the estate. Along the right-hand branch after the T-junction, traffic numbers would increase seven-fold, with the road servicing 37 houses, instead of the current seven.

The alternative option: secondary access on to Mill Lane

The Parish Council believes that these negative consequences and the increased flow of traffic could be mitigated through the creation of a through road to Mill Lane. In other words, the emergency access point would not be bollarded but open to traffic to provide secondary access for the existing and new-build properties. The Parish Council believes this plan is not only desirable but feasible.

In terms of desirability, the Parish Council's proposal is identical to the position adopted by KCC Highways around the time of the Dover Local Plan discussions.

On 17 October 2023, Matt Bembridge (KCC Principal Transport and Development Planner) wrote to Carly Petit (Principal Policy and Infrastructure Planner, DDC). He argued:

'The site should in fact facilitate secondary access in order to alleviate pressure and highway concerns (as brought to our

attention through recent local representations) on the St Andrews Gardens access.'

And further:

'When considered as a whole, the existing housing and proposed would be served more safely through provision of a secondary access.'

Similar points were emphasised by Sally Benge (KCC Transport & Development Planning Manager) when writing on 18 October 2023 to Claire Dethier (DDC Development Management Team). Ms Benge indicated that KCC Highways preferred

'a main access road through the site [which would mean that] 'most of the dwellings on St Andrews Gardens and the new development parcels could be served from more than one direction with the creation of a loop road'.

Clearly, in relation to the current planning applications, the 'pressure and highway concerns' and safety issues identified by Mr Bembridge have not been addressed. Likewise, in relation to Ms Benge's points, the only way that properties could be served by a 'loop road' in 'more than one direction' is through the creation of an access point on Mill Lane.

The creation of a secondary access is clearly feasible. At the time of the Dover Local Plan discussions, the site consisted of two contiguous but separate parcels of land controlled by different developers. At that stage, the two developers seemed to be wary about working together to create a comprehensive and coordinated development.

The application to develop the smaller parcel (Mill House/Mill Lane) came from Woodchurch Property. It proposed access to the new properties directly from Mill Lane. Documentation relating to the application process reveals considerable and detailed discussion between DHA Planning (representing Woodchurch) about the access point. It indicates that the proposal was 'acceptable' to KCC Highways. (See summary in DHA Planning, Local Plan Hearing Statement, Land Adjacent to Mill House, Mill Lane, Shepherdswell, Oct. 2023, MB/RD/32283.)

The question of emergency access to connect the Mill House/Mill Lane site with the St Andrews Gardens site arose because the 39 new builds on the latter parcel would take the number of dwellings on the estate to beyond the threshold designated in the Kent Design Guide. This stipulates that a road into a settlement such as St Andrews Gardens should 'serve no more than 50 dwellings unless an alternative access route [...] is provided (Page 123)'.

Both parts of the site are now under the control of a single developer (Guildcrest). This means that the context in which the access/highway issue was considered has changed. It would now be possible to link the two parcels by a loop road through the entire site with open access from both St Andrews Gardens and Mill Lane. This would mean adopting (or adapting) the route originally designated in the Woodchurch application.

Guildcrest Homes have told us that open access cannot be 'facilitated'. But they have failed to respond to the Parish Council's request for the reasoning behind this assumption. It is interesting that the developer is proposing to use the Mill Lane access point to accommodate construction traffic, which suggests that a permanent secondary access on to the site is feasible.

KCC Highways commented on the planning applications on 25 September 2025 and 7 November 2025 (KCC Highways, DOV/23/00235, 7 November 2025, ref TJ.) However, the submission does not address the points raised above. We would be interested to know whether and how the authority has reconsidered its previous emphasis on the safety of local residents (as outlined in the letters by Mr Bembridge and Ms Bengé).

The question of safe access has been a major issue for the Parish Council since this site was first proposed. The Council has consistently argued that a safe environment for residents must remain the priority. Clearly, the safest option is a route through the estate with two access points as outlined above.

From: [Nicola Crowfoot](#)
To: parishclerk@shepherdsweilcoldred-pc.gov.uk
Subject: Fw: Request to Install a Memorial Bench on The Green, Shepherdsweil
Date: 08 June 2026 16:11:28

Good Afternoon,

I just wanted to send you an update to inform you that we managed to reach our target of £2,300 we were advised to raise from the Legend on the bench charity. This covers the cost of the bench and we have even raised a further £175 for any additional costs that may occur or for its to back into the charity for them to install further benches in other public spaces.

This target was reached in only one week, which I hope shows not only how well-loved Barnaby was in the village but also how important local people feel these benches are for supporting anyone suffering with their mental health.

If you require any further information ahead of the meeting ,please let me know

Best wishes

Mrs crowfoot

From: Nicola Crowfoot
Sent: Monday, June 1, 2026 1:51:23 pm
To: Jan Rousell <parishclerk@shepherdsweilcoldred-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Request to Install a Memorial Bench on The Green, Shepherdsweil

Thank you for your prompt response.

For your information you can find out more about legend on the bench here - Home - Legend on the Bench <https://share.google/W0ukhQTRGI8SSv8JK>
And more about the fundraiser and read Barnaby's story here - Home - Legend on the Bench <https://share.google/W0ukhQTRGI8SSv8JK>

I will look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

Nicola

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Jan Rousell <parishclerk@shepherdswellcoldred-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: Monday, June 1, 2026 1:41:19 pm
To: 'Nicola Crowfoot'
Subject: RE: Request to Install a Memorial Bench on The Green, Shepherdswell

Dear Nicola

Thank you for your email and for contacting the Parish Council regarding the possibility of installing a memorial bench on The Green in memory of Barnaby Wills. Please accept my condolences for your loss.

Your request will be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the Parish Council on **17 June 2026**, where councillors will be able to consider it formally.

The Council does not currently have a specific memorial bench policy, but I will ensure that members are provided with the details you have shared, including the information about the "Legend on the Bench" charity and the mental-health support QR codes.

Following the meeting, I will contact you with the outcome and any next steps.

Kind regards
Jan

Jan Rousell
07907 431837
Parish Clerk
Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council

From: Nicola Crowfoot <
Sent: 01 June 2026 11:58
To: parishclerk@shepherdswellcoldred-pc.gov.uk
Subject: Fw: Request to Install a Memorial Bench on The Green, Shepherdswell

Dear Clerk and Members of the Parish Council,

I hope you are well.

I would like to enquire about the possibility of installing a memorial bench on The Green in Shepherdswell.

The bench would be dedicated to Barnaby Wills, who you may have heard sadly lost his life very recently. The bench would be and intended as a place for his family friends to remember him but also to help others who may have their own mental health struggles.

I have set up a fundraiser and the bench would be provided through the charity Legend on the Bench, who specialise in supplying and installing benches not only for memorial purpose but with the community benefit by providing QR codes with access to 24/7 mental

health support.

I would of course ensure that it meets any specifications required by the Council.

If you have a memorial or street furniture policy, I would be grateful if you could share it, along with details of the application process and any preferred specifications.

Thank you for considering this request. I would be very pleased to work with the Council to ensure the bench is appropriate and beneficial to the community.

Kind regards,

Nicola Crowfoot

Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council

Village Planters Survey Report

Survey date: 01 June 2026

Prepared by: Parish Clerk

1. Purpose of Report

This report presents the findings of a site survey of all village planters and asks councillors to determine whether the Parish Council wishes to start maintaining the non-adopted planters or remove them entirely.

2. Background

The village planters were installed several years ago and have been maintained inconsistently over time. Some have been adopted by village residents and community groups, while others remain the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The Council has previously discussed concerns about:

- declining condition of several planters
- lack of volunteer capacity
- cost and practicality of ongoing maintenance
- whether the current number and locations remain appropriate

The survey was undertaken to provide councillors with a clear evidence base for decision-making.

3. Summary of Survey Findings

The condition of the planters varies significantly. Key observations:

- Several planters are structurally deteriorated (rotting timber, loose boards, failing joints).
- Some planters are overgrown, empty, or sparsely planted, reducing their visual benefit.
- A small number are in good condition and/or actively maintained by adopters.
- Some locations may no longer be suitable due to shading, visibility, or lack of local support.

Overall, the survey indicates that the Parish Council would need to invest time, money, and volunteer/contractor effort to bring the non-adopted planters back to an acceptable standard.

4. Options for Councillors

Option A – Retain the non-adopted planters

This would require:

- repairs or replacements where necessary
- replanting
- ongoing maintenance arrangements (volunteers or contractor)
- budget allocation for materials and labour

Option B – Remove the non-adopted planters

This would:

- reduce ongoing maintenance costs
- remove deteriorated or unsightly planters
- leave only the adopted planters in place
- require a one-off removal/clearance cost

Option C – Reduce the number of planters

Remove the worst-condition planters but retain a small number in key locations.

5. Clerk's Observations

- The non-adopted planters show a mixed but generally declining condition.
 - Several require significant repair or replacement.
 - Without a clear maintenance plan, the condition is likely to continue deteriorating.
 - Removal would simplify asset management and reduce costs, but councillors may wish to consider the visual impact.
-

6. Decision Required

Councillors are asked to:

1. Review the survey findings.
2. Decide whether the non-adopted planters should be:
 - retained and repaired/replanted,
 - reduced in number, or
 - removed entirely.
3. Approve any associated budget or contractor work.

7. Individual Planter Assessments

Planter Location: Westcourt Lane/The Grange



Condition:

- **Structure:** Falling apart, loose boards & rotting timber
- **Planting:** Overgrown

Adopted? No

Planter Location: Co-op/Eythorne Road



Condition:

- **Structure:** Reasonably solid
- **Planting:** Overgrown

Adopted? No

Planter Location: The Glen/Eythorne Road



Condition:

- **Structure:** Reasonably solid
- **Planting:** Well maintained

Adopted? Yes - residents

Planter Location: Recreation Ground



Condition:

- **Structure:** Reasonably solid
- **Planting:** Beautifully planted

Adopted? Yes – Beavers/Cubs

Planter Location: Cemetery

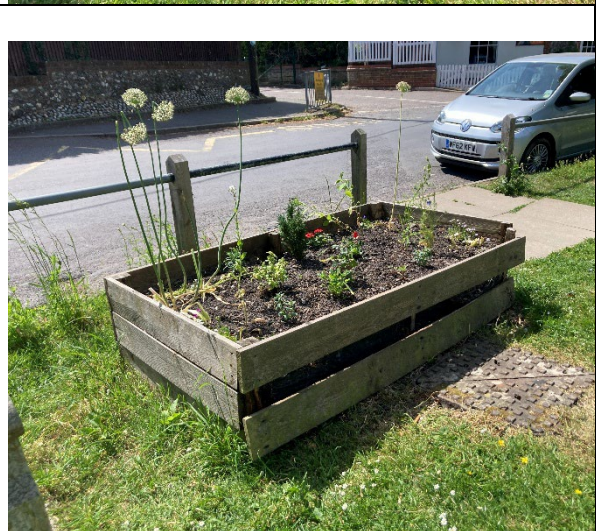


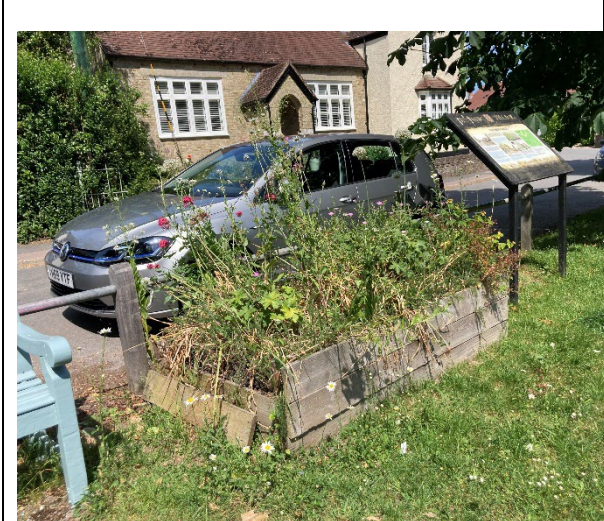
Condition:

- **Structure:** Reasonably solid
- **Planting:** Overgrown

Adopted? No

Planter Location: Village Green x 9





Condition:

- **Structure:** Reasonably solid
- **Planting:** Well maintained

Adopted? Yes – VGA

Planter Location: Village Hall x 5



Condition:

- **Structure:** Reasonably solid
- **Planting:** Overgrown

Adopted? No

Briefing Note: Memorial Bench Request – Shepherdswell Village Green

For: Parish Council Meeting – 17 June 2026

Agenda Item: 75.05 – Memorial Bench Request

1. Purpose of this Note

To provide councillors with an overview of:

- the request received for a memorial bench on Shepherdswell Village Green
 - the current number and condition of existing benches
 - potential suitable locations for an additional bench
 - considerations for councillors when determining the request
-

2. Background

A request has been received from Nicola Crowfoot for a memorial bench on Shepherdswell Village Green in memory of Barnaby Wills. The bench would be supplied and installed by the charity *Legend on the Bench*, which provides benches incorporating QR codes linking to 24/7 mental-health support.

There are already 6 memorial benches on the Village Green. Before determining the request, it is helpful to review existing provision and identify whether an additional bench can be accommodated appropriately.

3. Survey of Existing Benches

A site visit was undertaken on **04 June 2026** to assess the current benches on the Village Green. Photographs are included in Appendix 1.

Existing Provision

- **Number of benches:** 5
- **General condition:**
 - All benches are structurally sound.
 - There is one bench which requires a replacement rail – the owner has been advised.
 - All benches are well-used and appropriately located.

Distribution

- Benches are currently positioned around the perimeter of the Green.
 - There is a good spread of seating, but some areas have more provision than others.
-

4. Potential Location for an Additional Bench

Two possible locations have been identified on the Village Green where an additional bench could be placed without:

- obstructing sightlines
- impeding maintenance
- conflicting with existing benches
- affecting pedestrian routes or events held on the Green

Photographs of the suggested locations are included in Appendix 2.

These locations would allow the bench to be:

- visible
 - accessible
 - respectful
 - integrated with existing seating
-

5. Considerations for Councillors

When determining the request, councillors may wish to consider:

Suitability of Location

- Do the proposed locations complement existing seating?
- Would they create any maintenance or access issues?

Consistency with Council Approach

- The Council does not currently have a memorial bench policy.
- Approval of this request may set a precedent for future applications.

Design and Installation

- The bench would be supplied and installed by *Legend on the Bench* – an example of their benches is included in Appendix 3.
- Councillors may wish to confirm:
 - materials and style
 - installation method
 - ongoing maintenance responsibilities

Community Benefit

- The bench includes QR-code access to mental-health support.
 - The request has a clear community and wellbeing purpose.
-

6. Options for Councillors

Councillors may:

1. **Approve the request** and agree the proposed location.
 2. **Approve the request in principle**, subject to:
 - confirmation of design/specification
 - agreement of installation method
 - any conditions the Council wishes to apply
 3. **Decline the request**, giving reasons.
 4. **Defer the decision**, pending further information or development of a memorial bench policy.
-

7. Recommendation

Based on the site survey, an additional bench can be accommodated on the Village Green without adverse impact. Councillors are invited to consider the request and determine the next steps.

Appendix 1

Current benches

	Name	Maintained Y/N
A	Garnett	Y
B	Leveridge	Y
C	Isles	Y
D	Hansell	Y
E	Mansfield-Williams	Y

A Garnett



B Leveridge

