



**The meeting of Egerton Parish Council was held on Tuesday 3 February 2026
7pm Committee Room, Millennium Hall, Egerton**

Present

Cllrs: John Lawton, Peter Rawlinson, Jeff Hopkins, Pat Parr, Claire Foinette, Sue Stone, John Harper, and Richard Wall. Clerk Sonia Young.

Three members of the public were present. Also PC Aaron Hobday.

1) Apologies

Cllr Simon Palmer.

2) 2.1 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Parr and Harper: neighbours to the Orchard Nurseries site proposed for development and neighbour to one site put forward for consideration for the Ashford Borough Council Local Plan 2042.

3) 3.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 13 January 2026

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record of the proceedings.

Proposed: Cllr Foinette. **Seconded:** Vice-Chair Cllr Rawlinson. **All in agreement.** Cllr Wall abstained as not present at the January meeting.

4) 4.1 Matters Arising from 13 January 2026 (not covered by the agenda below)

4.1.1 Replacement tree on Elm Close

No update to report.

4.1.2 Update on the installation of adult gym equipment

Installation completed and in use. The Clerk to finalise permanent health and safety signage. Residents have been in contact to say how pleased they are to have the equipment in the village. Chair Cllr Lawton said EPC was delighted to have been able to tick another parish project off the list – with the help of funds raised by the village - and fulfill a wish for many residents. The bulk of the money came from the release of funds raised by the 2018 Village Fete and reserved to support a fitting memorial for Joshua Wilkinson and which the Wilkinson family are happy to see has at last come to fruition. Additional funds came from a donation from the Geoff Wickens and a grant from Kent Active. The Clerk thanked them all as well as the work of the Games Barn Committee chair Mel Rawlinson for her work to deliver the project.

4.1.3 Update on the proposed timeline for PO van visits to replace the pop-up Post Office.

Cllr Harper said there was no further news but that the village shop would be happy to support a pop-up PO should that option become available.

4.1.4 Millennium Hall sound system

Cllr Harper said the sound system has been ordered for installation during half term. The Clerk has transferred all assigned S106 monies to the Village Hall Management Committee to pay for it.

4.1.5 Update on the sponsorship of village planters.

Two sponsors are confirmed. One more is being sought. No other update.

4.1.6 Update on the delivery of a 1 tonne bag of salt

The Clerk has chased KCC re this.

4.1.7 Update on highways issue relating to the housing development at Crockenhill

The contractors have cleaned the road and have a site construction traffic management plan in place. EPC has written to English Rural Housing to ensure continued effective site traffic management.

4.1.8 Ownership of hedges on Stone Hill / New Road

Kent County Cllr Jeremy Eustace has sent details to EPC of who is responsible for maintaining the hedges in question - so far as title ownerships are known. He also forwarded a report by KCC that states the hedges complained about by residents are not adversely impacting on the highway at this time, and do not need to be trimmed back.

4.1.9 Aggregate to improve surfacing at the footpaths gate to the football field

The repair is pending.



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5.1 Chair to close the meeting for public discussion

Meeting closed at 19.31

Meeting re-opened at 19.35

Decision Items

5) 6.1 Planning and Development

Planning applications submitted to Ashford Borough Council this month for Egerton Parish Council to consider, details of which may be accessed online at:

<http://www.ashford.gov.uk/onlineplanning/>.

6.1.1

Case Reference:	PA/2025/1967
Location	Rock Hill Farm, Rock Hill Road, TN27 9DP
Proposal	Proposed conversion of live work unit to 1no dwelling house to include an annexe and carers' suite, plus detached garage.

EPC view: EPC agrees with the officer's opinion that this development should be for conversion to a single dwelling including an annexe not two properties plus annexe. Under HOU15 there would not appear to be enough garden to qualify for a single dwelling and certainly not two, plus annexe. EPC does not agree that enough parking has been provided to support three possible dwellings. The development is in a sensitive position adjacent to listed buildings comprising the original Rock Hill House and Barns. The highways officer objected to this development but suggested a change to the official footpath route, which is in fact blocked would regularize the position and negate his objection. EPC has not received notification of any application to reroute the footpath, and until such application has been submitted and approved, this application should be held back.

There is no Biodiversity net gain on the development. The site has been cleared up in advance of the application. The developer proposes to re-plant the hedges and trees and what has been proposed should be an absolute minimum. Pre-planning advice asked for a Heritage statement but one has not been made available/ visible to EPC.

EPC would like to see a satisfactory agreement made regarding the footpath due to the potential increase in the number of vehicles onto the site.

In summary, there appears to be insufficient garden for more than one property; there appears to be insufficient parking for multiple properties; there appears a conflict with the nearby Listed properties; the site is in danger of being over-developed. If the ABC Officer is minded to approve the application, EPC would like conditions imposed to ensure that the properties developed are for the exclusive use only of the principal owner and their family.

Proposed: Object.

Proposed: Cllr Wall. **Seconded:** Chair Cllr Lawton. **All in agreement.**

6.1.2 Proposed Community Space area at Egerton Forstal

Three private individuals have sought pre-application advice from ABC on setting up a community green space on land to the rear of the housing development at Gale Field. The individuals will privately purchase the .25-hectare green space and would like EPC to consider how it might work with the individuals to maintain the community space. The preliminary idea is that the individuals will retain ownership and the Parish Council will lease the land. The Parish Council would be responsible under the terms of the lease for the maintenance of the site.

EPC welcomed the proposal to create community green space in The Forstal area of the village and the generosity of the three individuals involved in putting this idea forward.

Cllrs agreed that they needed to understand the Parish Council's legal ability to take on a lease of this nature for this purpose and what the costs for maintenance are likely to be, and, as a part of that, better understand what is happening with the remainder of Gale Field not bought to build the affordable rentable homes or to create this community green space.



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6.2 Other Egerton Planning and development updates

6.2.1 Hedging

Following concerns raised by a resident, Cllr Wall will contact ABC about hedges between The Street and Stonebridge Green that are hanging over boundary walls and impacting adversely on higher-sided vehicles. Due to size and age of the hedge, it was considered a planning vs highways issue.

6.2.2 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Consultation on its Heathlands Garden Settlement Development

EPC Planning and Development Working Group (PDWG) submitted 34 comments to the MBC Draft Supplementary Planning Document. Only four of the total submitted were accepted by MBC. The PDWG said was very disappointing given the time it took to read all documentation and submit comments in less than 100 words to over 30 separate questions. More particularly, it was a concern that MBC had not taken account of many valid comments made and that the draft document did not provide robust and clear criteria for all the aspects of developing Heathlands. It risked a piecemeal development and a lack of consistency in planning decisions. It was noted that KCC and Save our Heathlands Campaign and Lenham Parish Council fared no better with the comments they had made. More details are in the February edition of *Egerton Update*.

7) 7.1 Financial Report

7.1.1 Unbudgeted invoices over £1,000 to be approved for February payment

None.

7.1.2 Special reserves

It was proposed to transfer £1, 619.99 into the EPC current account from the £3K Special reserve held at the end of the financial year to pay for the purchase of new village defibrillators. One defibrillator has been bought and is pending installation. The remaining monies of £1,380.01 to be released into the EPC General Reserve.

Proposed: Vice-Chair Cllr Rawlinson. **Seconded:** Chair Cllr Lawton. **All in agreement.**

Action: The Clerk

7.2 Approval of the 2025-2026 EPC Asset Register

To be reviewed and approved at the March meeting.

Information Items

8) 8.1 Correspondence

8.1.1 Correspondence from resident about Egerton Sewage Treatment Plant and also a request for the tree on the cricket field bank to be cut back.

Cllrs agreed that the Clerk should write to Southern Water to clarify if Phase 1 works have been completed and when Phase 2 might start and if not imminently, then to request the current site is tidied up,

The Clerk will clarify details about the tree with the resident before Cllrs can make a decision whether to cut the tree back again.

9) 9.1 Footpaths Report – (see Appendix 1)

Report circulated in advance of the meeting by Cllr Parr to all Cllrs.

9.1.1 Footpath to the rear of St James Churchyard

Cllr Parr said no hard barriers have yet been put in place, as promised by KCC, to close off the dangerous footpath which has been severely weakened by badger setts. There is no update on the proposed alternative routes for the footpath.

9.1.2 PROW/AS/C473 claimed upgrade to Bridleway Status of Public footpaths AW93 (part), AW25 (Part) and AW 92.

Cllr Wall provided details of why the submission was factually incorrect and out of date (see Appendix (i)), as one of the proposed routes goes through the middle of Henshaw Place. It was agreed that Cllr Wall will lodge a summary comment against the application.

10) 10.1 Highways Report



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10.1.1 HiP – update on the proposed 20mph speed limit for the village centre

Cllrs are in the process of putting a residents' survey in place to consult on views about the proposed reduction to 20mph in the centre of the village. The survey will ask three questions.

Action: Vice-Chair Cllr Rawlinson to draft the survey and circulate to Cllrs for comment.

10.1.2 Update on KCC drain clearance

Cllr Rawlinson put out cones to indicate the blocked drains on lower Rock Hill Road and which KCC had said it would clear, but KCC did not come out.

Cllr Stone has requested that the verges are swept before drain clearance to ensure debris does not block them again as soon as it rains.

11) 11.1 Update on the website merger of the EPC and village sites

A meeting has been organised for 17 February. Update at the March meeting.

12) 12.1 Spring village-wide litter pick

Cllr Wall confirmed that the village wide litter pick will take place on Saturday 21 March and that editorial will be included in the February Egerton Update to ask for volunteers to help.

Action: Clerk to purchase 12 bin openers ready for the pick.

13) 13.1 Additional Items

13.1.1 EPC Litter bin at football field

Vice-Chair Cllr Rawlinson reported that the new bin by the football field has been vandalised.

The Clerk to review whether a new bin is required or if the existing bin can be put right.

Action: The Clerk

13.1.2 Vegetation debris behind the village hall

The Clerk to request Envisage to undertake a clear-up.

13.1.3 Welcome packs

Cllr Parr to deliver packs to new residents at Crockenhill and at The Forstal.

The meeting closed at 20.52pm

Members of the public and Cllrs Harper and Parr left the meeting.

14) Closed session

A closed session was held to approve the minutes of the closed session held at the 13 January meeting and to discuss additional commercially confidential matters pertaining to the development of housing suitable for older people on the site known as Orchard Nurseries.

The minutes were read by The Clerk, and the minutes were approved and signed as a true record of the proceedings.

Proposed: Chair Cllr Lawton. **Seconded:** Cllr Stone. **All in agreement.** Cllr Wall abstained as not present at the January meeting.

A Closed Session will be held at the March meeting to approve the minutes of Item 14).

Next meeting: Tuesday 3 March 2026

Appendix (i)

Report No. 187 of the Egerton footpaths representative for February 2026 Meeting

6	Outstanding Issues remain from the January 2026 report.
0	Closed Items
1	New Issues

The outstanding items below are listed with the KCC Reference, the date reported, the footpath



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number, the location, the difficulty experienced and the status of action.

1. **PROW211126930.** 09/11/21. Part of AW87 to the west of the church behind the Glebeland houses where the path is quite narrow has collapsed due to badger activity. Status: Still In Progress – also see issue four below.
2. **PROW230732955.** 28/07/23. AW96. Barhams Mill Road, before Frasers, on the right-hand side from Egerton village end. Broken stile at the entrance to the footpath from the road. Status: Still Awaiting Allocation.
3. **PROW241298717.** 03/12/24. Part of AW87 to the west of the church. Further subsidence at the edges of the rubber matting placed there in 2021. Because of the danger it has been reported to KCC. Status: Still In Progress.

UPDATE 25/2/2025: Residents have not actually taken down the taped closure of this short section of path but are using the path anyway and have filled the two large holes with stones under the rubber matting as they want it to be reopened. Cllr Parr will contact KCC again and try to get some action on this problem.

UPDATE 11/3/2025: KCC replied that they will put up some sterner signage/warning tape and some posts. It's not a cliff edge so a metal barrier is not needed. The big issue is that a licence from Natural England is needed to work on the path as the badger and sett are protected. Natural England have indicated they will give a licence to complete works, but work cannot be done until July due to the breeding season!

UPDATE 20/5/2025: KCC have advised that they have been working on this one and decided a raised wooden board walk with a handrail over the top is the best way forwards and a design is currently being looked at. It's not straightforward as permission from Natural England is needed for a licence. This has been agreed in principle, but an ecologist may be needed on site to assess whether the badgers need to be permanently or temporarily evicted which will cost ££££££. KCC do not foresee that it will be sorted in July, but are working hard to get it sorted

UPDATE 24/7/25: New Temporary Closure Order received for this footpath up to January 2026 or until completion of the works, whichever is the earlier. The church side of the path was checked by Cllr Parr on 23 July, and the new Order is there, but the tape across has been removed by people determined to still use it. KCC have been asked to do work to block access at both ends, for health and safety reasons.

UPDATE 6/8/25: Reply from KCC Footpaths Officer Denis Fogle: *"We had a contractor out to look at it recently, quoted over £15K for a new boardwalk, which I am trying to find somehow"*

UPDATE 9/1/26: *KCC investigated all options to try to retain the existing damaged section of AW87 but must either divert the path or extinguish it altogether. The PC was asked to speak to the landowner of one of the two options for permission to divert the dangerous section of footpath. The Chairman agreed to discuss this and report back to the PC*

4. **PROW250339948.** 11/03/25. AW68 Rockhill Road, opposite Buss's Farm Shop. Broken stile. Status: Still Awaiting Allocation.
5. **PROW250549477.** 20/5/25. AW73 Newland Green Lane. Rambler reports that "the landowner of the land on which AW73 runs over has put up rope fencing surrounding and blocking the footpath. The footpath runs up the east side of Acorn Woods to the west of Newlands Green. The landowner has previously been abusive to walkers using the path." Status: Awaiting Allocation.
6. **NO PROW KCC NUMBER.** 11/12/25. A neighbour near AW76 and AW77 at Mundy Bois Road (opposite Kingsland Lane) reported that both these metal kissing gates had the actual gate part missing, thereby being completely open to the road. Photos below. It is assumed that they must



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have been stolen. I contacted the landowner of both footpaths as I believed they were kindly provided by him. The landowner did not know of this and took it upon himself to contact KCC and sort it out.

NEW ISSUE

1. An application has been submitted to KCC by the British Horse Society requesting that the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way should be modified to upgrade to Bridleway status Public Footpaths AW93 (part), AW25 (part), and AW92 at Egerton based on historic documentary evidence. Attached is a plan showing the claimed route for your information. The County Council has a duty to investigate every application it receives and as part of this process is asking the PC views with any evidence to support or negate the application for KCC to consider.

Draft comment proposed as below:

The BHS is in error. The footpath AW92 that now goes through Henshaw Place has never been accessible by horse. There is confusion because the (Settr Rides South East Toll rides) which were a pay-to-ride scheme with the farmers with an access at just past Henshaw Place to access and ride down to join the AW93 at Iden lane. The entrance to this was closed after the Settr scheme folded. It created a circular path joining the track running behind properties Brooke House and Willow Farm, using either the gate of AW92 onto Stonebridge Green Road or onto the track from opposite Court Lodge. It would be impractical to ride horses through Henshaw Place. It would be possible to use AW25 from Shepherd's Cottage to the link with AW93 - both of which have historic use by horses. Adding a full path from their joining point to Court Lodge would be achievable with the owners' consent as this would appear to be a historic "road" suitable for horse use and has seen permitted use by the horse riders in the past."