

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 15 April 2026 at 1930hrs

Shepherdswell Village Hall

MINUTES

There were no reports from the County and District Councillors, Community Warden or the Community Beat Officer. Nigel Baker, Chair of Shepherdswell Green Spaces Group (SGSG) addressed the meeting to provide a general update. SGSG met at the end of March and their draft minutes have been circulated to all Councillors. The goal mouths at the Recreation Ground have been reseeded – SGSG would like to record their thanks to James Perfect and Bomber Fagg for their help with this project. Anti climb paint will shortly be painted onto the Spartans Container at the Recreation Ground to prevent youths climbing onto the top of the container. SGSG AGM will be held in Shepherdswell Village Hall on 18 May 2026.

Public questions and comments on agenda and non-agenda items (this section will be limited to 15 minutes or otherwise at the discretion of the Chair). **None**

37/2026 IN ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

6 Members of the public

Clerk: Jan Hancock

Apologies: Cllrs John Bulaitis and Terry Hunt

38/2026 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 18 MARCH 2026

Cllr Crush proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2026 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record, subject to the addition of the wording “Due to a possible misunderstanding over the number of applicants” to agenda item 26/026. **Seconded by Cllr Denyer. AGREED, with 5 in favour and 4 against.**

39/2026 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE recorded.

40/2026 PARISH CLERK’S REPORT

Two Freedom of Information requests have been received and are being processed. An email was received from RoSPA indicating they are behind on administration but will respond to our email as soon as possible. A meeting is scheduled with Whitfield Parish Council on April 28th at 10 o’clock to discuss the Whitfield MasterPlan - Councillors are asked to confirm their availability. The co-option deadline for new councillors is Monday 20 April 2026. Applicants will be reviewed at the May meeting. Councillors were asked to review and respond to the Dover District Council's affordable housing supplementary planning document. The car park lights have been fixed, with three units replaced. Discussions are underway for additional solar lights in the car park.

Key dates for May include: Annual Parish Meeting: May 6th, Finance Meeting: May 11th, Annual Parish Council Meeting: May 20th

41/2026 FINANCE - SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Balances as 08 April 2026	£
Current A/C	85378.72
Business A/C	117428.78
INCOME	
DDC – Precept	82719.52
EXPENDITURE TO RATIFY	
Hugo Fox – Website	23.99
Staff Wages (April)	1177.43
Service Charge	7.00
NEST – Staff Pensions	65.55
Krystal Hosting – Emails	13.20
SGSG (goal mouths & anti climb paint)	375.00
History Society (Plaques)	300.00
Information Commissioners Office	40.00
EXPENDITURE TO APPROVE	
Small Works Contractor (inv 341)	450.00
Staff Expenses	151.16
Harmers (inv 26628)	819.79
Village Hall Fees – March	85.00
HMRC	189.49
Bill Roberts – Preschool roof	470.00
Rialtas (SM33982)	252.00
KALC/NALC Membership (9927)	926.29
National Community Land Trust (4303)	180.00
	3523.73

Cllr Roberts proposed that the schedule of payments be APPROVED, seconded by Cllr Elgar. All AGREED

42/2026 PLANNING COMMITTEE

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

43/2026 WORKING GROUP REPORTS

43-01 **Carbon Footprint Working Group** – Cllr Stauffer-Kruse reported that a meeting will be scheduled soon. Further delays were reported by Kent County Council regarding the installation of electric vehicle charging points. The group is still working on clearing the area near Reed Meadow for recycling bins. The small works contractor is unavailable, so other quotes or volunteers will be sought.

43-02 **Highway Improvement Plan Working Group** – The group requested permission to put an article and QR code in the parish magazine for a questionnaire on the HIP – this was granted. They also requested funding of approximately £38 for 1,000 paper questionnaires for residents without online access, this will be signed off at the May meeting. Local businesses have agreed to act as drop-off points for completed questionnaires.

43-03 **Communications Working Group** – No Report.

44/2026 COMMUNITY

44-01 Shepherdswell Green Spaces Group

- i. The minutes from the SGSG meeting held on 30 March 2026 we **NOTED**.
- ii. Shepherdswell Recreation Ground Play Area
The chair paused the meeting at 1952hrs to allow Nigel Baker, Chair of SGSG to present their plan to revitalise the play area at the recreation ground and move some items to Reed Meadow. A report has been circulated and is available on the Parish Council website. Highlights include:
 - o The group reviewed proposals from three providers and recommends proceeding with Playdale.
 - o The new design aims to add more challenging equipment for older children (up to 12-13 years old), and some existing equipment will be relocated or repositioned. It includes an inclusive roundabout for wheelchair users and a new, safer fence.
 - o A key upgrade is making the area more accessible by laying a new rubberized, smooth surface called "wet pour." The current bark surface is ineffective and requires maintenance.
 - o The new design includes replacing the entire fence for the play area.

Members spent some time discussing the plan with opportunity to ask questions.

The meeting was reconvened at 2010hrs and Cllr Roberts **proposed that the Parish Council APPROVE and ENDORSE SGSG to proceed with the refurbishment of the Play Area located at Shepherdswell Recreation Ground**, with regular reports to the Parish Council as required and at key decision points. The Council also **APPROVE the appointment of Play Dale Playgrounds as the preferred contractor** for this project. And in principle, the council **COMMITTED to the identification and allocation of match funding from Parish Council resources to support this project. Based on current prices, this totals £50,000 – split over 3 financial years. Seconded by Cllr Crush, all AGREED**

The agreed sequence of events is: a site meeting at the recreation ground, followed by the finance meeting on 11 May 2026, and then a final vote on proceeding with the expenditure. Chair and Clerk to arrange meeting at the Recreation Ground.

The Parish Council expressed it's gratitude to Nigel and Denise Baker for their significant contributions to SGSG and the community.

44.02 Update on Parish Council Assets

Members discussed the current arrangements for the inspection of Parish Council Assets and a proposal was made to formalise the process for future inspections. **Cllr White PROPOSED that the process for assigning responsibility for asset inspection (health & safety, risk assessment, repairs) will be determined at the Annual Parish Council Meeting.** Responsibility will either fall to the Chair and the Chair of Finance, or be assigned to councillor volunteers, to be confirmed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting. **Seconded by Cllr Stauffer-Kruse. All AGREED**

45/2026 To RESOLVE that, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of confidential information.

45.01 Grounds Maintenance Tender

Members **CONSIDERED** the four tenders received and **AGREED** to seek further clarification from two applicants. Members will review the additional information at an extraordinary meeting to be arranged before the end of April.

46/2026 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 1930hrs on Wednesday 20 May 2026 at Shepherdswell Village Hall.