



12/25

Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 16 December 2025 at 7.00pm at Ightham Village Hall

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Willingham (Chair), Cllr Holden (Vice Chair), Cllr Hall, Cllr Hogarth, Cllr Gunson, Cllr Mitchem, The Parish Clerk, County Cllr Rayner, Borough Cllr Betts and 1 member of the public.

- 1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Cllr Burgham
- 2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** - Cllr Gunson in relation to planning application 25/01958
- 3. **PUBLIC** - 1 member of the public was in attendance.
- 4. **MINUTES** - Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18 November 2025 were approved and signed as a true record.

5. REPORTS FROM BOROUGH COUNCILLOR & COUNTY COUNCILLOR. Councillor Betts reported that the Local Plan consultation was open and TMBC gave approval to extend the deadline to the 2nd January 2026. Councillor Betts was of the opinion that the Government set housing target of 1,100 homes was in undeliverable; the most homes ever built in Tonbridge & Malling in one year was 650. Councillor Betts suggested challenging this number and also urged as many people as possible to respond to the consultation.

In November, TMBC submitted their proposal for their preferred option of 3 Unitaries In Kent as part of local government reorganisation. The West Kent Unitary would comprise Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling, Sevenoaks and Maidstone. The split of the 3 Unitaries aligns with NHS, police and Parish boundaries and each Unitary has a population of around 500,000 therefore it was felt that a 3 Unitary model was the best fit for Kent.

Councillor Betts recently attended a cabinet meeting with Jeremy Whittaker who announced a new round of green business grants available from the 6th February 2026. The grant is for a maximum of £5000 and a 50% contribution which could be used to reduce utility costs or carbon emissions. It is open for expressions of interests now. Unfortunately there are no more grants available next year, the West Kent rural grant scheme has been withdrawn by the Government.

Some good news regarding AQMA's; at a November Council meeting it was decided that Tonbridge and Borough Green could be removed from the air quality management area (AQMA) as there has been improvement in air quality in these areas.

Councillor Betts recently visited the Allington Recycling Centre and Blaise Farm Composting Plant. A wide range of materials can be recycled including chemicals, paints, petrol, diesel, and cooking oil. There are also normal recycling streams and a reuse shop where all money raised goes to local charities. There are PV panels on the roof and the whole facility is carbon neutral. At Blaise Farm garden waste is going to good use as it is processed into fine compost. Food waste supplies all of the gas requirements for King's Hill. There is a food waste campaign at the moment to encourage people to use food caddies rather than dispose of food waste in black bins.

Regarding the Local Plan, Councillor Hall asked why some of the sites in Ightham had been excluded whereas the 2 sites put forward were in metropolitan greenbelt and Kent Downs national landscape, it seemed illogical. Councillor Betts said that he would find out why but there were probably additional reasons for them being excluded. He added that it was difficult to organise infrastructure with lots of smaller sites. Councillor Holden said that we had seen a number of applications approved by TMBC for infilling and using the argument of grey belt and asked what the definition of grey belt was?

Councillor Betts said that the guidance on grey belt was insufficient and this has been the subject in the recent MOTO hearing. He added that weight is also given to the lack of a five year housing supply

Signed.....Dated.....



when considering applications for new homes. Councillor Mitcham asked when this would end? Councillor Betts said it would only end when the Local Plan is approved. Councillor Holden said that the numbers of homes required bore no relation to the property market at the moment. Councillor Mitchem reported that she had asked TMBC to clear the verges along Fen Pond Road and A25 however had received a response to say that road closures would be required which would take at least 3 months as they are 40mph roads. Councillor Bett said that recent health and safety legislation is prohibitive for litter clearing. Councillor Willingham added that the weeds on the A25 and several central reservations were out of control, Councillor Betts said that he would also raise this with TMBC.

County Councillor Rayner reported that for food waste, the disposal authority pays £345 to dispose of each ton of black bin waste compared to £85 per ton from the food waste bin. On grey belt, Councillor Rayner had spoken to Pete Gillin at Wrotham Parish about the recent court hearing for the MOTO application, this is an important test case as the definition on grey belt is being considered. Wrotham Parish Council is alleging that the Inspector wrongly interpreted the meaning of grey belt. At the hearing there was representation from 2 KC's and three junior Barristers. Pete Gillin is optimistic and if the outcome is successful, this will change the definition of grey belt.

Councillor Rayner reported that Borough Green PC are also unhappy about the litter and verges and suggested that the Parish Alliance should get together and put KCC and TMBC on notice that they are going to take over the function as the current arrangements are not working. The motorways get cleared by the Highways Agency without issue.

Councillor Rayner reported that he had received an email from the Clerk about the mega flecta bollards at the junction of Common Road and A25. The Clerk has written twice to Highways to say that the bollards are too large and are restricting visibility turning into Common Road which is dangerous. Highways have written back to say that they are no larger than the original bollards and visibility is okay. Cllr Rayner agreed that visibility was restricted and that the highways officer is wrong, he suggested bringing in a Highways Advisor to look at the sight lines and do a separate report.

Councillor Rayner reported that the KCC budget is expected tomorrow and will dictate how much is available for spending. Councillor Rayner reported that Emma Tilbury has sent over the HIP report to the Clerk. Councillor Rayner reported that many officers are leaving KCC. Parishes should challenge decisions especially in the light of local government reorganisation.

Councillor Rayner reported that Mike Taylor has done a report on historic landfill sites, this is important to pass on to the new local authorities.

Councillor Rayner reported that A25 sweeping is being arranged.

There is no news on BSIP (bus funding).

The Clerk asked about an email that had been sent regarding waste at Ashwell opposite the entrance to Ightham Mote. It was assumed that this waste is arising from the built development and will be used for the rebuild. Councillor Rayner confirmed that KCC should be contacted if materials are being processed on the site, otherwise it fell under the remit of TMBC.

Councillor Willingham gave thanks to Cllrs Betts and Rayner who both left at 7:55 pm.

6. HIGHWAYS & PROW MATTERS – KCC closure: Oldbury byway for reinstatement works. Verges on Fen Pond Rd and litter picking – reported above. The Clerk suggested that we contact Velocity to look at the mega flectas on Common Rd- this was agreed. **HIP update** - Old Lane - we have been asked to contribute £3,400 (a third of the cost) of clearing the lane of vegetation before the resurfacing works can commence - this was agreed on the basis that it comes from this year's budget.

It was reported that the sign on Spring Lane /A25 junction was still down, the Clerk will re report. The Clerk reported that a bollard was down at Leather Corner and Councillor Willingham will ask James Hayward to repair it. The Clerk reported that the mirrors at the end of Back Lane are waiting to go in, Councillor Willingham reported that he was awaiting manufacture of the posts. The Clerk and Councillor Emmett will meet at the site to discuss the location of the mirrors. Councillor Holden reported that Back Lane was currently closed to repair a sunken manhole cover.

Signed.....Dated.....



7. MATTERS ARISING

Recreation Ground –Sovereign quote to carry out additional repairs £1,796.65 – agreed. The Clerk reported that she has contacted Wrotham Parish Council about their fitness equipment they had written back to say that it was installed in 2022 at a cost of £12.5K. The Clerk reported that the slabs outside the pavilion needed fixing and suggested that we should contribute to the cost as a thank you for Scouts giving us the use of the pavilion for the Local Plan meeting. It was agreed that the scouts should ask for a quote before considering a donation towards the cost of this. The Clerk reported that there were 2 new potholes in the car park and was asked to get a quote. There was a short discussion about resurfacing the car park but given the cost (estimated at £100k) it was decided that an annual budget to fix potholes was preferable to resurfacing the whole car park. **Tyrrells** – Awaiting date for woodwork repairs. **VTA** –The Clerk will circulate the VTA report and ask for quote based on the works suggested. **Sign** - Councillor Mitchem reported that we had received planning permission for the new recreation ground sign and we'll organise this in the new year.

Village Hall – Update Survey –Councillor Holden reported that a survey has been arranged with Sheffords for 8th of January and would take about half a day.

Oldbury Annexe –The Clerk reported that we are waiting signed documents but had received confirmation that the lease had been agreed and signed with electronic signatures. The Clerk will ask Warners if this is acceptable for us to go ahead and prepare the invoice which should be backdated to the 1st of September as we understand the annex has been used since then.

Village Fete July 2026 – Update Councillor Mitchem has spoken to the school and the PSA about organising a village fete next summer. Councillor Mitchem suggested that the Parish Council fund the marquees, toilets, generator, and insurance. Other members of the village such as the WI, Tennis Club, Scouts and Ightham Mote could participate. Councillor Emmett said that the Rotary Club could provide marquees. Councillor Mitchem suggested keeping it simple with a village picnic style. Date 11th July 2026 which coincides with the gardening club show. Everyone agreed that this was a good idea. Councillor Mitchem will start to organise the event in the new year

Casual Vacancy - Cllr Clark has unfortunately had to stand down so we are looking for new member. The Clerk has informed TMBC and put vacancy notices up. Assuming no more than 10 people come forward to TMBC before 7th January 2026, we will be able to co-opt a new Councillor.. The vacancy will be advertised in the next parish magazine

(Standing matters to be deferred to January to allow time to discuss the Local Plan)

8. FINANCE

8.1 The following accounts are submitted for payment: proposed by Councillor Hogarth and seconded by Councillor Hall both initialed all of the invoices. The Clerk will transfer funds from NatWest to Unitary to even out the accounts as the FSCA allowance is now £120,000.

Clerks Salary & Expenses	£1,050.45
Clerks Tax & NI	£5.60
Clerks Pension DD	£32.64
Gel Creative - (Standing Order)	£50.00
Gel Creative – Domain renewal	£50.00
EDF – Electricity Pavilion (Direct Debit)*	£208.69
Zen Internet – Broadband at the Pavilion	£54.61
Anthony Edwards -Parish and Churchyard maintenance	£1,251.52
James Hayward - Trees and hedges (November)	£tbc
Wicksteed – Repairs to play equipment	£2,741.76
Scribe – New Finance Package DD	£62.40
Business Stream - Water rates for pavilion DD	£28.00
Donation DAVSS	£100.00
Donation Ightham Mote Civil War Enactment – August 2025	£500.00

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NPC – Emergency removal of silver birch at recreation ground	£480.00
Treeability VTA	£450.00
St Peters – Contribution towards Parish magazine	£1,000.00
Aubergine – Transfer of date for ancillary web pages	£216.00
Bank Charges *	£6.00

- Will increase to £7 from 1st February 2026

NatWest Interest £255.94

Balances 30.11.25 Current accounts: Unity:£58,970.79, NatWest: £ 38,761.36

NatWest Deposit account: **£351,445.64**

8.2 POLICY - Review of: Financial Regs/Standing Orders The Clerk had circulated the financial regulations and standing orders and these were both agreed. The Clerk will review the emergency report as it needs updating, Councillor Holden suggested that we needed to think of an alternative emergency centre venue to the village hall during refurbishment works.

8.3 Gov.UK website and email addresses. Update work in progress to update the site.

8.4 Banking – The Clerk reported that the mandate had to be resigned due to the resignation of Councillor Clark.

8.5 Budget and Parish Council Precept for 2026 – 2027 – due 16th January 2026. The Clerk has circulated the budget for this year and is in the process of forecasting expenditure to the end of the year. The Clerk asked for any suggestions for expenditure next year and will circulate a draft budget. Councillors Willingham, Hall and Holden will meet with the Clerk in January to discuss the budget in detail.

8.6 Redeclaration of compliance with the Pensions Regulator – due 2nd March 2026. The Clerk will organise the redeclaration in time for the deadline.

9 PLANNING Tonbridge & Malling Local Plan – Regulation 18 consultation – 10

November to midnight on 2 January 2026. <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/localplan> . **Agree response to consultation.** Discussion about our response - in summary - objection to the sites put forward in Ightham on the grounds of access, greenbelt and Kent Downs National Landscape. We will also comment on the Dark Hill site which was not put forward and we will comment to say that if it comes forward at a later date that we would object on the grounds of National Landscape which should be held in highest regard. Or comments on the Borough Green site will involve the relief road which is imperative to be built before any development takes place. We will comment on the volume of traffic, J5 Slips, infrastructure, schools, water and drainage, and the adverse impact on the landscape of the village. We will also suggest consultation with Sevenoaks as they also have plans to develop on the A25. The Clerk will draft a full response and circulate for agreement before the deadline..

Update regarding IDOX return for Planning and Building Control – Return to Agile System from January 2026.

9.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

25/01917/PA UPPER BROOMS, COMMON ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9ED. Outline Application: All matter reserved except for access (Erection of 1x detached dwelling (Self build). “Objection on the grounds off no special circumstances to justify development in Greenbelt and national landscape area.”

25/01939/PA LITTLE KNOLL, COMMON ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9DY. Remodelling of existing roof, alterations to fenestration, two storey extension and proposed detached garage. “No objection.”

25/01880/PA REDWELL HOUSE, REDWELL LANE, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9EE. 1 x Sweet Chestnut, 3 x Oak, Group of Thuja and Yew, 1 x dead Ash and 1 x small leaning Holly (applicants ref. T1, T3, T7, G1 and G2) - Remove. 1 x Sweet Chestnut (applicants ref. T2) - Reduce

Signed.....Dated.....



“historic limb”. 1 x Sweet Chestnut (applicants ref. T4) - Reduce western side of the tree as specified by 2.5m and lifting drooping branches. 1 x Sweet Chestnut (applicants ref. T5) - Remove southern and southwest limbs overhanging the buildings. 1 x Beech (applicants ref. T6) - Remove 3 low limbs overhanging the boundary line, Lift the canopy by reducing the lower drooping branches.

25/01931/PA 51, FEN POND ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9JE. Single storey rear extension. “No objection.”

TM/25/02004/TPOC14 14 Nutfields Ightham Sevenoaks Kent TN15 9EA Remove/fell an established Sycamore tree on the corner of the property 2.75 meters from mains water supply stop cocks to 14 to 18 Nutfields. Also reduce canopy adjacent Cherry tree by about 20% to maintain shape.

Standing in Woodland W1 of Tree Preservation Order. “Objection to removal of the Sycamore”

For information:

25/01852/PA WEYBREAD, COMMON ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9AY. T1 (Applicants ref) Sweet Chestnut –Crown lift to 4 m. T2 (Applicants ref) Sweet Chestnut –Dismantle to ground level. Standing in W1 of Tree Preservation Order. (Not proceeded with)

25/01864/PA MOTE FARM BUILDINGS AND LAND, MOTE ROAD, IVY HATCH, Section 73 application to vary condition 2 of planning permission TM/23/01590/FL Erection of a greenhouse, polytunnels and potting shed. To enable the structures to remain on site for a further 3 years, allowing time for funding to be identified to enable the approved greenhouses to be erected.

25/01932/PA 3, NUTFIELDS, Ightham, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9EA. G1 (Applicants ref) Prunus, Hawthorn & Beech saplings - Reduce height to approximately 4-5ft. G2(Applicants ref) 4x Oaks - Crown lift suckers up to 3m. T3 (Applicants ref) Whitebeam Saplings - Fell to near ground level. T4 (Applicants ref) 1x Beech & 1x Oak Sapling - Fell to near ground level. T5 (Applicants ref) Sweet Chestnut - Crown Lift by 2m. T6 (Applicants ref) Beech Saplings x2- Fell to near ground level. T7 (Applicants ref) 2x Beech- Remove suckers up to 3m. T8 (Applicants ref) Beech - Crown Lift by approximately 3m. T9 (Applicants ref) Yew under T8 (Applicants ref) - Reduce top by approximately 1.5m. W1 of Tree Preservation Order. Councillor hall to review

25/01958/PA HAWKWOOD, COMMON ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9AY. Non Material Amendment to planning application TM/22/02611/FL to remove side facing ground floor windows and addition of parapet wall along flank wall.

9.2 PLANNING DECISIONS – APPROVED

TM/25/01536/PA IGHTHAM RECREATION GROUND, Sevenoaks Road, Ightham, Sevenoaks.

Advertisement Consent for 1 x double post mounted sign.

25/01632/PA LITTLE HOLT, COPT HALL ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9DU. Details of conditions 3 (materials) and 8 (archaeology), submitted pursuant to planning permission

TM/25/00394/PA (Erection of detached five bedroom dwelling and double garage).

25/01719/PA APRIL COTTAGE, BATES HILL, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9HB. 1 x Acer Crimson King (front) (T1 applicant reference) - Crown reduce by 30% (1.7m height and 1.25m width). 1 x Cherry (T2 applicant reference) - Crown reduce 30% (2.0m height and 1.75m width)

25/01766/PA THE OLD FORGE, SEVENOAKS ROAD, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9AA. 1 x large willow tree. Reduce crown by 30-40%. Standing at front of property

25/01772/PA9, FEN MEADOW, IGHTHAM, SEVENOAKS, TN15 9HT. 1 x Willow (applicants ref. T1) - Reduce regrowth back to most recent historic points of reduction as specified. Standing in Area A3 of Tree Preservation Order.

10. CORRESPONDENCE – (* circulated in advance)

Local Government Reorganisation submission

Request to subscribe to CPRE - £5 per month - agreed

Signed.....Dated.....



MOTO JR Update – Confirmation of contribution towards professional fees. The Clerk will circulate the breakdown, if unsuccessful our contribution will be about £7,000 and if successful we will be awarded costs so the contribution will be considerably less.

Register of electors 2026

News updates from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Deposit of building waste at Ashwell, Mote Road, Ivy Hatch - discussed above

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement Team report for 2025

AOB - Councillor Gunson asked whether high fencing around Skips was our responsibility? It was decided that that was for them to arrange and come to us for permission if it was a requirement. Councillor Mitchem reported that she had received a request to cut the trees around the Tennis Club and will go and investigate what work needs doing.

Agreed spend for a leaving gift for Bernadette Gillow, the Clerk will arrange with suggestions given.

Councillor Willingham thanked everyone for their contributions this year.

The meeting closed at 10:20 PM

Signed.....Dated.....