

Westwell Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 14 January 2026 at 7pm, Westwell Village Hall, Westwell

1. Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

2. Present and apologies

Present: Cllrs Bainbridge (chair) Drury (vice-chair), Ward, Wyatt, Bartlett, Farrington and Lister.
Clerk – Sonia Young.

Apologies: Cllrs Richards and Hutchinson.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4 4.1 Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2025 and matters arising.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Westwell Parish Council held on 3 December 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Drury. **Seconded:** Cllr Bartlett. **All in agreement.** Cllrs Lister and Farrington abstained as not present at the December meeting.

Resolved:

It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

4.2 Matters Arising

4.2.1 Tutt Hill highways clutter

The clerk has reported all issues to KCC, and they have acknowledged each item and will address them in due course. The clerk to request a new salt bin.

4.2.2 ABC (dog) waste bin Westwell Cemetery.

The existing bin will be moved in towards the cemetery in the spring.

4.2.3 SLRA meeting with Katie Lam MP about M20 noise reduction.

Cllr Bartlett circulated a draft letter from SLRA to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The letter requests a follow-up response from Katie Lam MP re M20 noise. It was agreed that the letter should be sent. The letter to be copied to Boughton Aluph and Eastwell and Kennington parishes.

4.2.4 ABC Parish Forum

The Clerk has circulated copies of the presentations at the ABC Parish Forums to all Cllrs.

4.2.5 Debris in St Mary's Churchyard

The PCC will discuss removal of the debris at their January meeting.

Decision Items

5 5.1 Planning applications received for comment

5.1.1 PA/2025/2128 – Elvey Cottage TN25 4JP

Existing outbuilding reduced in scale, bulk and mass.

WPC view: The proposal is to reduce the existing outbuilding in scale, bulk and mass. The evaluation of the proposal is to assess the reductions and to consider them against three key elements of planning policy that apply to this site: 1. What is proposed is a standalone annexe: it therefore needs to be compliant with the criteria set out in Policy HOU9 of the Ashford Local Plan (ALP30). 2. As the main building is a Listed heritage asset, the annexe that would result from the changes proposed in this application need to be compliant with ENV13 i.e. not

causing harm to the heritage asset. 3. As Elvey Cottage is in the National Landscape there is a duty to ensure that what is approved makes the landscape and its heritage assets better – this means that any harms that would occur have extra weight in a planning decision and the wider landscape visual impacts have greater importance. The proposal as shown in the drawings suggest the building will be made smaller by removing the side extensions (Log store etc) and the “dormer” features.

There is a claim that the height will be less by reducing the ridge height to the approved 6080mm approved under 17/00319/AS. By looking carefully at each of the approved, as built and proposed drawings, it appears that the ridge height in all cases scales to 6080mm. If this is correct, additional information is needed to advise whether the “as built” is on made-up ground so that the height from the ground is greater than the plans approved in 2017. As proposed, it appears that building would not change this ridge height. The dominant appearance of the existing building is a combination of height and mass.

“As built”, the building is approximately 2 metres wider than the 2017 approved plan and 1.5 metres deeper on a scaling of the drawings. This is a significantly larger footprint. It is this larger footprint that gives the existing building its bulk and mass. Removing the side extensions and the dormers as proposed will not reduce the core mass of the building. Two adjacent walls would need to be moved inwards to reduce this core mass, and this is not proposed. HOU9 (c) requires that “the proposed annexe is suitable in size, scale and materials and clearly ancillary and visually subordinate to the principal dwelling.”

For reasons of unchanged height and unchanged core mass this requirement would not be met. HOU9 d, e and f are also not met. It also follows that the harms to the Listed Asset and to the National Landscape are therefore still unacceptable in planning terms under ENV13 and ENV3a.

Resolved

It was proposed to object.

Proposed: Cllr Drury. **Seconded:** Cllr Wyatt. **All in agreement.**

Resolved.

It was resolved to object to the application.

5.2 Update on Planning Matters in progress

5.2.1 Works at the Sandbar Business Park

Cllr Drury said that external works at the site are nearing completion. A meeting is planned for January with all parties and questions to be raised will include when the Acoustic fencing between the site and Lake House will be installed; when the external bright yellow on the building corner will be corrected to the less bright – and approved - cinnamon yellow; confirmation re lighting arrangements as no additional information has been added to the ABC portal re timing and movement controls (OTH2025/0655); how the site is to be used by IKRA as regards working hours, parking spaces and occupancy.

6. 6.1 Financial Report

6.1.1 Approval of payments for January in accordance with the budget

WPC main account

| Expenditure to approve for Jan 2026 | | Method | £ |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Salary payment January | Clerk | BACS | 946.40 |
| Tax and NI | HMRC | BACS | 368.75 |
| Mowing inv 5458 | All Seasons Gardening Services | BACS | 678.60 |
| Total | | | £1993.75 |

| | | | |
|---------------|--|--|---------------|
| Income | | | |
| Total | | | £00.00 |

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 31 December 2025: £16,414.00 less unrepresented cheques as follows:

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

Actual balance = £16,414.00 as at 31 December 2025

WPC deposit account

| | | | |
|--------------|--|--|----------------|
| Expenditure | | | £ |
| Total | | | £134.40 |

| | | | |
|---------------|----------|------|---------------|
| Income | | | |
| 9 Dec | Interest | BACS | 22.21 |
| Total | | | £22.21 |

Bank Reconciliation Balance £46, 613.58 as at 31 December 2025 less un-presented cheques as follows:

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

Actual balance: £46, 613.58 as at 31 December 2025

| | |
|---|-----------|
| General reserve | 20087.39 |
| Grant | 2, 279 |
| HiP | 7,859.42 |
| Deposit | 15,937.77 |
| Special reserves: £450 tidy undergrowth Gold Hill | 450.00 |

**Interest added to the General Reserve*

WPC No 2 Account

| | | | |
|--------------|--|-----------|---------------|
| Expenditure | | Cheque No | £ |
| Total | | | £00.00 |

| | | | |
|---------------|--|--|---------------|
| Income | | | |
| Total | | | £00.00 |

Bank Reconciliation Balance £3.44 at 31 December 2025. Actual balance = £3.44 at 31 December 2025.

Resolved

6.1.1 WPC resolved to approve the accounts as noted and payments in accordance with the budget.

Proposed: Cllr Dury. **Seconded:** Cllr Lister. **All in agreement.**

Resolved. WPC approved the accounts as noted and payments to be made in accordance with the budget.

6.1.2 Verge/ undergrowth maintenance on Gold Hill

Cllr Farrington circulate a quote to all Cllrs prior to the meeting for the work to be done.

Resolved

WPC resolved to approve the quote as circulated.

Proposed: Cllr Farrington. **Seconded:** Cllr Drury. **All in agreement.**

Resolved: WPC approved the quote.

Action: Cllr Farrington to confirm the work and ask that it be done as soon as possible.

Information items**7. 7.1 Correspondence**

7.1.1 - Cllr Bainbridge will write to ABC in response to its recent press release about the increase in broadband connectivity across the borough. The letter is to query when Westwell can expect to be looped into any such improvements. The letter will be copied to ABC chief executive Tracey Kerly.

7.1.2 - WPC has been notified that East Kent Highways' community engagement officer Kieran Doble is to be seconded to a different department for 12months which Cllrs acknowledged will be a loss after such good work has been done in the Parish via the Highways Improvement Programme that he manages. WPC to write to Mr Doble to thank him for all his work for the parish. Letter to be copied to Kent County Cllr Jeremy Eustace.

Action: Clerk

7.1.3 - A resident has written to WPC to request that 20mph speed limit proposed for the centre of Westwell village, under the parish Highways Improvement Plan, is extended further out.

Action: Cllr Bainbridge to write to the resident about the proposed scheme.

7.1.4 - A resident has written to WPC about highways flooding and the impact on nearby homes. Cllrs also raised the issue of two other parish highways that flood frequently and become impassable.

Cllrs will try and meet with the resident to understand more fully the issues raised and conduct on-site investigations. They will also gather the what2words locations and images of the two other roads that flood. Residents will be encouraged to report the flooding via the KCC reporting portal every time that it happens so the frequency can be tracked by KCC.

Action: The Cllrs will forward their findings to the Clerk who will submit them to KCC for attention.

7.1.5 - Cllrs have been invited to attend the opening of Lake House Wellbeing Community Interest Company (CIC).

Action: Clerk to confirm the attendance of Cllr Wyatt, and that of Cllr Bainbridge nearer to the opening date. The Clerk to also send the good wishes of WPC for a successful, well-attended day.

8. 8.1 Playground

Following a site visit with the contractor, Cllr Farrington circulated the proposed siting for the climbing stack to all Cllrs in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that the site nearer to the shelter was the optimum position.

Action: Clerk to liaise with the contractor to organise the installation before the end of March and book the post-inspection health and safety check when the completion date is known.

9. 9.1 Cemetery**9.1.1 Memorial health and safety checks**

The Clerk circulated a draft policy to all Cllrs in advance of the meeting. Cllrs to review.

Action: Clerk to action feedback and circulate a final draft prior to the February meeting.

10. 10.1 KALC Meeting

Cllr Bartlett will raise broadband provision for rural parishes at the January meeting.

11. 11.1 Highways

See Item 7.1.4

12. 12.1 Village Hall Management Committee

A deep clean of the village hall is pending and a roller blind will be fitted across the patio doors.

Cllr Bainbridge will investigate the potential provision and need for an electrical generator.

Cllrs Farrington and Bainbridge will update the contact names and details within ABC document recently circulated by the clerk. This will ensure that when village hall is needed in an emergency as a welfare centre, the set up and communication lines will be speedy.

13. 13.1 Parish Priority Projects

Update at the February meeting. Cllr Bainbridge has applied for a Kent Country Cllr grant towards expanding the monthly community coffee morning.

14. 14.1 Westwell Eye

A financial report was circulated by the Clerk to all Cllrs ahead of the meeting. The Hare and Hounds is a new advertiser.

It was agreed to print 10 more issues – five copies for The Wheel and five copies for The Hare and Hounds.

Action: Cllr Bainbridge to liaise with the editor to increase the print run and the delivery team to enable this.

15. 15.1 Community Resilience Plan

Cllrs agreed it was important to understand how the Westwell Plan interfaces with the ABC Community Resilience Plan.

Action: Cllrs Ward and Bartlett.

Residents who step forward to assist in an emergency with the WPC Plan following the publication of the call for volunteers in the February publication of the Westwell Eye, will be asked to get in contact with Cllr Ward or the Clerk.

16. Additional Items

16.1 - Cllr Bartlett will report at the February meeting following speedwatch checks in Sandyhurst Lane. He said initial findings showed that 60% of vehicles were exceeding the 30mph speed limit.

16.2 – Clerk to liaise with PC Aaron Hopkins to see what meeting dates he hopes to attend. The Clerk to propose a date for the Annual Meeting to Cllrs for approval and then invite the PC to attend.

16.3 - It was agreed to add the date of the next meeting to the foot of each meeting agenda.

16.4 - Clerk to circulate details of how each Cllr can migrate their email to.gov.uk

The meeting closed at 21.21 hrs. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4 march 2026.

Chairman's Signature.....