

Westwell Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 2 July 2025 at 7pm, Westwell Village Hall, Westwell

1. Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

2. Present and apologies

Present: Cllrs Bainbridge, Drury, Ward, Richards, Bartlett. Clerk – Sonia Young.

Apologies: Cllrs Lister, Hutchinson, Wyatt and Farrington.

No members of the public were in attendance.

3. Declarations of Interest

All those Cllrs living close to sites submitted under the call for sites for the 2042 Local Plan. No Cllrs have pecuniary interests to declare.

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

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Westwell Parish Council held on 4 June 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Richards. **Seconded:** Cllr Ward. **All in agreement.** Cllr Bartlett abstained as not present at the June meeting.

Resolved:

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

4.2 Matters Arising

- **SLRA meeting with Katie Lam MP.** Meeting confirmed for 29 July. Cllrs Bainbridge and Drury will attend. Cllr Bartlett will submit a paper summarising all independent noise assessments.

- **Adult gym signage.** Installed adjacent to the rig.

- **ABC bin Westwell Cemetery.** The Clerk is in ongoing communication with ABC Environmental Services to have it relocated. Currently, ABC has not accepted that the bin is 'theirs'.

- **Cemetery signage to show plots by name.** A quote from Medash is pending.

- **Inspection of WPC Accounts for the 2024-25 year.** The Clerk confirmed that there had been no requests to review WPC's financial year.

Decision Items

5 5.1 Planning applications received for comment.

5.1.1 PA/2025/1084 – 12 Sandyhurst Lane, TN25 4NS

Proposed ground floor rear extension with roof lights and fenestration alterations following removal of conservatory.

WPC view: The proposal is to replace the UPVC conservatory with a brick extension. The roof will be a combination flat roof with a roof light and tiled pitched sides, thereby retaining the amenity of the first-floor rear bedroom window. The proposal is to keep to the same footprint as the conservatory but moved to the north side of the plot. This will improve the amenity of the garden as well as the amenity of the house for the same footprint. There would be new sets of bi-fold windows from the dining room and new garden room into the rear garden. The proposal will improve the property without loss of amenity for neighbours.

Resolved

It was proposed to raise no objection.

Proposed: Cllr Ward. **Seconded:** Cllr Bartlett **All in agreement.**

Resolved.

WPC will raise no objection.

5.1.1 Notification of Class R at Leda Park (former Oakover Nurseries site) Mortley Plant and Agri

This is an outlying plot to Oakover Nurseries land holdings that has been sold on to Jason Mortley. It was once the seedling area of the Nursery, but this was moved west when the land was bisected first by the M20, which divided this site from land to the south which is now the Sandbar site and then further by the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (now HS1). This notification is for the small land parcel south of HS1 and north of the M20, which has access to the A20, and is now to become the yard for a plant hire and landscape contracting company.

The site is high ground close to the Kent Downs National Landscape boundary to the north; therefore, activity that produces increased lighting in this rural area would be of concern. Increased traffic on and off the A20 on this rising ground north of the bridge over the M20 could become an issue; Access into and out of the adjacent Leda Cottages is already difficult. Ideally, there should be a mechanism to trigger a limit on traffic movement if the business expands beyond an “absorbable” level. As currently notified, there is neither a lighting problem nor a traffic issue to be addressed.

Although the matter of the Class R notification for a small building change of use on the site will be dealt with by ABC Planning purely on the technical rules that apply to Class R, WPC agreed it would be sensible to use the opportunity of this notification to flag these wider potential issues of lighting and traffic in case they arise in the future.

Action: The Clerk.

5.2 Update on planning matters in progress

5.2.1 Works at the Sandbar Business Park

WPC agrees with Kent Downs urging ABC to seek its own expert guidance on the lighting proposals. WPC’s concerns from a non-technical reading of the information provided are that there is no information at all on how the working hours lighting controls will work. The descriptions pre-curfew and post curfew appear, but with no detail as to the lighting differences between these two different lighting states. Even more concerning is that the TamLite design package appears to be focused entirely on demonstrating energy saving using a system called TamLite Vision controls which is calculated at 12 hrs per day 365 days per year. This is clearly not a system designed for the working hours specified in Condition 12, unless that is somewhere in information not yet provided.

Given the rural (E2) and sensitive nature of the site (setting of the National Landscape) with a large warehouse building already under construction, it is very important that the lighting is fully designed for the circumstances and use of the site’ and that this is provided with a non-technical summary so that stakeholders and neighbours can understand and be reassured that this site will have minimal light spill in non-daylight working hours. Also, it will be largely or totally dark during non-working nighttime and at weekends, to the times specified in Condition 12.

Action: Clerk to submit comment to ABC planning officer Oliver Peel with a request that the additional comment (agreed above) is added to the planning file. Cllr Bainbridge to send the same to Helen Locking.

5.2.2 ABC Local Plan 2042

WPC expects to hear more at the end of July after the ABC Cabinet meeting.

5.2.3 Elvey Cottage – appeal to Planning Inspectorate vs planning enforcement.

Ref: 3352530. The appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against the enforcement was dismissed by the Planning Inspector. There is no action for WPC.

6. 6.1 Financial Report

6.1.1 Approval of payments for July in accordance with the budget

WPC main account

Expenditure to approve for July 2025		Method	£
Salary payment July	Clerk	BACS	920.75
Tax and NI	HMRC	BACS	353.59
Mowing inv 5211	All Seasons Gardening Services	BACS	678.60

Adult gym resident training	Hayley Orange health & Fitness	BACS	150.00
Total			£2101.94

Income			
Deposits x 2 @ £20 each	Adult training	BACS	40.00
Total			£40.00

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 30 June 2025: £14, 035.79 less un-presented cheques as follows:

--	--	--	--

Actual balance = £14, 035.79 as at 30 June 2025

WPC deposit account

Expenditure			£
Transfer	Special reserve crown reduction	BACS	774.00
Transfer	Special reserve metal cemetery fencing		2210.00
Total			£2984.00

Income			
9 June	Interest	BACS	32.70
Total			£32.70

Bank Reconciliation Balance £46, 596.06 as at 30 June 2025 less un-presented cheques as follows:

--	--	--	--

Actual balance: £496, 596.06 as at 30 June 2025

General reserve	17,255.87
Grant	2, 279
HiP	7,859.42
Deposit	15,937.77
Special reserves: £2,100 picnic tables £374 health safety signage £450 tidy undergrowth Gold Hill £340 plot map	3264.00

**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 30 June 2025. Actual balance = £3.44 at 30 June 2025.

Resolved

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

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

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

Information items

7. 7.1 Correspondence

8. 8.1 Playground

8.1.1 Adult gym equipment – update on training sessions

Update from Cllr Farrington at the next meeting.

9. 9.1 Cemetery

9.1.1 Plot map

The clerk circulated a QR code and draft wording for the proposed sign prior to the meeting for Cllrs to check the code worked and linked back as needed to the cemetery plot map now hosted on the WPC website. The map provides a guide to each plot by surname. It is hoped that it will help loved ones to easily locate individual graves. Cllrs Richards and Ward confirmed that the QR code worked.

Cllrs agreed the wording as circulated.

Action: The Clerk to submit the wording for Medash Signs to a proof can be generated.

9.1.2 Estimate for permanent bollard and chain barrier

Estimate from Mealham Metals is pending.

10. 10.1 KALC Meeting

10.1.1 Update from the EGM

Cllr Bainbridge will circulate a report from the KALC EGM prior to the next meeting. He said his general impression was that the EGM on the subject of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was very useful although it was disappointing that Reform did not attend. He said the majority view was that Kent will end up with four new Unitary Authorities, with one strategic authority covering the whole of Kent and Medway. The deadline for change proposals to be submitted to the Government remains at 28 November, with KCC, Medway and 12 District Councils all able to submit a proposal, although it was thought that there may only be 4 or so alternate proposals from the 14 Councils. He said the major challenges acknowledged by all were how to disaggregate functions such as adult social care, the uncertainty for staff, what the overall cost of the proposed changes will be, and how core services will be maintained during the change. ABC's chief executive Tracey Kerly and Head of Policy and Performance, Charlotte Hammersley, will attend the next KALC meeting at the end of July and answer questions submitted by parish councils on the LGR. Cllr Drury will consider and submit questions on behalf of WPC.

10.1.2 WPC Response to the KALC Survey on Local Government Reorganisation

Action: Cllr Bainbridge will consider and propose responses for WPC.

11. 11.1 Highways

11.2 HiP 2025

Cllr Drury said that the proposed WPC HiP 2025 had been accepted by KCC East Highways. The next steps will be for speed surveys to be undertaken in the village centre of Westwell and for KCC to look at the costs of proposed changes to the junctions and traffic flows at Potters Corners. Cllr Drury said it was likely that traffic exiting Sandyhurst Lane would be left only onto the A20, using the roundabout to turn back towards Maidstone on the A20. She said it was unlikely that speeds on the A20 in that area could be reduced due to the sheer costs of implementation. That said, Cllr Drury added that there was the possibility of s106 developer contributions being allocated to road safety improvements – should any housing developments be approved for the Parish.

12. 12.1 Village Hall Management Committee

No update.

13. 13.1 Parish Priority Projects

Cllr Bainbridge said the August issue of Westwell Eye will be used to engage residents' interest in projects already proposed, and to solicit other suggestions.

14. 14.1 Westwell Eye

The clerk circulated a report to all Cllrs ahead of the meeting. There are two new advertisers.

15. 15.1 Community Resilience Plan

Cllrs Ward and Barlett asked Cllrs to read the draft plan and to make comment back to them before the next meeting.

16. Additional Items

16.1 Banners and signage for the new Greggs retail unit on the A20

Cllr Drury said she believed the promotional signage would disappear after opening.

The meeting closed at 20.50 hrs. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6 August 2025.

Chairman's Signature.....