



WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL

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TO: ALL MEMBERS OF WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL: Councillors are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Westbere Parish Council on **15 September 2025** in Westbere Village Hall at **7.00pm** for the transaction of the business described in the following Agenda.

Amanda Sparkes

A SPARKES, CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

A G E N D A for 15 September 2025 parish council meeting

1. **The Chairman's opening remarks** and reminder of rules for public participation during the meeting – whilst parish council meetings are meetings in and open to the public, they are not public meetings, and to ask for adherence and respect about the public participation opportunity:
2. **Adjournment of the meeting for Parishioners' questions and comments.** The meeting will be adjourned for parishioners' questions and comments. *This is the only opportunity during the meeting for residents to speak.* The period for public participation will last no longer than 10 minutes and a single member of the public is afforded no more than 3 minutes to make their representation, with the discretion of the Chairman.
3. **The parish council meeting to now resume: there is no public participation from this point forward.**
4. **Apologies for absence.**
5. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**, Other Significant Interests & Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests, & reminder for any changes to the DPI register held at CCC, such as change of job or home.
6. **To agree as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting held 21 July 2025**
7. TO RECEIVE the Minutes of the Canterbury Area KALC and KALC AGM meeting held 11 August 2025 with Southern Water as Guest Speakers. TO NOTE the next meeting will be held Tuesday 30th September 2025 at 6pm in Bossingham Village Hall.
8. **Parish Councillors' reports**
9. TO RECEIVE an update from the **Broad Oak reservoir Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting held 10 September 2025.**
More about the Broad Oak reservoir project as a whole at www.southeastwater.co.uk/broad-oak.
10. **Reports from County and City Councillors**
11. **TO RECEIVE any KCC Community Warden report**
TO NOTE all welcome to a "Scam Awareness Talk" at St Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Sturry CT2 0BL on Wednesday 17 September 2025 from 10.45-11.30am.
12. TO NOTE a CCC Parish Council engagement meeting on **Tuesday 23 September** at 7pm to be held at The Guildhall, Canterbury. The agenda will include: The Local Government Reorganisation consultation, with other stakeholders also invited to participate. And a follow-up discussion on the recent KALC survey, addressing key points raised by parish councils.
13. **TO DISCUSS Local Government Reorganisation and any Westbere Parish Council views on whether there should be 3 or 4 Unitary Councils across Kent**
14. **TO NOTE that Cllr Wilson undertook the annual inspection of the parish council's Assets on 01 and 02 August 2025. Actions required:**
 - i) To confirm with WVPS who owns Paddy's bench in the west churchyard – it is not on the parish council's insurance schedule.
 - ii) The Churchyard walls - these are owned by the Church but the maintenance of the closed churchyards is WPC responsibility – the flint walls were added to the WPC Insurance schedule in 2023 with cover for £20,000 now with a value of £22,050 at 01 June 2025 insurance renewal. Walls are in fair condition. Is there any documentation from the diocese setting out what the parish council is and is not responsible for?
 - iii) Picnic bench on the village green – footings have eroded and bench is unstable – requires work to provide stable base for each leg.
 - iv) Commemorative plaque on village green needs cleaning.
 - v) Bench seat at Shrubbery Corner needs cleaning and re-oiling – quote received for £100.
 - vi) BT phonebox/book library – needs tidying and some culling and cleaning internally.
 - vii) Level crossing at Walnut Tree Lane – defibrillator sign on railings has faded location information and needs re-writing.
 - viii) Green bin at Walnut Tree Lane level crossing – not on parish council's insurance or asset register – this needs replacing.

15. Planning matters

Canterbury District Local Plan

TO NOTE the [CCC Cabinet meeting of 08 September 2025](#) resolved to go out to a six-week focused Regulation 18 consultation from 09 September 2025 to 21 October 2025 on new proposed housing sites. (The Bread and Cheese Field remains a carried forward allocated site.)

Tree works in conservation areas

TO NOTE CCC confirmed that Trees in a conservation area are protected by the provisions of Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and so under this piece of government legislation, 6 weeks' notice is required to be served on the Council for any works to trees within Conservation Areas (unless any exemptions set out in the legislation apply). This applies to all trees/all species.

New planning applications:

CA/25/01288 - 27 Church Lane, Westbere, Kent, CT2 0HA

Erection of car port together with cladding and render to all elevations of dwelling.

TO NOTE any new applications that are validated prior to the meeting since the Agenda was posted.

Notifications:

16. **Use of Section 101 Scheme of Delegation** to the Clerk in conjunction with a minimum of two councillors since the last meeting: None.
17. **Finance** - Financial matters, including bank statements and bank reconciliations to be signed by a Councillor (not the Chairman), and Authorisation of payments, and initialling of invoices by two Cllrs.
TO NOTE that the Clerk added the previously owned WVPS bench alongside the Westbere Lakes footpath to the parish council's insurance schedule on 23 July 2025 – and also updated the Fixed Asset Register.
Financial Services Compensation Scheme Annual review – TO NOTE that on 23 July 2025 the Clerk confirmed the parish council's eligibility with Unity Trust Bank for the FSCS – this compensates customers up to a maximum of £85,000 if a bank, building society or credit union has stopped trading or does not have enough assets to pay claims made against it.
TO NOTE that the sector's United Joint Councils agreed a sector pay rise of 3.2% across all spinal points with effect from 01 April 2025 – so backdated pay was paid to the Clerk in the August salary.
Tree inspection – A visual tree inspection was undertaken on 04 April 2025. TO NOTE that the Clerk applied to CCC on 24 June 2025 to undertake tree works for the 18 trees that need work (– 16 in this financial year) hence the planning application above (some were exempt as removal of deadwood does not require permission).
TO NOTE that the Clerk undertook a site meeting with a tree surgeon on 10 June 2025 and TO DISCUSS quotes for the required tree works.

18. **Authorisation of online payments** (Chairman to sign Finance Appendix x2 for Minute book and Invoice file)

Replacement Padlock for the village green waste bin £7.69
Office supplies £11.54
Bourne to Garden – July grounds maintenance £350.00 (£291.67 excluding vat)
Clerk salary, including backpay and Mileage August 2025 £643.84, HMRC £238.36 and KCC LGPS Pension August £276.24
Bourne to Garden – August grounds maintenance £350.00 (£291.67 excluding vat) £350.00
SMS CIS and Payroll Solutions Ltd – payroll services for July, August and September £36.00
CloudNext – annual renewal of .gov.uk domain £60.00
Clerk salary and Mileage September 2025, £575.22, HMRC £205.16 and KCC LGPS Pension September £245.48

BANK BALANCES - bank balances are as follows: At **31 August 2025**: Unity Trust £35,352.12.

19. **CCC Capital Grants 2026-2027**

TO NOTE the Clerk has sought two quotes to apply for a capital grant for replacement box-hedging on the village green and will complete an application by the closing date of Tuesday 28th October 2025.

20. The 2025 edition of the Practitioner's Guide has a new requirement for 2025-2026 that the parish council's website should meet the new minimum accessibility standard WCAG 2.2 AA – C/fwd: the Clerk has attended a training session about this and is working on this. to investigate this.
21. **Clerk report** – for anything not noted elsewhere on this agenda/meeting paperwork.

Canterbury City Council is setting up a Focus Group so that local people can help shape the vision for a new Design Code for Canterbury District. A design code is a planning document that sets out specific design requirements for new development. For example:

- the layout of new development, including street pattern
- how landscaping should be approached including the importance of streets being tree-lined
- the height of buildings and façade materials

Canterbury City Council, along with other neighbouring councils in East Kent, has been awarded government funding for the first stage of preparing a design code – developing a vision.

Volunteers are invited to join a Focus Group to help develop this vision for Canterbury District. The aim is for the code to reflect local people's preferences around the character and design of developments, helping to deliver buildings that have the support of local communities.

Focus Group members will take part in two in-person workshops, to help develop a vision and identify priorities for the Design Code - at The Beane House of Art and Knowledge, 18 High Street, Canterbury, CT1 2RA:

- Workshop 1 – Saturday 27th September 2pm – 4pm
- Workshop 2 - 22nd November 2pm – 4pm

The Focus Group's findings and feedback will help shape the overall vision of the Design Code – covering a range of topics from street design, to building materials, to energy efficiency measures, to parking and bin design.

CCC hopes to recruit 30 members of all backgrounds and ages (18 or over). The recruitment process will be selective, with the aim for the Focus Group to be as demographically representative of Canterbury district as possible.

This means that not everyone who applies to be part of the Focus Group will necessarily be accepted, but CCC will also be circulating additional surveys to gather wider feedback from communities and stakeholders as part of the project.

The deadline for applications was 1st September. CCC will be announcing the selected Focus Group members shortly after the deadline. Cllr Wilson and the Clerk applied.

22. **TO NOTE the August edition of the Newsletter was produced, posted and uploaded**

23. **Two Fields "ransom strip" running between the two fields and option for the Parish Council to acquire it.** As reported to the May 2025 parish council meeting, Cllr Wilson has had a conversation with one of the 5 local shareholders of the company which owns the "ransom strip" running between the two fields. He understands that the majority of the shareholders would like to close the company, and one option which maintains control of the ransom strip might be for the Parish Council to acquire it at little or no cost. Even if there would be no cost there would clearly be legal costs involved, depending on the mechanism for the transfer e.g. taking over the shares of the company would be small cost, a legal transfer of the land would obviously have more costs attached. If Westbere Parish Council takes over this land, then protection from development would be retained. It was resolved at the May 2025 meeting that Cllr Wilson, Cllr P Glover as Chairman and the Clerk as the Proper Officer, formally discuss it with the shareholders on a no-commitment basis, at this point in time, to learn more and consider implications and future benefits/liabilities and future maintenance responsibilities etc that a transfer might bring to the parish council. Cllr Wilson agreed to find out the landowners' availability for a meeting.
Update: No meeting has taken place yet - the shareholders have to have a discussion to see if they all agree, and if not whether there is a mechanism to force the minority to accept the majority decision. Feedback is awaited.

24. **Welcome Pack** – to consider any new households to receive this
25. **TO RESOLVE** bi-monthly parish council meeting dates for 2026 as Monday 19 January, 16 March, 18 May, 20 July, 21 September and 16 November 2026.
26. Closure of the meeting

Meeting dates for 2025: - The parish council meets bi-monthly on the third Monday of each month: 21 July, 15 September, 17 November.