

Minutes of the meeting of Westbere Parish Council held on Monday 15 September 2025 in Westbere Village Hall at 7.00pm.

Present: Parish Councillors:

Paul Glover (Chairman), Sylvia Harlow (Vice Chairman), Kathy Fielding, Granville Glover, and Georgina Glover.

Clerk to the Council, Amanda Sparkes.

4 residents

1. The Chairman's opening remarks

Cllr P Glover welcomed everyone.

2. Adjournment of the meeting for Parishioners' questions and comments.

A resident asked if the order of the adjournment could be moved to after the approval of the Minutes agenda item in future – this was agreed.

A resident advised that someone had come to her house to advise that at the last meeting she had been spoken about but not identified. She explained that she runs a dog grooming business in Walnut Tree Lane but only on two days a week. The Minutes of the last meeting implied that her business had stopped the dustcart accessing the road but she doesn't work Thursdays, so the parking restriction had not been caused by her or anyone associated to her.

Another resident advised that a Pre-Loved Sale event has raised £270 for the village hall. Two residents advised that they had seen a large mobile home on the back of a lorry being escorted by two vehicles driven down Bushey Hill Road into the village. Its final destination is unknown, but it hasn't been seen in Westbere yet by anyone present at the meeting.

A resident advised two drains in Westbere Lane have been cleansed however there is solid debris and leaves by the entrance to the footpath by the village green which really needs to be shovelled up. The Chairman and Clerk will take a look at this.

The meeting continued.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Cllr Dave Wilson (annual leave), Parish Cllr Ken Dekker (annual leave) and CCC Cllr Harry McKenzie.

4. Declarations of Interests

None.

5. Minutes of the last meeting held 21 July 2025

Cllr Wilson proposed, and Cllr Harlow seconded and all councillors agreed they were a true record of the meeting, and the Chairman duly signed them.

6. Canterbury Area KALC

RECEIVED the Minutes of the Canterbury Area KALC and KALC AGM meeting held 11 August 2025 with Southern Water as Guest Speakers.

NOTED the next meeting will be held Tuesday 30th September 2025 at 6pm in Bossingham Village Hall.

7. Parish Councillors' reports

Cllr Granville Glover

Cllr Granville Glover had nothing to report.

Cllr Harlow

Cllr Harlow had nothing to report.

Cllr Georgina Glover

Cllr Georgina Glover advised of a nasty pothole on Westbere Lane which she will show Cllr P Glover for him to report.

She drew attention to properties with overgrown vegetation in Church Lane and Westbere Lane by the main road. The Clerk will ask the KCC Community Warden to visit and door knock/letter drop to the offending households and ask them to arrange to clear this, for the safety of pedestrians mainly but to also improve access and sightlines.

Cllr Fielding

Cllr Fielding advised she had nothing to report.

Cllr P Glover

Cllr P Glover said he had nothing to report.

8. Broad Oak reservoir

The Chairman and the Clerk attended the Broad Oak reservoir Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting held on 10 September 2025. The Clerk's notes are attached as an appendix to these Minutes.

Find out more about the Ground Investigation works, and the Broad Oak reservoir project as a whole at www.southeastwater.co.uk/broad-oak.

9. Canterbury City Councillors and Kent County Council councillor reports

None.

10. KCC Community Warden report

NOTED all are welcome to attend a "Scam Awareness Talk" at St Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Sturry CT2 0BL on Wednesday 17 September 2025 from 10.45-11.30am.

11. CCC Parish Council engagement meeting

NOTED 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. Cllr P Glover and Cllr Georgina Glover will attend this.

12. Local Government Reorganisation and any Westbere Parish Council views on whether there should be 3 or 4 Unitary Councils across Kent

All councillors agreed 3 Unitaries would work best in terms of pattern, layout, finance, size and number of electorate. The Clerk will let the CCC ward councillors know this preference.

13. Annual inspection of the parish council's Assets

Cllr Wilson undertook the annual inspection of the parish council's Assets on 01 and 02 August 2025.

The following Actions required were discussed and resolved:

- i) The WVPS owns Paddy's bench in the west churchyard – and 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. There is a question about whether there is any documentation from the diocese setting out what the parish council is and is not responsible for. Cllr Georgina Glover advised she has no knowledge of when the churchyard closed and offered to speak to the Diocese about this.
- iii) Picnic bench on the village green – footings have eroded and bench is unstable – requires work to provide stable base for a middle leg. The Chairman and the Clerk will look at this.

- iv) The Commemorative plaque on village green needs cleaning. WVPS provided the plaque and will clean this.
- v) Bench seat at Shrubbery Corner needs cleaning and re-oiling – Cllr Georgina Glover proposed and Cllr Fielding seconded that the quote received for £100 be accepted. The Clerk will appoint the contractor.
- vi) BT phone box/book library – needs tidying and some culling and cleaning internally. Cllr Harlow had undertaken that today.
- vii) Level crossing at Walnut Tree Lane – defibrillator sign on railings has faded location information and needs re-writing. The Clerk will look at this.
- viii) Green bin at Walnut Tree Lane level crossing – not on parish council's insurance or asset register – this needs replacing. The Clerk will make enquiries with Canterbury City Council to ask if it is theirs and if so could it be replaced.

14. Planning matters

Canterbury District Local Plan

NOTED the [CCC Cabinet meeting of 08 September 2025](#) resolved to go out to a six-week focused Regulation 18 [new local plan](#) consultation from 09 September 2025 to 21 October 2025 on new proposed housing sites.

There are no new sites in Westbere.

The Bread and Cheese Field remains a carried forward allocated site.

There is Policy N33 for an extension to Montgomery Gardens of 37 homes on Bredlands Lane. This will add pressure to the junction of Bredlands Lane with the A28 and may require highways mitigation, especially as there have been two accidents at this junction this year. There will also be additional pressure on the school in terms of both parking and school places.

The Clerk will put a response together for councillors to approve and send this to CCC.

Tree works in conservation areas

At the last meeting the Clerk was asked to ask CCC if there is any scope to have certain species of trees such as sycamores considered as exempt and excluded from tree work in conservation areas regulations and requirements.

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.

Notifications:

None.

CA/22/01388 - Walnut Tree Livery, Bushy Hill Road, Westbere, CT2 0HE – application still undetermined by CCC for Retrospective application for change of use of land to campsite in addition to existing use for livery/horse keeping. There is no update.

- 15. **Use of Section 101 Scheme of Delegation** to the Clerk in conjunction with a minimum of two councillors since the last meeting: None.

16. Finance

The bank statements and bank reconciliations were signed by Cllr Harlow and the initialling of invoices was also undertaken by Cllr Harlow.

NOTED 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 – NOTED 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.

NOTED 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. 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). The required tree works was undertaken last week. Whilst there the tree surgeon called the Clerk to site to advise that a Scots Pine tree has died over the summer. The Clerk will bring quote(s) to the next meeting.

17. **Authorisation of online payments**

The payments were listed on the agenda. The Chairman signed the Finance Appendix x2 for the Minute book and Invoice file.

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

The CCC Parish Capital Grants for projects to be delivered in 2026-2027 is now open and closes on 28 October 2025. Councillors agreed to apply for the replacement of the dead section of hedging on the village green. The Clerk has now sourced two quotations and will complete the application form.

19. **Website Accessibility**

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 – The Clerk has attended a training session on this and is working on it, and will report back.

20. **Clerk report**

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 were 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 Beaney 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. The deadline for

applications was 1st September. Cllr Wilson and the Clerk applied, but have not heard anything yet. The Clerk will follow this up with CCC.

21. **NOTED the August edition of the Newsletter was produced, posted and uploaded**
22. **C/fwd: 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.

23. **New residents for a Welcome Pack**

The Clerk will prepare and deliver a copy of the welcome pack to Box Cottage and the house on the right-hand side of Box Cottage.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

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Signed: Cllr Paul Glover, Chairman

Date:

Please note these Minutes remain as draft Minutes until they are approved by the parish council at their next parish council meeting.

The parish council meets bi-monthly on the third Monday of each month: Next meeting dates are 17 November 2025, 19 January, 16 March, 18 May, 20 July, 21 September and 16 November 2026.

Appendix: South East Water Stakeholder briefing held 10 September 2025

1. Update on ground investigation works

The contractor is Atkins.

The ground investigation is needed to establish the subsurface conditions to mitigate risk and develop the construction model. And to identify materials for re-use.

A ground investigation desk study and historical information was done first (from the 1970s).

Leading to a ground investigation specification document – this targets gaps, for example for bore holes.

Ground investigation is then undertaken producing ground investigation reports, lab testing and interpretation, and determination of materials - and all of this is passed to the design team.

The area is mainly London clay with sands, and chalk deep down. "Sheer plains" are to be designed out and replaced with different material to ensure no movement and no leaks.

159 boreholes have been done from Blean to Plucks Gutter – although the majority of the bore holes are on the reservoir site. There have been trial pits and found depths to the chalk. (The British Geological Society holds bore hole information from all around the country – the bore hole information will be shared with them.)

Ground investigation work is to finish at the end of November 2025. The report is likely to be an appendix to the subsequent planning application.

Archaeologists are involved in the first top metre. They will do a model and keep a watching brief. Nothing has been found yet. Geophysical surveys are to be done to look for archaeology.

The dam is anticipated to be 18m high.

South East Water is looking to submit a planning application in October 2027, hopefully through the Town and Country Planning Act with the local planning authority, rather than a Development Consent Order through the Secretary of State.

2. Environmental Update

Phase 1 Habitats surveys started April 2025.

Species surveys are being done eg dormice, bats, reptiles, badgers, water voles, otters and beavers, and Botanical Surveys, Tree surveys and Winter bird surveys.

Mitigation will be looked at where required.

A Biodiversity Net Gain of 10% is to be achieved.

South East Water is drafting an Environmental Scoping document – this will be sent to the local planning authority, along with a Habitats Regulations Assessment also. There have been meetings with regulators – Natural England, the Environment Agency, and Ofwat.

Vale Farmhouse is a listed building at the bottom of the valley – South East Water is talking to Historic England about this.

South East Water is wanting a flow-constrained licence from the Environment Agency for the extraction of water, rather than a time-constrained licence.

Catchment teams work with farmers to prevent the use of pesticides.

3. Visitor report – Next steps

From the March 2025 Stakeholder workshop a Visitor Amenity and Recreational Facilities report has been produced. South East Water looked at how the site is currently being used. A socioeconomic study has been conducted, Census data looked at, and traffic surveys have been conducted. A Vision for the reservoir with options, has been produced, for members of the public to look at.

The Vision:

- Water security and water quality
- Protect and enhance the natural environment
- Deliver a valued green and blue community resource
- Work in partnership with local stakeholders.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

Low intensity – walking, fishing, birdwatching – paths and a carpark.

Medium intensity – a greater range of interests, network trails, possibly a visitor centre, café and toilets.

High intensity – a regional visitor attraction including areas for water sport, camping, and visitor accommodation.

The Policy R17 in the Canterbury District Local Plan was written by Canterbury City Council without South East Water's input. South East Water has made a representation to CCC about this – asking that public consultation by South East Water and the results of that finalise the policy. South East Water will conduct public consultation in early 2026.

Visitor and parking analysis:

Upwards of 400 trips per day – by foot, cycle and car.

412-967 on weekdays

1,143 – 1,345 on weekends.

Associated car parking of 75 spaces (low scenario) and 180 spaces (high scenario). KCC's adopted standard would suggest 200 to 360 spaces, consistent with other reservoir facilities.

Stakeholders' feedback from the March workshop:

Most things wanted were:

- An inclusive environment
- Informal recreation
- Play area(s)

- Free parking
- Refreshments (café/toilets)
- Education
- Water Sports

The medium intensity scenario was favourite.

Concerns included:

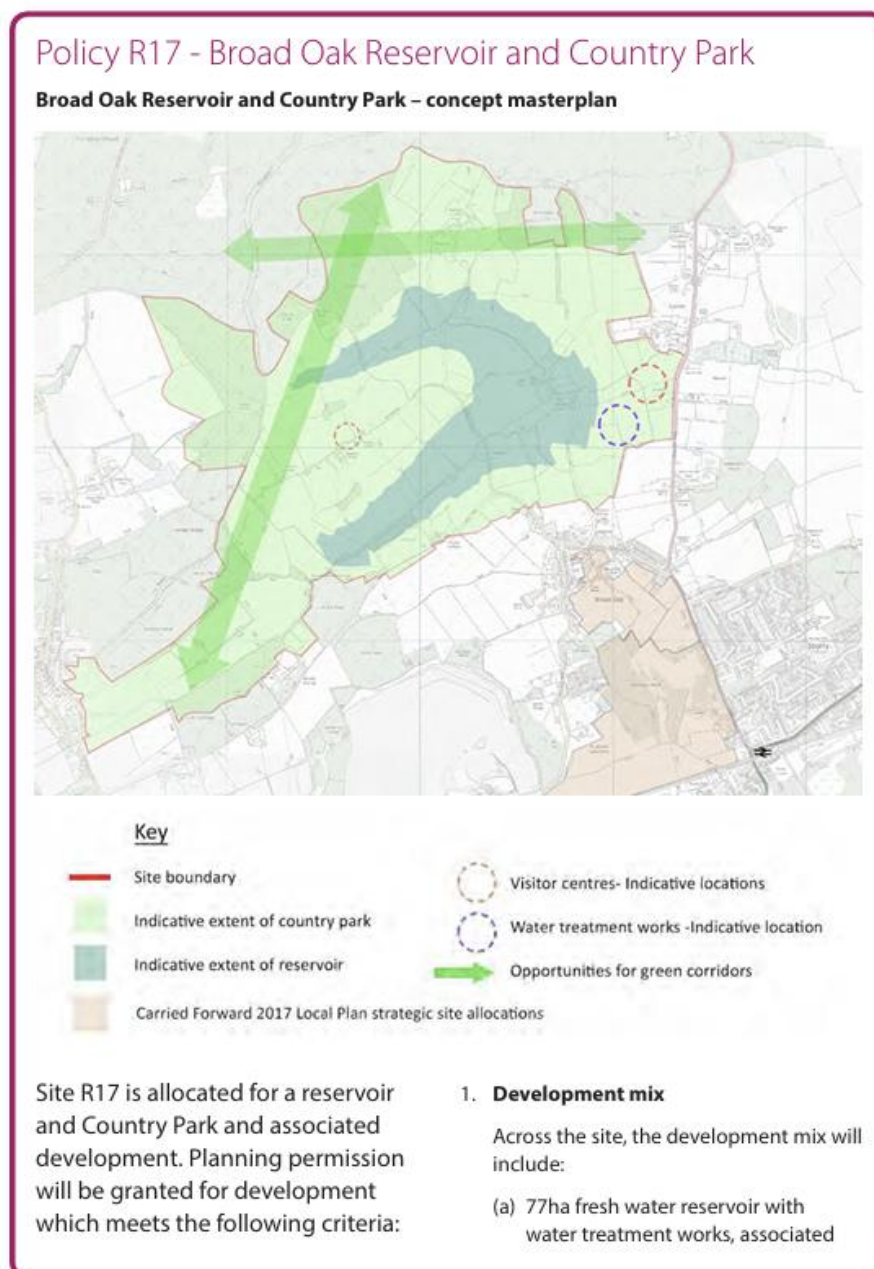
- Trip generation, traffic and noise
- Anti-social behaviour
- Environmental harm during construction

4. Public engagement

Informal consultation – planned for January and February 2026 – with events, webinars, etc. Plans will be shared and shown including a 3-D model. Members of the public will be able to speak to the team and give views on the proposals.

Publicity will be through emails to 65 plus stakeholders (and for them to onwardly share), ITV Meridian and the BBC, and social media. Door knocking/leaflet dropping was suggested.

Canterbury District Local Plan – Policy R17:



infrastructure and realignment of Sarre Penn, if appropriate;

- (b) Water sports including access into the reservoir and associated infrastructure;
- (c) Cafe/restaurant;
- (d) Education/Visitor Centre including community uses;
- (e) Sports and leisure uses such as outdoor pursuits;
- (f) Birdwatching walks including birdwatching hides or shelters;
- (g) Pedestrian and cycle routes including family friendly, wheelchair accessible, and art and sensory trails;
- (h) Picnic areas; and
- (i) Cycle and car parking.

2. Design and layout

The design and layout of the site should:

- (a) Be developed in accordance with a masterplan demonstrating a comprehensive approach to development, long-term management and stewardship;
- (b) Provide development that is sensitively designed to reflect the rural character and ensure design, scale and materials reflect the location;
- (c) The community, education, sports uses and water treatment facilities should be located on the eastern side of the site, sharing an access and parking facilities. Consideration should be given to the scope of the reuse of existing buildings on western side of the site to further

expand the range of facilities available;

- (d) Appropriate relocation, reconstruction and enhancement of the Grade 2 listed building, Vale Farmhouse, Barnetts Lane within the site, in consultation with relevant specialists including the County Archaeologist and Historic England;
- (e) Protect and enhance nearby heritage assets including the Grade 2 Listed Building Blaxland Farmhouse, Locally Listed Building Little Mayton, Mayton Lane Sturry and Tyler Hill Conservation Area;
- (f) Mitigate any adverse noise impacts from the proposed water treatment works; and
- (g) Provide a Minerals Assessment in accordance with the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan and other material considerations.

3. Landscape and green infrastructure

The green and blue infrastructure strategy for the site should:

- (a) Provide sustainable urban drainage which makes use of the existing topography and natural features of the site where appropriate;
- (b) Provide 20% biodiversity net gain, in line with Policy DS21;
- (c) Assess the site's potential to be functionally linked land for golden plover, in line with Policy DS17;
- (d) Incorporate opportunities for landscape and biodiversity enhancements identified within the Local Character Area E2: Sarre Penn Valley set out in Canterbury

Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal;

- (e) Retain and where appropriate enhance the ancient woodland and West Blean & Thornden Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest;
- (f) Ensure a substantial buffer between any development and the West Blean & Thornden Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest, ancient woodland and Little Hall and Kemberland Woods and Pasture Local Wildlife Site;
- (g) Aim to retain as much priority habitat as possible, and provide adequate mitigation where this is not possible;
- (h) Provide habitat, pollinator and ecological connectivity across the site and with the surrounding landscape, including with fragment woodland, ancient woodland and priority habitats; and
- (i) Conserve or enhance the PRow network across the site ensuring key views from the network are protected and that the network provides multiple benefits such as being designed as part of green corridors.

4. Access and transportation

The access and transport strategy for the site should:

- (a) Maximise safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle connectivity to existing routes and nearby settlements including provision of a Herne Bay to Canterbury cycle route;
- (b) Deliver a comprehensive network of safe walking and cycling accessible routes and trails for all levels of mobility, incorporating the PRow network. PRow routes should be sensitively realigned where required;
- (c) Provide primary access from Herne Bay Road;
- (d) Provide appropriate access arrangements and vehicle and cycle parking facilities for community, education, sports uses and water treatment facilities;
- (e) Maintain access to existing residential buildings to the north (and east) of the site; and
- (f) Provide a Transport Assessment to demonstrate the connectivity of the site with the existing highway network, any necessary mitigation and measures to minimise the need for use of private cars.