

HERNE & BROOMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office, Herne Centre, St Martin's View, Herne CT6 7AP

Minutes of the meeting of Herne & Broomfield Parish Council held at the Herne Centre on Thursday 12th February at 7.30pm, for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Present:

Cllr Davis (Chairman)

Cllr Austin

Cllr Binstead

Cllr Blatherwick

Cllr Checksfield

Cllr Collins

Cllr Lambkin

Cllr Maslin

Cllr Strong

Cllr Wilson

Joanne McCann (Assistant Parish Clerk)

021/26 To receive apologies for absence and accept reasons.

City Cllr Jones, Cllr Davison, Cllr White, Cllr Hill and Michele Nicholson

022/26 To receive declarations of interest on items on the agenda and requests for dispensations.

None.

023/26 To confirm the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11th December 2025.

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Two members of the public were present; they spoke about the planning application to extend Goldfinch Nursery and concerns regarding lack of parking and child safety walking to and from the nursery with cars reversing out of the site.

024/26 Chairman's Announcements.

Cllr Davis advised that Community Groups Day is being held at the Herne Centre on Saturday 7th March and all volunteers are welcome.

025/26 To receive reports from County Cllr Mulvihill, City Cllr Jones and City Cllr Paget.

Only City Cllr Paget was present.

City Cllr Paget

City Cllr Paget wanted to inform the Parish Council about a few public consultations. Canterbury City Council launched its draft biodiversity strategy which is open until the 6th May.

Local Government Re-organisation consultation has launched which closes 26th March. Canterbury City Council's annual parking review closes 13th February.

City Cllr Paget stated that she had attended a webinar about the proposed Broad Oak reservoir. There will be further public consultations going forward and the presentation will be shared with Councillors once it has been sent out.

City Cllr Paget also stated that there had been a query from previous meeting where a member of the public had mentioned dog fouling in Windmill Road, the update from Canterbury City Council is that the signs have been made and are going up tomorrow (13th February).

City Cllr Paget has also organised Community litter pick 22nd February, meeting in Cherry Orchard. She has also been involved in looking at bin requirements around the Parish. This has been reviewed by CCC and they have agreed to the following bins: Curtis Wood Park by noticeboard; Canterbury Road by cemetery bus stop; in the alleyway between the school and Norton Avenue; and Lower Herne Road footpath to Redrow development. These should all be in place in the next six weeks.

Cllr Blatherwick reported that there was a bin also missing in Herne Street near the flowerbed and dentist, and Cllr Davis reported a litter build up by Smugglers Cottages. Cllr Blatherwick wanted to consider the environmental assessment scoping of the reservoir, as a lot of the construction traffic will come through Herne which will be a huge impact for the village.

Cllr Blatherwick also discussed a meeting with Vistry regarding the Lower Herne Village development, as they are very concerned that developers aren't pushing ahead in opening the relief road earlier. We are at least a year away from the road opening and it keeps getting pushed back. This means the houses being built by Dandara will not have any link into Herne Bay via foot and will have to rely on cars, this includes if they have children attending school as there is no safe walking route through the new estate. There is also a lack of any community facilities. Cllr Blatherwick made a request that a CCC planning officer attends the next catch-up meeting so they can hear the Parish Council's concerns. Cllr Paget stated that they would also speak to planning about the issues raised.

Action: City Cllr Paget

026/26 Clerk's Report/Correspondence.

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Strode Farm Development update 27th January 2026

Online meeting attended by Tamara Mitchell (Vistry), the Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Cllr Ann Blatherwick, and City Cllrs Robert Jones and Grace Paget.

Points of note:

- Received confirmation that there will be no vehicular accesses on to Lower Herne Road.*
- Phase A has 132 properties currently occupied.*
- Phase B, Dandara site, will contain 104 properties.*
- Concerns raised regarding Phase B access as spine road will not be completed. No safe walking or cycling routes as access will have to be via Lower Herne Road. Particularly dangerous when it is dark.*
- Phase C should begin in the spring with possible completion late 2026.*
- 30 properties in Phase C have been sold to Leaf Living, a private rental housing provider.*
- Spine Road is opening as Phase A completes.*

- *Spine Road should be completed through the whole development by early 2027.*
- *Requested improvements made to PROW, and salt bin moved from behind the fencing.*
- *Asked about site security due to reported thefts from construction sites in the area. Security has been improved because of antisocial behaviour. Now have a dog on site overnight.*
- *Questions raised regarding the community/commercial space. This plot of land still owned by Hollamby Estates. Has been advertised and marketed but nothing agreed.*
- *No discussions have been undertaken with Stagecoach buses regarding providing a bus route through the development.*
- *Reminded about the payment for the noticeboard and planters.*

NALC training: Mastering Asset Management

Online training attended by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk and Cllr Carol Davis.

The training explored the essential principles for managing current and future assets. Some of the things discussed were:

- *the challenges of overseeing new facilities, which may come with business rates and minimal financial support or advance notice from principal authorities.*
- *comprehensive asset management strategies to oversee existing assets and effectively integrate new responsibilities.*
- *practical approaches for navigating financial constraints, including handling facilities with business rates and other financial implications despite limited funding.*
- *insights into optimising asset management practices and staying ahead of evolving challenges.*

The slides to be circulated when received.

Actions from last council meeting

- *The Clerk has arranged a meeting to discuss the parking issues around Streetfield, School Lane and Norton Avenue for 25th March 2026 at 5.00pm in the Herne Centre.*
Attendees: 2 x Herne Infant & Nursery School, 1 x Herne Junior School, 2 x Herne Bay Harriers

Assistant Clerk's report

The report been circulated prior to the meeting.

We are starting to plan the year ahead, and it's exciting to have the Parish Councils 30-year anniversary in May. This will be a lovely celebration and coming together of the community. Our Community Groups Day is looking as though it will be busy also with more groups attending than ever. Any help to run the raffle or help in the café would be greatly received.

It is also exciting to plan the revamp of Broomfield Community Park, and then we can look to hold some walks and talks at the site and even a community picnic.

The Lunch Club continues to thrive with 32 attending on Wednesday for fish and chips followed by trifle.

With temporary Admin Assistant in the office, we have managed to start going through policies again to ensure we are up to date and she is also organising the maintenance for the Herne Centre, updating the website and social media, booking in gardens for the safari, and organising Community Groups Day.

I have now been able to restart my CiLCA so hoping I can get Unit 5 submitted before the next full Council.

027/26 Finance.

To ratify payments made since last meeting.

These were approved.

To approve payments presented at this meeting; schedule and bank reconciliation supplied.

Cllr Davis reported Sum Up have agreed a £20 refund as a goodwill gesture for the problems with the machine.

To report on any income received.

Bookings: £5,906.85

Sum Up Card Payments: £1,942.71

Adverts: £885.60

Craft Fair: £100

Events: £1045.70

Total: £9,880.86

Cllr Davis asked if this income included the café, which it does not as that is separate.

028/26 To receive the draft minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 27th January 2026.

The draft minutes were received.

029/26 To receive the draft minutes from the Herne Centre Committee meeting held on 29th January 2026.

Cllr Austin asked what the decision was about cancelling the Christmas party for this year. Cllr Lambkin replied that there were mainly two large groups that bought tickets and if they hadn't attended it would have been a very quiet event. At Christmas the Centre has a lot of bookings and enquiries for this date so it would be better to use the Herne Centre for another event which we would see greater income.

030/26 To receive the draft minutes from the Local Government Review Asset Working Group held on 4th February 2026 and to discuss any points of note.

A briefing note had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Austin asked permission from the Parish Council on behalf of the Local Government Reorganisation & Assets Group to engage with the local City Councillors, for the purpose of:

1. Advising their intention to produce a NHP and our planned communication to our Parish residents regarding the NHP.
2. Proposing that a variant of the communication, including further information regarding the impacts of the local government re-organisation on those residents in unparished areas and presenting the possibility of boundary changes, serving as a dual consultation if presented as a joint statement. As a lot of the public are unaware how this will affect them.

Cllr Austin also asked permission from the Parish Council for members of the LGR & Assets Group to:

1. Make contact with KCC to establish the detail of their retained responsibilities and what liabilities will transfer with the Mill.
2. Meet with Friends of the Mill to understand the ongoing income/costs of maintaining the Mill and what they see as their continuing involvement.

All requests were agreed by the Council.

Action: Cllr Austin on behalf of LGR and Assets Group

031/26 To receive the draft minutes from the Planning and Highways Committee meeting held on 5th February 2026 discuss any points of note, and any other planning and highways issues.

Cllr Blatherwick read the objection submitted about Goldfinch Farm.

Members objected to this application as it constitutes a severe overdevelopment of the site which would drastically exceed that of the original planning permission granted (10/00547). This application is not a variation of a planning condition. It is in fact an application to double the size of the development granted in planning permission 24/00766.

Members were also very concerned about the impact that additional parked vehicles would have. Even with the recent extension to the car park there remains insufficient on-site parking for the existing nursery provision. There is very little off-site parking available, and existing issues will only be exacerbated.

Cllr Blatherwick also spoke regarding a minor correction to the draft minutes about the tree in Hunters Chase, that the root barrier would impact the removal of moisture in the curtilage of the applicant's property, creating heave as the ground re-hydrates, and the fact settlement readings had not been recorded since 2024.

Cllr Blatherwick also spoke about the scoping of the proposed reservoir and the fact that the project would have a big impact for Herne with regards to construction traffic and lorries.

Scoping for reservoir – considered effect on Herne traffic and construction.

Cllr Blatherwick also stated that she is concerned that there are no details about the lighting or surface for the public footpath from Lower Herne Road to Parkland Road and the fact a six-month closure notice had been issued by KCC. This is a footpath well used by children accessing the secondary school. The construction company are not maintaining the footpath currently and it is flooded.

The Assistant Clerk informed members that we had received complaints about the pothole repairs in Mill Lane and Albion Lane. Cllr Blatherwick stated that she had spoken to a worker and they hadn't been advised how big the job was so we having to reattend, and the road closure has been extended to let them finish the works.

Cllr Binstead asked if the Parish Council had received any complaints about the potholes in Lower Herne Road as she had seen three cars recently with flat tyres caused by the pothole. There was also a discussion about works vans from the Dandara site using Lower Herne Road when they should be using Bullockstone Road.

Cllr Davis stated that the two grass triangles at Broomfield Pond are common land and were registered in 1979 as such.

032/26 To receive reports from council representatives on outside bodies and other organisations.

No reports

033/26 To receive information regarding any environmental issues, including reports from the Tree & Pond Wardens.

Cllr Checksfield reported that she had attended the Friends of Herne and Broomfield Ponds AGM with Cllr Collins on Tuesday night. Cllr Checksfield asked Cllr Davis if they were aware why they must keep a large contingency in the account or can it be spent. Cllr Davis asked if it was in the constitution and this was going to be checked.

Cllr Davis stated that we have had a request from the BMX Club about a possible cull on the rabbits at the Community Park, and a report that there is myxomatosis affecting some of the rabbits. It was decided after discussion for members to check the park at dusk to see any evidence of myxomatosis first. The Assistant Clerk has also contacted KCC about permissions if myxomatosis is found in the rabbit population and is awaiting a response.

Cllr Davis informed us that the lease runs out in 2029 for the Community Park, it was suggested that after the Annual Parish Meeting, we look to ask KCC for an extension or renewal before the Unitary Authority takes over.

Action: Assistant Clerk

034/26 To discuss the quadrennial review of Town and Parish Councils allowances.

A report was circulated prior to the meeting.

It was agreed to increase the allowances of elected members and the Chair in line with the East Kent Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel's recommendations.

Action: Parish Clerk

035/26 To discuss the quote received regarding monitoring of the Herne Centre public wi-fi/internet access.

A report was circulated before the meeting.

The questions raised at the previous Council meeting about blocking of legitimate sites and monitoring were answered by the company.

Blocking legitimate sites: we are constantly working on improving our database and it is designed to minimize false positives, but if a legitimate site is ever blocked, it can easily be allowed through using custom allowlists (whitelisting). This gives you full control over what is accessible in an instant.

Also, you can reach out to our support team via the chat/phone/email and expect a reply within 3 minutes. After you submit a re-categorization request, it usually takes under 10 minutes for us to correctly re-categorize it, so you do not need to adjust any setting manually.

Reporting/Statistics: Yes, you can view reports showing attempts to access blocked or inappropriate content right from the Dashboard. This helps you understand how the filtering is working and provides visibility into overall usage and protection effectiveness.

It was unanimously agreed to 3 year monitoring and re-evaluate after three years.

Action: Assistant Clerk

036/26 To discuss the quotes received regarding replacing some of the Herne Centre emergency lighting.

It was agreed to progress with the second quote as we have used this company before and they have proved to be capable of the repairs. The Parish Council agreed to allow extra money for the possible replacement light in the office which has since had an issue of switching on and off since the inspection.

Action: Assistant Clerk

037/26 To discuss the quotes received for the cleaning of the drains at the Herne Centre.

A report was circulated before the meeting.

It was agreed to go with the first quote from the previous company we have used.

Action: Assistant Clerk

038/26 To discuss the proposed works to the Broomfield Community Park and results of the survey.

A report was circulated at the meeting.

The Parish Council agreed to undertake the repairs to the BMX track fence, the replacement of the fence at the back of the site and to reinstate the steps. The quote from the second company, who previously installed the fences was chosen. Regarding the information boards a separate report would be completed and this will be discussed at a later meeting.

Action: Assistant Clerk.

039/26 To discuss the proposed purchase of Herne Centre equipment

A report was circulated at the meeting.

After numerous discussions it was decided to ask the Herne Centre Manager to also look at domestic machines and for the report to be resubmitted for discussion at the next full council meeting.

Action: Herne Centre Manager

040/26 To approve the Herne & Broomfield Parish Council IT Policy.

The policy was approved with minor amendments.

041/26 To approve the Herne and Broomfield Parish Council Disciplinary Policy.

The policy was approved with minor amendments.

042/26 To discuss the grant application received for funding from Hi Kent.

Cllr Austin voiced concern over the application as its not in the spirit of the policy to offer to larger charities and the direct benefit to our residents could not be demonstrated. This was echoed by the other councillors. There is only £500 available for this year and next. It was agreed for the grant to be advertised in the newsletter and to consider applications from smaller organisations that would directly benefit from the money.

Action: Assistant Clerk

043/26 To discuss 30-year celebration of the Parish Council.

Cllr Davis stated that we were going to have a barn dance but due to a clash with the church it was suggested to make it an afternoon tea celebration with a band. Cllr Blatherwick was keen to show all we have achieved using the old Parish Plan. Cllr Davis

suggested inviting previous councillors. It was agreed to go ahead with an afternoon tea buffet, with the Local History Group providing a video and the Parish Council producing a display for about 80 people with a £10 ticket charge.

044/26 To discuss Herne Centre and Parish Office staffing.

This item will be preceded by a resolution Under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude the public and press due to the confidential nature of the business being discussed

Herne Centre:

The Assistant Clerk advised that Finance and Resources Committee had agreed to change the Amenities Manager and Amenities Assistant job titles to Herne Centre Manager and Herne Centre Deputy Manager, respectively, with some amendments to both job descriptions. Responsibility for assets outside of the Herne Centre will come under the parish office.

Herne Centre Deputy Manager Vacancy we have received applications and this will continue to be advertised in the newsletter, website and social media.

Parish Office:

The Assistant Clerk advised that the Finance and Resources Committee had agreed to extend the Temporary Admin Assistant's contract for a further 3 months, and that the Assistant Clerk increases her hours to 30 hours per week, commencing on 1st March 2026.

045/26 To receive any reports from Parish Council members.

Cllr Strong asked who would check the rabbits at the Community Park, Cllr Davis confirmed that some councillors and staff would have a look to see.

Cllr Checksfield wanted to clarify if we have a cultivation licence from the grass triangles at Broomfield Pond. The Assistant Clerk agreed to find out and report back.

Action: Assistant Clerk

046/26 The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on 12th March 2026.

Meeting Closed 21.15