

Notes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 13th April.

Eighteen members of the public attended including members of Blean Parish Council and County and Ward Councillors.

The speakers were

- Lucy Mangnall-Green from Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership.
- Ania Bobrowicz – Save the Blean.
- Alela – 2nd Whitstable Cubs, Beavers and Sea Scouts.

Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership.

Lucy gave a very interesting talk which included explaining that KSCP do work in Blean and helped in the development of Keirs Meadow, they also do habitat work in Clowes Wood and the Big Blean walk along with tree planting in Neals Place.

Along the river Stour they have collected 1,218 bags of litter and 100 large items. There are 69 river wardens and 43 riverfly monitors. There are plans to replace the sculptural seat in Clowes Wood in the summer/autumn 2026 for which they are looking for donations.

Save the Blean

Ania gave a very full and informative update on the work that is continuing by the Save the Blean group following the withdrawal of C12 in the Draft Local Plan.

She drew attention to a Protect Ancient Woodland petition that has been set up and encouraged residents to sign and publicise it. There is a BirdWatch walk planned for the 27th April.

2nd Whitstable Cubs, Beavers and Sea Scouts.

Akela outlined the various activities and events they have carried out since starting in 2024 which includes Community visits, St. George's Day parade, sport and physical activities, outdoor adventures, overnight stays and arts and crafts. They have received a Wild Kent Award. Examples of their artwork were displayed.

The Parish Council Chairman thanked the speakers for their interesting and informative talks. Following refreshments the monthly Parish Council meeting took place.

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13th April.

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Those Present: Cllr. P. Hutt (Chairman); Cllr. H. Samuelson (Vice-Chairman); Cllr. A. Jeffers; Cllr. S. Mohan; Cllr. J. Russell and Clerk Denise Horswell.

Also Present: County and Ward Cllr. A. Ricketts; Ward Cllr. S. Jupe and three residents.

1. Apologies for Absence.

No apologies had been received.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Resignation of Cllr. Akers and notice of Vacancy.

Following the resignation Of Cllr. Akers a notice of vacancy has been published on the Parish Council website and on the village noticeboards. Once 20th April has passed the notices of vacancy will be taken down and a co-option can take place if anyone comes forward. There are now three vacancies on the Parish Council.

3. Changes to DPI's & Declarations of Interest in matters to be discussed:

No changes were declared.

4. To Approve: Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting: of 9th March 2026.

The Minutes were **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Samuelson; **SECONDED** by Cllr. Jeffers and **APPROVED** by all **Members present. The Minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

5. To Approve: BPC I.T. Policy.

This is to comply with new regulations, Assertion 10, which is a mandatory compliance requirement for parish and town councils, focusing on digital governance, data protection, and IT management under the 2025 Annual Governance Statement. BPC website hosted by HugoFox is completely compliant. **Proposed by Cllr. Hutt, Seconded by Cllr. Mohan and APPROVED by all Members present.**

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6. Finance:

6.1 Invoice Payments (Banking Report circulated to Cllrs. for approval and payments paid between meetings).

April 2026

DD	Lili Waste Services	Waste Collection April	£126.58 (Vat £21.10)
Bacs	Mr K Waddington	Handyman Wages March	£211.75
Bacs	Mrs D Horswell	Clerk Salary March	£885.13
Bacs	Mrs D Horswell	4 x Litter Pickers	£9.99
Bacs	HMRC	PAYE & NIC March	£341.98
DD	XLN	Telephone & Broadband April	£116.07 (Vat £19.35)
DD	HugoFox	Monthly Website Charge	£11.99
DD	HugoFox	Monthly email charges	£20.99
	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Service Charge	£7.00
Bac	BVHMC	Hall Hire April	£36.00
Bacs	Meadow Grange	Handyman Supplies	£54.94 (Vat £9.17)

Total Paid Out: £1,822.42

Bank Statement as at 31st March 2026 - Current Account £27,428.16

(This does not include all the outgoing and incoming transactions in this banking report).

PROPOSED by Cllr. Hutt; **SECONDED** by Cllr. Jeffers and all Cllrs. present **APPROVED** the bank payments.

It was noted that the VAT refund claim for 2025/2026 for £2,618.34 has been submitted to HMRC.

7. Planning: (Planning Report for Discussion circulated to Cllrs. Prior to the meeting)

PLANNING REPORT April 2026

Planning Applications:

26/00276 - Erection of single-storey detached dwelling - Land To South Of 25 Honey Hill

Blean Parish Council note that the developer has tried to address one of the 3 reasons for refusal for a similar proposal in 2019, namely ecology and wildlife issues, by submitting reptile and ecology reports to address these concerns.

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Nevertheless, the principle of a new dwelling is still unacceptable for the reasons given by the appeal inspector in 2019.

For this reason, Blean Parish Council objects to this proposal.

26/00290 - Change of use of stable block to holiday accommodation - **Hothe Lodge , Tyler Hill Road.** Whilst Blean Parish Council do not raise objection to the proposed holiday accommodation, it is on provision that there is a relevant planning condition or Section 106 legal agreement imposed to ensure that the use of this building remains as holiday accommodation and is not occupied as a separate independent new dwelling in the countryside.

26/00352 - Change of use of existing detached garage to self-contained dwelling with associated parking together with single-storey side extension - **Land To Rear Of 1A Chapel Lane - Comments by 17th April.**

Decisions by CCC:

26/00137 TPO no 8/1990 - T2 cut back 1 Oak branch growing over the roof from neighbours land into 24 Honey Hill by approx. 4 metres or the nearest growth point. - **26 Honey Hill – GRANTED**

25/02279 - Retrospective erection of 1.8m close boarded fence to front boundary. - **37 Blean Hill - REFUSED**

Appeals

Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/W/23/3332825

24 School Lane

Retrospective application for single-storey detached agricultural storage.

Appeal DISMISSED.

7.1 Update: 25/02369 – 140 Blean Common – application for car wash.

No further update.

7.2 Blean Common Development. There have been no further issues.

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7.3 To Note: Draft Local Plan consultation for comments until 5pm on Monday 18 May 2026.

7.4 Update: Withdrawal of C12 in the Draft Local Plan.

A response has been received to the joint letter which had been sent to the Acting Vice-Chancellor of University of Kent from the Chairs of Hackington, Harbledown & Rough Common and Blean Parish Councils, copied to CCC Councillors, the Vice Chancellor of Greenwich University and MP Rosie Duffield. This was not encouraging and shows the University is determined to go ahead.

For Consideration & Comment – Save The Blean Briefing Paper (circulated to Cllrs. prior to the meeting).

Proposed by Cllr. Hutt, Seconded by Cllr. Samuelson and all Councillors present AGREED to work with Save the Blean and Hackington and Harbledown and Rough Common Parish Councils.

8. Reports from Ward Cllrs and County Cllr:

8.1 County and Ward Cllr. Ricketts:

Shelford Landfill

Meeting with Environmental. Moving more into recycling and less into landfill.

Health Overview Committee

Moving of the Stroke Unit from K & C hospital, which has won awards, to William Harvey.

LGR & CGR Review

The consultation is still open for Local Government Reorganisation. There is a whole District Review for the unparished areas.

Sculptural Seat in Clowes Wood

£1,000 pledged from the Members Grant.

8.2 Ward Cllr. Jupe:

Bio-Diversity Grants.

Dog Poo Posters. 2nd Whitstable Cubs, Beavers and Sea Scouts are designing Dog Poo posters, if they are approved they will be able to be used in our village.

Local Plan – A number of junctions are being changed in Canterbury.

Canterbury Hedge and Draft Biodiversity Strategy - Information about the Canterbury Hedge Project, an ambitious initiative to create a roughly 16 km continuous hedgerow spanning the whole district from Yorkletts in the west to the Wantsum Channel in the east. The hedge will pass through Blean Parish, through the open countryside between the A299 and the edge of the Blean woodland.

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9. Reports and Updates:

9.1 Village Hall Report: - Cllr. Russell.

Next meeting on 20th April.

9.2 N.H.W:

All relevant reports are circulated to Cllrs. weekly. It was noted there are lots of scams circulating.

9.3 Footpath Report: Cllr. Samuelson.

All the paths are dry.

9.4 Highways Report: Cllr Jeffers.

Cllr. Jeffers reported there are currently roadworks on Blean Common and the Thanet Way has overnight closures. Westgate Towers has now been finished.

9.5 Speedwatch Report:

Following Mike Akers resignation from the Parish Council there is now a need for a new co-ordinator.

9.6 Clerks Report.

April Report

Recreation Ground

Rubber safety surface worn away under one of the swings – contact a play area repair company.

Faults Reported:

Dead trees outside shops reported to Landlord 1/8/25 – **response received.**

Surface of the Crab and Winkle Way – Reported to PROW - **Ref 250880766 – Closed. Other Agency Responsible.**

CB18 – Overgrown vegetation and blocked drainage - Ref: 251014820 – Awaiting Allocation.

CB14 – Fallen Tree – Ref: 251227405 – Awaiting Allocation.

Correspondence Circulated:

KALC - Feedback from Dog Fouling Questionnaire

Canterbury Community Safety Partnership Annual Conference – 18th March.

Reopening Manston Airport – 2026 Airspace Change Consultation until Monday 22nd June 2026.

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Blean Woods Article - Mid-February to mid-March 2026

Kent County Council - Water Supply Inquiry - Parish/Town Councils

Kent ACRE - Supporting Rural Communities Through Our Village Halls

Canterbury Hedge and Draft Biodiversity Strategy - Information about the Canterbury Hedge Project, an ambitious initiative to create a roughly 16 km continuous hedgerow spanning the whole district from Yorkletts in the west to the Wantsum Channel in the east. The hedge will pass through our Parish, through the open countryside between the A299 and the edge of the Blean woodland. This corridor will reconnect fragmented habitats, strengthen ecological networks, and support key species including Turtle Dove, Hedgehog, and Hazel Dormouse.

The project aims to restore and expand hedgerows across a wide landscape where hedge networks are currently degraded. It will involve planting around 50,000 hedgerow plants, creating a resilient, species-rich habitat that links woodland blocks and improves wildlife movement.

Alongside the ecological benefits, a major aim is to engage with farmers, landowners, and local communities about the importance of hedges. Hedgerows can complement land management, support pollinators, reduce soil erosion, and store carbon. The project also aligns with the Canterbury District Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy.

We are especially keen to speak with local farmers or landowners who may be interested in new hedgerow planting or restoring lost boundaries. Introductions or shared contacts (with permission) would be extremely helpful in progressing this work.

There will also be opportunities for volunteer planting, school involvement, and community participation as the project develops.

Blean Woods article - March

KCC - Road Safety and Active Travel Group Newsletter - Issue 8

CPRE - latest update on our countryside.

KALC Canterbury Area Committee - Save The Date - Friday 22 May 2026 – Chartham Village Hall 6.30pm.

Consultations

Canterbury District Local Plan (Regulation 19) consultation - haveyoursay.canterbury.gov.uk

The consultation is open from **Monday 23 March until 5pm on Monday 18 May 2026.**

10. Matters raised by the Public:

A resident raised the matter of Butlers Court Farm planning application which had been granted by CCC for six dwellings but have now applied for twelve which is out for consideration by CCC.

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He also spoke about speeding in Chapel Lane and motorists parking on the grass verges. Ward Cllr. Ricketts advised him to keep reporting speeding to the Police.

A resident thanked the Parish Council for applying to CCC to have double yellow lines installed in School Lane.

11. Matters to be discussed and updates on pending projects: (Any relevant papers circulated to Cllrs. prior to the meeting)

11.1 Update: BPC Highway Improvement Plan – no further update.

11.2 To Discuss: Future of the Royal Oak Pub – An application for a license has been applied for and it is understood it will be re-opening soon.

11.3 To Discuss: Replacement of the wooden seat on the recreation ground.

It was agreed to replace the wooden seat with one similar to the one in the Memorial Area and the same inscription as on the existing seat to be added.

12. Councillors' Reports.

12.1 Cllr. Jeffers said he will chase 24 School Lane appeal with Ward Cllr. Smith. It was noted that the fence at 37 Blean Hill, which had been refused retrospectively by CCC Planning, has not been removed.

He also raised the need for more Parish Councillors for Blean.

12.2 Cllr. Mohan said he has spoken with a lady from Harbledown regarding Community Assets who is happy to help. Cllr. Mohan also spoke of the Kent Wildlife Trust Action group meeting he had attended which was very good but, unfortunately, not well attended.

Regarding Save the Blean, Cllr. Mohan said the signs are to be refreshed and new communication will be coming out with more communication for meetings.

Cllr. Hutt reported that the sewerage pump at the Bellway Estate at Greenhill had failed.

13. Any Other Business for discussion at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 11th May.

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There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.29.

Dates of forthcoming Parish Council meetings in the coming year 2026 unless for any reason they have to be changed –11th May; 8th June; 13th July; 14th September; 12th October; 9th November; 14th December.

These Minutes remain as draft minutes until approved by the Parish Council at the next meeting.

Date _____

Signature _____