

DARENTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 17 September 2025
Jubilee Hall, Waller Park Pavilion, Wood Lane, Darenth, Kent DA2 7LR

Councillors Present: T Hicks, K Holmes, S Holmes (Vice Chairman), G Manuel, T Prentice, D Risely and N Weavis (Chairman)

Also Present: E Mote, Parish Clerk
Councillor M Brown, Kent County Council
Three members of the public

The Chairman reminded the meeting of the protocol regarding the audio and visual recording of proceedings.

56/09/25: TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Parish Councillors I Armitt and K Webb and Borough Councillor P Denman.

57/09/25: TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY OR PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

None received.

58/09/25: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 JULY 2025

RESOLVED: To approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16 July 2025 as a true record.

59/09/25: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Chairman confirmed no urgent items had been raised for Member consideration.

60/09/25: TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL AUTHORITIES AND WORKING GROUPS

(a) Kent County Council Report

Councillor Brown reported on the following topics:

KCC phased roadworks commencing on 14 October; Darenth Park Avenue speed pillows would be lengthened by the Highways team; hedge cutting at local schools; KCC pursuing alternative model for devolution with a mid-November deadline; details for Combined Member Funding.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Brown for his comprehensive report.

(b) Dartford Borough Council Report

Councillor Paul Denman submitted apologies ahead of the meeting.

(c) **Kent County Council Community Warden Report**

Members, having previously received the September 2025 Report provided by Community Warden Joanne Appleton, duly noted its contents.

(d) **Greenlands School Parking - Working Group Report**

The Working Group met with Greenlands School on 4 September 2025, and the following proposals were presented:

Main aim for discussion: working together to reduce risks to child safety.

The following details outlines the first phase discussions of a collaborative effort between the Parish Working Party and Greenlands Primary School to improve child safety, focusing initially on low-effort and low-cost solutions.

First phase low effort/cost

Utilising the car park differently, separate sections for 1) parents that want to drop off and 2) those who park and walk children into school (usually younger children).

Alison Cook (Greenlands Headteacher) to communicate/survey the parents to introduce the above idea.

Greenlands to look into costing up the plan and present back to us at our next Working Group meeting with the School.

A Working group meeting with the school is scheduled for October 8th. We'll be discussing the project's progress, plan, and estimated costs, and will also walk around the parking area in question.

Working Group to request agenda item for October's Parish meeting and present/update above options back.

61/09/25: FINANCE

(a) **To note certified and audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return Notice of Conclusion of Audit 2024-25**

Members were asked to note minor scope for improvement in 2025/2026 from external auditor: In undertaking the review of the 2024/25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return it came to our attention that in 2025 the Council has not met the requirements of the 2015 Accounts and Audit Regulations to start the period of 30 working days for the public to inspect the accounts as soon as possible after the AGAR was approved. The Council should ensure that in 2025/26 they comply with the Regulations.

Members were also asked to note that the Notice of Completion for the 2024-25 AGAR had been published to the parish website on 8 September 2025 in respect of the certified and audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2024-25.

(b) **To agree Monthly Bank Analysis as at 31 July 2025**

(c) **To note Monthly Budget Analysis as at 31 July 2025**

(d) **To agree Monthly Bank Analysis as at 31 August 2025**

RESOLVED: To agree and note financial records, reports and information as presented. Members also noted the addition of the Monthly Budget Analysis as at 31 August 2025.

62/09/25: TO NOTE COMPLETION OF STAFF PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Members noted that the Facility Co-ordinator for Darenth Hall had completed the three-month probation successfully and, having shown commitment and suitability to the role, was now an authorised part-time staff member.

RESOLVED: That Members note that the Facility Co-ordinator had completed the three-month probation and was now a permanent member of staff.

63/09/25: TO NOTE PROPOSED INSPECTION OF PARISH OWNED ROADS AT THE SITE OF THE SHIP PUBLIC INN

Following reports of poor drainage causing flooding at the site, Members proposed to meet with the owners of The Yew Tree (formerly The Ship Inn) with the findings being reported at the Parish Council's October meeting.

RESOLVED: That Members note reports of drainage issues leading to flooding at the site, a meeting be held to consider the details and conclusions presented at the next appropriate Parish Council meeting.

64/09/25: KENT COUNTY COUNCIL BUS SHELTER GRANT

Members noted receipt of details for Kent County Council (KCC) Parish Bus Stop Shelter Grant (PBSSG) scheme 2025-26, which provides financial assistance to Parish Councils for refurbishing or replacing existing bus shelters in poor condition, or, where appropriate, for constructing new bus stop shelters.

After consideration, two Members confirmed they would source quotes for refurbishment of the current shelter and report their findings to full council at the October meeting.

RESOLVED: That quotes for refurbishment of the bus shelter would be sourced and presented at the council's October meeting.

65/09/25: TO CONSIDER CHRISTMAS 2025 ACTIVITIES

The following ideas were presented to Members by Councillor Manuel:

Proposal for a Community Christmas Tree:

I'd like to propose a plan for a community Christmas tree this year. This is a great opportunity to bring some festive cheer to our parish, with a potential location opposite the Co-op or thereabouts.

The good news is that CJ Love has agreed to donate an 8ft Christmas tree, put it up and take it away! This significantly reduces our costs, as the only expense for the Parish will be for the solar lights.

For the setup, the initial plan is to place the tree in a robust, trough-like base. To ensure security and prevent vandalism, the base would need to be securely bolted to the ground. I am currently awaiting a reply from CJ Love as they are looking into the best way to do this. I'll also look into whether the existing CCTV cameras at the Co-op might provide an extra layer of security. The tree itself would be decorated with solar-powered lights to simplify installation and avoid the need for an external power source.

I've had a few initial ideas for involving local groups, which would allow them to take the lead on organising activities. This approach would also help us avoid using the parish's insurance. I'd be interested to hear if you think this type of event could be covered by our current policy.

Decorations: I could reach out to the local school to see if the children would be interested in making decorations for the tree. This would give them a great sense of pride and ownership in the display.

Carol Singing: I could approach the local church to see if they would be willing to organise a carol service one evening. Alternatively, I could ask the school if their choir would like to perform.

This is where I'm at with the proposal at the moment, I believe this is a low-cost, high-impact way to celebrate Christmas with the community. I'm keen to hear thoughts at Wednesday's meeting.

RESOLVED: Members noted the proposals in principle and looked forward to an update at the October council meeting.

66/09/25: TO CONSIDER REPAIRS TO THE WALLER PARK PLAYGROUND

Members were asked to consider and approve playground repairs by Baylis Landscape highlighted in the annual inspection carried out by The Play Inspection Company on 23 October 2024, at a cost of £10,672.95. It was noted that the items highlighted were not of an urgent nature at present and that the Clerk would phase in works as necessary and in line with the next annual playground inspection report.

One Member considered the prices to be unreasonable and offered to source alternative quotes and report to full council at the October meeting.

The Clerk brought to Members attention two items repeatedly reported as part of the Council's internal playground inspection reports, which required attention. After consideration, Members agreed that Baylis Landscapes be instructed to carry out works in respect of replacement safety flooring and rocking horse repairs.

Members would receive additional updates at the November council meeting once the Annual Playground Inspection had been completed.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk instructs Baylis Landscapes to carry out Waller Park playground repairs in respect of replacement safety flooring and rocking horse repairs. One Member would obtain further quotes for other non-immediate items and report to full council at the October meeting.

67/09/25: WALLER PARK WOODEN GARAGE DOORS UPDATE

Members were asked to note further deterioration of large wooden garage doors and approve that quotes be sought for their imminent replacement.

However, one Member thought that the greens maintenance contractor should be liable for half of any costs and suggested an approach be made to Omega Tree Care Ltd. Conversely, the building is owned by the Parish Council, and the current greens maintenance contract allows for storage of equipment provided it is insured by the contractor.

RESOLVED: To note irreparable condition of wooden doors to Waller Park garage and await conclusion of discussion with our green's maintenance contractor with a member of the Parish Council.

67/09/25(a): REVIEW OF DOG WASTE BINS WITHIN THE PARISH

Members were asked to consider whether a review was required for more dog waste bins at Green Street Green Road. Members concluded that a review be carried out to determine if any bins had been removed and if this was the case, were there any posts remaining for new receptacles to be reinstated.

The Clerk would make enquiries with the Borough Council's waste department to confirm collection and charges for any additional bins.

RESOLVED: That the number of replacement bins be determined by any remaining posts and further consideration be given at the October council meeting for any necessary replacements.

68/09/25: POLICY CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

To consider adoption of Risk Management Plan Assessment

RESOLVED: To adopt the Risk Management Plan Assessment as presented.

69/09/25: PLANNING

To consider new applications

DA/25/00584/COU - Land Adjacent Ryecroft Farm Green St Green Rd Darenth DA2 8DX

Conversion of existing building into a one-bedroom dwelling (Use Class C3)

Observations: Members noted the details.

DA/25/00429/FUL - St Fiacre Green Street Green Road Darenth Kent DA2 7HT

Demolition of existing garage and the erection of two semidetached dwellings with parking together with new/alterd vehicle and pedestrian access

Observations: The Clerk applied for an extension to the response deadline and Members submitted the following comments:

1. The development site lies in the Metropolitan Green Belt and as a result there must be a presumption that the development is inappropriate unless 'very special circumstances' exist. The Parish Council notes that there has been no mention of the existence of 'very special circumstances' the Application should accordingly be refused.
2. It is assumed that the development site is deemed to be 'windfall;' as a result, the Parish Council considers it to be an unnecessary incursion on to the Green Belt due to the Borough able to demonstrate an adequate and identified 5-year supply of land for housing.
3. If the Applicant is claiming that the site should be designated as Grey Belt the Parish Council does not consider that the existing garage and outbuilding (for which approval was given last year [24/1466/LDC] is sufficient to constitute 'previously developed land.
4. Notwithstanding the above the Parish Council believes that the proposed building would, due to its size and bulk, be an over development that would have a spatial impact on the openness of the Green Belt and, in addition, would create a cramped appearance to the street scene.

DA/24/00846/FUL - Salinas Darenth Wood Road Darenth Kent DA2 8AA

Partially retrospective (3 existing Traveller pitches) application for a Gypsy/Traveller site, demolition of building and construction of a replacement bungalow

Observations: Members noted the details.

DA/25/00711/FUL - 17 Powell Avenue Darenth DA2 6NT

Change of use of land to residential garden and provision of a hard standing for vehicle parking with dropped kerb

Observations: Members noted the details.

DA/25/00880/FUL - Malt House Farm Green Street Green Road Darenth DA2 8DX

Erection of a building for general industrial purposes (Class B2) and creation of associated yard with associated land lowering, hardstanding and fence (Retrospective)

Observations: Members noted the details.

DA/25/00973/LDC - Land Adjacent Manor Farm Cottages Green Street Green Road Darenth DA2 8DN

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate (existing) for continued storage use of land (Use Class B8)

Observations: Members noted the details.

DA/25/01008/FUL - TWA Water Works Green Street Green Road Darenth DA2 8DH

Application for renewal of existing permission (21/00356/FUL) for single storey demountable office building with extensions to the existing building

Observations: Members noted the details.

DA/25/00840/FUL - The Hermitage Green Street Green Road Darenth DA2 8DX

Demolition of existing dwelling and the erection of a new dwelling.

Observations: Members noted the details.

(b) To note recent decisions and appeals

DA/25/00572/FUL - 2 Lincoln Terrace Green Street Green Road Darenth

Erection of a part single storey, part two storey side extension and associated internal alterations.

Decision: REFUSED TO PERMIT

DA/25/00597/FUL - 8 Powell Avenue Darenth DA2 6NT

Conversion of garage into a habitable room

Decision: PERMISSION GRANTED

DA/25/00627/ADV - Malt House Farm Green Street Green Road Darenth Kent

Display of two non-illuminated freestanding signs

Decision: EXRESS CONSENT GRANTED

DA/24/01438/COU - 19 Darenth Park Avenue Darenth Kent DA2 6JN

Change of use of the site from a residential dwelling (C3 use class) to a children's care home (C2 use class)

Decision: PERMISSION REFUSED

DA/25/00652/FUL - Mabledon Hospital Site Green Street Green Road Darenth

Erection of new secure palisade fence along part of the boundary line with Green Street Green Road

Decision: PERMISSION GRANTED

DA/25/00762/FUL - 87 Darenth Park Ave Darenth DA2 6LX

Conversion of garage into a habitable room

Decision: PERMISSION GRANTED

(c) To consider new applications/recent decisions received after agenda publication

DA/24/01438/COU – 19 Darenth Park Avenue Darenth Kent DA2 6JN

Change of use of the site from a residential dwelling (C3 use class) to a children's care home (C2 use class). PERMISSION REFUSED BY DBC

Decision appealed: Representations to be received by the Planning Inspectorate by 20 October 2025

DA/25/00976/FUL – Darent Valley Hospital Darenth Wood Road DA2 8DA

Erection of a modular, single-story decant ward on an existing car park, along with associated landscaping, car park alterations and all associated works

Observations: Members noted the details.

DA/25/01063/FUL – 21 Darenth Pak Avenue Darenth DA2 6JN

Garage conversion into a habitable room with associated alterations to front elevation

Observations: Members noted the details.

70/09/25: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date for the next Meeting of the Council was confirmed as Wednesday 15 October 2025.

71/09/25: EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

To consider the **exclusion** of the **press and public** for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1(2).

72/09/25: REVIEW OF STAFFING HOURS

Following the exclusion of the Press & Public, Members considered and agreed proposed changes to staffing hours effective from 1 October 2025.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting to Members.