



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MARDEN PARISH
COUNCIL AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY
23RD SEPTEMBER 2025 COMMENCING AT 7.30PM AT THE
ALLENS, ALBION ROAD, MARDEN**

033/25 PRESENT

Cllrs Boswell, Dobinson (in the Chair), Newton, Rabot and Turner were present. The Deputy Clerk was also in attendance.

034/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Goda, Summersgill and Tippen gave their apologies for this meeting.

035/25 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Cllr Boswell declared an interest in item 039/25 (Open Space - Southons Field) as a resident backing onto the field; Cllrs Newton and Turner declared an interest in item 043/25 (Outside Bodies Reports - Memorial Hall) as both Trustees of the Memorial Hall.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation

036/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllrs received, and accepted as a true record, the Minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 22nd July 2025. These were duly signed by the Chairman.

037/25 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no members of the public in attendance.

038/25 DEPUTY CLERK REPORT

The report was submitted to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Unfortunately, the Parish Council was unsuccessful in their request for a Japanese Cherry Tree. The football goal posts had been vandalised and the Caretaker has removed the net fixings and put these in storage. The Deputy Clerk has continued to chase the Happy to Chat signs for the Playing Field benches. There are no current projects for the Community Payback Team but this has been added to the Amenities Site Meeting agenda to see if there is anything they can assist with. Cllrs noted.

039/25 OPEN SPACE

Playing Field

Play Inspection Report from MPC

The reports for the Playing Field Play Area, Napoleon Drive Play Area, the Sports Wall and the Outdoor Gym Equipment had been received from the Caretaker for MPC. There were no issues to report. Cllrs noted.

Caretakers To Do List

A new Caretakers To Do List was given to the Caretaker in September and this was circulated to Cllrs. Cllr noted.

Southons Field

Play Inspection Report from MPC

The reports for the Play Trail, Swings and Football Goal Post had been received from the Caretaker for MPC with no new issues to report. Cllrs noted.

Other Open Space

Strategically Important Play Areas (SIPA)

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) are gathering information about future play provision in the borough and the condition of the play spaces. Cllrs were asked to answer questions regarding the play area at Marden Playing Field. The Deputy Clerk completed the form and this would be sent back to MBC.

Machinery for Open Space

The Deputy Clerk raised current council owned machinery provided to the Caretaker/Groundsman and its future needs. Cllrs requested the Clerks to create a spreadsheet of current machinery, value, replacement costs, lifespan and for a discussion to be had with the Caretaker/Groundsman to assess whether current machinery is fit for purpose. Cllr Turner also recommended that an Equipment Policy be created and the Deputy Clerk would discuss this further with the Clerk. The spreadsheet would be circulated to Cllrs prior to being taken to the Finance Committee meeting for future possible budget costing.

Trees

Monthly Tree Inspections

The monthly tree inspections had been received and no issues were reported. Cllrs noted.

040/25 CEMETERY

Exclusive Right of Burial Certificates

Two Exclusive Right of Burial Certificates were put before the meeting and these were signed by Cllrs Boswell and Turner.

Hedgerow Planting

Cllr Rabot reported that the Council had been offered 1,000 hedgerow saplings by Maidstone Borough Council. These would have to be received and planted anytime from November 2025 to January 2026. The hedgerow would then complete the boundary around the extension of land at the back of the Cemetery. Cllr Rabot informed Cllrs that the Police Cadets would help with planting and a suggested date to do this would be from Saturday 24th January 2026. Cllrs agreed with this recommendation and this would be taken to Full Council for agreement.

ICCM Autumn Journal

Cllrs received the link to the ICCM Autumn Journal and a hard copy was available at the meeting. Cllrs noted.

041/25 PUBLIC TOILETS AND CAR PARK

Public Toilet Issues

Cllr Boswell raised the issue of accessibility for wheelchair users at the Public Toilets. Cllr Turner agreed and the Deputy Clerk suggested that this be added to the Amenities Site Meeting agenda for Cllrs to take a closer look at the building.

Car Park Issues

There were no car park issues to report.

042/25 AMENITIES SUB-COMMITTEES AND SUB-GROUPS

Environmental Sub-Group

The Environmental Sub-Group meeting took place on Tuesday 29th July and notes of the meeting were circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllrs noted. Green Homes (Retrofit) online event was being arranged for Monday 13th October at 10.00am. Cllrs Boswell, Rabot and Turner expressed an interest in attending.

Estate Management Plan

Cllrs on the Environmental Sub-Group reviewed the Estate Management Plan and made changes. This was circulated to Amenities Cllrs prior to this meeting. Cllrs agreed with the changes.

Nature Recovery Plan

Cllr Rabot informed Cllrs that Maidstone Borough Council have announced a grant funding process for communities to improve areas for biodiversity and nature recovery. The Environmental Sub-Group had suggested the area that is already maintained around the Library as a sensory/dementia garden. Cllr Rabot had drafted a paragraph needed for the expression of interest form. Cllrs agreed for the form to be submitted.

043/25 OUTSIDE BODIES REPORT

Memorial Hall

Cllr Newton reported that the ladies toilet had been refurbished. The noticeboards were being updated and there was some decoration of walls taking place. There had been issues reported with the main water heater and Trustees are looking into an on demand unit as well as one for the ladies toilet. There also had been issues with the electrics and quotes for that work were being sourced.

Youth Provision

Cllr Rabot informed Cllrs that unfortunately, working with Charlton Athletic may now not take place as due to Marden being a rural area and the project for them was may be too small. However, Kent Cricket Community Trust had been approached and they can provide a youth bus which provides outdoor sports equipment as well as gaming consoles inside the bus. The sessions do have a cost and whilst these initiatives may not have been well attended in the past, they needed time to grow. The Parish Council has historically tried to provide youth provision by working with other service providers. Cllrs were in agreement that whilst the timing of dark evenings and colder weather of

Autumn/Winter may hamper efforts, that Cllr Rabot research further and look to the Spring time. Cllr Rabot would conduct a communication strategy and work with the Kent Cricket Club on how to reach young people. Youth Provision would remain on the agenda of the Amenities Committee Meetings for future updates on this project.

044/25 OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Outstanding Issues List

There has been a new double bin provided by Maidstone Borough Council outside the Church Green shops. The Deputy Clerk has chased about the moving of an existing bin near the West End Tavern to Albion Road and is awaiting a response. The Solar Panel project for the Public Toilets and the Changing Room Refurbishment project will be added to the list of current projects.

045/25 OTHER AMENITIES ISSUES FOR DECISION

Southons Field 2026 Booking

The Deputy Clerk raised with Amenities Cllrs on the Open Space Sub-Committee that the Russett Runners were requesting to hold their running event again in 2026 on Southons Field. Cllrs commented that the event held in 2025 was well organised, professional and had no issue with Russett Runners booking Southons Field in 2026.

046/25 INVOICES FOR PAYMENT

The following invoices were put before Cllrs for payment:

Marden Scout Hut – Playscheme Use of Hut - £200.00

P&F Cleaning – Public Conv. Cleaning - £725.00

MPC Grant Funding Request – Baby Umbrella Charity - £150.00

KCC Procurement Services – Photocopier Charges - £2.40

Ian Jones – Unlocking/Locking S/F and Public Conv. – £200.00

Viking – Toilet Tissue/Urinal Blocks - £97.46

Rams Hill – Strimmer Line/Mower Repairs - £143.00

Total: £1,537.85

Cllrs agreed payments and Cllrs Turner and Rabot would authorise on Unity.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.49.

Date:

Signed:

Cllr Dobinson

Chairman, Amenities Committee

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