



TO ALL MEMBERS OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Dear Councillor

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND the Marden Parish Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 8th September 2026 at 7.30pm at The Allens, Albion Road, Marden

Alison Hooker

Alison Hooker (Mrs)

Clerk to Marden Parish Council

1st September 2026

clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk / 01622 832305 / www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend this meeting and may speak during the public adjournment at the discretion of the Chairman and in accordance with standing order 1 e-g. Questions relating to any other items that are not on this agenda should be referred to the Chair of the Council or Clerk as appropriate and outside this meeting.

The law allows the public proceedings of council meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By attending this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, please advise the Clerk if you intend to record any part of the proceedings.

Marden Parish Council operates under General Power of Competence since adopted on 7th May 2024. Minute Reference 012/24.

AGENDA

086/26 PRESENT

087/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence to be received.

Cllrs to inform the Clerk by 5.00pm on the day of the meeting if they will not be attending the meeting.

088/26 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Changes to Register of Interest

Redaction of Cllr addresses

Granting of Dispensation

089/26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

To receive and accept as a true record the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th August and the EFCMs held on 18th and 25th August.

090/26 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members of the public to make themselves known to the meeting as to whether they wish to raise any issue under this item.

The meeting to be adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

Members of the public will be given the opportunity to raise any issue under this item.

EXTERNAL VERBAL REPORTS (if in attendance)

County Councillor Report

Borough Councillors Report

Police

The meeting to be reconvened to discuss item 057/26 onwards.

091/26 CLERK'S REPORT

To receive and note the Clerk's report – *in meeting pack*

092/26 PARISH MATTERS

Reports from MBC and KCC

Cllrs to receive and note written reports from Borough and County Councillors

Borough Cllr reports in meeting pack.

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

Crime Figures

Cllr Rabot to provide a report on receive crime figures.

Crime Figures can be found at: [Marden and Yalding | Your area | Kent Police | Kent Police](#)

Other Police Matters

Communication

Newsletter

Water Issues

Cllrs to receive and updates on outstanding issues

Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP)

Cllrs to receive any new requests for inclusion in the ISP

Changing Rooms Refurbishment

Cllrs to receive any updates from architect on the refurbishment work.

Public Conveniences – Solar Panels

Licence has been received.

Allotments

Cllrs to receive update from Redrow.

Full Council Action Log

For Cllrs to note – *in meeting pack*

Deputy Clerk Position

Cllrs to receive details of the new Deputy Clerk and starting date

Remembrance Sunday

Cllrs to note the Remembrance Sunday service will be held on 8th November at Marden Parish Church.

093/26 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

Cllrs to note the Amenities Committee draft minutes of meeting held on 25th August 2026.

[Draft-Amenities-Committee-Meeting-Minutes-25082026.pdf](#)

Planning Committee

Cllrs to note Planning Committee draft minutes of meeting held on 18th August 2026.

[Draft-Planning-Minutes-18th-August-2026.pdf](#)

Finance Committee

There was no Finance Committee meeting had been held in August.

[Meetings – Marden Parish Council](#)

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Other attended

Those in attendance to update the meeting on the following:

19th and 20th August – Golding Homes “Sports Mash Up”

24th August – Asset Transfer Webinar

24th August – HR Sub-Committee meeting

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

14th September – MBC webinar: Planning Committee changes

15th September – HIP Meeting with Kent Highways

16th September – MBC Parish Conference

16th September – Dementia Group meeting

17th September – Christmas meeting

17th September – Age Friendly Meeting (tbc)

21st September – Chairman/Vice-Chairman/Clerk meeting

24th September – PPG meeting

25th September – Police Drop-In Session at Village Café

26th September – Meet the Council at Marden Library

2nd October – KALC Finance Conference

8th October – Site meetings at Cemetery, Southons Field, Toilets and Playing Field (tbc)

094/26 CORRESPONDENCE

Cllrs to receive the following items for noting:

Marden Parish Council Office Correspondence Log – August – *in meeting pack*

Marden Parish Church Magazine

KALC Newsletter

Clerk/Council publications

095/26 FINANCE

Bank Statements:

Details of bank statements will be made available at the meeting.

Bank Mandates

Cllrs to discuss updates to bank mandates for Unity Trust Bank and Nat West

Payments for Approval

Invoices for Payment

Invoices due for payment to be submitted to the meeting.

096/26 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

[MPC Highways Improvement Plan - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge](#)

Cllrs to note the letter drafted at Planning Committee meeting on 1st September and confirm content.

Speed Watch

Cllrs to note dates for future sessions.

Public Transport

Meeting papers can be found separately to the agenda at: [Full Council Meeting – 8th September 2026 – Marden Parish Council](#)

If you have any questions etc that you wish to ask regarding this meeting please contact the Clerk on 01622 832305 or email clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11TH AUGUST 2026 AT THE ALLENS, ALBION ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Marden Parish Council operates under General Power of Competence since adopted on 7th May 2024. Minute Reference 012/24.

063/26 PRESENT

Cllrs Boswell (in the chair), Dobinson, Gibson, Griffiths, Newton, Rabot, Summersgill and Tippen.
The Clerk was also in attendance.

064/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Adam and Goda.
Borough Cllr Russell also gave her apologies.
Not in attendance: Cllr Turner.

065/26 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Cllr Gibson declared an interest in item 069/26: allotments as a resident of Highwood Green.

Changes to Register of Interest

The Clerk confirmed that all Cllrs registers of interest had been redacted. However, notification had been received from MBC to add additional wording which would be added shortly. Cllrs agreed for the Clerk to undertake this on their behalf.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

066/26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllrs received, and accepted, as a true record the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 14th July 2026. These were duly signed by the Chairman.

067/26 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

No members of the public were in attendance.

The meeting was adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were in attendance.

EXTERNAL VERBAL REPORTS (if in attendance)

County Councillor Report: Not in attendance

Borough Councillors Report: The Local Government Review has been announced with Maidstone being included in West Kent. Work is going on behind the scenes to

appoint Committees etc with the Shadow Councillors will be elected in May 2027. No decision has been made on whether to bring Parish Council elections forward to next year.

Police: Not in attendance

The meeting was reconvened to discuss item 068/26 onwards.

068/26 CLERK'S REPORT

The Cllrs had received and noted the Clerk's report.

069/26 PARISH MATTERS

Reports from MBC and KCC

No written reports had been received for August as several of the other parishes within the ward did not hold a meeting this month. Updates would be provided in September if relevant.

Police Update

Crime Figures

Cllr Rabot provided a report based on the most recent crime figures for June on the Kent Police website. 28 crimes recorded with 18 being violent/anti-social behaviour.

Other Police Matters

The next drop-in session was due to be held on Friday 25th September at the Vestry Hall from 10am.

Issues at Southons Field with people coming through from Appledown Grange and the telephone exchange, sometimes with catapults, and breaking down the fencing. This has been reported to 101 but Cllr Boswell could not obtain contact details for BT to report direct.

Communication

Newsletter

The Summer edition of the newsletter had been delivered and was available on the website. The next edition of the newsletter was currently being drafted.

Water Issues

The Clerk continued to chase Katie Lam MP for a response regarding correspondence sent on water issues in the parish.

Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP)

There were no new updates on the ISP.

Changing Rooms Refurbishment

The architect had contacted the Clerk to suggest phasing the work into two sections (1) refurbishment of the building; and (2) extension of the storage areas. This was to try and get the costings down to meet the S106 funding available. Cllrs agreed to the phasing of the project and Cllr Griffiths would contact the architect to take this forward.

Public Conveniences – Solar Panels

The Clerk had chased the solicitors again for confirmation of agreement to commence works.

Cllr Griffiths agreed to manage this project going forward.

Allotments

The details discussed at the last meeting had been sent back to Redrow. However, Redrow were querying the agreement for a commuted sum. The

Clerk had sent over a copy of an email received in 2020 providing details of this agreement.

Full Council Action Log

Cllrs noted the action log. Cllrs were asked to view this to ensure that there were no actions outstanding for themselves to undertake.

Byelaws

Following receipt of the letter from the Secretary of State Cllrs Adam and Newton along with the Clerk had met to go through the queries. Changes had been tracked and the Clerk had resubmitted the application.

Annual Parish/Residents Meeting

Cllrs agreed to hold next year's Annual Residents meeting as a social event inviting village organisations along with residents.

070/26 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

There was no Amenities Committee meeting held in July.

Planning Committee

Cllrs noted the Planning Committee draft minutes of meeting held on 21st July 2026.

Finance Committee

There was no Finance Committee meeting had been held in July.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Other attended

Those in attendance to update the meeting on the following:

20th July – Memorial Hall meeting: report to be given at Amenities Committee meeting.

20th July – closing date for Deputy Clerk applications. Cllrs were informed that interviews were due to take place on 20th and 24th August.

20th to 31st July – Marden Summer Play Scheme: A report would be submitted to the Amenities Committee meeting.

23rd July – Meeting with Chairman/Vice-Chairman: meeting held to discuss end of Play Scheme during Clerk's absence.

10th August – Resilience Planning meeting: Notes circulated

10th August – Highways Working Group: Notes circulated

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

18th August – Environmental Sub-Group – Cancelled. Cllrs were asked to consider daytime meetings as it may be easier for attendance.

19th and 20th August – Golding Homes "Sports Mash Up" – this is currently being advertised.

071/26 CORRESPONDENCE

Cllrs received, and noted, the following items:

Marden Parish Council Office Correspondence Log – July

Marden Parish Church Magazine

KALC Newsletter

Clerk/Council publications

072/26 FINANCE

Bank Statements:

Revenue Accounts

Nat West: £18,206.72

Unity: £163,432.37

Capital Account

CCLA: £57,614.34

Payments for Approval

Payments agreed via email and authorised between meetings

Employees – MPC/Play Scheme staff salaries (Budget Code 4000)

£13,397.86

Authorised by Cllrs Dobinson and Tippen 04/08/26

Alison Hooker – Play Scheme supplies (Budget Code 4015) £185.14

Parent – Play Scheme refund (Budget Code 4015) £112.00

Authorised by Cllrs Dobinson and Tippen 07/08/26

Payments agreed authorised at August Full Council Meeting

HMRC – August NIC/PAYE (Budget Codes 4000/4002) £4,240.17

Alison Hooker – reflector strips (Budget Code 4235) £23.70

Viking – Office/Public Conv. Supplies (Budget Codes 4071/4328) £178.91

Stanleys – Mower/Vehicle fuel and supplies (Budget Codes 4310/4316)

£137.91

Marden Memorial Hall – July Office rent/refuse (Budget Codes 4070/4074)

£300.00

Paul Waring – July contract mowing (Budget Code 4014) £208.68

Castle Water – cemetery water supply (Budget Code 4302) £20.34

Castle Water – Changing Rooms water supply (Budget Code 4225) £17.23

Kent County Council – photocopier charges (Budget Code 4065) £40.84

Total: £5,167.78

Agreed by all Cllrs and authorised by Cllrs Dobinson and Rabot.

073/26 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

The Highways Working Group had met yesterday to discuss the Highways Improvement Plan and to review the list with the matrix previously used to ascertain priority. The new priority list for 2026 had been circulated to Cllrs and it was agreed to submit this to Kent Highways along with a request of an update for outstanding work.

Speed Watch

Cllr Summersgill would arrange future dates and circulate to the speed watch group.

Public Transport

Nothing to report.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.38pm

Cllr Anne Boswell

Chairman

Date: 8th September 2026

Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden

01622 832305 / 07376 287981 / clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk / www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18TH AUGUST 2026 IN THE JOHN BANKS HALL, MARDEN MEMORIAL HALL, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Marden Parish Council operates under General Power of Competence since adopted on 7th May 2024. Minute Reference 012/24.

074/26 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam, Boswell (in the chair), Dobinson, Gibson, Newton, Rabot and Tippen. The Clerk and 11 members of the public were also in attendance.

075/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Goda, Griffiths, Summersgill and Turner.

076/26 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of interest

Changes to Register of Interest

There were no changes to Cllrs Registers of interest

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

077/26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11th August would be deferred until the September Full Council meeting.

078/26 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members of the public were in attendance regarding planning application 26/502754/REM.

It was proposed, and agreed, that the meeting would be adjourned for residents to speak. Comments raised can be viewed at Appendix 1.

The meeting was then reconvened for Cllrs to make recommendations.

079/26 PLANNING APPLICATION

26/502754/REM – Land East of Albion Road and North of Copper Lane,

Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale sought) for the erection of 117 dwellings, together with associated landscaping, open space and other associated infrastructure, pursuant to outline permission 23/504068/OUT (allowed at appeal APP/U2235/W/24/3346817).

Cllrs took residents comments on board (see Appendix 1) and discussed this application. Comments raised by Cllrs included:

- A robust construction plan needs to be agreed;
- Cllrs still did not agree with the highways proposals made at appeal. However, as this did not form part of the reserved matters application it was proposed that a letter be sent to the Director of Highways (cc'd to MBC Planning Officer, County Councillor Black and Katie Lam MP). The Clerk was asked to put onto the next Planning Committee agenda.
- Double yellow lines from Stanley Road to the entrance to the new development be added as a condition. (Previous consultation with residents held in 2023).
- 3-storey apartment blocks went against Marden Parish Council's previous comments on the large developments in the parish.
- Not enough open space within the development and play equipment provision should be made on site.
- Planning statement implies that there will be market housing mix from 2 to 5 bed properties. The planning appeal statement stated there would be bungalows within the housing mix.
- A percentage of the affordable housing/First Homes should be in perpetuity to Marden residents. The housing needs survey undertaken for Marden in 2022 shows this.
- Landscape Management Plan – more robust plan for water management; third of the trees are not native to Marden.

8.20pm – 6 members of the public left the meeting.

Following the above comments the Chairman asked for the decision to go to a vote:

0 – recommend approval
 7 – recommend refusal
 0 – abstained.

8.25pm – 2 members of the public left the meeting.

Cllrs therefore recommended refusal contrary to the following MNP policies:
 Policy BE2 – Residential Amenity regarding the 3-storey dwellings and the impact on landscape viewing north.

Policy BE3 – Sustainable construction: solar panels should be included

Policies NE3 and NE5 – proposals do not seem adequate for the planting. A more robust management plan should be agreed; more native trees should be including in the planting plan.

Other Comments:

TPOs on neighbouring boundary : reference TPO 5014/2024/TPO.

Cllrs support KCC's drainage letter and further information should be provided to show compliance to MNP Policies NE1, NE2, In1 and NE6 before a decision is made on this application; ensure water supply will be available to the site and wouldn't be detrimental to the existing supply.

Consider grey water systems

If MBC are minded to approve the following should be conditioned:

- Lighting on the development
- Double yellow lines between Stanley Road and the entrance to the development.
- Play equipment to be installed on the development
- A robust construction plan.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.41pm

Cllr Anne Boswell

Chairman

Date: 8th September 2026

Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden

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Appendix 1

26/502754/REM – Land East of Albion Road and North of Copper Lane,

Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale sought) for the erection of 117 dwellings, together with associated landscaping, open space and other associated infrastructure, pursuant to outline permission 23/504068/OUT (allowed at appeal APP/U2235/W/24/3346817).

Residents Comments

- 1) Proposed traffic layout for Albion Road. Single track road with right of way/priority. Concerns of residents in Russet Grove re access/egress. Could priority be changed/yellow box be installed.
- 2) Nothing seems to have been changed on the plan following the meeting with MPC in May. Social housing is planned by housing in Seymour Drive.
- 3) 3-storey dwellings are inappropriate for this site. Would be viewed from dwellings on Seymour Drive and from driving into the village on Thorn Road.
- 4) The 3-storey dwellings on Seymour Drive are at the back of the development.
- 5) Dwellings are 10m from Seymour Drive dwellings.
- 6) Construction plan – ie hours of working, noise, would this be something to discuss this evening or at a later stage – this will be a condition and would be submitted separately.



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 25TH AUGUST 2026 IN THE PARISH OFFICE MEETING ROOM, MARDEN MEMORIAL HALL, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Marden Parish Council operates under General Power of Competence since adopted on 7th May 2024. Minute Reference 012/24.

080/26 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam, Boswell (in the Chair), Dobinson, Gibson, Griffiths, Newton, Rabot, Summersgill, Tippen and Turner.
The Clerk was also in attendance.

081/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Goda gave his apologies.

082/26 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of interest

Changes to Register of Interest

There were no changes to Cllrs Register of Interest

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation

083/26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of previous meetings were deferred until the September Full Council.

084/26 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no members of the public in attendance.

085/26 PLANNING APPLICATION

26/502754/REM – Land East of Albion Road and North of Copper Lane, Marden

Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale sought) for the erection of 117 dwellings, together with associated landscaping, open space and other associated infrastructure, pursuant to outline permission 23/504068/OUT (allowed at appeal APP/U2235/W/24/3346817).

Following the discussion and decision made at last week's Extra Full Council Meeting the Clerk had drafted a response based on the comments raised by Cllrs and residents which had been circulated to Cllrs. Cllrs had viewed the document and a few changes were made – see Appendix 1 for final response. Cllrs recommended REFUSAL as application was contrary to Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policies: In6 – Housing for Older People; BE1 – Local

character; BE2 – Residential Amenity; BE3 – Sustainable construction; NE3 – Landscape Integration; NE5 – Landscape Planting.

However, if MBC are minded to approve, Marden Parish Cllrs requested that this application be referred to Maidstone Planning Committee, and that the following conditions should be applied:

- A detailed plan of the proposed lighting on the site
- Installation of double yellow lines between Stanley Road and the entrance to the new development on both sides of Albion Road
- Installation of LEAP play equipment and additional open space
- A robust landscape management plan
- A robust construction management plan including lorry movements/routing.
- Installation of solar panels
- Ensure that the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on the site is at least 20% as outlined in Planning Statement 5.9.3

Additionally, consideration should be given to the incorporation of Swift Bricks/Boxes

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.41pm

Cllr Anne Boswell
Chairman

Date: 8th September 2026

Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden
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Appendix 1

Marden Parish Council Response to Maidstone Borough Council: Response sent to Maidstone Borough Council 27th August 2026

26/502754/REM – Land East of Albion Road and North of Copper Lane,
Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale sought) for the erection of 117 dwellings, together with associated landscaping, open space and other associated infrastructure, pursuant to outline permission 23/504068/OUT (allowed at appeal APP/U2235/W/24/3346817).

An Extra Ordinary Full Council meeting was held on Tuesday 18th August 2026 which was open to the public and 11 residents attended.

Planning Statement 3.4: Access

Many of the residents' views were concerning the highways proposals for Albion Road which was agreed by the Planning Inspectorate at appeal. Parish Councillors agreed that a letter would be sent to the Director of Highways outlining the concerns of residents and the Parish Council regarding these proposals.

Following reviewing the reserved matters application Cllrs raised the following concerns:

Planning Statement 5.4: Scale and Appearance

3-Storey Apartment Blocks

3-storey dwellings went against Marden Parish Council's Marden Neighbourhood Plan:

"Built Environment: A number of the most recent major housing developments included large three storey blocks of flats. The introduction of such buildings is inappropriate and would have a detrimental impact on the rural character of Marden. Strong opposition from the Parish Council led to amendments to reduce the overall height and design of the structures (on some developments) and this was welcomed." Marden Neighbourhood Plan page 19. The 3-storey buildings are contrary to Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policy BE1 – Local Character

The 3-storey dwellings would also have an impact on the residential amenity of the neighbouring development, residents of Thorn Road and to the landscape viewing north – contrary to Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policy BE2 – Residential Amenity.

Planning Statement 5.5: Housing Mix and Tenure

The Planning Statement (page 32) sets out that there will be a market housing mix of 2 to 5 bed properties. However, the Planning Appeal Statement paragraph 6.2.2 states that there would be a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings including bungalows to cater for older and disabled people. The housing mix in the reserved matters application does not provide this mix and is therefore not compliant with Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policy IN6 - Housing for Older People.

Cllrs would wish to see a percentage of the affordable housing/First Homes being in perpetuity to Marden residents as set out in Marden's Housing Needs Survey undertaken in 2022.

Planning Statement 5.8: Landscaping Design and Open Space

Open Space

Although, in principle, the provision of children's play space meets the criteria of MBC Local Plan Policy LPRSA295 Cllrs believe that not enough open space has been provided and a local equipped area for play (LEAP) should be included on this development. The distance from the site to the nearest play park is not in close proximity and children would need to cross the busy Albion Road to access this together with walking along PROW KM281 which is a narrow and often muddy footpath.

Planning Statement 5.12

Energy and Sustainability Statement Table 6

The document does not demonstrate conformity with Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policy BE3 as to why solar photovoltaic units have not been incorporated despite being identified as technically feasible.

Landscape Management Plan

Cllrs are concerned over the watering and management of the new planting when the developer hands over to the management company. It is felt a more robust plan needs to be in place before any transfers.

Cllrs also raised concern over the percentage of native trees/plants to Marden. The Plant Schedule contains a number of non-native trees from China, Himalayas and America. The four hedgerows contain 60% non-native species. Therefore, Councillors feel this is contrary to Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policy NE3 – Landscape Integration and NE5 – Landscape Planting.

Other Issues:

KCC Flood and Water Management Letter dated 14th August 2026

Cllrs concur with KCC's response regarding insufficient information being submitted relating to the provision of a sustainable drainage scheme on the site and further information should be forthcoming to show compliance to Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policies NE1 - Surface Water Management; NE2 - Water Quality; NE6 -Soil Conservation and In1 - Water Supply and Sewerage before a decision is made on this application.

The applicant also needs to ensure that South East Water has sufficient water supply available to the site and wouldn't be detrimental to the existing supply in the village which is already under great strain

Recommendation

Following a unanimous decision Cllrs recommend **REFUSAL** of this application on the following grounds:

Contrary to Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policies:

- In6 – Housing for Older People
- BE1 – Local character
- BE2 – Residential Amenity
- BE3 – Sustainable construction

- NE3 – Landscape Integration
- NE5 – Landscape Planting

If MBC are minded to approve, Marden Parish Cllrs request that this application is referred to Maidstone Planning Committee, and that the following conditions should be applied:

- A detailed plan of the proposed lighting on the site
- Installation of double yellow lines between Stanley Road and the entrance to the new development on both sides of Albion Road
- Installation of LEAP play equipment and additional open space
- A robust landscape management plan
- A robust construction management plan including lorry movements/routing.
- Installation of solar panels
- Ensure that the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on the site is at least 20% as outlined in Planning Statement 5.9.3

Additionally, consideration should be given to the incorporation of Swift Bricks/Boxes

Clerk's Report – Full Council 8th September 2026

Meetings etc 9th September to 13th October

14th September – MBC webinar: Planning Committee changes
15th September – HIP Meeting with Kent Highways
15th September – Planning Committee meeting
16th September – MBC Parish Conference
16th September – Dementia Group Meeting
17th September – Christmas meeting
(TBC) 17th September – Age Friendly meeting
21st September – Chairman/Vice-Chairman/Clerk meeting
22nd September – Amenities Committee meeting
24th September – PPG meeting
25th September – Police Drop-In Session at Village Café
26th September – Meet the Council at Marden Library
29th September – Finance Committee meeting
2nd October – KALC Finance Conference
6th October – Planning Committee meeting
(TBC) 8th October – Site meetings at Cemetery, Southons Field, Toilets and Playing Field
13th October – Full Council meeting

Correspondence Log

In meeting pack

Full Council Action Log

Action Log updated following August meeting – available in the meeting pack and on the website. Cllrs to note any outstanding issues assigned to them.

Clerk's Outstanding Issues:

Public Conveniences – Solar Panels

Licence received and waiting for dates for work to commence on the structural work. Little Green Energy have been informed.

Byelaws

Confirmation received from Secretary of State. Waiting for decision.

MPC Website

Still updating – if Cllrs see any issues please let me know.

Other

Deputy Clerk position: New Deputy Clerk starts on 21st September. Report will be given to the meeting.

Name badges/lanyards: I have produced new name badges on lanyards for all Cllrs to have (another set is kept in the office for events). Also additional ones for the Cllrs who are on Resilience Planning – will have them all available to the September FC meeting.

Allotments: Responded to Redrow in respect of their request for MPC to take on the car parking. As previously stated MPC will only take on the allotment site, not the car parking.

Awaiting Response From:

Redrow – allotment work

MBC – Asset of Community Value application for The Unicorn

Katie Lam MP – response to letters regarding water/development and Southern Water

MBC Members Report from Cllr Claudine Russell

Dated: September 2026

Council

The Gypsy and Traveller DPD has been halted and we now remain without a 5 year land supply for the remainder of this council and into the unitary council. The new call for sites for housing was started and sites can now be viewed by looking at;
maidstone.oc2.uk

My concern is that that the call for sites has just been opened, not directed by policy and with the timescale for unitary will not be completed within this council. Everyone who sees large sites near to them will be worried and the plan will not be formulated quickly. A unitary council that is united with Sevenoaks (90% green belt), Tonbridge and Malling (South East water say they can't supply) and Tunbridge Wells (High Weald National Landscape designation) may well pick up the half finished work with far more sites than are needed and seek to use as many of them as possible to overcome the targets that are imposed upon the unitary as a combination.

There continues to be work done on local government reorganisation work streams and warding arrangements by the officers.

My group raised a motion to tackle litter in rural areas and this has been taken on board cross-party and is being discussed at the committee meeting tonight.

Planning issues again are a major feature of my work and I now sit on the Planning Committee as my group increased our numbers on this committee due to a member leaving the Liberal Democrats and joining the Green Group on the council.

Overview and Scrutiny

I called in the cabinet decision to close Maidstone Market without finalising their plans for the Lockmeadow and Coronation Square area. O&S agreed with the call in and made recommendations to cabinet to reverse the decision on the closure while they more fully undertook the work as to what they wanted to see in the Market Hall, cost their proposals more thoroughly and then decide the impact on the market. The recommendations are currently awaiting the next meeting of cabinet.

Ward Work

There were a number of issues relating to the prolonged closure of the A229 and I have worked with my county cllr colleague to alleviate some of the traffic issues and have arranged for the litter picking team to go along various lanes that were being used as a cut through to clear up the disgusting amount of litter that was thrown from cars during this time. The verges and most of the verge plants were squashed and some of the lanes degraded badly during this heavy traffic period so I have reported this for restoration.

I have raised the matter of rural postal delays again to Royal Mail and to Katie Lam MP who will also escalate the issue. Many rural residents are not receiving post for a number of weeks and they are missing important letters and appointments.

As always, if you need my help, please do not hesitate to email me at
claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk

Green Party Councillors' Report of JULY/Aug 2026, for Marden & Yalding Ward Parishes –

Council meetings continued in July with Full Council on 1st July, then Cabinet on 22nd; there were no formal meetings in August and the next Cabinet is on 16th September, with full Council on 30th. The Council confirmed withdrawal of the Gypsy & Traveller DPD (see last month's report for details), and confirmed some earlier Cabinet decisions. The meeting on 22nd July had a full Agenda, which covered a Public Space Order for catapults (not enacted), the final report on the VAWG (Violence against Women & Girls) consultation, with confirmation of a budget spend to continue the work and several financial items on forward strategy/budgets and also the usage of last year's small surplus.

There were also items on remedial works to the Cremators, an Article4 proposal for certain large units in the town centre, distribution of CIL (Community Infrastructure Fund) levies to eight schemes (including the Puffin crossing in Nettlestead) and an item on the re-development of Lockmeadow's open spaces and market hall. This last resolution was 'called in' to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, mainly because of concern about loss of the regular markets while a new Operator was being found; that Committee met in August and returned the proposal to Cabinet for re-examination next month.

Democracy & General Purposes Committee (on 29th June) had discussed details of the 'shadow' operation of the proposed Town Council, which will come into being on 1st April 2027 (with formal elections in May 2027), and Council agreed its constituent Members on 1st July and its initial budget. No decision has been made about Parish Council elections happening next May instead of in 2028, at the same time as Unitary & Town Council elections; Cabinet/Councillors have no say in that decision.

We heard from Central Government in mid-July about the future make-up of Kent for Local Government Reorganisation in April 2028, which confirmed Maidstone as being part of a West Kent grouping with Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge & Malling Councils. There is a lot of 'internal' Officer discussion going on at the moment about the processes and Committee make-ups to manage the period up to elections for the 'shadow Council' (May 2027), and it will be interesting to see how the 16-strong Councillor overview group (2 from each of the 4 Boroughs, plus 8 from KCC) will be operated. A lot of these political 'decisions' will emerge in early September, and Central Government is expressing a need for urgency and Action (with some, but not enough, funding!)

Event Updates for Newsletters/Sharing with Residents:

There is now a weekly Farmers' Market on Jubilee Square, by the Town Hall, every Saturday and the final Bandstand event in Brenchley Park on Sunday 6th September. Coming up this month are a series of Heritage Open Days in town and around from 11-20th, including a 150th anniversary Flower Festival at the main church, events at the Museum and a Carriage Museum tour on Saturday 26th (Mike went on the first one earlier this year, and the national expert gave an illuminating walkround tour). Maidstone's Literary Festival is on again this year, from 1st to 11th October in several venues.

www.visitmaidstone.com/whats-on/events-calendar for full details of September & October events.

Consultations: Hopefully, Residents completed the Survey which closed on 30th August. There are no open Consultations at the moment for MBC, but there is one on the KCC system about their Minerals Plan (which includes the contentious site for removal of ancient woodland at Oaken Wood)

- <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/draft-of-the-kent-mineral-sites-plan-2026> - Kent Draft Mineral Sites Plan (including Oaken Wood) - closes 5th October

Parish Matters –

Collier Street – An enquiry about the PSPO sign for the Play Area; current one expires in October.

Hunton – We continue to await details of the proposed polytunnels along Lughorse Lane, by Clockhouse Farm. Queries received about traffic along Lughorse Lane (being related to a PlanAp in Yalding) and missed Garden bin collections (due to a closure on East Street, but also an earlier error). A strong response from residents to the idea of closing the Hall as a Polling Station next year.

Marden – A fair bit of correspondence about closure of access alongside a site along Battle Lane, being addressed by the KCC councillor now. Lots of requests for advice about responding to the PlanAp put in for the ‘Copper Lane’ site’s full design details (Parish Council has sent in a Rejection at end of month); KCC Highways and Flood/Water Management have put holding objections in, so far. Nothing heard in August about the Plain Road ‘hostile’ PlanAp for 115 houses, which is still being considered by MBC. Parish office has finally received the legal paperwork to progress solar panels on the public toilet roof! Grace is supporting a resident with SEND student and issues with school.

Nettlestead – The funding for the Crossing was approved by Council, so next steps are with KCC.

Yalding – Mike has been contacted by residents of Laddingford about potential new caravans down Claygate Road & Darman Lane areas, but YPC confirm that Planning Enforcement have been involved with at least one Site. A new PlanAp for advertisement boards for ‘The George’ former PH has also elicited some comment, as there is Enforcement action occurring in parallel. Grace called in a PlanAp for 26/500120/FULL Land West of Maidstone Road in Paddock Wood, which YPC had also done.

Borough Councillors Grace Couch & Mike Summersgill – 30th August 2026

Emails: michaelsummersgill@maidstone.gov.uk, gracecouch@maidstone.gov.uk

Full Council Meetings Action Log

	Action for Cllrs
	Action for Clerk
	Action for Cllrs and Clerk
	Ongoing

ONGOING

Action No.	Minute No.	Date of Meeting	Minute Action	Allocated to	To Do	Date completed
A18	138/24	13th February 2024	Risk Assessments - review format (see A109)	Clerk	ONGOING: Continuing to be updated.	
A27	153/24		Review faint yellow lines in village	Cllrs	ONGOING: To report to the Clerk	
A105	125/25	10th December 2024	Update Word documents to meet new Accessibility regulations	Clerk	ONGOING	
A109	136/25(F)	11th March 2025	Update Risk Assessments and upload to website	Clerk	ONGOING	
A177	085/25	11th November 2025	Arrange further Speed Watch dates	Cllrs Rabot and Summersgill	ONGOING	
A230	142/26	14th April 2026	Cllr Rabot to liaise with Beat Officers for surgery dates	Cllr Rabot	ONGOING	

2024/2025

Full Council Meetings Action Log

Action No.	Minute No.	Date of Meeting	Minute Action	Allocated to	To Do	Date completed
A111	137/25(D)(e)	11th March 2025	Trial Sharepoint with a few Cllrs	Clerk		
A117	148/25(D)		Chase Southern Water	Clerk	Chased April - September Mike Russell is now contact	

2025/26

Full Council Meetings Action Log

Action No.	Minute No.	Date of Meeting	Minute Action	Allocated to	To Do	Date completed
A150	046/25	12th August 2025	Write to Southern Water regarding the new pipework system at Bewl Water / flood risk assessment	Clerk	Emailed Mike Russell 9/9/25	
A168	069/25	14th October 2025	Arrange meeting with Allotment Society	Clerk / Cllr Rabot		
A171	074/25		Obtain quotes for wooden fingerposts	Clerk		
A172	080/25	11th November 2025	Invite PCSO to next Community Forum	Cllr Boswell		
A206	118/26	10th February 2026	Arrange meeting with MBC/KCC re asset transfers	Clerk	Asset Transfer WG	
A213	123/26	10th March 2026	Cllr Turner to view Business Stream account due to high invoice	Cllr Turner		
A234	142/26		Cllrs to look at GDPR training	Cllrs		

2026/27

Full Council Meetings Action Log

Action No.	Minute No.	Date of Meeting	Minute Action	Allocated to	To Do	Date completed
A240	041/26	9th June 2026	Obtain costings for planning consultants / contact other Parish Councils	Clerk		
A247	058/26		VAT spreadsheet for last 6 years	Clerk		
A254	069/26	11th August 2026	Annual Residents Meeting/Social event 2027	Cllr Boswell and Clerk	Look into ways of inviting organisations and residents along	

Asset transfer workshop - Roger Taylor (Virtual)

24th August 2026

Key Outcomes

Parish and town councils are urged to prepare proactively for community asset transfers, even where principal authorities are currently unresponsive. Key guidance covers legal powers, valuation myths, negotiation tactics, and structural risks. The overarching message: councils that prepare now will be positioned to act when unitary authorities eventually seek to divest community assets.

Five Preparation Steps

Before pursuing any transfer, councils should address:

- **Power to acquire** — Confirm the council holds the **General Power of Competence** (requires a formal council resolution, minimum % of elected members, qualified clerk); not all councils have it
- **Management model** — Acquisition does not require self-management; consider subcontracting to a **CIC, charity, or community group**
- **Professional advice** — Engage solicitors, surveyors, and where relevant, environmental consultants; do not rely on uninsured community volunteers
- **Budgeting** — Set aside funds (suggested range: **£2,000–£10,000** depending on council size) specifically for professional fees
- **Community engagement** — Avoid "vanity projects"; involve residents and potential user groups from the outset

Valuation & Legal Powers

- **Section 123 (LGA 1972)** requires principal authorities to obtain "best consideration" on disposal — but this is widely misapplied
- **Circular 06/2003 (General Consent Order)**: If an asset promotes **economic, social, or environmental well-being** and the gap between transfer price and market value is **under £2 million**, best consideration is not required
- The £2 million threshold applies **per individual property**, not to a bundled portfolio
- Assets used for community purposes should carry **lower valuations** due to restrictive covenants limiting use
- Income-generating assets (e.g., car parks) are not automatically excluded — maintenance costs often offset income, negating the "income-producing" argument

Restrictive Covenants & Transfer Terms

- Most transfers will include a covenant restricting use to community purposes — this is acceptable but must be **drafted broadly** (e.g., "recreation and ancillary purposes")
- Councils must know covenant terms **before** making an offer — withholding this information is unreasonable and affects valuation

- **Overage clauses** (seller receives % of uplift if planning permission granted) vary widely; standard terms are ~30% for 10 years, but councils have seen 80% for 99 years
- **Pre-emption clauses** (must offer asset back at original price, e.g., £1) are highly onerous — negotiate removal, especially where capital has been invested
- Overage rights can be **sold to commercial third parties** by the principal authority, meaning future negotiations may be with a commercial entity, not the council

Allotments — Automatic Transfer Rule

- Statutory allotment sites **must** transfer automatically to a parish council upon its creation — the district council has no discretion
- This is the **only asset category** with an automatic transfer obligation

Dealing with Unresponsive Authorities

- Use **Freedom of Information (FOI) requests** to obtain asset registers and land ownership data
- Engage local district councillors to apply pressure where departments are unresponsive
- District council asset registers are often **inaccurate** — cross-check against community knowledge
- Principal authorities frequently misunderstand parish council legal status; frame transfers as **local authority to local authority**
- Do not give up: authorities must provide a **reason** for refusing a transfer, not simply decline

Leases & Freeholds

- Existing leases transfer automatically to the new unitary authority when reorganisation orders take effect
- Now is a good time to negotiate **freehold acquisition** rather than renewing leases, avoiding future rent disputes
- **7-year leases** get a foot in the door but are not ideal — push for longer terms; authorities often seek to exclude the **Landlord and Tenant Act** (removing automatic renewal rights)

Timing & Unitary Authority Transition

- No hard deadline exists for initiating transfers — dialogue simply shifts from district to unitary authority post-reorganisation
 - **Act now:** unitary authorities will be strategic bodies unlikely to prioritise individual community assets early in their existence
 - All district council assets, leases, overage rights, and agreements transfer **automatically** to the unitary authority by order
 - Shadow councils (pre-vesting) can begin asset negotiations immediately
-

Open Questions / Risks

- VAT implications vary by asset type; councils with large portfolios (e.g., 72+ assets) should seek **specialist VAT advice**
- Woodland and complex assets can be acquired and leased to managing bodies (e.g., **Woodland Trust**), but councils retain liability if management lapses
- Contracts tied to assets (e.g., public conveniences) may contain **auto-renewal traps** — scrutinise notice periods carefully before assuming obligations
- Declining an asset transfer carries risk: unwanted assets may be sold commercially to parties whose use conflicts with community interests

LOG OF CORRESPONDENCE AND HOW DEALT WITH?*No names/contact details should be added here*

Date:	Contacted via	Who took call/emails?	Brief details of issue raised	Council/Committee	Outcome
03/08/2026	Email	Ali	P/S manager providing inventory of equipment	Play Scheme	Noted for 2027
03/08/2026	Email	Ali	P/S staff with bank details	Play Scheme	Updated file for salary payments
03/08/2026	Telephone	Ali	Bowls Club asking to book parking for S/F on 9th August	Southons Field	In diary (invoice to be sent)
03/08/2026	Face to Face	Ali	Applicant withdrawing application for D/C role	HR	Noted
03/08/2026	Telephone	Ali	Resident reporting a loose headstone at the cemetery	Cemetery	Contacted caretaker to secure. Visit and take photo to contact next of kin to repair
04/08/2026	Email	Ali	Company asking if we kept details of their work on our system	General	No - any requests from residents are directed to the company in question
04/08/2026	Face to Face	Ali	Resident asking about a new burial plot and whether ashes can be interred	Cemetery	Would provide details of fees and rules/regulations
04/08/2026	Email	Ali	Funeral Director asking for location of plot for burial	Cemetery	Provided screenshot of location and also sent to grave digger
04/08/2026	Email	Ali	P/S staff member querying salary	Play Scheme	Have to put details through HMRC and therefore taxed at Basic Rate as has other job
04/08/2026	Email	Ali	Resident with concerns on traffic in High Street	Highways	Take to Highways S/G meeting on 10/8/26
04/08/2026	Email	Ali	Church magazine for input for September edition	General	Nothing of note to add - provided details of e-newsletter
04/08/2026	Email	Ali	Bowls Club asking to extend parking on 9/8/26	Southons Field	Added to invoice
04/08/2026	Email	Ali	Office alarm maintenance due	Office	Arranged for 7/8/26
05/08/2026	Email	Ali	Kent Highways with details of how to apply for licence regarding Christmas lighting	Christmas	To be completed
05/08/2026	Email	Ali	Planning Officer confirming extension for planning app to 27/8/26	Planning	Noted
06/08/2026	Email	Ali	Company in Pattenden Lane asking about road closure	Highways	Provided Cllr Black email to contact
07/08/2026	Email	Ali	P/S parent asking about private facebook page and collection of son's t-shirt	Play Scheme	Gave link to facebook and arranged for collection
07/08/2026	Telephone	Ali	MBC (ACV) regarding application - owner not correct	Planning	Advised to obtain updated land registry documents and resubmit

07/08/2026	Email	Ali	Land Registry details received for ACV application	Planning	Completed form and resubmitted
07/08/2026	Face to Face	Ali	Office alarm maintenance undertaken	Office	Noted - details on alarm app
07/08/2026	Face to Face	Ali	Resident enquiring about plots next to family members in old section	Cemetery	Already used - not available for interments
07/08/2026	Face to Face	Ali	Resident regarding recent Copper Lane/Albion Road reserved matters application	Planning	Provided details of when meeting will be held
10/08/2026	Telephone	Ali	Resident reporting missed garden waste bin	General	As no internet reported for resident
10/08/2026	Telephone	Ali	CloudyIT to resolve a virus report	Office	Undertaken and back to normal
10/08/2026	WhatsApp	Ali	P/C cleaner to arrange to collect delivery of toilet paper etc	Public Conv.	Caretaker collected on cleaner's behalf
10/08/2026	Email	Ali	Planning Officer extension to 31/8/26 for residents as notice has only just gone up	Planning	Noted
10/08/2026	Email	Ali	Resident reporting screws missing from Nap. Drive see saw	Amenities	Reported to caretaker
10/08/2026	Email	Ali	Applicant withdrawing application for D/C role	HR	Noted
10/08/2026	Email	Ali	Grave digger confirming receipt of location map for burial 19/8/26	Cemetery	Noted
10/08/2026	Email	Ali	Stone masons regarding a memorial installation	Cemetery	Telephoned as no interment has yet taken place - family to be contacted to find out more details
10/08/2026	Email	Ali	Resident regarding interment of ashes cost	Cemetery	Provided details of what fees cover
10/08/2026	Email	Ali	Cloudy IT - requiring info for Impersonation Protection	Office	Provided Cllr Summersgill's MBC email as this could be blocked
11/08/2026	Email	Ali	Beat Officers with next drop in session date	General	Contacted Vestry Hall to confirm - OK
11/08/2026	Email	Ali	Family informed of interment of ashes being on hold	Cemetery	Noted
11/08/2026	Email	Ali	Redrow - querying commuted sum request	Allotments	Provided copy of email confirming Redrow will consider payment (14/1/20)
11/08/2026	Email	Ali	Marden PTA to arrange a meeting regarding M@C	Christmas	Arranged for 17/8/26
11/08/2026	Email	Ali	Choir group asking to come along and perform at M@C	Christmas	Agreed pm in the hall

12/08/2026	Email	Ali	S/F 2 x regular hirers regarding storage	Amenities	Arranged to meet to discuss
12/08/2026	Email	Ali	4Jays confirming delivery of portaloos for 19&20/8	Amenities	Passed to Cllr Rabot for information
12/08/2026	Email	Ali	Resident of S/F asking MPC to cut back hedge	Amenities	Will speak to caretakers
12/08/2026	Email	Ali	Resident of P/F regarding trees	Amenities	Will speak to caretakers
12/08/2026	Email	Ali	MBC Solicitors re licence - chasing MBC for signatures	Amenities	Noted
13/08/2026	Email	Ali	Confirmation for receipt of Byelaws submission	Full Council	Noted
13/08/2026	Email	Ali	MBC Property confirming licence was due to be signed and returned to solicitors	Amenities	Noted
14/08/2026	Telephone	Ali	Hall fire extinguisher checks to arrange appointment	Hall	Passed to Lisa (Hall Administrator)
17/08/2026	Mobile (personal)	Ali	4Jays for delivery of portaloos	Amenities	Contacted Chris to unlock - met on site
17/08/2026	Email	Ali	Storage information for S/F users	Amenities	Noted
17/08/2026	Face to Face	Ali	PTA Chairman to discuss Christmas	Amenities	
17/08/2026	Email	Ali	Enquiry about hall booking	Hall	Passed to Lisa (Hall Administrator)
17/08/2026	Email	Ali	Weald of Kent Young Farmers - advert in newsletter	Newsletter	Gave Cllr Boswell's email
17/08/2026	Email	Ali	Resident asking about next Police Surgeries	Police	Provided dates
18/08/2026	Email	Ali	Applicant withdrawing application for D/C role	HR	
18/08/2026	Email	Ali	MBC Solicitors confirming receipt of signed licence	Amenities	Noted
18/08/2026	Email	Ali	Play Scheme feedback forms - several received	Amenities	Noted
20/08/2026	Email	Ali	Confirmation from MBC solicitors that work can commence	Amenities	Noted - passed to Cllr Griffiths
20/08/2026	Email	Ali	Confirmation from vicar that funeral went ahead	Cemetery	Noted - form returned to Registrar
20/08/2026	Email	Ali	Play Scheme feedback form received	Amenities	Noted
21/08/2026	Email	Ali	MBC Tree Officer confirming TPO at Copper Lane has lapsed	Planning	Noted
24/08/2026	Email	Ali	Resident enquiring about allotments	Amenities	Still in talks with Redrow
24/08/2026	Telephone	Ali	Resident regarding Copper Lane planning application	Planning	Noted

24/08/2026	Email	Ali	Resident sending in comments on Copper Lane application	Planning	Noted
24/08/2026	Email	Ali	cc'd in to email to Borough Cllrs regarding planning process	Planning	Noted
24/08/2026	Email	Ali	Neighbouring PC regarding toilet refurbishment	General	Replied
24/08/2026	Email	Ali	Confirmation received of signed licence from MBC solicitors	Amenities	Noted
25/06/2026	Telephone	Ali	Resident reporting squeaky swing at playing field	Amenities	Report to caretaker
26/08/2026	Email	Ali	Request to hire hall	Hall	Passed to Lisa (Hall Administrator)
26/08/2026	Email	Ali	Funeral Directors to arrange a burial	Cemetery	Phone back tomorrow
27/08/2026	Email	Ali	Marden Bowls Club - work being undertaken on green 17/9/26	General	Noted
27/08/2026	Email	Ali	Gala Lights with insurance and certificate for xmas lights	Christmas	Passed to Kent Highways
27/08/2026	Telephone	Ali	Neighbouring PC regarding planning / other PC issues	General	Noted
27/08/2026	Email	Ali	Xmas lights contractor with info on dimensions	Christmas	Passed to Kent Highways
28/08/2026	Telephone	Cllr Dobinson	Utilities provider	General	Will ring back next week
28/08/2026	Face to Face	Cllr Dobinson	Resident asking about scarecrow map	General	Will call back
28/08/2026	Telephone	Cllr Dobinson	Southons Field hirer for 2027	Amenities	Will contact Ali via email

Received on 28/8/26 - responded on my return from leave (1/9/26)

28/08/2026	Email	Ali	Funeral Director with information for burial on 15/9/26	Cemetery	Responded with further questions
28/08/2026	Email	Ali	Southons Field hirer for 2027	Amenities	Responded with available dates
28/08/2026	Email	Ali	History Group with poster for social media	General	Will add w/c 31/8/26

DRAFT

Director of Kent Highways

Via email



Mrs Alison Hooker
Parish Clerk
Marden Parish Council
Memorial Hall
Goudhurst Road
Marden
Tonbridge
Kent
TN12 9JX
Tel: 01622 832305
Mobile: 07376 287981
Date:

Dear Sir

**Re 26/502754/REM – Land East of Albion Road and Copper Lane, Marden
Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale
sought) for the erection of 117 dwellings, together with associated
landscaping, open space and other associated infrastructure, pursuant to
outline permission 23/504068/OUT
(allowed at appeal APP/U2235/W/24/3345817).**

The highway arrangements for the above planning application were agreed by the Planning Inspector in December 2024 following an appeal, see above references.

The Planning Inspector allowed the highway proposals, noting in paragraph 22 of his judgement:

“In the light of the appellant’s revised approach to access summarised above, KCC observed via correspondence of 8 October 2024 that ‘...whilst it is disappointing that the appellant is unwilling to bring forward a more straight forward solution, the acceptability of the proposed pedestrian access strategy has been demonstrated in technical terms...’ “.

At the appeal hearing in November 2024 Marden Parish Councillor Richard Adam CEng FIHT MICE (and currently Head of Highways and Drainage Engineering at a major transport infrastructure organisation) described the Parish Council’s severe concerns about the highway proposals for Albion Road, see Appendix A. The Inspector referred to Councillor Adam’s contribution being of ‘particular relevance’ in paragraph 8. Now that the reserved matters proposal has come forward to Maidstone Borough Council the Parish Council and residents have further reviewed the highway proposals and remain extremely concerned about the road safety implications.

The scheme was drawn up over 2 years ago and before the Russet Grove development was fully occupied. To reassure the entirely justifiable road safety concerns of residents we would request that an updated road safety appraisal of the

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Mondays, Tuesdays & Fridays 10am - 12 noon
Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk



proposed scheme is undertaken. In addition to the practicality and safety for through traffic caused by nearly 60m of priority single lane working, particular reassurance is needed that:

- a) the road safety of those residents in Seymour Drive, The Wickets and properties on Albion Road directly affected by the scheme – Jewell House, Jewell House Cottage, Bishops House, Kontiki, Derwen House and The Howlands – will not be compromised; and
- b) similarly for the safety of cyclists using the narrowed carriageway and pedestrians crossing Albion Road to access PROW KM281 which has been identified as a key connection to the village centre.

The Inspector said in paragraph 116 of his judgement that *“Albion Road could no longer be used by some agricultural equipment”*. We think this is untenable for a village surrounded by agricultural land, where large agricultural vehicles regularly use the road. He suggests in paragraph 119 that *“Howland Road could be used by larger vehicles”*. Howland Road is totally unsuitable for larger vehicles as was demonstrated by the recent prolonged closure of the A229 near Cross at Hand. We also request that a full safety assessment of Howland Road is undertaken, especially considering the very narrow bend by Rose and Crown Cottages, to assess whether it is wide enough for large agricultural vehicles, to safely pass along the road without impacting pedestrian, cyclist or motorist safety as well as the safety of residents and properties.

Yours sincerely

Alison Hooker

Alison Hooker
Clerk to Marden Parish Council

APPENDIX A

Appeal Statement given by Cllr Adam at the Appeal Hearing for Land at Copper Lane/Albion Road application: 12th November 2024.

Good morning and thank you for providing the opportunity to speak. My name is Richard Adam and I'm a long-standing member of Marden Parish Council.

I also have a 43-year career as a fully qualified professional in the field of highway engineering and now hold a senior position where I am the technical authority for all highway design matters within my organisation.

The parish council recognises that the site between Albion Road and Copper Lane in Marden is allocated for housing in Maidstone Borough Council's adopted Local Plan Review document for 2021 to 2038.

As such, we do not object to the proposed development in principle, much as some of our village residents might wish us to, as we need to take a pragmatic view and work towards the best outcome for the parish as a whole.

This appeal relates to an outline application for up to 117 houses and associated infrastructure, with all matters reserved apart from access, but safe and convenient access between the site and the village centre has always been the parish council's main concern.

You will have seen our grounds of objection to the planning application, and some of these were expanded upon in our September 2024 representation for the appeal.

In October 2024, the appellant provided a new scheme to alter the highway layout along the length of Albion Road north of the site towards the village centre in an attempt to address some of Maidstone Borough Council's grounds for refusing the application.

The parish council made a second representation last month, specifically about this appeal scheme, and then a third in November when the appellant's proofs of evidence were made available.

You may be relieved to hear that I do not intend to repeat the many detailed points we have previously made today, but it is important that all three representations are read together as one.

However, there is a further aspect that we would like to draw to your attention to, namely the standards and guidance published by Active Travel England in respect of infrastructure design for the three active travel modes: walking, wheeling and cycling.

As I'm sure you know, Active Travel England is the government's executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England.

Active Travel England has developed a suite of tools to support the development of designs and the assessment of design quality for active travel interventions and schemes.

The design tool most relevant to the appeal scheme is the Route Check, which assesses a wide range of metrics using the common Red / Amber / Green rating approach.

Additionally, for the Safety Check tab in the Route Check spreadsheet, there is a Black rating for so-called 'critical issues' that need to be designed out. In terms of footway width, this is a critical issue for the appeal scheme.

When taken together with all the other safety-related deficiencies highlighted in our three representations, it is clear that Kent County Council should not have withdrawn its objection following presentation of the appeal scheme.

If I may speak personally for a minute, I don't like to come here to criticise the work of fellow professionals in public, but road user safety is a serious matter, and in this case, that needs to be done.

In my career, I have never seen a scheme involving so many compromises that would variously affect the safety (and convenience) of all road users: pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

Were such a scheme be referred up to me at work, there is no way that I could consider recommending that for approval. The designers would be invited to go back to the drawing board and try again.

Anyway, on behalf of Marden Parish Council, I ask the inspector to use his independence and not rely on the Kent County Council letter dated 8 October 2024, because that fails to address many of the relevant road safety issues.

If one imagines a good road layout design at one end of the spectrum, the appeal scheme would fall off the other end because it not only 'scrapes the bottom of the barrel' in term of technical standards and guidance but also goes below that. The design attempts to do the impossible within the available road-space along Albion Road and of course fails.

In summary, the parish council is not saying that there isn't some way to achieve safe and convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists between the proposed housing development and the village centre without also introducing avoidable hazards and delays to motor traffic using Albion Road.

However, we are saying that the appeal scheme clearly isn't the answer. We therefore request the inspector to reject the appeal on the numerous grounds of road user safety (and also convenience) identified in our three representations and the additional 'critical issue' raised today.

Thank you, and if it would help the inspector, I would be happy to hand over these notes for the written record.