

# Upper Hardres Parish Council

## Annual Parish Meeting

**Tuesday 13 May 2025, 7.30pm at Bossingham Village Hall**

### Minutes

**1. Chairman welcomed those present and recorded attendance and apologies**

Attending: Chairman Nick Waldron, Cllr Simon Warner, Cllr Angela Waldron, Parish Clerk Clare Hamilton, CCC Ward Cllr Mike Bland.

Apologies: Cllr Robert Richardson, John Pitcher.

**2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12 May 2024 were accepted and signed**

**3. Chairman's Report**

see Reports

**4. Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025**

see Reports

**5. Reports from County and City Councillors**

see Reports

**6. Public participation session**

not required

**7. Any other information**

Signed .....Nick Waldron *Chairman*, May 2026

*Chairman Nick Waldron*

*Parish Clerk Clare Hamilton* | [clerk@upperhardres-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@upperhardres-pc.gov.uk) | [www.upperhardres-pc.gov.uk](http://www.upperhardres-pc.gov.uk)

## **REPORTS**

### **Chairmans Report 2025**

Welcome to the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting.

At our Annual Meeting of the Council held earlier this evening, I was elected as Chair for a fourth year.

#### **City & County Councillors**

On 1 May, Mike Sole was re-elected as our KCC Councillor. He is always very generous with his time and we look forward to continuing to work with him.

#### **Planning**

Since April last year we have commented on 10 planning applications. We have the right to comment on applications and consider all of them. Do please make us aware if you have any concerns.

Poor water quality issues continue to stall applications and a long-promised solution is yet to materialise.

#### **Communication with CCC and KCC**

I continue to be frustrated with the poor communication with different departments at both CCC and KCC and have made our County and Ward councillors aware of my feelings for them to pass on to the relevant people.

#### **CIL - Community Infrastructure Levy**

We have agreed to ring fence some of the CIL funds for improvements to Bossingham Village Hall.

#### **Village Hall**

Many thanks to the committee for their hard work. As ever, they need more members.

#### **Roads and Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)**

Thanks to Cllr Simon Warner, matters are slowly being put in place.

#### **Playing Field**

Problems caused by moles have been highlighted for several years in the annual safety inspection and we have appointed a mole catcher to eradicate the problem.

#### **War memorial and garden**

Thanks as ever to John Pitcher for his work in maintaining this. If anyone wishes to assist John, I know he will be very grateful.

#### **Email list**

There is an email list where Clare sends out updates, do request to join if you haven't already. Clare now also posts on Facebook.

#### **Clare**

A big vote of thanks to Clare, our parish clerk, without her the parish council would not operate and her hard work is much appreciated.

#### **Recruitment**

We really do need some new faces. We have 6 meetings a year so the time commitment is not onerous. Do feel free to have a chat with one of us and have a look at our website for meeting dates and Minutes to keep aware on local matters.

We are lucky to live in this fantastic area so let's keep a community voice on local issues.

*Nick Waldron, Chairman, Upper Hardres Parish Council, 13 May 2025*

## **Parish Clerk/RFO's report 2025 & Statement of Accounts**

The end of year bank balance for the financial year 2024/25 was £31,249.19. (see Balance Sheet on next page)

This includes £22,492.66 which is the Canterbury City Council 'Neighbourhood Portion' of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL for short) following small local developments.

CIL funds can be spent on infrastructure, eg. open space and community facilities, and highways improvements. Some funds have been spent on plumbing and electrics for the village hall, other funds are earmarked for items in the Highway improvement Plan.

The Precept received from Canterbury City Council was £7,234 to cover the costs of running the parish council. It is funded by a small charge on each household's Council Tax bill and increases slightly each year to meet our increased costs.

We received an annual Concurrent Functions Funding payment of £1,925 from Canterbury City Council; this goes towards the cost of Grounds Maintenance for the Playing Field and the Village Hall, and the annual playing field safety inspection.

Our Reserves Policy includes Restricted funds for - emergency repairs to the village hall and the car park, and long-term maintenance of the playing field equipment.

We aim to keep an amount in Unrestricted Reserves to meet any unexpected expenditure.

If you are not already on the Parish Email List and would like to be included, please email me and ask to be added.

Finally, a polite request - I work 6 hours per week as parish clerk, can I please ask that any phone calls to me are made during office hours only. Thank you. Email at any time!

*Clare Hamilton, Clerk & RFO, Upper Hardres Parish Council, 13 May 2025*

# Upper Hardres Parish Council Balance Sheet for year ended 31 March 2025

	£	£	Budget 24.25	note
<b>RECEIPTS</b>				
CCC: Precept	7234.00		7,234.00	
CCC: Concurrent Functions Funding	1925.00		1,925.00	1
CCC: CIL Neighbourhood Portion	1051.15		0.00	
HMRC: VAT repayment	989.96		850.00	2
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>£11,200.11</b>			
<b>PAYMENTS</b>				
<i>Precept:</i>				
Clerk's salary	4,408.56		4,524.00	3
Clerk's annual expenses	367.31		371.00	4
Insurance premium	510.74		480.00	
Subscription to KALC	254.29		250.00	
Audit fees	252.00		210.00	
Election expenses	0.00		0.00	
Training/literature	0.00		0.00	
Website domain name renewal	14.39		20.00	
Website hosting	155.87		150.00	
Defibrillator aftercare, parts, contr. to running costs	249.48		114.00	
PCC donation (s.137)	150.00		150.00	
Meeting costs	0.00		0.00	
Contingency Fund	0.00	6,362.64	100.00	
<i>Concurrent Functions Funding:</i>				
Grounds maintenance & clearing	3,916.80		3203.00	1
Playing Field annual inspection	196.80	4,113.60	155.00	
<i>Reserves:</i>				
Parish Grant Fund Awards 2023 (s.137)	500.00			5
Playing field maintenance (from playing field reserves)	692.00			
		1,192.00		
<i>CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy):</i>				
Trees inspection (playing field and VH garden)	250.00			6
Works to trees (playing field and VH garden)	516.00			
Bus shelter renovation	660.00			
Dishwasher for VH	299.99	1,725.99		
<b>Total payments</b>		<b>£13,394.23</b>		
Balance brought forward	33443.31			
Receipts less payments	2194.12			
<b>Balance carried forward</b>		<b>£31,249.19</b>		



Clare Hamilton Parish Clerk RFO



Nick Waldron Chairman

13 May 2025

## **KCC Councillor Mike Sole**

This is my monthly update for May 2025.

Firstly, I was delighted to be re-elected to KCC with an increased vote share and larger majority. Thank you for your support. There has been a significant change in the administration at KCC and the Liberal Democrat group that I belong to is now the official opposition with 12 councillors. There are also 5 Green, 5 Conservative and 2 Labour councillors, but with 57 councillors Reform are now running the council.

The only KCC meeting that has taken place so far was the AGM where the new leadership was appointed. At this meeting I challenged the new administration on their decision to no longer fly the Ukrainian flag or Pride flag during Pride month, but it was confirmed that neither will be flown again. In an unusual move many KCC meetings due to take place in June have been cancelled and we are still awaiting confirmation on some committees, but I hope to serve on the Growth, Economic & Communities Committee, Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue and the Flood Risk Management Committee.

During May I attended annual parish meetings in Petham, Wickhambreaux, Womenswold, Thanington and Barham where I was able to speak to many local residents about my role, local government reorganisation and changes at KCC. I also attended the usual monthly meeting of Thanington Parish Council and Canterbury City Council annual meeting.

I was really pleased to hear that KCC have now agreed to fully fund the accessibility bus stop improvements by The Firth Trust in Barham that I have been campaigning for. I held a very good councillor surgery in Barham with the KCC Community Warden and Kent Police. It was good to see so many people and I am following up on the issues raised with me.

I also had a separate meeting with Cllr Lee Castle and the KCC community wardens that cover both Nailbourne and Little Stour & Adisham. Unfortunately, the other areas of my KCC division are still without wardens. I've had a couple of meetings with group of residents in Bokesbourne and Bridge to discuss various issues – if I can help with anything, please get in touch.

## **CCC Councillor Mike Bland**

Notes from CCC Cllr Mike Bland's verbal report to the meeting:

### **Changes at CCC**

There have been swift changes at CCC over the last few weeks since the elections in May, and Mike expressed his concern to see what happens within CCC.

### **Planning enforcement**

Mike has chased colleagues for an update on a local planning enforcement matter and will pursue it. Lack of feedback suggests lack of enforcement being done.

### **Devolution**

Mike hopes that local government reform / unitary authority will improve issues, eg. planning enforcement. District councils across Kent have signed up to planning to move from district council and KCC to unitary authority. Outline proposal has been submitted to government. There have been delays due to elections but now work should continue and proposals finalised. There will be public consultation events. There will be an impact on parish councils and the way services are delivered.

### **Communication**

A discussion ensued and Councillors expressed their concerns at lack of replies to parish council enquiries from CCC and KCC. Mike suggested meeting parish councillors to plan a way forward. Cllrs would rather their requests are dealt with directly by the relevant council departments rather than through our Ward and County councillors.

Mike will talk to some colleagues to see how these frustrations can be heard and resolved.

## **Hardres & Stelling News report for 2025 APMs**

Firstly, a big thank you to all who have written articles for inclusion in the Villages Community Magazine for without you there would not be a magazine. I know that many readers look forward to the regular contributions and the occasional letters from readers.

Contributions regularly include community news from County, District/City, and Parish Councils together with the two Parish Churches and a message from the Parish Priest; as well as those from SM Primary School Headteacher, History Group, Gardening Society, both Village Hall, Johns Haffenden's Farmers notebook, Minnis Managers, thoughts from Steve Hardman, a brief weather report as well as information on the mobile library dates and Windmill & Museum. With occasional articles from other clubs, societies and individuals these all go to make what I hope is an interesting and informative Community Magazine with something for everybody.

The National Parish Magazine of the Year competition was not held for 2024.

A big thank you to Bruce & Margaret Crawford and their band of delivery agents for getting the magazine to you; to Ann Day for handling the finances and selling all the advertising spaces, not forgetting Xinyang and Sijia at Stelling Minnis Stores for willingly continuing to allow some readers to collect their magazine from the shop. Advertising spaces remain at 23 pages to allow for the increasing demands of the regular contributors and a limitation on magazine size placed by the printer of a total of 64 pages (front cover, 23 for adverts and 40 for the editorial material) because of machinery capacity.

Any images for the front cover should be in Portrait format, please.

*Nick Smith – Editor*

## **Stelling Minnis and Upper Hardres History Group** Chair's report for 2025 AGM

This year the Society has combined its core roles of researching local history and developing the archive of local history materials with talks for both members and the local community.

The Society has amassed, catalogued and preserves a wide range of historical documents, both originals and copies, relating to people and properties from the villages of Stelling Minnis, Bossingham and Upper and Lower Hardres. These materials are available on request to members of other similar societies in the area and the public. A number of 'archiving sessions' have been carried out over the last year to review the collection and help with the cataloguing of the materials. For Example, we looked for material and found original newspapers related to VE Day, the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of which is due in May.

We were fortunate to have Charlotte Cornell of the Canterbury Commemoration Society come and give a talk for us in October the subject of which was Aphra Behn, the playwright, poet, prose writer and sometime spy, in the Court of Charles II. A daughter of Canterbury, and the subject of Charlotte's PhD thesis, Aphra was one of the first English women to earn her living by writing. Charlotte explained that it was hoped to have a statue of Aphra placed in Canterbury to compliment that of Chaucer. In February, Maxine and other members of the public went to see the life-size statue unveiled at the front of the Beaney House of Art and Knowledge by HM Queen Camilla.

Maxine's links with the Rotary Club of Canterbury offered us the opportunity to join their speaker evening presented by Jane Delamere about Amy Johnson, a pioneering English pilot and the first woman to fly solo from London to Australia. Amy and her plane were lost in the Thames Estuary off Herne Bay during war service in 1941 at the age of 37.

We were also able to Join the Rotary Club last month for a talk by Dr Andrew Richardson 'Women of Power, Daughters of the Kentish Royal Family in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Andrew spoke about seven women whose graves have been excavated in the local area – Lyminge, Barham, Stowting and Kingston. The grave goods buried with them included wonderful broches and other Jewellery which allows dating and trace the antecedents of these women across Saxon Western Europe.

We have also booked local author James Bennett to come to talk to us later this year about his childhood in rural Kent.

The Society held its annual Christmas Party and Quiz in December which was good fun and very enjoyable. We also maintain our strong links with Stelling Minnis Windmill and Museum and look forward to the new season opening at Easter.

We are pleased to welcome new members Mac and Jackie McCarthy to the Society. We are pleased to invite those with an interest in local history to come and along to our meetings on the third Thursday evening of each month.

*Maxine Blades, Chair 2024/5*