



Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council

ALLOTMENTS AND LAND COMMITTEE MINUTES Tuesday 24th June 2025

Present: Cllrs J Bright (Chair), J Hobson, K Pressland
Deputy Town Clerk: Julie Belsey
One member of public

111. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2025/26

Councillor J Bright was voted as Chair
The Vice Chair will be elected at the next meeting.

112. OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

The Chairman reminded those present of the right to record, film or broadcast any meetings of the Council, committees and subcommittees is established following the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

113. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies with reason were received and approved from Cllr E Orhan.
Not in attendance: Cllr J Nichols

114. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

115. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members received the draft Terms of Reference and AGREED their APPROVAL. **The Terms of Reference will go to the next Full Council meeting for final APPROVAL.**

116. MINUTES

RESOLVED to RECEIVE and APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11th March 2025.

117. MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

None

118. QUESTIONS AND/OR OBSERVATIONS FROM THE ELECTORATE OF BROADSTAIRS & ST PETER'S

None

119. BUDGET

The Committee RECEIVED and NOTED the budget to date.

120. NORMAN ROAD & NASH GARDENS ALLOTMENTS

We have one vacant plot at Norman Road, St Peter's which became available week commencing 16th June. The first person on the waiting list has been notified.

Our Gardeners have removed the ivy and overgrowth along the flint wall of The Pathway which backs on to the allotments in Nash Gardens following a complaint from a resident who lives opposite. This was a huge undertaking and on removal, a lot of the roots were not from the allotment side, however, just our area has been removed and allotment holders have been asked if they could ensure that any growth that appears to be going up the wall is removed should it grow up from the allotments side. There is one area that still requires work, which will be carried out in the cooler weather.

121. CULMERS AMENITY LAND

The Civic & Support Officer's (CSO) wild flower project has commenced at Culmers. Unfortunately, the first round of seeding was not successful. The CSO has made arrangements with our Contractor for this area to be reseeded and has also arranged for use of water from the Culmer's Allotment Association. This is fully reported on under the Environment Committee.

NGL Boxgreen continue with the Grounds Maintenance of this land.

122. MOCKETT'S WOOD

i. Neil Hibbert started with us on 1st April as the Woodland Officer. He has made great strides already and is working closely with the Friends of Mockett's of Wood implementing the Management Plan.

The Woodland Officer has produced an update 'newsletter' which will be posted on social media and our website. He will continue to produce these updates on an ad hoc basis and they will be sent out to Councillors for information. We will also be updating Thanet Council with improvements and to show Mockett's Wood as a 'place to visit'.

A group of volunteers from Saga came to the woods on 12th June for the day and have helped with the dead hedging areas. The Town Council will arrange for a staff day at the Woods for planting of bulbs.

The Woodland Officer intends to make contact with the local schools regarding help within the woodland and education of the woodland in the hope that this will lead to alleviating some of the vandalism. He has also had a meeting with the local beat police on the subject of vandalism.

Unfortunately, there had been a fire in the woods following end of exams last week. Evidence of burnt exam papers were found and these have been passed onto the police.

A group of staff have emptied, tidied and made framework for the container used for the Mockett's Wood equipment and also taken an inventory of tools.

Work has started on the blocking of the smaller pathways and thoughts are now on the creation of the circular path.

ii. The Committee received the Mockett's Wood Path Proposal from the Wood Land Officer for phase one. This gave two options for potential surfacing:

Summary

Creating durable, accessible paths for Mockett's Wood is currently one of the key challenges & one of the main points of focus.

This task has been split into 2 phases: Phase 1 to upgrade the main path - 240 meters long & 2 metres wide to allow 2 wheelchairs to pass. Phase 2 will focus on re-surfacing the 2 new circular paths – probably using gravel boards & woodchip. At the moment work in the woods is centred on renovating & clearing the 2 circular paths while blocking off & re-wilding surplus pathways.

Options for path surfacing	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Volunteers & Woodland Officer build main paths using treated gravel board, stakes & woodchip.	a. Low cost – most of the woodchip should be free. Gravel boards, stakes & joining plates approx. £2,000. b. Low disturbance / impact to woodland. c. Very eco-friendly materials. d. Can potentially start work this budget year.	i. Time to complete: Likely to take 18 – 24 weeks depending on material availability. ii. Probably won't be able to commence works until current path blocking / renovation work complete. Estimate this will take 33 – 36 weeks. iii. Woodchip paths will have a higher maintenance overhead & the gravel boards may be more vulnerable to vandal damage.
2. Hire contractor to build main path using eco biodegradable membrane, MOT base & either self-binding gravel [or woodchip] topping. Heavy duty treated wood edging.	a. Durability: Paths created with self-binding gravel need very little maintenance & can last 20+ years. The full life cost in terms of materials & labour would be low. b. Less vulnerable to vandal damage than option 1. c. Accessibility: Gravel would be a better surface for wheelchair access than wood chip.	i. Disturbance & impact: Higher due to machinery required to scrape existing path, bring in materials & compact each path layer. ii. Wood closure: For the duration of the works – around 3 weeks. iii. Cost & sourcing required budget & / or external funding. Estimates range from £16k to £33k net for 240 metres of path. iv. Unlikely to be able to start works until next budget year.

Following discussion, Cllr Pressland gave some other options including sweet chestnut rounds for the edging of paths with bark chippings, and also to look at a compostable membrane as an alternative to the MOT base, with loose gravel chippings. This would promote growth around the edges of the path, whilst the loose gravel could be raked to maintain a growth free pathway.

Full costs of these alternatives will be obtained and brought back to Committee in October. Dependent on the cost, this will either have to have 3 quotes or go out to tender once a decision has been made.

123. PIERREMONT HALL GROUNDS

NGL Boxgreen continued with the grounds maintenance of this area. The planters and urns have been replanted for the summer.

Cllr Pressland commented that about 50% of the Ilex Crenata Caroline Upright hedging surrounding the lawned area at the rear Pierremont Hall appears to have failed. The Deputy Town Clerk informed the Committee that this is watered regularly and has had appropriate maintenance since it was planted. The Contractor will be asked to take a look.

124. GREEN SPACES CULTIVATED UNDER LICENCE FROM TDC

Our third Gardener, Graham Back, commenced on 31st March and fits in very well with the Team.

Balmoral is looking great, with new shrubs now in situ and a tidy up and general upkeep of the area in place. Our Operations Officer has repainted all the railings around Balmoral Gardens and we have also taken into our care the two large terracotta pots which were left unkempt. These have been cleared and replanted.

The circular bed in Pierremont Park has been cleared and planted and is a huge improvement. The round rose bed has not required any additional maintenance but is in full bloom.

The war memorial has been cleared of the winter planting, and summer bedding is now in place.

To add a 'pop' of colour and impact to Victoria Gardens, a couple of the smaller beds near Morellis have also had bedding plants added.

Cllr Pressland was requested to have a site visit and speak with the Gardeners regarding planting and to also discuss the grassed bed at the front of Victoria Gardens which does not have any planted areas. Included in this discussion will be the sensory raised beds in Balmoral Gardens.

TDC have removed the pergola at Balmoral Gardens which was becoming a health and safety issue. However, we have not been informed if this will be replaced. A plaque was also positioned on the pergola, which should be repositioned back at Balmoral Gardens if the pergola is not replaced. The Deputy Town Clerk to follow this up.

A request has been sent to TDC for the hedge in the circular area by the shelter at Victoria Gardens to be reduced by at least 12 inches. The hedge has not been reduced in a while and is now at a height where it is difficult for the internal bedding areas to be seen. It has been requested that this is incorporated into TDC's winter maintenance programme.

Due to the lack of maintenance of this hedge, the fencing has also started to be pushed out of line. Discussions are taking place with TDC regarding a resolution to this.

The Gardeners have requested that we look into removal of the 'palm trees' within Victoria Gardens. These are in fact cordylines and are part of the bedding

The cordylines do take a lot of the water out of the ground which makes it difficult for other plants to establish around this area.

On discussion the Committee decided that the cordylines should remain as they are considered to be part of the visual amenity of the seafront, however some maintenance is required, with one cordyline to be reduced by a couple of feet initially to allow for new growth, and this maintenance is to be carried out to the other two in the following season.

We have been approached by TDC regarding the possibility of taking on Nuckell's Gardens and aiding the volunteers from Dickens House Museum. The TDC Tourism Manager will look into having the area incorporated into our cultivation licence. This is likely to commence in the new financial year. Consideration would need to be given to increasing staff hours for this additional area. Updates will be given as they are received.

125. TREE WORKS

Following discussion regarding the two trees located at the Baird's Hill footpath, it was agreed to pass this back to KCC as this area is not Town Council land and the Committee .

126. FORWARD AGENDA ITEMS AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting: 20th October 2025, to include the Allotment Holders Open Meeting.

Meeting Closed at 20.03
Deputy Town Clerk