

South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council
www.southwillesboroughnewtown-cc.gov.uk
Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on
Monday 13th April 2026

April Minutes

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:05pm

In attendance Chair Cllr Sue Mullan (SM) Vice Chair Cllr Paul Bohill (PB) Cllr Malcolm Webb (MW) Cllr Eric Parkinson (EP) Cllr Andy Hodges (AH) Cllr David Mullan (DM)

Also in attendance, Sarah Evans Community Council Manager (SECCM) Annette Brennan Deputy Clerk and Allotments Officer (AB) Peter New Neighbourhood Watch (PN) Members of the public 1.

74/26 To Record and List Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Lauren Corbett and Cllr Steve Campkin and approved.

75/26 Declarations of pecuniary, other significant or voluntary interest

No declarations were made.

76/26 To Agree the Minutes of the Additional Meeting of the Council March 2026 and sign

It was Proposed MW and Seconded AH that the Minutes were a true record of the meeting and the Chair signs them.

77/26 To Agree the Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting March 2026 and sign

It was Proposed DM and Seconded PB that the Minutes were a true record of the meeting and the Chair signs them.

78/26 To receive reports from Kent Police and Neighbourhood Watch

Members discussed the previously circulated report relating to Celebrating Responders Week Kent Police, PN gave a verbal report of his previously circulated Neighbourhood Watch Report. PN also presented a discussion document related to item 86/26 87/26

The Chair was moved to item 86/26 for Members to consider and discuss.

Resolved:- Proposed EP Seconded AH and Agreed unanimously that It was resolved in pursuance of the powers conferred by s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and being of the opinion that the expenditure satisfies the requirements of that section, the Council approves the expenditure of up to £500.00 towards the provision of refreshments for Police Officers throughout the week of 20th April 2026. These payments to be assigned to the Area Enhancement Budget.

To delegate the CCM and Deputy Clerk to 1) To arrange free hot drinks and cake / crisps / chocolate for Police Officers by arranging an appropriately limited account with The Alfred Arms and Ashford Cattle Market Stockpot Café and Salvation Army Community Café. 2) The drafting of a letter of appreciation on behalf of the Council, 3) To investigate if thank you for your service cards could be signed by members of the local youth group and kids club to be delivered to Ashford Police Station. If so possible to design and draft these cards for completion.

79/26 Meeting adjourned for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda. (This item will last no more than 15 minutes in total)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm with no questions from the public was immediately reopened 7:15pm

80/26 To consider a response to the Community Governance Review for an Ashford Town Council.

Resolved:- Agreed unanimously the Council supported the proposal and arrangements for the creation of an Ashford Town Council

81/26 To consider a report of the Community Council Manager regarding the investigation of possible transfer of assets to SWANCC in the Local Government Reorganisation process and agree actions.

Members had a lengthy discussion on the previously circulated report.

Resolved:- Proposed SM Seconded MW Agreed unanimously to the following

- 1) Table of assets presented with the addition of Belmont Car Park.
- 2) To carry out land registry checks on all assets presented on the land registry government website and further checks on open spaces with KCC. This task was delegated to the CCM and the use of the Council Debit was agreed for the costs for these checks.
- 3) Once completed to write to Chief Executive and Head of Policy and Performance at Ashford Borough Council, also for KCC related assets to write to Leader of KCC Council, Chief Executive of KCC with the draft letter presented in the report.
- 4) To also investigate if the Listed Buildings within Newtown Works could be considered as Assets within the transfer process.

82/26 To consider a report of the Community Council Manager on arrangements for the Annual Meeting of Electors 26th May 2026 and agree actions.

- 1) Resolved:- Agreed unanimously to the draft agenda for the Annual Electors Meeting,
- 2) The Welcome and Annual Report of the SWAN Community Council
To be drafted by the CCM and agreed by the Chair and the Clerks

- 3) **An award for Members of the Planting and Biodiversity Working Group. Achieving Silver for the Environment Award Certificates of Appreciation to be given to all members.**
- 4) Certificates of appreciation for Members of the Rising Costs Working Group and feedback on the KALC Award Ceremony Cllr Hodges
- 5) To invite all community groups and the school to make representations on their activities as previous years. Chair of Meeting to lead on this item.
- 6) To invite a report from Neighbourhood Watch
- 7) To invite reports from KCC and Ward Cllrs
- 8) **To invite nominations for Young People of SWAN Awards for Outstanding contribution to the Community, Outstanding contribution to the Community and investigate a Young Carers aspect and promote on social media with a deadline for nominations to be received by 6th May 2026. To delegate the Community Council Manager to draft Award Nomination and criteria. Nominees to be considered at the Annual Meeting of the Council 11.5.26.**

83/26 To receive and note the Minutes of the March Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Resolved Proposed EP Seconded AH to receive and note Minutes of March Meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee.

84/26 To agree the payments listing (attached), new beneficiaries, endorse any payments agreed by email and any deposit key refunds required.

Resolved Proposed AH Seconded PB and Agreed Unanimously

- 1) Payments to year end March 26 were approved table 1.
- 2) Payments for April were approved table 2
- 3) Also, the payment of £77.10 to Kings Seeds for the Living Workshop and Community Allotment provision by Council Debit Card.

Table 1

Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
Current Account 1 (P)	316	Agilico Telecoms and Broadban	Agilico	S	49.28	9.86	59.14
Current Account 1 (P)	317	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	7.00		7.00
65 Account A	318	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	7.00		7.00
50 Current Account E	319	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	7.00		7.00
50 Current Account E	320	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	3.00		3.00
50 Current Account E	321	Zoom Legal advice meetings	zoom	S	13.99	2.80	16.79
Total					87.27	12.66	99.93

Table 2

Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
50 Current Account E	1	Zoom Legal advice meetings	zoom	S	13.99	2.80	16.79
Current Account 1 (P	2	Defib Maintenance	Hopkins+	S	72.24	14.45	86.69
Current Account 1 (P	3	SSL Certificate and Domain for	Ashford Web Services	X	60.00		60.00
Current Account 1 (P	4	Worknest Legal Expense Insur	Worknest	X	214.00		214.00
Current Account 1 (P	4	Worknest Legal Expense Insur	Worknest	S	65.00	13.00	78.00
Current Account 1 (P	5	Worknest Health and Safety	Worknest	S	3,662.93	732.59	4,395.52
Current Account 1 (P	6	Water Allotments	Waterplus	X	88.21		88.21
Total					4,176.37	762.84	4,939.21

85/26 To agree Legal Expense Insurance for Worknest Health and Safety and Human Resource contracts

Resolved Proposed AH Seconded EP and Agreed Unanimously to Legal Expense Insurance for Worknest Health and Safety and Human Resource contracts at a cost of £214.00 as per table 2 item 4.

86/26 To consider a report of the Community Council Manager on quotations for replacement fencing at Gas House Fields and agree

Members considered the previously circulated report from the Community Council Manager regarding quotations for the replacement of fencing at Gas House Fields allotments, together with correspondence from the Section 106 (S106) team at Ashford Borough Council. Members also considered an additional quotation for site levelling works to improve safety.

Resolved: Proposed EP Seconded AH and Agreed unanimously

1. To apply for Section 106 (S106) funding for the full replacement of fencing at the allotments.
2. Subject to approval of the S106 funding application, to accept the quotation from Four Seasons Fencing as follows (plus VAT):
 - Critical Line: £3,642.51
 - Extended Line: £5,251.27
 - Perimeter to main site: £9,592.44
3. In the event that S106 funding is not approved in full, to refer the fencing quotations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for further consideration.
4. To delegate authority to the Allotments Officer to make necessary arrangements with tenants regarding the installation programme.
5. To accept the quotation for site levelling at a cost of £1,450.00, subject to confirmation of requirements following the allotment tenant review process.

87/26 To receive Planning Consultant reports to assist the Council in responding effectively to the applications PA/2026/0171 and PA/2026/0229 at Newtown Works and agree.

PN presented the previously circulated discussion document.

Resolved :-Agreed Unanimously

- 1) To receive the Highways related report from Aprica UK Ltd,
- 2) **To submit the report in full and assert as the Community Councils views and opinion on the impact of the development on the area and the inadequacies in the walking, cycling, bus, and car management along with all serious concerns relating to Crowbridge, the plans for amendments at Gladstone Road and the challenges those plans present**
- 3) The payment of £1350 To Aprica UK Ltd was approved.
- 4) To receive draft response from the Local Council Consultancy Consultant. This was reviewed and considered.
- 5) Careful consideration was given to the Discussion Document and concerns relating to fire services, road widths and parking provision, the prevention of crime and the prevention of violence against women and girls in the design of lighting and parking were weighed and agreed.
- 6) To further engage the LCC Consultant to assist in drafting the response to the planning committee at Ashford Borough Council.

88/26 To agree a response to Planning application PA/2026/0171 and PA/2026/0229 at Newtown Works

Resolved :- Agreed unanimously to object to planning applications PA 2026 0171 and PA 2026 0229. To use the drafted Response from the LCC Consultant and highways report from Aprica UK Ltd. To add to this draft response the following concerns which were delegated to the CCM to include in the response, to seek oversight from the Consultant if possible as the Council is aware of the limited constraints to his availability before the due date of submission.:-

1. Crowbridge and Old Millstream Bridge
2. **SWANCC was advised an independent structural check would be carried out by KCC's Bridges Department however the outcome and arrangements following this survey have not been reported back to SWANCC nor is it submitted within the planning documents.**
3. **The Bridge is very old structure and not designed for the weight and volume of traffic this development proposes, both in construction and occupation.**
4. **Should it fail, it would be serious both in isolating the existing residential area and the flow of traffic throughout the town. This concern is supported by the requirement within the Local Ashford Plan for under Policy SP6 to review this for quality, design and permeability in use.**

5. SWANCC would again state that the structural review of the bridge and related works need to be completed before the development is progressed.
6. Further concerns are raised as to the inadequacy of the proposals to improve the access challenges created by the Old Millstream Bridge as detailed by Aprica Ltd To raise the strong concern that the bridge needs to be addressed
7. Samuel Peto Way and Harold Way Kirtley Way and Ellson Close To draw in the Independent Highways Report Samuel Peto Way page 11 paragraphs 1-3. To ensure the impact on the residents of these areas are clearly articulated in the response.
8. Community Safety
 - a) Fire Safety

A formal consultation response from Kent Fire and Rescue Service in relation to application PA 2026/0229 has not been received. It is noted that the proposed Locomotive Sheds , from the submitted elevations, to potentially exceed the ridge height approved under previous planning consent for the site.

With regard to application PA 2026/0171, the available response from Kent Fire and Rescue Service is understood to have been based on assumptions relating to buildings not exceeding 18 metres in height.

However, the submitted drawings for the proposed development include references to building heights of up to 22 metres. It is not clearly demonstrated within the application whether these measurements are taken from finished ground level or whether site level variations have been accounted for.

There appears to be potential for an inconsistency between the Design and Access Statement and the submitted elevation drawings.

This requires clarification, as it is directly relevant to the assessment of fire safety provision and emergency access arrangements.

b) Noise and Vibration

Similarly, there are strong concerns which the Council has received, considered and support these would include concerns that the impact of Noise and Vibration from the Highspeed and Railway service adjacent to the proposed properties affecting the quality of living for the potential new residents.

c) Prevention of Violence against women and girls and prevention of Crime

Furthermore, and of no less importance is the prevention of violence against women and girls and the prevention of crime.

Safety must be achieved by design and every sustainable effort must be made to ensure adequate lighting throughout the development. The lighting plan item 11.12 demonstrates a lack of lighting at Samuel Peto Way end of the development and the circulating the new blocks proposed within the development.



Safe sustainable parking to prevent not only the aforementioned overspill of 500 cars but also the potential conflict that can arise due to disputes over location and lack of parking, which also impacts the safety of Women and Girls.

The size and design of cars has increased in the development of new model cars, particularly electric vehicles, the lack of parking spaces able to be included in the design plans as it stands only evidences this. Road width, parking spaces and turning areas must be able to accommodate the vehicles owned by the future residents of this development with suitable capacity and access for Emergency vehicles to able to respond accessibly and safely to the development.

- 9) It was also noted SWANCC is aware of safety concerns raised by young people in relation to the prevention of unauthorised access to the adjacent railway, railway property, and operational railway land and businesses.**

89/26 To consider a draft S106 request for the SWAN area.

Resolved:- Agreed unanimously to the draft S106 request to date. It was noted that due to delays with the post not all consultees had had the opportunity to respond, therefore it was agreed to accept submission up to 15th April 26 and delegate the CCM to include these in the formatted draft and then these would be overviewed the Chair who is also Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee and Vice Chair to be submitted 16th April 2026.

90/26 Urgent Correspondence

- a) Internal Auditor The date of internal audit 11.6.2026
- b) SLCC Kent Branch training on hybrid meetings was agreed for CCM.
- c) Complaint of untended brambles at Alfred Road.
- d) Complaint of trees overgrowing on Gladstone Road causing on obstruction to the bus-stop as well as neighbouring properties.
- e) Email from Aubergine 262 Website development is progressing go live date to be agreed by which time all content must be completed.

Resolved: Agreed unanimously to the following:-

- a) Internal Audit date was received and noted.
- b) SLCC Kent Branch training was approved
- c) To report to Ward Cllrs and Ashford Borough Council to address.
- d) To report to Ward Cllrs and Ashford Borough Council to address.
- e) To a go live date of 3rd June 2026 all content to be completed by 27.5.26 It was also noted the staff time impact to complete this would be substantial and this was to be prioritised alongside preparations for Annual Meeting of the Council, Annual Meeting of Electors and Year End Accounting and Governance Return.

91/26 To agree the date of the Next Meeting as The Annual Meeting of the Council May 11th 2026

Resolved:- Agreed the date of the Next Meeting as The Annual Meeting of the Council May 11th 2026. An additional Meeting of the Council was also agreed 15th June 2026 to receive the internal auditors report and agree the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

There being no further business to discuss the Chair closed the meeting at 9pm

Signed Chair _____ Date _____

Appendix of Reports

- Community Governance Review
- Asset Transfers
- Annual Electors Meeting
- Minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee
- Fencing at Gas House Fields Allotments report
- Planning Consultant draft response
- Review of Planning Consultant Report
- S106 report

Community Governance Review survey questions

- Parish Ward Names

Parish Ward 1 Furley

Parish Ward 2 Godinton and Report

Parish Ward 3 Willesborough

Parish Ward 4 Victoria

Parish Ward 5 Beaver

Do you support or opposed proposed town council Ward names

- Proposed to have 16 Councillors 4 wards would have 3 Cllrs and one ward would have 4 Cllrs as it's a larger electorate.
- Do you support this number of Cllrs
- Do you support the name as Ashford Town Council

Vesting Day for Ashford Town Council would be 1 April 2027 the shadow authority would be appointed with the first elections held May 2027. in the interim shadow authority would be appointed to make decisions on the establishment, precept initial asset transfer (consisting of allotment) and other matters as necessary.

The Shadow Authority would comprise of

Existing Cllrs from wards covered entirely by the review area

2 representatives from each of the community forums in the review area (Central Ashford Community Forum and North Willesborough Community Forum).

Do you support the proposed arrangements.

Vesting day is the date when a new local authority officially comes into existence and assumes it legal powers and responsibilities.

Do you support the creation of a town council for the unparished area of Ashford.

To Consider the possible transfer of assets to SWANCC in the Local Government Reorganisation process and agree actions.

To agree

Table of Assets

Letter to Ashford Borough Council

Background

With just 13 months until the transition to Unitary authorities if agreed for KENT, should SWAN Community Council wishes to investigate the management of assets in the area it will need a proactive approach

There is very little guidance provided for Parish Councils in Ashford and the gap in the White Paper which gives a very limited comment about strengthening expectations on engagement with town and parish councils — nothing about asset transfers or support mechanisms.

This absence of central guidance means each area is handling transfers differently, creating a gap in information and access for town and parish councils wanting to proactively engage and consider actions.

At the KALC Conference last year, it was advised the transfer of assets would require a business case, a Quality assured council and a CILCA qualified clerk. To meet this the CCM is working towards CILCA. The Quality Assurance Bronze required is in place, except for the website, with the new website being WCAG2.2 compliant and live will then demonstrate the requirements for this award. As this progresses towards the Councils objective for growth and sustainability of services and assets in the area.

To date there has been no correspondence received from Ashford Borough Council regarding the possible discussions for asset transfers. This was raised at the recent KALC Ashford Area Committee, advised that “ABC is not planning to transfer any assets outside of their normal processes but if Parish Councils had a specific asset in mind to put this forward. ABC will then need to consider the business case along with the objectives and ability of the Parish Council to manage the asset. It was actioned to contact the Monitoring Officer at ABC, as it was reported the view has recently changed and that the Borough Council can transfer assets.”

Although KCC has also not communicated to date regarding assets or asset transfer it replied in response to the budget consultation that any transfers from KCC would need to be at full market rate value.

At this time however recommended questions sourced from A Portfolio Holder in Norfolk Council who is proactively progressing arrangements for asset transfers to local parish councils in the area see blog page link. <https://www.civic.ly/learning/devolution-and-asset-transfers/>

Questions the Council should be asking are as follows

1. Do we know what assets might be transferred to us? If not, who should we be contacting to find out?
2. What is the current condition of these assets? Request condition surveys and maintenance histories.
3. What are the annual running costs and potential income streams? Demand detailed financial information.
4. Do we have the capacity to manage these assets? Consider staffing, expertise, and potential partnerships.
5. Do the higher tier authorities intend to transfer any assets and if so What support will be provided during transition? Ask for specific commitments on training and funding.
6. Could we partner with neighbouring parishes to create economies of scale in asset management?

Actions the Council needs to consider

1. Lists of assets in our area that might be transferred see table below
2. Current maintenance costs for these assets
3. Potential income figures where applicable

4. Condition surveys and outstanding maintenance issues
5. Long-term capital investment requirements
6. Capability and capacity to manage new assets or services.

To take forward any investigation into these assets, the Council will need to note these are financial liabilities, take independent legal advice on the costs and considerations and with this process draft a business case to consider whether it can resiliently manage the service ongoing. It will also need to agree the assets in the area and those it wishes to investigate.

- 1) Assets in the Table below over the SWAN Area to consider to investigate, Members may wish to add other considerations.

2-5) Then write to CEO and Head of Policy Performance to determine the points 2-6 and review with independent advice to achieve point 6.

After which a weighed business case can be drafted with support to inform Members and consider collectively on a decision for any of these assets and propose this to the Borough Council. This business case would benefit from being supported by the SWAN Community Plan to align with the Councils consultation of the community and future goals.

Future Planning

Also with the possible transfer of assets being investigated in response to Local Government Reorganisation a longer term plan is needed. Going forward the SWAN Community Plan does need to be developed for the near future.

Funding to support the area and its development is key to any objectives, an avenue to ensure is investigated is S106 agreed funding between developers and the Borough Council these do be examined to understand the potential support for the area in addition to the allotments which is examined under a further item on this agenda.

A request has been submitted to the S106 team at Ashford Borough Council to determine the full scale of support available to the area requesting specifically:-

- Details of any S106 funds currently available (unallocated or open for use)
- Information on any upcoming S106 funding expected to become available
- Relevant timescales or deadlines associated with these funds

The S106 team has advised this will take time due to limited capacity within the team and a response is awaited.

This will signal to the Council planning objectives which have been deemed as required for the SWAN area and its ability to meet the mitigated impact from growth and development as well as maintaining its current assets and services.

South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council

Finance and General Purposes Committee 23rd March 2026 Minutes

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:00pm

In attendance Chair Cllr Sue Mullan (SM) Cllr Steve Campkin (SC) and Cllr Lauren Corbett (LC)

Also in attendance, Sarah Evans Community Council Manager (SECCM)

14/26 To Record and List Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mark Harris and Approved

15/26 Declarations of pecuniary, other significant or voluntary interest

No declarations were made.

16/26 To Agree the Minutes of the last Meeting January 2026 and sign (attached)

It was Proposed SC and Seconded LC that the Minutes were a true record of the meeting and the Chair signs them.

17/26 To review the budget performance to date, reserves report, bank reconciliation and recommended bank transfers and agree actions.

Resolved: Agreed unanimously to accept the budget performance to date and budget monitor report, reserves were noted and the bank reconciliation was agreed. A transfer of £15,000 from Reserves to Current Account was approved.

18/26 To agree the payments listing (attached), new beneficiaries, endorse any payments agreed by email and any deposit key refunds required.

Resolved: Proposed SC Seconded LC and Agreed to the following:-

1. The updated payments listing was approved table 1 below.
2. A further payment To Cllr Sue Mullan of £11.70 for railway expenses for the Wilder Kent Award attendance approved. The expense form was complete, signed, and presented in the meeting and approved.
3. All payments agreed by email were endorsed table 2a and table 2b
4. Clerk emergency decisions were noted
 - 1) fencing pins and fencing for allotments at a cost of net £99.47 Vat £19.89 total £119.36. payment reference 135,
 - 2) Safety Boots £29.00 inc vat payment reference 298.

Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
291	Memorial Bench	Ashford Borough Council	X	600.00		600.00
292	Cable ties	Fixings Warehouse	S	6.02	1.20	7.22
293	Agilico Telecoms and Broadban	Agilico	S	49.28	9.86	59.14
294	Salaries	South Willesborough and N	X	2,220.62		2,220.62
294	Salaries	South Willesborough and N	X	850.20		850.20
294	Salaries	South Willesborough and N	X	339.33		339.33
294	Salaries	South Willesborough and N	X	320.37		320.37
295	NEST Pension	South Willesborough and N	X	253.70		253.70
296	Water Allotments	Waterplus	X	79.81		79.81
297	Microshade Cloud Services anc	Microshade	S	256.84	51.37	308.21
298	safety boots dpty clerk	Thanet Tools	S	24.17	4.83	29.00
299	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	6.00		6.00
299	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	3.00		3.00
300	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	6.00		6.00
301	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	6.00		6.00
302	Zoom Legal advice meetings	zoom	S	13.99	2.80	16.79
303	Room Hire Sal Army	Salvation Army Ashford Cor	X	703.75		703.75
304	Office Print Costs	ASL	S	35.00	7.00	42.00
305	HMRC Cumbernauld	South Willesborough and N	X	556.48		556.48
306	CLerk Exp Paper for office	South Willesborough and N	X	27.00		27.00
306	CLerk Exp Paper for office	South Willesborough and N	X	14.99		14.99
306	CLerk Exp Paper for office	South Willesborough and N	X	18.45		18.45
307	Storage container hire PSEO	Ashford Cattle Market	S	120.00	24.00	144.00
308	Copier Lease Hire	PEAC	S	84.99	17.00	101.99
309	Website Updates	Aubergine 262 Ltd	S	150.00	30.00	180.00
310	Communkity Skip Contact form	Ashford Web Services	X	55.00		55.00
Total				6,800.99	148.06	6,949.05

Table 2 a

Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
273	PAT Testing	Kingsnorth Electrical Ltd	S	91.15	18.23	109.38
274	Payroll Costs	Manningtons Chartered Ac	S	205.00	41.00	246.00
275	Fire Extinguisher Servicing	DELA Fire and Security Ltd	S	120.00	24.00	144.00
276	Salaries	South Willesborough and N	X	2,220.62		2,220.62
276	Salaries	South Willesborough and N	X	339.33		339.33
276	Salaries	South Willesborough and N	X	1,205.40		1,205.40
276	Salaries	South Willesborough and N	X	320.37		320.37
278	NEST Pension	South Willesborough and N	X	226.72		226.72
278	NEST Pension	South Willesborough and N	X	26.98		26.98
277	HMRC Cumbernauld	South Willesborough and N	X	-256.52		-256.52
279	Microshade Cloud Services anc	Microshade	S	97.64	19.53	117.17
280	Office Print Costs	ASL	S	35.00	7.00	42.00
281	Water Allotments	Waterplus	Z	88.21		88.21
282	Water temp probe	Screwfix	S	15.82	3.17	18.99
283	PPE and Safe Working Equipm	Tudor UK Ltd Trading as Ti	S	282.00	56.42	338.42
Total				5,017.72	169.35	5,187.07

Table 2b

Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
162	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	Z	6.00		6.00
162	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	Z	3.00		3.00
190	Agilico Telecoms and Broadban	Agilico	S	49.28	9.86	59.14
267	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	6.00		6.00
267	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	3.00		3.00
268	Zoom Legal advice meetings	zoom	S	13.99	2.80	16.79
269	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	6.00		6.00
270	Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank	X	6.00		6.00
Total				93.27	12.66	105.93

19/26 To review the Council Risk Assessment and agree.

Resolved:- Agreed unanimously to update the risk assessment that all new activities are risk assessed and for a more detailed summary of all activities to be added to the risk assessment.

SECCM to update the risk assessment and return to the next meeting.

20/26 To review the Lone Working Risk Assessment for 2026.

Resolved:- Agreed unanimously to accept the risk assessment with a scoring of 2 and 2 for priority and severity after controls were put in place. It was delegated to SECCM To ensure all staff have a personal alarm; these were to be purchased as soon as possible by Council Debit card. That a zero-tolerance policy needed to be drafted and adopted by Annual Meeting in May 26.

SECCM to draft zero tolerance policy for review at next meeting and recommendation to Council at the Annual Meeting. SECCM to purchase personal alarms for all staff by Council Debit card.

21/26 To review the strimming brush cutting and mowing risk assessment for 2026.

Resolved:- Agreed unanimously to accept the risk assessment and adopt for 2026 2027.

22/26 To review the cleaning graffiti risk assessment for 2026 and agree.

Resolved:- Agreed unanimously to accept the risk assessment and adopt for 2026 2027.

23/26 To review the litter picking risk assessment and agree.

Resolved:- Agreed unanimously to accept the risk assessment and adopt for 2026 2027.

24/26 To review quotations for additional Safe Working Equipment and agree.

Resolved :- Proposed SC and Seconded LC to agree the following purchase from Tudor Environmental 2 x blue spray suit coveralls 1 x composite safety trainers £41.39 net £8.28 £49.67 inc VAT. plus delivery.

25/26 To review quotations for stationery and equipment of the SWAN office and agree.

Resolved :- Proposed SC and Seconded LC and agreed to the following

- 1) Purchase of 100 second class stamps to agree at local Post Office for payment by Council debit card**
 - 2) Amazon Order Stationery and Equipment**
 - 10 A4 Ring Binders economy pack**
 - A4 Dividers Bulk Pack**
 - Bonsai Card and Paper Shredder with Servicing Sheets It was noted that here was time limited deal on the shredder and this may return to market price £89.99**
 - Paperclips and Assorted File Clips**
- Total £127.65 inc vat payment was quoted for the Amazon Basket and payment approved by Council Debit Card was approved.**

26/26 To review the service report for Fire Extinguishers and agree actions.

Resolved:- Agreed unanimously to the purchase of a New fire extinguisher with UK kite marking. The purchase was to be completed as an Emergency decision by the Clerk to ensure safety payment by Council debit card approved.

27/26 To review delegation from Council acceptance of Consultant quotations

Resolved Agreed unanimously that

- 1. Planning Consultant proposal Local Council Consultancy**

Following a satisfactory introductory call with the associate, to accept the Written Quotation from Local Council Consultancy at an estimated costs of £1785.00 excluding VAT. It was noted that if additional time is required due to any charges costs would be charged at a day rate of £595.00. This quotation confirmed the service of drafting planning statement on behalf of SWANCC in respect of PA/2026/0171 and PA/2020/0171 to meet the Borough Council deadline of 16.4.26.
- 2. Independent Quotation for Highways and Transport Planning**

The associate for LCC has recommended an independent transport and highways assessment relating to planning applications above to inform the response from the Council and ensure a robust review of the highways and parking concerns the council has raised.

Aprica ltd and HD Consulting were recommended to the Council and due to the shortage of time created by the deadline from ABC this was investigated as 1 quote To action SECCM to carry out an introductory call with recommended associate from Aprica ltd and HD Consulting and subject to a satisfactory call to receive fee proposal for Transport assessment in relation to these planning applications and circulate by email for payment agreement.

28/ 26 To agree the date of the next meeting as 27th April 2026 and any items for the Agenda.

DRAFT

Table of Assets

Letter to Ashford Borough Council.

	Table of SWAN Assets.		
	<u>Newtown</u>	<u>South Willesborough</u>	<u>Income Generating</u>
<u>Carparks</u>	Newtown Green Road A Newtown Green Road B Wainwright Place Bullied Place Maunsell Place	East Stour Way	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Community Buildings</u>	Baxendale Community lounge	SWAN Centre with Community Usership Agreement with SWAN Association. Who are active in developing this into a community hub. BGFC Pavilion likely to have Community Usership agreement with BGFC. Waterside Centre understood to have lease with KCC Children's Services.	<u>Yes SW Query Newtown</u>
<u>Green Spaces</u>	Newtown Green Stirling Road	Frogs Orchard Frogs Island SWAN Farm Cudworth Road SWAN Farm Bushy Royds leading to River Close Canterbury Road BGFC Playing Field The Spinney Allotments Pocket Park Canterbury Road Surtees Close Green Field believe this is privately owned	<u>No</u>
<u>Playparks</u>	<u>Newtown Green Playpark</u> <u>Stirling Road Playpark</u> <u>Bulleid Place Asda Playpark</u>	Outdoor Gym Fairview Drive Small Playpark Basketball Court Herbert Rd	<u>No</u>
<u>Benches</u>	<u>On Street and Newtown Green</u>	On Street and Green Spaces	<u>No</u>
<u>Litter Bins</u>	<u>On Street</u>		<u>Query advertising</u>
<u>Communal Bins</u>	<u>On Street</u>		<u>Query</u>
<u>Allotments</u>		Gas House Fields	<u>Yes cost only basis</u>

Dear Chief Executive and Head of Policy & Performance,

I write on behalf of SWAN Community Council regarding the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation proposals and the potential implications for the management and transfer of local assets.

With the proposed transition to Unitary Authorities anticipated within the next 13 months (subject to agreement for Kent), the Council is seeking to take a proactive approach in understanding whether there are opportunities to support the future management of assets within our area.

To date, the Council has not received any formal communication from Ashford Borough Council regarding potential asset transfers. However, following discussions at the recent KALC Ashford Area Committee, we understand that whilst the Borough Council is not currently pursuing a programme of asset transfers, Parish and Community Councils may submit expressions of interest for specific assets. We also understand that the Council's position may be evolving.

In order to inform our considerations and any potential future proposals, SWAN Community Council would be grateful if you could provide clarity on the following:

1. Whether Ashford Borough Council has identified any assets within the SWAN area that may be considered for transfer, either now or as part of future reorganisation arrangements.
2. Confirmation of ownership and current management arrangements for assets within our area.
3. For any assets that could be considered for transfer:
 - Current condition surveys and maintenance histories
 - Annual running and maintenance costs
 - Any existing income streams and financial performance
 - Details of any leases, licences, or third-party agreements
4. The Council's criteria and process for considering asset transfers to Parish and Community Councils, including:
 - Business case requirements
 - Any expectations regarding staffing, expertise, or delivery models required to manage assets effectively.

For your information the Council has recently undertaken an independent benchmarking and was determined to be a Medium Council LC 2 Substantive. Moving towards LC3 Town Council. The Council is actively pursuing NALC Local Council Award Status and the Clerk RFO is engaging with CILCA due to complete later this year.

5. Whether Ashford Borough Council intends to transfer any assets as part of Local Government Reorganisation, and if so, what support will be provided to Parish and Community Councils during transition, including:
 - Financial support or transitional funding
 - Professional or technical advice
 - Training or capacity-building support
6. Any indicative timelines associated with potential asset transfer discussions in the context of Local Government Reorganisation.

7. Whether the Borough Council would support or encourage joint arrangements between neighbouring Parish or Community Councils to manage assets collaboratively, and if so, whether any frameworks or guidance are available.

SWAN Community Council is currently reviewing a number of assets within its area to determine whether further investigation is appropriate. As part of this process, the Council is mindful that asset transfer represents both an opportunity and a long-term financial responsibility, and therefore wishes to ensure that any consideration is supported by robust information and due diligence.

We would welcome the opportunity to engage in early dialogue with relevant officers to better understand the Borough Council's position and to ensure a coordinated and constructive approach.

We would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this request and advise on the appropriate officer contact for progressing these enquiries.

Yours sincerely

Chair SWANCC

**The Annual Meeting of Electors
Date 26th May 2026 at the Salvation Army Hall at 6:30pm**

This is a meeting of the residents however it is organised by the Council on behalf of the residents.

Below is a drafted format for members and arrangements for members to consider as recommendations and to agree

Chairing the Annual Parish Meeting

The meeting should be chaired by the Parish Council Chairman or in their absence the Parish Council Vice Chairman. LGA 1972 ss 17(1))

However, there is no requirement for the Parish Council Chairman to attend a meeting of the parish but they are entitled to attend. LGA 1972 s 16

If neither the parish council chair nor the vice chair are present then those electors present may appoint a chairman for the meeting. LGA 1972 ss 17(3)

10) Welcome and Annual Report of the SWAN Community Council

To be drafted and agreed by the Chair and the Clerk

To be presented by a Member of SWANCC

11) Sign the minutes of the last Annual Meeting of Electors 2025

12) Report of the Responsible Financial Officer Sarah Evans

- 13) To consider an award for Members of the Planting and Biodiversity Working Group. Achieving Silver for the Environment Award Certificates of Appreciation
- 14) Certificates of appreciation for Members of the Rising Costs Working Group and feedback on the Award Ceremony Cllr Hodges if available
- 15) To consider any other awards that the Council may wish to make
- 16) To invite all community groups and the school to make representations on their activities as previous years. Chair of Meeting to lead on this item.
- 17) To invite a report from Neighbourhood Watch
- 18) To invite reports from KCC and Ward Cllrs
- 19) To close the meeting with refreshments to be organised by the Deputy Clerk and funded by the Event Working Group budget.

Sarah Evans
Community Council Manager
8 April 2026

A report of the Community Council Manager on the requirement for Critical Replacement of Fencing on Gas House Fields.

Recommendations of Decisions

To agree the quotation Four seasons Fencing to remote existing fence and supply 1.8 High Mesh Fencing Galvanised & Polyester Powder Coated Green (RAL 6005)

Delegate the Community Council Manager to

- **Support request for approval of S106 funding request to Ashford Borough Council.**
- **To agree the allocation of vacant plot 44b3 for access gates**
- **Subject to approval to instruct Four Seasons Fencing to carry out works**
- **Liaise with tenants to ensure safe access for fencing contractors.**

Background

A routine inspection on the Gas House Fields Allotments Monday 16th March 26 revealed that the side allotment left side of chain-link fence is leaning significantly and the posts are not properly supporting the fence. The fence is adjacent to the footpath and it does pose a serious risk if it were to give way to footpath users, tenants and the security of the site. The outside of the fence footpath side has a large amount of bramble growth which is also required to be removed to all the works to progress. The fencing runs alongside 3 tenant plots and 1 vacant plot. This fence line has been named Critical Line fence

Furthermore, the side entrance fence to the allotment is covered in razor wire which is very low for passersby of the busy walk way, the gate is very narrow in itself and does not accommodate wide loads such as wheelbarrows, as the gateway opens the footpath is less than 1 foot in width and is a potential tripping hazard and it does not allow for wheelchairs to be able to access the side site at all. The chain-link fence provides limited security and the fence is bringing to come away from the post at the adjoining point with the River access. This fencing would benefit from replacement and significantly improve accessibility to the site for tenants, better security and better safety for passers by due to the razor wire. This fencing has been named Extended Line fence.

The main site has perimeter fencing which is topped by razor wire the posts are of the same age and grade of the side allotment and the posts holding up the main gate are occasionally dropping and the posts from the neighbouring property to the main gate are being to degrade and could pose a risk they are going to need to be replaced. This has been named Perimeter to the Main Site.

S106 confirm **£18,450.05** (capital) and **£6,854.93 (maintenance of the capital project)** is available for the Gas House Fields Allotments site, with a spend deadline of **09/06/2032**.

Restriction of spend: towards improvements to Gas House Fields site to comprise of improvement of fencing and gating, the improvement of water and electricity supplies and the provision of outdoor furniture

Fencing Quotations

To clear all brambles and overgrowth remove all prior fencing and posts and remove all from the site
To install 1.8m high P100 Mesh Security Fencing Galvanised & Polyester Powder Coated Green (RAL 6005).
Responsibilities with instructing Fencing Contractors

Subject to site survey

No LADS in any form associated with this project

All live underground service which pose a safety threat to the company electric, gas water, must be marked out on the ground and plans made available to the Contractor prior to commencement of works.

Marking out of fence lines is the responsibility of the Council line to be waterproof marking material Where existing fencing is being replace will install along the same line as existing whilst trying to avoid existing post foundations

Will require on-site parking close to location of works – an opportunity to visit the site has been offered to each contractor and the challenges of parking, the wet path on the barrier gate to the allotments was explained.

To ensure suitable completion of the Work Nest Agreement for engaging contractors before work starts.

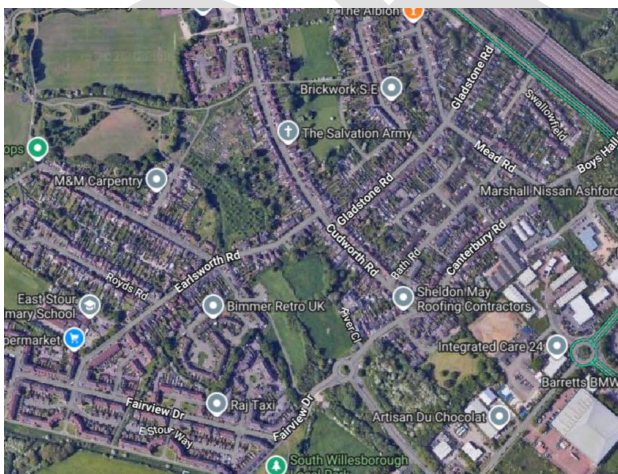
Fencing Suppliers

Galvanised & Polyester Powder Coated Green (RAL 6005)					
	Prelims Delivery Plant Management	Critical Fence	Extended Line	Perimeter to main site	Total cost
<u>Secura Fence</u>	Take down and dispose of existing fencing Total price £2,850.00 + vat Cut back and dispose all vegetation required to install new fence Total price £1050.00 + vat	No breakdown provided	No breakdown provided	No breakdown provided	SUPPLY AND INSTALL 236 METERS 1.8 HIGH P100 SECURITY FENCING 1 NO 3-METER-WIDE DOUBLE LEAF GATE TO MATCH 1 NO 1.2 WIDE SINGLE LEAF GATE TO MATCH TOTAL PRICE £19,240.00 + VAT £23140 +Vat and further site visit to review vegetation
<u>Perimeter Solutions</u>	£770.00	£4546 fence	£5644.80 £1483.15 gate	£9120 1477.63 Main gate 14836.15 Side gate	£24525.45 plus VAT Plus £25 per hole if not diggable by hand.
<u>Four Seasons Fencing</u>	0	£3,642.51 Site clearance, fence removal and vegetation cut back and clear included	£5,251.27 Site clearance, fence removal and vegetation cut back and clear included	£9,592.44 Site clearance, fence removal and vegetation cut back and clear included	£18486.22



Key

Blue	Critical Line
Orange	Extended Line
Black	Perimeter to Main Site



Site Address Map
 Gas House Fields
 Allotments
 Rear of Cudworth Road
 South Willesborough
 Ashford KENT TN24 0BB

Review of Quotations

Secura Fence

*Securafen Ltd
Unit b withambrook park
Grantham
Lincs
NG31 9ST
01476 516277*

www.securafen.co.uk

Nationwide company, Members of Federation of Small Businesses CHAS approved Contractor CSCS Cardholders as standard.

The quote provided the costs for the fencing and 2 of the gates however, 1 side gate was omitted from the quote. There are additional costs for removing the existing fencing and vegetation. A site visit was declined and the quote was provided based on the quotation request. The quote was simple and straightforward however without a site visit the contractor has very limited information on the site requirements any obstacles or challenges which may create further costs. The quote was not broken down as requested and it is difficult to recommend the quote due to the omitted gate, the lack of breakdown in the price, the declining of a site visit suggests it may be a less than straightforward transaction to have the works completed.

Perimeter Solutions

Apollo House, Orbital One, Green Street Green

Road, Dartford, DA1 1QG Tel: 01474 702233

www.perimeter-solutions.co.uk

A nationwide company, winner of the Morgan Sindall National Supply Chain Innovation of the Year, winner of Nominated for Association of Fencing Industries Project of the Year £3m; **Constructionline Gold, Acclaim and SSIP (Safety Schemes in Procurement), CHAS advanced, external safety audit annually and CQMS.**

A site visit was declined however, the quote was accompanied with notification a site visit would be required to review the site clearance costs and these would need to be added to the quotation. The quotation for the fencing was clear, fair and accurate and allowed for the gates and fencing to be completed. However, the quotation only allows for a fitted sliding latch and drop bolts for the main gates and no mechanical lock is included. the reason for this is not given and the price differential reflects it.

It is the most expensive and there will be the added costs for site clearance, plus if the ground is too hard it will become necessary to pay an additional £25 per hole for operators to use equipment to dig in the fencing posts. It is difficult to recommend the quote due to the higher cost overall plus the additional charges which will be required for site clearance.

3) Four Seasons Fencing

**Fourseasons Fencing
Bethersden
Ashford Kent TN26 3AT
www.fourseasons fencing.co.uk**

National Highway Sector schemes Quality Assurance awarded, CIRAS confidential reporting, CAME ad BPT approved installer and Constructionline Gold Medal Member Approved.

Professional High Standard company contracts include Schools, Children Centres, Dreamland Margate, Construction sites across the County.

Straightforward accurate quotation, site visit completed prior to quoting and review of the condition of the current fencing for the whole site was undertaken, the vegetation and overgrowth was accounted for and requirement for a clear line of work explained. arrangements for workers to park vehicles was confirmed and site access for skip for removing existing fence and waste confirmed.

No additional cost for waste removal from cutting back brush and overgrowth to access fencing line. However small compost bins, one water butt connected to shed and benches will need to move from 2 plots on critical fencing line before installation.

Cost Effective compared to other quotations, no additional site visit required and has worked for this Council installing the previous fencing improvements 2024 which were very satisfactory.

The recommendation of this report that Four Seasons are instructed based on their experience, professional credentials, pricing and excellent straightforward service, ability to remove all waste without complication or additional cost.

Review of safety for access

The provision of footpath inside the allotment gate for the critical and extended line is very narrow less than 1 foot in width. it is the recommendation of this report to move the gate to the left corner where a vacant plot 44b3 is situated this will allow for the gate to have a wide swing and easy access for wheelbarrows to access the plots and tenants to access without risk of tripping or slipping. This would reduce the plot size and it would reduce the rental income by £16.00 per year however the benefits of safety far outweigh the cost.

Conclusion

To agree the quotation Four seasons Fencing to remove existing fence and supply 1.8 High Mesh Fencing Galvanised & Polyester Powder Coated Green (RAL 6005)

Delegate the Community Council Manager to

- **Support request for approval of S106 funding request to Ashford Borough Council.**
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Newtown Railway Works, Ashford, Kent

**Planning Application Reference PA/2026/0171 and PA/2026/0229, Newtown
Railway Works, Newtown Road, Ashford, TN24 0PN**

I am writing to make you aware of the strong objections that South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council and the wider community have regarding this unacceptable proposal.

As you will be aware the planning application has generated considerable opposition from many local residents and some statutory bodies. Planning objections that we fully support and endorse.

While sympathetic towards the desire to sensitively and comprehensively bring the site back into beneficial use, we strongly object to this application. It is over development, does not represent sustainable development and it not in accordance with national and local planning policies. It would cause significant harm to important heritage assets, local infrastructure and the well-being of the local community (as well as the proposed occupiers).

For these and other important reasons it should be refused.

Turning to the main reasons why we consider it should be refused in more detail.

Significant harm to important Heritage Assets

It is without exaggeration to say that the site, in the context of historic environment and history of Ashford (especially its railway heritage), is unique and irreplaceable and could be quite rightly described as “the epiphany of the Towns heritage”.

That it is of national significance is not in doubt, as reflected in that it contains six designated Listed Structures, including the landmark railway sheds and clock tower and gatehouse (which is the subject of a separate but related planning application). It also contains locally significant heritage assets and the potential for important archaeological remains.

While we recognise and support the efforts of the applicant to conserve these assets and their setting, they do not go far enough, by a wide margin, to make the proposal acceptable in planning heritage terms.

The impact of some of the proposed elements of the development would be to fundamentally alter, and irrevocably lose, significant elements of this important heritage. In particular, the use of inappropriate materials, development in spaces

that are important for the setting of designated assets and the loss of important views as well as the height and massing of some of the buildings.

There is a general lack of special attention and respect to the important heritage value of the site, and in our opinion cannot be described as a conservation led approach to the conservation and enhancement of the site.

It would cause a high level of harm to the significance of the heritage value of the site including the several designated and non-designated heritage structures and their setting. In a broader sense, the significance of Ashford (as an historic place with a proud railway heritage) – not just those aspects covered by designations – would also be harmed by aspects of these proposals.

As such it is contrary to national and local planning policies. This includes the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'), which places great weight on the conservation of heritage assets (paragraph 212), makes it clear that any resulting harm requires a clear and convincing justification (paragraph 213) and where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent excepted in specified circumstances (paragraph 214).

Can we also add that while we welcome that the Monument and Memorial Plans are presented as drafted by Mr Gerry Clarkson CBE are to be incorporated into the scheme, we are concerned that there is no certainty in the proposal where they will be located or indeed implemented. They should form an integral part of the proposal. Should the council be minded to grant the planning application, we would urge that a planning condition or similar be included covering the appropriate siting of this Monument and Memorial Plans.

It is Not Well Designed

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF stipulates that planning decisions should ensure that development functions well and adds to the overall quality of the area, not just in the short term but over the lifetime of the development. In addition, the NPPF set outs that development should establish a strong sense of place. It also requires that development should optimise the potential of the site to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

Policy SP6 of the Ashford Local Plan requires that development proposals must be of high quality design and demonstrate a careful consideration of and positive response to each of the specified design criteria. In addition, that they must show how they have responded positively to the design policy and guidance and amongst other things, site specific development briefs.

We contend that the proposal is not of high quality design and should, therefore, not be supported.

Its design raises multiple concerns. Just to name a few examples. The height, including the six-storey structure, and massing of some of the structures is excessive. It does not safeguard the privacy and outlook of nearby properties, especially the six-storey structures, which will overlook properties on Newtown Road and impact residents' amenity and views. The number of dwellings and the scale of the development is considered too excessive for the site. It fails to respect the character and heritage of the local area.

In assessing its design impact, it is also important to consider its impact on the proposed occupiers. The proposal is deficient in this regard. It is simply too cramped to provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers, not only in terms of floorspace but also private and communal space, especially green spaces.

Also, insufficient regard has been given to ensure that it functionally and physically integrates to the wider area. The design should offer an inclusive approach that provides equality to the whole community, reflecting the local spirit of South Willersborough and Newtown, which it does not.

Woefully Inadequate Affordable Housing Provision

We consider that the development does not make adequate provision for affordable housing.

That there is a chronic shortage of affordable housing in Ashford is evident and well documented.

Policy HOU1 of the Local Plan addresses the provision of affordable housing and sets a minimum housing target of 35% for house developments of ten or more homes (and on sites of 0.5 hectares or more). Adding that “All proposals are expected to meet their full affordable housing provision on-site”. Policy HOU1’s first criteria allows for “In the Ashford Town area*, flatted development (including the proportion of flats provided on a mixed flat and housing scheme) will not be required to provide any form of affordable housing”. It is accepted that the site falls within the Ashford Town area.

However, paragraph 64 of the NPPF states that “Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies...”expect it to be met on-site unless: a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities”.

We understand that the scheme shows that 5 dwellings would be available for affordable homes, a less than 1% affordable housing provision for a scheme of about 800 dwellings (**double check this**).

This is woefully inadequate, and in our view, enough to refuse planning permission in its own right.

The provision of virtually no affordable housing in an area of acute affordable housing and in what is likely to be one of the biggest developments in the area for many years is wrong and unjustifiable least of all in planning terms.

We also contend that it is contrary to national planning policies that prioritise the provision of affordable housing especially in major housing developments such as this. In particular, criterion b of paragraph 64 the NPPF with its emphasis on that the agreed approach should contribute to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

Regard should also be had to the adoption of the Local Plan predates the publication of the latest NPPF and as such planning rules require that more weight should be placed on the provisions of the later more up to date planning document.

While we accept there may be some exceptional costs associated with the development's build out, we do not accept that they would be so unduly high for the area that they would not support a much higher provision of affordable housing.

Weak and Flawed Community Engagement

We do not consider that the applicant has proactively engaged with the Community Council and the wider community in the plan preparation process. Further, where engagement has taken place, it has been weak. To give one good example of this. In discussions between the applicant and the Community Council concerning the statement of community engagement it was agreed that the response to the application should include that at the November 2025 meeting the plans were not presented only discussed in a verbal report - as a change from Film and Media to Housing and the development of plans on this basis, a change which was not made. As such the scheme does not fully reflect their aspirations for the development.

While it is recognised that the Community Council was formed in 2019 and pre-dates some of the detailed discussions about the use of the site, nonetheless the applicant has had ample time in which to meaningfully engage with it.

This is a significant flaw especially given the scale and significance of the proposal. It is also contrary to good planning practice and local and national planning policy guidance.

This includes the Local Plan with its emphasis on "By building a consensus with the community and other stakeholders they create greater certainty for investors with the cost savings that implies." (para 2.169). Also, the NPPF, which states at paragraph 40, "Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community".

Adverse Impact on Already Stretched Essential Community Facilities and Infrastructure

There is already a serious issue with essential infrastructure and community facilities provision in the local area, many of which are already struggling to cope with demand. There are already well documented and acknowledged issues with the capacity of doctor's surgeries, schools, hospitals, roads and sewerage.

While the proposals include the provision of some improvement to address this, these are sketchy and we consider are grossly inadequate to meet the infrastructure needs generated by this huge development.

We are deeply concerned that if approved it would overwhelm, often already stretched, essential community facilities and infrastructure.

Out of Scale

Closely related, at over 700 dwellings, this would be a significant increase in scale, particular in the context of the scale of expansion in housing and other forms of development that the local area has already undergone in recent years.

While we are willing to accept in principle the scale of development proposed for the site as articulated in the Local Plan, this proposal, however, is much larger, than this, particularly in respect of the plans for the locomotive sheds. It is grossly out of scale with the local area and its limited services and infrastructure, and would result in significant harm to local character, distinctiveness and general quality of life.

It should be stressed that the Community Council is not opposed to new house building as well as other forms of development. Far from it. The local area has already experienced significant house building in recent years with more in the pipeline (including the original plans for the site as articulated in the Local Area). Indeed, it is considered that the local area has already made its proportional and sustainable contribution to meeting housing supply. There are already concerns about the adverse cumulative impact these developments will have on the character, sustainability and services. The new proposal is too much. It represents over development and is grossly out of scale and disproportionate with the local area.

Unacceptable Impact on Highway Safety and on the highway Network

The Community Council has commissioned its own independent transport assessment of the highway implications of the proposal by respected highway consultants HD Consulting. This report, which forms an integral part and must be read as part of the Council's submission, provides comprehensive and compelling advice that the proposed development is woefully inadequate in highway terms and should be refused on these grounds alone. It also shows that the transport related evidence provided by the applicant in support of the proposal is deficient and lacking in several key respects. As the report states in its conclusions and its recommendations:

"Conclusions

- **Kent County Council (KCC)** states that there is an *"unacceptable impact on highway safety on the highway network"*. This is a view shared by Aprica.

KCC requires *'a full and robust transport assessment'* and states that *'they are unable to support the application in its current form due to significant deficiencies in the submitted TA; They cannot conclude that the proposal would avoid an unacceptable impact on highway safety on the highway network; the Transport Assessment does not currently demonstrate that the proposed development would avoid an unacceptable impact on highway safety given the significant parking shortfall; reliance on low car ownership is not evidence-based and current car ownership levels within the Newtown area are much higher than that suggested; The suggested provision is much lower than the previous planning permission on the site; The applicant needs to undertake a robust assessment compared to existing car ownership levels in the 2021 census; There is under-provision of on-site car parking with a high risk of overspill onto surrounding streets; No strategy for further parking restrictions on residential roads surrounding the site has been submitted; Detailed plans need to be submitted showing proposals for on-street parking restrictions (fundamental to make the development acceptable from a highways perspective). Lack of detail as to how the proposals are compliant with Local Transport Note 1/20 for the existing footways along Newtown Road; Lack of commitment to upgrade the existing bus service along Newtown Road; Travel Plan measures lack enforceability and require strengthening; There is no modal share targets submitted within the Travel Plan including targets for reduce private vehicle usage out of the site; As submitted, the Transport Assessment does not provide a sufficiently robust evidence base for a development of this scale; KCC H&T currently **objects** to the application'.*

Rarely does a Council's Highways Team submit such a critical response and in many respects the response is refreshing to read. Aprica agrees with all KCC's comments and echoes many of them.

- **Active Travel England** *'raises concerns about the adequacy of transport planning, particularly regarding prioritisation of sustainable modes'* and states that *'the applicant has not demonstrated sufficient infrastructure prioritisation or detailed assessments of off-site facilities'; 'relies on outdated planning approaches'; 'Newtown Road currently lacks compliant cycle infrastructure and safe crossings'; 'the proposal ... lacks adequate provisions for cyclists and pedestrians at multiple access points, with concerns about connectivity, safety, and directness of routes'* and concludes that ... *"The applicant is advised to revise transport assessments, develop detailed infrastructure improvement plans, and work with authorities to secure necessary funding and contributions, ensuring the development maximizes sustainable travel opportunities and aligns with policy frameworks.* Aprica agrees with the ATE comments.
- The access proposals severely lack provision for pedestrians and cyclists, and in some cases are felt to increase vulnerability, particularly for cyclists.
- Existing walking and cycling facilities are poor, as is the one, limited, bus service. Pedestrians are not well catered for and the cycle facilities and bus stops are inadequate and nowhere close to current standards.
- Some of the highway works seem excessive even for the claimed benefits, and could have a significant adverse effect on congestion, pollution and the existing local residents' enjoyment of their locale.
- The suitability and effectiveness of the proposed highway works, the ratio of parking spaces to units, and indeed the acceptable number of units themselves should be re-considered. Alternatives should be explored with a view to improving road safety, connectivity and sustainability, whilst possibly value-engineering the proposals to better use available funds including Section 106 monies.
- A concerning number of recorded injury collisions have occurred in the most recently recorded five-year period. Bearing in mind the number, and likely unrecorded collisions, this is something that needs to be taken into consideration when deciding

on the suitability of the highway measures proposed. The lack of similarity of the current application to the previously permitted, extant, application should also be considered.

- If sustainability is to be achieved, far more needs to be done to make walking, cycling and bus travel more accessible, attractive and safe.

For a development of this size, the application is weak and incomplete. There are numerous improvements that should be made to the proposed highway works, which make little or no effort to encourage genuine sustainable modes of travel or provide walking/cycling links to the application site.

The existing highway network is poor and outdated where pedestrians, cyclists and bus users are concerned. The application proposals need to be linked to improvements in the wider area if people are to be encouraged to walk, cycle or take the bus.

It is suggested that the RSA 1 (should it have been carried out) be reviewed or repeated whenever any revised, more detailed, application is made. The RSA2 (detailed design stage) should provide the technical confirmation that the proposals minimise the risk of occurrence and severity of collisions. The outcomes of the RSA should be secured by planning conditions.

Recommendations

Based on Aprica's assessment of the highway proposals to date, together with the evidence of the existing highway conditions in the area and the very low likelihood of better and increased sustainable travel, it is Aprica's considered opinion that this Planning Application should be refused.

It is recommended that the Applicant be required to review and revise their entire proposals, with a view to scaling back the proposed development to something that is far less likely to create overspill parking, revise the proposed Highway Works to make safe, sustainable travel more attractive and more achievable. Proposals for safe and sustainable travel should be expanded to cover the wider area so that there is connectivity to the application site. The ratio of residential, commercial and visitor parking should be much closer to Kent County Council and Ashford Borough Council's Policy figures. Any associated Travel Plan should be robust and enforceable with a

monitoring and measuring process agreed. All of these issues should be secured by planning conditions and monitored & enforced after completion”.

It Does Not Represent Sustainable Development

National and local planning rules are clear that this should be at the heart of planning decision making.

As paragraph 7 of the NPPF states: “The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner”.

We strongly contend that the proposal does not represent sustainable development. This is for a variety of compelling reasons, many of which we have detailed earlier. These include adverse impact on heritage, air quality as well as essential facilities and infrastructure, poor design and is out of scale.

We would like to make special mention that it would promote unsustainable forms of transport movement especially by car.

National planning rules are clear that “Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes” (NPPF, paragraph 110).

A requirement the proposal fails to meet and by a wide margin, as clearly shown by the evidence submitted by the Community Council (including the associated independent transport assessment) and many others including Kent County Council Highways Team and Active Travel England.

As such it does not offer a genuine choice of travel modes nor encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel as required by national and local planning policies.

For these and other compelling planning reasons we strongly urge that it should be refused.

Review of Consultant Reports and recommendations PA 2026 0171 PA 2026 0229

Newtown Works

1. Independent Highways Report

This is a robust report for not only reviewing this planning application but also to inform and advise the Council highways improvement plan. It overcomes objections the Council has received on its priorities and covers a wide span of the Council's concerns and aims. Noting the Consultant for the draft planning response has used this as comprehensive evidence to underpin the objections the Council has raised.

Recommendation

To submit in full and assert as the Community Council's views and opinion on the impact of the development on the area and the inadequacies in the walking, cycling, bus, and car management along with all serious concerns relating to Crowbridge, the plans for amendments at Gladstone Road and the challenges those plans present.

2. Draft Response to the Planning Applications PA 2026 0171 PA 2026 0229 Newtown Works

The Consultant has produced a comprehensive draft response to these applications, meeting the brief to date which is not only effective but exceeds the brief by being extremely straightforward to understand.

The response has considered all the reasons which the Council has agreed the planning applications should be objected on and as requested and required referenced these to the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Policies for the adopted Local Ashford Plan 2030 also noting the concerns the Council has raised relating to the Memorial and Monument for Newtown – which are not included in the plans except for reference in the design access statement with the design proposals however it is made clear that the plan has no site for this or confirmed location for this.

However, the access and impact on residents on Samuel Peto Way, Harold Way Elson Close are clear within the Highways Study but not directly represented in the response, It is important that the Council represents all the residents in these applications and their voices are heard, particularly noting that a number of residents from this area have lodged objections on the planning portal.

Discussing this with the Consultant it was agreed to recommend

- 9. To draw in the Independent Highways Report Samuel Peto Way page 11 paragraphs 1-3.**

Listening to residents.

10. The Council has also received concern through objections on the planning portal, conversation, email and engagement at the Community skip day the following concerns
11. Noise and Vibration from Highspeed and Railway service adjacent to the proposed properties affecting the quality of living for the potential new residents. As also proposed by Cllr Webb
12. Is preventing unauthorised access to the railway properly considered in the plans, which is a genuine concern, and in the opinion of this report demonstrates the lack of community engagement in the amended housing plans.
13. Fire Risk Management, Kent Fire and Rescue at the date of this report have not commented on PA 2026 0229 Locomotive sheds, their response is to 0171 which states that no buildings are above 18m, however the elevations for the Locomotive Sheds are substantially above this and the elevations for the further design are also unclear if they exceed this as some reference 22m.
14. Safety of women and girls in the design lighting access and CCTV
15. Further concerns are expressed over the sensitivity of the design and the unique opportunity to develop them sympathetically.

As a local resident for over 25 years, the Newtown Works have been a grey, depressed set of buildings, located behind a wire mesh fence. Unloved, uncared and forgotten.

Then over the last couple of years, they have been stripped back to original stonework, and for the first time, you can appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of the train sheds, and what a 'gem' Newtown and Ashford have as a whole with these buildings, and the potential to build something amazing there.

Then there is the current proposal to build 6 storey flats in front of these buildings, that are so out of keeping with the original train sheds, and surrounding area.

The height and number proposed is not in keeping with the current wider area. And it is on that basis I object to the development.

We have a once in a lifetime chance to develop the site. It is a shame the film studio can't proceed, but instead the site could be developed so that it honours the past, and reflects an exciting future for Ashford.

One example could be to build upon the local winemaking of the area, and have a property within the train sheds that prompts the local wines, and use this to make Ashford the 'Epernay' of English winemaking. And a travel destination for tourists.

There is so much potential and the current development lacks so much vision for what it could be and indeed, become the jewel in Ashford's crown.

16. In addition, the Discussion Document from NHW Coordinator has raised again concerns over the capacity for parking, road widths for access not only of cars but emergency vehicles, safety of women and girls and elevations which will be impacted by the new regulations relating to the outcomes of the investigations into Grenfell and new legislation supporting this, these are discussed under a separate item on the Agenda to the meeting and the document has been circulated to all Members.

Recommendation 2

To consider these key concerns points 2-7 and add them into the draft response.

17. Ensuring an impactful and resilient response.

The overspill of parking

The overspill is potentially over 500 cars the add this figure to the draft response to ensure it is clear to all considerers of this response the direct implications of the lack of parking management within the design as it is at present.

The implications of Crowbridge Old Millstream Bridge not being properly fit for purpose before development are serious. Whilst effectively covered in the Independent Highways Study it is not yet in the draft response. Discussing this with the Consultant it was agreed to recommend.

Recommendation 3

Drawing in Crowbridge Road page 9 and 10 and referencing the Council has made attempts to review the longevity and protection of the Bridges as per Council Minutes and whilst a KCC Structural Survey was initiated it has not received the finds and is legitimately concerned for the safety of the community and accessibility of the development and station particularly as proposed by Cllr Bohill if the International Station facility is restored cars will access this from Junction 10a Orbital park Crowbridge and Newtown road.

Conclusion

The Council has sought to be efficient and effective in both its approach to the planning applications, effective debate has been had over multiple meetings to review these applications, and instructing the advice of the Consultants has given the Council a weighty objection to a difficult set of applications with over 900 documents to draw together a response reflects the concerns of Members, it considers NPPF and local policy and has allowed residents a wide range of opportunity to inform its response to be an effective voice for residents as it the Councils key objective.

Sarah Evans

Community Council Manager

11.4.2026

Requirements in South Willesborough and Newtown which could be met with developer contribution and S106 funding

The S106 community infrastructure survey was sent out immediately after the EGM March 26, however a number of respondents have advised it was only received 9th April 2026. Respondents have advised they will return these by Wednesday 15th April 2026, including the SWAN centre.

A table has been produced to demonstrate the agreed Council goals to date, survey and resident feedback also received, noting needs discussed by members for health care and the response from AIMREC for Heritage and Culture space which members have viewed. Suggestions are then made relating to Green Spaces, Sports and play facilities for members to consider.

With the full responses received Members could agree, add to or amend this list their own considerations to be agreed, determine to submit the request with the planning application response and delegate the addition of survey responses to the FGP committee to meet 27th April 26 and send a holding request to the Planning Department to consider the request Or delegate this to the CCM to add in the further requests as per delegations scheme” **To seek, apply for and accept grants or other funding for Community Council projects”** in the interest of transparency it is recommended to submit on the planning portal and ensure that this has overview of Chair, Vice Chair and FGP Members agreed by email.

Key	
Navy Blue	Council Agreed Objectives
Black	Suggestions for Consideration from Council Members and Staff.
Bright Blue	Survey and Resident feedback

SWAN Infrastructure and Community Needs Table							
<u>Community Buildings</u>	<u>Allotments</u> <u>Green Spaces</u>	<u>Sports</u> <u>Play Facilities</u>	<u>Traffic</u> <u>Management</u> <u>for increased</u> <u>volume of cars</u> <u>throughout</u> <u>SWAN</u>	<u>Arts and</u> <u>Culture</u>	<u>Health</u>	<u>Education</u> <u>and</u> <u>School</u> <u>Provision.</u>	<u>Transport</u>

<p>Community Hub coheses the community to the new development and provide capacity for the growth of the community to be facilitated by SWANCC.</p>	<p>Improvements at the Allotments the provision of communal meeting facility toilet facilities, the improvement of water and electricity supplies and outdoor furniture.</p>	<p>Herbert Road Basketball Courts upgrade and provisions</p> <p>Improvements to the MUGA outdoor play area</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance and upgrades for play facilities in South Willesborough and Newtown.</p>	<p>Contribution towards measures designed to manage on-street parking in South Willesborough and Newtown including the investigation, making of and implementation of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) or Permit Parking Area (PPA), or the making of other highway improvements designed to assist control on-street parking as considered appropriate. The contribution proposed within the application for Newtown Works is woefully inadequate for the needs that will be required.</p>	<p>Monument and Memorial at Newtown Works</p> <p>As proposed by Mr Gerry Clarkson CBE on behalf of AIDC Ltd and Ashford Borough Council</p>	<p>Community Pharmacy</p> <p>Increased GP service*</p> <p>Support for William Harvey Hospital*</p>	<p>No response from School to date</p> <p>However KCC have made S106 requests received at March EGM 26, relating to transport, SEND and other needs.</p>	
<p>St Marys Willesborough</p> <p>Whilst not directly in the parish of SWANCC it is the local Parish Church for followers of this faith and this area is within its Parish. It provides a range of vital community service and support. There 3 top priorities</p> <p>Safe access through the churchyard, especially at night</p> <p>Easy, safe, accessible parking for all</p> <p>A welcoming</p>	<p>Conservation of biodiversity and Environmental improvements for Frogs Orchard and Frogs Island as the local green spaces to connect with nature</p>	<p>Carpark at Bromley Green Football Club</p>		<p>Provision of heritage interpretation, conservation works, and public realm enhancements associated with the historic railway within the parish, to mitigate the impact of new development on local character and to support community engagement with the area's</p>	<p>Rivers of Life Access to Good medical facilities</p>	<p>Rivers of Life Utilities especially water</p> <p>Good transport links</p> <p>Bridge over Aylesford Stream on Crowbridge Road</p> <p>The bus service of only once an hour is not helpful</p>	

venue for the community, serving Willesborough, Newtown, and South Willesborough				cultural heritage.			
<p>The churchyard includes a public right of way and is dark at night, which makes walking along the footpaths difficult. New lighting will prevent trips or falls and create a sense of safety.</p> <p>Four accessible parking bays to enable those less mobile, easy access to the centre – whereas at present they need to negotiate a set of steps at the south side; a steep path at the west side; or a fairly dangerous bend on the north side, meaning anyone using a vehicle to drop off passengers on that north side currently has to park on a busy bend in the road. The accessible parking bays will open up the community centre to more people.</p> <p>The outside works improvements will make it easier for all in the community to access the</p>							

<p>centre at all times. It will be well-lit for evening/night time use, with the aforementioned parking bays being a welcome necessity for those who need it.</p> <p>We want to welcome all.</p> <p>We estimate the cost of the works to be in the order of £40,000.</p> <p>Without these improvements there will be a section of the local community who continue to feel ostracized because of their inability to access the centre.</p>							
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Sarah Evans
 Community Council manager
 10.4.26