

Teston Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting on 28th July 2026

Present:

Cllr Peter Coulling
Cllr Chris Douglass
Cllr Nina Wheat
Cllr Bob Ayling
Cllr Ben Merchant
Cllr Steve Taylor

Chairman & Interim Clerk
Vice-Chairman
Interim RFO

No members of the public

Borough Cllr Fay Gooch

Before the meeting commenced the Chairman drew attention to the Council's policy on photographing and broadcasting of Parish Council meetings. No intention to film, photograph or broadcast was declared.

1.	Parish Councillors: Peter Broadley and Steve Taylor were co-opted as Parish Councillors. MBC will be notified and Web Site updated. They also each become a Trustee of TLCT and Teston Village Green and a Director of Teston Village Stores CIC, as permitted by the respective foundation documents for those entities.
2.	Parish Clerk: signature of contract imminent, duties commencing 17 th August. IT resilience, including email and Web access, to be reviewed – Cllrs Merchant and Taylor to assist.
3.	Declarations of Interest , in the interests of transparency, all Parish Councillors declared an interest in (a) Ash Tree Corner, Courtlands Verge and the Allotments, as the Parish Council owns the land; (b) the Village Green and Village Hall as Custodian Trustees; (c) Teston Land Conservation Trust Matters as they are Trustees; and (d) Teston Village Stores CIC as they are Directors of the CIC. Cllrs Douglass, Wheat, and Ayling have an interest as members of Teston Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr Taylor is a member of Barming with Teston PCC. Dispensations to engage in discussions and decisions confirmed in each case.
4.	To receive and agree Apologies for Absence; Cllr Broadley, apology accepted.
Meeting adjourned to receive comments and questions from members of the public	
Public session:none.	
Meeting Reconvenes	
5.	Minutes of previous meeting: Minutes of 26 th May 2026 approved
6.	Ratification of decisions: no decisions to ratify.
7.	Ordering of the Agenda: items taken in published order.
8.	Audit: an email from Mazars was responded to; no substantive issues to-date.
9.	Finance: Finance Report reviewed. The Bank Reconciliation had not been brought to the meeting and would be sent to Councillors the next day. (<i>Action discharged</i>).
10.	NatWest Bankline: the original, chargeable Bankline has been terminated and the free Communities Bankline is now in operation.
11.	Planning: Planning Report reviewed and agreed to submit "no comment" for 26/502126.
12.	Play Area, Goalposts & Defibrillator: no faults / concerns noted to-date. Cllr Ayling to inspect until next meeting.
13.	Tree, Hedge & Grass routine maintenance: requirements reviewed. Noted that village benches, play equipment & goalposts and telephone kiosk have been added to the document and fencing will be added. Cllr Douglass offered to review all benches and provide a report for consideration. Noted that one replacement tree is definitely required for the edge of the Village Green and all trees will be inspected for further casualties after the current very warm weather – probable planting this Autumn. The Chairman to review with the Churchwarden any need for works to the Village Green hedge

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	adjacent to the Churchyard.
14.	Autumn bulb planting: Ash Tree Corner was noted as a possible location for bulb-planting and other sites will be considered. Cllr Broadley to be approached for actual planting.
15.	Play & Sitting Area: planting at the south-western corner of Village Green was discussed. It is currently looking quite acceptable after dead vegetation and rubbish were cleared and crushed stones, with weed-suppressing mat underneath, laid earlier this year. Cllr Douglass to prepare a costed planting scheme for consideration.
16.	Highways: Highway Improvement Programme (HIP) – noted that Cllrs Ayling and Coulling will meet with a KCC Officer to review two items – possible pavement from Readers Court to the War Memorial and the pedestrian refuge and pavement opposite Crown City. Also noted that a new entrance onto the east side of Malling Road has been installed, just to the south of the gateway – this to be reported to Highways.
17.	Allotments Report: Cllr Douglass reported satisfactory status and outlined arrangements for provision of a skip for rubbish removal, including a prior email to allotment holders.
18.	Village Hall matters: Cllr Douglass noted that the monthly Film Club will again be offered this Autumn and Winter (but not December). Cllr Douglass to arrange for Village Hall storage of glasses etc between performances.
19.	Standing Orders: the Chairman has substantially completed a revision, with the objective of review and adoption by Councillors at the next meeting.
Meeting Adjourned	
Teston Land Conservation Trust matters - Noted that a mown path through Ripton Wood is being successfully established, together with strimming to keep the kissing gate clear of overgrowth. - Installation of two bases & benches was discussed, noting that total costs would be £2.5 – 3K. It was agreed that a map of Ripton Wood would be drawn-up to assist planning of future development and also for publicising the facility – Cllr Taylor to assist.. - Meeting date – the current Chairman would arrange a meeting for an in-depth discussion of TLCT's status. Teston Village Stores CIC matters - Finances – were reported to be as usual i.e tight! - Staffing matters – staff have coped very well during the holiday period, being very forthcoming in terms of covering any holiday absences. - Meeting date – the current Chairman would arrange a meeting for an in-depth discussion of CIC's status. Friends of Teston Church matters - Ramsay & Nestor tablets – noted that the Chairman is engaged with the Churchwarden and Diocese in an endeavour to determine what conservation / renovation would be permitted, A conservator has offered to provide an informal view of possibilities to assist that process. Three private offers of donation towards such work have been received and it is expected that other offers would materialize when it becomes clear that the Diocese would provide the necessary Faculty.	
Meeting Reconvenes	
	Confidential Items: consider the exclusion of the press and public on the basis that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
20.	Enforcement updates: one current situation was briefly reviewed, noting that input from, and action by KCC is awaited.

Date of next Parish Council meeting: Tuesday 29th September 2026 at 7.30pm at Teston Village Hall