

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of Teston Parish Council held on 30 September 2025 at 7.30pm in Teston Village Hall

Councillors Present: Peter Couling (Chairman)
Chris Douglass
Robert Ayling
Ben Merchant
Robin Owens
Nina Wheat
Tina Burgon

Also: Melissa Babington, Parish Clerk
Borough Cllr Fay Gooch

Members of the Public Present: 0

The meeting was Chaired by Cllr Peter Couling.

The Chairman of the meeting drew attention to the Parish Council's Standing Orders on photographing, recording or broadcasting of Teston Parish Council Meetings.
No intention to record the meeting was declared.

1. Declarations of Interest

None noted.

2. To receive and agree Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Borough Cllr Allison Sweetman and Kent County Cllr Robert Ford.

Public Participation Session

No participation.

3. To agree Minutes of previous meetings:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 2025 were unanimously approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Ratification of Decisions:

There were no decisions taken by the Clerk under Exceptional Delegated Authority (EDA) since the last meeting to be ratified.

5. Ordering of the Agenda

No requests were made for items to be taken earlier in the meeting.

6. Finance Report

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The Council considered the report of the Clerk and received the spreadsheet, including Bank Reconciliation, on which the accounts were being collated and had the opportunity to examine and ask questions.

The Council was informed of the payments scheduled to be made and it was agreed that the following payments be approved; -

Expenditure For Approval and Cheques for Signing:

Name	Cheque No	Reason for Invoice	Net	VAT	Gross
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
TMBC	72	Costs for printing Tapestry – August - Paid	£140.01	0.00	£140.01
Ripton Homes & Gardens	3535	Hedge cutting around Teston's war memorial – Paid	£50.00	0.00	£50.00
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Chris Douglass	3537	Chris Douglass - Paint for the Kiosk - Paid	£109.00	0.00	£109.00
Commercial Services Trading Limited	3538	Quarterly Grounds Maintenance for April, May & June 2025	£1011.57	£202.31	£1213.88
TMBC	73	Costs for printing Tapestry – September	£162.42	0.00	£162.42

7. Planning

The Clerk presented a report outlining the position on new and current planning applications, which the Council considered.

25/503562/TPOA - West Bank Malling Road Teston Kent ME18 5AU

TPO Application to - G.1 Group of sweet chestnut trees located to the right of the driveway designated within G1 of TPO No 2 of 1992,

Laterally reduce the overhang over the driveway by approx 2m back to the vicinity of the previous reduction points.

Reasons for proposed work; Repeat work to reduce the amount of debris on driveway. – **No comment**

Approved

25/500776/FULL - Little Court Lodge Farm Tonbridge Road Teston Kent ME18 5BY

Extension to existing car park to allow for 15no. additional parking spaces.

25/500829/SUB - Knole Farm, Unit 3 Malling Road Teston Kent ME18 5BH

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Submission of details pursuant to condition 2- (Site Development Scheme) ,6- (landscaping scheme), 8- (lighting) subject to 24/501467/FULL

25/500830/SUB - Unit 1 Knole Farm Malling Road Teston Kent ME18 5BH

Submission of details pursuant to condition 2- (Site Development Scheme), 5- (landscaping scheme), 7- (external lighting) subject to 24/501504/FULL - **Split - Part Allowed/Part Refused**

25/502800/FULL - 5-6 Church Street Teston Kent ME18 5AJ

Demolition of the existing rear extension and erection a two storey rear extension including 2no. rooflights.

25/502801/LBC - 5-6 Church Street Teston Kent ME18 5AJ

Listed Building Consent for demolition of the existing rear extension and erection a two storey rear extension including 2no. rooflights.

Refused

25/502310/FULL - Crown City Chinese Restaurant Tonbridge Road Teston Kent ME18 5BU

Retrospective application for siting of a storage container for use in association with the existing restaurant.

8. Teston Bridge Country Park

Cllr Douglass and Cllr Couling met with the Country Park team. It was agreed that the Environment Agency's work is progressing well.

9. Tree, Hedge Work, and routine maintenance

The schedule of works was reviewed and agreed.

10. Allotments Report

Cllr Douglass reported that the allotments were generally in good condition, with some plots exceptional and others showing signs of autumn wear. Some plots on the eastern boundary are in poor condition; Cllr Douglass will draft letters to the relevant plot holders for review before the end of the allotment year.

All agreed to the proposed rent increase: £38 for Teston residents and £48 for non-residents.

11. Play Area

Cllr Ayling reported that work on the play area is progressing well and on schedule, with completion expected the week beginning 6th October.

All agreed to produce a notice acknowledging the grant from the William & Edith Oldham charitable trust, with a budget of £250 + VAT.

Agreed to explore the Rural Investment Grant for back of shop improvements; Cllr Couling to circulate the grant document to all councillors.

12. Country Park

Cllrs noted that the re-seeded grass in the Country Park is growing well.

13. Highways

Cllrs reviewed the draft Highways Improvement Plan, which was presented by Cllr Couling.

14. Christmas Period Events

Agreed to go ahead with the New Year's Day event on the Village Green; Cllr Douglass to book.

15. Bulb & Trees Planting

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Agreed to proceed with tree planting; bulbs have been purchased and will be planted shortly.

16. **Exceptional Delegated Authority**

It was agreed that EDA should continue until the next meeting.

Adjournment of the Meeting

It was **agreed** that the meeting adjourn to enable consideration to be given to the following: -

- **Teston Land Conservation Trust matters**

- Finance - Finance healthy
- Ripton Wood - Ripton Wood mowing pending quote.

- **Teston Village Stores CIC matters**

- Accounts - Accounts in progress
- Staffing - staffing down to 2 pupils
- Improvements & Outreach - shop digital migration; dry cleaning discontinued; outreach being chased; £300 donation confirmed.

- **Friends of Teston Church**

- Accounts & Meeting - Accounts review and meeting to be arranged.

Meeting reconvened

Confidential Items

17. Matters noted regarding Crowned City appeal, woodland wall repair, and Knowle Farm scaffolding/fencing; all under review.

Next Parish Council meeting: Tuesday 25th November 2025 at 7:30pm.