



AGENDA

WESTERN AREA COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday, 14 December 2021

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT

Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock (Chairman), Monique Bonney, Roger Clark, Nicholas Hampshire, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Richard Palmer, Paul Stephen, Sarah Stephen and Corrie Woodford (Vice-Chairman).

Quorum = 3.

RECORDING NOTICE

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Information for the Public

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[Link to meeting: to be added](#)

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1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Chair will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures. The Chair will inform the meeting that: there is no scheduled test of the fire alarm during this meeting. If the alarm does sound, please leave the building quickly without collecting any of your possessions, using the doors signed as fire escapes, and assemble in the car park at the side of the building. Await instructions from the Fire Marshal before entering the building. Should anyone require assistance in evacuating the building, please make the Swale Borough Council Democratic Services Officers aware of any special needs so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships. The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary Interests (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should

declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the meeting while that item is considered.

Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the meeting.

4. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting held on 31 August 2021 (Minute Nos. 202 – 216) as a correct record

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 5. Matters arising from previous meetings | 5 - 12 |
| 6. Public Forum | |
| 7. Local issues to be raised | |
| 8. Update on work plan - to include funding allocations for 2021-22 | 13 - 20 |
| 9. Matters referred to Committee by Cabinet | |
| 10. Matters referred to Cabinet by Committee | |

Issued on Monday, 6 December 2021

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of the Area Committees, please visit www.swale.gov.uk

**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

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Western Area Committee meeting: Progress on Matters arising – 14 December 2021

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
1.	Heritage issues	<p>Cabinet adopted a Heritage Strategy and Action Plan on 18 March 2020. The Action Plan contains a programme of Conservation Area (CA) reviews. It has been suggested by the Cabinet Member that the Area Committee may want to fund CA reviews for areas which are outside of the planned programme of reviews in the Action Plan.</p> <p>In December 2020, the Western Area Committee agreed that £6,270 be allocated to a firm of consultants to undertake CA reviews in Rodmersham, Milstead and Tunstall in line with a quote submitted to members. Since that meeting, the Conservation and Design Manager has been giving regular update reports on the progress of the CA reviews.</p> <p>The position reported at the September 2021 meeting was that the Milstead CA Review should be adopted in December 2021. The Rodmersham Green and Tunstall CA Reviews should be adopted early 2022. Research continues about the possibility of carrying out an Iwade CA review.</p>	<p>An update will be provided by the Conservation & Design Manager along with a briefing on the proposed Rodmersham Church Conservation Review.</p>

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
2.	Changing Places Toilets	A Parish Councillor for Bobbing brought the Committee's attention to the Government Fund Changing Places Toilets. Local Authorities were invited to submit expressions of interest by 26 September 2021 to install larger accessible toilets. This was also raised at the Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting.	In progress - an Expression of Interest was submitted within the deadline and the outcome is expected Autumn 2021.
3.	Charging of electric cars at home where there is no driveway.	A Parish Councillor for Bobbing raised the issue of residents in the future needing to charge electric cars at home when they had no driveway. There needed to be a policy change to allow for a wire to be run either under or over the pavement. The Committee agreed that this issue was not specific to the Western Area and should be referred to Cabinet. Additionally, a Member said that the infrastructure needed to be put in place locally for high-speed rapid chargers. If such chargers were installed in communal parking areas, there would be a quick turnover of cars using them.	The EV policy is being drafted but it will pay reference to this type of issue and point to Kent County Council guidance as it is their responsibility.
4.	Youth provision in villages	<p>As part of the considerations for priorities and ambitions going forward for the Western Area Committee Meeting, the lack of youth provision in villages was raised as an issue.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Palmer agreed to take this forward and said that a report would come back to the next meeting.</p>	Cllr Palmer proposes inviting a representative from the Kent County Council Youth Service to attend the March 2022 meeting to discuss this further.

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
5.	Agricultural Bill	A Parish Councillor asked if the Area Committee could advise where guidance can be found on the Agricultural Bill so that parish councils can engage with land-owners.	The Agricultural Bill was due to be discussed at the September 2021 Swale Area Committee Meeting. A Tunstall Parish Councillor had done some work on this and would feedback.
6.	The Air Cadet Squadron	<p>This item was raised at the Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting and passed to the Western Area Committee to look into.</p> <p>The Air Cadet Squadron building at Westlands School was discussed as it was under threat.</p>	Further to the Cabinet Member for Community contacting the Air Cadet Squadron, discussions have been ongoing. The Economy and Community Services Manager met with two of the Air Cadet Squadron's officers and discussed a number of proposals that might suit their relocation needs. Their notice to quit is not effective until the end of March 2022 and they want to invest the time to get the best possible outcome. They will keep SBC updated on their progress.
7.	Woodland Management Plan	In March 2021, Western Area Committee awarded £2,758.79 for a Woodland Management Plan at the Meads and Rose Hill. At the September meeting it was reported that an order had been placed with White Horse Ecology to update the previously drafted management plan.	The Greenspaces Manager reported that the updated management plans and work plans have recently been received from White Horse Ecology and are being reviewed prior to release.
8.	Walking and Cycling Project	At the March 2021 meeting, the Area Committee awarded £13,000.00 in funding for a walking and cycling project.	Cllr Stephen is in the process of setting up a member working group and discussing planning routes with community groups.

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
			<p>Linked to this is the new post that has been approved and part of the work to be undertaken by the new officer (Active Travel Co-ordinator) will be to co-ordinate the technical elements of the project's work and move towards engaging with the Highways Authority to ensure the necessary highways safety audits have been undertaken ahead of any development and promotion of route(s). Members with an interest in the new post have until 19 November to respond to me on the job description ahead of any revisions being made before being taken to the internal Job Evaluation Panel. Thereafter the post will be advertised, interviews undertaken and hopefully an appointment made in the new year.</p>
9.	Closed Churchyards	The Area Committee considered the report and agreed to add this to the work plan to discuss further at a future meeting.	Please see Appendix 1 – Proposal Form.

Bring back to future meetings:

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
10.	Conservation issues, including ponds	SBC only has details of the ponds which it manages directly. There is a strategic and heritage, conservation and tourism need for information, including ownership, condition and management of the ponds in the area.	Bring back to a future meeting.


No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
		<p>Both the Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group and Kent Fire and rescue have confirmed they are happy to work with Swale Borough Council to pull this information together for Swale.</p> <p>This will be considered as part of the wider environmental work and prioritisation of work programme. No work is currently underway on ponds.</p>	

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Western Area Committee Proposal form 2021-22

Title of project	Western Area committee – closed churchyard works													
Proposer (Area Committee Member)	Councillor Mike Baldock													
Relevant Heads of Service/Lead officer	Martyn Cassell Jay Jenkins													
Project Proposal	Allocation of funds to bring forward lower priority improvement works in closed churchyards sites within the area committee area.													
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Site</th> <th>Description of works</th> <th>Estimated total cost of works</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>St Peter & Paul, Borden</td> <td>Repair metal railings</td> <td>£590</td> </tr> <tr> <td>St Michael & All Angels, Hartlip</td> <td>Repair to flint wall £21,850 Repair to stone arch - £1,200 Repair to entrance doors - £600 Repairs to footpath - £1,156 Make good concrete pavings - £320 Repairs to Lychgate - £1,110</td> <td>£26,226</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Saints, Iwade</td> <td>Repair to dilapidated wall - £1,350 Remove tree damaging store roof and repair roof - £1,700 Fencing repairs - £500 Repair collapsed wall £1,000</td> <td>£4,550</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Site	Description of works	Estimated total cost of works	St Peter & Paul, Borden	Repair metal railings	£590	St Michael & All Angels, Hartlip	Repair to flint wall £21,850 Repair to stone arch - £1,200 Repair to entrance doors - £600 Repairs to footpath - £1,156 Make good concrete pavings - £320 Repairs to Lychgate - £1,110	£26,226	All Saints, Iwade	Repair to dilapidated wall - £1,350 Remove tree damaging store roof and repair roof - £1,700 Fencing repairs - £500 Repair collapsed wall £1,000	£4,550	
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Link to Area Committee criteria as agreed by the Committee	Works will improve the environment of the area.													
Anticipated officer resource required	Special Projects Officer resource to commission works. Input needed from Conservation officers in Planning team. Works to be tendered or commissioned from property maintenance contractor.													
Cost £	£10,000 allocated to works above.													
Planned Start Date	March 2022													
Due Date for Completion	TBC													

Western Area Committee Proposal form 2021-22

Title of project	Western Area committee – closed churchyard works
Please note there is a requirement to consult with the relevant Head of Service and Cabinet Member to ensure this proposal does not conflict with strategic priorities and will not put undue pressure on officer resource.	
Agreed by relevant Head of Service (Name, date and signature)	Martyn Cassell  30/11/21
Agreed by relevant Cabinet Member (Name, date and signature)	



Western Area Committee Funding Scheme

Summary of applications received for the December 2021 meeting

Area Committee's allocation for 2021-22 - £40,000.00

There have been no previously agreed allocations by Western Area Committee

Available to allocate at the December 2021 meeting - £40,000.00

The following applications have been checked by officers to ensure that there is no cross over with other work being carried out by Swale Borough Council (SBC) or other organisations and to check that there are no SBC financial/officer resource implications.

The applications have also demonstrated they comply with the criteria set by the Western Area Committee to improve the appearance, environment and facilities of the area and benefit residents across the area and to contribute to Swale's strategic priorities 2 and 3.

Reference:	WAC007
Organisation:	Newington History Group
Applicant Name:	Sue Flipping – Committee Member
Status of organisation:	Unincorporated Association (Community Group)
Details of project/activity:	<p>The project is to design, print and install three lectern-frame interpretation boards on footpaths at key points south of the A2 to attract walkers and visitors to the unique historic remains of military defences built to protect London had the Axis powers invaded in World War I.</p> <p>The extensive defence line included trenches, gun emplacements, barbed wire fences and look-out posts. This would be the first time they have been clearly marked for identification by non-experts.</p> <p>We see this as the first stage of a longer-term proposal by NHG to develop facilities that will discourage private car use and promote the area of Newington and surrounding villages as a heritage walking and cycling destination. This further proposal would mean working with community stakeholders in villages within a five-mile radius to develop off-road routes that encourage people to walk and cycle from place to place rather than drive. However, we believe it is not enough to make those routes available, we need to give people reasons to use them and that making sense of the heritage and environment through interpretation boards is one way to do that.</p>

	<p>Location Board 1 will be sited on footpath ZR63 (Standard Hill overlooking Wormdale Farm), Board 2 on ZR64 (which runs to the paintball activity centre at Wormdale Farm) and Board 3 at the junction of ZR65 and ZR66B at Cranbrook Wood.</p> <p>Each of the boards interprets a different part of the landscape and heritage and the contribution each played to the defence of the country in 1914-1918.</p> <p>Strategic priorities The project supports the following Swale Borough priorities: 2.2: Encourage active travel and reduced car use, including through the permeability of new developments and work with partners to address air quality issues The project is intended to encourage active travel by giving local people and visitors a reason to use footpaths south of the A2. The additional foot traffic will help keep the footpaths clearer for all users, particularly by helping keep undergrowth down during the summer months.</p> <p>Promotion will identify the public transport links (rail and bus) that bring visitors within a mile's walk of the boards.</p> <p>Interpretation boards 2 and 3 are accessible from Callaways Lane and the A2 respectively along mainly wide, generally flat footpaths. Board 1 overlooking the beacon is accessed via gently inclined and well signed footpaths from Wormdale Hill or Bull Lane. We feel they are accessible to most people who are mobile with no or with minimal assistance.</p> <p>2.4: Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry. The project identifies and interprets an important part of Newington's heritage that, until recently, has been known only to academics and people with a specialist interest. Through the interpretation boards, walkers will be able to identify both the WWI defences of a century ago and the commemorative beacon erected on the site of a WWI gun emplacement by NHG in 2018, itself a heritage project.</p> <p>The boards open up a new visitor attraction in Newington by revealing how the landscape would have looked 1914-1918. While military historians are aware of the general location of the defences, this is the first project to make them easily accessible and clearly identifiable both to those with a specialist interest and to the general public.</p> <p>We will enhance the visitor experience by directing them to additional information via our website address and a QR code on the boards. A choice of audio and video opportunities on the</p>
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website will make the information accessible and engaging for different ages and abilities.

The boards use a mix of text and images to make the information accessible.

Feedback from NHG's many 2014-2018 WWI commemorative projects shows that local people felt more pride about living in Newington after attending the community events. It also showed that visitors were surprised about the amount of history associated with Newington. We believe that people will always be drawn to areas that they can learn something about.

We expect the interpretation board project to attract additional visitors to Newington because of its unique and specialist interest and because it takes people through attractive countryside. We anticipate repeat visits, particularly as we extend our walking and cycling heritage and nature routes.

NHG will use social media and our website blog to promote the locations throughout Kent and run occasional interactive projects to engage visitors.

3.3: Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors.

An interpretation board off ZR54 at the solar farm in Bobbing has been erected by a separate organisation to mark a different section of the WWI defence. If we are successful in getting funding for our project, we intend to approach communities along other sections of the defence line to share our application and design experience and encourage them to install similar boards. This would ensure the continued recognition of a vital part of British and military history, not just in Newington but across the south-east.

If successful with this project, our next will be to provide interpretation way markers along those routes and to work with community groups in other villages to create connected walking and cycling routes.

3.5: Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.

An NHG member has run occasional guided walks along the routes where the interpretation boards will be with children as young as five and adults into their 70s. The walks have demonstrated an interest from all age groups in learning about the history of the area, a curiosity about the defences themselves and an appreciation of the countryside as it looks now. The footpaths on which the boards will be located are, for

	<p>the most part, flat, wide and easily accessible from paved areas and therefore an excellent introduction to walking for those who are not regular walkers.</p> <p>Additional information The boards will give information in text and images about the important role Newington played in preparations for the protection of the country during WWI. The inland defence line is the only place in Great Britain where genuine, rather than training, trenches were dug. They were complemented by pill boxes, observation posts and gun emplacements. NHG will be using a local construction firm for the installation and a local artist to provide images.</p> <p>This current project brings benefits to local people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raising the profile of the village • encouraging inward investment and property sales • increasing villagers' pride in their heritage, particularly among younger people • positioning Newington as an interesting and desirable place to live • encouraging people to walk more in their local area and appreciate the countryside <p>It brings benefits to visitors by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a new visitor attraction • engaging them in history and heritage in an easily accessible way • promoting footpath routes that they might not have considered before and using them to walk between villages rather than taking to their cars <p>As the projects unfold, we hope there will be benefits for other local organisations and marginalised groups by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opening learning opportunities under the guidance of experienced professionals • comparing different histories and heritages • adding walks that are accessible to all • using art and creativity to develop understanding of history and heritage • involving other specialist groups in future projects <p>Approval for installation of the boards has been granted by Kent County Council and relevant landowners.</p>
Supporting papers	No
Quote provided	Yes apart from artwork and installation estimates
Total project expenditure:	3 x Aluminium lecturn frame interpretation boards - £2,430.00 3 x Artwork - £500.00 (estimate) 3 x Installation of boards - £500.00 (estimate) 1 x Delivery - £125.00 VAT - £486.00

	Total Project Expenditure - £4,041.00
Total project income (addition sources of income including cash/in kind):	None
Funding request:	£4,041.00

The following applications have been checked by officers to ensure that there is no cross over with other work being carried out by Swale Borough Council (SBC) or other organisations and to check that there are no SBC financial/officer resource implications.

However, the applications have not provided evidence that they comply with the criteria set by the Western Area Committee or that they will contribute to Swale's strategic priorities 2 and 3.

Reference:	WAC006
Organisation:	Iwade at the Barn
Applicant Name:	Kelvin Rivers-Simpson - Treasurer
Status of organisation:	Registered Charity
Details of project/activity:	Timber storage shed to be erected adjacent to the Barn. This will allow the hire space to be clear of unused equipment and allow different types of equipment to be stored away from other items thus allowing for greater flexibility to types of hiring.
Supporting papers attached?	No
Quote provided	No
Total project expenditure:	Storage timber shed complete build - £22,550.00 + VAT
Total project income (addition sources of income including cash/in kind):	Grant - £10,000.00 Barn Hire various hire events - £4,514.54 Visiting micro-put hire - £1652.39 Fundraising activities - £100.00 Misc - £8.99 Total Project Income - £16,275.92
Funding request:	£5,000.00

Reference:	WAC008
Organisation:	Borden Parish Council
Applicant Name:	Julie Miller – Clerk and RFO
Status of organisation:	Parish Council
Details of project/activity:	<p>The parish council leases a derelict landfill site from KCC that is now a nature reserve. The nature reserve is exposed due to the lack of adequate fencing and the council is looking to erect fencing around the site to ensure it is not exposed to illegal encampments and is safe for residents to visit. The fencing will also ensure dog walkers can be confident their dogs are safe within the boundary.</p> <p>It also protects the area from illegal encampments etc.</p>
Supporting papers	No
Quote provided	Yes
Total project expenditure:	Fencing to boundary of Nature Reserve - £10,000.00
Total project income (addition sources of income including cash/in kind):	None
Funding request:	£10,000.00

Reference:	WAC009
Organisation:	Newington Parish Council
Applicant Name:	Mrs Wendy Licence
Status of organisation:	Parish Council
Details of project/activity:	<p>The Council would like to improve and add to the adult exercise equipment at its Recreation Ground to encourage residents to get outdoors more and improve their well-being. The current equipment is need of refurbishment and one piece needs replacing. Since the pandemic more people have been going to the Recreation Ground and there has been a greater usage of the equipment. A ladies fitness club meets at the Pavilion and uses the equipment. Local teenagers also enjoy using the equipment. This facility is important to residents across the generations and helps promote a healthier lifestyle</p> <p>The Council has recently invested heavily in improving the play area and this has sparked a new interest in the Recreation Ground which also has a MUGA, a teen shelter and five-a-side goals. There are allotments and a community woodland next to the Recreation Ground and a junior football club also plays on the playing field. The Council has also refurbished the car park and track so people come from a wide area to use the facilities. The Recreation Ground is used by people of all ages.</p>

	<p>The respondents of the 2011 Census were asked to rate their health. These are the results for Newington: the percentage of residents in Newington rating their health as 'very good' is less than the national average. Also the percentage of residents in Newington rating their health as 'very bad' is more than the national average, suggesting that the health of the residents of Newington is generally worse than in the average person in England. The pandemic has affected people's mental health and physical health so the provision of the additional equipment would be extremely beneficial to everyone in the local community as well as those outside the area.</p> <p>This project will improve the facilities at the Recreation Ground and will benefit residents across the area and is a much needed investment in the open space. It will help promote a healthy lifestyle to residents. People from outside the parish use the Recreation Ground. Furthermore, it will also help disadvantaged people who are unable to afford membership to a gym or sports club enabling them to take greater responsibility for their own physical health and enhance their quality of life. It will promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by encouraging a wide range of accessible leisure activities to everyone.</p> <p>The Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the outdoor gym equipment.</p>
Supporting papers	No
Quote provided	Yes
Total project expenditure:	Adult Gym Equipment £16,590.00 VAT £3,313.18 Total Project Expenditure - £19,908
Total project income (addition sources of income including cash/in kind):	None
Funding request:	£10,000.00

Reference:	WAC010
Organisation:	Upchurch Parish Council
Applicant Name:	Mrs Wendy Licence – Clerk to the Council
Status of organisation:	Parish Council
Details of project/activity:	Following requests from parents and carers for more equipment at its play area, Upchurch Parish Council is seeking to install a nature trail in the nearby wooded area. This will improve the appearance, environment and facilities of the area and benefit residents across the area.

	<p>The Council added play equipment in December 2018 and in 2020 added adult gym equipment to the Recreation Ground and this has been very well used. During the pandemic, the Council saw a significant increase in families using the play area as the initial lockdown meant that people were not permitted to travel and they looked closer to home for recreation. This increased usage has continued and the Council wants to further enhance the facilities in the area for the benefit of residents in Upchurch and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>This is a much needed investment in the open space and will encourage families to spend more time outdoors. This will be beneficial both mentally and physically to residents, as well as encouraging physical activity it also encourages social interaction. The Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the woodland trail.</p>
Supporting papers	Yes
Quote provided	Yes
Total project expenditure:	Woodland Trail - £4,699.20
Total project income (addition sources of income including cash/in kind):	None
Funding request:	£4,699.20

Compiled by Janet Dart, Interim Area Committees Coordinator
 November 2021