

Sheppey Area Committee Matters Arising Report December 2025

New actions/issues and progress with ongoing actions

No.	Item	Background	Actions/updates
1.	Health facilities in the East of the Isle of Sheppey	Concerns were raised about the potential closure of the General Practitioners (GP) surgery at Eastchurch which would mean that residents will need to attend Leysdown surgery instead where there are already delays in getting appointments. Members suggested that a representative from the National Health Service (NHS) be invited to a future Sheppey Area Committee meeting.	NHS Kent and Medway were contacted who advised that no formal application had been received by the ICB for the closure of this site. If a practice wishes to close a branch surgery there is a defined process that must be followed. The ICB is responsible for reviewing any such application. This includes assessing the rationale for the proposal, the impact on patients and access to services, and ensuring that appropriate engagement and communication have taken place before any decision is made. The consultation meeting that was referred to at the Sheppey Area Committee meeting, was an engagement activity organised and led by the GP practice, not the ICB. The purpose of that engagement was to seek patient and public feedback ahead of any potential application being submitted to the ICB. If an application is received, the ICB will ensure that all relevant stakeholders, including local representatives, are kept

			informed and that there is appropriate opportunity for engagement. The message during the engagement session may not have been clear and that will be feed back to the practice to ensure communications accurately reflect that no decision has been made.
2.	Isle of Sheppey Growth Board	Councillor Mike Whiting proposed that an Isle of Sheppey Growth Board be set up to improve the prospects for economic growth on the Isle of Sheppey. This was supported by the Thames Estuary Growth Board. The ask of Swale was for funding to get the Island Board up and running. Swale could not spend money without it going through the relevant service committee. The cost of getting all that Growth Board expertise, together with their contacts in central government and the investor markets, would be £25,000 per year for two years. It was agreed that Sheppey Area Committee refer the proposal to set up a Sheppey Growth Board to the Economic and Property Service Committee.	A report on this item is going to the Economic and Property Service Committee on 29 January 2026.
3.	Barton's Point	Councillors requested that regular updates should be provided at future Sheppey Area Committee meetings under the Matters Arising item.	The Strategic Programme & Assets Manager advised a report to the Economy and Property Committee on the 8 October 2025 resolved that the future occupation and use of Bartons Point Coastal Park (as agreed on 19

			January 2023) be rescinded until further consideration of its potential by the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee. A subsequent report to the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee on the 12 November considered the potential options for the future and asked Members how they would like officers to proceed for the long term. Four headline options were set out, albeit that the report acknowledged this was not an exhaustive list and that those options presented will be interchangeable rather than exclusive. a) Continue to manage in-house with existing income generation from leisure activities, but with a management plan to preserve the habitat. b) Retain the land, limit leisure usage and focus on the use of the site for ecological benefit/habitat bank. Explore potential ecological enhancements through biodiversity credits. c) Explore external management opportunities with conservation organisations to run as an ecology education centre. d) Transfer the asset to a local organisation. The Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee agreed to form a task and
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			finish working group to consider the future of the site.
4.	Household Support Fund	It was agreed that the reports that go to the Cost-of-Living Group, come to Sheppey Area Committee.	The Community & Partnerships Manager advised that the Crisis Resilience Fund is replacing Household Support Fund as of April 2026 and we are still waiting on Government guidance which is due in January 2026. Further information will be provided at the February 2026 Sheppey Area Committee Meeting if available.
5.	Highway Improvement Plans	The KCC Divisional Member for Sheppey agreed to arrange a session with the KCC Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, and SBC councillors and parish/town councillors on the Isle of Sheppey, to discuss highways matters.	Update to be given by KCC Councillor Maxwell Harrison.
6.	Heritage issues	Area of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCA) Swale Borough Council currently does not have an ASCA. Since the adoption of the Heritage Strategy in 2020 and subsequent Action Plans wherein a number of Conservation Areas have been reviewed, it has been proposed that in order to better manage and maintain Swale's historic environment and heritage, targeted ASCA can prove beneficial for conservation areas with a commercial centre. Any designation needs to be based on public consultation and must follow specific legal	The draft consultation document is estimated to be ready by winter of 2025.

		steps, including consideration of the order by the Secretary of State. Following an all members briefing in May 2024, it was agreed that a draft consultation document be prepared for approval by the Planning Committee, before undertaking public consultation.	
7.	Sheerness - Conservation Area Reviews	Regular updates on Marine Town & Mile Town Conservation Area Review and the Bluetown Conservation Area Review come to Sheppey Area Committee meetings.	Sheerness- Marine Town & Mile Town Conservation Area Review Press notifications to London Gazette and one local newspaper are now submitted. The final adopted version of the appraisal documents is envisaged to be published on the SBC website by mid-December 2025. The adopted map of redesignated Conservation areas with their changed boundaries are available on the SBC website. Sheerness- Bluetown Conservation Area Review Review of Sheerness Blue Town Conservation Area is estimated to start in spring of 2026 as part of Heritage Strategy- Action plan 2.
8.	Local Heritage List	The Selection Panel met on 17 October 2024; 278 nominations were presented out of which 150 were shortlisted to be designated as Swale's Local Heritage. The proposed designation list was presented to the Policy & Resources Committee on 27	At the Selection Panel meeting there were several deferrals. Also, the team have identified a few geographical gaps in terms of current nominations and wish to include some recommendations emerging from Conservation Area appraisal work. As such, an additional call for 'invitation to nominate'

		November 2024, wherein it was unanimously agreed to designate the shortlisted assets with addition of one more asset- taking the total to 151 designated assets on Local Heritage List. The majority of mapping work on SBC GIS system and associated data organisation that includes photo and brief description of each asset is now complete and published on the SBC website.	Local Heritage assets concluded on 31 October 2025, with the Selection Panel meeting estimated to be held before Christmas 2025, subject to Historic England's availability. Following that, it is anticipated the list would be updated every three years following a call for nominations and Selection Panel. The next one being scheduled for 2028. In addition to the above, a protocol for urgent designation of assets on Local Heritage was adopted at the June 2025 Policy & Resources committee.
9.	Area Committees Review	A review of Area Committees is currently underway and Area Committees were consulted during the summer round of meetings. The public, councillors and officers were consulted for their views.	The Member Working Group have reviewed the consultation responses, along with feedback from the sessions at Area Committee meetings. They have agreed 14 recommendations which are going to the Policy & Resources Committee on 26 November 2025 for consideration.
10.	Public Toilet Facilities Public Consultation	The public toilet consultation was carried out based the recommendations in the July Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee report. The public consultation lasted 12 weeks was opened to Swale residents, visitors, community groups and businesses to ensure as many people could take part. Everyone was encouraged to share their honest opinions, particularly from representative groups such as those with a disability, older people, families with young	Swale Borough Council Councillors agreed to new proposals to transform public conveniences. These new proposals expect to generate saving that can be used to ensure that the Council maintains financial stability and continue to deliver statutory services for our residents. Residents can now expect several public conveniences to be managed by Town and Parish Councils who are able to effectively

		children or those who are pregnant. There were also posters in all the public toilet facilities, posters in all Council offices along with paper forms, advertised on the Swale website and social media, shared with the local press, Area Committee presentations and directly contacting representative organisations (such as, Swale CVS, Age UK, Swale Seniors Forum, Freedom Centre and others). There were over 800 responses to the consultation; 60 of which were paper submissions and 752 online. All the feedback from residents, visitors, Area Committees, Community groups, Town/Parish Councils, letters and petitions have been collated and were presented at the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee on 12 November 2025 along with recommendations.	keep public conveniences open and respond to local demand. We will also be working with local businesses to allow residents and visitors to use their toilet facilities free of charge. To participate businesses must be inclusive well-placed businesses with convenient operating hours, who will in turn receive contributions towards upkeep. To help residents and visitors be better informed about the locations of publicly accessible toilets, there will be information added to the Swale website and updated regularly. This will enable residents and visitors to plan their journeys more effectively, whether shopping, socialising, or visiting local attractions. Unfortunately, to achieve the expected savings, the toilets in poorest condition, most costly to operate and based on public options have to be closed. These are the Forum, Milton Regis and Whitehouse. In turn, in order to improve the condition of remaining toilets, while improving energy and water efficiency where applicable will be funded through the use of existing external grant funding like the UK Shared Prosperity Fund or the Council's reserves/capital funding
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11.	Swale Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	A public consultation was carried out to assist with the development of a Swale-wide Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan. Area Committees gave their feedback at the September 2025 round of Area Committee Meetings.	The LCWIP consultation closed on the 26th October 2025 with a total of 82 engagements ranging from paper responses, comments on map pins and on-line completions of the questionnaire. Currently, the feedback is being collated and analysed by consultants. Once this is done, necessary amendments will be completed and the report will go back to Committee for feedback. When the Committee is happy with the final report, this will then form part of the Council plan and can be cited for funding bids to start to design the routes in the LCWIP. A thank you to all that took the time to complete this complicated consultation.
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