

Harrietsham Parish Council
Environmental Committee
Minutes of meeting held on Monday 9th March 2026

1. **Present:** Cllrs Brown (Chair), Dayes, Dean, Luck, Mrs S Amos, M Cuerden
(RFO/Amenity Manager)
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Donley
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (12th January 2026) were signed (without amendment) at the following Council meeting, another copy was signed for our records.
4. **Disclosures:** None

MC reported that he had, earlier that day, walked round almost the entire council estate, and was pleased to report that there were no issues arising. In fact, he commented that, for example, the paths round the war memorial / churchyard, which usually need at least a branch clearing, were all clear and easy going. There was virtually no litter. He then briefly went through each area in turn.

5. **Millenium Field (formerly New Burial Ground):** Nothing to add.
6. **Garden of Remembrance:** Nothing to add.
7. **Glebe Field:** Nothing to add on the walk-round. The tree height reduction has been delayed until autumn in order to give the ground a chance to dry out.
8. **Medical Centre & Church Road:** Nothing to add. We still have had no response from the Practice over our offer to part-fund any work they wish to do to the centre's front.
9. **Woodlands Walk:** Nothing to add regarding the walk-round, except to say that the listing aerator seemed to have been righted – Cllr Dean said that it had done that all by itself!
10. **Allotments:** Nothing to add. Further advice had been sought on the best way to maintain empty allotments. We had been advised that this was likely to be regular spraying, (it seems there are weed killers especially for Mares' Tail), although councillors still had a preference for avoiding chemicals and so were still veering towards laying heavy-duty tarpaulins. MC noted that that would be a lot of plastic, so would probably be expensive, and would probably deteriorate over time. It was agreed that we should start with spraying (possibly a couple of times over the next three or four months) and see how it goes.
11. **Benches:** Nothing to add. MC didn't think that they had been treated this year yet – probably due to the poor weather, but they generally seemed in good condition. (We haven't been charged for the contract yet.)
12. **War Memorial:** Nothing to add on the walk-round. MC had looked at possible locations for a new bench. The existing one, in the far right corner, is about 30%-50% obscured by a conifer bush. On this, it was felt that as we will get a new bench, there was currently no need to do anything about it. A decision at some point, maybe in a couple of years, on whether to cut it back (which might leave it looking shabby) or to remove it, will be needed. As for the new bench, it was agreed that the best place would be to the left of the gate, in the corner, on the grass, facing towards Tommy – so with the back to the Glebe Field. We have a quote from the contractor for a 2mx1mx10cm concrete base for £395 (exc VAT) which was deemed acceptable. MC will ask if we can get a bench delivered to his yard instead of to the parish office – all that remains now is to select one, and place the orders.
13. **A20 Verges:** MC had nothing to add about the contract. The transfer of the West Street Green is being progressed by the Clerk, and is now in the hands of new solicitors. The discussion on new Christmas lights is progressing.

On the Village Sign and stream-side bench, MC reported that he had received three quotes. One came in much higher than the other two, and so was discounted. The other two were to within a few pounds of each other, but one had included a new bench that wasn't asked for. MC will therefore go back to this contractor to see if removing the bench would reduce his cost, in which case we would accept the quote. It was noted that whoever got the contract, the existing bench would require some repair at some additional cost (replacing one missing slat and bracing two timbers).

14. Saxon Place Field: MC had nothing to add. The Clerk is still progressing the S106 variation that would free up money for play areas etc.

15. Teers Meadow: Nothing to add to the walk-round. MC noted that it is looking very neat and tidy, with not much new growth yet. The Medway Valley Conservation Partnership (MVCP) had done their 2-day scrub bash in late February – Mrs Amos having been up to see how they were getting on in day two. There was some discussion about “the cows”, and when they were due back. Mrs Amos checked the management plan, and said possibly April, (presumably depending on need), and then again in November. Cllr Luck said she’d contact the cow’s owner to see what she thought. It was also noted that we hadn’t asked for a cut on the field in 2025, so we may well be looking at getting one done in late 2026.

16. Items for future work: All items are covered above.

Finally, Cllr Brown confirmed that MC is to retire from the Amenity Manager post at the end of the month, and that until such time as a replacement is appointed, councillors would need to take on the task of checking the various areas. An initial proposal was made, consisting of:

Cllr Brown – Glebe Field, Saxon Place field (inc orchard and allotments), West Street Green

Cllr Dayes – A20 verges (which also includes West Street Green)

Cllr Dean – Woodlands Walk (including the Lake)

Cllr Donley – Medical Centre & Village Hall (including Church Road verges)

Cllr Luck – Teers Meadow, Millenium Field, Garden of Remembrance, War Memorial

Mrs Amos – Also Teers Meadow?

17. Date of the next meeting: Monday 11th May in the Parish Office at a time to be agreed.

Meeting closed at 8:45pm.