

# Godstone Parish Council

(incorporating the Villages of Godstone, South Godstone and Blindley Heath)

## Clerk to the Parish Council

S Endersby

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## MINUTES

of the meeting of Godstone Parish Council to be held on  
**Monday 4 September 2023 at 7.30pm at St Stephens, South Godstone.**

**Members:** Cllrs J Gardner, C Farr, S Farr, K Ward, I Smith L Case, C White and C Edwards  
**Apologies:** None  
**Present:** Tandridge District Councillor M Crane, S Endersby (Clerk), J Hale Chairman of GAA and other Members of Godstone Allotment Association (GAA), G and L Felstead.

### 1. Questions from Members of the Public

### 2. Apologies and reasons for absence

2.1 No apologies.

**RESOLVED** – The meeting was deemed quorate.

### 3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Cllr J Gardner stated that invoice G1463 was from his company for the supply of materials.

### 4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 3 July 2023 and Monday 7 August 2023

4.1 Councillors reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2023.

**RESOLVED** - Council unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2023 as an accurate record of the meeting and agreed that they be signed by the Chair.

4.2 Councillors reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2023. Cllr C Farr requested that a detail be corrected, Cllr C Farr is not provided with a device for TDC.

**RESOLVED** - Council, noting the correction, unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2023 as an accurate record of the meeting and agreed that they be signed by the Chair.

### 5. Motions postponed from the previous meeting

5.1 **MOTION:** Request that a monthly budget is allocated and agreed for the Greenspace Committee to enable the committee to approve and complete small works and that the committee have delegated responsibility to approve quotes for Tree works.

(Proposed: Cllr C Farr; Seconded: Cllr S Farr)

**RESOLVED** - Council unanimously agreed that the Green Spaces Committee be permitted to authorise up to £1000 of spend on unplanned expenditure if circumstances demanded and that the motion (5.1) be approved.

### 6. Reports

6.1 Clerks Report - Matters to bring to the Councils attention

6.1.1 Request for notice in pond about no bread.

**ACTION 9/23 – 1 – Cllr K Ward to investigate the cost of signage.**

6.1.2 Human Circus – Council noted the confirmation of dates; arrive Sunday PM 21st July until Sunday PM 28th 2024. Circus organiser did say they may ask to move it forward one week if schedule demands it) and estimate of fee given, stating will confirm 2024 fee when its agreed. Football club made aware.

6.1.3 Auditor engagement Letter – reported that the letter had just arrived, so needed to be reviewed and circulated to council for approval at the next meeting.

**ACTION 9/23 – 2 – Clerk to ensure Engagement Letter is circulated and included on the agenda of the next meeting.**

6.1.4 Councillor vacancy – Council noted that the deadline for parishioners to request a bi-election is 8 September, after this date council can advertise to fill the vacancy. After 8 September 2023, on confirmation from TDC if there is to be a bi election or not, the Clerk will circulate details on the next steps.

**ACTION 9/23 – 3 – Clerk to keep council up to date on Councillor Vacancy stage.**

6.1.5 Councillor Vacancy - Reallocate matters allocated to P Ryan. It was noted that P Ryan had been allocated to the Hilly Fields Inspections (jointly with Cllr J Gardner) and attending Preservation Society meetings.

**RESOLVED** - Council unanimously agreed that Cllr J Gardner continue with Hilly Fields with no new Cllr allocated and Cllr I Smith be appointed to attend the Preservation Society meetings as the council representative.

6.1.6 Football

- i. Request for PL Insurance (club and grass contractors) – email correspondence circulated to council. Clerk confirmed that K Ward as Chairman of GSA has now provided the PL insurance for the club.
- ii. Correspondence from football team on clearing the cuttings – Council noted the correspondence in relation to clearing the grass cuttings. It was not considered a Health and Safety risk as suggested in the correspondence and Council have always made it clear that organisations using the Green should carry out Risk assessments for the activities being undertaken to ensure the area is suitable.  
Council noted that the Green is an open space, not specifically a sports ground on which rent is charged, cuttings are not cleared on each cut to help manage the costs of maintaining the Green. If the football club wish to pay for the clearance, they should submit a proposal to the council. Council noted that it did not intend to make any changes to the grass cutting contract to increase grass cutting collections.  
Cllr K Ward has liaised with both the Football club and the Grass cutting contractor in the event that the football club choose to pay for clearance of cuttings.
- iii. Annual letter just reconfirming Terms and Conditions – It was noted that each year a letter reconfirming the Terms and Conditions of using the Green is sent (which covers insurance, risk assessment, care for the Green etc). The Clerk requested clarification on the position in relation to training which had been raised historically. Council noted that permission for training has not been agreed to date.

**ACTION 9/23 – 4a – Clerk to advise Football club on position in relation to clearing cuttings.**

**ACTION 9/23 – 4a – Clerk to liaise with the Football club for details to be confirmed on expectations for use of pitch for games and training.**

- 6.1.7 Inspections – The Clerk raised her concerns on inspection reports and managing and progressing matters raised on them, noting she had also raised the matter with the Green Spaces Committee. The Clerk checks reports as much as possible on receipt, but due to the continuing current circumstances at the Parish office of no administrative support this task remains difficult. It is requested that councillors completing inspections bring matters to the attention of full council (i.e. by way of a motion or under the reports section) if they feel action is required. Council can then consider recommendations and work that might be required; need planning for; what actions to prioritise and approve spend or allocate funds to matters.
- 6.1.8 Gazebo's on the Green – Noting the requests, often last minute that are made to the Clerk, the statement has been drafted for consideration, for the website: *'The council request that Gazebo's are not used on Godstone Green without permission being sought from council. If you wish to request permission you should contact the Clerk giving the details of the date and reason you would like to erect a gazebo and enough notice for the request to be considered at the next council meeting.'*

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously approved the statement for inclusion on the Website and that it accurately reflects the council position.

**ACTION 9/23 – 5 – Clerk to update the website with Gazebo information.**

- 6.1 Chairman's Report – (for noting) information only
- 6.2 Reports (for noting) from representatives on outside bodies etc
  - 6.2.1 Surrey County Council matters effecting the parish – Cllr C Farr reported the new transportation scheme of mini buses on demand being launched.
  - 6.2.2 Tandridge District Council (TDC) matters effecting the parish – Cllrs C Farr and M Crane reported that legionella is still being detected in tests on the Godstone Toilets. TDC work to public health standards and follow the appropriate advice and toilets won't be opened until advised ok to. TDC continues to work hard to get the toilets open and TDC has gone out to tender in relation to internal updates to the toilet building.
  - 6.2.3 Blindley Heath Liaison Group – Cllr S Farr reported that the annual onsite meeting had taken place and the following points:
    - i. A rare plant has been discovered, Petit Whin Gorse
    - ii. Kingfisher spotted on the pond
    - iii. Grazing by cattle will not happen this year, to SWT will arrange a 'drunken' cut
    - iv. Reptile survey not yet completed
    - v. Meeting again in March
  - 6.2.4 Preservation Society – Cllrs L Case and I Smith attended and reported that there was a talk on pollution given.
- 6.3 Reports from Committees
  - 1.4.1 Greenspace Committee - Recommendation in relation to works following the Tree Survey

The committee's recommendation to full council is that work as recommended by the Tree Survey at the Burial Ground and Godstone Green be carried out as these are high traffic areas. Following a specification of works for

the two areas being sent to contactors and quotes received being considered the Committee recommend that the quote for £5850 + VAT be accepted.

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously accepted the recommendation of the Green Spaces committee and proposal to complete the work at the Burial Ground and Godstone Green first and to accept the recommended contractors quote.

**ACTION 9/23 – 6a** – Clerk to confirm and advise council of budget for tree care that remains.

**ACTION 9/23 – 6b** – Clerk to liaise with contractor to ensure they are clear on the access to the burial ground to avoid any issues.

The committee reported that there is considerable work to be done at Tilburstow Hill/The Enterdent and the committee considered this to be done as a second phase of works. A working group of the Green Spaces committee are meeting to consider how to approach the task and works recommended. It was noted that the committee wanted to consider/address if potential works would be created when the tree work is carried out.

A specification of works for Tilburstow Hill/The Enterdent was also sent to contactors and only one quote (£40k) was received by the date detailed for a response. The committee felt that due to the size and potential expense of the task, further quotes should be sought.

In addition to the report given by the committee, Cllr I Smith raised his concerns in particular on a twin bowed cherry tree at Tilburstow Hill which is in grave danger of falling over and detailed as a P1 (top priority) in the tree survey, this tree is next to the road Tilburstow Hill Road. There are about a further 8 trees within 100 yards of the Cherry tree which also need to be addressed.

It was noted that addressing one tree could be at great expense and some felt seeing the cost of removal within the context of a larger project should be considered.

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously accepted the recommendation of the Green Spaces committee to review the area Tilburstow Hill/The Enterdent as one project, but the following action was agreed:

**ACTION 9/23 – 6c** – Investigation to be undertaken as to whether the cherry tree could be cut down in to the wooded area.

**ACTION 9/23 – 6d** – Specialist contractor to provide a quote for tree works along the road at Tilburstow Hill.

## 7. Finance and Insurance Matters

### 7.1 Accounts for Payment - to approve **AUGUST** accounts for payment

GPC Ref.	Business	Invoice	Invoice Date	Payment For	Net amount	VAT	Invoice Total
<b>Salary Payments</b>							
G1457-58	Salaries			AUGUST Salary	£1,907.29		£1,907.29
G1459	HMRC			AUGUST - NI and Income tax			
G1460	NEST Pension			AUGUST - Pension contribution			
<b>Direct Debits</b>							
G1461	BT	M129 J5 FJ	17-Aug	Telephone and Internet	49.22	9.84	59.06
G1462	British Gas	5320336	8/9/2023	Electricity (4/7 - 4/8)	£32.62	£1.63	£34.25
G1469	SES Business Water	43	25-Aug	Field Supply - Blindley Heath	32		32
<b>Invoices for Payment</b>							
G1456	Zurich Insurance	526368651	23-Jul	Insurance Cover	917.63		917.63
G1463	Segment Engineering	5139	28-Jul	Supply of Materials for Embankment Slide	260.83	52.17	313
G1464	Southern Tree Care	2023/0449	9-Aug	Hedge cutting at Enterdent	225		225
G1465	St Stephens			September meeting	25		25
G1466	Neat Gardens			August Cuts			
G1467	T Cherriman		30-Aug	Blindley Heath Car Park	2000		2000

G1468	PKF LittleJohns	SB20231287	1-Sep	External End of year Auditor	630	126	756
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\*Salaries paid in accordance with 7. Payment of Salaries of the Parish Council Financial Regulations. \*\*Employee/Employers total payment paid by GPC.

**TOTAL**                      **£6,079.59**    **£189.64**    **£6,269.23**

Council considered the list of payment presented and Invoice G1467 was discussed, the amount being higher than expected. Cllr J Gardner to liaise with contractor to confirm amount invoiced before payment is made.

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously approved the payments list totalling £6269.23, noting G1467 to be paid on confirmation from Cllr J Gardner that the amount had been checked.

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously agreed that the Neat Gardens invoice could be paid on receipt, on the condition that all items on it were within the contractual agreement.

**ACTION 9/23 – 7 – Clerk to liaise with Cllr C White as second signatory and arrange the payment of invoices.**

Noting further Playground repair costs (G1463), council considered if CIL funds be used to cover the costs. Council noted guidance information about what can the Community Infrastructure Levy be spent on<sup>1</sup>? The levy can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure, including transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals, and other health and social care facilities..... This definition allows the levy to be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, open spaces, parks and green spaces..... The levy can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure, if that is necessary to support development.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy#spending-the-levy> Paragraph: 144 Reference ID: 25-144-20190901 - Revision date: 01 09 2019 Paragraph: 145 Reference ID: 25-145-20190901 - Revision date: 01 09 2019

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously agreed that all invoices paid to date and any received of final costs remaining in relation to repair the embankment slide and the roundabout in the playground, should use CIL funds held by council to cover the costs.

**ACTION 9/23 – 8 – Clerk to ensure CIL funds are allocated to cover playground costs in relation to the repair of the embankment slide and roundabout.**

## 7.2 Insurance

7.2.1 Notice of Renewal – Councillors acknowledge that the insurance policy documents had been circulated on 23 August 2023 for councillors to review in advance of approving.

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously agreed that the Insurance Renewal as approved. Invoice, ref: G1456 has been approved for payment (this is part of a 3-year deal).

**ACTION 9/23 – 8a – Clerk to double check the level of cover for the playground equipment detailed on the insurance policy following the playground refurbishment works.**

**ACTION 9/23 – 8b – Clerk to check if this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 3-year deal.**

7.2.2 Notice of Claim – Council noted that the councils insurance company had contacted the Clerk to confirm receipt of a claim. The Clerk confirmed that she would liaise with the Insurance company to provide documentation and information as requested.

## 8. Parish Office - The Bounty

8.1 Update on Purchase of the office building – The Clerk reported that she was aware that an email had been received from the councils solicitors which she needed to review. The Clerk confirmed work to prepare the Loan application papers for the council to apply for a PWLB loan has been ongoing.

**ACTION 9/23 – 9 – Council stated Clerk to liaise with Chairman to arrange an extraordinary meeting as soon as papers are ready in relation to the purchase of the Parish office.**

8.2 Staffing – Council noted that vacancy has now been open for nearly 2 years. Potential casual cover muted with council has come to nothing. Administration Assistant vacancy - £1000 allocate to recruitment. One agency's online cost provided to council and Clerk confirmed that enquiries have been sent to some other agencies for costs to be provided to council as soon as possible. NALC website was muted as a place to advertise, with limited enthusiasm to pay to advertise on the NALC website.

**ACTION 9/23 – 10 – Clerk to continue posting the vacancy advert in Parish magazine; social media and circulate it to councillors and local organisations (such as schools) to assist in appointing a new admin person.**

9. **Christmas lights** – It was reported that with Cllr I Smith's assistance, there had been more success finding potential contractors and a letter requesting a quote to check and switch on lights has been sent out. Response has so far only been to decline the request to quote. Clerk has applied to SCC for the annual SCC licence to attach lights to streetlamps. The Clerks concern about there being Christmas lights this year was stated.

**ACTION 9/23 – 11 – Clerk to provide Cllr I Smith with the specification that was circulated to help with assistance.**

10. **Greens, Commons and Land** – Matters to bring to the Councils attention in relation to the areas of the Parish detailed below and discuss any specific items detailed:

### 10.1 Godstone

10.1.1 Section 38 – Council acknowledged that confirmation had been received that the application for a new section of path had been successful and the the work should be completed within 3 years of the date of the permission.

10.1.2 Playground

i. Roundabout

- a) The council were made aware that due to the condition of the seats the contractor had removed the seats when attending the site and had quoted a replacement cost of £296. The condition of the seats was very minimal when the roundabout was closed, so not sure why they had been removed.

**ACTION 9/23 – 12a** – Clerk to contact the playground contractor to enquire why they were removed and request the seats be returned.

**ACTION 9/23 – 12b** – Cllrs J Gardner and C Farr to contact the playground contractor to enquire why they were removed and request the seats be returned.

- b) Clerk had provided council with the email from the contractor in relation to the repair of the roundabout and requested instruction on if the roundabout can re-open.

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously agreed that the roundabout remain closed until the seats have been returned/replaced.

ii. Gates

- a) Noting that some information had been received in relation to the gates of the Playground being involved in an accident, the very limited details known had been recorded in the accident book following report from Cllr I Smith.

- b) Clerk visited and inspected the gates, and they don't shut fully as they 'rub' at the top of the frame.

- c) Council discussed the installation of the gates and the issue.

**ACTION 9/23 – 14** – Cllr J Gardner to arrange for gates to be removed and adjusted to improve how they shut.

iii. Signage at the Playground to be improved.

**ACTION 9/23 – 14** – Cllr L Case/Clerk to follow up on action on wording and cost of improving the signage at the playground.

10.1.3 Car Park Surface – Work to repair the holes in the surface previously discussed has been investigated and the estimate is £750.

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously agreed that the work needed to be carried out.

**ACTION 9/23 – 15** – Cllr J Gardner to liaise with the contractor completing the work.

10.2 Hilly Fields – No discussion or issues raised.

10.3 Salisbury Road Allotments

10.3.1 Requests and matters raised in regard to individual Allotments

10.3.1.1 Requests for Greenhouses:

- i. Plot 10&11 for greenhouse 180cm x 180cm  
ii. Plot 17 for a greenhouse size 143 x 216 x 195 cm  
iii. Plot 20 for a greenhouse size 6 x 8 ft.

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously approved the requests for Greenhouses.

**ACTION 9/23 – 16a** – Allotment holders to be advised of the approval

10.3.1.2 Requests to change the size of allotments:

- i. Plot 27 – The request to halve the allotment was noted including correspondence from a Councillor responding to the request stating councils' opinion when the matter had not been raised with council. Different opinions on the situation and how to address such issues were noted.

**ACTION 9/23 – 16b** – Matter to be considered further at the meeting referred to 10.3.2.

- ii. Merging Plot 22 & 24

**RESOLVED** – Council unanimously approved the merging of Plot 22 and 24.

**ACTION 9/23 – 16c** – Allotment holder(s) to be advised of the approval to merge allotments and Clerk to update Parish records.

- iii. Compost area of plot 31 encroaching on to plot 36 – Confirmation on how to proceed.

**ACTION 9/23 – 16d** – Matter to be considered further at the meeting referred to 10.3.2.

10.3.2 Update on meeting between GAA and Council – The Chairman reoutline the position the organisations find themselves in and it was noted that although efforts have been made to arrange the meeting, it has not yet taken place. Group endeavouring to arrange a meeting.

10.3.3 Allotment Agreement – It was noted that Cllr I Smith and Clerk both have points that they believe need to be included in an updated Agreement letter, i.e. covering the newly created parking area and assessing risk/lone working and plan to prepare a draft for council to review.

**ACTION 9/23 – 17 – Allotment Agreement amendments to be completed before next years growing season for councils consideration.**

10.3.4 Parking area – Council noted that the *Developers agent of the Garage site has spoken with the planners informally regarding the allotment car park. The case officer for the garage scheme said;*

- As it is outside of the boundary of the Garage development ownership, including details of the allotment car park in that development's drawings would not hold any weight in terms of formalising the car park.
- The Garage development planning application has already been decided, altering plans to annotate with the carpark wouldn't be possible, nor would it hold weight.
- To formalise permission for the new allotment carpark council would need to submit a full planning application specifically for that work.
- While the planner wouldn't give a formal answer, the impression given was that they didn't think the new carpark would attract enforcement action if left as is, i.e. It is likely no one would ask you to remove it. The case officer also implied that it may well be considered a permitted development or a non-planning issue, but could not formally say so without looking into it further.
- With regard to putting in a full planning application, they couldn't see any issues that would obviously prevent the car park being approved.

Council noted the information provided and that council would need to consider whether to choose to leave things as they are, apply for planning permission and potentially encounter an issue, submit an application for the new car park and have it formally approved. It was further noted that the application would require drawings, there would be a planning fee. Council noted this issue is not entirely without risk, as things might come up in the planning process.

Council made no decision on this matter during the meeting and no immediate action was agreed on the matter.

#### 10.4 Tilburstow Hill and The Enterdent

##### 10.4.1 14 The Enterdent, Godstone

10.4.1.1 The residents discussed the driveway work they wish to carry out. Council confirmed that it did not have any issues with the gravel surface proposed. Ensuring the boundary was carefully adhered to was discussed.

10.4.1.2 Trees near the property were raised with the council. Email from the resident on the matter had been previously circulated to council 1 September 2023.

**ACTION 9/23 – 18 – Cllr J Gardner would visit to confirm the boundary if necessary.**

#### 10.5 South Godstone

#### 10.6 Blindley Heath

10.6.1 Blindley Heath Cricket Club (BHCC) – An update on the points discussed and agreed at the meeting attended by Cllrs C Farr, S Farr, C White and J Gardner with BHCC.

i. To install two benches in a style and location agreed with both parties at BHCC expense - It was confirmed that the installation and location of benches had been agreed. It was agreed that the council would repair the memorial benches on the common.

**ACTION 9/23 – 19 – Cllrs J Gardner and C Farr to liaise on dimensions for materials for the benches.**

ii. Update on car park resurfacing – Work to address the surface has been completed

iii. Contract for a refuse bin (with the agreement of GPC) securely fixed – It was agreed that any refuse bin would be kept on the cricket ground and kept inside.

iv. Discuss changes made in mowing The Common, which has caused us some issues in locating cricket balls – Cllrs C Farr and S Farr have passed the feedback to the grass cutting contractor to resolve the issue.

v. A general discussion on continuing to improve the relationship between both parties and work together.

vi. It was noted that the council informed BHCC that the height barrier would no longer be installed.

**RESOLVED** – Council agreed that the funds allocated as designated funds for the height barrier be used to cover the cost of the resurfacing works.

10.6.2 Misuse of parking area of the Blindley Heath Pond by Local Garage – Council appreciated the concerns raised by the Parishioner and they shared the frustrations; council noted that enforcement for the Parish is problematic.

### 11. Wayleave – Reviews and updates

11.1 Tippywychett – Update (circulated by email 1 Sept)

**ACTION 9/23 – 20 – Clerk to liaise with residents solicitor to request that a drafted document is prepared and proposed for the councils consideration.**

**12. Burial Grounds and Memorials**

12.1 Exclusive Rights of Burial Applications and Memorial Applications

12.1.1 Council noted the memorial applications approved within the regulations: Allen – 476 - Memorial

12.1.2 Applications for EROB approved under delegated responsibility noted: Battersby – 290 - EROB

12.2 Inspection from Cllr K Ward – Actions to be agreed to address points raised:

- i. The condition of sections of the pathways becoming a concern (picture below).



**ACTION 9/23 – 21a** – Clerk to request a quote to repair the path (2mx2m section)

- ii. Notice board in bad order, frame and perspex broken.

**ACTION 9/23 – 21b** – Clerk to liaise with maintenance contractor to carry out repairs.

- iii. Several trees encroaching & overhanging pathways – It was noted that the trees have been reviewed in the Tree survey.

- iv. Large number of benches covered with foliage & not useable.

**ACTION 9/23 – 21c** – Clerk to liaise with maintenance contractor to carry out maintenance on the benches.

- v. Steps to the war memorial are overgrown and not accessible.

**ACTION 9/23 – 21d** – Clerk to liaise with maintenance contractor to address condition of the steps.

12.3 Council noted that the mole catcher had been instructed and it was hoped that addressing the mole issue, will then assist in the spread of unwanted weeds that are becoming a problem in the area.

**13. Correspondence** – Council noted the correspondence circulated by email since the last meeting:

13.1 Twinning with Santeny

13.2 A consultation on draft recommendations for division boundaries in Surrey has begun

13.3 Inspectors Procedural Meeting Letter ID/26

13.4 Funding available for tree planting in Surrey- for charities and community groups

13.5 NALC NEWSLETTER - Note Article on Model Finance Regulations

**14. Matters for reporting or inclusion on future agendas**

14.1 [Data Protection](#) policy adopted in May 2019, updated NALC MODEL policy (Dec 2019).

14.2 Review the Press/Media Policy and update it to include the use of social media

14.3 The next meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled to be held on **Monday 2 October 2023 at 7.30pm**, please check agenda for venue.

----- Meeting ended 10.15pm -----

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Chairperson

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Dated