The Minutes of the Meeting of Thurnham Parish Council held on 28th September 2026 at the Tudor Park Hotel, at 7:30pm.

Councillors present:

Cllr Wise
Cllr Shelley
Cllr Dunlop
Cllr Smith
Cllr Skinner
Cllr Jenkins
Cllr Duncan

Also present:

Sherrie Babington, Parish Clerk
KCC Councillor Sarah Emberson
members of the public.

The meeting was opened by Cllr Skinner.

1. Apologies.

   Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

   Apologies were received and accepted from:

   - Cllr Waters – Work

2. Parish Councillor Vacancies

   No applications for co-option had been received.

   The vacancy remained open.

3. Declaration of Interests.

   To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

   No declarations of interest were made.

   To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

   No dispensation requests were considered.

4. Minutes from last Parish Council Meeting.

   To consider the minutes of the previous meeting and if in order sign as a true record.

Members considered the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 20th July 2026 and agreed that they were an accurate record.

Proposed: Cllr Jenkins
Seconded: Cllr Wise

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 20th July 2026 be approved as a true record.

The Minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising not otherwise covered on the agenda.

6. Public Participation.

To discuss any questions received by members of the public.

There were no matters raised under public participation.

7. Clerk's Report.

Quiet Lanes – Augustine Camino

The Clerk reported that, following the Parish Council's approach to Andrew Kelly, Route Director of the Augustine Camino, confirmation had been received that he supported the proposed Quiet Lanes designation. Members noted that approximately 300 Augustine Camino pilgrims pass through Thurnham each year, using Thurnham Lane and Pilgrims Way, with some travelling from Bearsted Station. The route also brought visitors into the area and included St Mary's Church.

Mr Kelly had highlighted concerns regarding vehicle speeds and pedestrian safety, particularly along Pilgrims Way and Thurnham Lane.

Members welcomed his support and agreed that this provided further evidence of the importance of these rural lanes to walkers and other non-vehicular road users.

8. External Reports.

a. To receive the MBC Ward Councillor's Report.
No MBC Ward Councillor's Report was received.

b. To receive the KCC Councillor's Report.

KCC Cllr Sarah Emberson provided Members with an update on current KCC matters.

Local Government Reorganisation was discussed. Members were advised that the process had currently been delayed and that there remained uncertainty regarding the future arrangements for Kent.
Cllr Emberson also discussed highways matters with Members, including the difficulties and costs involved in introducing lower speed limits on rural roads.

Members discussed the national speed limit applying to narrow rural lanes and whether a wider review of rural speed limits could be undertaken by KCC.

Cllr Duncan proposed that the Parish Council contact KALC to ask for the subject of rural speed limits and possible reductions on rural lanes to be raised for wider discussion.

This was agreed by Members present.

Action: Clerk to contact KALC regarding the wider issue of speed limits on rural lanes.

c. To receive the Police Report.
No report submitted.

d. To receive Parish Councillors Reports.
No matters were reported.

9. St Mary's Church.

To receive a report on St Marys Church.

Cllr Smith provided an update on St Mary's Church.

The recent Classic Car Show had been successful and had generated a profit for the Church, although attendance had been lower than at previous events.

Members also discussed concerns regarding an old yew tree within the churchyard.

It was reported that Cllr Waters, in his capacity as the Parish Council's Tree Warden, had been assisting the Church by providing guidance and obtaining advice regarding the tree and the work that might be required.

10. Financial Matters.

a. Financial Statement.
To receive and approve the financial statement and payments.

Members considered the financial statement and payments presented by the Clerk.

No queries were raised.

Proposed: Cllr Shelley
Seconded: Cllr Duncan

RESOLVED: That the financial statement and payments be approved.

11. Planning Matters.

a. Planning Applications Received
26/500485/FULL – Land at Hockers Farm, Orchard View, Detling, Kent ME14 3BF
Demolition of existing structures and erection of 25 dwellings and associated car ports and parking, including 40% affordable housing onsite, erection of a two-storey building for use as a children's nursery and associated parking, provision of open space, biodiversity net gain area, landscape buffering and associated works.

Members noted that the application was situated within Detling Parish and that Thurnham Parish Council had been consulted as an adjoining parish.

No objection was raised.

RESOLVED: No objection.

26/502903/FULL – Land Adjacent to A2 Tyres, Detling Aerodrome Estate, Bimbury Lane
Change of use of the land for open storage for vehicles associated with A2 Tyres and metal components for VP PLC (Groundforce), together with associated hard surfacing and reconfiguration of the access.

No objection was raised.

RESOLVED: No objection.

26/502947/FULL – The Chase, Ware Street, Weavering, Kent ME14 5LA
Demolition of existing conservatory and dormer, loft conversion and associated extensions and alterations, together with extension of the existing retaining wall and block paving to increase the parking area.

No objection was raised.

RESOLVED: No objection.

b. MBC Planning Decisions.
26/501849/FULL

Brickfield Cottages Coldblow Lane Thurnham Kent ME14 3LR

Section 73 - Application for minor material amendment to approved plans condition 2 (to allow changes to the external finishes of the property) pursuant to 23/503917/FULL for - Demolition of existing bungalow, 1no. outbuilding and 2no. tanks with fencing. Erection of 1no. four-bedroom dwelling with associated works and landscaping.

Application Permitted

26/500580/SUB

Shell Detling Detling Hill Detling Kent ME14 3HT

Submission of details pursuant to condition 3-(remediation strategy) .4-(scheme to install underground tanks) .5-(foul water drainage disposal) .6-(enhancement of ecology) .8-(acoustic assessment) .9-(acoustic report) subject to 25/503208/FULL.

Split - Part Allowed/Part Refused

26/501494/LAWPRO

26 Peverel Drive Thurnham Kent ME14 4PS

Lawful development certificate for proposed Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension with 3 no. roof lights

Application Permitted

c. Other Planning Matters..

Changes to the Planning Decision-Making Process
The Clerk reported on forthcoming changes to the planning decision-making process following a recent Maidstone Borough Council planning briefing.

Members had been circulated with a report prior to the meeting outlining the changes and their implications for the Parish Council.

It was noted that the changes would result in a greater number of applications being determined under delegated authority and would change the existing arrangements through which applications could be referred to Planning Committee.

Members expressed concern regarding the potential reduction in local democratic oversight and the ability of parish councils to have applications considered by elected Members.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should write to its Borough Councillors asking that they continue to monitor applications affecting Thurnham and the operation of the new arrangements.

Action: Clerk to write to the MBC Ward Councillors.

12. Highway & PROW Matters.

a. To consider general highway and PROW matters.
Members noted the two Public Path Diversion and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Orders previously circulated by email relating to:

- Public Footpaths KH68 (part) and KH636, Detling and Thurnham; and
- Public Footpath KH114, Thurnham.

Members discussed the plans and noted the position.

Highway Matters
Members discussed the continuing work to progress the proposed Quiet Lanes scheme for Pilgrims Way, Thurnham Lane and the surrounding rural lanes.

The support received from Andrew Kelly, Route Director of the Augustine Camino, was welcomed and Members noted the increasing number of walkers using the route.

Members discussed the speed limits applying to rural lanes and the difficulties experienced by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders when sharing narrow lanes with vehicles.

Following the earlier discussion with KCC Cllr Emberson, Members agreed that the wider issue of rural speed limits should be raised through KALC.

Members also discussed recent water main failures and the resulting road closures and disruption within the local area. The age of the existing infrastructure remained a concern.

b. HIP (Highways Improvement Plan).
To receive an update on the Highways Improvement Plan.

Members confirmed that the proposed Quiet Lanes scheme remained a priority within the Parish Council's Highways Improvement Plan.

The Parish Council would continue to liaise with KCC regarding the proposals and await further information regarding possible measures.

13. Future Agenda Items.

No matters were raised.

14. Date of next Meeting.

Members confirmed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 19th October 2026.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8:24pm.

Signed: .....

Date: .....