

SARRATT PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office: Village Hall, The Green, Sarratt Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 6AS
Telephone: 01923 262025
Email: clerk@sarrattparishcouncil.gov.uk
Web: <https://sarrattparishcouncil.gov.uk>



DRAFT MINUTES FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF SARRATT PARISH IN THE FRONT HALL AT SARRATT VILLAGE HALL 11TH AUGUST 2026

Councillors Present

Cllr Lee Farman – Chair and Planning Lead
Cllr Angela Coakley – Vice Chair
Cllr Michael Lowry – Policy and Resources
Cllr Philip Mitchell – Environment and Sustainability - Absent
Cllr Simon Diggins – Highways
Cllr David Zerny – Highways
Cllr James Alder – Planning
Cllr Michael Sparks – absent

Mrs Lena Mortimer – Clerk to the Council

Public: 12 members of the public

Note: These minutes have been prepared from meeting contemporaneous notes and recorded transcript.

26/1053 APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apologies received in advance from Cllrs Sparks and Mitchell.

26/1054 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none

26/1055 TO MOVE THAT THE CHAIR SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11TH AUGUST 2026

The Minutes were duly signed by Cllr Farman

26/1056 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were none

26/1057 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A Sarratt resident asked about the heritage design phone box on the Green. It is missing its door, and it was promised by British Telecom in 2024, that it would be replaced in September 2026. It has not, as yet, been replaced.

Action: To contact British Telecom to expedite progress on this matter.

26/1058 TO CONSIDER THE APPLICATION OF FRASER JOHNSON AS AN APPROPRIATE CANDIDATE FOR PARISH COUNCILLOR

Unanimously carried; Sarratt Parish Council is delighted to welcome Fraser Johnson as a co-opted Parish Councillor, to fill the second of three vacancies. As a resident of Commonwood for over 11 years, Mr Johnson is eager to use his skills in support of Sarratt environment and community.

26/1059 LOCAL PLAN REG 19 RESPONSE.

The Local Plan Regulation 19 and Fighting Fund

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The Council considered the current Regulation 19 stage of the Three Rivers Local Plan. Members noted that the Local Plan is at the stage where representations are invited on whether the plan is legally compliant and sound. The deadline for comments was noted as 25 September.

It was agreed that, although concerns remain regarding the sustainability of major development in Sarratt and the surrounding area, an adopted Local Plan would help reduce the risk of speculative development. The Council therefore supported submitting a response supporting the Local Plan but used input from a professional planning consultant that helped reinforce concerns about sustainability, transport, school capacity, drainage, Green Belt, heritage, landscape, village character, infrastructure, and cumulative impact.

A planning consultant, Carl Thomas, has been identified to prepare the Regulation 19 response at quoted cost of £4994.00+VaT).

The Council noted ongoing collaboration with Sarratt Residents Association, Sarratt Matters, the Joint Residents Associations and neighbouring parish councils with our Reg19 response.

Resolved: To fund the professional Regulation 19 response professional input from the SPC Fighting Fund.

Resolved: Where urgent decisions are required between meetings, councillors may consider and agree use of the Fighting Fund by email or other written communication, with decisions to be reported back at the next available public meeting. Where timescales allows, proposals will continue to be publicised through existing village communication channels.

Action: Continue public communications explaining the purpose of the Fighting Fund and encouraging residents to sign up to the village email list.

26/1060 COLLABORATION WITH SARRATT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION AND SARRATT MATTERS

The Council welcomed continued collaboration with Sarratt Residents Association, Sarratt Matters and other local groups in responding to planning and development pressures. Councillors noted that the planning process is complex and sometimes counter-intuitive, and that coordinated working with all volunteers would help increase information gathering, coverage and ensure the strongest possible response.

26/1061 DOMESTIC WATER CONNECTION REQUEST TO BE INSTALLED UNDER SMALL PART OF COMMON LAND

The Council considered a request relating to new water connections for the huts on the Moor Lane side of the Mulberrybush site. Affinity Water requires three separate supply pipes and meters. The proposed route is from the main in Dawes Lane, beneath the existing drive across the common, with a manifold and meters located just inside the common-side boundary. Members noted that the proposed route would minimise disruption compared with excavation along Moor Lane, and that timing may align with planned Affinity Water works in Dawes Lane. Affinity Water already has rights in relation to underground infrastructure; limited permission would be needed for access to meters and associated maintenance.

Action: Continue discussions with solicitors to prepare the appropriate licence, wayleave or other agreement required for access and maintenance, and consider whether this can be incorporated alongside the agricultural access licence.

26/1062 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS WHO HAVE ATTENDED MEETINGS ON BEHALF OF SPC.

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Members received updates on meetings attended, including the KGV trustees meeting and the Sarratt Matters steering committee. The KGV trustees had considered refurbishment costs and fee increases to support future work.

26/1063 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATES CLLR MITCHEL

Received the first draft of the website from Parish Online, launch pending review, email transfer and training.

26/1064 CLERKS REPORT

A broken barbed-wire fence near the path to the Tree Avenue was discussed. Members noted the potential danger and the lack of response from the landowner.
Action: Seek support from Three Rivers District Council for enforcement action in relation to the unsafe fence.

Members discussed the national litter-picking day on 19 September and considered whether a village event could be organised around it, potentially involving residents collecting litter on their way to a central meeting point on the Green.
Action: Liaise with existing litter-picking volunteers and publicise a simple village initiative for 19 September.

Issues relating to overnight parking of camper vans on Parish Council land were discussed. No-parking signs have been purchased and installed, but further legal and enforcement options require clarification.
Action: Research the Council's legal powers and potential enforcement options for overnight parking on Parish Council land and report back with recommendations.

Concerns were raised about Parish Council bins being used for commercial or inappropriate waste. Residents and councillors were asked to note the nature of any unsuitable waste found in the bins.

Possible one-way traffic arrangements around the Green and Dawes Lane were raised. Members agreed that further clarification and research would be needed before any formal proposal could be considered with Hertfordshire County Council.

The Royal British Legion branch in Sarratt is ceasing to exist. Members noted that Remembrance responsibilities will fall more fully to the Parish Council, and that there may be protocols for retiring the British Legion banner.
Action: Contact the schools regarding participation in Remembrance Day on Wednesday 11 November and investigate the appropriate protocol for retiring the British Legion banner.

Members noted a recently averted local scam and that it had been reported to the police. Updates were also given on renovations outside Sarratt School, including the need to restore and protect the Green following construction traffic.

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Agreement had been reached with an environmental adviser regarding cutting arrangements on Dawes Common, taking into account butterflies, bluebells and the general ecological health of the common.

26/1065 and 1066 PLANNING AND PLANNING APPLICATIONS CLLR ALDER

The Council considered a number of planning applications and related matters. The following positions were agreed or noted, subject to the Clerk submitting detailed comments where appropriate.

Land To The North And West Of Cottage Farm Redhall Lane 26/1340/PDPA

Prior Notification Agriculture: Construction of agricultural buildings...

SPC: Noted. Our position remains the same as for the previous application. The proposed structures are some distance away from the existing buildings, which will lead to development in what is currently a large area of open fields, and would impact the openness of a Greenbelt area.

Bay Tree Farm Bucks Hill 26/1271/FUL -Construction of an outdoor riding menage

SPC: Our position remains the same as for the previous application. No objection on the basis this is in an area with other menages, is low impact with no lighting and is for private use only.

Toledo The Green Sarratt 26/1238/FUL - Demolition of the existing dwelling; construction of detached two storey dwelling

SPC: We recognise the extent of the approved permitted developments, so we support the more logical approach this application proposes. As this site borders the conservation area, we ask that any development meets the design codes set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Moonshine Farm Bragmans Lane 26/1242/PDA - Prior Approval: Change of use of existing agricultural barn to one self contained residential dwelling with associated parking

SPC: We note that this is not a new construction but is a new residential unit in a Green Belt location. If officers are minded to approve we ask that requirements added to the permission to ensure this dwelling remains ancillary to the main house.

The Ash Bucks Hill 26/1229/FUL - Construction of first floor rear extension...

SPC: No objection. We support investment in the dwelling and request the applicant take the opportunity of these changes to improve the energy efficiency of the building. It is not clear how this addition will effect light for the neighbouring properties, so this will need to be checked carefully.

York House School 26/1215/FUL & 26/1216/LBC - Installation of solar panels on the roofs

SPC: We support this application and the investment in renewable energy.

Land At Long Spring Sarratt Lane 26/0849/FUL - Change of use of land to use as a residential caravan site comprising 2no. Gypsy/Traveller pitches...

SPC: A detailed objection response with some professional input submitted.

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The Council noted that one recent planning decision had gone against its submitted view, concerning Cherry Tree / Dove Farm.

26/1068 PLANNING APPEALS

The Clover Court appeal relating to 20 houses on Church Lane is awaiting a written decision from the inspector.

26/1069 ENFORCEMENTS

None discussed.

26/1070 HIGHWAYS CLLRs DIGGINS AND ZERNY

Members discussed continuing frustration with Hertfordshire County Council highways processes, including the lack of meaningful parish input into road repair priorities, delays in addressing safety concerns, and poor communication regarding repairs and drainage issues. Specific concerns included road safety near the entrance to Sarratt, flooding near Homewood, the condition of Bucks Hill, inconsistent pothole repair criteria, and uncertainty over scheduled works and road markings.

Resolved: The Chair, with support from councillors, will write to the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council and the Cabinet Member responsible for Highways to escalate the Council's concerns. The letter will set out the parish's experience and request meaningful engagement on rural road safety, road repairs, drainage and maintenance priorities.

Action: Draft the escalation letter, review available evidence and correspondence, and contact neighbouring parish councils to identify whether similar highways issues are being experienced elsewhere.

26/1071 AND 1072 ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY CLLR MITCHELL

Plan (to date) : Develop User Guide for Environment and Sustainability

Actions of note (to date)

- Tree assessment complete. Initiating action of priority category 4 and 5 requirements
- Jo Deacon work underway on registering filming portfolio for conflict-of-interest reasons
- Spoke to Andrew Taylor from the HCC Countryside Management Services, who acknowledged that he can't help us at the moment.
- Had some follow up with the Asset Transfer, they didn't know what we were referring to with regards the Dawes Lane parcel of land, so sent them a map
- In discussions with HCC about the CS Higher Tier EOI process, which potentially opens up availability for more grants.

Next Steps (ahead of Oct meeting)

- Record the Stileman report as the benchmark for all Woodland Management for the next 3yrs. This requires a minuted council resolution and should be logged in the Works Approval Log (Appendix F), framed as *adopting Stileman's recommended monitoring actions for categories 3 and below*.
- Adopt the Sarratt Tree Safety Process and build monitoring to match it. Fulfill the visual checks and walk throughs detailed in the Sarratt Tree Safety Process Document- annual/post-storm visual checks for the category 3 residuals and after-gale checks (Force 7+). We then build a 3–5 yr full reassessment backstop.

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- Works are expected to begin surveying additional trees at KGV, with particular attention to trees affected by recent drought conditions. The Council on receipt of the survey results can decide if any work is to be undertaken
- The Council noted the need to confirm adoption of amended environmental policy wording, including provisions relating to advertising on the Green.

26/1073 POLICY AND RESOURCES – CLLR LOWRY

26/1074 BANK RECONCILIATION AND SUPPLIERS PAYMENTS

- The end of July bank reconciliation was reported, with a current account balance of £75,064.
- August was noted as a lower-than-usual month for normal supplier payments.
- Significant payments were made in relation to the KGV refurbishment project, including the first stage payment to HT Prestige Builders and window deposit costs offset by funds received from Sarratt Rebels Football Club.
- The Fighting Fund receipts at the end of August were noted, with further donations received subsequently. The Council noted the need to manage cash flow carefully while awaiting staged grant payments, VAT reclaims and Football Foundation funding.

26/1075 & 1077 EXTERNAL AUDITORS' FINAL REPORT

- The external auditor has issued a clean audit opinion. Minor issues previously identified by the internal auditor related to allotment invoicing timing. The current internal auditor is retiring, and alternative internal audit arrangements will be required for next year.
- The External Audit completion notice is to be placed on the website.

Action: Identify and appoint a suitable new internal auditor for the next financial year.

26/1076 KGV PAVILION REPORT

- The KGV refurbishment funding package was summarised, including contributions from Three Rivers District Council, the Football Foundation, Sarratt Parish Council, Sarratt Rebels and KGV trustees. Members noted that project cash flow is dependent on timely payments from funders and prompt VAT recovery.

26/1078 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM A DISTRICT COUNCILLOR CIARAN REED
District Councillor Reed reported on forthcoming community governance review matters. The Council may need to consider its external parish boundaries, any proposals from neighbouring areas, and whether warding arrangements within the parish should be simplified. Parish elections are expected in May, subject to any future local government reorganisation changes. Political parties represented locally have informally indicated that they do not intend to field party candidates in Sarratt parish elections, preserving the parish's independent approach where possible.

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Members were advised that Government changes to planning call-in arrangements will be implemented from 31 October. Parish councils and others will no longer be able to request matters to be called in to planning committee, and applications for nine or fewer homes will not be capable of call-in. Larger applications will be subject to revised arrangements involving the planning committee chair and senior planning officers.

Local government reorganisation in Hertfordshire has been paused. As a result, the expected May election arrangements may revert to the existing district council cycle, with no immediate creation of a new unitary authority structure.

28/1079 CORRESPONDENCE

Dealt with under 26/1064

26/1080 IDENTIFY AND SELECT ITEMS FOR THE MEETING AND OTHER RECENT ACTIVITY TO PUBLISH ON PUBLIC CHANNELS

The Clerk will compose these with the help of Cllr Farman.

26/1081 TO CONSIDER COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

The Council discussed the long-running agricultural access licence relating to the Mulberry Bush and noted that the water connection request may provide an opportunity to resolve and formalise access arrangements.

The Council also noted that due to its formal status, cannot enter into commercial only deals with its land.

The Chair has contacted Aecom who undertook the Neighbourhood Housing Needs review, regarding the possibility of updating this evidence. The purpose would be to understand current housing need and the potential effect of existing permissions and live applications on future need assessments.

Members briefly returned to the issue of school capacity, noting that the position is complex, with local primary school numbers, funding pressures, secondary school capacity and future development impacts all needing to be considered carefully in planning responses.

26/1082 TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – 13TH OCTOBER 2026

The meeting concluded at 22:15pm