

Green Party Councillors' Report of December 2025, for Marden & Yalding Ward Parishes –

After the busy November, this past month has seemed to be a lot quieter, apart from in my Cabinet role covering Finance issues. We put forward the proposed 2026/27 Fees & Charges to committees, and to Cabinet, during December (including the second stage in raising town parking fees back to where they would have been with inflation, post-Covid). Also, without knowing exactly what the Local Government Finance settlement would be (received the week before Xmas), I have started to set out the process and budget for the next financial year, and there is further Committee, Cabinet and Council decision-making during Jan/Feb on how much we expect next year's Council Tax to rise.

The Council meeting on 3rd December heard a Motion of 'no confidence' in the Council Leader being tabled by two Councillors from this part of the Borough, which was defeated by 28 votes to 14. Council then heard from the (continuing) Leader as to progress on various matters in the Borough, plus considered a second Motion about potential future planning issues at Invicta House. Cabinet on 17th December looked primarily at finance issues, noting that the half-year now shows an expected small surplus in Council funds/spend; it also passed a motion on Council Tax reduction allowances.

A public consultation regarding Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) continues to be open until 25th January, so please respond; we're actively encouraging all ages' participation, and the funded 'Citizens' Assembly' style community discussion on VAWG is also now [open for applications](#). Two SPDs on Lidsing & Heathlands garden settlements are also still out for Consultation, as is also the Gypsy & Traveller (GTT) Reg. 18b consultation + Call for Sites (<https://maidstone.oc2.uk/>), until 11th Jan. And lastly there is also another Survey/consultation out, about the creation (or not) of a Town Council: <https://online1.surveymonkey.com/r/41f29ed5-8b99-44ef-9ce3-b6ce2712a0b2>

Please check upcoming events, in town and around, on: <https://www.visitmaidstone.com/whats-on>

Parish Matters –

Collier Street – Mike had assisted a resident with concerns over blocked ditches, by contacting UMIDB (who confirmed that they knew about a problem, and enforcement action had been taken).

Hunton – Mike had mail about litter on Hilltop and a potential permissive path action, and attended a meeting with Clockhouse Farms, about their proposals for polytunnels on the Greensand slopes above Lughorse Lane. Chased up a couple of recent Planning Enforcement issues without success.

Marden – Mike had meetings at Stilebridge Lane caravan site with residents, about power/water supply issues & fly-tipping on land opposite, and had contacted the Parish Council over potential encroachment on another site in Tilden Lane (already under MBC Enforcement action). Traffic & speeding issues continue to get traction on social media, and Parish Council had formed a joint Group to discuss/assess. Attended, damply, a wonderful Weald of Kent Young Farmers' Tractor Run.

Nettlestead – Nothing to report from Mike, but a very jolly post-Parish Xmas drinks/canapes with Councillors. The Council Leader had visited a new cafe/coffee shop (on the riverside, by Bow Bridge) after he & Mike received an email from the owners about negative comments online from an adjacent area's Councillor (Grace is to visit early in the New Year) – supportive actions & publicity.

Yalding - Mike visited a resident on Claygate Road, to look at new works undertaken on the highway verge, including tree removal and a new access crossing of the ditch; UMIDB & KCC Highways were informed, asking about clearance suitability and any potential highway safety issues. Grace received an issue of concern over flags on High Street lamp-posts, which Parish Council are dealing with. And both had emails about a small solar panel 'farm' in Laddingford, which is currently being assessed by MBC about its environmental aspects; Grace had met with Boom Power to discuss details of their proposals. Grace had been contacted by a resident over highway lighting concerns on/near the East Peckham by-pass, after the fatal accident there; she has passed on KCC contact details for that zone.

Borough Councillors Grace Couch & Mike Summersgill – 1st January 2026

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