

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Meeting held at 8pm in the Reading Room on Monday 10th November 2025.

Present: Cllrs Cox, Husband (Chair), Jones, Pryor, and Steed.

In attendance: Mole Valley District (MVDC) Cllrs Budd and Keay, Surrey County Council (SCC) Cllr Helyn Clack, and the Clerk.

1. Apologies for Absence

(155) Council **resolved** to accept apologies from Cllrs Bourke and Gowrley and MVDC Cllr Potter.

2. Declarations of Interest

(156) None.

3. Requests for Dispensations

(157) None.

4. Minutes and Agenda

(158) Council **resolved** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th September 2025. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair as a correct record.

5. Planning and Licensing

New Planning Applications

- (159) Council noted an update from the Clerk that following consultation with Cllrs who serve on the Planning Committee the following actions had been taken:
- (i) MO/2025/02176: Erection of a single storey extension to existing garage at April Cottage, Old Road, Buckland RH3 7DY. No comment;
 - (ii) MO/2025/02182: Erection of a first floor extension with dark green cladding and a grey slate-tiled hipped roof, partial demolition of the rear and west side of the ground floor extension and removal of one chimney at Lynchets, The Coombe, Betchworth, RH3 7BT. Council had highlighted the prominence of the white frontage of Lynchets when deciduous trees have minimal or no leaf cover, and asked MVDC for the proposed colour scheme and materials to be controlled by condition, sought a commitment to a sensitive external lighting plan and asked for withdrawal of permitted development rights for additional openings.

Planning Notifications

- (160) Council noted the following Planning Authority notifications:
- (i) MO/2024/1728: Erection of a two storey side extension following demolition of the existing conservatory and roof to the single storey WC/study at Yew Tree Cottage, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 7BG. Appeal dismissed.
 - (ii) MO/2025/02176: Erection of a single storey extension to existing garage at April Cottage, Old Road, Buckland RH3 7DY. Approved with conditions.
 - (iii) MO/2025/02182: Erection of a first floor extension with dark green cladding and a grey slate-tiled hipped roof, partial demolition of the rear and west side of the ground floor extension and removal of one chimney at Lynchets, The Coombe, Betchworth, RH3 7BT. Refused.
 - (iv) MO/2025/02484: Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development in respect of a Listed Building for the refitting of existing kitchen & utility room with new flooring, cabinets and wall cupboards at Yewdells, Dungates Lane, Buckland RH3 7BD. Application registered.
 - (v) MO/2025/02550: Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development in respect of the erection of a single storey side extension and installation of door and window to front elevation at Yew Tree Cottage, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 7BG.

- (vi) MO/2025/0384: Erection of a self-build dwelling and associated works on land East of Tranquil House, Old Reigate Road, Betchworth, RH3 7DR. Appeal lodged.
- (vii) MO/2025/02574: Crown lift willow tree to 3 metres for pedestrian clearance. Crown reduce willow tree by approximately 2-3 metres back to old pruning points only by removing limbs no greater than 75mm in diameter at Buckland Village Green, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 7EF.

(161) Council noted:

- (i) receipt of a notification of a Proposed Upgrade to the existing Radio Base Station Installation at the BT Computer Centre, Chesterfield Park, A25 Reigate Road, Buckland RH2 9RG; and
- (ii) having reviewed the proposals, while, as no planning concerns had been identified related to the upgrades, no formal representation had been made, clarification had confirmed the intention is to both improve the 4G service and support the delivery of a 5G service.

Planning Enforcement

(162) Council noted MVDC had advised that:

- (i) following the refusal of planning permission MO/2025/0659: Replace existing driveway entrance retaining walls with new stepped retaining walls at Burley, Old Road, Buckland RH3 7DU, MVDC had been advised the height of the retaining walls had been reduced to within the 1 metre permitted development height tolerance;
- (ii) there are no further updates available for any of the other outstanding planning breach enquiries.

Planning – Policy

(163) Council noted MVDC had:

- (i) introduced Local Validation Requirements and Biodiversity Net Gain Requirements for planning applications submitted on, or after, 10th November 2025 and a news item had been published on the village website to alert residents;
- (ii) launched a public consultation on a Westcott Neighbourhood Plan.

Planning – Community Engagement

(164) Council noted:

- (i) Cllr Bourke had attended the second six-monthly in person MVDC Development Management Community Engagement Meeting between 10am and noon on Thursday 11th September 2025;
- (ii) Cllr Bourke had taken the opportunity to submit questions in advance of the forum, responses to which had been issued and asked the team to provide guidance as to how to get the best out of the recently relaunched planning portal; and
- (iii) expressed his appreciation to the officers for making themselves available for what he considered a worthwhile session.

Licensing

(165) Council noted:

- (i) a Tranquil Dale resident had recently raised with the operator of the Shell Little Waitrose site licence breaches, namely:
 - (a) the entrance to the site being coned off during published opening hours; and
 - (b) deliveries being repeatedly made earlier than the prescribed time windows;

- (ii) the operator had undertaken to schedule additional training for all staff and to ensure the terms of the licence and need to comply with those terms are explained to staff brought in from other sites to provide cover.

Cllr Cox joined the meeting.

6. Airports and Highways

Airports - DCO

(166) Council noted:

- (i) on 21st September 2025 the Secretary of State for Transport had granted consent for the transformation of the northern emergency runway into a full runway at Gatwick Airport;
- (ii) the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC), working with its legal team, had written to the Secretary of State for Transport to outline the basis upon which they plan to challenge this decision in the High Court, and had since, on 30th October 2025, submitted a legal claim;
- (iii) GACC had launched a fundraising campaign to ensure the campaign can be fully funded and campaign flyers are published on the village website and displayed on the noticeboard opposite the village shop;
- (iv) A public meeting, at which GACC representatives will speak, is being hosted by Charlwood Parish Council, at St Nicholas church, Charlwood, on 26th November; details of which have been published on the village website;
- (v) Capel Parish Council has invited any Cllrs unable to attend the Public Meeting in Charlwood to attend its Parish Council Meeting on 17th November to hear from GACC; and
- (vi) SCC Cllrs serving on the recently established SCC Gatwick Airport Expansion Working Group are inviting input and a link to a short survey has been published on the village website.

(167) Council **resolved** to:

- (i) invite Peter Barclay, GACC to speak to the village at the 2026 Annual Parish Meeting on 23rd March 2026. **Action:** Cllr Cox;
- (ii) ask Cllr Gowrley to attend the Public Meeting in Charlwood and prepare an article to be published in the January edition of the parish magazine to provide an update to the village and generate interest in attending the Annual Parish Meeting. **Action:** Cllr Husband; and
- (iii) focus Council's effort on taking steps to ensure residents are sufficiently informed about the legal challenges underway and GACC's related fundraising campaign to consider making individual donations.

Gatwick Airport – Noise Management Board

(168) Council noted Cox had attended the Gatwick Airspace Fayre on Wednesday 1st October 2025 at Gatwick Airport's Stem Centre, an event previously referred to as the annual public meeting of the Noise Management Board.

Airports – Airspace Change

(169) Council noted:

- (i) earlier this year, the Government had proposed the creation of a UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS) to take forward airspace modernisation in the London region under a single initiative; and
- (ii) Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) had recently shared that the UK Government Department for Transport (DfT) and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), acting as co-sponsors of "London Airport South" (a project already underway to modernise arrival and departure routes to the south of Gatwick), had announced this project, prompted by a need to accommodate the new requirement for a 3rd runway at Heathrow Airport, will be integrated into the scope of the as yet to be established UKADS under references ACP-2020-043/044/045.

Standing orders suspended to allow SCC Cllr Clack to participate.

Highways – Maintenance

(170) Council noted that:

- (i) SCC Highways maintenance had finally responded to repeated requests channelled via SCC Cllr Clack for a return visit to be made to complete a length of footway edging commenced late spring; and
- (ii) the SCC contractors commenced footway edging between the driveways to Park Cottage and Buckland Court on Friday 7th November, had now completed two days work and were expected to return to complete the task tomorrow.

(171) Council noted Cllr Pryor took the opportunity to express concern that the contractors appear to be depositing material removed from the footways on to the inside verge and accepted SCC Cllr Clack's offer to review the operational guidelines currently applied to edging tasks. **Action** SCC Cllr Clack.

(172) Council noted:

- (i) SCC Cllr Clack had shared an extract of the SCC interactive map (not publicly available) that had highlighted an intention to fell ash trees along the westbound carriageway of the A25 Reigate Road between the village centre and Tranquil Dale;
- (ii) SCC Highways had confirmed its belief the trees are located within the extent of the public highway and the SCC Tree Officer had provided assurance work will be undertaken from the roadside (i.e. no access required via cultivated field); and
- (iii) the SCC Tree Officer had marked up the trees for the contractors and provided assurance the contractors will be instructed to minimise collateral damage to the remaining trees and to remove arisings from site.

Highways - A25 Safety Improvement Work

(173) Council noted:

- (i) anecdotal feedback that making right hand turns onto the A25 Reigate Road from Old Road, Rectory Lane and Lawrence Lane has become more difficult since the introduction of the average speed cameras with drivers attributing this to longer streams of solid traffic with fewer gaps; and
- (ii) SCC Cllr Clack's advice that encouraging drivers to reduce their speeds is SCC Highways policy.

National Highways – Use of local road network to facilitate works on the M25

(174) Council noted an initial response issued by SCC highways officers to a question posed by SCC Cllr Clack had suggested assurances provided shortly after the A25 Reigate Road became a preferred diversion route were no longer being observed.

Action: SCC Cllr Clack agreed to share a copy of the email that had set out the assurances with SCC Highways officers and to ask a supplementary question to establish the:

- (i) extent to which the assurances are no longer being met;
- (ii) process and timing of the decisions made that have resulted in any change; and
- (iii) what actions can be taken to protect the amenity of residents living along the diversion route.

(175) Council noted Cllr Steed:

- (i) had, in a personal capacity, recently submitted, reports to the SCC Countryside Access team to highlight the declining condition of the steps (known locally as Jacob's Ladder) and a stile on the Greensand Way;
- (ii) been pleasantly surprised by the speed of reaction with respect to the stile and asked SCC Cllr Clack to relay his thanks to the relevant team; and
- (iii) thanked SCC Cllr Clack for agreeing to add her weight to his request for repairs to be made to safeguard the safety of walkers using Jacob's Ladder steps.

Standing orders resumed.

7. Amenities and Volunteer Activities

- (176) Council resolved to authorise the Clerk to liaise with Josh Flynn to arrange for grass cutting to continue for as long as the need remains evident and the ground conditions permit.
- (177) Council noted the Clerk, having recently met with Dave Challice (DC), Chartered Arboriculturist had:
- (i) spoken with Jordon Guigenhalt, MVDC Tree Officer and asked DC to resubmit the planning application (withdrawn earlier this year) to secure permission to undertake schedule restorative pruning of the willow tree; and
 - (ii) received confirmation that as the tree species, planted alongside FP472 (between Old Road and Bromley field), had been selected to replace fully mature trees (removed to allow the installation of a new water supply pipe) that the appropriate management plan is for the trees to be left to grow to their mature height. For clarity, the intention, when selecting the trees was not to create and maintain a hedge; and
 - (iii) suggested that as the trees mature a reduction in light could mean that the growth of the brambles, particularly towards the field end of the path will reduce in vigour.
- (178) Council noted recent strong winds had accelerated the need for concrete spurs to be installed to support the fencing around the bus shelter located opposite the village shop and **resolved** to authorise the Clerk to arrange for the maintenance to be undertaken for an ex-Vat cost of no more than £500. **Action:** Clerk.
- (179) Council noted the Community First Responders had agreed to run a CPR training course on Wednesday 19th November at the Reading Room and the Reading Room Committee had agreed to apply a reduced fee of £10 for the room hire. Council **resolved** to:
- (i) record a vote of thank to the Community First Responders for giving up their time to run the course; and
 - (ii) record a vote of thanks to the Reading Room Committee for applying a reduced rate; and
 - (iii) pay the room hire fee of £10. **Action:** Clerk.
- (180) Council **resolved** to record a vote of thanks to Martin and Sheena Boyce and Alan and Donna Pryor for installing the poppies and silhouette of a soldier respectively to coincide with the RBL Poppy Appeal.
- (181) Council noted:
- (i) a change in the routing used to issue communications to subscribers to the village email group had been implemented;
 - (ii) the change addresses anti-spam measures recently activated by several internet service providers that was reducing the reliable delivery of messaging;
 - (iii) given the importance attached to this means of communicating with residents advice/support was sought from Design Lynx, our website hosting company;
 - (iv) emails are now issued via a free Brevo account.

8. External Meetings, Local Government Reorganisation, Neighbourhood Area Committee, and Communications

External Meetings

- (182) Council noted Cllr Pryor had attended the Surrey Wildlife Trust led River Mole Catchment Annual Update on Wednesday 1st October 2025 at the Wells Community Centre Epsom. A report had been circulated to Cllrs for information. No further action required.
- (183) Council noted Cllr Jones had met with SCC officers to understand more about the implementation of Warm Welcome schemes in nearby villages, and is exploring whether there is potential for trialling a scheme in Buckland.

Local Government Reorganisation

(184) Council noted:

- (i) the Government had recently announced Surrey will move to two new unitary councils – East Surrey and West Surrey;
- (ii) for Buckland, this means the current two-tier system – where SCC and MVDC share responsibilities – will be replaced by East Surrey Unitary Council;
- (iii) elections to the new shadow authorities will take place in May 2026;
- (iv) East Surrey’s elected members will help set up the East Surrey Unitary Council and operate in a “shadow” capacity until vesting day;
- (v) on 31st March 2027, Surrey’s 12 existing councils will be dissolved; and
- (vi) from 1st April 2027 (vesting day), East Surrey Unitary Council will officially take over.
- (vii) There will be no immediate changes to how residents access services. Council offices and community spaces will remain open, and services will continue as usual.

Dorking and Villages Neighbourhood Area Committee (DVNAC) Pilot

(185) Council noted:

- (i) Cllr Jones had attended a meeting of parish councils and the subsequent launch meeting of the DVNAC pilot;
- (ii) the DVNAC is due to meet again twice, on 11th November and 8th December, before SCC prepares summary feedback to be submitted to UK Government MHCLG (Ministry for Housing, Community and Local Government);
- (iii) MVDC will provide updates to parish clerks, on 24th October and 3rd December, to support open and transparent communication with all parish councils;
- (iv) it is understood the as yet to be appointed Est Surrey Unitary Council will draw on the feedback from the pilots when establishing its community governance arrangements.

(186) Council noted the headline priority identified at the first DVNAC meeting encompassed loneliness, isolation, mental health issues, lack of transport and cost of living and was labelled “Deprivation”. Council **resolved** to express its concern about the labelling, to seek clarification as to how the challenges posed by GDPR will be tackled and to ask for any learning to be shared with the team responsible for the transition of the role MVDC plays in emergency planning to East Surrey Unitary Council. **Action:** Cllr Jones.

(187) Council noted Cllr Jones and the Clerk had each attended Surrey ALC updates at the start of October that had featured presentations from parish councils with experience of asset and/or service transfers after which the presentation slides had been circulated to Cllrs.

Communications

(188) Council noted a letter issued by Royal Mail, acknowledging the need for an improvement in the delivery service provided to all Buckland properties with an RH3 postcode had been published on the village website.

(189) Council noted MVDC had advised the feedback collated from the recent Community Governance Initial Public Consultation will be used to draft a proposal for MVDC to consider at its February 2026 Council meeting; a timeline MVDC considers will allow any proposed changes to parish and town councils across Mole Valley’s unparished and parished areas to be in place ahead of the 2027 parish council elections.

(190) Council noted SCC’s Greener Futures team had launched a small grant scheme to support community groups demonstrate delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities with a final date for applications that had closed within a month of its launch. **Action:** All to remain mindful of the possibility a further opportunity may arise and require a similarly swift application.

(191) Council noted updates issued by Surrey ALC, SCC, Surrey Hills, MVDC, Gatwick Airport and GACC had been circulated to Cllrs and key information published on the parish news page of the village websites and within parish updates.

(192) Council noted:

- (i) Re-Betchworth's Biodiversity initiative had funded surveys of Rectory Green, Buckland which had advised Rectory Green is a good condition neutral grassland containing at least 89 plant species and identified a goal of managing the grassland to increase the abundance and diversity of wildflowers is likely to be a slow process;
- (ii) the report recommends avoiding further rotovation and not sowing wildflower seed for at least the next two years whilst continuing to undertake surveys to monitor progress.
- (iii) the report outlines possible actions that could be considered, depending upon survey outcomes and emphasises the need to minimise harm to the genetic composition of the grassland.
- (iv) the advice set out in the report is consistent with guidance previously put forward by Simon Humphreys and the views expressed by Buckland Parish Council.

SCC Cllr Clack and MVDC Cllrs Keay and Budd left the meeting.

9. Formalities and Finance

- (193) Council noted the Cllr email accounts are now hosted on Council's bucklandsurrey.org.uk domain and the .net domain licence will not be renewed in May 2026.
- (194) Council noted formal papers for the 2025 Surrey ALC AGM had been circulated and **resolved** to authorise Cllr Husband to vote in favour of each of the ordinary resolutions set out on the Agenda (relating to the Election of Vice Presidents, Approval of 2024 Minutes, the Appointment of Directors, an Advisor and an Independent Examiner and to exercise Council's vote on the appointment of representatives to external bodies).
- (195) Council noted its Staffing Committee had met on 4th November 2025 to review the adequacy of the Clerk's contracted hours and consider a request for vocational equipment. Council **resolved** to approve the recommendations of its Staffing Committee.
- (196) Council noted:
- (i) Cllr Jones had verified the bank balances entered on the Q2 bank reconciliation against the bank statements, and having reviewed the cashbook against the bank reconciliation, signed the cashbook to confirm no anomalies had arisen between 1st July 2025 and 30th September 2025; and
 - (ii) financial schedules circulated in advance of the meeting had included a year-to-date cash book, an analysis of forecast versus budget expenditure and a bank reconciliation.

Account Payments and Receipts

- (197) Council noted Unity Bank had applied a £6 monthly charge to the current account on each of 30th September and 31st October 2025 and £175.95 Q2 interest to the instant access saver account on 30th September 2025.
- (198) Council **resolved** to approve the following payments:
- (i) Design Lynx £348.00 including £58.00 vat, Set up new communication routing;
 - (ii) Josh Flynn Gardening Service £204.00 including £34.00 Vat, Grass cutting – two cuts during September;
 - (iii) Design Lynx £66.00 including £11.00 vat, Transfer of email accounts to the .org.uk domain;
 - (iv) Microsoft £104.99 including £17.50 Vat, Renewal 365 Software licence;
 - (v) Reading Room £102.00, Room hire for mtgs : 12th May, 14th July, 8th September, 10th @ £23 and £10 for First Aid Course on 19th November
 - (vi) Josh Flynn Gardening Service £306.00 including £55.00 Vat, Grass cutting – 3 cuts during October;

- (vii) Champion Timber £147.60 including £24.60 Vat,
Concrete spurs, bolts and postcrete to make repairs to bus shelter fencing;
- (viii) Sheena Boyce £622.90,
Additional salary payment – extra hours worked;
- (ix) HMRC £617.76, PAYE liability re: salary payments in November;
- (x) Sheena Boyce £440.90 including £38.22 Vat,
Reimbursement council expenses.

10. Forthcoming Meetings

- (199) The Parish Council will next meet on Monday 12th January 2026 and meetings are subsequently scheduled to be held in the Reading Room on the following dates:
2026: 9th March, 11th May, 13th July, 14th September and 9th November; and
2027: 11th January, 8th March, 17th May, 12th July, 13th September, and 8th November.
- (200) Cllr Husband and the Clerk will attend the Surrey Branch of the National Association of Local Councils AGM and Autumn Briefing on Thursday 13th November 2025 in Cobham.
- (201) Cllr Jones will attend meetings of the Dorking and Villages Neighbourhood Area Committee on 11th November and 8th December 2025.
- (202) The 2026 Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 23rd March 2026 in the Reading Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.15p.m.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk

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