

Sandgate Parish Council Environment Committee - May 2024 to April 2025 Report

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of what the Environment Committee has been doing for the past year (May 2024 to April 2025).

Formation of Environment Committee

At the Annual Parish Council meeting in May 2024, the membership of the Environment Committee was agreed as: Susan Claris (proposed as Chair in July 2024), Peter Hickman, Kirsty Hogben, Rosa Morris and Nicola South (with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parish Council as ex-officio members). Hazel Barrett stood down from the Environment Committee and is thanked for her work during the previous year.

Action List

The Action List from 2023/2024 was reviewed and key priorities identified for the year 2024/2025, as follows:

- Reducing road speeds in Sandgate: 20 is plenty
- Sea water quality: Environment Agency to move water testing point for Sandgate Beach to Sandgate
- Solar panels on The Boat House
- Sprucing and greening: wilding, more planting etc

Updates on Actions

The spreadsheet of actions is a live document and is continually updated and reviewed. Key updates are as follows:

- *20 is plenty* – in August 2024, Kent County Council said that it would support (but not fund) a 20mph scheme in the Village. An informal consultation was undertaken by the Parish Council in January 2025 which showed strong (>95%) support for the 20mph zone, with a large proportion of people supporting wanting a larger area for the 20mph zone. KCC published the Traffic Regulation Order for a (slightly expanded) scheme at the end of March 2025, with comments to be made by 28 April. An advisory 20mph school scheme was introduced on Coolinge Lane in January 2025.
- *Sea water quality* – the Parish Council put up signs along the beach front in November 2024 informing residents and visitors that the quality of the water at our beach is normally excellent or good, but that after heavy rainfall or stormy conditions, the quality of the water may be adversely affected for up to 48 hours. The signs include websites and QR codes where further information on water quality may be found. The Council again decided, reluctantly, not to apply for the Seaside Award. We need to apply to DEFRA for the beach at Granville Parade to become a designated bathing beach, and, if successful, this might mean that a water testing point is provided. The application process is currently closed, with the DEFRA website stating “We expect to begin accepting applications again in spring 2025”. The form and supporting evidence will be collected prepared over the Summer for submission by 31 October.
- *Solar panels on The Boat House* – Planning permission was granted in November 2024. It has been confirmed that the roof structure can sustain the weight of the solar panels. now a need to determine the structural composition of the roof area. Solicitors have been contacted about conveyancing to purchase the end of the roof that belongs to UK Power Networks,

- *Sprucing and greening* – in July 2024 the Folkestone Town Sprucer repainted all the bollards in Sandgate Village and also undertook various other sprucing activities. Following discussions with the Town Sprucer, the decision was taken to set up a Sandgate Sprucing satellite, supported by the Folkestone Town Sprucers. The first Sandgate Sprucing was undertaken in October 2024, with a further Sandgate Spruce in January 2025 to replace the barrels outside the flats opposite The Providence. Barrels have also been planted outside the Library. Work was undertaken in March 2025 to introduce a wildflower and bee corridor at Battery Point and flowers are now starting to appear.
- *Parking and double yellow lines* – double yellow lines installed on Encombe in August 2024. There was not support for double yellow lines on Sunnyside.
- *Missing dropped kerbs in Enbrook Valley* – these have been added to the HIP.
- *Defibrillator training* – this was held on 29 July 2024 and was well attended by Parish Councillors. An additional defibrillator has been added at the BP garage in Seabrook.
- *Green Grant application* - focused on ideas for greening, wildflower planting, and walking routes through the Valley.
- *Active Travel funding* – KCC has responded positively about ideas for dropped kerbs, pedestrian refuge islands and walking routes in Sandgate

Finances

There is a £3,000 budget per year for Environmental Improvements. Unspent provisions are not carried forward for a subsequent year, except with the specific approval of the Council. For 2024/25, these were approved as follows:

From/To Environmental Budget – Scribe Item Code 35

For the following specific items:

- *£125 Hedgehog Project (Sandgate Action Group have provided £125 contribution towards the overall cost)*
- *£475 Toilet Block Deep Clean*
- *£466 Village Green Cycle Rack*

£1,066 Total

This increased the 2024/25 budget from £3,000 to £4,066. Spend for 2024/2025 is shown below.

Item	Cost (excluding VAT)
Boathouse Toilet deep clean	£475.00
Dog bag dispenser and bags	£210.50
Donation to Folkestone Sprucer	£1,000.00
Sleepers for flower beds on Village Green	£700.00
Cycle racks on village green and by Library	£1011.00
Signs about seawater quality	£120.08
Jet washing Riviera sleepers	£300.00
Noticeboard for Shornecliffe	£74.86
Total	£3,891.44
Hedgehogs?	£125

Susan Claris, Chair of Environment Committee