

Councillor Report for Hersden Parish Council (14/07/2026)

Councillors Harry McKenzie and Keji Moses

Park and Ride Performance

Data from a Scrutiny Committee meeting at the beginning of June showed that total usage across all three park and ride sites has gone up by 12% in the last 12 months, and Sturry Road has outpaced the total with an increase of 18%. At the same time, parking acts in Canterbury are down by 3.7% but footfall is up by 1.2%. This indicates that our bus-first transport strategy is working.

Buses for Broad Oak

At the last Joint Transportation Board meeting, Stagecoach finally confirmed that a bus service will be restored through Broad Oak in September. It is unlikely to be the original number 7 route as Stagecoach intend to use their existing network; it is likely to be a reroute of the 602. However, this is still very positive news and a huge thank you goes to everyone involved. We did our bit to make this happen by running a petition, survey and holding a meeting with the commercial director of Stagecoach.

Renewed Planning Enforcement Policy

Cabinet voted to adopt the renewed Planning Enforcement Policy in June and we wrote to them to welcome the policy which is pretty straightforward but also ask questions about how appeals will be managed, where funding will come from, how it will be objectively decided whether to act and what the enforcement process could look like. We have been promised further guidance and training to be released for councillors and parish councils later this year addressing each of these points and more.

Consultations and Funding Opportunities

- The Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy is out for consultation – the consultation closes in September and we welcome your views.
- Biodiversity grants are open until 24th July. In the last round, Water Meadows Primary School got funding for biodiversity habitats in a forest-school area.

New Adopted Housing Strategy

Cabinet have now accepted a recommendation from the Overview Committee to adopt the new housing strategy. Harry voted in favour of this in that Overview Committee meeting. It is a realistic and grounded strategy that has ambition within what the council is able to deliver to meet specific housing needs. There are a lot of elements to this strategy – some key points include tougher action to bring long-term empty homes back into use, mechanisms in the Draft Local Plan to increase social housing and more.

Alongside our housing strategy, the government has also announced a social housing bill which will reform Right to Buy and make it easier to evict domestic abusers.

New Council Homes on East Street

11 new council homes are being built on East Street just off Sturry Road. This is a stone's throw away from this ward and residents here will be eligible to bid on these homes on Kent Home Choice. They will be chalet bungalows that will have disability adaptations and sustainable features such as solar panels. Harry voted for these new council homes on the Planning Committee last year and funding has been received from the Social and Affordable Homes Programme run by Homes England.

Community Safety Partnership

In the last Scrutiny Committee meeting, Harry asked council and police officers about what is being done to tackle illegal parking across the ward, when we can expect a new youth hub in Canterbury to be delivered after it was approved over 2 years ago and what is being done about dirt bikes vandalising football fields, as seen in Sturry recently. We are following up on each of these points as officers did not have information to hand.

Bin Collection Changes

Due to exceptionally hot weather, bin collections have been made earlier so they start from 6am to protect workers from the heat and help them to do their jobs safely.

World Cup Campaign

Many of us are enjoying the world cup, however, it is important to recognise that it is not fun for everyone as data shows that domestic abuse increases by 38% when England lose and 26% when they win. The council has launched an information campaign to raise awareness of this and tackle domestic abuse, not just now but always.

As for the world cup, officers are identifying council-owned venues across the district that would be suitable to open up for public viewings of remaining England matches.