

**MINUTES OF THE CHIDDINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
MONDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2026 AT 7.30PM IN CHIDDINGSTONE VILLAGE HALL**

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**Present:** Cllr S. Andrews, Cllr I. Henderson, Cllr P. Myers, Cllr K. Outlaw, Cllr T. Nunn,  
Cllr C. Shamwana and Cllr H. Williams  
**Apologies:** Cllr J. Roper (Chairman), Cllr P. Vicary, County Cllr R. Mayall and District Cllr M. Silander  
**In attendance:** Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). District Cllr R. Streatfeild attended part of the meeting

In the absence of Cllr Roper, members agreed that Cllr Outlaw would chair the meeting.

**Closed Session**

- 139. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Roper and Cllr Vicary and members accepted their reasons for absence. Apologies for absence were also received from County Cllr Mayall and District Cllr Silander.
- 140. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**  
Cllr Outlaw declared an DPI in item 147(iii) as she is the representative of Kent ACRE who is asking Town and Parish Councils to pledge funds.  
Cllr Shamwana declared an NPI in item 149(iii) as a relative may carry out this service for the Parish Council.
- 141. The minutes of the Chiddingstone Parish Council Meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Nunn, seconded by Cllr Myers, and all were in favour.
- 142. To hear report of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026**  
The Clerk reported that the chair and secretary of the Sevenoaks Branch of CPRE attended to give a talk on their work and threats to the Green Belt and National Landscape from development in the district. Cllr Roper gave a Chair's report of activities and Cllr Nunn reported on the Neighbourhood Plan. The 2026 Community Award was presented posthumously to Mitzi Quirk, and her son collected the award.
- 143. To review and update Standing Orders**  
Members reviewed and approved the Standing Orders. No changes required.
- 144. To review and update Finance Regulations**  
Members reviewed the Finance Regulations, and the following changes were approved, proposed by Cllr Outlaw, seconded by Cllr Shamwana, and all were in favour. The changes are as recommended by the Internal Auditor in January 2026.
- 1.16. In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC). Changed to read:
  - 1.16. In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the **Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP)**, available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).
  - 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair or a cheque signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Finance Committee. Changed to read:
  - 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member shall verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Finance Committee.

#### 145. To review and update Health & Safety policy

Members reviewed and approved the Health & Safety Policy. No changes required.

#### 146. Planning:

##### i. To consider planning applications received

- i. SE/26/00515/LBCALT: Tudor Cottage, 6 The Village, Chiddingstone TN8 7AH - external structural remedial works including partial dismantling and rebuilding of a compromised retaining brick garden wall. Members fully supported the proposed structural remedial works to the historic garden wall. However, a more sympathetic alternative is preferred to the reinstatement of the existing 1.3m wooden privacy fencing, which is out of keeping with the Grade II listed building setting and the Chiddingstone Conservation Area. The Parish Council would like to see secured by condition a more historically sympathetic boundary treatment, such as traditional woven willow/hazel hurdles, close-spaced cleft chestnut paling or the re-planting of a native hedge.
- ii. SE/26/00751/WTPO: Chiddingstone Castle, Hill Hoath Road, Chiddingstone TN8 7AD - large Willow tree. Fell to ground level because the willow has outgrown its location posing a risk to neighbouring property and utilities, leaving stump in situ. Members had no objection to this application.
- iii. SE/26/00603/MMA: Land North of Highway Depot, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway TN11 8JL – Minor Material Amendment to 24/01501/FUL with following on site investigations in coordination with utility company Southern Water it has been established that a distance of 4m from the roadside boundary is required. This distance is required to meet safety requirements, due to a nearby rising main running along the boundary of the site. Members had no comment to make on this application.

The Clerk reported that the Planning Committee considered the following applications since the last meeting:

- iv. SE/26/00665/PATCF: Land North West of Vexour Bridge, Hampkins Hill Road, Chiddingstone - Prior notification for a temporary campsite. This application is made under Class BC of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Members had no comment to make on this application.
  - v. SE/26/00434/FUL and SE/26/00435/LBCALT: The Wheatsheaf, Hever Road, Bough Beech TN8 7NU - demolition of existing storage buildings, alterations to existing canopy and erection of a proposed outbuilding with new path and retaining wall. Relocation of shed with new steps. Associated hard and soft landscaping. Members supported this application.
- ##### ii. To report SDC notifications of planning decisions
- SE/25/02901/FUL: Newtyehurst Farm, Cowden Pound Road to Truggers Lane, Markbeech - partial demolition of building to convert barn B into two pairs of semi-detached units with car parking. Alteration to fenestration. Juliet balcony. Replacement cladding to roof and walls. Associated landscaping. Application approved.
  - SE/25/03591/HOUSE: Keepers, Peshurst Road, Peshurst - proposed single storey rear and two storey side extensions, covered porch to front and side elevations, new rear central pitched roof, chimney rebuilt, new dormer windows and roof lights and associated landscape works. Application approved.
  - SE/25/02403/FUL: Brownings Farm, Hale Oak Road, Chiddingstone - erection of timber pole barn, relocation of fences and gate. Application approved.
- ##### iii. To hear update on potential breaches of planning policy
- The Clerk updated members regarding potential breaches of planning policy in the parish.

District Cllr Streatfeild joined the meeting at 7.40pm and Members agreed to suspend the Closed Session.

#### Open Session

##### Report by District Cllr R. Streatfeild

District Cllr Streatfeild reported that the Regulation 19 documents will be available to the public 7 days before the Development & Infrastructure Advisory Committee meeting and the consultation will open after the Cabinet meeting.

Dates to be advised. There has been a lot of discussion at SDC about asset transfers which will take place prior to local Government Reorganisation. He has a question lodged for the full SDC council meeting tomorrow, this is “What steps will SDC take to restore the astro turf at Edenbridge Leisure Centre?” as there has been no reinvestment at the leisure centre.

The Closed Session resumed at 7.50pm.

### **Closed Session**

iv. To hear update on the Chiddingstone Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Nunn reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee is meeting again this week and will start to review the draft policies that have been drawn up as a result of the initial survey. There are 17 draft policies and 12 community aspirations, such as a children’s play area and better community use of the reservoir. After the Steering Committee has finalised the draft policies, they will be considered by the Parish Council and, once approved, be subject to public consultation and then approval by SDC. It may be necessary to employ a professional to help with the final wording. The last stage is that the Neighbourhood Plan is subjected to a referendum, and will become a statutory planning document if 50% of those who respond to the referendum are in favour. It will then be reviewed every 5 years.

v. To hear update on the draft Housing Needs Survey

Cllr Nunn reported that there have been 97 responses to the Housing Needs Survey and there will be a final request in the May parish magazine for responses, particularly from those residents aged 75+ who so far have been unrepresented. Paper copies are available in the Castle Inn and the Wheatsheaf. Cllr Shamwana requested 10 copies for distribution to the Chiddingstone Sewing Club.

vi. To discuss the SDC Draft Local Plan

Cllr Nunn reported that the responses to the SDC Regulation 18 consultation can be found on SDC’s website and there were 114 responses to the three proposals in Chiddingstone Causeway. A meeting was held with the landowner, Cllr Roper, Cllr Nunn and the Clerk to discuss the initial results of the Housing Needs Survey.

The Clerk reported that, from 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026, any planning application for 150 residential units or more that SDC is minded to refuse, whether under delegated powers or at Development Management Committee, will need to be referred to the Secretary of State (SoS). SDC would still formulate the grounds of refusal, but is prohibited from issuing a decision to refuse planning permission. Within 21 days of the SoS being formally notified, the SoS will decide whether the application can be determined at local level or national level. If it is decided that the application can be determined at local level, then SDC can proceed to refuse planning permission. If the SoS decides that the application needs to be determined at the national level, then the SoS will call it in and it will then be subject to a Public Inquiry, run by a Planning Inspector, who would write a report to the SoS with their recommendation. In light of the Planning Inspector’s report, the SoS will then decide to either to grant or refuse planning permission. The SoS is not bound by the Planning Inspector’s report but needs sound planning grounds to deviate.

Cllr Streatfeild was invited to comment and he said that this will depend upon the priority that the site may have in the Local Plan process, whether it is in the 0-5yr bracket, the 5-10yr bracket or the 10-15yr bracket.

### **147. Finance**

i. To discuss renewing the 3 year long term agreement with Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd

The Clerk reported that the current 3 year long term agreement includes the 2025-26 year but from 2026-27 a new agreement is required. Members agreed to renew the 3 year agreement.

ii. To discuss the provision of a new planter in Chiddingstone Causeway

Members agreed to purchase the metal planter, details of which were provided previously by Cllr Williams, and the Finance Committee will approve the final purchase.

iii. To consider request to pledge a grant towards Kent ACRE’s work with village halls

Cllr Outlaw declared an DPI in this item and left the room whilst the matter was discussed. The Clerk read an email from Kent Action with Communities in Rural England: “Village halls sit at the heart of rural life.

“They are the places where people meet, stay warm, take part in activities, access support and feel part of a community. Yet many halls are under increasing pressure, run by volunteers, facing rising costs, trying to meet growing local need with limited resources and struggling to find new trustees. Kent ACRE [www.kentacre.org.uk](http://www.kentacre.org.uk) is the Kent member for Action with Communities in Rural England [www.acre.org.uk](http://www.acre.org.uk). Kent ACRE strives to strengthen rural areas of Kent and Medway by making critical resources accessible at the heart of the community, fostering support and inclusion for all. Over the past year, we have supported more than 100 halls across Kent and Medway to improve their governance, update their policies and procedures, and find funding to refurbish and improve their hall facilities. Four village halls, Cowden, Lamberhurst, Newington in Folkestone and Saltwood, were supported to win funding from DEFRA’s Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Fund enabling them to complete significant refurbishment projects including renewing roofs, installing energy efficient heating systems and refurbishing kitchens and toilets. However, we want to do more. Kent ACRE is now launching a crowdfunded programme spearheading the evolution of village halls into vibrant community hubs, ensuring essential services reach rural areas.

“Building on our existing expertise in governance, facilitation, community engagement and fundraising, we aim to transform these spaces into local support centres or community hubs. This will address crucial needs like mental health, domestic abuse support, employment and other vital services often unavailable outside urban centres. Partnering with NHS mental health services, the National Institute for Health and Care Research, other agencies and various charities, we will deliver tailored aid directly to communities. We will work closely with parish councils, community wardens, and local groups to identify and prioritise services, ensuring no one is left behind.

This programme will help village halls to:

- strengthen governance, safeguarding and volunteer confidence
- expand local activities, warm spaces and social groups
- host accessible health and wellbeing support, including mental health, domestic abuse and financial advice
- build a clearer understanding of local needs through a countywide survey
- ensure halls and parish councils can better engage and support their residents

We are writing to ask whether your council would be willing to support this work by:

- making a pledge to the crowdfunder and/or
- sharing the campaign with your residents, hall committees and local groups.

Even a modest contribution from parish and town councils sends a strong message of local commitment and helps unlock wider community support. Every pound raised goes directly into strengthening rural community infrastructure and improving access to services for the people who need them most. Until the full target of £71,771 has been reached, any donation will take the form of a pledge only. Spacehive will hold all donations in escrow until the campaign has ended, and return all commitments to each donor if the full target has not been reached. We would be very grateful if you could consider supporting the campaign and helping us spread the word. If you would like more information, a briefing for councillors, or materials to share locally, we would be happy to provide them.” Members agreed to pledge £300. Proposed by Cllr Nunn,, seconded by Cllr Shamwana, and all were in favour.

iv. To consider a grant towards the River Eden Catchment Water Quality Monitoring Scheme

The Clerk reported that she has been in contact with the person who is organising the scheme and he said “To get the testing underway we need to buy the sampling and testing equipment. The running costs are £70 per sampling site per year for chemical reagents etc. I would want to do probably 5 sites between Delaware and the confluence of Eden with the Medway to make it worthwhile getting the Team together and doing the extra analysis. So the cost will be about £350 per year.” The Clerk reported that she has been in touch with the Clerk for Hever and Penshurst Parish Councils, and will send a piece to the Chiddingstone parish magazine as volunteers are sought for testing. Members agreed to give a grant of £150. Proposed by Cllr Myers, seconded by Cllr Williams, and all were in favour.

v. To approve list of payments

Cllr Shamwana proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Nunn and all were in favour. Cllr Roper and Cllr Outlaw to authorise the payments online.

#### **148. Affordable Housing provision in the parish**

i. To hear update regarding the Chiddingstone Affordable Housing schemes

The Clerk reported that English Rural Housing Association has provided the following update:

i. Millbrook site in Bough Beech: “Our contractors, Arazu, have undertaken works to remediate the foul discharge from the Sewage Treatment Plant outfall serving Chequers Barn and Millbrook and we are awaiting the follow up test results to confirm that the outfall is satisfactory. The landowner of Chequers Barn has also undertaken the same. The work methodology was approved by the Environment Agency and we will forward the test results to them when received. We trust this will have alleviated the smells emanating from the Chequers / Millbrook outfall pipe at Mill Lane.”

ii. Bassetts site in Chiddingstone Causeway: “Firstly, thank you to both Jonathan and yourself for taking the time to represent the Parish Council at this year's meeting with the UCL/Bartlett School of Planning 1<sup>st</sup> year students to discuss the merit and challenges of affordable housing delivery. Your support is always valued and as you mentioned hopefully next year we will have a live scheme to show to the students. The Section 106 comments have now been received from KCC and SDC and the draft is with the landowner for comment. We have gone out to tender to five contractors with returns due 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026 and I am chasing the planning officer for the draft conditions as a matter of urgency, so that they can be shared with the tenderers for the scheme. This will give us a firmer footing to finalise the scheme viability.”

Cllr Streatfeild left the meeting at 8.32pm.

ii. To discuss measures to mitigate flooding in Redleaf Close

Cllr Outlaw reported that the two stage complaints process has been followed but on both occasions, WKHA has claimed that there is no case to answer and at the second stage that the residents are free to find alternative accommodation. Members were very disappointed by this response. The Clerk reported that a meeting is in the process of being arranged with Sarah Robson, SDC's Deputy Chief Executive & Corporate Director of Communities, Place and Economy, who has offered to act as a mediator between the Parish Council and WKHA. Members discussed what further steps could be taken if a satisfactory conclusion is not agreed, this would include escalating the matter to the Housing Ombudsman.

#### **149. Highways and Rights of Way**

i. To hear update regarding applications for speed reduction measures in Bough Beech and on Camp Hill  
None.

ii. To hear update on Chiddingstone SpeedWatch

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting, 4 sessions were undertaken, and the Speedwatch police officer attended in Chiddingstone Causeway with his speed gun on one occasion.

iii. To consider using the services of a local person to clean roadside signs

Cllr Shamwana declared an NPI in this item. The Clerk reported that a local person is setting up his own business to clean road signs. The cost will depend upon the size of the sign. Members agreed to discuss this further with the resident and the Finance Committee to agree cost.

iv. KCC Highways: Temporary Road Closures

- Camp Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway will be closed on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026 for up to 1 day. This is to enable carriageway patching to be carried out by Kent County Council.
- Winkhurst Green Road, Ide Hill will be closed between Scollops and Bore Place Road from 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2026 for up to 1 day. This is to enable carriageway repairs to be carried out by Kent County Council.

#### **150. Closed Churchyard and Maintenance Areas**

i. To discuss quote for laying the hedge opposite Chiddingstone School

The Clerk reported that she has received the following quote from John Waller, Underwoodsman:

To lay, stake and bind hedge (approx 45m), in Chiddingstone graveyard, on boundary with road: £1,400.00  
To remove all trimmings or chip on site: £350.00. Total £1,750.00. Members approved the quote and Clerk to request that the work takes place in October half term. Clerk to liaise with the school. Proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Myers and all were in favour.

ii. To discuss quote for additional works

The Clerk reported that Hever Landscapes has quoted as follows:

- i. To trim and wire back the yew trees on the entrance to the church: £325 + VAT.
- ii. To add a bracket to a broken arm of the wooden fingerpost at Whitepost Cottages, Chiddingstone Hoath: £65 + VAT.

Members approved both quotes. Proposed by Cllr Nunn, seconded by Cllr Outlaw, and all were in favour.

**151. To discuss correspondence received**

The Clerk reported that lists of correspondence received have been circulated and drew members' attention to the following:

- i. Item 2: SDC News Release: Council gears up for new weekly food waste collections. SDC will begin delivering food waste caddies to around 50,000 households from Monday 30 March 2026, ahead of the launch of its new weekly food waste collection service. From Monday 27 April 2026, most residents will be able to recycle their food waste at the kerbside every week, on the same day as their normal waste collections. Before the start of the new service, households will receive two food waste caddies - a small grey caddy for indoors and a larger black and orange caddy for outdoors. They will also receive a roll of caddy liners to get them started and a leaflet explaining how to use the service. The new service will help residents to reduce the amount of waste placed in their black sacks, benefiting the environment and saving taxpayers' money. Once collected, the food waste will be taken to an anaerobic digestion plant, where it will be turned into renewable energy and nutrient-rich fertiliser. Processing food waste separately will save Kent County Council over half a million pounds a year in waste disposal costs.

Cllr Irene Roy, the Council's Cabinet Member for Cleaner and Greener, says: "Food waste makes up around a third of household waste and is one of the heaviest things we throw away. When it ends up in black sacks, the weight pushes up disposal costs, and it is sent for incineration. Incineration destroys valuable nutrients, produces avoidable emissions, and offers poor value for taxpayers. By collecting food waste separately, it can be recycled instead, protecting the environment and saving over half a million pounds a year to help safeguard funding for local services."

Residents are asked to put their black and orange outdoor food caddy at the kerbside by 7am on their usual waste and recycling collection day from 27 April 2026. Caddies should not be put out before the service starts. For more information about food waste collections, visit [www.seveoaks.gov.uk/foodwaste](http://www.seveoaks.gov.uk/foodwaste).

- ii. Item 4: GACC Newsletter: "**Judicial review update:** We had hoped that the decision on the four-day judicial review hearing in the High Court would be handed down before Easter. However we have received advice from the Judge's Clerk that an update will be issued after the court's Easter break (14<sup>th</sup> April). Whilst disappointing in some respects the delay does indicate how complex this case is. The Department of Transport has submitted corrections to some of their climate assessments and this will have no doubt caused a blip in the process. We've mentioned previously its important to recognise that if we win, we have to be ready for an appeal by the other side. And if we lose we ourselves will be looking at appealing. As you can imagine this is an expensive undertaking. We want to be ready whatever the outcome and so we continue our fundraising efforts. See fund raising details below.

**Route 4 – Northern Departure Route:** The ongoing consultation on Route 4 has sparked significant conversation across the region. For those of you not familiar, this consultation relates to proposed changes to the principal departure route to the north of Gatwick known as Route 4. The changes could have a substantial impact on both the environment and the quality of life for residents living near Gatwick. GACC strongly urges all of you to participate in the consultation process. The public meetings and webinars are now finished but there is a huge amount of information on the Route 4 consultation web site. The changes to these flight paths could see an increase in noise pollution for many communities, so your feedback is crucial in shaping the future of aviation routes around Gatwick. For more information on how to take part in the consultation, visit Route 4 Consultation Information website or contact us directly. You may also find your local council or residents' group is actively considering the options and can advise you.

**What's Happening at Gatwick ?:** At the beginning of March Gatwick Airport announced that their profits are down by 2.4% from 2024 and passenger numbers are also down (1.1% on 2024). Here is a firm indication that Gatwick's Big Enough.

“The decline was linked to an almost 2% drop in short-haul passengers. An analysis of 2025 traffic compared to 2019 (pre-covid and Gatwick's best ever year) shows an overall 8% drop in passenger numbers. The evidence shows that growth in short-haul traffic has stalled. Although Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) claims that long-haul traffic has risen by 3.3%, the current conflict in the Middle East will make that a short-lived gain. The short-haul holiday market is likely to see impacts as a result of increased fuel costs as well as passenger concern about flying east.

**Other News:** We are constantly engaged in the environmental world as reflected in activities here. Friends of the Earth have an active petition calling on the government to halt aviation expansion. Please support this important petition. Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) is a subject that frequently comes to our attention particularly as the aviation industry together with the fossil fuel industry keep trying to wriggle out of their responsibilities. There's been recent pressure on government to relax legislation on using crop based fuels in SAF. As always, we will continue to advocate for a sustainable future for the Gatwick area and beyond. From the Route 4 consultation to the ongoing uncertainty over expansion plans, GACC is committed to keeping you informed and ensuring that our voices are heard.”

**152. To hear report and discuss Parish Projects, including approval of costs:**

- i. Chiddingstone Carpark  
None.
- ii. Litter Pick, Bulk Refuse Freighter, Flytipping  
Members discussed flytipping at the Bough Beech Sailing Club entrance and at Lockskinners. It was agreed to hold a litter pick in May/June, date to be agreed.
- iii. Rural Swathe Cutting Contract  
The Clerk reported that the first cut 2026 will be April/May.
- iv. Summer Family Fun Play Event  
The Clerk reported that this will be on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August on the Chiddingstone Causeway Sports Field from 10.30am to 1.30pm.
- v. Play Area  
Cllr Nunn reported that this will be an aspiration of the Neighbourhood Plan.

**153. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda**

- i. Cllr Andrews reported that the Village Hall Management Committee has asked about the safety of the steps in the Community Garden. Clerk to add to the Chiddingstone Risk Assessment and the Clerk to purchase an appropriate sign.
- ii. Cllr Andrews reported that car parking in Chiddingstone village continues to be a problem and asked if the Chiddingstone Castle Trustees could consider installing some signs directing people to their carpark.
- iii. Cllr Henderson reported that the sewage drains have been repaired by Southern Water on the green in Chiddingstone Hoath and the hole filled in, and area seeded.

The Annual Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7.30pm in Chiddingstone Village Hall. The meeting closed at 9.22pm.

**Chiddingstone Parish Council – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

List of Payments since last meeting (figures inclusive of VAT)

Payment Number	Date	Payee	Amount inc. VAT	VAT
832	20.04.26	Clerk – salary	£1,548.21	
833	20.04.26	HMRC – PAYE	£409.15	
834 SO	20.04.26	Kent County Council – pension contribution	£567.43	
835	20.04.26	Clerk – mileage and petty cash	£243.29	
836	20.04.26	SDC – dog bin emptying Jan-Mar26	£124.80	£20.80
837	20.04.26	Spacehive – pledge towards Kent ACRE	£300.00	
838	20.04.26	NEDRA – grant towards River Eden water monitoring	£150.00	
			<b>£3,342.88</b>	<b>£20.80</b>

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