

PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 21st June 2021, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion

The KALC Community Awards for 2020 and 2021 were presented to Tracy Claridge, and to Ruth Clark and Guy Hagan on behalf of Benenden Action Team.

Present	Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Grant, Lewis, Skeet and Thomas	
In Attendance	C Levett, Clerk	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Cllrs Cruse, Driver and Warne.	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	No declarations of interest.	
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The Parish Council minutes from the meeting held on 17th May 2021 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
4. MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ITEMS	<p>a. <u>Working Groups Terms Of Reference</u> : The Working Groups Terms of Reference were unanimously approved and adopted.</p> <p>b. <u>Parish Councillor Vacancy/Co-Option</u> : It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Councillor vacancy outstanding from last year, because of the pandemic, should be filled. The Clerk to start the co-option process.</p> <p>c. <u>Face to Face Meetings</u> It was noted that both the Parish Council and the Iden Green Pavilion Trustees carried out risk assessments prior to meeting and the opening of the venue, and that meetings take place in a Covid-complaint environment.</p>	CL
5. REPORTS BY COUNTY/ BOROUGH COUNCILLORS	Cllr Dawlings has been elected the Leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.	
6. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	A Parish Chairmen's Group meeting takes place on 22 nd June to meet the new Leader of the Council.	
7. PLANNING	<p>a. <u>Neighbourhood Development Plan</u></p> <p>The independent examiner is holding a public hearing on Friday 25th June starting at 9.30am to explore a limited number of matters focussed on the two allocation sites at East End. The examiner has put forward 6 questions, which will be in the public domain before the hearing, along with the responses.</p> <p>Those invited to take part in the hearing are: Paul Tolhurst (as representative of the NDP/Parish Council); Steve Baughen (representing TWBC); Charles Merritt (representing Friends of East End); a representative from Biddenden Parish Council; KCC Highways; Savills (representing Benenden Healthcare Society) and the High Weald AONB unit.</p> <p>Only those invited will be able to participate, however a live stream will be publicly available at the time via the TWBC webcast site, https://tunbridgewells.public-i.tv/core/portal/home. Additionally, a recording will be available within 20 minutes of the end of the live webcast on the website.</p> <p>b. <u>Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/01205/FULL Waterden, Goddards Green Road. Resubmission and variation of the approved scheme 19/03030/FULL including different roof-light arrangement, roof finish, roofline of link, larger covered terrace to rear, fixed door rather than opening to rear of link (Part Retrospective). <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.</p>	

Chairman..... Date.....

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These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, but a summary of discussion and decisions taken at the meeting.

- **21/01911/FULL and 21/01912/LBC Cattsford, Dingledden.** Upgrade thermal performance of existing dwelling and internal alterations
 - Listed Building Grade II.
 - Pre-app advice sought.
 - Total volume of building 542 cubic metres — volume to be demolished 2.40 cubic metres. Part of the 'shed' extension to the cat slide roof on the NE elevation, built at a later date than the remainder of the building and is in poor condition and not a significant part of the dwelling.
 - Property is generally in a poor state of repair. Much of the exposed timber components have rotted away.
 - Conservation Officer not yet commented.
 - Heritage and Design Statement contains much information and photos.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support these applications subject to the proposals being satisfactory to the Conservation Officer.

- **21/01503/FULL The Parsonage , Cranbrook Road.** Erection of single storey side extension; internal alterations to layout and fenestration; proposed replacement garage and extension of existing driveway
 - Property located next to the Grade II Listed 1-4 Corner Cottages, but separated from no. 4 by large garden of The Parsonage.
 - The house is set back from the road and orientated sideways to the road.
 - Proposal is to remove existing garage to rear of property and erect a new 2 bay car port with closed store of timber construction, typical in the trend of car barns, with an external staircase to the 'store' in the roof.
 - Single storey but with the height of the roof accommodating storage, it will be quite high and next to the road frontage. There is mature tree and hedge screening fronting the area, but with the height it will be visible.
 - Garage next door is barely visible because of mature hedge and low form of garage. A comparison of the Existing and Proposed Block Plans indicates that the tree to the eastern frontage in the existing block plan is no longer present in the proposed block plan. But its removal is not mentioned. The garage is positioned squarely in the middle of the frontage to allow for parking to the front of it, hence the tree removal, although the application form states though that no hedges or trees will be removed or pruned to carry out the proposal.
 - The 'side extension' (southern end of the building) is to accommodate a new modern single storey kitchen/dining (as is the trend), with the interior of the former kitchen remodelled to form a 'breakfast kitchen' and the utility room will become a shower room, a currently outside store will be bricked in to form a utility room, and other alterations.
 - No Design and Access Statement.

Whilst there is no issue with the extension, remodelling and location of the new garage, **the Parish Council unanimously agreed to object to this application** on the grounds of the height, mass and scale of the garage. The Parish Council comments that the application lacks detail because of the omission of a Design and Access statement and queries the statement that no hedges or trees will be removed or pruned as it would appear that a substantial copper beech tree will need to be removed and a hedge broken through.

- **21/01690/LBC 1 Corner Cottages, Cranbrook Road.** Listed Building Consent: Amendments to approval under application reference 21/00203/LBC. Alterations to approved windows

The Conservation Officer has commented and supports the proposal as the location of the upper floor window is in a relatively discreet location. No conditions are required.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- **21/01392/FULL Land Adjacent To 2 Hague Cottages, Coldharbour Road.** Change of use of agricultural land to residential. Construction of two semi detached house, garages and new vehicular access. Redesign of the application approved under application number 20/02165/FULL.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application but requests the following conditions :

1. That the removal of hedgerow to obtain access from Coldharbour Road is limited to the width required for access and is carried out with care to avoid damage to adjacent trees and hedges.
2. Boundary fencing must be installed along the rear boundary to permanently separate the build from the applicants' agricultural land and operations prior to the commencement of any works. Hedgerow to be planted along the fencing upon completion of the development.

- **20/03727/FULL and 20/03728/LBC Mill Street House, Mill Street.** Timber orangery.

This is a redesign of a previous application and is now supported by the Conservation Officer.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- **21/01035/FULL Walkhurst Farmhouse, New Pond Road.** Proposed two storey extension; Erection of a detached car port.

Benenden Parish Council objects to this application due to the positioning of the car barn with the removal of part of a mature hedge to create a new access. The car barn is a large structure at 5 bays and would be overbearing in its proposed position with an awkward turn into the barn. Benenden Parish Council requests the repositioning of the car barn to the right of the existing driveway; this avoids the removal of part of the hedge and the creation of a new access. In this position it would be less intrusive in the landscape and not visible from the wider views across the area from Walkhurst Road.

This application has subsequently been refused by TWBC.

- **21/01369/FULL Oakdale, The Green.** Erection of a tractor barn and store together with the construction of an access track.

Benenden Parish Council unanimously objects to this application because of the impact that the new barn would have on the Conservation Area, The Grange Historic Park and Garden, and the AONB landscape. There is not sufficient justification for the size of the barn proposed, and if the intention is to provide management of this relatively small field, then this could be undertaken by erecting a building closer to the house, Oakdale, rather than a standalone building in the field.

The Parish Council also requires clarification of the paragraph in the supporting Planning Statement stating that the applicant 'wishes to at least establish the principle of being able to accommodate emergency and domestic supply services up to his residential boundary' – this proposal is not included as part of this application. The current access to Oakdale is via a right of way through the adjacent property at Ash Lawn from The Green; the Parish Council would expect any proposal to provide vehicular access from Iden Green Road through the field to Oakdale to be the subject of a separate application.

The applicant has contacted the Parish Council regarding its objections, and representatives of the Parish Council will meet with the applicant on site.

	<p>c. <u>Other Planning Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20/02226/FULL Land Adjacent To St Annes Standen Street A mobile home has been installed in front of the barn. TWBC Planning Enforcement Team is aware of this planning breach and Enforcement Action is being taken. • Hawkhurst Golf Club Appeal APP/M2270/W/21/3273022 <p>Hawkhurst Parish Council asked neighbouring parishes to consider submitting an objection to the appeal. Benenden Parish Council agreed to support Hawkhurst PC and submitted the following:</p> <p>19/02025/HYBRID Hawkhurst Golf Club, High Street, Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Kent — Hybrid Application: Demolition of existing clubhouse, squash courts and ancillary structures, and redevelopment of existing golf course. Full planning permission sought for new relief road and associated earthworks and junctions with A268 and A229. Outline planning permission (all matters reserved for future determination) sought for residential development, a C2/C3 care home, class D1 facilities such as a doctors' surgery and/or community hall, public car park, public park and associated parking, servicing, utilities, footpath and cycle links, formal and informal open space including woodland planting and recreation facilities, ground and infrastructure works.</p> <p>The Parish Council has requested that the appeal is dismissed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The parish of Benenden lies to the north-east of Hawkhurst parish and, like Hawkhurst, it is a rural area within the High Weald AONB. ➤ The impact of development on the golf course site will cause significant harm to the AONB, ancient woodland and wildlife habitat and will have dire consequences on the transport infrastructure of the surrounding rural parishes of Kent and East Sussex. ➤ Benenden Parish Council supports the objections made by Hawkhurst PC, Highways England, East Sussex CC and Rother DC regarding the serious consequences and impact on the highways network in the locality and in the wider area that will arise from a development of this size in this location. The congestion at Hawkhurst traffic lights is already a serious problem with drivers avoiding the crossroads and travelling down narrow rural country lanes in an attempt to reach their destination without sitting in a traffic jam. The consequences of development in Hawkhurst in recent years has added to this problem and through-traffic via Benenden has increased as a result. ➤ TWBC recently refused an application for 71 dwellings (20/02788/FULL) on Highgate Hill on the grounds of failure to conserve and enhance the landscape or scenic beauty of the AONB, etc., and that the resultant quantum of traffic would have a significant and adverse effect on capacity and congestion of the crossroads in Hawkhurst. ➤ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council states that it would have refused this application had it not been appealed. The Reg 19 Pre-submission Local Plan does not include the Golf Club as an allocated site, and this suggests that housing numbers will be absorbed elsewhere in the borough within the emerging Local Plan. Benenden Parish Council supports this underlying principle of not sacrificing designated areas simply to achieve housing targets; a major development of this kind should not be permitted in the AONB and it fails to comply with other rural policies. ➤ A large development in this location is contrary to the principles of the NPPF, particularly having regard to the protection of the designated AONB; the impact on the community of Hawkhurst and the impact on the transport infrastructure of the wider area. 	
8. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS & TRANSPORT	<p>a. <u>Footpath At Old Dairy Site</u> : Cllr Cruse had drafted a letter to the landowners regarding the missing public right of way requesting that they ask the Definitive Map Team to add the PROW to the definitive map. The Clerk to reword the letter as agreed by Parish Councillors.</p> <p>b. <u>KCC Highways Reporting</u> Cllr Lewis advised that she had reported a number of highways issues online via https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem and that these had been dealt with promptly.</p>	CL

9.
RESOURCING/
FINANCE

a. Monthly Finance

TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st May 2021

Brought forward 89870.44

Income

Payee	Reference	Amount
		0.00

TOTAL 0.00

Expenditure

	Supplier	Reference	Amount
8DD	John Lewis	Broadband	9.92
DD	CF Corporate Finance	Printer Lease	180.00
BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	909.18
BACS	Edf	Public Toilets	47.72
BACS	Zoom Video Communications	Remote Meetings	14.39
BACS	D Buckett	Audit	300.00
BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	258.00
BACS	BT	Office Telephone	127.30
BACS	TWBC	Rates - Public Toilets	52.32

TOTAL 1898.83

Reconciled with bank statement 047 31st May2021 **87971.61**

Approved Payments June 2021

DD	John Lewis	Broadband	9.92
DD	NEST	Pension	67.79
BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	909.18
BACS	Edf	Public Toilets	43.05
BACS	Castle Water	Public Toilets	106.76
BACS	Tenterden Twilight	Public Toilets	509.14
BACS	Edf	Defibrillator	1258.72
BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	408.00
BACS	C Levett	Postage	3.39
BACS	Iden Green Pavilion	Meeting Hire	14.00
BACS	Krystal Hosting Ltd	Parish Server	179.99
BACS	HMRC	Q1 Employer Contributions	157.59

TOTAL 3667.53

b. Public Toilet Cleaning Tenterden Twilight Commercial Cleaning, toilet cleaning contractors, has advised of a price increase this year and next year to bring Benenden into line with other contracts that they have. The new price for this year is £102.50 (+VAT) per week, attending and cleaning the toilets daily. Next year the price will increase to £123.00 (+VAT) per week. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to accept this increase.

10.
ENVIRONMENT &
MAINTENANCE

Cllr Lewis reported that the Group had held its first meeting.

a. Village Tidy 18 people volunteered to take part in the tidy which took place on 12th June. The road verges were cut the following week which revealed more litter.

b. Village Sign Cllr Beveridge has met with Fox Construction, who are keen to undertake the repair work to the village sign. They will be providing a quote to include a foundation and new oak post and to re-use the existing ironwork. Additional quotes will be sought if the quote is in excess of £500.

c. Public Toilets The Parish Council agreed that the public toilets should be fully re-opened. The Clerk to produce CCTV and patrol notices.

GB

CL

Chairman..... Date.....

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	<p>d. <u>Parish Wells</u> The Clerk had contacted an additional contractor, Cranbrook Roofing, and has chased for a response. Four contractors in total have been approached, with two responding, as previously reported. The Clerk to contact the two responders and discuss the specifications. Cllr Beveridge agreed to meet the contractors if appropriate.</p> <p>e. <u>Defibrillator</u> The Group is looking into the power supply, cost and tariffs of the defibrillator in the Iden Green telephone box. Cllr Lewis has contacted the Community Heartbeat Charity which advises that the costs are higher than they should be. Cllr Lewis also reported that a more modern defibrillator may be required. Cllr Lewis to pursue.</p> <p>f. <u>Dog Waste Bins</u> The Group proposes that a dog waste bin should be installed at Benenden and Iden Green Recreation Grounds and will obtain further information. This was supported by the Parish Council.</p> <p>g. <u>Occasional Maintenance Work</u> The Group suggested that it would be beneficial to have a person lined up to carry out maintenance work. This was supported by the Parish Council. The Clerk to draft an advert.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>JL EM GROUP</p> <p>CL</p>
11. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS/ COMMUNITY	<p>a. <u>Pre-School</u> : The Parish Council has been invited to a remote meeting on 28th June, with other village organisations, at which the Pre-School will share its ideas and information for its way forward. It is looking for new premises, either in an existing building or on land which can be purchased to build a new facility. Cllrs Cochrane and Thomas to attend.</p> <p>b. <u>Allotments Bequest</u> : A parishioner has again asked that the Parish Council intervenes to resolve the issue of the outstanding bequest, suggesting that the Parish Council obtains a court order if necessary. The Clerk has again written to the executors and asked that action be taken to resolve the matter, and clarify the nature of the advice which the executors are seeking and to establish what the delay is. The Parish Council agreed that no further action would be taken at the moment.</p> <p>c. <u>Platinum Jubilee</u> : Peter Ellis has contacted the Church, the Players, the Magazine and the Parish Council regarding the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations next year. He would like to co-ordinate events, including the lighting of the beacon, and would like to work with a Parish Council representative. Cllr Thomas agreed to be the representative. Cllr Thomas also proposed to progress the wildflower meadow with KCC. The Parish Council agreed. Cllr Thomas to speak to Cllr Holden.</p>	<p>SC/NT</p> <p>NT</p>
12. COMMUNICATIONS	Nothing to report.	
13. CORRESPONDENCE/ PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS	No other correspondence or questions.	
14. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION	Items to be followed up by the working groups.	
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Parish Council Meeting Monday 19 th July 2021 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion.	
	The meeting closed at 9.15 pm	

Clerk to the Parish Council, 21st June 2021