

PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 15th July, 7pm, Memorial Hall

Present	Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Driver, Grant, Hagan, and Lewis; Cllrs Dawlings and Holden; C Levett, Clerk.	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Cllrs Cruse, Presgrave and Thomas; Cllrs Neville and Palmer.	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	No declarations of interest.	
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 17th June were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
4. REPORTS BY COUNTY/ BOROUGH COUNCILLORS	<p>Cllr Holden reported :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC will contact the newly elected Government and have written to the new Home Secretary regarding arrangements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the hope of better support and dispersal measures. • Testing of the new entry and exit system for Europe have not gone well. If a third Thames crossing is approved this will hopefully ease traffic away on local roads. • New planning proposals are expected from the Government. This will also impact on infrastructure. • KCC owns 8 historic windmills including Union Mill in Cranbrook. KCC, looking to find £83m in savings, has looked at all discretionary spending. Disposal of the windmills would save around £140,000 a year. A public consultation was held which was completed by more than 2,300 people, with 87% saying they disagreed with the proposal to offload the buildings. However, the Environment and Transport Committee voted to hand them over to special interest groups to run and maintain. Cllr Holden did not support this decision. <p>Cllr Dawlings :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbours of Apple Pie Farm continue to be concerned about the development of the plots and remain vigilant. <p>Full report from Cllr Neville circulated, including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beacon Farm Packhouse : Site has been subject of planning enforcement investigation following complaints about a potential breach of a condition relating to the use of the site. • Cabinet update : High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 was approved; noted service improvement in TWBC Call Centre. • West Kent Rural Grants : Application period extended as there is still over £200K available. • Local Plan : Stage 3 examination hearing sessions taking place throughout July. Adoption date should be at the end of 2024. • Highways Improvement Plans : Cllr Neville has asked how successful has Benenden been in securing funds from KCC for the implementation of any measures. The Clerk to respond that BPC has not found it particularly effective, although correct reporting of Highways issues works well. 	CL
5. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	No reports.	
6. PLANNING	<p>a. <u>Planning applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/01581/FULL 7 Vere Meadows. Single storey rear extension and installation of bi-fold doors ❖ Single storey rear extension to create a study accessed via family room. Walls to be timber clad, roof of corrugated steel or similar, windows of aluminium grey. ❖ Bi-fold doors to be installed in the west elevation from the dining/family room to the patio. <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/01409/FULL Roman Way, Cranbrook Road. Addition of 2 dormers to NE elevation, 1 dormer and balcony to SW elevation, alterations to NW & NE ground floor fenestration ❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: Parish Wide BNDP Policies; AONB/HWNL; Outside LBD1; 10 constraints in total. ❖ SITE HISTORY: 79/01172/REM Reserved Matters - Dwelling; 99/01766/FULL Bedroom and bathroom extension; 15/505247/FULL Proposed single storey side and rear extension; 16/500957/FULL Proposed single storey side & rear extension. All approved. ❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: South Lodge, Benenden School Grade II Listed opposite; Corner Cottages Grade II Listed to the west; Proposal does not affect the Listed Buildings. 	

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

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

	<p>PROPOSAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Add two dormer windows on NE elevation and one dormer with balcony on SW elevation of a roof for better use of internal attic space. Dormer windows - wood and glass, fully insulated, matching clay tile roof and brick cladding in same style as main property external walls. Dormer balcony - wood and glass, fully insulated with matching clay tiles and brick cladding as above. ❖ Replacement and improvement of existing front door porch on NW elevation to provide increased rain/elements protection. Constructed of oak with partial brick wall and clay tile roof. ❖ Addition of enclosed porch on N side of property entryway to protect from elements and create additional barrier/insulation. Constructed of semi brick wall, glass and wood windows/door and flat roof. Given its northerly position, the inclusion of windows (rather than leaving it open sided) will allow light through whilst also ensuring maximum protection at this cold and damp spot. ❖ GENERAL COMMENTS: PRoW WC312A to west of property unaffected; No trees affected. <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/01590/FULL Beacon Oaks Cottage, Rolvenden Road. Variation of Condition 2 of 22/01269/FULL - Amendments to layout to include side extension to north elevation, extension of living/dining area, changes to fenestration, and removal of carport. Outbuilding and replacement extension to be joined under one gable ended roof, with dropped eaves to one side ❖ Amendment of layout of previously approved scheme under 22/01269/FULL. ❖ Proposed changes : Relocation of entrance door from east to north elevation; Side extension on north elevation to make space for utility/boot room with window and wc with obscured window; Extension to living/dining area to allow for relocation of kitchen; Proposed windows replace previous French doors on west elevation; Extended patio around side of house with access from proposed bi-fold doors; Replacement of bathroom beside previous bedroom 2 to office space with window; Proposed family bathroom between bedrooms 2&3; Ensuite for proposed Bedroom 2 with obscured window; Carport to be removed as not required. ❖ Comment: Proposal will square-off the building and the internal layout makes more sense for the living accommodation. <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/01647/FULL Townfield House, Cranbrook Road. Proposed single storey rear extension, entrance canopy, side porch, replacement doors and windows, part timber cladding to facade, associated landscaping works. ❖ SITE HISTORY: 76/00900 Change of use of garden shed to office for a temporary period – refused. 78/01269 Agricultural access; 78/00931 Extension and double garage; 89/00632/FULL Two storey side extension; 91/01122/FULL Stables with adjoining tack room; 97/01004/FULL Two storey extension and alterations – all approved. ❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: None affected by proposal. Nearest is School Farm Grade II. ❖ APPLICATION FORM INFO: Proposed works include : single storey rear extension, entrance canopy, side porch, replacement bay window, replacement doors and windows, part timber cladding to facade, associated landscaping works to driveway and patio areas. All external materials to match but doors and windows will be of timber rather than uPVC. No trees affected. Access not affected. Parking not affected. Pre-app advice not sought. ❖ GENERAL COMMENTS: Single storey rear extension will square off rear and side of building to facilitate internal modifications to layout on ground floor to provide open plan kitchen, dining, playroom/homework area. Not specifically mentioned in the proposal is the ground floor accommodation on the opposite side of the building which, in the existing floor plan is shown as a single space and marked ‘Annex’ and proposed floor plan shows modifications to create Annex/Holiday Let with kitchenette, bedroom with ensuite, and a snug. <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application but seeks the relevant conditions applicable to holiday lets if granted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/01146/FULL Land At Reed Wood Farm, Mill Street. ❖ SITE HISTORY: 21/00967/FULL Part of Reed Wood, Mill Street - Retention of a forestry building, retention of mobile welfare unit in situ, retention of lean-to and proposed works to repair and maintain existing access track (Part Retrospective). ❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: BNDP Parish Wide Policies; Outside LBD1; HWNL; Ancient Woodland +30M Buffer Area; PRoW; 1-9 New Dwellings or equivalent, or Major Apps & Res Matters - 3 consult KCC on Planning Apps; Agricultural Land Classification Grade 3; Applications or Equivalent Only (including Reserved Matters) 2 Consult KCC on Major Planning; Potential Archaeological Importance - Various Sites 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ BACKGROUND 21/00967/FULL : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BPC : Neither supported nor objected, comment - supportive of rural industries, and if consent granted, certain conditions requested, such as exterior lighting, welfare unit to only be used for forestry operations and not for residential purposes, access to the PRoW must not be hindered. ○ TWBC REFUSED on the grounds : loss and deterioration of an area of designated Ancient Woodland; wholly exceptional reasons not provided; insufficient information about impact of on existing trees, priority habitats, protected species and biodiversity; fails to comply with many Local Plan policies; no assessment of net gain for biodiversity; unsustainably located; appears to include elements of commercial woodyard operation, harmful to HWNL. ○ APPEAL DISMISSED Numerous reasons mainly surrounding loss of mature woodland in creating barn and harm to HWNL; no felling licence in place and even though there is now a felling licence it does not cover area felled to accommodate barn, therefore it does not indicate that this area could have been removed, more suitable location would have been on the site of the derelict buildings to the NE of the appeal site which would not have entailed the significant loss of woodland. Unjustified harm has been caused to the woodland and the development does not conserve and enhance the HWNL. No concerns were raised by TWBC in relation to the access track, but it remains that the development as a whole is unacceptable. ❖ COMMENT: The mobile home on site at the time of the original application burnt down and was removed from site. Pole barn was left in situ. This application is for existing barn to remain with an 'office' formed within the structure below roof eaves height. Many issues, not least is the harm already done within the woodland and to the wider impact on the HWNL and biodiversity harm. Applicant does now have a felling licence and there is a Woodland Management Plan. Applicant states that the barn will only be used for the purpose of managing the woodland and will not be carrying out commercial woodyard operations. There are many woodlands in the parish larger than this where forestry operations are carried out under felling licences but without barns on site - the timber is simply extracted after coppicing. If this application is refused, TWBC will have to enforce the removal of the barn. The damage is already done. <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to object to this proposal and supports the original refusal by TWBC and the dismissal of the appeal by the Planning Inspector in January 2024.</p> <p><u>b. Other Planning Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/01210/AGRIC Hill Top Farm Hinksden Road. Prior Notification of agricultural development - Erection of agricultural barn. It was noted that despite BPC's objection and concerns this application has been approved by TWBC. • 23/03274/FULL Benenden Hospital ❖ Cllrs Beveridge and Thomas attended TW Planning Committee on 19th June and the committee voted to defer the application, mainly due to the shortfall in contributions brought about by the viability assessment. ❖ The application will be considered again on 24th July. ❖ The Principal Planning Officer advised that a meeting has taken place with Esquire, TWBC and KCC, and hopefully KCC have understood the clawback clause, the viability issues, and importantly that affordable housing is very important for the Borough and for Benenden, and that providing 30% AH is a material consideration for Committee Members. ❖ Esquire has worked hard to try to fill in the gap in contributions, with a revised offer of £565,000 (increased from the former one-off contribution of £300,000) which equates to £6,975.31 per dwelling. All achievable with the trigger payments deferred until later in the build process to enable cash flow, peak debt, and interest to be managed more effectively throughout the construction programme by the applicant. ❖ The Principal Planning Officer asked that BPC provides some comments following the deferral of the application, and before the next TW planning committee meeting on 24th July. BPC agreed its comments and these were submitted to TWBC. ❖ The Principal Planning Officer has also suggested that the Examiners Report for the BNDP be added as an Appendix to her Committee Report along with the June Committee Report. ❖ Cllr Dawlings will register to speak. Borough Councillors are concerned about the lack of public transport, but this is lacking generally in Benenden and is not considered an issue. Sustainability issues were dealt with at the examination stage of BNDP. Viability is a separate issue to sustainability. From the Parish Council point of view the most important aspects are affordable housing and the quality of the development, and do not want to see these 	
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	<p>compromised. The site is brownfield and outside of the AONB and if this application is not approved it may result in a more unsuitable development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan : Pre-Submission Consultation (Regulation 14) taking place between 25th June to 20th August. • Coldharbour Road Verge <p>The Clerk had reported the issues as agreed and TWBC Planning Enforcement responded :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Whilst no consent for the works had been applied for, TW would have likely granted. ❖ TW would remind the owners of their obligation to apply for approval, but the land is not registered. ❖ TW consider there is no permanent impact on the character of the conservation area and no detrimental impact on the biodiversity and natural habitats and will not pursue action. ❖ Any future works should be reported immediately, taking note of workers on site. ❖ BPC, concerned about the conservation area, IG Well, the way sign and the grass island, agreed to take action to restore the verge and uplift the area around the crossroads and would try to engage with the landowner. 																																																
7. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS & TRANSPORT	<p><u>a. Highways Report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Driver chased the request made for white lines at the junction of Hinxden Road and Coldharbour Road. Cllr Hagan has confirmed that this has been completed. • The Clerk had contacted KHS regarding the way signs at Iden Green crossroads and at Babbs Lane to advise that TWBC had suggested that these do not accurately reflect the traditional agreed design. KHS has advised that the rural lanes practice note referred to by TWBC is a TWBC document from 2004 and has long been superseded and KHS works to the current Kent Traffic Signs Manual. • The yellow flashing lights on the sign near the Primary School entrance have flashing continually for several weeks. This has been reported to KCC and work scheduled to rectify. <p><u>b. Flyposting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Driver removed various and numerous notices/signs posted around the village. • Guidance regarding flyposting, and community and charity advertising was considered and the clerk contacted the owners of the signs. • Some responses were received, and some collected. Some had contacted KCC and TWBC for advice regarding temporary event notices. • The Clerk has suggested to event organisers that, where appropriate, the Village Magazine can be used to advertise events and the Primary School newsletter, and that requests can be made to BPC for posters to be put on the noticeboards and PC website and facebook page. • BPC to produce a policy setting out what is acceptable. 	CL																																															
8. RESOURCING/ FINANCE	<p><u>a. Monthly Finance</u></p> <p>TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st June 2024</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Brought Forward Current Account</td> <td style="text-align: right;">39277.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brought Forward Savings Account</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brought forward</td> <td style="text-align: right;">89277.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Income</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Payee</td> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Reference</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Amount</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 40px;">Unity Trust Bank</td> <td style="padding-left: 40px;">Interest</td> <td style="text-align: right;">203.42</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 40px;">R Murphy</td> <td style="padding-left: 40px;">Telephone Kiosk Donation</td> <td style="text-align: right;">200.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 40px;">B&IG WI</td> <td style="padding-left: 40px;">Copying</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">405.22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Supplier</td> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Reference</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Amount</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD Nest</td> <td>Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">84.55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD Corporate Finance</td> <td>Printer Lease</td> <td style="text-align: right;">238.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FEE Unity Trust Bank</td> <td>Account Fee</td> <td style="text-align: right;">18.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS F&C Cleaning</td> <td>Public Toilet Cleaning</td> <td style="text-align: right;">690.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Tompsett Landscaping</td> <td>Grounds Maintenance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">565.20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Employee</td> <td>Staffing Costs</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1113.61</td> </tr> </table>	Brought Forward Current Account	39277.14	Brought Forward Savings Account	50000.00	Brought forward	89277.14	Income		Payee	Reference	Amount	Unity Trust Bank	Interest	203.42	R Murphy	Telephone Kiosk Donation	200.00	B&IG WI	Copying	1.80	TOTAL		405.22	Expenditure			Supplier	Reference	Amount	DD Nest	Pension	84.55	DD Corporate Finance	Printer Lease	238.80	FEE Unity Trust Bank	Account Fee	18.00	BACS F&C Cleaning	Public Toilet Cleaning	690.00	BACS Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	565.20	BACS Employee	Staffing Costs	1113.61	
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	BACS o2	Telephone	31.80	
	BACS Argos	Paper	5.00	
	BACS HMRC	Employer Contributions Q1	323.12	
	BACS Castle Water	Public Toilets	30.77	
	BACS Notice Board Company	Noticeboard	474.84	
	BACS Julie Lewis	Annual Assembly Expenses	61.56	
	BACS David Buckett	Internal Audit	375.20	
	BACS Iden Green Pavilion	Hall Hire	46.00	
	BACS Alex Durnell	War Memorial Garden	434.00	
	BACS Air Ambulance Charity	Donation	100.00	
	BACS Home-Start SW Kent	Donation	100.00	
	BACS Chris Heath	Bus Stop Repairs	232.00	
	BACS edf	Public Toilets	90.36	
	BACS Krystal Hosting	Server Annual Renewal	239.99	
	TOTAL		5254.80	
	Balance		84427.56	
	Current account bank statement 097 30th June 2024		34224.14	
	Savings account bank statement 002 30th June 2024		50203.42	
	Reconciled		84427.56	
	Approved July 2024 Payments :			
	DD Nest	Pension	84.55	
	BACS Wooden Flagpole Company	Flagpole	2950.00	
	BACS Anthony Hicks	IG Well	8481.30	
	BACS Employee	Staffing Costs	1113.81	
	BACS o2	Telephone	31.80	
	BACS Sainsbury's	Paper	5.00	
	BACS F&C Cleaning	Public Toilet Cleaning	708.00	
	BACS Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	402.00	
	BACS Iden Green Pavilion	Meeting Hire	16.00	
	BACS TP Jones	Payroll Q1	63.40	
	TOTAL		13855.86	
	All invoices listed have been examined, verified and certified by the Clerk			
	b. Resourcing Committee Meeting 8th July			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft minutes of the meeting held on 8th July were circulated. • Financial Regulations : These were considered at length by the Resourcing Committee and unanimously agreed to recommend the Financial Regulations to the Parish Council for approval. These were unanimously agreed by the Parish Council. • Insurance Renewal : The Resourcing Committee considered various aspects of insurance and BPC's Asset Register and unanimously agreed to accept the quote from Gallagher/Hiscox. The Clerk had enquired about a long-term agreement, and the broker had responded that the 5% discount traditionally offered to clients is no longer available. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to accept the quote. • Internal Audit 2023/24 : items from the report were noted by the Resourcing Committee. 			
9. ENVIRONMENT & MAINTENANCE	a. Beacon Field Wildflower Meadow			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft lease received from KCC and circulated. • The Clerk queried the sum payable to BPC, and KCC confirmed that this is an error on the draft lease and the sum payable to BPC at the commencement of the lease is £7,000. • The lease plan of the Field is also incorrect and the Clerk will advise KCC. • The lease will require certain insurances and liability, covered by the insurance policy. • The Risk Assessment procedure for the lighting of the Beacon will need to be updated. 			CL
				CL

	<p><u>b. Village Asset/Maintenance Report</u></p> <p>i. Parish Wells</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony Hicks completed the final snagging work and Cllr Beveridge signed off the project, and Anthony Hicks have been paid in full. • Deadwooding the oak tree and removal of the holly behind IG Well has taken place. • The neighbouring resident is happy to continue cutting the grass and will be asked to occasionally clear away any soil which has been disturbed from the bank. • Cllr Beveridge contacted TW Conservation Officer regarding permission to bollards to protect the Wells. TWBC has confirmed that BPC has permitted development rights for these types of operations, and therefore planning permission is not required, but the Conservation Officer has given informal support. BPC will need to contact KCC for permission to erect the bollards. The Clerk has contacted KHS to confirm the correct procedure for obtaining permission. • Lettering on the Wells was discussed. Cllr Beveridge has approached Anthony Hicks for advice. BPC agreed that if possible the lettering should be restored but is concerned about any degrading of the stone, which would be likely if work is carried out. BPC to consider if a plaque, dating the Wells, would be more suitable <p>ii. Flagpole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The order for the new flagpole was placed with The Wooden Flagpole Company. Removal of the old flagpole and installation of the new is scheduled for 24th July. Cllr Beveridge will oversee the installation. Water will be required on the day and Cllr Hagan will organise. • Cllr Holden supported a grant to the KCC Combined Members Fund for £1,500 and this has been approved. • Cllr Presgrave has asked that BPC's request for a donation of £500 from the PCC is included on the PCC's agenda for its meeting on 22nd July. <p>iii. Noticeboards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new noticeboard for Iden Green bus stop has been received and installed by Cllr Hagan. • There are 2 keys. One will be held in the Office and Cllr Lewis will hold the other. 	
10. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS/ COMMUNITY	<p><u>a. Allotments</u></p> <p>Report from Allotment Association :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank account balance of £2,342. • Installation of mains water to start in July. • Once water work is complete remaining funds will go towards fencing repairs. • Work on a specification for the parking area to obtain quotes and fundraise for. • 3 vacant plots. 1 potential new member, and a taker for some/all of one further plot. • First inspection of plots undertaken. Some plot-holders to be chased (numbering of plots). • Water harvesting in place. <p><u>b. Public Toilets</u></p> <p>London County Contracts has rectified issues previously highlighted and installed an extractor fan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cistern now also fills more and releases more water. • The sewer was also extremely backed up and had to be cleared out. The Clerk has raised this with the toilet cleaner. • The issue with the door not locking was because the exit button inside the toilet was not being fully depressed and perhaps some heavy handedness. 	
11. CORRESPONDENCE/ PARISHIONER QUESTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Woodcock Lane Ditch</u> <p>A parishioner raised concerns that it would appear that when UKPN laid new cable the existing ditch was filled in. The verge now gets very boggy and cars have become stuck. The Clerk to write to UKPN and ask that the ditch is reinstated, and before winter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Annual Jazz and Blues</u> <p>Cllr Beveridge advised that the event takes place at IG Pavilion on 7th September, and welcomed any assistance.</p>	CL
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Date of Next Meeting: Monday 16 th September 2024, 7pm	
	The meeting closed at 8.10pm.	

C Levett, Clerk to Benenden Parish Councillor, 15th July 2024