

PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 19th February 2024, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion

Present	Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Driver, Grant, Hagan, Lewis and Thomas.	
In Attendance	Cllrs Dawlings. C Levett, Clerk. Anthony Iren, Canham Homes.	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Cllrs Cruse, Presgrave and Warne. Cllr Grant chaired the meeting until Cllr Thomas arrived at 7.40pm.	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.	
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The Parish Council minutes from the meeting held on 15 th January were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
4. PLANNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almshouses Site, Walkhurst Road presentation by Anthony Iren, Canham Homes prior to submission of Reserved Matters application in relation to the Outline consent 19/00822/HYBRID dated 23 March 2021 for 13 market homes. 1 x 4/5 bed, 2 x 5 bed, 3 x 4 bed, 6 x 3 bed, 1 x 2 bed. <p>Anthony Iren explained that Canham Homes has been working with Benenden Almshouse Charity since the end of last year and discussing with the Planning Officer. The current planning permission expires March 2024 and they intend to submit the pre-commencement and reserved matters application within the next week. Canham Homes has worked locally on a development in Sissinghurst and has commenced work on a new development in Frittenden. The company directly employs some trades and delivery drivers.</p> <p>Anthony Iren responded to BPC questions and concerns :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Outline consent limits all dwellings to 2 storeys with a ridge height of no more than 10m. To be confirmed that this is proposed. ❖ Concerns regarding parking, tandem parking, garaging, car ports to be considered. Issues of parking in Walkhurst Road highlighted. ❖ Boundary treatments will be submitted. 1.8m close board fence between properties; post and rail around boundaries; front of properties landscaped as much as possible. ❖ Tree planting scheme is still being designed. Draft to be sent to BPC. ❖ Agreed to install bat boxes and swift bricks following request from BPC. ❖ Ecology works commence 4th March. ❖ No external lighting except PIR light above front doors and bollard lighting in the courtyard for almshouse residents. BPC requested that these are downlight PIR to limit light emission into Benenden dark skies. ❖ Chimneys will be fitted with a class 1 flue for wood burners should a resident wish to install. ❖ There will be air source heat pumps and no solar panels. ❖ Properties will be as energy efficient as possible with ratings of B or A. ❖ Mix of tile hanging, weatherboarding, slate. ❖ The elevation drawings are not representative of the proposed build and BPC requested revised elevation drawings showing the materials to be used on each elevation. It was agreed that these would be sent to BPC. ❖ Construction period – maximum 18 months and whole site build before occupation, with temporary access to the site. <p>Cllr Grant to draft feedback from BPC to Canham Homes.</p> <p><u>Planning applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/00228/FULL The Oast House, Great Nineveh, Nineveh Lane. Installation of 2no. rooflights on inward facing roof of roundels and installation of log burning stove with black painted flue between the two roundels ❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: Parish Wide BNDP Policies; High Weald National Landscape; Outside LBD. ❖ SITE HISTORY: Many applications back to 1995 with conversion of farm buildings to 3 private 	PG

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

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

- residential units with associated garages.
- ❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: Next door main house, Great Nineveh, Grade II Listed.
- ❖ D&A/PLANNING STATEMENT INFO: Two of first-floor bedrooms are located within roundels. Both have single high level rooflight to provide natural light but escape from these openings would be impossible because of size and height. Proposal to install escape rooflight in each bedroom to ensure escape is possible in event of fire. E1 escape model from The Rooflight Company - side hung and set down in roof structure, simple lines, black colour and central glazing bar. Log burner to be installed in ground floor roundel. Flue and rooflights will not be visible from Great Nineveh.
- ❖ GENERAL COMMENTS: Conservation Officer comments that proposal is acceptable - flue utilitarian and semi-industrial - appropriate.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- **23/03502/FULL The Forest, Nineveh Lane.** Installation of solar panels and wood burning stove to games room
- ❖ Open cart shed structure with games room, office, shower and wc on first floor approved under 22/03683/FULL. Construction commenced.
- ❖ Proposal to install solar panels on roof of games room with storage of batteries in new garage, plus small and efficient wood burning stove in games room.
- ❖ Solar panels on elevation facing away from listed building with stove flue - matt black to match finish of other windows and doors. No impact on Listed buildings of The Forest and The Barn.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- **24/00227/FULL Benenden C Of E Primary School, The Green.** Change of design from 2 proposed dormer windows to 2 conservation rooflights
- ❖ Application amends approved size of rooflights of 942W x 1498H under 23/03248/LBC (BPC supported) to 1000W x 1400H in northern elevation view towards Ash Lawn.
- ❖ Obscured glass.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

For information, large green box at front of building facing The Green is electric intake and meter box. Approved 23/00410/LBC. Conservation Officer raised no concerns. BPC raised question of whether box and vehicle charger could be positioned on southern elevation but planning agent advised that this position would make it inaccessible to the other property to read the meter.

- **24/00210/FULL Upper Frogs Hole, Frogs Hole Lane.** Alterations to fenestration, new door and porch canopy, Widen sunroom walls, New and re-stained/repainted cladding
- ❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: Parish Wide BNDP Policies; BNDP LE1 Views; Ancient Woodland +30m buffer area; Outside LBD; HW National Landscape.
- ❖ SITE HISTORY: Erection of 2no. Double garages and replacement dwelling applications approved.
- ❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: None
- ❖ D&A: Replacement dwelling built 2012 with 2 storey central element and two single-storey wings. Set in approx 3 acres of amenity garden. Minor changes proposed internally and externally to improve functionality and appearance. Internal changes and widening of sunroom. External proposals to re-stain 2 storey element from existing orange/ginger colour to black. Single storey wings constructed of 'hard and stark' brick to be clad with black timber boarding.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

Other Planning Matters

24/00374/TN0T56 Telephone Exchange, New Pond Road. Telecommunications Consultation: Installation of 20m monopole mast accommodating 6no. Antenna, ancillary radio equipment, 2no. 300mm dishes, 2no. Equipment cabinets & GPS module in fenced compound.

	<p>This application was received too late to be included on the agenda. BPC requested from TWBC an extension to date for comments due so that the application could be considered at BPC March meeting, but this was not forthcoming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: Parish Wide BNDP Policies; HW National Landscape; 11 in total. ❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: Numerous historic and Listed buildings plus adjoins the Benenden Conservation Area. ❖ PLANNING STATEMENT INFO: 20m high monopole mast with antenna and dishes. Para. 4.3 of planning statement refers to pre-app engagement with TWBC: on initial assessment planning officers felt unable to support due to “harm to both significance of Benenden Conservation Area and surrounding designated heritage assets, along with harm to setting of High Weald National Landscape”. The applicant is progressing the application “to give officers opportunity of a formal submission to consider balancing factors arising from social and economic benefits of improved mobile phone connectivity and national and local planning policy support for modern telecommunications infrastructure. ❖ GENERAL COMMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At 20m high, proposed monopole is equivalent in height to 4.5 double decker buses stacked upon each other/2.22 the height of an average telephone pole of 9m/height of church spire of St Georges Church. Telephone exchange building is 7m high. ○ Telephone exchange is just outside Benenden Conservation Area which contains numerous Listed and historic buildings. Sight line plans showing points at which mast would be visible within CA were requested, but have not been forthcoming. ○ Mast will be visible from within village and from all approaches to village. ○ The Parish is devoid of vertical elements of street furniture (other than telegraph poles) and only street lighting columns within parish are located at East End near Benenden Hospital (outside the HWNL). Introduction of 20m high mast will be visually intrusive and will not protect or enhance HWNL or the setting of this rural location. One of the aims of BNDP is to protect sensitive landscape of parish and this proposal does not comply with essence of BNDP. ○ ‘Discounted Sites Location Plan’ shows seven sites (including proposed site), all of which are located in most sensitive areas within Benenden. Site D7 at BVH was discounted because of “concerns about visual impacts of a 20m + mast within conservation area and views from the bowling club and local recreational spaces”. Telephone exchange is only just outside CA and mast will loom over village, houses, and be prominent in landscape on approaches, etc, making this site as sensitive as other sites. ○ Whilst BNDP does mention need for improved telecommunications many times, essence of the Plan should not be compromised to achieve such infrastructure. <p>Cllr Driver had received 3 emails in response to his magazine article about the mast application. 2 strongly opposed and 1 would welcome the improved infrastructure, but not in this location. A number of other parishioners had contacted BPC raising concerns.</p> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to object to the application.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas will make reference to the application in the Magazine, explaining the need for BPC to respond, and the Clerk will contact those had previously been in touch and advise of BPC response. Parishioners will be encouraged to respond to the consultation via TWBC Planning and the item will be discussed further at BPC March meeting if parishioners would like the opportunity to voice their objections or support.</p>	<p>NT CL</p>
<p>5. REPORTS BY COUNTY/BOROUGH COUNCILLORS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mast Application : as Borough Councillor, Cllr Dawlings will reiterate TWBC’s comments. • TWBC Budget : to be approved at the end of the month. 5% increase on KCC element of council tax; 3% increase on TWBC element; 6.5% increase on BPC element (Band D equivalent of increase of £3.19 for the year. TWBC includes funding for the Community Grant Scheme, which is available for people in need. • West Kent Rural Grants Scheme : available to community groups and small businesses for capital projects https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/business-portal/business-support-and-grants/west-kent-rural-grant-scheme 	

6. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	Nothing to report.																																																																																		
7. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS & TRANSPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cllr Driver met with Nigel Rowe, KHS Community Engagement Officer, on 26th January : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nigel Rowe to request traffic surveys on Cranbrook Road and Mill Street. BPC request to extend 30 mph limit on New Pond Road as far as entrance to The Grange unlikely to be supported by KCC Highways. ○ Requirement to refresh white lines at Benenden crossroads reported by Nigel Rowe and Peter Driver. ○ Updated Highways Improvement Plan has been submitted. This should be done annually. ○ White lines at Iden Green to be reported with request for refresh. 																																																																																		
8. RESOURCING/ FINANCE	<p>a. Monthly Finance</p> <p>TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st January 2024</p> <p>Brought forward 84059.77</p> <p>Income</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Payee</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Reference</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Parish Wells</td> <td>Fundraising</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B&IG WI</td> <td>Copying</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2.70</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">27.70</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Expenditure</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Supplier</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Reference</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>DD Nest</td> <td>Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">84.55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Employee</td> <td>Staffing Costs</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1096.82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS o2</td> <td>Telephone</td> <td style="text-align: right;">31.56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS MTC Taxis</td> <td>Transport</td> <td style="text-align: right;">35.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Defibrillator</td> <td>IG Congregational Church</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Edf</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">161.39</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS TP Jones</td> <td>Payroll Q3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">63.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Arnold Cole Trust</td> <td>Property Rental Income</td> <td style="text-align: right;">400.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS London County Contracts</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5932.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS London County Contracts</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5932.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13788.12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Reconciled with bank statement 090 31st January 2024 70299.35</p> <p>Approved Payments February 2024</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tbody> <tr> <td>DD Nest</td> <td>Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">84.55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Employee</td> <td>Staffing Costs</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1104.42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS o2</td> <td>Telephone</td> <td style="text-align: right;">31.56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Business Stream</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">22.34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Iden Green Pavilion</td> <td>Meeting hire</td> <td style="text-align: right;">16.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Microsoft 365</td> <td>Annual Renewal</td> <td style="text-align: right;">59.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Krystal Hosting</td> <td>Annual Domain Renewal</td> <td style="text-align: right;">14.39</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Viro Branding Ltd</td> <td>Public Toilet Signage</td> <td style="text-align: right;">33.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Webbs Ironmongery</td> <td>Public Toilet Keys</td> <td style="text-align: right;">21.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Amazon</td> <td>Public Toilet Bin</td> <td style="text-align: right;">31.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1419.74</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>b. Church Clock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PCC had advised that substantial repairs urgently needed, costing in region of £16,000, with 50% of costs to be met by BPC. ● BPC expressed concerns that there is still no formal agreement in place regarding contributions to the clock. Cllr Hagan to follow up on this. ● BPC expressed concerns that it was previously advised that a quote had been received for 	Payee	Reference	Amount	Parish Wells	Fundraising	25.00	B&IG WI	Copying	2.70	TOTAL		27.70	Supplier	Reference	Amount	DD Nest	Pension	84.55	BACS Employee	Staffing Costs	1096.82	BACS o2	Telephone	31.56	BACS MTC Taxis	Transport	35.40	BACS Defibrillator	IG Congregational Church	50.00	BACS Edf	Public Toilets	161.39	BACS TP Jones	Payroll Q3	63.40	BACS Arnold Cole Trust	Property Rental Income	400.00	BACS London County Contracts	Public Toilets	5932.50	BACS London County Contracts	Public Toilets	5932.50	TOTAL		13788.12	DD Nest	Pension	84.55	BACS Employee	Staffing Costs	1104.42	BACS o2	Telephone	31.56	BACS Business Stream	Public Toilets	22.34	BACS Iden Green Pavilion	Meeting hire	16.00	BACS Microsoft 365	Annual Renewal	59.99	BACS Krystal Hosting	Annual Domain Renewal	14.39	BACS Viro Branding Ltd	Public Toilet Signage	33.00	BACS Webbs Ironmongery	Public Toilet Keys	21.50	BACS Amazon	Public Toilet Bin	31.99	TOTAL		1419.74	
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	<p>around £10,000 but also one which was “significantly cheaper”, and this now appears to have jumped to £16,000.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cheaper one was for an in-situ refurbishment and less substantial than the higher quote, which was for a comprehensive refurbishment of the clock offsite. • Cllr Hagan convened a meeting of the Clock Committee on 15th February. Some members of the Committee are very experienced and knowledgeable about the clock. • One part is thought to be the root cause of the chimes not working. Simplistically a curved toothed comb has worn down over time. Committee members are confident that they can remove, template and re-make the comb in brass themselves. • Cllr Hagan has also been made aware of a local specialist, Anthony Gray, who lives in Rolvenden Layne. Anthony will be a great sounding board for the Clock restoration and is on hand to assist as required. • The Parish Council unanimously agreed with Cllr Hagan’s recommendation that the Committee completes its “comb” replacement and then consult Anthony Gray on future issues, maintenance and repairs. <p><u>c. Grounds Maintenance Contract</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Resourcing Committee has approved the grounds maintenance contract for 2024 for mowing The Green and at mowing and hedge cutting at Cherryfields with Tompssett Landscaping at roughly an increase of just over £100 for the year. 	
9. ENVIRONMENT & MAINTENANCE	<p><u>a. Beacon Field Wildflower Meadow</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As reported previously, Cllr Holden had pressed KCC for action regarding financial contribution and lease agreement, but nothing yet received from KCC. Clerk has chased Cllr Holden. • Cllr Thomas mentioned the previous suggestion to keep a clear footpath across the field. <p><u>b. Village Asset/Maintenance Report</u></p> <p>i. Parish Wells</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Iden Green : Work is due to start in March. The Clerk has contacted Anthony Hicks to confirm. ❖ There is some dead wood in the oak tree behind the well and some branches have fallen narrowly missing the well. There is a also a holly tree growing into the oak tree. ❖ Benenden : ○ The litter bin next to the Benenden Well was hit by a vehicle recently. ○ It was agreed to erect bollards to protect the structure from damage, and at IG Well once restoration is completed. ○ Steel bollards are more likely to stay in place than a timber one and more likely to damage the vehicle that hits it rather than the well. ○ Cllr Thomas to contact the Conservation Officer for guidance as to what is permissible, height and material. <p>ii. Flagpole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Cllr Hagan met with Robin Dalton-Holmes and agreed that it is damaged and needs restoration, and that the supports either side of the base are rotten and need to be replaced. ❖ Cllr Hagan subsequently met with Robert Greenwood to discuss the best way to create new supports. ❖ Whilst metal supports may be harsh, he recommends a hole filled with concrete and two steel supports instead of timber, either side of the existing flagpole. Base of pole can be trimmed to remove rotten bit, drenched in preservative and reattached with new bolts so it can be pivoted down for future maintenance. ❖ Cllr Hagan to consider how the pole can safely be taken down. <p>iii. Noticeboards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Iden Green • Removed as in danger of falling forward into layby. 	<p>NT</p> <p>GH</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To replace same size (12 x A4) of hardwood oak with header board would cost in the region of £2,100 plus delivery. • The Parish Council agreed a smaller, powder coated aluminium would be more appropriate and to consider a wall mounted one in the back of the bus shelter. • Cllr Thomas to establish ownership of the bus shelter. ❖ Benenden • Noticeboard attached to BVH is triple door oak unit (18 x A4). Replacing it with a similar size of hardwood would be approx £3,000. • The Parish Council agreed to replace with powder coated aluminium double door green unit (12 sheets of A4) at £1,025. • Cllr Hagan will remove the existing noticeboard. <p>iv. Damage to bus stop – the bench in the bus stop in The Street was damaged with 3 supports missing. Chris Heath to carry out repairs to make the bench stable again. The Clerk to chase.</p> <p>c. <u>Spring Village Tidy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take place Saturday 23rd March. 	<p>NT</p> <p>CL</p>
<p>10. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS/ COMMUNITY</p>	<p>a. <u>Allotments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful grant application to KCC Members Grant fund, although only secured £500 from bid of £2,700 leaving a shortfall in funding for mains water, standpipes, repair of fencing at the bottom of the field. • Seeking alternative funding (Kent Community Foundation/Amity Allotment Fund), and Allotment Committee will look at other fund-raising activities. • Refocussing on securing mains water as spring approaches. • £870 received from subscriptions and rent. • 1 plot (half size) vacant. • 21 individuals either jointly or singly renting plots. • Most plots are now active; although it remains very muddy. • Working with the Clerk to ensure the grant from TWBC is fully and productively utilised. • Two structure applications small polytunnel and shed recommended by Allotment Committee for approval. • No sizes/dimensions had been specified and it was agreed to ask the Allotment Committee for these and a BPC decision to be made by email. <p>b. <u>Public Toilets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works are complete and the toilet is open. F&C Cleaning are cleaning every day. • London County Contracts have repaired a snagging issue with door to the toilet. • Significant amount of condensation gathering on toilet bowl and cistern causing floor to be wet. • It was agreed that there should be some mechanical ventilation. Cllr Grant to look at the contract. • Signage to be installed by Cllr Hagan. • Note for asset maintenance schedule: Both the doors should be lightly sanded and weathershield repainted at the end of this summer. • Some areas of new tarmac damaged by cars running over it/turning on it. • It was agreed to consider timber posts to separate paved area from car parking area. The Clerk to seek permission from BVT. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fete storage ❖ Cllr Hagan met with members of the Fete Committee and confirmed that space in toilet building which was the ladies’ toilets meets their needs. ❖ A new door will need to be fitted, and if BPC agrees to fete storage Committee will pay for this. ❖ No other work would be required. ❖ Committee looking for permanent storage after this year’s fete and would like free of charge. ❖ Whichever organisation BPC agrees to allow for storage will need to ensure that items are 	<p>CL</p> <p>PG GH</p> <p>CL</p>

	<p>covered by the organisation's insurance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A formal agreement with whoever uses the space, setting out responsibilities, will need to be drawn up. ❖ The Cricket Club had previously made a request for storage. It was advised at the time that BPC would be refurbishing and re-opening public toilets and it was highlighted that the space may not be suitable. ❖ The Clerk to contact the Cricket Club to advise the current situation. <p>c. <u>D-Day 80 6th June</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Beveridge has confirmed that he will lead on this and is liaising with Grant Matthews and the Bonfire Society to organise the lighting of the beacon. 	CL
11. CORRESPONDENCE/ PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS	<p>a. <u>Memorial Hall AGM</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes of the Memorial Hall AGM held on 31st January were circulated. 	
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Date of Next Meeting: Monday 18 th March 2024, 7pm, Benenden Hospital Quinlan Centre	
	The meeting closed at 9.05pm.	

C Levett, Clerk to Benenden Parish Councillor, 19th February 2024