

# Bethersden Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Mr Colin Tearle Sunny Lawns Densole Lane Densole CT18 7BL  
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## Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in Bethersden Village Hall at 1900hrs.

ABC Councillor report at Appendix A

### **114/2022 Present**

Cllrs A Boyd (Chairman), E Allan, K Brannan, S Buckman, P Buss, A Jordan and C Tearle (Parish Clerk) and four members of the public.

### **115/2022 Apologies**

Cllrs J Crannis, K Mitchell and A Pickering (ABC).

### **116/2022 Declarations of Interest**

None

### **117/2022 Minutes of the Meeting of the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

It was resolved to approve and sign these.

### **118/2022 Election of a Vice Chairman**

Cllr A Jordan was nominated and seconded, their being only one nomination was duly declared elected.

He then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### **119/2022 Planning Applications**

a) To consider the following applications

**PA/2023/1723**-Sunglen Naturalist Park, Wissenden Lane, Bethersden, TN26 3AJ

Outline application for a three-bedroom dwelling with all matters reserved save for access and scale.

**It was resolved to support this application but with the following comments.**

**This site is/has been subject to a High Court order regarding its use.**

**Access from Wissenden Lane is by way of a clay earth track leading on from a hard entrance area site over a defective stream bridge. While this track is hard and dry now it should be considered how vehicular traffic will traverse to the area when clay is wet and soft and possible need for imported hard materials for the road while having a negative effect on the surrounding trees.**

**This site is in a quiet secluded ancient woodland area outside the confines of the Bethersden village envelope in an area surrounded by mature trees. The trees within the site are mainly of a leylandii type thought to be the remains of screening of the site's previous use as a naturalist area. The determination of these quick**

growing trees is not noted within the application but the lack of ground plants such as bramble, except in one small prolific area in sunshine, indicates that the area of development is in shade most of the day making effective solar generation challenging if those trees stay.

The Bethersden Stream passes through the site but it is suggested that the fall in the river is such, apart from the defective bridge carrying the track, that with such a fall that flooding should not occur

There are a number of concrete hardstanding's in the area of the site indicating previous non-domestic use along with the remains of what appears to be a small swimming pool.

While the Bethersden Parish Council considers the size of this building to be undesirable, excessive and a negative intruding development in the countryside, the previous building works indicate that this is not a greenfield site.

It is noted that toilets, sink and washing facilities are laid out in a traditional manner on the plans of the building application. Despite indications in the accompanying paperwork building plans, that mentions earth toilets. This indicates that mains water would need to be supplied to the site and waste water treatment with discharge into the stream. The lack of available sunlight indicated that mains electricity would also be required.

The Parish Council urges the ABC planners to save guard the indigenous trees, and the Bethersden Stream, from negative effects – and prevent development creep in the countryside and ancient woodlands

**PA/2023/1775**-Oak Cottage, Brissenden Court, Woodchurch Rd, Bethersden, TN26 3BE  
Double cart shed (retrospective).

**It was resolved to defer this application**

b) Planning Appeals

**PA/2022/2513**-Land to the west of Forge Hill

Erection of four residential homes and two bungalows, associated access, parking and landscaping.

**120/2022          Bethersden Design Statement and Newsletter**

Cllr K Brannan updated Members on the progress to date. A few minor amendments were suggested which were taken on board. The Parish Clerk was asked to see if he could acquire some pre-printed address labels from ABC to enable the two documents to be circulated next month.

**121/2022          Chairman`s Report**

We regret to report that Cllr. Burnett has tendered his resignation from the Parish Council. We wish to thank Cllr Burnett for his four years' public service as a councillor and Vice Chairman.

The Ashford Borough Council has set in train the requirements for replacing Cllr Burnett with an initial public notice of vacancy. If there is no qualified candidate coming forward after 20 days the council may appoint a replacement. In the event that more than one candidate comes forward with the required support of 10 Bethersden electors then an election will be held which will cost the parish circa £3000.

On the Sunday twelfth of November, we will be represented at the Remembrance Sunday service at the war memorial and after at the church service. I hope to see many of you there.

Plans are being prepared by the council to formulate a development plan for the parish for the next three and a half years.

We have had thanks from Community Warden Kathy Carter for her retirement gift and has bought a chiminea.

We need to look at ways of encouraging the younger members of our community to take part in community events, even creating and running them. The parish council and many other community enterprises are crying out for support from younger people.

A virtual meeting has been held between the Kent Highways, Kent County Council the parish council and The Environment Agency. Cllrs Jordon and Buss. Discussions regards the general drainage situation of the village with other possible mitigation.

Plans were announced to start work later in October on adding another duct under Church Road to increase the flow capacity from Forge Field on the Bethersden Stream.

We are still looking to recruit community Flood Wardens!

The work on the A28 road drains has not been tested by heavy rainfall since the work was completed in the Winter.

Investigations are being made by Ashford Borough Council and the Parish Council regards the unacceptable situation with the attenuation tank in the George Field.

The legal teams on both sides of the George Grove / Parish council involved in regularising the boundaries between the George Field and George Grove are now progressing hopefully to a acceptable resolution

The 2 dying trees in the recreation ground road side fence have been felled for safety reasons.

Complaints have ben received regards the hedge by the school is so far out into the path people are having to walk in the road.

The CCTV camera proposition covering the recreation ground including carpark and play areas will be presented later. Quotes have been received for repair/replacement of soft pour surfacing on the children area

## **122/2022 Parish Clerk`s Report**

- a) The day following the October Council Meeting former Cllr G Burnett resigned from the Council. The election process has been set in motion, and we will be advised on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023 if an election has been requested.
- b) The two diseased trees at the recreation ground have been removed.

## **123/2022 Finance**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> October 2023</b>	<b>£</b>
Lloyds Bank – Treasurers Account	72,845.13
Lloyds Bank – George Field Account	14,156.48
Co-op Bank	21,128.01
<b>Income</b>	
Lloyds Bank (Int)	13.21
ABC Precept	20,000.00
<b>Expenditure</b>	
C Tearle (Salary & Expenses Sept)	1,172.52
HMRC – PAYE	1,348.80
MMP Accounting Solutions	144.00
Countrywide Grounds Maintenance	579.34
Bethersden Village Hall (BVH-2022-278)	25.00
*Screwfix	40.48
*FSF (Screws etc)	4.16

*Zoom	15.59
Woodchurch Fencing (Rec Grnd Fence)	1800.00
Floodlighting Services (Tennis Court Floodlights)	1,296.00
Chris Buckman (Village Handyman)	105.00
Kent County Playing Fields Ass.	20.00
SSE Energy Solutions (Tennis Courts)	124.69
Mazars (Annual Audit Fee)	378.00

- a) The schedule of bank balances and invoices were approved.
- b) The Council noted and accepted receipt of Section 3 of the Audit Report from Mazars the External Auditor.
- c) A brief discussion was had on some ideas for the forthcoming budget setting for 2024/25.
- d) It was resolved to sign a new electrical supply contract with SSE.
- e) It was resolved to cease the contract with Zoom.

### **124/2022 D-Day Commemorations**

Members expressed a desire to mark the anniversary. The Parish Clerk was asked to contact Tracy Laws who had previously circulated some ideas.

### **125/2022 Councillor Training**

A brief inconclusive discussion was had on this subject. Further ideas were to be sent to Cllr A Boyd and or the Parish Clerk.

### **126/2022 Bethersden Flooding July 2021**

A comprehensive report was received on the recent Teams meeting held between Cllrs A Boyd, A Jordan, P Buss, representatives from KCC, ABC and the Environment Agency. A new pipe is shortly to be laid under Forge Hill after twelve years of effort.

### **127/2022 Date of the Next Meeting**

This will be on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 in Bethersden Village Hall at 1900hrs.

### **128/2022 Exclusion of the Public**

It was resolved to exclude the public and the press from the meeting for the following item of business by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

### **129/2022 The Recreation Ground**

- a) It was resolved to use Baxtec 4G Networks to install CCTV cameras at the recreation ground.
- b) It was resolved to use B E Ames Ltd to re-tarmac the areas under the two carousels, climbing frame and slide.

### **130/2022 S106 Monies**

The Clerk appraised Members of the projects for which he was bidding for S106 funding. There was a need to make these applications as many are shortly to expire. Members were further advised that because of the issues that had been raised by Mr Godfrey, the recent S106 funding for the George Pub has now been stopped. This

happened after the September meeting. As the cheque had already been issued it was felt the Council had no option but to meet this from its budget.  
The Clerk is currently sorting out the repayment of this funding with the S106 Officer.

### **131/2022      Misconduct Allegations**

The solicitors being used by ABC to investigate the allegations against council members by a member of the public, have been in regular correspondence with the Parish Clerk. It is hoped this will all be shortly resolved.

#### Appendix A

Cllr J Blanford ABC

Cllr J Blanford is trying to sort something out about the ongoing saga of the attenuation tank in the George Field.

Borough Councillors are shortly to be taken on a `planning tour` of the district.