

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS-AT-CLIFFE

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 11th October 2021 at 7pm, at St Margaret's Village Hall.

Present : Cllrs Rebecca Simcox (in the chair), G Simcox, A Newton, A Fielding, P Blake, J Harris, T Gilham, together with Clerk. Apologies received from Cllr S Creed (personal issues). Cllr Smith absent due to illness. District Cllr Martin Bates in attendance. Community Warden also in attendance.

County Cllr Steve Manion in attendance briefly from 7.40pm.

Public in attendance: Penny Bailey, Peter Wells, Christine Waterman, V Verren, Brendan Wells, Richard Hall, together with 4 residents via video screen.

Public participation:-

Mr Wells reported that on Sunday last there had been a bicycle race up Bay Hill (this has happened in the past). Clerk advised Mr Wells to report such incidents at the time. Community Warden will speak to Mr Wells in this regard.

Penny Bailey reported that roadworks in Reach Road had been "diabolical" but that workers on site had been helpful and courteous.

Viv Verren advised that she is meeting with Darran Solley of DDC at the Churchyard later this week and asked if PC had any other issues - issue of encroachment of trees/bushes into village car park suggested, together with damaged wall on car park boundary.

1. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 13th September 2021, having been circulated to all Councillors, were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.	
2. <u>Declarations of interest</u> None declared on agenda items.	
3. <u>Reports from County/District Councillors</u> County Cllr Steve Manion:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Noted Zero Vision Strategy by KCC with a target to eliminate road fatalities on Kent Highway Network by 2050.● Clerk advised of continued severe flooding issues in Reach Road - Cllr Manion will take forward.● Consultation on adult social care is now open.● Advised of anti-smoking "Stoptober" initiative.● Cllr Fielding advised that he had contacted Project Zero office at Kent Highways to see if St Margarets would make a suitable pilot case but with no reply - Cllr Manion will chase this up.● Cllr R Simcox reported continuing problem of missing footpath signs - Cllr Manion will chase up.● Cllr R Simcox raised the question of re-surfacing of Granville Road previously mooted - it is unsure when this will be undertaken but in 5 year plan.● Cllr Gilham advised Steve of problem with kerb on Swingate junction - which could cause vehicle damage - Cllr Manion will take forward.	

- Cllr G Simcox raised question of closing High Street re Christmas switch-on of lights - could be a combined KCC/DDC issue. Cllr G Simcox also asked to be kept informed of any grants available for Queen's Jubilee.
- Alexandra Road - Clerk to provide information to Cllr Manion asking for this to be cleared.

District Councillor Martin Bates:-

- Report received (attached to minutes).
- Cllr Gilham cited poor signage on main road re Reach Road closure - an ambulance recently took 3 hours to attend a heart attack victim.
- Cllr Fielding questioned outdated planning policies in place through DDC - Cllr Bates confirmed that Policy DM25 re open spaces remains key.

Community Warden:-

- Parking issues continue to be reported across the village - Stephen attends and investigates where necessary.
- He asked people to remain mindful of any vulnerable people locally, as there are those who have been in isolation for two years.
- Roadworks in Reach Road have caused issues - he speaks regularly with the contractors on site and work should be complete by 29th October.
- He continues his patrols and deals with issues as they arise.
- He will investigate the re-painting of yellow lines at end of The Droveway.
- Motorbikes - he has asked residents to log any incidents via 101 so that Kent Police have a log.
- Cllr Blake reported damaged tennis wires due to over-tightening.

4. St Margaret's Bay Conservation Association

- Presentation made by Brendan Wells and Richard Hall for funding of £3,000 towards total funding of £10,000 for the preparation of a Character Appraisal for the Bay Conservation Area.
- Cllrs had been provided with briefing paper (attached to minutes).
- Cllr Fielding stated that this could be very helpful to the Parish Council in responses to planning applications in future.
- Although St Margarets has two distinct Conservation Areas, DDC advise that this could only relate to the CA in The Bay. However, if a group were to be formed re the central village Conservation Area, expertise and experience could be shared.
- KCC is providing funding of £1,500 with DDC providing staff costs in assisting in this preparation/seeking of tenders etc.
- IT WAS RESOLVED and unanimously agreed that a sum of £3,000 be allowed for this project.

Clerk to deal with payment

5. Planning

- (a) Currently 391 objections on planning application for Glebe Field, 3 in favour. Costs so far for PC - £895 to planning consultant, £832 to Creative Frog re leaflets/banners/posters etc. £2,600 in crowd funding raised. Use of volunteers had saved money. No information available as to when the application is likely to go before the Planning Committee. Parish Council is to write to Keith Harrison at Action with Communities in Rural Kent, also on the Bay Trust.

Clerk to deal

- (b) The following applications had been delegated to Clerk, responses confirmed:-

21/01330	Erection of lean-to extension for livestock - Barn rear of 7 Millfield	No objections
21/00317	Erection of a three-storey detached building to incorporate 5no. self-contained flats; erection of two-storey and single storey rear extensions to existing 12no. terraces, insertion of 2no. dormer windows and alterations to fenestration (existing single storey rear extensions to be demolished). Erection of single storey rear extension to existing boathouse with alterations to fenestration. Reconfiguration of internal access road, relocation of parking area, 8no. additional parking spaces and associated landscaping (Readvertisement, amended drawings) - Coastguard Cottages, Bay Hill	Strongly object per attached
21/01380	Erection of rear dormer roof extension with high level glazing and front gable roof extension with glass balustrade balcony The Leazes, 17 Salisbury Road	No objections
21/01404	Erection of front dormer roof extension Kestrel, Nelson Park Road	No objections
21/01387	Erection of single storey front extension Longacre, Station Road	No objections
21/01385	Erection of two storey side extension with rear juliette balcony and part demolition of boundary wall to facilitate off-road parking (existing garage to be demolished) Little Kitlands, 11 Lighthouse Road	No objections
21/01264	Conversion of detached garage to ancillary annex accommodation including the erection of side dormer window, extension of first floor terrace and alterations to windows and doors White Cliff Cottage, The Front	Previous comments apply viz:- Strongly object - proposal would harm the setting, in the AONB and adjacent to SSSI. Traffic in that area is being discouraged by the PC. The application, if granted, would set a precedent being significantly outside the village confines

The following comments are made on the applications received:-

21/01402	Erection of detached dwelling (existing dwelling to be demolished) The Edge, Bay Hill
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Object:- 1. There is no evidential need for demolition of the existing building of 1923 which can function as a dwelling for the foreseeable future. 2. The existing building has historic interest as it is of unique construction in this locality. It is subject to a request for listing as a heritage asset. Therefore its loss could cause harm to the Conservation Area. 3. The design and proportion of the existing building sits well in the cliff side location and contributes to the special landscape character of this Conservation Area. Its value should be preserved. 4. Despite its age it is fully insulated and has an above average energy efficiency rating. Therefore there is no justification on sustainability grounds for its demolition and replacement. 5. The proposed replacement dwelling would be significantly larger with its greater height and obtrusive balcony. It would detract from rather than enhance the visual attractiveness of this sensitive location, It would potentially have negative effects on neighbouring dwellings.

21/01456 Erection of a detached dwelling (existing dwelling to be demolished)
Waihora, 33 Salisbury Road *Object - property is of poor design, no
Design and Access Statement to justify need to demolish
(4 in favour; Cllrs G Simcox and P Blake abstained)*

21/01460 Erection of a detached dwelling, detached garage and associated parking
(existing garage to be demolished and 6 no. trees to be removed)
Michaelmas, Convent Close *No objections*

21/01489 Erection of a single storey front extension and alterations to boundary wall
Meadow View, Collingwood Road *No objections*

21/01506 Erection of first floor extension and alterations to roof
South Goodwin House, 69 Granville Road *No objections*

(c) White Cliffs - following advice from Planning Consultant, further objection submitted to DDC.

(d) Planning application 21/00455 (Ashpoint House) - Clerk had submitted details to Enforcement Officer at DDC re building of wall and removal of hedges/trees, not in line with approval.

6. Clerk's Report

- Natalie Elphicke office responded - will press re holding of remote meetings for Parish Councils.
- Swings and fixings etc ordered from Playdale - 8/10 week lead in - cost £2752.46 + VAT on delivery.
- Wreath received re Remembrance Sunday - will Chair be attending? What amount does PC want to add to cost of wreath?
- Audit completion certificate on website.
- Email from lady re local bus service / traffic. What do Councillors want to do? Clerk approached Stagecoach re attendance at future meeting and response awaited.
- Re £705 due to NT re bollards and signs - is the PC happy for this to be paid via credit card? Confirmed.
- Details received re toilet costs for 2022-23 (received post agenda and to be placed on November agenda.).
- Abandoned traffic barriers reported - still in situ on Bay Hill - Clerk will chase
- Highways thought PC was a bit early with request re grit/salt - they will make contact/deliver supplies in November.
- Objection re Coastguard Cottages application 21/00317 re Coastguard Cottages submitted by Clerk given timing issues for DDC response.

Cllr Newton to attend, Clerk to deal with payment

Clerk to monitor

Clerk to deal

Clerk to deal

Clerk to deal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFA Planning Consultants contacted and provided responses re White Cliffs Hotel planning applications - submitted. • Updated Financial Regulations on website. • Responded to resident re use of tennis courts. • Clerk to order Christmas tree for PO Corner + another tree for the Hall (separate invoices). • Renewal for tractor insurance received at £206. 	<p>Clerk to deal</p> <p>Clerk to deal</p>
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<p>7. <u>South Foreland Valley</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written report provided to Cllr Newton by new Ranger Jason Moule (attached). • Jon Barker has arranged for new signs/bollards at £705 which Clerk will reimburse to NT. • Gate/bollard at Lighthouse Road are installed. • Advert from Skipton Building Society (filmed in Valley) was shown. Funds for this still to come. • Cllr Newton is to arrange to meet Mrs Simpson in the Valley re proposed memorial bench. • Re Thorne Estate - Bradleys quote re land transfer comes in at £1,440. Cllr R Simcox will speak to a known conveyancer to seek alternative quote. 	<p>Clerk to deal</p> <p>Cllr R Simcox to deal</p>
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<p>8. <u>Finance</u></p> <p>(a) Quotations still awaited re Play Area surfacing / KGV wall.</p>			
<p>(b) The following payments were approved:-</p>			
<p>AFA Planning Consultants</p> <p>Idverde Ltd - grasscutting</p> <p>Dover Security Services Ltd</p> <p>Creative Frog re artwork/leaflets etc</p> <p>Castle Water - water rates</p> <p>NEST - Council + Clerk</p> <p>ICO annual fee</p> <p>Mrs R Simcox - expenses</p> <p>P Haste - plumbing repairs at KGV Pavilion</p> <p>Mr I Miller - Registrar fees / expenses</p> <p>AFA Planning Consultants</p> <p>JJM Electrical - new outside lights at KGV Pavilion</p> <p>Google Ireland - monthly fee</p> <p>Jane Cook - September salary</p> <p>Office expenses</p> <p>HMRC</p> <p>Credit card (defib pads x 2)</p>	<p align="right">£708.00</p> <p align="right">£192.74</p> <p align="right">£907.20</p> <p align="right">£831.80</p> <p align="right">£64.62</p> <p align="right">£200.85</p> <p align="right">£35.00</p> <p align="right">£19.99</p> <p align="right">£75.00</p> <p align="right">£835.00</p> <p align="right">£120.00</p> <p align="right">£450.00</p> <p align="right">£41.40</p> <p align="right">£1253.77</p> <p align="right">£30.01</p> <p align="right">£265.92</p> <p align="right">£372.00</p> <p align="right">-----</p> <p align="right">£6403.30</p>		
<p><u>Receipts:-</u></p> <p>Cemetery fees £750.00</p> <p>Credit from exhibitions £25.00</p>			

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<p>(c) IT WAS RESOLVED to accept quotation from Vurleys re new fencing for Reach Road Pond at £2,600 + VAT.</p> <p>(d) IT WAS RESOLVED to accept quotation from D A Tree Surgeons in the sum of £2,655 for tree work at Chapel Lane Pond and Kingsdown Road. Clerk will apply to DDC re works at the Pond as this is in the Conservation Area.</p> <p>(e) Cllr Simcox will seek further conveyancing quote re land transfer.</p>		<p>Cllr Gilham will liaise and Clerk to pay invoice</p> <p>Clerk to deal</p>
<p>9. <u>Correspondence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● KALC re the Queen’s Green Canopy ● Mr and Mrs P Shimmell re tennis courts (x2) ● Andrzej Kluczynski DDC re litter and dog fouling enforcement. ● Mr S Barnes - FOI request re Glebe Field objections / funding. ● Kent Highways re road closure Dover Road, Guston 4-28 October. ● KALC re AGM 13 November (via Zoom). ● KALC- Kent PCC's Special edition Newsletter-Police and Crime Plan Survey 2021 ● Ann-Elise Newman re transport facilities for the village. ● Jon Barker re bollards and signs in Valley. ● Louise Winch Kent Highways re Highways Improvement Plan. ● Mark Welch KCC re Kent Rail Seminar 2021. 		
<p>10. <u>Reports from Parish Councillors</u></p> <p>(a) Nothing to report.</p> <p>(b) (1) Cllr George Simcox gave report and demonstration of planned lighting for this Christmas, having been in liaison with businesses The Smugglers and the local shop. The plan is to use proper fixings, which will save money in the long term.</p> <p>Walls of the Smugglers and the shop have been damaged in previous years by the lighting added to the properties - IT WAS RESOLVED to allow £250 to each property to defray any painting repair work required.</p> <p>Cllr G Simcox advised that total cost for materials would be £3,100 + VAT (which includes spares). IT WAS RESOLVED that this be accepted with Clerk to deal with payment. He would be using 2 suppliers, with one having next day delivery, the other with delivery by mid November. Contractor Ross Purchase will put up fixings ahead of this delivery. Cost of an electrician will also be required (all lights are LED with just 2 plugs providing all power).</p> <p>Switch-on planned for 26th November. He will investigate the suggestion of a road closure.</p> <p>(2) Cllr G Simcox presented ideas/proposals for the Queen’s Jubilee in 2022. He would like to get the whole community involved in wide-ranging events, to include - a beacon lighting event; a torchlight procession; village fete/festival to include a stage with local acts and a festive concert from say 6pm.</p>		<p>Clerk to deal</p> <p>Cllr G Simcox to take forward</p>

Clerk asked to write to agent of Bay Trust David Hannent to ask if it would be possible to use the Glebe Field for celebrations

Re Queen's Green Canopy re tree planting - hopefully grants available for this purpose, possible planting in South Foreland Valley.

Costs estimated as follows:-

Procession (say)	£500
Gas beacon	£490
Green canopy from grants	
Stage hire	£5,078
Facilities hire	£1,500
Marketing/branding	£750
Activities fund/hire	£1,000
Marquee (optional)	£2-£4,000

It was agreed that a planning group was required to include local groups/ businesses.

Cllr Gilham left the meeting at 9.10pm.

(c) Cllr Fielding will deal.

(d) Cllr Newton to meet with Mrs Simpson re bench.

Clerk to write

11. **Village Maintenance**

- Playing field inspection - undertaken by Cllrs Blake and Harris. Confirmed that Rhino Plant will undertake further cutting back of hedge on house side of Alexander Field. Stated that a further bin is required at gate end of Alexander Field which Clerk will investigate.
- Defibrillators - First light defib had acted in the treatment of a heart attack victim recently.
- Badges/logo - Cllr G Simcox displayed finished design which was approved.
- IT WAS RESOLVED that Council would meet cost of partial invoice from David Adams re electric work at the Hall, with Hall to meet cost of the main cable at £122.
- Clerk will place toilet costs for 2022-23 on November agenda.

Clerk to deal

Cllr G Simcox to take forward

Clerk to deal

Clerk to deal

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.

Confirmed:

Chair

11th October 2021

St Margaret's at Cliffe Parish Council objections to DOV/21/00936

This application follows a similar application (16/01028) that attracted a high level of objections from the community although the application was withdrawn before the Parish Council could submit its views.

The Parish Council now sets out its range of objections to 21/00936.

Background and history of the site.

The site known as the Glebe Field (or St George's Field in DDC list of Open Spaces) has been used for community purposes since the late nineteenth century.

What is now known locally as The Glebe Field or Glebe Meadow was originally part of a larger plot of land owned by the church. In the late 19th Century, a large 4-bedroom Vicarage was built on part of the land and regular village fetes and bazaars and celebrations were held in the Vicarage gardens and on the Glebe Field. In 1902 the first Parish Hall was built on the land and this part of the village became the centre for both indoor and outdoor communal village activities with convenient facilities at the hall to support events held in the field.

By the time the Vicarage was sold in 1984 all communal outdoor activities had long since moved to the Glebe Field. When Sir Fred Cleary's St Margaret's Bay Trust bought the Glebe Field from the Church in 1972, he consistently pledged to retain the majority of land for local recreational and community use. In his autobiography Sir Fred described how the Trust bought the land to protect it for recreational use. In the April 1972 edition of the local Parish Magazine he contributed an article in which he confirmed intent to protect the land: *This land is now preserved for ever and the Trustees have let the land to the Church Council at a nominal rental.*

There is substantial photographic evidence that the amenity has been used for village events such as fetes, sports and maypole dancing from 1911 when there were celebrations of King George V Coronation to the last fete in 2013. The Scouts Group regularly used the field until 2015 when the Bay Trust fenced off the site. In that year an ACV was granted but this expired in 2020.

This year the applicant held a very brief, online only consultation with the community. The published results indicate that out of 299 replies over 90% gave strongly negative responses.

The evidence of regular use, together with the large number of objections from residents to this and the previous application, demonstrates the value that the community at large places on this area of open space and should in itself warrant protection.

Status of the site

The site is designated open space and is protected by Policy DM 25 of the Core Strategy. The site's value lies in its contribution to the Green Infrastructure Network, to visual amenity in the village, to cultural and social heritage and to the protection of the setting of the AONB.

Dover District Council Authority Monitoring Report 2019-2020 provides an annual update of housing land supply and sets out the Council's position in relation to future housing land supply in accordance with NPPF. It states: "Using net housing figures, the assessment demonstrates that at 1st April 2020 the Council had a five-year land supply. At that point in time, there was 6.16 years of supply which equates to a surplus of 728 dwellings once an additional 5% buffer has been taken into account to ensure choice and competition in the market for land". Due to the Glebe Field site's current protected status and open space designation and in the absence of any compelling or demonstrable need to release more land for housing in the village, development of this site for housing would depart from the Development Plan. The release of the site from protected status and its removal from the Green Infrastructure Network would result in a deficiency of this type of open space in this community.

Open Space Assessment

The applicant makes reference to The Dover District Council Open Space Assessment, December 2019. This report was commissioned by the DDC and prepared by Consultants on behalf of the Council. It is

noted that the same Consultants also prepared the report in support of the current application and this calls into question the value of this report. The Assessment document does not feature on the Council's website and, as noted by the Planning Inspector in the recent Marlborough Road, Deal appeal, it should be awarded limited weight (paragraph 14 of Appeal Decision). The Inspector also stated in his dismissal of the appeal that the fact a site is privately owned and fenced off does not preclude it from listing as a protected open space.

The Applicants have referred, in their application, to the adopted open space standards and methodology. But this applies only to 'accessible green space' as set out in paragraphs 1.25-1.28 of the Land Allocations Plan. The site is no longer publicly accessible. Accordingly, the application for housing should be determined on the basis of compliance with criterion vi of Policy DM25 of the Core Strategy. The application claims that there are sufficient other open spaces for the community. But the nearest are the King George V Field and Reach Close and neither is suited to hold the scale of public events that have used the Glebe Field in the past. The King George V Field is a cricket ground and used throughout the summer. Reach Close is open space for the residents of this housing estate and has a road running through its centre. Other sites mentioned in the report are beyond 300m distance. Therefore the Parish Council believes that the evaluation of the Glebe Open Space in the application is flawed and should be rejected. The Parish Council strongly refutes the applicant's claim that the open space is surplus to requirements.

Housing Development

The Parish Council believes that the proposed housing development of 14 dwellings is inappropriate in this location. It would create an urban type development out of character with the rural street scene.

The Core Strategy 2010 Policy CP1 Settlement Hierarchy provides that villages, such as St Margaret's at Cliffe, are a tertiary focus for development. Major sites (10 or more dwellings, according to DDC Statement of Community Involvement 2019) would ordinarily only be acceptable through a plan led approach or review of the local plan and call for sites. They would not normally be brought forward through the development management approach unless the site is allocated for this purpose, which it is not. As a "major site" application it cannot be described as "windfall development".

Residents' parking spaces are provided in the design but there is limited visitor parking, which would likely be in St George's Place. Whilst Kent County Council Highways and Transportation has raised no objection to the proposal, the impact of the development will result in a significant loss of on street spaces in St Georges Place (due to the new entrance, enlarged turning head and parking spaces directly off the road) and the proposed development would in practice result in overspill parking in St Georges Place causing significant impact on St Margaret's Village Hall. St Georges Place is regularly used for parking by those attending Village Hall events. This is material to the determination of the application.

The proposed Dover Local Plan has identified three other sites in St Margaret's for housing development and the Parish Council believes that these are likely to be more suitable than development which causes the loss of the Glebe Field.

Green Infrastructure Network

Prior to the application for housing development in 2016, the site was of high visual quality and was freely accessible, being used frequently by the Scout Group since the 1960s and in this regard contributed significantly to the District's Green Infrastructure Network and supported the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy.

Historic use of the field reflects its value as a social, cultural and visual amenity. The Parish Council wishes to restore these attributes for future benefit of the community.

It is uncertain at this stage whether the proposed method of construction, outlined in the application, is sufficient to mitigate tree loss and whether the proposed method would be adhered to during the construction phase if development was to progress. However, of greater concern are the effects on the

visual amenity arising from the loss of ten trees to accommodate the development and potential loss of further trees during the construction phase. Coupled with the loss of green space and infill of the site with buildings and areas of hardstanding, the effects are likely to be significant. The Parish Council believes this would result in harm to this valuable environmental asset.

Given the sensitivity of the surrounding landscape character, the infill of green open space and consequent loss of trees and vegetation is likely to harm the key relationship between the village, surrounding topography and the AONB. To protect the setting of the AONB it is therefore important that trees and public green spaces are retained as far as practically possible since they serve to facilitate the integration of the built fabric and surrounding landscape. The Parish Council believes the proposal is contrary to Policy DM 16 on grounds that is harmful to landscape character and will result in undesirable visual impacts that will affect the setting of the AONB.

Core Strategy policy DM25 Open Space

Applications 16/01028 and 21/00936 have generated a very high level of objections from the community and the Parish Council has received many representations which oppose any building on this site and wish to see it preserved as open space, as intended when St Margaret's Bay Trust originally bought the Glebe Field.

Accordingly the Parish Council believes that the relevant test against which the proposed development should be determined is criterion vi of Policy DM25 of the Core Strategy. This requires the Applicant to demonstrate that the site has no overriding visual amenity interest, environmental role, cultural importance or nature conservation value. It is not enough for the Applicants to claim that since the site is no longer accessible to the public and can at present no longer be used by villagers, it has no value and is thus surplus to requirements. The site holds meaningful purpose to the local community and contains many important attributes. These are:

1) The site is of social and cultural value locally. Its retention as protected open space is necessary to ensure the longevity of its social and cultural value (as per previous ACV listing).

2) The site forms a valuable area of unmanaged natural grassland in the heart of the village. It contributes significantly to the District's diverse network of Green Infrastructure and its natural state serves only to increase net biodiversity in the village.

3) The site is considered locally to enhance the rural /village character of the area and for this reason is highly valued. The site contributes significantly to local visual amenity and to health and well-being. If protected, the site could continue to serve and benefit those who live in the village. The Parish Council has offered to acquire the site from the owner and manage it for the benefit of the community.

4) The site serves to protect the setting of the AONB and to prevent uncharacteristic urbanisation of the village.

For all of the reasons outlined above the Parish Council strongly objects to application 21/00936 and believes it should be refused.

MEETING REPORT FOR ST MARGARET'S AT CLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL ON 11 TH OCTOBER 2021 FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN BATES

BINS

Waste collections have improved significantly over the past month with almost 100% of recycled, household and food waste collections taking place daily. We have been advised that first garden waste collection service is planned for week commencing Monday 11th October 2021. Your collection day for the garden waste service remains the same as it was prior to the suspension. If you need to check your collection day you can do so by visiting THE DDC waste collection website. As usual they will accept up to 6 bags of garden waste on each collection day. They anticipate high volumes of garden waste during the first collection cycle. If your garden waste bin is not collected on the scheduled day please leave it at your property boundary and they will collect it as soon as possible. The Council intends to offer a discount off the subscription for 2022/23 to all existing customers, and details will be confirmed later.

WINTER COMMUNITY GRANT

The closing date was on 20 th September and DDC have received 72 applications totalling £121,841.82. Details of successful applicants should be announced towards the end of October.

LITTER AND DOG FOULING ENFORCEMENT

The DDC Environmental Protection and Crime Unit have signed a three-year contract with a company called Waste Investigation Support and Enforcement (WISE). They will be responsible for patrolling the District and serving fixed penalty notices for litter dropping and failure to pick up dog waste. This will free up DDC staff to investigate other infringements such as fly-tipping. The new team will start operating from 18 th October.

LOCAL ISSUES

1). Coastal erosion to the promenade at St Margaret's Bay plus a request to fix a large pothole in the car park.

The last email I received on this was on 9 th September and stated:

"There were a number reported to me over the last year – mainly to do with the rear half where residents access the cottages. This was a loose granular material crushed and compacted by a roller.

This was carried out earlier in the year and doesn't last very long, but a quick short-term solution.

We may need to do this again if further potholes have developed especially after the summer season. I know the car park and its current state has also been questioned and I know it's on the minds of management to consider and possibly bid as a potential project being the long-term solution.

DDC got back to me today (11/10) to say that I have a list of outstanding car parking repairs with our contractor and St Margaret's Bay has been included to review this and carry out short term repairs

2). Parking in the Bay car park.

Have asked Parking Services to confirm whether the new tariff boards have been installed. They did not and I am chasing them for a response.

3). Church Wall.

On 9 th September I received this response from DDC:

Regrettably, I haven't done anything with this. It is really the remit of Property Services but it is very unlikely that the Council would rebuild this wall.

Churchyards are a challenging asset. The Council does not own the majority of churchyards it is

responsible for. We have 22 separate sites.

They have usually been the responsibility of a Parish or Town Council that has benefitted from the revenue generated from burials but as they become full to capacity, the PC's & TC's register them closed and refuse the future maintenance liability (they are entitled to do this within a 2yr period from them being registered closed). The churchyards are then transferred to the District Council as a statutory requirement. The District Council cannot refuse responsibility.

There is not a specific standard to which a churchyard must be maintained by the Council but obviously keeping it in safe order is necessary. Walls and lych-gates can be extremely expensive to repair but are competing against funding for more priority matters.

I can arrange for the bricks to be removed but as the wall is not a Health & Safety matter and is more an aesthetic task, I cannot see it being resolved in the foreseeable.

I read this email out to you at the last meeting. One of the members of the public was not satisfied with this response and I have written to DDC Parking Services requesting that they take another look. They replied today to say that they took a look the other week, but could find nothing wrong on site. They suggested that maybe they could meet with someone who could show them the problem.

4). Groynes.

I received the following response from DDC on 10 th September:

I have now received the asset performance report from the East Kent Engineering Partnership from when they surveyed all the sea defences back in July of this year. This included looking at the beach data logged since 2003 and its safe to say the beach is pretty contained within the Bay with very little migration to the North or South. Consequently, this will allow us to focus the EA grant funding on repairing the groynes and extending their design life – because of the health and safety picked up within the survey/report DDC are still planning to conduct these works this autumn/winter.

Objection re Coastguard Cottages (revised application)

Objection to revised application 21/00317 The Parish Council notes the amendments to the original application but the objections submitted to the original application remain in place. The changes to the design of the new building do not address any Parish Council concerns. We still hold that the design is discordant with the heritage asset. It does not respond positively to the local context in terms of form and scale. It does not contribute to the significance of the historic terrace or the character of the local Conservation Area and has no mitigating public benefit for this community. The fundamental issue is the existence of the new building itself and the consequent need to transfer the car park to the garden area below the Coastguard Cottages. We can see no reason to add this building and cause harm to the valued open space in the CA. According to Bay Trust published accounts the site was sold for £1.35million. This works out at an average of just over £100,000 per dwelling. When refurbished these dwellings can expect to sell at well over double that figure given this is a prime site facing the South Foreland Valley, the Heritage Coast and the English Channel. Even with the added costs of refurbishment this will be a viable project without any additional building. We object specifically to the location of a large car park in the sloping open space of the garden. This is a tranquil area in the CA which will be harmed by the introduction of noise and pollution from vehicles. The proposal therefore is not compliant with NPPF paragraph 180. The placement of a car park in this open space would not contribute positively to the setting of the heritage asset or the local character of the Conservation Area and there is no public benefit to offset the visual harm it causes. It is consequently not compliant with NPPF paragraphs 185 a) and c), 192, 195 and 200. As the site is bordered by the Heritage Coast and AONB the proposal is also potentially at variance with Dover policies DM15 and DM16 The lower garden is currently an ideal recreation space for residents and children of residents but a large car park here will make it potentially dangerous and mean that unsupervised use by young children would be a significant risk. Moreover the siting of the car park is impractical for residents who would be required to walk uphill and some distance to dwellings located at the southern end of the terrace. Fine in the good weather but difficult in bad weather in this very exposed site. There is a real possibility that some residents would ignore this car park and just park close to their dwellings, as will delivery drivers. The plans indicate 20 car park spaces but this is inadequate for the number of dwellings in the terrace and the proposed new build. But of course an even larger car park would be even more harmful. It is difficult to find any ground to support this part of the application. The existing car park at the end of the terrace is in the best place it could be and should be retained to preserve the integrity of the site of the listed building. In its earlier statement of objections to 21/00317 and 21/00318 the Parish Council noted the relevance of application 19/01489 which sought to build on the land bordering the Coastguard Cottages site. It was for three 2 storey houses. It was refused by the DDC planning officer who stated : "the proposal would cause harm to the visual quality of the street scenes and the prevailing character and appearance of the conservation area." She then referred to the proximity of the site to the listed building and stated : "The introduction of the buildings causes less than substantial harm to the open setting of the designated asset.... Weighing against the proposal are the impacts upon the open appearance of the rear of the site, the views of the AONB, the setting of the listed building, and the failure of the scheme to assimilate with the visual quality of the street scene and the need to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. As such, the proposal has not taken into account the constraints to development on the site." It is clear from this, that even though the proposed housing is separated from the Coastguard Cottages by open space, it can still have a harmful impact on the heritage asset. The Appeal Inspector provided even stronger reasons for refusing the application saying it would be : "a discordant development within the context of this CA". He notes : "The significance of this designated heritage asset is the historic interest of the Coastguard Cottages and the garden that belonged to it. Looking at the present-day situation this setting is still readily discernible, and corresponding to this, is of historic significance.....This encroachment of built development would be detrimental to both the character and appearance of the setting of the Listed cottages, as well as their special interest, and therefore the proposed development would be harmful to their significance". In view of these statements, about development that is near but not on the Coastguard Cottages site, it is difficult to see how any large 3 storey construction right next to the listed building and the placement of a commercial style car park within the garden of the historic site, can be

permitted if the NPPF and District planning policies are consistently applied. The Parish Council does not object to the 21/00318 proposed improvements to the interiors of the Coastguard Cottages but has concerns about changes to the rear of the properties. They do not enhance the appearance of the heritage asset. We also note that in the Design and Access Statement measures to minimise carbon emissions and promote renewable energy and reduce impact on climate change do not form an integral part of the design solutions. There appears to be little evidence that sustainability measures and opportunities to improve energy efficiency of the building have been incorporated, despite the fact that some of the cottages have EPC ratings below the legal threshold for renting.

St. Margaret's Parish Council – South Foreland Valley Report White Cliffs Countryside Partnership (WCCP), September 2021

Dexter cattle.

Our main focus for this month has been keeping public footpaths clear and trying to stop invasive species from spreading into our rich areas of chalk grassland in the valley, it seems to of been a really prolific year for such species as: Hogweed, Wild Parsnip, Hemlock and Canadian Goldenrod. Working alongside the volunteers with the use of hand tools and machinery, we are trying to keep the Canadian Goldenrod at bay. By cutting when it is in flower, we hope to weaken the plant and stop the perennial regrowth.

During our latest task we have now started to cut back areas of grassland and scrub, now that the breeding bird season is over, and flowers have gone to seed to disperse over the grassland, we are able to carry out this management.

Volunteer Dave Hart mowing the areas of Canadian goldenrod.

Volunteer Rob Freeland raking cut vegetation.

Thursday 23 rd September – Some members of the Parish Council went on a guided walk with Melanie Wrigley to hear about the precious chalk grassland plants, animals and landscape of your wonderful South Foreland Valley SSSI. A few suggestions where discussed about using it as an asset to raise a little income towards managing the valley, working in partnership with residents and road associations. And both residents and Natural England permissions willing.

Volunteer task:

Thursday 29 th September – We had a very productive task this month, cutting back Canadian Goldenrod including areas of chalk grassland and cutting back overgrown pathways, working in the bottom of lighthouse field, with Volunteers Chris Little, Dave Hart, Rob Freeland and Doreen Stone. A big thank you to all our volunteers for your help over these last few months and to our lookers for helping with checking our 12 Dexter cattle. We are always looking for more Volunteers who would be able to help out with our practical habitat management tasks, please get in touch if you would like to get involved in the restoration of this beautiful landscape. For more information please Contact: Jason.moule@doover.gov.uk or chris.little48@btinternet.com

A before and after photo of the Goldenrod area.

Chris Little and Dave Hart made a great start at cutting lighthouse field on the 29 th of September, leaving behind the grassy tufts of anthills that are essential to our blue butterfly populations.

A footpath that has been cut back in lower lighthouse field by volunteers Doreen Stone and Rob Freeland, for better public access along this route.

Vapourer moth

Wasp spider

Now is the time that many of our wildflower meadow species will be going to seed and our butterfly season is coming to an end, this makes way for other important wildlife. Autumn migration is now underway with many species gathering in numbers to head back to their wintering grounds in South Africa. Around the valley, Swallows and Martins can be seen in large numbers at times preparing for their long journey back, and rare birds on passage can be seen along the cliff tops for those dedicated birdwatchers. A highlight on our last task was a Merlin, a small falcon passing over lighthouse field, seen by Ranger Jason Moule and Volunteer Rob Freeland. Other interesting

sightings this month have been a Wasp spider and a Vapourer moth.

Written by Jason Moule, WCCP 01/10 /2021, WCCP