

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS-AT-CLIFFE

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 14th February 2022 at 7pm, at St Margaret's Village Hall.

Present : Cllrs Rebecca Simcox (in the chair), A Newton, G Simcox, T Gilham, P Blake, J Harris. Cllr A Fielding joined meeting via video link. District Cllr Martin Bates and District Cllr Oliver Richardson in attendance.

Public participation:-

Penny Bailey - raised the issue of vehicles (including buses) parking on the brow of the hill (at junction of Sea Street/Lighthouse Road). It was suggested that any future problems are reported to the Community Warden and/or PCSO.

Penny Bailey - raised the question of lack of white lining on edge of road from Sea Street to Bay Hill - Clerk had reported but will follow up.

1. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 10th January 2022, having been circulated to all Councillors, were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.	
2. <u>Co-option of Councillors</u> Clerk confirmed that all relevant formalities had been completed, and Parish Council was now able to co-opt in respect of the two vacancies for Councillors.	
3. <u>Declarations of interest</u> - Cllr Blake declared an interest in matters pertaining to the White Cliffs Hotel.	
4. <u>Reports from District Councillors / Community Warden / PCSO</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Written report received from Cllr Martin Bates received (attached to minutes).● Cllr Fielding asked when the next consultation on the Local Plan is likely to take place. Cllr Bates advised this should start in March and last for a period of six weeks.● Clerk asked Cllrs Bates and Richardson of any help that could be suggested in respect of the local Nursery, in respect of their quest for funding. They will investigate avenues in this regard. Clerk will make contact with County Councillor Steve Manion for his advice.● Cllr Gilham asked if question of cleaning of parking machines in the area could be looked at as many of these are in a very dirty state - Cllr Bates will investigate. <p>PCSO - short monthly report received - only two issues for St Margaret's surrounding nuisance off-road bikes.</p> <p>Community Warden - he continues his patrols and visits around the village; no issues witnessed at Alexander Field and he asks that any incidents are clarified as regards times etc. Graffiti at Nelson Park dealt with and information given to PCSO. He has attended at school gates during school opening/closing and no cars seen parking on the zig zag markings - he will attend on a few more occasions.</p>	Clerk to deal

5. **Clerk Report**

- Parish Council can now co-opt for 2 vacancies as formalities completed.
- Road grit/salt now received at farm.
- All 3 defibrillators now registered with British Heart Foundation site.
- All invoices for KGV extension and works now complete - PC have met £4,000 contribution and covered VAT element (which can be reclaimed).
- £530 deposit has been paid to Bandshop Sound and Light re deposit for stage for Queen's Jubilee event.
- Chair has written to Hall re wi-fi problems experienced during meetings.
- Re adverse possession of land off The Avenue - having checked, this paperwork was sent off to Land Registry last February (£40 payment made by Clerk) - cannot trace any reply. Have therefore re-sent together with a further cheque for £40 - response awaited. Response received citing long delays in dealing with such cases.
- Precept request with DDC for £94,000 (2.84% increase, 20p per month for Band D property).
- Email received re lack of white lines at edge of road in Sea Street - reported.
- Lottery grant re phone box submitted from Emma Rosen in name of PC - Clerk had provided bank account/financial information.
- Issue with vegetation on Bay Hill reported following last month's meeting - Highways Steward visited twice to investigate.
- Vandalism with graffiti at bus shelters and dog poo smeared on bench in Alexander Field. Issues reported to PCSO and Community Warden.
- Insurance company emailed re cover for Jubilee event - reply awaited.
- Have paid invoice for damage to concrete bunker lock to Harmers (under Finance).
- Clerk advised that petition for Parish/Town Councils to have the ability to hold remote meetings has now passed 10,000 signatures.
- VAT Return completed - sum of £4,073.68 to be returned by HMRC.
- Question of annual footpath walk to be considered.

Clerk to monitor response

Clerk to monitor response

6. **Presentation by Greentech Energy - Solar Farm Proposal for Chalkpit Farm**

- Introduction to company - project development, engineering, operation and maintenance of solar farms - have 300 plants with 800MW under management.
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- More than 80 technical specialists; 100% privately owned with HQ in Hamburg (UK company).
- Why the Chalkpit site - lowest impact in locality, favourable topography, gentle slopes and no water course. Existing fields can be used for underground connection cable, avoiding village lanes; good access from main road network; visually well contained with trees and hedgerows.
- Site in close to The Lane Guston, east of railway line. Proposal for a 23-24MW solar farm - 48,000 panels mounted on steel framework, gravel access track; wooden post perimeter fence and cctv system. Will undertake landscaping and environmental enhancement measures (no lighting).
- Company hopes to hold open days locally during March.
- Construction would take approx 6 months; deliveries managed 1000hrs - 1600hrs to avoid peak traffic; 20 construction personnel involved; construction access from Deal Road to avoid local roads; construction route via A2 and A20; average of 5-6 HGV deliveries per day, max of 10 during busiest times
- Site would be decommissioned after 40 years (leased from farmer); all above and below ground infrastructure removed from site; reverted to open farmland.
- Would give enough electricity to power 7,270 homes.
- This is the beginning of consultation process, with formal planning application to come forward in due course.

7. **Planning**

- a) Re Glebe Field - PC advised that Planners at DDC still require some details from the applicant before proceeding.
- b) White Cliffs Hotel - viability study put before Planners - PC response to this sent to DDC, with copy sent to Mr Thurman planning solicitor at the Council.
- c) The Edge - Cllr Fielding advised that the St Margarets Bay Conservation Association have sent further objections to DDC re this planning application. Cllr Fielding will look at preparation of a further objection from PC for consideration.
- d) The following comments were made on the applications considered:-

22/00007 Installation of 2no. velux windows -
Pembroke, Nelson Park Road *No objections (delegated to Clerk)*

22/00053 Change of use of land to Gypsy/Travellers site for 3no. pitches,
each pitch to provide space for mobile home, touring caravan,
and associated parking for car and light goods vehicle -
Sherleys Farm, Upper Road *Strongly object (attached to minutes)*

22/00018 Alteration to existing vehicle access, formation of car park with
150 spaces, replacement fence and associated landscaping -
Land West of Wanstone Court and South East of Upper Road
Strongly support (per attached)

Cllr Fielding to deal

Chair and Clerk had attended Planning Committee meeting and provided spoken objection to the planning application re White Cliff Cottage - this had been approved by Planning Committee although strong condition applied re use only as an auxiliary building to the main property, with no other use.

8. Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Cllr George Simcox provided an update on the current position:-

- Stage arranged and deposit paid.
- Has started a marketing campaign on Facebook.
- Event has been placed on PC site and social site.
- He has a list of local groups and organisations already contacted - so far 18 organisations have been contacted with mostly positive responses.
- He is looking at permits/licences required - will liaise with Community Warden.
- A further meeting of the taskforce to be set up soon.
- VIP's to be invited.
- Councillors and residents to be asked re any musicians available for the event.
- Cllr George Simcox is investigating - Spirit of St Margaret's badges; medals (how many?); re-usable cups (80p each); signs re parking etc; costs to be firmed up.
- He has contacted St John Ambulance and provided PC insurance cover details.
- He has also spoken to Dover Security Services re on-site security cover.
- He will make contact with the village schools.
- It was agreed that King George V field would be used, with Hall offering use of the building in case of wet weather.

Cllr G Simcox to arrange further meeting with Councillors

9. South Foreland Valley

- Report received and circulated from Mel Wrigley at White Cliffs Countryside Project.
- Cllr Newton provided update - Duggie from DSS had reported 18 naked people gathered near the Lighthouse, and an unfortunate 2 suicide attempts.
- 5 lots of migrant boats seen in St Margarets, followed by further 6 boats.
- 5th Feb - a group of 15 young women gathered taking drugs - Police called.
- Duggie moved on 3 Dutch camper vans.
- Bunker lock damaged by vandalism - repaired by Harmers.

10. Finance

(a) The following payments were approved:-

Bandshop Sound and Light re stage	£530.00
E J Clough - Christmas trees	£588.00
Cinque Ports Construction Ltd - KGV Pavilion works	£9,000.00
Vurley Fencing - Reach Road pond	£3,234.00
St Margarets Village Hall - room hire	£252.45
D A Hart - South Foreland Valley expenses	£37.37
Castle Water Ltd - water rates	£63.98
NEST - Pension (Clerk+Council)	£200.85
Google Ireland	£46.00
R Purchase - January invoice	£1,000.00
Dover Security Services Ltd - South Foreland Valley	£648.00
Harmer & Sons Ground Maintenance Ltd - lock repair	£304.80
Jane Cook - salary	£1,253.97
Office expenses	£30.87
HMRC - PAYE/NIC	£265.72
Cinque Ports Construction Ltd - KGV pavilion works	£7,074.70
Jane Cook - Land Registry fee	£40.00

	£24,570.71

Receipts:-

Credit interest	54p
Cricket Club re KGV pavilion extension	£3,500 + £5,895.59

(b) IT WAS RESOLVED that contracts in respect of Mr R Purchase and Mr I Miller be continued for a further year, with a 10% increase to the cost in both cases. IT WAS RESOLVED that Clerk salary be increased by 10%.

(c) Grasscutting contract details yet to be received - to be on March agenda.

Clerk to deal

Clerk to place on agenda

11. Civic Cemetery

IT WAS RESOLVED that Cemetery fees be increased in line with schedule (no increase since 2019). Increase as set out in schedule to be applied re Cemetery Registrar.

Clerk to deal

12. Section 137 Grants

IT WAS RESOLVED to pay the following Section 137 grants:-

St Margarets Parent & Toddler Group	£500
Spirit of St Margaret's	£300
St Margaret's Nursery	£600
St Margarets PCC - Churchyard volunteers	£100

Following a grant application received from Pegasus, Clerk to make contact with organiser to ask for attendance at a future PC meeting to put forward their role/work.

Clerk to deal

13. Village Traffic

Following submission of original Highway Improvement Plan proposals to Kent Highways, nothing has yet been received in response. Cllr Gilham will approach contractor to determine cost of a pedestrian crossing to compare to Highways suggested costs.

Cllr Gilham to deal

14. Correspondence.

- Terry Martin KALC re Jubilee beacons.
- Tracy Evans re adverse possession of land - Clerk had dealt.
- Alice Fey re Planning Committee meeting 26 Jan - attended by Chair and Clerk.
- KCC Highways - Temporary prohibition of traffic and suspend one way - various roads - Dover from 8 Feb.
- WRSE partnership - long-term regional plan for water resources in Southeast England.
- Mr R Stone re Dover starting an application for City Status.
- KALC re Dover Area Committee meeting 26 Jan.
- James Apps re any highway proposals for village.
- Keith Watson DDC re Restoration works to sea defences - St Margarets Bay.
- KALC - minutes of Dover Area Committee meeting 26 Jan.
- Dover SPS Border Control Post Engagement Launch.
- Chris Clayson re bus shelter proposal.
- James Jenkison Greentech re solar farm proposal at Guston.
- KCC Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 Full Review 2021.
- St Margarets Nursery re funding/guidance request.
- National Highways - A2 Dover Access scheme progress update - Feb 2022.
- Mike Fielding re damage to Bowls Club gate.
- Heather Waller PROW re Beach Road / The Front.
- M Burnley-Cumming re footpath ER41.

Clerk to approach Steve Manion

Clerk to respond

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Kent Wildlife Trust re chough re-introduction.● Tim Falconbridge re parking on Sea Street / Lighthouse junction. Greater enforcement is required at this point.● Daniel Thorman DDC Planning Solicitor re White Cliffs Hotel planning application, lawfulness of Condition 15.	Clerk to respond
<p>13. <u>Councillor Reports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cllr Blake had spoken to Chris Clayson re his proposals for the bus shelter outside the Old Chapel. Cllr Blake had previously been looking at a wooden replacement shelter for this position (image shared) - cost £6,200 inc VAT. KCC grants are available. He will speak further to Mr Clayson and report to future meeting.	Cllr Blake to deal and Clerk to place on agenda
<p>14. <u>Village Maintenance / Matters affecting the Parish</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cllr Blake had undertaken playing field inspection. Clerk to chase up with DDC provision of further bin at far end of Alexander Field.● Cllrs Newton and Blake had undertaken site visit to Alexander pavilion - flooring is in very poor condition and needs replacing. Club has placed defibrillator inside pavilion and Councillors expressed view that this should be outside the building for use by all.	Clerk to deal

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.05 p.m.

Confirmed:

Chair

14th February 2022

MEETING REPORT FOR ST MARGARET'S AT CLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL ON 14TH FEBRUARY 2022 (District Cllr Martin Bates)

1). Waste

At present collections are continuing as normal but contingency plans are in place should Veolia suffer severe staffing shortages because of the current Omicron outbreak. Currently, the impact remains manageable and consequently the collection service is running as normal. However, should this deteriorate there will be an escalating programme of reductions in service. This would commence with the suspension of garden and bulk waste services. Residents will be advised should these measures be required.

2). Household Support Fund

Dover District Council has welcomed an allocation of £171,826 from the fund, which is being used to support a number of organisations within the district amongst which are:

Dover and Deal Foodbanks (which includes a rural provision) - £40,000 each

Sandwich and Deal Centres Age Concern – £20,000 each

Dover Riverside Centre (Friends of Age UK) - £20,000

Citizens Advise Bureau - £20,000

And a severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) - £10,326 (to support rough sleepers in severe weather).

3). INTERNAL BORDER FACILITIES

The Special Development Order for the HMRC site at White Cliffs Business Park is now with the Secretary of State for LUHC and is expected to be signed off this week. A contractor, Galliford Try, has been appointed. Soft works on the site commenced on 7th February. More extensive work will begin once sign off is achieved.

The Special Development Order for the DEFRA site at Bastion Point in White Cliffs has now reached the engagement stage which will end at midnight tonight. Further information on the project has been posted on their website: [Dover SPS Border Control Post – Inland Border Facilities](#). A newsletter was forwarded to all key stakeholders, and I posted a copy on our Facebook page. The site is projected to commence operations on an escalating scale in July and will initially employ up to 200 newly recruited Port Health staff.

4). DOVER FAST TRACK

The contractor for this development has also been appointed and is COLAS. Construction will commence of the fast-track link road between the B&Q roundabout and Dover Rd outside Guston very shortly. It will initially provide access to the HMRC IBF site and both contractors are already working together closely on logistical planning.

5). LOCAL PLAN

This is currently on track to commence the regulation 19 engagement process in March. An announcement of the official timescales for the process should be announced shortly.

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.

We received the following update from Keith Watson on 27th January:

Things have moved on since looking at temporary repairs. The standing water needs to be addressed with a solution first to hold any real longevity regardless of any material laid. The promenade falls away from this point and so any rainfall or wave overtopping will freely drain away. In order for this to work a suitable surface needs to be laid between the speed humps, but firstly all the silt, mud and existing surface needs to be removed down to desired levels with a road type asphalt specification laid in its place. The contrast in materials should delineate this as being a main access route and not for parking as you've experienced below. However the asphalt also allows the opportunity to install DYLS along the splash wall side and "keep clear" to be marked by the gate entrance and so will dramatically improve things and support enforcement for illegal parking. Any works decided of this nature really needs to wait until spring when things dry out and temperatures rise a little to make lasting repairs.

2). Groynes.

Work should already have commenced. Ovenden Allworks was looking to mobilise machinery and materials to St Margaret's Bay from Friday 28th January. Works will comprise of re planking the beach groynes and concrete repairs to the sea wall – the contract is expected to last 6 weeks weather permitting. Access to the car park and beach will remain as normal with minimal disruption, however if there are any concerns regarding these works please don't hesitate to let us know.

3). Glebe Close and White Cliffs Hotel Planning Applications

Both these applications are in the pipeline and likely to come before the Planning Committee although no dates have been set as yet. The latest on Glebe Close is that Planning Services are still awaiting further information from the applicant which they requested some time ago. Ollie has stated that he will be prepared to represent your interests when/if these applications appear for consideration.

4). Rural Car Parking

Consideration has been given to Rural Car Parking charges and the decision will be reported to Cabinet this month. I cannot say anything further at this stage.

5). 36 and 38 The Droveway

This is not going away, and the builders have submitted yet another request for variation of conditions. DOV/21/01170. I attended a meeting with some of the residents on 6th February where it was clear that the conditions were still being breached particularly in relation to the garages. Since then both enforcement and planning officers have visited the site. Their latest report to us was as follows:

"I went on site yesterday. The garages have been built higher than the approved drawings.

We have sought to make it clear to the applicant that we are not minded to determine the application until the drawings showing the proposed development match what has been constructed on site (and is intended to be constructed on site). We have requested the amended drawings and there will need to be a further round of consultation for the application. My intention, with all the correct drawings in place and with a fair wind behind, is to report the application to Planning Committee in March – but I cannot promise this now."

I have asked the planning officer to let me know if the application is likely to come before the committee in March.

6). Pine Edge

The officer is at the point of deciding on this application and we should be advised very shortly. However, we are not permitted to provide any further information until the applicant has been notified. I have chased the Planning Department for an update.

Planning objections:-

Sherleys Farm:

St Margarets Parish Council strongly objects to 22/00053 | Change of use of land to Gypsy/Travellers site for 3no. pitches, each pitch to provide space for mobile home, touring caravan, and associated parking for car and light goods vehicle | Sherleys Farm Upper Road St Margarets At Cliffe CT15 6HY

The Parish Council have a policy to object to any application for dwelling or settlement outside the village confines and in our Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB. Hence, we object to this application. Sites for development have been identified within our village as part of the HELAA suitability assessment.

The fact there is a dwelling here at all is unfortunate. There has been a rolling grant of planning permissions for the retention of a mobile building on this land since 1980 for agricultural purposes. Before this it was MOD land. Non-restrictive occupation of the mobile home was only allowed in 2019 and in June 2020 a certificate of lawfulness was granted to enable it to be converted to a permanent dwelling house. The history of the site is well explained in this officer's report 20/01305.

A certificate of lawfulness for siting an additional mobile home was refused in 2020.

The proposed site is 800m from the English Channel and immediately opposite the National Trust Gateway to the White Cliffs property comprising of 2.8k of protected coastline. This proposal is slap bang in one of the most beautiful areas of the country. Kent's Heritage Coast was named by the Lonely Planet Travel Guides 2022 as second only to Stonehenge in the top 10 regions in the World to Visit. This Area of Natural Beauty is not just enjoyed by locals. The adjoining NT land enjoys upwards of 520k visitors per year with a current rate of growth at 10% per year despite a policy of no active marketing or promotional events. – for everyone – for ever!

Please see diagram below of the long stretch of National Trust protected coastland. Sherleys farm is positioned Northwest of Fan Bay.

This exposed spot, isolated from any buildings, well outside the village confines, in the middle of such beauty on protected chalk grasslands and farmers' fields, 780m from the cliff edge, 1.2k from South Foreland Valley Lighthouse and 2.5k from Dover Castle is no place for any new settlement.

Please see attached satellite view from Google map with Sherley's farm circled in red indicates how isolated and unsuitable it is for any development.

Dover Heritage Strategy, updated June 20, recognises the Gateway to England and the White cliffs of Dover as of outstanding significance and grants it protection. In addition, this Strategy recognises this area as being of outstanding historical interest with its second world war defence constructions.

This application site should be surveyed and listed properly before any groundwork could be considered. The road: Upper Road has a 60m/hour limit, has dangerous curves and is narrow. It is not suitable for trafficking in mobile homes and definitely not suitable for pedestrians. There are no footpaths on that side of the road connecting to Dover or St Margaret's, no street lighting or access to public transport.

Gypsy/Traveller site - The Parish Council do not understand why this site is being put forward for 3 gypsy/travellers' sites. The Gypsy Traveller Potential site assessment for Dover 2020, which has been revised to cover the period 2020 – 2040 recognises need and has identified sufficient sites within the district. This has been strengthened in the new local plan which is currently on track to commence the regulation 19 engagement process in March.

Gypsy-Traveller-Potential-Sites-assessment-March-2020.pdf (dover.gov.uk)

A substantiable Gypsy and travellers' site should recognise the particular vulnerability of caravans and not be sited in exposed areas of high wind. The councillors were also concerned to recognise the proposed site plan could be seen as a first step as the design appeared such that it was meant to accommodate more sites.

Wanstone Farm -

St Margarets Parish Council strongly supports | - 22/00018 | Alteration to existing vehicular access, formation of car park with 150 spaces, replacement fence and associated landscaping | Land West Of Wanstone Court And South East Of Upper Road St Margarets At Cliffe CT15 6HY

The Parish Council have been working alongside the National Trust since 2018 to improve the situation along Upper Road. This is an important route into the village and suffers with bad parking, congestion, and dangerous driving. A lot of the traffic is caused by people visiting the White Cliffs of Dover, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB and not by local access. Kent's Heritage Coast was named by the Lonely Planet Travel Guides 2022 as second only to Stonehenge in the top 10 regions in the World to Visit. Despite a policy of no active marketing or promotional events by the National Trust the number of visitors to its site is increasing.

In 2020 we worked together with the National Trust and Highways to put down double yellow lines along Upper Road to solve some of the dangerous parking.

These displaced cars will park somewhere, and this proposal gets them off the road to allow safer access to the village. The existing car park is not sufficient and cannot be enlarged. Roadside parking is dangerous.

Fortunately, the proposed site was used last summer under the "28 day rule" or we would, on occasions, have had deadlock along this stretch of road.

We are convinced that the National Trust have considered fully the effect on the AONB, the screening, the heritage, the planting, and the habitat and this proposal will relieve pressure on the SSSI. We approve that there will be no light pollution. We believe that this carefully planned management of visitors to the site will prevent harm to the AONB in the long term and reduce the problems experienced on Upper Road.