

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS-AT-CLIFFE

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 11th April 2022 at 7pm, at St Margaret's Village Hall.

Present : Cllrs Rebecca Simcox (in the chair), A Newton, George Simcox, P Blake, T Gilham, A Fielding, J Harris together with Clerk. County Cllr Steve Manion and District Cllrs Martin Bates and Oliver Richardson in attendance.

Public participation:-

Peter Wells advised the PC that, following some abusive/threatening behaviour at the doctor surgery, this may be under threat of closure.

Peter Wells advised there is a manhole cover which is very loose in Well Lane near the entrance of the King George V Field - this is an unadopted road but Clerk will report to Highways.

Sandy Liggins - advised that the 3 heritage lamp-posts (outside the Church, at Post Office Corner and on corner of Reach Road) are looking tired and in need of painting. Cllr Blake will speak to maintenance contractor in this regard.

David Hall - reported various potholes including one near Langdon Close in Reach Road, two further holes just beyond the dip at bottom of Station Road.

1. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 14th March 2022, having been circulated to all Councillors, were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.	
2. Declarations of interest - Cllr Blake declared an interest in matters pertaining to the White Cliffs Hotel; Cllr Fielding also declared an interest in the White Cliffs Hotel matters.	
3. Reports from County / District Councillors ● County Cllr Steve Manion - <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ He confirmed he has been lobbying on traffic issues, including the use of Manston for parking of freight vehicles.○ He confirmed that KCC have a dedicated web page on their website regarding helping and housing Ukrainian refugees.○ Clerk cited the 4.5 year time lag for dealing with new PROW footpath requests and Cllr Manion will look into this.○ David Hall once again raised the issue of the flooding in Reach Road which Cllr Manion will follow up. District Councillors - <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Written report provided by District Councillors (attached to minutes). Cllr R Simcox advised of the disappointment of losing the Community Warden who is moving away from the service. He has been an asset to the village. It is not sure if he will be replaced; in the meantime the contact of his team leader is David Harnes.	Clerk to deal
4. Clerk Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Following receipt of Lottery grant of £3,384 re phone box, first £600 paid re refurbishment of box - further payments to be made as required.	

- Kent Highways re white line request for Sea Street (ref. 621005) - “works being programmed”.
- Parish Council “hub” now closed.
- As per email from Laura Wilkins, process re registering new footpaths from Droveaway Gardens to Sea Street now complete.
- Posters re pop-up cafe at KGV Pavilion placed on boards.
- Further email received re “complaint” but nothing substantive since received.
- Zurich Insurance have now provided the name/contact of an account manager to liaise re Jubilee event.
- New fees re Cemetery now on website.
- Bin on Alexander Field - request made (ref 819865) - nothing heard.
- Resident from 1 The Freedown telephoned re “vine” growing from behind property - Cllr Blake had looked at site. Clerk confirmed this was Parish Council land and he will speak to maintenance contractor re any works.
- Tree work at Kingsdown Road/Chapel Lane Pond completed and invoice paid.
- Manhole/drainage cover reported (ref. 628743) - this has been resolved.
- £600 finally received re filming in South Foreland Valley by Building Society last year.
- Phone call received from Kingsdown Road resident re “littering” following strimming of bank - Cllr Blake had dealt.
- Request re erecting a tent in the Bay.
- Response from Planning Enforcement re Seapoint House - they advise no planning breach seen re exterior wall.
- Date for footpath walk - Clerk asked to place this on agenda for September.
- Defibrillator at Alexander Pavilion - Cllr Fielding will liaise with Club re placing this outside the pavilion (currently locked in pavilion and of no use to public).
- Confirmed to Claringboulds re acceptance of quote for KGV boundary walk buttress repair. Cllr Blake advised this has been done, invoice awaited.
- Bradleys have replied, following 2 chasing emails. Queries sent to other side, reply now awaited.

Cllr Blake will liaise

Clerk to deal

Cllr Fielding to deal

Clerk to deal with invoice

Clerk to monitor response

5. **Queen’s Platinum Jubilee**

- A new “plan of attack” with allocated tasks and responsibilities to be undertaken.

- Cllr Newton will liaise with vendors/stall holders together with Dover Security Services.
- Cllr Fielding will undertake risk assessment.
- Cllr R Simcox will deal with ordering/funding questions.
- Cllr Harris will deal with stage activities (Cllr G Simcox had been advised of two volunteers who may be prepared to act as stage managers).
- Cllr Blake will liaise with Cricket Club re power/use of pavilion etc.
- Cllr Gilham is dealing with fencing required around cricket wicket and arena.
- Clerk will deal with issue of insurance and licences required.

- Cllr G Simcox has designed spreadsheet (in shared drive) showing all parties contacted/attendees - he would like to have one form providing all details to be sent to all attendees.
- First aiders to be arranged (St John Ambulance too expensive).
- Idea of bouncy castle to be investigated.
- 2 bands have confirmed so far, Cllr G Simcox is keen to get more performers.
- Cllr Gilham raised the question of singing of the national anthem - Church choir could be involved.
- Tables - use of Scout tables + those from village hall (Mrs Liggins will speak to Hall Management).
- Further "taskforce" meeting to be undertaken next week after Easter break.

Cllr G Simcox to arrange meeting

6. **Planning**

(a) Cllrs R Simcox and Fielding had met with Lucinda Roach, DDC Planning Officer, in relation to current Glebe Field planning application. She had advised that the proposal in its current form is not acceptable and she is minded to refuse under delegated powers. She had confirmed that the field would have greater protection in the new Local Plan as an open space. After contact, the applicant had provided a further informal proposal which again was not acceptable. Cllr Oliver Richardson advised PC that ongoing dialogue between her and the Parish Council would be a good idea; Cllr R Simcox said the meeting had been useful.

(b) White Cliffs Hotel planning applications 20/01566 and 011567 - at the Planning Committee meeting these were both approved - 4 in favour/4 against with the Chair making the casting vote.

Attendees Cllr R Simcox and A Newton expressed their extreme disappointment at the lack of questioning and apparent disinterest by the Committee members, despite being provided with a plethora of planning objections provided by a professional planning expert. Cllr R Simcox proposed that the Parish Council investigate the idea of a Judicial Review into the process behind the approval. IT WAS RESOLVED that this be taken forward, initially to seek advice on the strength of the case in this respect (on a pro bono basis).

Cllrs R Simcox and Newton to investigate legal advice

(c) The following comments were made on the applications considered:-

21/01402 Erection of detached dwelling (existing dwelling to be demolished) -
The Edge, Bay Hill *Strongly object - The Parish Council confirms its previous statements of objection to this application.*

The amended plans do not address the issues of unacceptable bulk and height of the proposed replacement building and consequent harmful effect on the landscape in this Conservation Area. The location is particularly sensitive to obtrusive constructions. The existing house sits well in the landscape scene as demonstrated in the photos already supplied by the Parish Council. This proposed larger and higher dwelling with open structured balcony would cause significant visual impairment to the view from the promenade. There is no public compensatory benefit from the proposed replacement dwelling. Therefore the Parish Council strongly objects.

22/00349 Erection of a two storey rear extension, first floor side window, alterations/
replacement to window/doors, changes to external materials, glass balustrade
and brise soleil to front elevation, installation of swimming pool, and 8 solar
panels to roof -
The Pines, Cavanagh Road *No objections*

22/00376 Erection of two storey side/rear extensions with dormer windows to front and
rear roofslopes, integral double garage and rear stepped terrace (existing
rear/side extensions, steps, garage and shed to be demolished) -
High Hills, 74 The Droveaway *No objections*

22/00385 Installation of 9no. ground mounted solar panels to rear -
Bay View, 8A The Droveaway *No objections*

22/00378 Erection of a single storey extension, decking and steps to existing garage
to facilitate conversion to ancillary art studio -
Ledgeland, 17 St Margarets Road *No objections*

22/00427 Erection of single storey rear and side extensions -
7 Reach Road *No objections*

22/00423 Removal of one branch of a Sycamore subject of Tree Preservation
Order No. 1976/1 -
9 Millfield *Defer to Tree Officer*

Clerk asked to approach DDC with a proposal to place Tree Preservation Orders on
mature trees on Glebe Field

Clerk to investigate

7. South Foreland Valley

- Bi-monthly report received from Mel Wrigley of White Cliffs Countryside Project (attached to minutes). Cllr Newton reported that 3 German camper vans had been moved on from the area by Dover Security Services, together with two tents. Reported smell seems to be coming from reed beds. Cllr Newton is to speak to maintenance contractor re fencing off small parcel of land owned by PC, currently unfenced.

8. Re Proposal for Village Car Park / Church Clean-up

- Proposal received from Martin Hunt for a litter pick/general tidy at the village car park, bordering and including St Margarets. Martin would like to plant a living hedge along the border after clearance. IT WAS RESOLVED that the Parish Council would support this initiative, to include the cost of a small skip.

Clerk to advise Mr Hunt and check cost re skip

9. Finance

(a) The following payments were approved:-

D A Tree Surgeons	£2,655.00
Trevor May Contractors Ltd re tennis courts	£570.00
M Robinson planning report	£250.00
Dover Security Services re South Foreland Valley	£518.40
Castle Water	£57.67
Credit card (Land Registry fee)	£40.00
P Quittenden re phone box	£600.00
Wight Computers Ltd re website	£171.59
R Purchase - March invoice	£1,000.00
Castle Water	£11.31
Mrs R Simcox re Warden card/gift	£33.91
Mr I Miller - March invoice	£2,325.00
NEST - Council/Clerk	£200.85
Jane Cook - March salary	£1,253.97
Office expenses	£29.49
H M Revenue and Customs	£254.72
Google Cloud - monthly fee	<u>£46.00</u>
	£10,028.91

(b) Clerk had provided copy of annual summary of accounts for year ended 31 March 2022, together with Register of Assets. IT WAS RESOLVED that the Register be adopted. Clerk will prepare and provide Annual Return at May meeting, following meeting with internal auditor.

Clerk to prepare and arrange meeting - to be on agenda for next month

(c) IT WAS RESOLVED that the Section 137 grant application by Pegasus Playscheme be approved at £1,000.

Clerk to advise and make payment

(d) IT WAS RESOLVED that grazing rights for Old Bottom Freedown return to pre-lockdown levels at £1,100 per annum.

Clerk to make contact and arrange

10. Correspondence

- Steve Manion re Free School Meal vouchers over Easter.
- Steve Manion - decision taken to keep the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) Booking System.
- Ms H Watson - further email.
- DDC Planning Dept re refusal on application for caravan siting at Sherleys Farm.
- Dan Bruce, Public Transport Manager KCC re bus shelter grants.
- Peter Wallace, DDC Planning - apology for delay in response (White Cliffs).
- Kent Highways re micro-surfacing of Granville Road.

- Forwarded message - Ian Miller re extra hours at Burial Ground.
- Martin Hunt re proposal for litter pick/tidy up of car park / Church grounds.
- James Jenkinson, Greentech - "thank you" re meeting attendance.
- Stephen Noddings - team leader contact email following his departure.
- Laura Wilkins, Public Rights of Way re two new claimed footpaths.
- Jenny Whitaker re DDC decision on White Cliffs Hotel.
- Action with Communities in Rural Kent - Stakeholder Survey.
- KALC re bus funding reduction consultation.
- James Jenkinson Greentech re public exhibition responses.
- Planning Enforcement - response re Seapoint House.

11. **Highways**

- Cllr R Simcox advised that she and Cllr Fielding have a meeting arranged with rep from Kent Highways on 22nd April at 9am. They will compare notes before meeting to check on highway priorities. (Cllr Gilham advised that if very high figures are quoted for any highway works, that a copy of the "bill of quantities" be sought.

12. **CCTV**

- Cllr Blake advised that he is awaiting a quotation from a local man re upgrading the current CCTV system, following bouts of vandalism on the tennis courts recently. It was agreed that the whole system needs to be looked at-updated. Cllr G Simcox asked if there was any merit in linking in to to the DDC system.

13. **Village Maintenance / Matters affecting the Parish**

- Playing Field inspection undertaken by Cllr Blake. Most issues now resolved, although Playdale still to fix the swing poles. It was agreed that he would speak to his contact to arrange the annual ROSPA inspection. Clerk advised that new bin at Alexander Field has been requested (again).
- Clerk asked that maintenance contractor be asked to replace perspex in noticeboard at village hall.
- DDC and KCC both have dedicated pages on their websites re Ukrainian refugees.
- Position re resignation of Warden - unsure if this position will be re-filled.
- Cllr Newton raised the question of the path being blocked which leads alongside Jessamine Cottage to village car park (by a large caravan and piles of logs). Clerk will liaise with DDC in this respect.

Cllr Blake to make contact

Clerk to deal

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9 p.m.

MEETING REPORT FOR ST MARGARET'S AT CLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL ON 11 TH APRIL 2022

TRAFFIC SITUATION

On 18th March P&O made all sea crews on the Calais run redundant and replaced them with cheaper agency staff. From that date queues of HGVs into Dover started to build up with TAP being triggered almost every day, invariably from early morning to late evening. The issue came to a head at 3.57hrs on Friday 31 st March when TAP was triggered and has not been stood down since. The town was essentially gridlocked last weekend not just because of the P&O decision which had taken out half the port's capability but also due to appalling weather conditions, insufficient police and highway resources, damage to one DFDS vessel and the removal of another from service for a refit plus the start of the Easter Getaway with a huge increase in tourist traffic. The teams in KRF managed to bring this under control last Sunday and have since managed to keep traffic in Dover flowing through the continuous use of TAP and Brock together with an increase in police resources. It is anticipated that these controls will have to remain in place until after the Easter holidays and there remains no firm date as to when P&O will resume sailings

FLY TIPPING PROSECUTIONS

A 30-year-old man from Folkestone was sentenced to a 12-month community order and must complete 100 hours unpaid work and ordered to pay £1,498 in clean-up costs after pleading guilty to four offences of fly tipping across the Dover district. Dover District Council's Environmental Crime Team linked the man to all four offences which occurred between 18-31 March 2021 at Richborough Road, Ash; Updown Road, Ham; Undercliffe Road, Kingsdown; and Grove Road in Preston

In a separate case brought by Dover District Council, a 64 year-old man from Deal entered guilty pleas to two offences of fly-tipping and was ordered to pay £848 at Folkestone Magistrates court on 28 March 2022. The case was brought by DDC following an investigation into dumped loft insulation material at The Beach in Walmer and at Dover Road, Guston which occurred in October 2019.

RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT FARE – 27 TH APRIL (10AM TO 4PM)

Hosted at St Mary's Parish Centre, Cannon St in Dover the event brings together a wide range of

local employers and support organisations to help anyone:

looking for another job at sea

re-training for a new career

thinking about going back to college

brushing up on job seeking skills

looking for help navigating finance & benefits

As well as those made redundant at P&O Ferries the event is open to the wider community, so please share with local contacts!

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.

Ongoing. Asset management still undertake a programme of repairs as previously mentioned in early Spring once the ground has had time to dry out. Now we are in the Spring we will monitor developments and report back to you at the next meeting.

2). Glebe Close and White Cliffs Hotel Planning Applications

The White Cliffs Hotel application came before the Planning Committee last month and was unfortunately passed through the casting vote of the chairman. A decision on Glebe Close is still awaited.

3). 36 and 38 The Droveaway

This is not going away, and the builders have submitted another request for variation of conditions. DOV/21/01170. There is an interesting challenge from one of the residents concerning the implications of an application under Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act. Essentially a developer can apply for retrospective planning conditions under this Section but guidance from LUHC would tend to indicate they can do so only once. I am seeking clarification of this from Planning Enforcement.

4). Pine Edge

Planning refused the application on 1 st March on Highway grounds. We understand that Brendan has requested them to look at other infringements particularly with respect to the balcony and the garage which is not a garage. On 28 th March enforcement wrote to the landowners providing them with seven days to provide options to resolve breaches of conditions around the boundary treatments and raised platform. (Planning permission for the other raised platform and outbuilding has been refused). An email of 8 th April confirmed that the beech tree has TPO and the applicant could be prosecuted if any damage results to it. I have requested an update on the owner's response

to the enforcement officer's email of 28 th March.

5). Character Appraisal

SBMCA have requested some assistance from DDC with funding. We have discussed with Planning who are retendering the contract at £11,500. This remains ongoing.

February/March 2022

White Cliffs Countryside Partnership (WCCP)

A recap of works

In addition to general site management and administration we have done, the following tasks listed below have been carried out over the last couple of months:

Friday 11th February, WCCP Team task day. Lighthouse field

- Expanding grassland corridors between lower lighthouse field and adjacent National trust land, along beech road by removing the mature scrub, with use of chainsaws.
- Brushcutting areas of rank grassland adjacent to grassland corridors to improve wildflower richness.

Lighthouse Road Field, valley bottom and slope up to Beach Road.

Team group task clearing the scrub to open up the grassland 'ride' along the track from the bench back towards the S. Foreland Lighthouse direction.

Pines Field, Work carried out to reduce scrub. Grassland area was given an early cut to enhance wildflower richness and keep nutrient levels down by reducing scrub and ranker grass species

Central compartment, clearing fallen trees from footpaths and access points after strong winds occurred during early March.

- Placing cut materials at fire site to be burnt at a later date.

Monday 21st February morning site patrol after strong winds

- No sign of any dangerous or fallen trees across pathways

Thursday 24th February

- Cancelled due to bad/dangerous weather.
- clearing fallen trees from path after more strong winds, same area some fell as previous month.

Thursday 3rd March, Volunteer task, Pines field

- Grassland management, cutting large area of the lower compartment, with use of ride on Flail mower and brushcutters. Watch this space for cowslips!
- Removal of prolific tree saplings in the grassland, with use of bowsaws and loppers by volunteers
- Raking up cut materials
- 5 volunteers present

Volunteers: Stuart, Dave, Chris, Phil, Rob and Monica, mowing and raking the cut grass in the pines compartment.

Wednesday 9th March clearing more fallen trees from path after strong winds, like this Ash tree.

- Three sycamore trees were also felled in preparation for a large poplar tree to be taken down in the approaching week, deemed as a potentially high risk, that could be a danger to the public and may cause damage to site infrastructure in the future.

(Central compartment).

Thursday 17th March, Central compartment

- leaning white poplar that was a potential risk on site and was felled with use of chainsaws.

Tuesday 29th March

- All 12 Dexter cattle were moved off site back to the farm from the central compartment.

Thursday 31st March, Pines Field.

- Clearing cut materials from previous Volunteer task and placing at fire site in preparation for the next task.

Grazing cattle in the valley

After such a productive period with the 12 Dexter cattle that have been grazing in the valley since last year, we have now moved them off site and won't be bringing back on to graze until late summer-early autumn.

We are very happy with the grazing levels the Dexter's have left on site before their departure, they have produced a much greater range of sward and structure within the grassland and other various vegetation on site. We are really looking forward to seeing what positive impacts this may have on the wildlife in the valley this coming season.

Notable Wildlife Observations.

03/03/22 - Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) Seen at the bottom of pines field.

09/03/22 - Brimstone butterfly (*Gonepteryx rhamni*) x4

31/03/22 - Singing male firecrest ((*Regulus ignicapilus*) singing at the bottom of pines field in large Yew tree (*Taxus baccata*)

31/03/22 - False Oxslip (*Primula vulgaris* x *veris*)

Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*).

Cowslips (*Primula veris*) and False Oxslip (*Primula vulgaris* x *veris*) lower Pines Field.

Report by Jason Moule and Melanie Wrigley,

WCCP.09/04/2022