

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS-AT-CLIFFE

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 9th May 2022 at 7pm at St Margaret's Hall.

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

Laura Cory also in attendance re the St Margaret's Nursery. and Brendan Wells on behalf of the St Margaret's Bay Conservation Association.

Public Participation - no points raised during this section of the meeting, although Viv Verren on behalf of the Church had expressed a wish to express thanks to David Hall for his work in the Churchyard.

1. IT WAS RESOLVED that Cllr Rebecca Simcox be elected as Chair of the Parish Council for the year 2022-23.	
2. IT WAS RESOLVED that Cllr Anna Newton be elected as Vice Chair for the year 2022-23.	
2(a) This was brought forward on the agenda at the request of the Chair. St Margaret's Nursery Laura Cory attended the meeting to express the practical problems and financial challenges facing the Nursery. Her full report is attached to the minutes. County Cllr Steve Manion has a meeting at KCC tomorrow when he will raise this issue and report back to the Parish Council.	
3. IT WAS RESOLVED that Cllrs Newton and Harris be elected as representatives to serve on the Dover Area Committee of the Kent Association of Local Councils for the year 2022-23.	
4. IT WAS RESOLVED that Cllr Fielding serve as a representative on the Village Hall Management Committee for the year 2022-23.	
5. IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint Jane Cook (Clerk) as the Responsible Financial Officer for 2022-23.	
6. IT WAS RESOLVED that the following subscriptions be agreed for the year 2022-23:- Kent Association of Local Councils Campaign for Protection of Rural England Fields in Trust Kent Wildlife Trust Kent County Playing Fields Association	

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Parish Council would continue with the payment of £5,000 for the year 2022-23 to the White Cliffs Countryside Project in respect of ongoing management of the South Foreland Valley.

7. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 11th April 2022, having been circulated to all Councillors, were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.

8. There were no declarations of interest on items on the agenda.

9. This item deferred to the Jubilee event.

10. **Reports from Councillors / PCSO**

- District Cllr Martin Bates provided written report ahead of meeting (attached to minutes).
- County Councillor Steve Manion cited the following KCC initiatives:-
 - Operation Brock is still ongoing - this has meant that planned M2 closures have been deferred for time being.
 - Ukraine - still continue to offer refugee support.
 - “No mow May” - encouraging people to leave their laws unmown to promote wildlife habitat.
 - Cllr Gilham asked if any works had been put in place re the continued and long-outstanding problem with flooding on Reach Road. Cllr Manion will seek answers to this.
 - He confirmed that a recent encroachment of traveller caravans at Waldershare was being dealt with by KCC.
- PCSO River Jarvis had provided a written report (attached to minutes). Following a recent incident of vandalism on the tennis courts, CCTV had shown 3 boys damaging the nets. He will take this forward in liaison with Schools Officer at DBGS. He confirmed that he believed Martin Dodds was currently covering as Community Warden for St Margaret’s before a permanent replacement is found.

11. **Clerk Report**

- Kent Highways re white line request (621005) - site still reads “works being programmed”. Clerk to monitor
- Re email from Steve Manion re registering of footpaths - no shorter timescales possible.
- Bin on Alexander Field - request made (ref 819865) - nothing heard despite two requests - no feedback. Clerk to follow up
- Footpath walk - to be on September agenda.
- Repair to wall at King George V completed and invoice paid. Landlords are shown as insolvent on Companies House website.

- Reply from Bradleys re land transfer in Thorne Estate (South Foreland Valley). Cllr Newton will read through documents and Clerk to then respond. Further invoice from Bradleys to be received in due course.
- Complaint from lady in Nelson Park Road re cutting of verge - passed to maintenance contractor.
- Via Ian Miller - he would like to purchase 6 traffic cones for when he is working at the Cemetery - approved. He also would like a steer by the PC on the adding of solar lights to grave spaces. It was confirmed that any such lights should be removed.
- Report received from "The Circuit" that the defibrillator at the village hall had been used. All checked and reported OK, with quarterly report undertaken to them.
- Have confirmed to Martin Hunt re litter clearance at village car park - he will be in touch.
- Playdale invoice received at £3,302.95 (£2,752.46 + VAT) for all repairs and new Tango seat - paid.
- DDC Tree Officer has confirmed re Glebe Field TPO request (per email).
- Noticeboards - village hall one taken away for repair. Key broken in one at Nelson Park - new keys ordered and maintenance contractor to investigate if key can be retried from noticeboard.
- Re potholes reported - Station Road "work being programmed", near Langdon Close "works completed".
- Grant of £1,000 paid to Pegasus Playscheme.
- £1,100 received from Braeside re grazing at Old Bottom Freedown.
- Response from DDC re path next to Jessamine Cottage - not part of the car park. Clerk was asked to write to residents asking them to remove the obstructions and to reinstate the boundary wall/fence.
- Request from Cricket Club re extra bins which Clerk will take forward. Re recycling collection, Club would have to employ a waste company.
- Re damage to Bowls Club gate/wall - all now sorted and damage paid for.

Clerk to deal

Clerk to liaise with Registrar

Clerk to follow up

Clerk to write

Clerk to deal

12. Planning

Brendan Wells gave a brief resume of the Planning Committee's consideration of application re "The Edge" - this was approved. Both he and Cllr Richardson had spoken in objection to the proposal, based purely on material planning considerations. Despite both citing traffic problems and a lack of a construction management plan, no questions were raised on this issue. The Planning Officer had described the proposal as "finely balanced". On a previous application for Sholden, Councillors had quoted that a response by Sholden Parish Council in objection to a planning application should be given weight as the local point of government; no such comment was made for St Margaret's Parish Council.

St Margaret's Bay Conservation Association - Mr Wells gave a brief overview of the current situation - went to full tender in February - of those received, only one was affordable to SMBCA (DDC were not happy with the tenderer). Other two received were over budget. DDC will now follow their own procurement process and it has been confirmed that they will pay any tender accepted in excess of the £11.5k max. These tenders should be returned by Friday.

The question of a judicial review in respect of the decision on White Cliffs Hotel is still under discussion with Solicitors - further report to be at next meeting.

The following comments were made on the applications considered:-

22/00274 T1 Beech tree - crown reduce by approximately 3-4 metres in height and 2 -3 metres laterally; T2 - Beech - fell, both subject of Tree Preservation Order No 14 of 2006 -
Timbers, 16 Granville Road *Defer to Trees Officer*

22/00477 Erection of a detached dwelling, new vehicle access and parking, construction of retaining and boundary walls -
Land At Old Chapel, Sea Street

The PC objects to this application as the proposed dwelling would result in a very cramped development in this location. The new build would obscure the historic Chapel and have a harmful effect on the street scene which is opposite the Conservation Area. The design is incongruous and out of character in this particular setting. The Parish Council has concerns that the part of the proposed building plot, adjacent to the bus shelter and BT Cabinets, is public land.

22/00540 Change of use from tearoom (Use class E(b)) to holiday let and food servery (Sui generis) -
Blue Bird Tea Rooms, 79 Granville Road *No objections*

13. **Finance and Accounts**

(a) The following payments made since April meeting were approved:-

Emma Rosen (re phone kiosk)	£476.16
Mr C Little - re South Foreland Valley	£29.57
Idverde Ltd - grasscutting	£192.74
Mr G Simcox - Jubilee banners	£132.54
Pegasus Playscheme - S137 grant	£1,000.00
Mrs R Simcox - Jubilee raffle tickets	£108.00
R C Claringbould & Sons Ltd - King George V boundary wall	£2,664.00
Castle Water - water rates	£64.99
R Purchase - April invoice	£1,847.40
Mr P Blake - keys/ink expenses	£44.83
Playdale Playgrounds Ltd - repairs/equipment	£2,752.46
Jane Cook - April salary	£1,336.22
Office expenses	£42.79
NEST - Pension (Clerk+ Council)	£232.94

<p>Castle Water - water rates Bandshop Sound & Light - stage re Jubilee HM Revenue & Customs Mr G Simcox - Cups etc for Jubilee</p> <p>Receipts:-</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Precept</td> <td align="right">£94,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tennis Club re works</td> <td align="right">£245.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Burial fee</td> <td align="right">£295.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grazing fee</td> <td align="right">£1,100.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Credit interest</td> <td align="right">51p</td> </tr> </table> <p>(b) Section 1 Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021-2022 was approved and duly signed by Chair.</p> <p>(c) Section 2 Accounting Statements 2021-2022 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021-2022 was approved and duly signed by Chair, having been signed by Clerk/RFO on 28 April 2022.</p> <p>(d) IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the Zurich Municipal quotation re insurance for the Council for a five year term at £2,602.92 per annum.</p> <p>(e) Re RNB quotation for upgrading of CCTV at King George V Field - 1 camera 2 MP system and new 16 channel DVR recorder - IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the quotation of £2,780.00. IT WAS ALSO RESOLVED to accept the quotation in respect of labour at £700. Cllr Blake will check re "exclusions".</p>	Precept	£94,000.00	Tennis Club re works	£245.00	Burial fee	£295.00	Grazing fee	£1,100.00	Credit interest	51p	<p>£11.31 £2,120.00 £347.56 £507.57</p> <hr/> <p>£13,911.08</p>	<p>Clerk to send completed AGAR to external auditor</p> <p>Clerk to contact Zurich and arrange</p> <p>Cllr Blake to liaise</p>
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<p>14. <u>Queen's Jubilee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clerk had provided schedule of costs already made - this was annotated with items yet to be paid for. Budget is £5,000 but this may be stretched in view of extra electrical work required at the King George V Pavilion for staging etc (£400). ● Cllr Blake will look at cost of "tarpaulins/covers" for cricket square. ● Cllr Newton confirmed that stallholders are coming forward - there is a good mix of stalls and people are responding well. She advised that the Church choir will not be performing given their performance on the following day. Idea of a Ukrainian stand was mooted. ● It needs to be checking re food on site - is this being cooked or just heated up? ● Agreed that a further taskforce meeting be set up for Monday 16th May at 11 a.m. 	
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<p>15. <u>Meeting with Highways Steward</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cllrs R Simcox and A Fielding had met with Highways Steward to discuss various issues and to look again at the Highway Improvement Plan (HIP). 	
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- Idea of a village-wide 20mph speed limit discussed - traffic survey in this respect could be carried out by Kent Highways.
- The question of further yellow lines extended in Sea Street was discussed and at Bay Hill/junction to allay inconsiderate parking.
- Updated HIP has been provided to KCC and they will return with suggestions and pricing of individual initiatives.

16. **Correspondence**

- Kent Highways re works to Granville Road. Work now undertaken but some problems remain - edges need sealing and some drains covered. During works, the buses stopped coming as they were unable to turn around.
- Agenda re KALC AGM + January minutes of Dover Area Committee.
- Sue Clark (Pegasus) - thank you for grant funds.
- Steve Manion re Community Warden replacement.
- Alice Sands, DDC Planning re South Sands House minor amendment.
- Martin Dunn DDC re obstruction near car park.
- Cllr Martin Bates re Members Grant for Jubilee.
- T Lamb re "fencing" at Chapel Lane Pond - now undertaken by R Purchase.
- Steve Manion re timescales for registering footpath changes.
- Mrs V Verren - request to paint Church handrails/gate - being looked at by R Purchase.
- Ritchie Hulks - request re confirmation of tenure for Cricket Club - completed by Clerk.
- Alice Calverley request re use of Madge Field for notice for Pines Gardens Jubilee event. Clerk had confirmed, requesting that notice is removed immediately after event.
- Minutes of KALC AGM 27 Apr.
- Complaint from resident re noise nuisance - Clerk had referred to DDC.
- Peter Wallace - re planning applications for Coastguard Cottages/White Cliffs Hotel.
- Peter Jull re White Cliffs Walking Festival - confirmed by Clerk that parking of 2 vehicles by marshalls near cattle grid on Lighthouse Road would be permitted.
- Dover and District Town/Council Evening - 7th June 6pm - Clerk and Cllr Blake to attend.
- Secretary of Cricket Club re litter bins/recycling bins. Clerk in liaison with DDC.

Clerk to contact Steve Manion to advise

Clerk to confirm

Clerk to liaise

17. **Reports**

- South Foreland Valley - nothing to report this month.
- St Margarets Nursery - covered above.
- Path adjacent to Jessamine Cottage - covered above.
- Minutes of KALC Dover Area Committee meeting - circulated to Councillors.
- Cllr Simcox provided a hard copy of the "Rural Round Up" free magazine provided by some local Parishes as an idea for future direction of village magazine.

18. **Village Maintenance**

- Playing field inspection - undertaken by Cllr Blake.
- Clerk asked to contact Playforce re ROSPA inspection.
- Re tree removed at back of Church path - this had been removed as it had been reported as diseased/dead by Tree Warden. Tree stump needs grinding out and new tree to be planted in autumn.
- Clerk had prepared suggested letters to Kingsdown Road residents re works to verge at end of Kingsdown Road.

Clerk to deal

Clerk to contact DDC

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

MEETING REPORT FOR ST MARGARET'S AT CLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL AT 06.45PM ON MONDAY
9th MAY 2022 (District Councillors)

COUNCILLOR'S GRANT FOR PLATINUM JUBILEE AWARDS

As part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations DDC have launched a members grant scheme. Each member has been allocated £500 to award to organisations in their ward to assist with Platinum Jubilee events/projects. We may approve multiple grants so long as the total does not exceed £500 per councillor. The grant scheme is now open and will shortly be promoted on the DDC website and social media accounts.

Before an organisation can apply for the grant they must contact their Councillor for approval.

1. When we approve the grant the organisation will need to complete an online application, the link is <https://forms.dover.gov.uk/jubilee>. They will need to upload a copy of their governing document (such as constitution) and a copy of a recent bank statement.

2. We will then be contacted by an officer from the Investment, Growth and Tourism team to verify that we have approved the grant.

3. The officer will then arrange payment.

If there is any of you who would like some financial assistance to assist you with your Jubilee plans then please let Ollie and I know.

CHURCH BREAK INS

There have recently been two church break ins in the ward. The first was a lectern at St Johns Church, Kingsdown and the second was a 12inch brass cross from the altar at St Martins of Tour in Guston. Both events took place around 2nd May. A person has been questioned concerning the former according to media reports.

LOCAL ISSUES

1). Repairs to St Margaret's Bay car park.

The worst area at the rear half of the car park between the speed humps has now been completed – this was carried out last week. The car park still needs some work and they are currently examining the budget to see whether they have the funds to go to the next stage.

2). Glebe Fields Planning Application

A decision on Glebe Close is still awaited.

3). 36 and 38 The Droveaway

There have been further complaints from neighbours of other infringements of conditions. The Planning Officer plans to visit the site next week and speak with them. I will later be having a one to one with him. There is a possibility that this application may return to the Planning Committee this month.

4). Pine Edge

Planning refused the application on 1st 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 28th 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 8th 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 28th 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

St. Margarets, Kingsdown and Guston April 2022

Information provided by: PCSO 61625 River Jarvis, DOVER CSU.

Crimes of note

06/04/22 – A2, Dover - Theft – Diesel was taken from a vehicle during the night.

07/04/22 – Guston – Traffic Offence – Vehicle was stopped, and driver was found to be in possession of cannabis

07/04/22 – Dover Road – Criminal Damage – Person has caused damage to property in excess of £5000

11/04/22 – St Margarets – Theft – Person has had their ring stolen

17/04/22 – Great Mongeham – Threats – Person has made threats to kill another person

18/04/22 – Kingsdown – Public Order – Person has verbally abused another person

19/04/22 – St Margarets – Theft – Person has left Nintendo switch unattended and when returned found it had been taken

27/04/22 – A2, Dover – Theft – Person has had number plate taken from their vehicle

29/04/22 – A258, Dover – Traffic Offence – Vehicle seized for driving with no insurance

Anti-social behaviour

06/04/22 – Deal - Nuisance Vehicle – Vehicle was seen to be driving through a field.

13/04/22 – St Margarets – Nuisance youths – Youths seen riding a small off-road bike along pavements

Good evening,

My name is Laura Cory and I'm the book-keeper at St. Margarets Nursery. I've been involved with the nursery for 19 years. I've been asked along today to give you a little bit of information regarding the plans and current circumstances at the village nursery.

Just for a bit of context let me give you a brief history of the nursery. The Nursery was started in 1992 and was initially run by the governors of St. Margarets CP School up until around 1996/1997. After that it was run as a separate unincorporated Charity, run by a committee made up of parents and interested parties. As of 9th April 2021, St Margarets Nursery became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation to offer greater protection to its Trustees. We employ 14 members of staff, most of whom are part time, and currently we have 42 children on our books the majority of whom are from the village or surrounding villages.

The nursery is made up of 6 mobile units which we inherited second hand in a poor state of repair in 2006 from KCC. Before this we rented a mobile unit from portacabin. These units are situated on the back of the school site. This is an ideal location for us as we work closely with the school and arrange a number of joint activities with the reception class. We act as a feeder for the school, and it's also ideal for parents dropping off older siblings. The units we inherited were originally being used as a nursery in Maidstone and were donated to us by KCC. We spent a lot of time and money refurbishing the building, with the premise that it would give us 15 years useful life. In 2006 KCC were able to assist with advice and funding to complete these works. Of the £100K spent on the refurbishment KCC and Surestart provided funding of £90,000, along with providing guidance with the necessary project managers and contractors.

Sixteen years later and the building is again in desperate need of refurbishment. Our major concern being the buildings' ability to stand up to winter weather and continued use.

We have had an initial quote from Lowrie brothers of £115K. However, this was some time ago and I'm assuming that the price would have increased due to the increase in building supplies.

This was to undertake

Repair and re-clad the outside of the building.

New WOODEN RAMPS (We've since had to replace 2 of them already as they were unsafe)

NEW DOORS:

INTERNAL WORKS:

NEW LIGHTING:.

SLIDING DOOR: in the middle of the building to join the two rooms

AC UNITS:

This is of course is just an initial quote. Finding other builders willing to quote or undertake work on mobile units is proving tricky.

Unfortunately, despite writing to numerous departments within KCC there appears to be little appetite for them to assist us with the renovations, despite the nursery providing a valuable service and fulfilling the council's statutory obligation to provide nursery places. I wrote to Jeni Smart the Senior Sufficiency Officer for South & West Kent and she wrote back saying that "in terms of financial support there is no funding available for refurbishment /building work".

According to the government KCC must ensure the availability of high-quality education, be this in the form of 15 hours free education for all 3 & 4 year olds, 15 hours for the most disadvantaged 2 year olds & 30 hours for working parents of 3-4 year olds. They do this through something called a provider agreement. In this agreement they agree to pay the nursery an hourly rate upto the child's free entitlement. This is currently set at £4.61 per hour for 3 & 4 year olds. In accordance with the agreement, we are not able to charge any additional cost. Despite that the hourly rate we charge for non-vouchered hours is £5.50 per hour. As you can imagine there are considerable costs associated with

running a nursery. All our staff have to be first aid trained, DBS checked, Safeguarding trained, food hygiene trained etc. When I first started at the nursery this was all training provided free by KCC, now this is training we have to fund. We also have to provide Legionella Risk Assessments, Fire Risk Assessments, Fixed Wire Reports, etc all from KCC approved providers. All our staff hold a NVQ Level 3 in Childcare or above, 3 have degrees, 3 have professional status qualifications. Despite that we can only afford to pay the majority of staff the minimum wage of £9.50. Early Years Education is severely underfunded, and because of the way funding is provided there is no ability to generate additional money to fund extensive building works. Last year was the first time in 6 years that we had a Net Gain in funds and ironically that was only because of Covid Grants.

We are still in the process of negotiating a 15-year lease with KCC for the land the portacabin is situated on, a process that was started before March 2020. KCC have also stated that if we intend to carry out work (even on a building they don't own??) they will require us to get specific "licences" from themselves, which apparently involves them charging us! And we can't apply for that until the lease is finalised. Nor can we apply for Funding until said permissions are in place.

Everyone always asks why don't you just build a brick building and in an ideal world this would be the dream. However, in the past KCC would only grant us a 5 year lease at a time so this was never a possibility. What I think would be the ideal solution was if KCC built a brick building on the site and rented it to us. I've spoken briefly to the headteacher at the school, and I got the impression that this is not something she would be against. In fact Helen Comfort is very supportive of the need to have a continued and sustainable Early Years Provision in the village. What I do find disappointing is that KCC managed to fund the complete rebuilding of Portal House in our village with no benefit to either the school or nursery, but seems unable to help with a provision that has provided a service for countless local families for nearly 30 years.

We have been exploring avenues of funding. Becky Dyer from the Dover District Community development Team came out to see us. She told us to look into Crowd Fund Kent which I did. KCC use a platform called SpaceHive to deliver its grants. However, the maximum you can apply for is £20K and to get this you have to crowdfund to match this amount. Spacehive charge a 5% platform fee, and also charge a 2.2% fee for each card transaction. To me it doesn't seem right that a private company is making this much money out of allocating Government Grant Money?

We are lucky that we enjoy the unstinting support from hard working trustees, parents and the local community who have already begun funding in earnest on our behalf. However, £115K is a lot of money to fund through raffles, cake sales, quiz nights and fun runs, and during these times of increasing austerity it does not feel appropriate to continually ask parents to contribute.

We are wondering if anyone can offer any assistance? Be this help with funding, putting us in touch with organisations that offer help with projects, any individuals who are able to offer project management or surveying advice or links with any companies that are able to work on commercial premises on KCC grounds.

We have been providing high quality nursery care for village children since 1992. We are a true community venture, who try very hard to foster a community spirit within the nursery so that the children feel involved in village life right from the start.

We would really like to continue providing this service in facilities that are fit for use for future generations of village children.

Thank you for taking the time to listen.