

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS-AT-CLIFFE

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 8th July 2024 at 7pm at St Margaret’s Hall.

Present: Cllrs R Simcox (in the chair); N Fulford; B Pearce; P Blake; A Fielding; A Wheeler; T Gilham, together with Clerk. (Apologies for absence received from Cllr Luckhurst (holiday).

Apologies received from District Cllr Martin Bates. County Cllr Steve Manion and District Cllr Oliver Richardson in attendance.

Public Participation:-

Peter Wells noted that Openreach appear to have reconnected a light to the telephone kiosk in Reach Road (PC owned). He reported a problem with the footpath/steps leading down to The Bay from the top of Bay Hill (near BT exchange). He was provided with the information for reporting to PROW.

David Hall - reported that manhole in Sea Street, in the dip opposite the flower container, should be inspected as it seems to be leaking. He also expressed disappointment that, on fixing some of the road surface in Upper Road recently when the road was closed, many potholes still exist. Following meeting with Tom Williams at Kent Highways, Chair explained that the work completed had been from a specific budget and the others come under the discretion of a different team/budget.

Penny Bailey - the railings in The Bay are already starting to rust, despite being painted fairly recently. Cllr Richardson agreed to take this back to DDC. Also reported the problems created recently by a Jewsons lorry delivering supplies to Seaways on Bay Hill, creating queueing traffic both ways on the hill.

Maria Fitzgerald - questioned if anything further had been heard re severe bus losses to the village. She is aware that bus timetables change again in September/October but unaware of the impact of those changes. County Cllr Steve Manion agreed to approach the Public Transport section at KCC in this respect. Clerk confirmed that a sheet of passenger numbers had been provided quite some time ago by Matthew Arnold (through Steve Manion) but these had little meaning and nothing further heard, particularly in regard to the “dog leg” idea proposed by the PC. Cllr Fulford agreed to liaise with Maria with the idea of forming an action group in this regard.

VJ from village stores - agreed that he would organise the Christmas celebrations, but would need lots of volunteers and other businesses to be involved. He will provide food for the event. Clerk confirmed that the Hall was booked for 30th November. Clerk to organise lottery licence through DDC for raffle.

1. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 10th June 2024, having been circulated to all Councillors, were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.	
2. Declarations of interest - none declared on agenda items.	
3. Reports from County / District Councillors <ul style="list-style-type: none">County Cllr Manion advised that next year’s budget is live for consultation until 8th August (he will email Clerk with link details). There is also the opportunity for members of the public to use a paper response and again he will provide details. KCC has joined forces with other authorities in the search for more foster carers, where there is currently a lack of people coming forward.	

- Re proposal for A258 working group - KCC Member for Transport Neil Baker has responded and Steve will chase him again by the end of the week, to then respond to the PC.
- He advised that there is now a specific “pothole website” created by KCC - he will provide details. On questioning re the recent Highways “mayhem” in the village created by road closures, he advised PC to write to KCC Leader Roger Gough.
- Cllr Gilham again raised the question of the traffic lights permanently left on green on the A256 and why these cannot be turned off until needed. Question was also raised as to why metal road signs are not removed when a job is finished - any left on the A2 are the responsibility of Highways England.
- Cllr Richardson - written report received (attached to minutes). Cllr Gilham asked why the proposed small works to alter the High Street layby had been quoted at such a high price - he will speak to Ovendens in this respect.

Cllr Gilham to deal

4. **Brendan Wells re Village Conservation Area**

- At a recent History Society talk, Brendan had noted interest in creating a Conservation Appraisal for the Conservation Area in the village (as created by STMBCA for the Bay area).
- He advised that the village is vulnerable, with the new Labour Government pushing for increased housing development. The Appraisal created for The Bay is now used by DDC when looking at planning applications for that area - the document provides planning officers with terms of reference.
- He suggested that a group be formed - maybe just one or two individuals to start with. Their own Appraisal was undertaken using £3k provided by the Parish Council and also a Members Grant of £1.5k from Cllr Steve Manion. He advised that a bid for funding could also be made to DDC.
- The boundary of the present village Conservation Area could be reviewed. Re Article 4 direction - this would come into play in a Conservation Area rather than allowing permitted development.
- Cllrs Wheeler and Fielding will take the idea forward and seek village interested parties.

Clerk to deal

Cllr Simcox noted that the property on the corner of Reach Road had yet to re-render the exterior wall.

Cllr Simcox questioned the deteriorating nature of the White Cliffs Hotel - agreed that email should be sent to Conservation Officer to see if anything can be done.

Clerk to write

5. **Housing Needs Survey**

- Cllr Fielding noted the response from English Rural Housing Association. Issues seem to have been experienced in prioritising applications from local people - nothing heard re property changes since 2020. Cllr Fielding will draft a response noting the need to be kept advised of any changes, the question of priority and any information on sub-letting of properties which is not permitted.
- He noted that Wingham Parish Council had negotiated with DDC to be “first choice” for local people in developments involving an element of affordable housing. There could be up to 30 potential houses when looking at the Local Plan sites for St Margaret’s. Agreed to write to Cllrs Edward Biggs and Pam Brivio at DDC, together with Ashley Roberts the Head of Planning Policy and Projects, and Rachel Collins the Strategic Housing Manager at DDC (to be cc’d to Cllrs Bates and Richardson).

Clerk and Cllr Fielding to liaise

Cllr Fielding will take forward

6. **Clerk Report**

- Cllr Manion has stated he will press Matthew Arnold re historic bus use numbers - nothing heard - several months have now passed.
- Community Warden agreed to approach DDC Housing Dept re trailing electric charging cables in Reach Close.
- Two meetings held with Tom Williams at Highways reinforcing problems with recent road closures.
- Councillors will have seen email response from Member Neil Baker re A258 working group - nothing further received.
- Defib at Bowls Club had already been installed inside the pavilion. Cllr Blake will liaise with Club about reinstalling outside the property to allow greater access.
- Nothing heard from Matthew Arnold via Steve Manion re historic bus numbers.
- All new paperwork prepared for Cemetery, with new fee sheets, rules, etc New print shop in Whitfield could copy ledgers via digital camera but would need to undertake a quotation for work.
- Reported to DDC re High Street streetlights - DDC are to replace bulbs as these are faulty.
- Re Valley poplar trees - now will not be undertaken before September at the earliest.
- Letter sent to English Rural re Ash Grove allocation / priority - response received.

Cllr Blake to deal

- Cllr Wheeler attended Introduction to Planning workshop - she had found this useful but things may change with the new Government's drive for housebuilding.
- Re water trough on The Front - Castle Water reacted quickly in taking direct debit. The reading was not as far out as anticipated but new meter reading with them courtesy of Cllr Pearce. (Given high reading, this may be due to continued estimates or there may be a leak). Cllr Pearce will continue to keep an eye.
- Problem with lights at Reach Road toilets reported by Clerk to DDC on 7th April - they responded on 14th June!
- New Clerk booked on "Nuts and Bolts" course.
- As advised by Tom Williams, the question re the closure of Sea Street on 16th September has been raised, asking for traffic management.
- Re suggestion of Royal Mail PO box number for new Clerk - this would be £42.60 per month, whether delivered or collected. It was agreed that a physical postbox be placed at the village hall for this purpose - Cllr Fielding will speak to the Hall Management Committee in this respect.

Cllr Pearce to deal

Cllr Fielding to deal

7. **Planning**

(a) Planning application for 24/00583 for Chart HUse, 5A St Margaret's Road was duly ratified.

(b) The following comments were made on the applications received:-

24/00495 Rainwater goods to be refurbished and replaced to external envelope of building -
Bay Hill Close, Bay Hill *No objections*

24/00659 Erection of single storey extension, alterations to windows to rear and left side elevations (existing conservatory to be demolished) -
Temple Cottage, 49 The Droveaway *No objections*

24/00655 Removal of 3 no existing antennas, relocation of 3no existing antennas, relocation of 1no exiting dish, installation of 3no new antennas and associated upgrades -
Swingate Transmission Tower, 1 Jubilee Way *No objections*

24/00654 Removal of 3no existing antennas 50.7m AGL, relocation of 3no existing antennas 50.7m AGL, relocation of 1no existing 0.3m dish 50.7m AGL, installation of 3no new antennas 50.7m AGL and associated ancillary upgrades -
Swingate Transmission Tower, 1 Jubilee Way *No objections*

24/00704 Fell one Elm the subject of Tree Preservation Order No 1 of 2023 -
Berkeley, 9 Granville Road *Defer to Trees Officer*

(c) Nothing further heard re Glebe Field. Cllr Simcox advised she had heard from ex MP Natalie Elphicke who had continued to chase the Charity Commissioners on the Bay Trust. It was agreed to investigate the idea of following the complaints procedure for the Commissioners. It was also mooted that new MP be approached.

Cllr Simcox to deal

6. Finance and Accounts

The following payments since June were approved:-

Google Cloud - monthly fee	
Woodcraft UK Ltd - benches x 2	£66.00
Dover Security Ltd - Valley and D-Day	£4,158.72
Castle Water Ltd	£540.00
Trevor May Contractors Ltd - tennis courts	£585.75
Castle Water Ltd	£11,130.00
S M Ford - soldiers re D-Day	£4.78
R Purchase - general maintenance	£70.00
R Purchase - Cemetery	£2,331.50
NEST - Clerk and Council re pension	£200.00
KALC - course	£256.32
KALC - course	£60.00
Lynne Hopwood - cleaning	£60.00
Jane Cook - June salary	£152.00
Jane Cook - office	£1,562.03
HMRC	£20.00
Credit card - ink	£372.04
	£12.40

	£21,581.63

Receipts:-

Credit interest 9 June	£166.10
D-Day (cash)	£876.40
D-Day (square reader)	£125.75

Clerk agreed to email Ross Purchase monthly invoices from now on.

Clerk to deal

IT WAS RESOLVED that £209.31 from Cemetery to Current Account to cover this month's expenses.

Clerk to deal

IT WAS RESOLVED to accept quotation from D A Tree Surgeons for £1,885.00 for tree works at Reach Road Pond.

Clerk to deal

Breakdown of funds raised through D-Day events provided - Clerk now to make payment to Royal British Legion of £1,011.97.

Clerk to deal

9. **Councillor Responsibilities**

Following discussion, individual areas of responsibility were allocated (sheet attached to minutes).

10. Item re contingency planning for Cemetery Registrar to appear on September agenda.

Clerk to place on agenda

11. **Correspondence**

- Richard Haynes reply re white poplars.
- Neil Baker - re setting up of A258 working group.
- Tracy Evans - re fishing in the Bay.
- Simon Creed re defibrillator at Bowls Club.
- Openreach re works on 10 July at end of Lighthouse Road.
- KCC re closure of Upper Road Guston on 17 Jun.
- Anna Newton re Civic Cemetery.
- KCC - follow up email re small piece of land at Swingate - Clerk can now confirm approval.
- Richard Beckett re traffic in Reach Road.
- Andrea Kourellias re path in The Avenue - since cleared.
- Lorna Hunt re overgrown footpath - since cleared.
- Rob Hay re flower bed surround opposite village shop. Resident had approached DDC - he will come back to Clerk if nothing heard.
- Sophie Bramble - June newsletter.
- Sonia Simmons - re trees to rear of Reach Road pond.
- Jennifer and Roger Crisp re land on Sea Street.
- Streetworks SE - re closure of Cripps Lane from 19th August.
- RACE re meeting at Shepherdswell 10th July (Cllrs Wheeler, Fielding and Gilham will attend).

Clerk to deal

Clerk to monitor

12. **Reports**

- Cllrs Fulford and Pearce had met with Richard Haynes of White Cliffs Countryside Project re South Foreland Valley. Valley is generally in a good state although recent rain has meant the grass is long (which encourages wildflowers and wildlife). They continue to work on paths / gates. Cllr Fulford is to arrange a meeting in say mid August with David Hart and Ranger Jason to get an overall feel for the whole area. The cattle will be moving back to the Valley towards the end of summer. A lack of volunteers continues to hinder clearance progress - proposals to encourage new blood to be discussed. Cllrs Fulford / Pearce will prepare a three-monthly update going forward. Plan to look at risk assessments for all structures in the Valley to be investigated (NT and/or MOD may be able to assist with this).
- Cllrs Fulford, Simcox and Clerk had been involved in two meetings with Tom Williams, Highways Engineer at Kent Highways to stress the "mayhem" experienced with recent road closures to all in the village, together with HM Coastguard and the National Trust. Lessons have hopefully been learned from this and a more constructive dialogue can be had in future.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Playing Field inspection undertaken by Cllr Pearce. Generally in good order; following repeated damage to downpipes at Alexander Pavilion, Cllr Pearce will liaise with Mr Purchase for the cost of replacing with metal pipes.	Cllr Pearce to deal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cllr Blake will follow up to Playdale for annual play inspection.	Cllr Blake to deal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cllr Gilham raised the issue of overgrown path at the top of Sea Street (near telephone exchange / Foreland Court).	Clerk to report
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● As no PC meeting in August, it was proposed to begin arrangements for footpath walk on 15th September.	Clerk to check re availability of hall
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cllr Simcox will investigate the cost of providing “be aware of ducks crossing” signs.	Cllr Simcox to deal

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

Confirmed:

Chair

8th July 2024

Councillor areas of responsibility

- 1) CCTV. Cllrs Fielding / Simcox.
- 2) Police and Community Warden liaison. -Cllrs Pearce / Simcox.
- 3) Defibs. - Cllrs Wheeler / Simcox.
- 4) Website / social media. / Cllrs Simcox / Fulford + volunteer
- 5) Highways issues. Cllrs Simcox / Fielding / Gilham.
- 6) Litter picking. Cllrs Blake and Pearce.
- 7) Footpaths. Cllrs Wheeler / Pearce / Fulford.
- 8) Maintenance contract - liaison. - Cllrs Blake / Pearce.
- 9) Christmas arrangements. - Cllrs Simcox / Fulford.
- 10) Liaison with library - Cllrs Wheeler / Luckhurst.
- 11) Alexander Pavilion / Field and liaison with Football Clubs. - Cllrs Fielding / Pearce.
- 12) KGV Pavilion / field and liaison with Cricket Club (and Tennis Club). - Cllrs Luckhurst / Blake / Pearce.
- 13) Play Area / inspections. - Cllrs Blake / Pearce.
- 14) Liaison with Bowls Club. - Cllrs Luckhurst / Blake / Pearce.
- 15) Rep on Village Hall Committee). - Cllrs Fielding (Director) + volunteer.
- 16) Reps for KALC Dover Area Committee meetings - Cllrs Blake / Anne / New Clerk idc. .
- 17) Civic Cemetery / liaison with Registrar. - Cllrs Fulford / Pearce / Blake.
- 18) Reach Road Pond. - Looking for volunteers to caretake it - Cllr Gilham.
- 19) Chapel Lane Pond. - Cllr Blake.
- 20) South Foreland Valley. - Nikki, Anne & Brian
- 21) Trees. - Cllr Gilham.
- 22) *Bank reconciliations etc.. - Cllrs Fulford / Simcox.*
- 23) *Planning (incl Conservation Areas)- Cllrs Fielding / Wheeler.*
- 24) *Policies - including Data Protection Officer - Cllr Fulford and anor.*

MEETING REPORT FOR ST MARGARET'S AT CLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL ON MONDAY 08.07.24

DEAL JOBS AND SKILLS FAIR ON 10TH JULY

A jobs and skills fair, focusing on help, advice and careers information for young people, is coming to Tides Leisure Centre in Deal on Wednesday, 10 July 2024 from 11.30am-3pm.

Over 20 local employers are expected to exhibit, and a programme of workshops will offer advice, including CV and application writing and other practical support. Job seekers could even leave with a job offer on the spot with some employers offering interviews on the day. The event is free to attend and open to all.

OVER 50s "ROOTS TO WORK SCHEME

Dover District Council (DDC) is inviting local businesses to get involved in a scheme aimed at helping the over 50s into work. Roots to Work is an initiative between DDC and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and has been running for nine months. The scheme specifically supports people over 50, who are receiving benefits and trying to return to the workplace, with a range of free workshops and accredited courses.

DDC is now inviting businesses to get involved by taking on participants for work experience or taking part in information sessions to share more about their business and what they look for in an employee. Roots to Work offers free courses which are run by Kent Adult Education and include Food Safety, Emergency First Aid and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH). Workshops for CV writing, confidence building, and transferrable skills training are also on offer from DDC.

If you run a business and would like more information about how to get involved, please contact Roots2Work@dover.gov.uk

SCHOOL YOUTH ROADSHOW

Following the success of the last two years, the Dover District Youth Conference is running as an IMPACT roadshow once more in 10 different secondary schools in Dover, Deal and Sandwich from 25-28 June.

Year 8 students will listen to talks about different subjects that relate to making a choice, such as what choice should they make when it comes to crossing a train line or carrying a knife, and thinking about how certain choices could lead to potentially life changing outcomes.

IMPACT stands for 'I'm making positive action choices today'. The sessions will convey essential and positive messages encouraging young people to support each other and build their personal resilience through the positive choices they make. Guest speakers include Caley Walden and Sgt Glen Rickersey from the Violence Reduction Unit, Andy Richardson from The Metanoia Project, Small Steps and the Network Rail Safety Team who are showing two videos about staying safe on the railway.

There is also supporting entertainment from talented local musician Robbie White.

Both the Prevent team and Kent County Council's Youth & Community team are attending the roadshows for the students to meet afterwards.

1). UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT AT SEA ST

Still concerns from residents around the presence of badgers on the site. We have reported them back to DDC who have promised to speak with Kent Police concerning the matter. They have also suggested that residents contact the Badger Society who specialise in dealing with complaints of this nature. We have passed the contact details on to the residents.

2). BOLLARDS IN STATION RD

We are still awaiting a response from DDC and have forwarded an email to Parking Services requesting an update on this matter. Parking Services had referred the request to Property Services and the chaser has been copied to them also.

3). MANHOLE COVER IN ROMAN WAY

Despite constant chasers we are still failing to receive a response from KCC. Ollie is currently attempting to liaise with them directly. (now completed).

4). STREET LIGHTING IN THE HIGH STREET

They are clearly faulty and are still under guarantee. We have referred the matter to Property Services who will be seeking replacements.

5). ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The antics of an individual within the village were referred to us recently. We have discussed this with Community Services who are aware of the case and have been in discussion with social services over the matter. They have suggested that the parish council request an ASB review and in the meantime Community Services will discuss this further with Kent police.

6). RURAL PROSPERITY FUND

A request was made for a contact within DDC who could answer some questions around the fund. We believe that Jane Miles from Community Services has already