

Minutes of a meeting of Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council held on Monday 17th April 2023 in Aldington Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors; L Harman (Chairman), R Boulding, L Guy, H Stebbings and S Wagstaff

Absent: Cllrs R Lloyd and R Spicer

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk

Also present: P New (Neighbourhood Watch) and 4 residents

1198. Apologies for absence:

Cllr G Taylor

1199. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

1200. Public participation:

There were no public submissions.

1201. Neighbourhood Watch:

Report attached.

1202. Minutes:

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th March 2023 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

1203. Chairman's Report:

It's been a busy month:

- Margaret and Rod Gibbs have initiated the refurbishment of the lawn at the War Memorial. On Monday 3rd April a group of volunteers gathered and dug out all the snowdrop & crocus bulbs so that they can be replaced in the new lawn. On Saturday, Rod dug out the weedy grass and discovered that the concrete is much closer to the surface than we thought. There were some comments about digging the topsoil off – and it is true that is very good topsoil – just so shallow that the grass suffers when it is dry. Rod did manage to get some rubble out so, though not perfect, we hope that the extra depth of soil will make the grass more resilient.
- The Reynold's Gate was obtained from the container and has been given to Rod Gibbs. Thank you to Ray for seeing to that. We anticipate having a new gate in place within a couple of weeks.
- Potholes continue to plague the area. Our HIP is way off track with further information later.
- We have disruptive and antisocial behaviour happening in Aldington. There have been two reports of items being thrown into Quarry Pond. There was evidence of den making in the Quarry Field Badger hole adjacent to the Environment Centre. This in itself is not concerning but the evidence of drinking and smoking

is. I have heard reports of two youths on electric scooters riding inappropriately on the roads, and one doorbell video shows loud and disruptive behaviour probably from the same 2 youths at 01.00am in Wheatfields where they can be clearly seen investigating a resident's car port.

- The death of Paul O'Grady has continued to dominate social media conversations and there have been many suggestions as to how he could be commemorated. I would like to discuss this further under Agenda Item 9. Quarry Field Wood & Pond. Paul's funeral will take place this Thursday. A post was put onto Aldington & Bonnington Community FB Page – intended for villagers but it also appeared on Ashford Radio's social media so I think we can anticipate that the village is likely to be mobbed on Thursday.
- The Aldington Point-to-Point went ahead despite heavy rain beforehand. I received 3 complaints from Church Lane residents about the state of the road and verges following the event. I would like to suggest that it would be appropriate for the PC to write to the organisers to point out the concerns and to request that we are given a full traffic management plan ahead of next year's event. This is the second year that this organisational team have had issues.
- In other news, I have been invited to the inauguration of our new Saxon Shore Benefice Vicar on the evening of the 25th April. It will take place at St. Matthews Church Warehorne.
- Lastly, I'd like to congratulate you all on being reappointed Parish Councillors for Aldington & Bonnington. I look forward to working with you all, and whilst some may feel that a lack of election for our Parish Council is a negative thing, I am glad that you don't have to go through one. I do not get off so lightly in my Borough Councillor role...For Parish Councils, we are not unusual in being elected without a contest; of 42 Parish Councils in Ashford, only 5 are being contested in 2023. It is harder and harder for people to find time to give to their community and I applaud all of you.

1204. Finance:

Schedule of payments:

Chq no	Payee	Purpose	Amount
1800	L Harman	Reimbursement	£107.64
1801	Alison Eardley	Neighbourhood Plan	£1,320.00
1802	Harmer & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£1,226.40
1803	CPRE	Annual subscription	£60.00
1804	KALC	Annual subscription	£644.20
1805	Home Tech Electrical	MUGA lights	£505.68
1806	Information Commissioner	Data Protection Fee	£40.00
1807 & 1808	Staff costs		£2,231.15
1809	Groundwork UK	NDP grant repayment	£4,631.10
1810	JRB Enterprise Ltd	Dog Waste bags	£485.40
1811	R Boulding	Reimbursement	£20.05

1812	Aldington Village Hall	Room hire	£296.00
1813	L Harman	Reimbursement	£168.00

Resolved:

1. To authorise payment of the items in the schedule of payments
2. To authorise the transfer of £12,000.00 from deposit account to current account.

1205. Planning Committee:

The Committee met prior to the Parish Council meeting and considered applications for Pinnhurst, Forehead House, Finchwood Aesthetics, Oakdene and Field to the West of Sellindge Converter Station.

1206. Quarry Field, Quarry Wood and Pond:

The Parish Council has been approached for approval to plant a memorial fruit tree/ flowering cherry tree on Quarry Field. The former Gardening Society have also expressed an interest in planting a tree in the same area. Following discussion it was agreed that a scheme would be drawn up to plant trees along the footpath that separates Reynolds Playing Field from Quarry Field leaving sufficient space for the beacon and mowing by tractor.

The Pond clearance due in the autumn did not take place as anticipated and will now take place later this year contact to be made with the contractor and also to seek a quotation for a platform next to the pond.

1207. Neighbourhood Plan:

The Neighbourhood Planning Team have now reached the stage where the first formal phase of consultation, Regulation 14 can commence. The statutory period for this phase is 6 weeks after which the team will examine the responses and consider any modifications that need to be made to the plan.

Members of the Parish Council will have received an advance copy of the plan to read and enable the Council as a body to make a decision to take the plan forward to consultation.

Councillor Stebbings raised a number of points relating to the draft and some areas that had not been fully covered. It was agreed that the areas would be looked at with a view to bringing the revised document to the next meeting ready to launch at the Annual Parish Meeting.

1208. Events Committee:

Planning is well under way for a Picnic on the Park on 7th May as well as a dog show.

1209. Aldington Meadows:

The weekly inspection of the play equipment at Aldington Meadows has identified that the multiplay unit is now reaching the end of its life and will need to be removed.

At the present time this is only a low risk on the Risk Assessment but will be closely monitored in order that it is removed as soon as it reaches high risk.

1210. Highways:

The Clerk recently had a meeting with Kent Highways to discuss the Highways Improvement Plan and to obtain updates on the works outstanding.

In relation to the footpath from Calleywell Lane to the Post Office the delay is being caused by a drain cover that sits at an angle in the path that will need to be re-aligned to level the path. This is the responsibility of Southern Water who are being reluctant to talk to Highways, this is being actively pursued.

The majority of the dropped kerbs have now been installed. The traffic island on Goldwell Lane is the last one to be dealt with, this is scheduled to take place on the 5th June. The delay has been caused because to undertake the work a full road closure is required.

Highways will be undertaking a site visit in the coming weeks to look at Giggers Green Road where the drainage works were undertaken to understand what the issues are in terms of reduced width. They will also looking at the placement of the speed limit signs and village name signs to ensure that they are in the optimum place.

The area at the top of Calleywell Lane, the red band across the road, which is badly pot-holed is on the schedule of works to be undertaken, when repaired it will be with black tarmac not red.

1211. Any Items for Information:

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.35pm.

REPORT TO ALDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL APRIL 2023

Sadly, in recent weeks across the East of Kent there have been numerous incidents of rogue traders/bogus callers calling on communities especially trying to target the elderly and vulnerable.

These criminals will work to seek out and find our vulnerable and our elderly persons in the community. They often call back if they “strike lucky”.

Rural areas are attractive to them and recently there have been incidents across East Kent and especially in nearby villages like Smeeth, Brabourne and Mersham. However, they have now started to appear in town areas. Thankfully, as yet not in **ALDINGTON**

Importantly I intercepted a rogue trader in Kennington and saved a family £800. I have also provided considerable intelligence of CCTV and vehicle/person photographs and I am in touch with the Lead officer for East Kent on this problem.

The Electricity/fuel costs issue has presented a golden opportunity for approaches to households to reduce energy costs with upgraded roof insulation. Normally two persons call at a property and one will enter the loft. The occupier is then called upstairs to answer a few questions about existing insulation and the other criminal downstairs, filling out bogus paperwork, will look to gather up any items like cash, handbags, wallets, and phones.

I have sat with people who have been conned. It is absolutely stomach turning.

Some elderly people are so embarrassed they do not tell family or friends so we are completely unaware and cannot push out alerts, warnings, or crime prevention advice.

Sadly, some victims never ever regain their confidence!

The other great concern now is rogue traders calling looking to carry out unsolicited work.

A job quoted as £100 suddenly becomes £1000 and threats and intimidation occur to obtain the monies. Our advice must be.....

NEVER EVER AGREE TO UNSOLICITED WORK ON YOUR DOORSTEP NO MATTER HOW CHEAP AND ATTRACTIVE THE PRICE IS

You will notice the police alert I sent out however as I stated earlier this has now spread into a wider area and we must be alert and vigilant. The advice is.....

IF IN DOUBT DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR

IF PERSONS REFUSE TO WITHDRAW AND LEAVE CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY GIVING AS MUCH OF A DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSONS AS POSSIBLE AND ANY VEHICLE DETAILS.

REMEMBER YOU MAY HAVE ACTED TO STAY SAFE, FURTHER ALONG IN THE COMMUNITY A PERSON MAY NOT BE AS CAREFUL.

THIS IS AN AVOIDABLE AND PREVENTABLE CRIME. PLEASE BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL

Warning after rogue traders reported in Hythe

Residents are advised to be vigilant after rogue traders were reported in **Hythe** and **Dymchurch**.

On **Tuesday 28 March 2023**, Kent Police received two reports of a group of men attending addresses and beginning work jet-washing the properties' roofs.

They then attempted to charge large amounts of money for the work, but were challenged and left the area in a white van after police were called.

Enquiries to track the men are ongoing and anyone with information should call [01843 222289](tel:01843222289), quoting reference 46/56257/23.

Warning

The incidents follow similar reports in the **Edenbridge** area earlier this month and officers are looking into any possible links.

Detective Inspector James Wyles, of Folkestone's Community Safety Unit, said: 'I urge anyone who is approached by cold callers on their doorstep to seek advice before agreeing to any work or payment.'

'The residents approached in these incidents did exactly the right thing and contacted the police to report their suspicions. I ask that people also look out for elderly or vulnerable relatives or neighbours and come to us with any concerns.'

Advice

- If someone knocks at your door, always refuse on the spot repairs or maintenance.
- Don't allow anyone to pressure you into agreeing to have work carried out. If you ask them to leave and they don't, contact the police on 999.
- Don't ever go to a bank or cashpoint with a trader; legitimate traders would never do this.
- Use reputable traders who are members of the KCC Trading Standards approved trader scheme Trading Standards Checked.
- Ask for quotes in writing and check that the tradesperson is from the company they say they are from.

Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

Rogue Traders

We have seen an increase in reports of this type of criminality recently.

Opposite is our leaflet on how you can protect yourself against these types of scams.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.



Protect yourself and others against rogue traders

Most people who call at your home are genuine. But sometimes people may turn up unannounced and try to sell you services or items you do not want or need or carry out unnecessary repairs to your home at inflated prices.

If you're concerned about someone calling at your home, **don't open your door.**

You can:

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you
- Get three written quotes
- Ask family and friends for recommendations
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand, and never pay in full until you're completely satisfied with the work.

Preventing fraud

Together, let's stop scammers.

Remember, ABC:

~~Assume~~

~~Believe~~

~~Confirm~~

Get the latest scam advice:

[@KentPoliceECU](https://twitter.com/KentPoliceECU)

Pressurised selling on your doorstep is a crime and you can report it:

- kent.gov.uk/tradingstandards or call 0808 223 1133
- For advice: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/
- Follow @kent_ECU or email kfas@ecis.police.uk



Contacting Kent Police

Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report
Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact
In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**
If deaf or speech impaired, text 'police' and your message to **60066**
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Doorstep Criminals/Rogue Traders

Residents from Folkstone, Hythe and Dymchurch have been targeted by cold calling criminals saying their roof, drive or gutter needs either cleaning or repair but it is a scam and they will pester the resident until they agree to them carrying out the work. They will then carry out some extra work on a small area without asking and then demand payment and intimidate the resident into having the whole job being completed by them, even though they have not asked for this work to be carried out.

The following gives some guidance on what to do, if you get someone cold calling in this way -

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you
- Get three written quotes
- Ask family and friends for recommendations
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand, and never pay in full until you're completely satisfied with the work.

If the person becomes aggressive and you are feeling intimidated or threatened, then call the Police.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

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DOORSTEP CRIMINALS : DON'T GET SCAMMED THIS SPRING

Spring is here, birds are singing and flowers are blooming. But please be on alert as this is also the time of year that doorstep criminals come knocking on doors.

They come with bogus offers of guttering and roofing repairs, or work on driveways and gardens.

This year, with household budgets under pressure, many are likely to be tempted by superficial bargains, which could end up costing dearly. It is all too common for doorstep criminals to promise the earth and fail to deliver. They leave a trail of unfinished or substandard work in their wake, with inflating prices as a project progresses far beyond what was originally agreed.

£18,000 lost to criminal traders

Mr M was approached by a stranger outside his home who told him that the coving on his roof needed urgent attention. What started as a friendly conversation about a relatively small issue ended with £18,000 spent on unnecessary work. When the doorstep criminal asked for even more money, Mr M called in Trading Standards.

He's had sleepless nights ever since and was worried about leaving his home for a period in case the criminals returned. And unfortunately, he has been unable to get any of his money back.

Never agree to have work carried out by cold-callers. Always keep your door firmly closed to doorstep criminals.

Everyone is vulnerable to falling for rogue and criminal traders at one time or another, regardless of age or personal circumstances. The most powerful form of defence against these doorstep criminals, for you, your family and your neighbours, is to be informed and be vigilant. And always be prepared to say no.



Good news for Kent residents

You can find reputable and safe traders via Kent County Council's **Trading Standards Checked**. It's the only scheme of its kind that thoroughly vets local traders. Each trader has passed the 50 point Safe Local Trader checks and is continually vetted throughout their membership.

The 50-point checks ensure traders adhere to consumer protection rules, are competent and capable of undertaking the work they commit to and are accountable if something goes wrong.

Find a safe local trader to carry out your work, visit:
kent.gov.uk/tschecked
Or call: **03000 41 64 38.**



You will recall at previous meetings I reported I had launched **OPERATION GUARDIAN ANGEL** to help those who help care/support elderly/vulnerable family members.

This has been received well in the community and unless you have experienced the personal concerns and worry of supporting family members to still live independently in the community, on many occasions on their own, you will not fully appreciate this campaign.




The other matter of huge concern to me is

I am very concerned to read reports of sheep worrying and even worse young lambs being attacked by dogs.

This is not just a dreadful crime against defenceless animals but strikes at a person's livelihood which I do not have to labour the point in rural areas.



Livestock worrying

Livestock worrying is a criminal offence and comes under the [Dogs \(Protection of Livestock\) Act 1953](#) .

'Worrying' is where a dog attacks or chases livestock causing injury or suffering.

This isn't just a threat to a farmer or land owner's livelihood, it's also a dangerous situation for the animals involved, and could lead to more risk if the animals get onto the road.

A farmer is allowed to kill the dog if it's worrying their livestock.

Always keep your dog under control around other animals and if you see a dog on the loose worrying animals, [report it online](#).

Protecting livestock – know the law

'Worrying' livestock is a crime under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953.

If you are on agricultural land and a dog you own or are in charge of **attacks** or **chases** livestock in a way that may cause **injury**, **suffering** or **loss**, you could be **prosecuted**, **fined** and **ordered to pay compensation**.

Under the Animals Act 1971, a person acting to **protect livestock** may be able to **kill** or **injure a dog**, without incurring any criminal or civil liability, if he or she believes it is worrying livestock.



Please keep your dog on a lead.

If you see a dog worrying livestock, please call the police on **999**.



**Protecting and serving
the people of Kent**

As always, I am very grateful when alert and vigilant NHW members give early warnings of incidents.

I received this below recently.

It allows me to alert colleagues as well as you as a council. You may have earlier warning yourself about these events.

The key to the message below is the matter was reported!

Hi Peter,

Just want to report something that has happened in the village.

There were a group of older teens camping over the Reynolds playing field last night. Down by the pond in a little patch behind some brambles. Saw them when I walked dogs at 9pm, playing loud music drinking etc. This morning at 7am while walking the dogs we discovered all the rubbish and mess they left, they had tried to start a fire, left broken glass, cans, wrappers. I picked up a Tesco receipt from the rubbish which includes a card number.

Followed tracks left by electric scooters back to a house opposite Aldington primary school. House no.2 good well houses. These kids constantly ride through the village on electric scooters playing loud music and one of them has been reported for watching young children at the park.

I will be reporting to the police but thought should email you also.

At the time of writing this report I am aware of 2 BMW cars taken in Kennington Ashford with the same 'Mode of Operation' as last year when over 30 high end cars (BMW's AUDI's RANGE ROVERS etc) all keyless ignitions were targeted and stolen from properties with criminals using devices to read and open the locking systems. I am working closely with the Serious Crime Directorate who I assisted last year. That work resulted in arrests and persons put before the courts.

You may have seen this locally but this was a result of your work and contacts supplying info and CCTV to us.

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/kent/news/two-charged-following-theft-of-30-keyless-cars-278587/>

If you wish to thank your contacts on my behalf then please do

Thank you for your help
Scott

DC 10255 Scott DRAKE

Telephone External: 01227 868443

Telephone Mobile: 07980683365

Telephone Internal: 062443

Email: 10255@kent.pnn.police.uk

Address: Canterbury Police Station, Old Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3JQ

www.kent.police.uk

Charges brought in keyless car theft investigation

Two men have been charged following an investigation into keyless relay thefts of cars in Kent.

That work may be needed once again but I also include it into my report to show the value and the strength that Neighbourhood Watch brings to a community and in your area of Aldington where the solid support of the council and individual councillors demonstrates that we can help to keep communities that we serve crime free and residents free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

Thank you as always for all your support.

I am aware that this is an extremely busy time for all councillors and the clerk.

On that point I wish you all well and conclude my report.

Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant.

Peter

Peter New

Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch

