

Minutes of the Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council meeting held on Monday 14th October 2024 in Aldington Village Hall at 7:30pm.

Present: Councillors: L Harman (Chair), R Boulding, L Guy, P Hannabuss, G Taylor, S Wagstaff and J Weatherall.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk

Also present 1 resident.

1514. Apologies for absence:

Cllr H Stebbings.

1515. Declarations of interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

1516. Sellindge Synchronous Condenser:

During October the following works are planned to be carried out:

Synchronous Condenser:

- Pouring to level 1 of 7 stage concrete pour as discussed at the last meeting
- 3 day curing period (before base can be worked on)
- Installation of embedded parts, sacrificial fixing and cages
- GE will be on site for inspections.

On site substation:

- Excavation of switchgear bases
- Pouring of foundations, these are small in nature

Main transformer:

- Pouring of main walls including form work

EHV Cable Works:

- Preparation of thrust bore reception pit
- Pouring of thrust bore pit walls
- Thrust bore works begin by end of month.

1517. Solar:

Report from the Aldington and Mersham Support Group:

“The archaeological desktop study to be carried out by Peter Spencer and paid for by the Parish Council, has commenced. He has been liaising with the Kent Archaeological Society and KCC to understand the differences in their respective historic environment records for the area of the proposed solar generating station. He is also in the process of downloading and processing the LIDAR data. In his opinion Wardell Armstrong (EPL001’s contractor) have a bad reputation with the archaeological community and have carried out a poor job in this case. Based on his experience with other solar projects and particularly given the rich archaeological heritage along Bank Road, he thinks that 2% of the project area should be trenched, which is far in excess of the very limited amount of trenching carried out to date.”

We have recently had a meeting with renowned physicist Professor Sir David Melville, who has considerable experience on the issue of lithium-ion batteries at Cleve Hill and worldwide. In his opinion battery fires are an accident waiting to happen and the proximity of the battery enclosures so close to residential properties is a matter of serious public health concern. Furthermore, he considers the current firefighting guidelines which call for sufficient water to be stored on site to allow for 2 hours firefighting, to be inadequate. In reality these fires last for days and require vastly more water than is being proposed by EPL001.

We are seeking guidance from Counsel on a number of aspects and have also requested a quotation from him, to provide written advice to the Parish Council on the draft Development Consent Order.

We note with interest the 306 representations that were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, which reflect the significant concerns of the community. The representations from ABC and ABPC were particularly strong in contrast to KCC's, which was very weak on the traffic management plan in particular. "

The quote has been received from Counsel which is for £1,000 plus VAT for an opinion on the Development Consent Order.

Resolved: to request the Parish Clerk to prepare a report on the timescales indicated by the Planning Inspectorate including expenditure to date to enable the budget for 2025/2026 to be considered in December.

1518. Public Participation:

A resident advised that the sign on Reynolds Gate has become worn and now difficult to read.

The Parish Clerk will contact the Handyman to remove and seek a replacement.

1519. Neighbourhood Watch:

Report attached.

1520. Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:

Work on the next Ashford Local Plan continues. We are now looking at all the site proposals put forward by land owners, agents and developers. Site selection will be done step by step, starting with the town centre.

Council has responded to the consultation regarding changes to the NPPF that was issued by the new government. I read that there have, predictably, been a large number of responses that may take some time to process – so we await the conclusion of that! The next public consultation on the Ashford Local Plan is expected to be held in late Spring 2025. This will be the first formal round of consultation.

You may have seen in the press that ABC has announced collaboration with Canterbury City Council to address the nitrate neutrality issue caused by pollution in Stodmarsh Lakes. The two councils will jointly setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle to collate and sell nutrient 'credits' obtained from a range of measures carried out across both Ashford and Canterbury. These measures will include programmes to

reduce water usage, change land use and improve off-grid foul drainage systems to reduce nitrate and phosphate in ground water that ends up in the River Stour. Ashford is not the only borough impacted by the NE directive – many other areas of England are subject to the ruling which has halted many new housing developments across the country. The new initiative is hoped to be able to start unlocking Planning permissions, especially for the building of much needed social housing, in the new year.

A diary note for you; Saturday 23rd November; Carnival of the Baubles returns to Ashford to kick off the festivities and light up the town centre with its stunning night-time giant lantern parade. There will be a full day of festive fun for the whole family – with a Christmas markers market, free lantern making workshops and performances at the Bandstand and Elwick Place. Due to the Carnival’s increasing popularity, this year’s route has been reversed – now starting off from the Lower High Street at 5pm, finishing in spectacular style outside The Ashford Cinema at Elwick Place. This year’s parade will be led by a giant Firebird. With a fountain of sparks from its beak, it will help guide the procession of local schools, youth and community groups and Ashford based businesses through the town.

For those interested in a more immediate night out; Ashford Cinema have now extended the £6.99 Monday night offering to cover Tuesday and Wednesday evenings too.

Lastly – Given the removal of the Winter Heating Allowance, ABC is working with Kent County Council which has launched a targeted marketing communications campaign to encourage greater uptake of Pension Credit following the Chancellor’s announcement that people not eligible for Pension Credit or other means-tested entitlements will no longer receive a winter fuel payment. It is estimated that 18,314 residents in Kent may be affected. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of Pension Credit; dispel some of the misconceptions around it; and to ask family, friends and professionals to support where a person is struggling with the application process. You can access information at www.kent.gov.uk/kenttogether and at <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help/>. Please keep an eye out for neighbours you suspect may need support and make them aware of this campaign.

1521. Parish Councillor Vacancy:

To be carried forward to the November meeting.

Councillor Weatherall left the meeting.

1522. Minutes:

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th September 2024 were submitted, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

1523. Chairman’s Report:

Firstly, I’d like to offer my congratulations to Stephen on his recent appointment as Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee. I am sure Ray will value your support. I am sure also that Ray’s vast experience will be valuable to you as you learn the ropes!

On to Parish Matters. We've had a bit of correspondence this month; Concerns were raised about trees in the woodland off Knoll Hill. The Clerk was requested to contact the Tree Officer in ABC to look into land management on this site. The owner is not local. Following high winds Highways cut a tree that fell across the road. The resident comment was with regard to the cut end of the stump that remains, which is over the fence line and presents a hazard to any wide loads using Knoll Hill.

Continuing on the subject of roads; the Highways consultations issued by the clerk on concerns raised about visibility for drivers exiting Saxon Heights and Wheatfields developments provoked quite substantial back lash. I was almost mobbed by concerned residents at the Wednesday Hub a couple of weeks ago who had read the consultation letter to mean that this Parish Council was proposing changes that had already been agreed. The owner of Aldington Fresh Foods went on social media to enlist support for a petition against the proposals. I spoke to him directly to reassure him that Aldington & Bonnington Parish Council were not suggesting that customers should not park outside his business. The unnecessary furore caused by the (good) intentions of this consultation letter illustrates how careful we need to be with information we issue – it's clearly not always read as intended.

I've also had a phone call and an email from Kent Trial Riding Fellowship Rights of Way Officer. The correspondent is asking for our support to approach KCC ProW team to ask for permission to carry out conservation work to AE396, which runs between Frith Road and Bank Road. The lane is a BOAT (*Byway Open to all Traffic – this is a highway over which the public is entitled to travel on foot, horseback or pedal cycle and by wheeled vehicles of all kinds, including mechanically propelled vehicles, but which is used by the public mainly for walking or for riding. Sometimes called a Green Lane*). Kent TRF wish to repair sections that are rutted and frequently flooded, making them impassible on a bike, whether a trail motor bike or indeed a cycle bike. The Kent TRF have some funding available and have spoken to the landowner who is supportive. I'm interested to hear what other councillors think about this proposal. Kent TRF assure me that their members are careful and respectful when riding on Green Lanes. The club was founded in 1970 and covers the whole of Kent.

1524. Finance:

Schedule of payments:

Payee	Purpose	Amount
Filmbank media	Film night licence	£183.60
Aldington Village Hall	Film night	£318.34
Staff costs		£2,750.72
Harmer & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£990.00
Aldington Village Hall	Room hire	£193.50
Forvis Mazars LLP	Audit	£504.00
Handyman expenses		£99.18
KALC	Training course	£42.00
L Harman	Reimbursement	£150.90
G Taylor	Reimbursement	£89.92

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and authorise the payment of the items of expenditure**
- 2. To authorise the transfer of £5,000 from deposit account to current account.**

1525. Planning Committee:

The committee considered one application for Howarths, Dicksons Bourne for the change of use of an existing outbuilding from incidental residential use to ancillary residential use with the addition of 2 rooflights. They had no objection subject to the dark skies policy being adhered to.

The committee also noted the lodgement of an appeal against the Borough Council decision on Knoll Hill House, Knoll Hill. No further comments were made.

1526. Neighbourhood Plan:

The Neighbourhood Plan was considered by the Ashford Borough Council Cabinet at its recent meeting with a recommendation to the Full Council that the plan should be “made” at its meeting on 17th October.

1527. Highways Improvement Plan:

The pre-consultation questionnaires have been returned and the comments collated. The draft Highways Improvement Plan will now be submitted to Kent Highways for consideration.

1528. Events Committee:

No events are planned at the current time.

1529. Quarry Field and Pond:

Discussion was held with regards to the parrot weed in the pond and its clearance. It was agreed that due to the quantity present it would be better to mechanically remove this. The Clerk was asked to contact Darren Godden to take this forward.

1530. Aldington Meadows:

A letter was delivered to every household in the estate and adjoining properties regarding proposals and asking for the support of residents for updating the open space. It was noted that the response had been very poor and those that had responded were suggesting alternatives rather than supporting.

With regards to the old tennis court it was proposed and agreed that contact be made with Darren Godden to come in and clear the surface down to the sub base in order that a new hard surface can be laid.

1531. Items for information:

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:20pm.



**REPORT FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.
RUCKINGE PARISH COUNCIL. OCTOBER 2024.**



Without rushing the year away, I must alert council to risks I see increasing as we head towards Christmas and the New Year sales periods.

THE THEFT OF INTERNET SHOPPING PARCELS & PACKAGES FROM OFF OF HOUSEHOLD DOORSTEPS and COURIER FRAUD.

Courier Fraud is where a package is delivered to your property and moments later a person calls saying the delivery was made in error. Only when a bill later arrives do people realise, they have been a victim of crime.

This risk has developed over a period of 2 to 3 years and was fuelled by the arrangements to operate safely as COVID restrictions relaxed.

1. The theft of a parcel from a doorstep mainly in town areas where there is foot traffic by a “Chancer and opportunists” Sometimes the thief had no intention of committing the crime but there was a parcel and then it was gone!
2. Criminals developed a more serious approach and vans were now followed that risk grew around the time of Black Friday sales and of course Christmas as more and more online shopping took off.
It also now brought into play more rural and isolated premises so no property off the beaten track was safe now
3. Then we had vans taken as delivery drivers went to premises and the criminals were frustrated that many deliveries were being accepted by residents and so when the opportunity arose, they stole the complete van and all deliveries inside.
4. Sadly, and I have no in-depth details as yet but a delivery van driver was killed recently in the North of England as criminals tried to take the van and the driver was killed as the van drive off.

My work will need to address this risk in the coming months as we start to move towards Christmas.

We must encourage safe delivery arrangements.



CRIME

Parcel thefts rise from doorsteps as gangs follow courier vans



Kent Fraud Alert System



Delivery Scams

How the scam works –

An unexpected parcel is delivered to the victim's door, which will normally contain a high value item such as a laptop or iPhone. Shortly after the delivery, a person wearing a uniform from the same company will attend and state that the item was delivered in error and that they are there to take it back. However, it is a scam. The item would have been ordered in the persons name without their knowledge and the criminals would have tracked the order to know when it was delivered and when to knock on the door to say it is all one big error. The totally unaware occupier will not know there has been a scam until they receive letters requesting payment for the item.

If you get an unexpected delivery that you have not ordered, then contact the company and agree with them which courier company will collect it and on what day they will attend.

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.

For further information about Fraud, visit our website at [Advice about fraud | Kent Police](#)





Preventing fraud


Together, let's stop scammers.



Remember, ABC:

 never Assume

 never Believe

 always Confirm

Get the latest scam advice:



@KentPoliceECU



**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 you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service **18000**.

Or text us on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service.

www.kent.police.uk   

Beware of suspicious callers

Most people who call at your home are genuine.

But sometimes people may turn up unannounced and try to:

- Trick their way into your home to steal valuables or money
- Sell you services or items you do not want or need
- Carry out unnecessary repairs to your home at inflated prices.



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

You can also:

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Never leave your door unattended
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you.



**Kent
Police**


Contacting Kent Police

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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**

www.kent.police.uk   

ALERT

I must now put down a marker for you to consider which I will bring a comprehensive report to at the next meeting.

I have started to warn residents of my concerns on the number of reports involving e-scooter/electric bike fires. A sample of what I will be speaking about are set out.



Kent Fire and Rescue Service

17 Jul · 🌐

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Crews are reminding people to be careful when charging electrical items, after an electric bike caught fire in [#Maidstone](#)

Here's some top tips on electrical safety:

- ⚡ Try not to leave items charging overnight or if you leave the house
- ⚡ Use recognised and recommended chargers and charging leads
- ⚡ Don't use damaged charging cables
- ⚡ Avoid over-charging items and over-loading plug sockets
- ⚡ Purchase electrical items from reputable suppliers
- ⚡ Place charging items on a non-flammable surface

More on this incident here:

<https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/incident/flat-fire-maidstone>





Ten people, including a baby who had to be dropped from the first floor window and caught by a member of the public, escaped a house fire before firefighters arrived in Ilford this weekend.

Part of the ground floor, an internal staircase and most of the first floor were damaged by the fire, which is believed to have been caused by the failure of a lithium-ion battery attached to an e-bike stored in the hallway.

The escape of the residents was largely aided by a builder who was driving by, quickly stopped and put up a piece of scaffolding as an improvised ladder to help the occupants to come down safely.

Control Officers received 12 calls about the fire, and crews were on the scene at 1013, with the fire being brought under control by 1150. Six fire engines and around 40 firefighters attended.

Three adults and one child were taken to hospital by London Ambulance Service crews, with a further four adults and two children assessed at the scene.

This fire is yet another example of the dangers e-bikes and e-scooters can pose if the battery fails catastrophically and catches fire. In this case, the e-bike was not on charge, but it was stored by the front door, impeding the occupants' escape.

For advice on how to safely charge and store your e-bike or e-scooter, please look at our [#ChargeSafe](#) page on our website.

Well done to all of our crews and blue light partners involved, and a huge well done to the builder who reacted quickly and helped residents to escape safely.



I am concerned about putting a news item from an agency into a report but until such times as an official report is published, I feel as background reading this is important for you.

Faversham busker known as Punky Jim killed in Salters Lane house fire started by e-scooter

Max Chesson mchesson@thekmgroup.co.uk

[Read all comments](#) | 15

Published: 12:24, 12 August 2024

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| Updated: 12:59, 12 August 2024

A much-loved busker was killed in a house fire started by an e-scooter.

Well-known Faversham musician James Ronayne - also known as Punky Jim or Jimmy - has been named locally as the victim of the devastating blaze in Salters Lane in the early hours of Saturday morning.



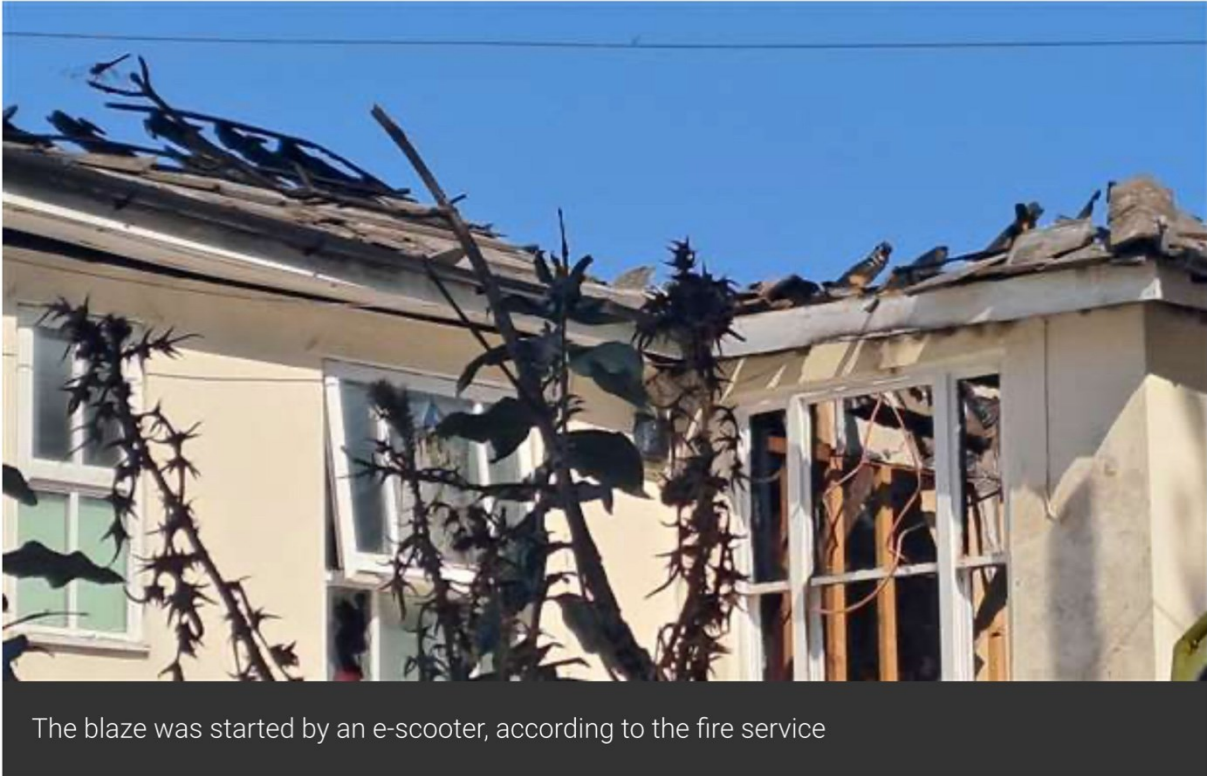
James Ronayne performing in Faversham town centre. Picture: Chris Davey

The 44-year-old had been living at Mill House, a 23-bed house in multiple occupancy (HMO) opposite the entrance of Faversham Town FC.

James's sister Samantha posted on social media: "The tragic house fire on Salters Lane did result in the loss of my extremely loved brother, James Ronayne."

“As you can imagine, as a family we are grieving, this is not the kind of news you expect to wake up to.

“His loss has left Faversham speechless. He was such a well-loved person, such an amazing character.



The blaze was started by an e-scooter, according to the fire service

“As a family, we’d love to put the money together to give him the send-off he deserves.”

A **fundraiser** has been started to help pay for costs.

More than £1,200 has been donated so far, with as many as 60 people contributing.

A former pupil of the Chaucer School in Canterbury, James was well-known for busking all over Kent, though he had **hoped to swap performing on the streets** for a full-time career in music.

He was inspired by bands such as Pearl Jam and Alice in Chains but had an eclectic taste when it came to what he listened to at home – everything from Bob Dylan to classical tunes.

Ten fire engines, a command support unit, and a height vehicle were all sent to Salters Lane after the blaze broke out at 18 minutes after midnight Saturday.

Over the weekend, it was confirmed **a man in his 40s** had died at the scene.

It has since been revealed by the fire service that the “significant” blaze is thought to have been accidental and was “started by an e-scooter”.

House fire in Faversham

 Incident Saturday 10 August 2024 00:18
Saturday 10 August 2024 20:20

Fire engines: 10

Partner agencies: Kent Police, KFRS Volunteer Response Team, South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb)

Swale

Final update:

Firefighting operations have concluded.

Follow local highways authorities for road closure updates.

The cause of the fire is believed to be linked to an e-scooter.

I have commenced public awareness and will continue to do so.

The news report above features the property was an HMO.

I felt it important for you to know in this report that the concerns of Christmas risks of parcel and package thefts alongside the e-scooter fire risk concerns will dominate my thinking alongside my normal NHW work.

A vital piece of work which I am asking support for is the survey by the Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott. This survey gives residents the opportunity to say what they feel are the crime issues and what should be the police priorities in coming years.

The link is below and please could I ask that each councillor makes a response.

The Commissioner used the plan that is built from these responses to hold the Chief Constable to account when he meets on Quality Assurance and Performance Reviews on the police plan. Please all respond as residents and your families too



The PCC launches a consultation on the new Police and Crime Plan - have your say!

The Police and Crime Commissioner is currently writing the new Police and Crime Plan, which sets the priorities Kent Police should follow. Matthew Scott wants to cut crime, to support victims and to build trust, but he wants to know what YOU witness and experience in your area. Do you feel safe? Do you trust the police? Please, have your say via our short, anonymous survey.

The survey is anonymous and will only take you a few minutes. We'd be very grateful if you could fill it in:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PoliceandCrimePlan2024/>

I am trying to get a good response from rural communities as I sense that as far as policing goes they feel the poor relations and concerns in the urban areas may not reflect the rural communities concerns and views.

I look forward to a strong last quarter of the year working with you to help keep our residents safe and crime free and as important free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

Thank you all as always for your solid backing and support. I really appreciate that.

You know me well enough now to ask the question how concerned you are Peter about the e-scooter situation and the answer to that members is very!

Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com) KENT POLICE VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

