

Minutes of the Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9th September 2024 in Aldington Village Hall at 7:30pm.

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

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk.

Also present: 5 members of the public and P New (Neighbourhood Watch)

1496. **Apologies for absence:**

Councillors H Stebbings and J Weatherall.

1497. **Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

1498. **Sellindge Synchronous Condenser:**

An update of the works was provided by Welsh Power, welfare facilities have now been established on site and the pole mounted electricity transformers located at the entrance to the site have been relocated to provide easier access. The excavations for the foundations are currently taking place ready for the concrete pour which will take place over seven layers due to shrinkage and the tolerances required for the condenser. During this period the lorry activity will decrease whilst the foundations set. A gateman will be situated at the front of the site entrance.

1499. **Solar:**

The public meeting was well attended and a number of people attended the drop in during the day to register with the Planning Inspectorate. The Chair has subsequently met with the MP Katie Lam to express local concerns and to request her support. A meeting has been held with our planning consultant Alison Eardley who is currently producing the Parish Council's submission prior to the Clerk submitting this.

One of the concerns with the application is that there is little consideration being given to the archaeology or potential archaeology that exists throughout the whole of the proposed site. There is LIDOR data available which can be interpreted by experts as to the potential that may exist. To this end an expert has been identified who is prepared to interpret the data and produce a report which will be suitable for submission to the Planning Inspectorate in due course. The fee for this being £1,068.75.

Resolved: to request the production of a suitable report for submission to the Planning Inspectorate on the interpretation of the LIDOR data.

1500. **Public Participation:**

A resident asked if any traffic monitoring had taken place in Bonnington as there was a perceived increase in volume of traffic in particular along Frogmore Lane

1501. **Neighbourhood Watch:**

See report attached.

1502. **Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

Autumn is upon us! The summer has been far from restful.

I was delighted to be able to use part of my Ward Member's Community Grant to arrange for Nick, the Aldington Tennis Club coach to be onsite to run tennis sessions every Tuesday morning in August. They were very popular with local families.

The Local Plan Explained events ran throughout August, with the last online event being last Wednesday. The events were well attended. Work now starts on screening the many sites proposed by land owners and developers for inclusion in the Ashford Local Plan. Planners will consider their suitability to meet the housing target that the Borough is required to deliver by Government. The next round of public consultation is anticipated to be held in the Spring/early summer next year.

The Council has published its Borough Plan, which was picked up in the BBC Kent news! The Plan has three themes; Planet, People, Place, which will form the drivers for projects that we will be looking to bring forward over the next 2/3 years and which will also shape the thinking behind the Ashford Local Plan.

The Planning Committee also met in August, with some high profile applications discussed that you may have seen covered in the national press (Royal Oak, Smarden).

Frith Road continues to be a topic of conversation locally. I have reported the horrific resurfacing through KCC Highways website and discussed it with our KCC Councillor who also promised to follow up.

Fly tipping is visible on the Ward once more; I have reported two lots one on Brockmans Lane and the other in Bank Road.

1503. **Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th July 2024 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

1504. **Chairman's Report:**

The Parish Council may not have met in August, but Parish Council activities continued none the less.

I'd like to thank Ginny Taylor, as always, for her commitment. There every Tuesday to supply squash and biscuits to the children attending the Summer Tennis Sessions, and every Wednesday for the Hub, as well as being one of the drivers behind the Summer Fete.

Speaking of the Summer Fete; I'd also like to thank Theresa from Gefion Dog Training for organising the PO'G Dog Show this year, which was opened by Her Worshipful, The Mayor of Ashford, Cllr Lynn Suddards. It was a pleasure to have her here and to show her what Aldington is all about! The annual Fete is a major effort for the small team of volunteers that make it happen. Thank you to everyone.

Solar has obviously been a big topic over recent weeks. We ran a successful 'drop-in' event last Wednesday together with AMSEG, and also met with our new MP Katie Lam last Thursday evening to enlist her support at the PINS meetings which will take

place over coming months. More on this topic when we reach that part of the agenda.

We installed a picnic bench in Walnut Ridge which has been well used throughout the summer. I am delighted to see families using it as a meeting place and children enjoying lunch together there. We need to invest in our green spaces to build the community that we wish to be.

We also invited households at this end of Roman Road to feed back on our aspirations for the next Highways Improvement Plan. I have also had three further approaches about the traffic hazards faced when pulling out of Badgers Close, Saxon Heights and Wheatfields. These highlight the increasing traffic that passes through the village. Managing it without losing our rural character is a challenge. We will discuss this further later in the agenda.

I also received a message from a concerned resident about overgrown verbiage at the top of Calleywell Lane. I would like to ask the Clerk to look into this and to discuss with our contractor. I see that someone has seen fit to place bollards in the road in this sop – I assume because the greenery is reducing the width of the footpath.

1505. **Finance:**

Schedule of payments:

Payee	Purpose	Amount
Staff costs		£2,707.09
Harmer & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£990.00
KCC	Traffic survey	£340.00
Bouncers bouncy castle	Summer fete	£370.00
Aldington Village Hall	Room hire	£157.50
BWP Creative	Website	£273.60
JRB Enterprise	Dog Waste Bags	£485.40
L Harman	Reimburse summer fete	£369.50
Handyman expenses		£166.57
Art of Design	Neighbourhood Plan	£2,800.00
Staff costs		£2,687.33
Harmer & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£990.00
SLCC	Training Course	£54.00
Aldington Village Hall	Room hire	£284.00
Zurich insurance		£1,769.42
P Setterfield	Reimbursement	£35.00

Resolved:

1. To receive and authorise the payment of the items of expenditure
2. To authorise the transfer of £6,000 from deposit account to current account.

1506. **Notice of Conclusion of Audit:**
Report ABPC/24/011 attaches the Certified Annual Return from Forvis Mazars LLP, the Parish Council's External Auditor.

Resolved:

1. To receive and note **Report ABPC/24/011**.
2. To receive and acknowledge the certified Annual Return,
3. To request the Parish Council's website provider to procure a .gov.uk domain name and issue the Clerk and all councillors new email accounts.

1507. **Planning Committee:**
The Committee considered one application, for Questeds Cottage, Annex at, for a single storey front extension and changes to fenestration and has submitted a comment that it would prefer the South and East elevations to be predominantly ragstone in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB8 preserving the character of the area.

1508. **Neighbourhood Plan:**
The Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted as 90% of those voting voted in favour of the Plan. Whilst the Plan has been adopted there are two more stages which have to be passed, the first being the Cabinet of Ashford Borough Council have to approve and then the full Borough Council have to approve, at this stage the Plan is made and forms part of the formal planning legislation.

The Chair thanked all those that had participated in undertaking the research and preparing the Plan.

1509. **Highways Improvement Plan:**
Report ABPC/24/012 states that the Parish Council's Highways Improvement Plan is due to be reviewed, and any new requests considered before meeting with the Community Engagement Team at KCC.

Subsequent to the production of the Report requests have been received for consideration of the installation of double yellow lines on Calleywell Lane between Wheatfields and Quarry House as well as at the junctions of Saxon Heights and Badgers Close on Roman Road.

Resolved:

1. To receive and note **Report ABPC/24/012**.
2. To undertake a resident's consultation on the proposals for Roman Road and Calleywell Lane.
3. To return to the Parish Council with a full report once the outcome of the pre-consultation questionnaire is known and the traffic survey received.

1510. **Events Committee:**

Councillor Taylor reported that the Summer fete was a success as a village gathering covering its costs, the main issue being a lack of volunteers on the day to organise future events more volunteers are required the Church provided much need help on the day. Consideration is being given to organising next year's fete on the August Bank Holiday weekend.

1511. **Quarry Field and Pond:**

Contact has been made with Led by the Wild for advice and guidance as to how the pond and surrounding area should be managed. Urgent work is needed to remove the invasive Parrot Weed from the pond.

1512. **Aldington Meadows:**

The proposal to install a MUGA on the site of the old tennis court needs to be reviewed as it has been ascertained that the old tennis court was in fact a hard court and the years of neglect have caused the tarmac to fail and nature has taken over. To enable grass to be sown topsoil would have to be brought in, this would raise the level, or the sub-base would have to be excavated at considerable cost.

As a result of this a letter is to be produced and sent to residents explaining the issue and suggesting alternatives.

The subject of drainage was raised as the surface water drain from Patterson Farm Close runs through Aldington Meadows and due to a collapsed drain backs up and floods a resident's property. Bellway, the owners of the open land in Aldington Meadows have undertaken surveys that indicate that there are collapsed drains in the vicinity of the oak tree but have not undertaken any works as it does not affect their land. They have also undertaken a survey from the inspection cover in Patterson Farm Close and have identified debris from the road surface, a privately owned stretch of road, and state it is that which is causing the issue and will not do anything about it.

Emails from the Parish Council are no longer being answered or acknowledged.

1513. **Items for information:**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:45pm.



REPORT FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.

ALDINGTON & BONNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL SEPT 2024



ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

CRIMINAL DAMAGE

THEFT FROM VEHICLES, LEAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ON SHOW IN A PARKED CAR. VANS CARRYING TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE AT RISK

THEFTS FROM GARAGES, SHEDS, BARNs, STABLES AND OUTBUILDINGS

THEFTS OF INTERNET SHOPPING PARCELS FROM DOORSTEPS (VANS ARE NOW FOLLOWED, EVEN REMOTE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTIES ARE VULNERABLE

SPECIAL CRIMES e.g. THEFT OF HIGH END KEYLESS CARS/KNIVES/DRUGS

BOGUS CALLERS/ROGUE TRADERS/SCAMS

FLY TIPPING

My work will ENGAGE WITH THE PUBLIC AND RESIDENTS OF COMMUNITIES.

WORK TO SUPPORT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS CAMPAIGNS

IMPORTANTLY TO LOOK AHEAD AND ANTICIPATE, ALERT AND INFORM. REACT TO CONCERNS OF RESIDENTS AND DEVELOPING/CHANGING CRIME THREATS.

ONE OF OUR BIGGEST THREATS is SCAMS. These come on our mobile phones, our landline phones, our computers, our laptops, by letter and on occasions by face to face on our doorsteps.

They can come from 3, 30, 300 and 3000 miles away.

May I draw council's attention this month to the theft of internet shopping parcels

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



CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON ALERT not Aldington but a warning

I have also dealt with a case of a hand held electronic device being spotter in use on KNIGHTS PARK to target a residents car. A very vigilant NHW member intervened to prevent any crime being carried out.

I have fully briefed the Serious Crime Squad who I worked with on keyless car thefts last year and early 2024. All info/intel has been submitted.



Knights Park (Ashford, Kent) Community Group

Peter New · 29 Aug · 🌐

Dear Readers

You will have already read the post from Trudi, a vigilant member of Neighbourhood Watch about the attempted car theft on Knights Park in AUGUSTUS WALK, KNIGHTS PARK, off of MILLBANK ROAD.

Good quality CCTV has been provided to the police of the incident at approx 1125 hrs today (Thursday 29th August)

Would anyone with CCTV or Camera Doorbell footage of the person shown below please make contact my email is below

Thank you for your help in this matter
Peter

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com)
Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch

👍👎 Heather Stanton and 3 others

6 comments

👍 Like 🗨 Comment 📧 Send





AREAS TO IMPROVE

I think an area where we must seek to improve is to get residents to report all crimes. Yes, we have online and 101 and now live chat but we must not shy away from using 999. Our vulnerable and elderly may only have a landline phone.

Let Force Control make the decisions on responses. We must combat the feeling of “They are too busy” “They won’t come” we must make the calls and put the onus on the police to decide. We can get a crime number and any feeling of shortfall in performance can be followed up with that number.

Far too many times crimes and attempted crimes are not reported.

The financial loss is much less than the insurance claim excess, so no crime number is needed as no claim is being made so no report is made.

A classic example would be shed thefts not reported and then a shed is a target and say £15000 of specialist fishing equipment or expensive bikes/golf equipment is stolen and sadly the police find it is the 6th shed theft in the area but 5 were not reported. No crime prevention alerts go out and the 6th shed may have been an avoidable crime.

Attempted thefts should always be reported because sometimes thieves return if they have been thwarted but have seen something they wish to target.

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR and **CRIMINAL DAMAGE** are other examples of crimes that must be reported.

All reports help to shape proactive patrols and importantly crime prevention advice.

I will make a verbal report on the following issues

- 1. AN INCIDENT OF ROGUE TRADING NEARBY IN ASHFORD and NHW Response.**
- 2. MY CONCERNS OVER E-SCOOTERS AND A DEVELOPING FIRE RISK IN COMMUNITIES**
- 3. THE ASHFORD POLICE ESTABLISHMENT.**

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.
Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant

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

