

Minutes of the Meeting of Penshurst Parish Council held on 3 March 2025 at 7.00 pm in Penshurst Village Hall

1. PRESENT: Cllrs R Rees (Chairman), Mrs D Broad, N Furnell, R Rees, J Horsford, R Gerard-Sharp,

2. APOLOGIES: Cllrs A Campbell, D Howard, B Townsend, PC John Donegan, KCCllr Mrs Margot McArthur

In Attendance: SDClr R Streatfield, 4 Parishioners

3. Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 3 February, having been circulated to members were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. Declarations of interests in agenda items. Cllr Rees: Finance – Payment in relation to VE Day Village Celebrations.

5. OPEN SESSION:

Continuing problems at Kingdom were raised in relation to activities that were not permitted plus equipment that should have been removed. These had all been reported for action to SDC, the use of the roof area by numbers of visitors to the site, combined with a suitable exit route for the numbers involved had also been raised. PC to write to SDC Enforcement, copying in the Leader of the Council.

It was noted the temporary opening originally provided in relation to the building at Swaylands was still open although rarely used.

Members were advised that Highways had authorised work to be carried out on Rogues Hill drainage overnight during the week, a unit had attended site at 1.30 am to carry out clearing work to the drains. Clerk had contacted KCC regarding the fact that neighbours had been woken due to the flashing warning lights on the vehicle and it was estimated that the unit was only on site for approximately 10 minutes with little sign of any work having been carried out, a response from KCC was awaited.

6. KCCllr Mrs Margot McArthur: No report

7. SDClr Richard Streatfield (Part): Cllr Streatfield confirmed that the issues raised in relation to Kingdom had been reported to SDC for action. In view of the fact that the request for a change to the mayoral system had been refused, there would be an impact on timing of elections for the District and County councils plus a change in the ratio of representatives to parishioners, it was anticipated that district council elections would take place in 2027. Problems with the green bag system continued. Invitations to VE Day Celebrations had been sent out, it was anticipated there would be many local events and parishioners were encouraged to attend them as they would be available throughout the day.

8. PC 30366 John Donegan: PC Donegan had advised the clerk he would be on a training course and therefore would be unable to attend the March meeting.

9. Tom Tugendhat Report: No report

10. Neighbourhood Watch - February/Report Cllr Furnell:

On Sunday 23rd February the police firearms team shot several injured deer on Fordcombe Road by Smarts Hill junction. Highways removed them although Cllr Furnell was advised this was SDC's responsibility.

A drug dealer was given a 5 ½ year sentence for supplying cocaine across West Kent.

There had been a spate of farm thefts this month including:

A Gator all-terrain vehicle was stolen from Fishponds farm in Upper Hayesden lane.

A battery stolen from Hartsland Farm following the theft of a quad bike taken from a nearby house which needed a battery.

Walters Green Road, Penshurst: Quad bike stolen from shed

Penshurst Road, Speldhurst: Vehicle stolen

Security lights were smashed at a neighbouring property

Electric fencing was stolen from a field in Coldharbour road. Intruders broke into Spring Hill Farm and stole diesel and a chain saw. Thieves tried to break into a shed on a farm in Gate Farm Rd, Bidborough. Intruders at Ashour were chased off by a gamekeeper, Hartsland farm had a chainsaw taken

Vehicle theft

One vehicle is stolen every five minutes in the UK with keyless entry **car theft** also called relay theft; keyless entry cars have a key that transmits a signal to operate your car. Thieves can copy that from outside your home and then drive your car away. Currently new Land rovers are popular with criminals. To avoid theft keep the keys in a metal box or Faraday bag at home (this stops the signal being transmitted) and use a steering wheel lock when away from home. Putting a tracker on your car does not stop it being stolen but at least you can see which country it has been taken to! It is called relay theft because it involves two thieves. One stands by your house to copy the signal using an electronic device. The signal is then relayed to the second thief by your car. His device will then operate the car.

11. Matters Arising:

i. Parking – Fordcombe Village Green Area: Cllr Horsford had circulated photographs of the areas showing substantial damage to the grassed area plus oak posts boundary which had also been damaged. There had been an increase over time in the number of vehicles using the area for parking which restricted access for delivery lorries. This issue to be discussed with the Kent Highways personnel at the meeting being arranged for members to discuss issues with the team covering the PC area. It was anticipated that any alterations/additions required to deter vehicle access would need to be included on the PC HIP document for approval by Highways.

ii. The Lane: Brick path near Reeves Court, trip hazard. Reported to West Kent Housing for site inspection as possible trip hazard on brick area.

12. PLANNING: Planning Applications:

25/00372/FUL: Westover Farm, The Lane, Fordcombe: Change of Use of Residential and Agricultural Land and the installation of an Equestrian American Barn with Hardstanding and Track Connecting to Existing Facilities, and Removal of Existing Stable Building and yard.

25/00085/LBCALT: The Oast House, Ashcombe Priory, Chafford Lane, Fordcombe: Internal alterations, alterations to fenestration and replacement of existing windows and doors. Conversion of garage to habitable rooms.

25/00084/HOUSE: The Oast House, Ashcombe Priory, Chafford Lane, Fordcombe: Internal alterations, alterations to fenestration and replacement of existing windows and doors. Conversion of garage to habitable rooms.

25/00145/FUL: Birches, Fordcombe Road, Penshurst: Refurbishment and alteration works throughout the existing property, including the conversion of the existing basement to provide additional habitable accommodation. Construction of an orangery extension to the west-facing elevation. Removal of the existing shed outbuilding and outdoor swimming pool. Construction of a replacement outdoor swimming pool with new detached outbuilding. Removal of the existing greenhouse structure. Construction of a detached garage and storage building with new driveway and parking area, served by new vehicular access. New gates to serve the existing driveway. Associated hard and soft landscaping works in the vicinity of the proposed extension and swimming pool. Sunken area for Air Source Heat Pump units and below ground LPG tanks. **Please Note: This application is no longer valid: Further information has been requested, sections of proposed sunken area for Air Source Heat Pump, below ground LPG tanks and noise assessment report.**

24/03428/LBCALT: Springs Cottage, Bullingstone Lane, Penshurst: Raising of roof area and eaves over the external door openings and slightly extended either side. Raising of the ceiling to the living area including a central fully vaulted area. Raising of ground floor by approximately 50mm allow for raising the existing floor level by approximately 50mm. Removal of 20th century? / modern? brick drylining skin to internal face of original solid external wall and replacement with timber stud insulated drylining with plasterboard and skim coat as internal finish including formation of recess to wood burner on north wall.

Minor description change added 12 February 2025

24/03327/HOUSE: Yeomans, Walters Green Road, Penshurst: Demolition of existing garage, summerhouse and single storey extension. Erection of linked single storey extension. Internal alterations. Alteration to fenestration. Associated landscaping. **GRANTED (24/03328/LBCALT Refused)**

SE/24/03041/FUL: Lake House, Poundsbridge Lane, Poundsbridge, Penshurst: New dwelling with outbuildings, including self-contained guest accommodation, and swimming pool. Associated hard and soft landscaping works.

SE/24/03017/24/03016/HOUSE/LBCALT: 1 Rectory Cottages, High Street, Penshurst: Replacement central heating with a new external oil boiler and oil tank. Install a new hot water cylinder and add 4 radiators to the existing 3. Possible alterations to pipework. **GRANTED**

SE/24/02520/FUL: Fordcombe Village Recreation Ground Fordcombe Road Fordcombe: Existing single storey storage building 36 sqm and one 15 sqm shipping container to be removed, and to be replaced by storage building of 56 sqm, for storing equipment for charitable functions.

SE/24/02585/FUL: Barn North of Little Chafford, Spring Hill, Fordcombe: Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to residential use. Penshurst Parish Council note the reasons for the refusal of the previous application (23/02304) and consider that these have been fully addressed in the current application. We therefore support the proposed development. **The applicant has provided a BNG metric and BNG report.**

Tree Surgery:

24/02738/WTCA: Rogues Hill House, Rogues Hill, Penshurst: Various works to trees.

24/02722/WTCA: Garden Cottage Fordcombe Road Penshurst: Various works to trees

24/02803/WTCA: Rogues House, Rogues Hill, Penshurst: Beech Tree - Cut back 20% of tree canopy.

25/00181/WTPO: Daneby Hall, The Lane, Fordcombe: Proposal (T1 & T2) Oaks - reduce lower lateral spread over garage by 30% (G1) group of Oaks - reduce by 30%

13. HIGHWAYS

854466: Spring Hill: Public House and Village Hall: Issue reported again, report on information relating to work carried out and further work to be done requested. Flooding reported to KCC Highways, confirmation received regarding problem with pipework serving the area, Southern Water responsible for work required to rectify. **22.1.25 – Information not currently available.**

826354/755185: Finches, Fordcombe Road: Flooding due to blocked Drain/Gulley. Gulley scheduled for cleaning.

826364: Blocked Drains - Rogues Hill: originally promised for clearance in July 2023, reported on 20.8.24 that cleaning was scheduled.

832672: Flooding of property and problems with drainage at another submitted 24.9.24: Reported to Kent Highways, SE Water and Southern. Checks carried out by water companies and highways; currently Southern Water approached to deal with issue.

PROW: 822853: SR465 – Walters Green Road/Weavers Cottage: Poor surfacing with possible septic tank issue; **240712840: - Coach Road, SR 546:** Overhanging trees. *Footpath repairs delayed.*

823784: Extension of yellow lines to The Lane in Fordcombe: To improve safety for the septic tanker whilst working. PC advised to include on HIP. Reported again under 844790 for update on current situation.

835121: White/Yellow Lines: Request for road markings to be reinstated adjacent to hedging from new rectory area down towards entrance to Leicester Square. Application plus photographs provided by Cllr Furnell submitted to SDC together with request for reinstatement. **Work agreed with SDC, date for work to be carried out awaited, dependant on weather conditions.**

842230: Poundsbridge Manor: White lines require reinstatement; Poundsbridge Manor – Speldhurst drains now blocked due to hedge cutting, clearance required. **Works being programmed – 20.11.24**

839558: Cleave House: Multiple potholes. **Works being programmed – 1.11.24**

Chafford Lane Wall: Notification received that SDC responsible for area, confirmation awaited on way forward with regard to clearance of materials in road and further repair works. ED advised by KCC Highways that SDC liable for reporting problem for action.

PROW Report 250225697/241097018: Inadequate drainage on footpath SR465 – Allocated, awaiting inspection.

862579: Overhanging Branch between Little Chart and Spotted Dog (Reported by others). Issue under investigation 21.2.25

864529: Rogues Hill: Report of Gulley clearance lorry attending site at 1.30am 28.2.2025 for approximately 10 minutes but no visible work carried out.

Road Closure: Chafford Lane, Fordcombe - 21st March 2025 for 1 day: The road will be closed from the river to entrance to The Drive. The alternative route is via Chafford Lane, B2188 Spring Hill, Sandfield Road, Walters Green Road and vice versa. Pedestrian access will be maintained during the works. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while drainage improvement works are undertaken by Kent.

Urgent Road Closure - Poundsbridge Lane, Penshurst - 24th February 2025: It will be necessary to close Poundsbridge Lane, Penshurst from 24th February 2025 for up to 4 days. The road will be closed outside Honey Field Cottage. The alternative route is via Poundsbridge, Poundsbridge Hill, Poundsbridge Lane, The Lane, B2188 Fordcombe Road, B2188 Spring Hill, B2188 Saints Hill, B2188 New Road, B2188 Fordcombe Road, B2188 High Street, B2176 Rogues Hill. B2176 Penshurst Road. This is to enable drainage investigation works to be carried out by Kent County Council.

14. Finance/Accounts:

KOMPAN: Cableway Inspection and Re-assembly: ED advised that it would be prudent to have the aerial ropeway checked by a recognised company in time for the next RoSPA Inspection. This was approved. Date for work to be done will be advised.

BLACK HAWK SECURITY SYSTEM

Blackhawk Security System to carry out work to our existing CCTV equipment. PC had been sharing some of the original equipment ie NVR Recording equipment with the Village Hall Committee since the original equipment was installed. It had been decided it would be beneficial for the PC to have its own recording facility which would also ease access to check the system for those who monitor the system. It was agreed the quotation of £869.73 be approved and work be authorised, Clerk to action.

VE Day Celebrations: Request for **£1000 S.137** payment towards the costs for the village. It was proposed and seconded that the sum of £1000 be awarded via the S.137 towards the costs of the parish celebrations for VE Day. Cllr Rees abstained in view of interest registered.

The following accounts were presented and unanimously approve for payment:

Vision ICT	Email/Website Service	Certificate Renewal	£ 60.00
Chiddingstone PC	Swathe & Visibility Contract	2024	£228.45
Blackhawk Security	CCTV System Upgrade/Alterations		£869.73
Penshurst Commemoration Society	Village VE Celebrations		£1,000.00
HMRC	Clerk Tax Payment		£141.60
Mrs E M Divall (Clerk)	Annual Salary & Expenses		£8,817.71
Lucy Fuller Rowell	Lengthsman – February		£100.00
	Litter pick around village, Yew Hedge, layby,		
	Keymer Court To Doctors, Glebelands to Star House,		
ICO	Data protection annual fee		£52.00

a. Play Area: Estimate received of cost of work for play area:

- i. Cableway inspection, refurbishment and reassembly: £321.43 - 642.86
- ii. Supply and install of Bonded Rubber Mulch @ 40mm depth - @ £84.29 sq. m.
(Areas to be advised)

b. Water Company Supply – Penshurst Allotments: (Castle Co.)

Request for the PC to provide standing order facility, water meter reading required currently. The Chairman was aware of a problem with rats on the site, it was noted that many local residents fed birds which encouraged the rats.

- c. **Insurance:** Clerk confirmed insurance had been checked two years previously and was competitive at that time but advised a further check would be beneficial. Cllr Duncan had offered to assess insurance for cover and cost, this was agreed.

15. Any Other Business: None