



# Bearsted Parish Council Newsletter

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## Welcome from the Chairman



Welcome to the first of our newsletters which will help Bearsted Parish Council to keep our residents up to date on upcoming events and works taking place in our village.

The newsletter can be sent directly to you by email once you register on our website or can be picked up at one of our noticeboards, the station or libraries.

These past few months has seen many of our events cancelled due to Covid-19. Councillors have continued to work during the lockdown with virtual meetings taking place allowing decisions and plans to be made.

Our thanks go to Jess Howells who organised our Covid-19 support during the past 3 months as well as the 250 plus volunteers who delivered groceries, collected prescriptions and just made sure some of our residents were doing well. As the regulations are eased the village will hopefully return to some normality with our pubs and restaurants opening and sports being played once again on The Green. We hope that you continue to stay well and we shall be updating our news page regularly.

## Are you good with Numbers?

Bearsted Parish Council are looking to co-op members to our Finance Committee due to the retirement of a Councillor.

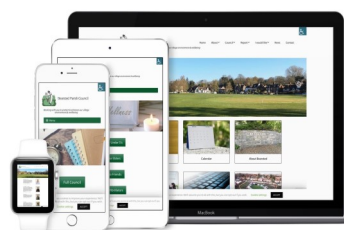
The role involves analysing budgets and ensuring they are maintained, monthly assessment of financial accounts, review of invoices and making recommendations for effective financial management.

Members of the council spend between 3-5 hours a month volunteering and full training can be given.

Bearsted Parish Council are keen to hear from anyone who can give their time to continue the work we are doing. Please contact:

[clerk@bearstedparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@bearstedparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## The New Bearsted Parish Council Website



We are proud to announce that the new Bearsted Parish Council website is now live.

Councillors felt the duty and need to comply with the accessibility regulations which warranted a new website that was more functional and user-friendly for residents.

The new website will allow you to find local businesses, organisations and activity groups for all ages. We have the functionality for issues to be reported, live traffic reports as well as local news.

## The Village Pond



Our village pond has deteriorated over the years with water leaking as well as the surrounding trees taking what was left. It has been challenging to obtain the correct specification as well as the best time to do the works.

We have finally put a tender out for the works required which will entail clearing the bull rushes and keeping them for replanting in clusters, scraping off the surface and laying a new liner with clay.

The pond banks will be shaped. A sand filtration system will be constructed allowing rain water from the road to flow through enabling

the pond to be continually topped up with the existing overflow system. The depth will not change and we shall be replanting in clusters with lilies in the middle of the pond.

The contractor will be required to warranty the works with an annual maintenance program to ensure our on going costs are minimal.

## Traffic Working Group update

The BPC Traffic Working Group is continuing to work through a long list of highways issues in the village.

Double yellow line corner protection on 11 junctions, primarily around Madginford School and the schools on The Landway are now with KCC for formal consultation, with an outcome and implementation expected shortly.

The initial informal consultation regarding the implementation of double yellow lines on a section of Ware Street between Chapel Lane and Sandy Lane met with mixed reactions and therefore BPC was unable to take this proposal forward.

It is now proposed that double yellow lines be implemented solely on the section of the road where there is a slight bend restricting sightlines. This would prevent parked cars creating a blind spot and impairing visibility for oncoming traffic. The proposed double yellow lines are on the north side of Ware Street and would run from the bottom of Sandy Lane, extending 36 metres westwards, finishing approximately opposite the start of the row of cottages. This proposal is in the interest of vehicular and pedestrian safety and it is hoped it will prove acceptable and can be expedited as soon as possible.



### New Homes off Church Road are refused

BPC objected to MBC about two planning applications by Bellway Homes to build around St Nicholas Church in Church Road, Otham. Although not located within our parish, we considered that these new homes would put increased traffic onto Spot Lane.

Otham and Downswood PC's opposed them as did hundreds of local residents, We were all delighted when Maidstone BC refused them on 25 June but, the developers have appealed and there is likely to be a public inquiry later this year.

MBC officers consider there is little chance of successfully defending these appeals but, many Borough Councillors consider that they can.

Chairman of BPC Planning Committee, Graeme Hannington, said: "New housing developments south of Bearsted are causing increased congestion on Bearsted's Roads, particularly Willington Street, Spot Lane, Madginford Road, Ware Street and Otham Lane. These already busy roads are often jammed at peak hours without additional traffic. Many new developments come without road and transport improvements to cope with the new traffic they will generate."

BPC has a duty to object to poorly integrated local developments as new traffic would only further congest Bearsted's overloaded roads.

## Summer Playscheme

Bearsted Parish Council are pleased to confirm The Summer Playscheme will go ahead this year.

There will be some changes due to COVID-19 but we are delighted to be able to support families who need affordable and local childcare over the summer break.

Tickets are now sold out but please get in touch if you would like to be added to the waiting list. [admin@bearstedparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@bearstedparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## Bearsted Market on The Green



Due to Government regulations our market will not operate the rest of the year.

We have decided to relaunch this in March 2021. However, we are closely monitoring this on a monthly basis at our Communications committee meetings in the hope that if things change, we may be able to operate a Christmas gathering when we switch on the tree lights.

## Appointment of New Clerk



It is with pleasure that we announce that Erin Sugden has been appointed Clerk to Bearsted Parish Council.

Erin has worked for the Council for a number of years and is keen to continue to work with residents to protect and enhance our village environment and wellbeing.