

BEARSTED PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2025

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT BY CLLR DENIS SPOONER

MBC continues to make slow progress on a number of issues.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM (LGR)

MBC has now resolved to inform MHCLG that it favours joining a new Unitary Council containing T&MBC, SDC and TWBC. This is Option 3a of a number of different options that were considered by all the existing 14 local councils in Kent. Other councils have opted for other options. I understand that MHCLG will announce its proposals for LGR in Kent in April or May of next year.

THE POTENTIAL CREATION OF A MAIDSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Public consultation continues on whether the unparished areas of MBC should have either one Maidstone Town Council or several Community Councils which are likely to be based on existing MBC Wards. A new Town Council or several new Community Councils are likely to have similar powers to the existing Parish Councils in the rest of the Borough.

PROGRESS ON PLANNING POLICY

6-week public consultation exercises are now underway on the SPDs for both the Heathlands and Lising Garden Communities and for the G&T DPD. There are no proposed G&T sites within Bearsted Parish but, a proposed site off Water Lane within Thurnham Parish has generated opposition from some Bearsted residents, some of whom think the site is in Bearsted. I understand that BPC will be considering the G&T DPD in due course. In the meantime, residents should be advised to communicate directly with Thurnham PC and MBC.

Work has now commenced on rolling forward by 5 years the existing 2021-2038 Adopted MBC LPR to 2026-2043. Recent MHCLG changes to planning regulations mean that the new LPR must be completed within 30 months. I regard this as being an impossible timescale.

In addition, it has been explained by MBC Officers that they will be planning for about 1,300 new dwellings pa to be provided in Maidstone within each year from 2038-2043. Added to the additional housing numbers already required by recent changes to the NPPF, this could mean that MBC may have to provide

land for up to 8000 – 9000 new dwellings in the borough over and above all existing LPR allocations which include Lidsing, Invicta Barracks and Heathlands, etc. I am, therefore, seriously concerned that this will put pressure on the green fields around Bearsted.

UNAUTHORISED TREE FELLING AT HILL HOUSE, WARE STREET

In my view, this unauthorised work has had a significant impact on the character and appearance of the local area. No further work has been undertaken since it was stopped by MBC Officers on 30 October. I understand that the Officers have requested that a retrospective application be submitted for tree work within a Conservation Area.

CLEARANCE OF VEGETATION FROM LAND NORTH OF WARE STREET AND WEST OF EDELIN ROAD

This land is within Thurnham Parish but, just over the Parish Boundary with Bearsted. Nevertheless, some Bearsted residents have complained about the clearance work being undertaken. The land is allocated for 67 dwelling on the LPR. Val and I strongly opposed this allocation when the LPR was being prepared but it was accepted by MBC. The land owner and workmen are doing nothing unlawful in clearing the land.

MEETINGS ATTENDED

9 November: As a Borough Councillor, I attended the annual Remembrance Service at the Maidstone War Memorial.

11 November: I attended a meeting of the MBC Planning and Healthier and Stronger Communities Policy Advisory Committee (PHSC PAC). There were no items on the agenda that were of direct relevance to Bearsted.

12 November: I attended a ‘drop-in session’ on the Lidsing SPD that was organised by MBC Officers at the Boxley PC offices in Walderslade.

15 November: I attended a public exhibition organised by developers to explain a large, proposed new housing development off Hermitage Lane, Maidstone.

17 November: I attended:

- i) a ‘drop-in session’ on the Heathlands SPD that was organised by MBC Officers at the Dog and Bear PH in Lenham village; and
- ii) a full meeting of MBC which decided on which of the Options for LGR it favoured – see further information above.

25 November: I attended an online briefing by MBC Officers to explain the work to be done on the LPR 2026-2043 – please see above for further information.

1 December: I attended an online planning training session conducted by MBC Planning Officers. This training is open to all parish councillors and it was good that Jodie attended.

I thought that the presentation by Officers was excellent. It was clearly aimed at the high quality of design and the higher density of layout that MBC will be seeking in all the new housing developments planned within the Borough. I was very disappointed and embarrassed at most of the subsequent questions posed by some Borough Councillors – who should know better. Few questions related to design and layout and, instead, related to compliance with conditions, grass cutting on POS and tidying up an overgrown area of land!

2 December: I attended a meeting of Downswood PC.

3 December: I attended a full meeting of MBC. There were no items on the agenda that had any direct relevance to Bearsted residents.

4 December: I attended a meeting of the MBC PHSC PAC. There were no items on the agenda that were of direct relevance to Bearsted.

Borough Councillor Denis Spooner
Bearsted and Downswood Ward

12 December 2025

From: [Val Springett \(Cllr\)](#)
To: [Bearsted Parish Council \(MBC\)](#)
Cc: [Ciaran Oliver \(Cllr\)](#); [Denis Spooner \(Cllr\)](#)
Subject: Report for full council
Date: 09 December 2025 17:39:54

Bearsted Parish Council Meeting – 16th December 2025

Borough Councillor’s Report – Cllr Val Springett

I have been contacted by several residents concerned about the site in Water Lane put forward as a potential gypsy and traveller site. Unfortunately the borough has to find land for just under 600 pitches and called for landowners to put forward land for consideration. The consultation on the policy and potential sites ends on 11th January. The consultation document is quite large, and contains a series of questions within different sections of the proposed policy, which includes potential sites. If residents do not wish to review the whole document and answer the integral questions, they may email their comments to LDF@maidstone.gov.uk.

The site at The Lodge, Water Lane seems to be causing the most concern and its reference is C4S(008).

I have also assisted residents just outside Bearsted, in the Bearsted Park and Edelin Road area, who contacted me with concerns about motorised vehicles on a public right of way and adjacent vegetation clearance. I contacted the KCC PROW team, who have investigated to see if any enforcement action was needed. The ownership of the land over which the PROW runs is unclear. The site itself is land-locked, but is included as a development site in the Local Plan and the landowner is permitted to clear vegetation on his land. It is disappointing that the landowner seems to be flouting legislation, and that he has not submitted an access application first to establish how the development will connect to the highway in Ware Street.

I continue to work with residents near the shops at The Green, shop owners and KCC Highways to try to resolve the persistent parking on double-yellow lines at the southern end of Thurnham Lane. An informal consultation on no waiting restrictions, and a minor change to the parking bays will be done by the parish council ahead of a formal consultation by KCC Highways.

I have objected to two planning applications- the holiday let at Paignton in The Street as I have concerns about the safety of the access, and an enlargement to a modest bungalow in Aldington Road, which will impact the neighbouring link detached property and the street scene.

Cllr Val Springett
MBC Ward Member for Bearsted and Downswood

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will hold and use your data, and your rights in this respect is available on the MBC website using the following link:

<https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/privacy-and-cookies/service-level-privacy-notice/democratic-services/councillors>

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Bearsted Parish Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/25

No	Payment Reference	Gross	To pay	Heading	Invoice date	Invoice no.	Details	Payment Reference Total
5601		£34.38	£34.38	115/4	01/11/25	21076	Compute4U - Licences for laptops x 3	
5602		£72.00	£72.00	115/4	01/11/25	21063	Compute4U - Leased laptops x 3	
5630		£0.00	£0.00	205/3/2	03/11/25	25641217	EDF Energy - 01.10.25 - 31.10.25 xmas lights	
5646		£5.95	£5.95	115/7	04/11/25	Lebara 04.11	Lloyds Bank - Lebara - office mobile	
5597		£6.58	£6.58	220/2	06/11/25	10008214724	Castle Water - Oct water usage - Pond	
5628		£264.00	£264.00	740/6	10/11/25	Inv 28227	Midas Waste - Waste removal - fireworks	
5610		£1,369.20	£1,369.20	740/4	12/11/25	15608889	Brandon Hire - Hire of safety eqt - signs, lights, barriers	
5647		£19.99	£19.99	205/3/2	12/11/25	Amazon card	Lloyds Bank - Amazon - santa hats for switch on	
5651		£19.97	£19.97	115/4	12/11/25	Adobe Card1	Lloyds Card - Adobe - Nov Adobe charge	
5627		£370.80	£370.80		14/11/25	31454	Safeplay PS Ltd - Monthly play area checks - Oct	
	1	£185.40		210/2			Monthly play area inspections	
	2	£185.40		285/1/2			Monthly play area inspections	
5623		£48.75	£48.75	115/14	15/11/25	15112025 - BP	Madginford Hall - Oct hall hire	
5626		£42.00	£42.00	120/1	17/11/25	13751130153	KALC - Training - climate change	
5613		£60.00	£60.00	115/4	20/11/25	237899	Managed Technology - Mono and colour ink usage	

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Date

Bearsted Parish Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/25

No	Payment Reference	Gross	To pay	Heading	Invoice date	Invoice no.	Details	Payment Reference Total
5622		£97.55	£97.55	115/2	20/11/25	M141 MT	British Telecom - BT charges November	
5606		£60.00	£60.00	235/2/2	21/11/25	Deposit 01B	██████████ - Return of key and plot deposit	
5619		£42.00	£42.00	115/12	21/11/25	Inv 23	██████████ - Cleaning of office	
5620		£340.00	£340.00	740/6	21/11/25	BEARFIRE25	Urban Blue Bus - Medical cover for fireworks	
5621		£1,591.38	£1,591.38	205/3/1	23/11/25	132	Orva Electrical Ltd - Install/remove motifs in Bearsted	
5609		£34.41	£34.41		24/11/25	AB expenses	Amy Bush - Expenses	
	1	£2.40		115/8			Milk for office	
	2	£7.60		785/7			Coffee re Music on the Green rep	
	3	£2.40		115/8			Milk for office	
	4	£12.99		205/3/1			Box for light switch on	
	5	£9.02		205/3/1			Button for light switch on	
5633		£22.26	£22.26	255/3	25/11/25	105084498	Three - Three monthly SIM charges - new contract	
5638		-£2.89	-£2.89	235/2/1	26/11/25	TE900287	Castle Water - Adj inv Allotments C Lane 01.08-31.08	
5637		£5.31	£5.31	235/2/1	27/11/25	TE905742	Castle Water - Allotments C Lane 01.11-25.11	
5634		£179.38	£179.38	100/8	28/11/25	106	██████████ - Finance support Nov	

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Bearsted Parish Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/25

No	Payment Reference	Gross	To pay	Heading	Invoice date	Invoice no.	Details	Payment Reference Total
5636		£370.80	£370.80		28/11/25	32053	Safeplay PS Ltd - Monthly play area checks - Nov	
	1	£185.40		210/2			Monthly play area inspections	
	2	£185.40		285/1/2			Monthly play area inspections	
5624		£339.99	£339.99	180	30/11/25	Donation	Church Lane Allotment Association - Grant - new lawnmower	
5639		£15.00	£15.00	115/12	30/11/25	Nov clean	Ian's Window Cleaning - Nov clean of windows and cobwebs	
5631		£72.00	£72.00	115/4	01/12/25	21248	Compute4U - Leased laptops x 3	
5632		£34.38	£34.38	115/4	01/12/25	21260	Compute4U - Licences for laptops x 3	
5635		£65.00	£65.00	115/14	01/12/25	01122025-BPC	Madginford Hall - Nov hall hire	
5640		£13,500.00	£13,500.00	100/8	02/12/25	9000164448	Kent County Council - 01.10.25 - 31.03.26 Community Warden Sponsorship	
5641		£74.85	£74.85	410/2	02/12/25	KI-CBA22A74-0	EDF Energy - 01.11.25-30.11.25 elec WT	
5648		£3.00	£3.00	115/17	02/12/25	Card chgs	Lloyds Bank - Nov card fee	
5611		-£35.16	-£35.16	740/4	03/12/25	15686198	Brandon Hire - Credit note inv 15608889	
5642		£29.49	£29.49	235/1/2	04/12/25	10008483702	Castle Water - The St allotments - November 2025	

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Bearsted Parish Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/25

No	Payment Reference	Gross	To pay	Heading	Invoice date	Invoice no.	Details	Payment Reference Total
5612		£53.16	£53.16		05/12/25	JU expenses	Joanne Upton - Expenses	
	1	£10.50		115/15			Parking for MBC conference	
	2	£1.20		115/8			Milk	
	3	£7.45		115/8			Washing sponges, juice, toilet rolls - office	
	4	£3.80		110/1/1			Tape measure	
	5	£24.26		115/4			Adobe - card not working	
	6	£5.95		115/7			Lebara - card not working	
5643		£6.37	£6.37	220/2	05/12/25	10008519200	Castle Water - Nov water usage - Pond	
5644		£130.17	£130.17	400/1	09/12/25	01608301	Valda Energy - Unmetered street lighting 24.11-23.12	
5649		£1,796.92	£1,796.92	150/8	09/12/25	24/25 recharges	Madginford Hall - 10% utility bills - April 2024 - Mar 2025	
5650		£870.49	£870.49	150/8	09/12/25	1st half 2025	Madginford Hall - 10% utility bills - Apr 2025 to 31.10.25	
5625		£60.00	£60.00	235/2/3	12/12/25	INV 0902	Cutting Edge Locksmiths Ltd - Allotment lock repair	
5652		£874.85	£874.85		25/12/25	Dec Pay	HMRC - PAYE and NI Dec (office staff)	
	1	£428.60		100/1			PAYE Dec	
	2	£446.25		100/6			NI Dec	
5653		£193.67	£193.67	100/5	25/12/25	Dec pay	NEST Pension - Dec pension deductions	
5654		██████	██████	100/3	25/12/25	Dec Pay	Amy Bush - Dec pay	

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Bearsted Parish Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/25

No	Payment Reference	Gross	To pay Heading	Invoice date	Invoice no.	Details	Payment Reference Total
5655			100/3	25/12/25	Dec Pay	Joanne Upton - Dec payroll	
<p>The following payments have already been made</p>							
5616	11272025 BK Security	£1,310.00	£1,310.00 740/7	04/11/25	183	BK Security Services - Security for fireworks	
5617	11272025 Express toi	£378.00	£378.00 740/4	04/11/25	SI-7813	Express Toilet Hire - Toilet hire - fireworks	
5614	11272025 B Heaslip	£1,129.00	£1,129.00 740/4	10/11/25	25-015	Ben Heaslip - Sound eqt for fireworks, sub hire of generator	
5618	11272025 A P Media	£100.00	£100.00 740/6	10/11/25	001	AP Media Tech Ltd - DJ Services - fireworks	
5629	11192025 Payro	£6.00	£6.00 115/10	10/11/25	PSS2614475	Payroo Ltd - Oct Payroll charges	
5615	11272025 V Flanagan	£1,300.00	£1,300.00 740/6	11/11/25	1060	- Event fee - Bearsted fireworks	
Sub Total		£29,945.35	£29,945.35				
Total		£29,945.35	£29,945.35				

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Quick Budget Comparison 2025-26

Financial reports verified and checked at Finance meeting on 11th December 2025

Committee	Budgeted Income	Actual Spend (to date)	Variance to Budget
Full Council	£89,345	£69,431.66	£19,913.34
Environment	£52,710.19	£24,839.33	£27,870.86
Communications	£51,570	£24,006.58	£27,563.42
Traffic	£20,000	£10,009.00	£9,991.00
Special Projects £198,234.92	198,234.92	£450.00	£197,784.92

These figures have been extracted from the Financial Budget comparison report.

To enable Cllr's to easily see available funds and budgets, for each Committee without the need to manually check/calculate the figures. If you have any queries, please contact me.

BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS - 30th Nov 25 As reviewed and agreed at the finance meeting on the 11th Dec

Bank	Acc. Type	Term	Ends	Interest Paid	Interest Rate	Balance
Unity	Current	n/a	n/a			£35,635.19
Unity - Instant Access	Instant Access Saver	n/a	n/a	Quarterly	2.10%	£21,234.25
Unity - Fixed Rate	Fixed Rater Saver	24 month	02/07/2026	Jul-26	5.00%	£85,000.00
Cambridge & Counties	Fixed Rater Saver	60 months	31/10/2029	Annually in Oct	4.40%	£52,206.03
Hampshire	Fixed Rater Saver	12 months	19/09/2026	Annually in September	4.22%	£83,630.04
Redwood Bank	95 day Notice Acc	n/a	n/a	Annually	4.20%	£109,971.78
Buckinghamshire BS	Instant Access Saver	n/a	30/10/2026	Annually in Dec	3.30%	£100,001

TOTAL

£487,678.29

██████████
Clerk Bearsted Parish Council

My ref: JO/LJ12/G401

Date: 15 December 2025

Dear ██████████

Bearsted Parish Council
Council Tax and Precept 2025/2026

I am writing to notify you of the values for the council tax base in 2026/27 to Bearsted Parish Council.

██████████ **2026/2027 Tax Base** 3,665.7

PI ██████████ tax bases have yet to be adopted in accordance with the usual timetable however, due to the urgent need of parish clerks to plan for the new financial year and therefore attach the draft Parish tax bases that are set to be presented to our **Cabinet scheduled for 28th January 2026**. We will of course alert parish clerks, in the event of any changes to the figures.

While I appreciate that the level of precept for 2026/27 is for the Parish Council to agree, I have set out below two options that the Parish Council may wish to consider and compare these with the funding levels for 2025/26.

1. Maintaining the current Band D charge:

The current band D charge of £ 38.57 will generate a precept of £141,386 from the tax base for 2026/27.

There would be increase of £ 1,386.00 in total funding.

There would be no change in the parish element of the council tax for each resident.

2. Maintaining the current precept:

The 2025/26 precept of £140,000.00 could be maintained by a £ 38.19 band D. This would decrease the charge to each band D taxpayer in 2026/27 by £ 0.38.

