

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at Bearsted Golf Club on Tuesday 1st April 2025 at 7.00pm

Present:

Cllr David Hall

Cllr Val Springett (Vice Chair)

Cllr Richard Ash (MBE)

Cllr Pat Catt

Cllr Frank Jagger

Cllr Kapil Kaushik

Cllr Martha Monday

Cllr Jodie Pottage

Cllr Carolyn Smith

Cllr Denis Spooner

Cllr Sean Turner

Cllr Chris Waters

Also, in attendance were The Mayor of Maidstone, Cllr John Perry, The Clerk Joanne Upton, The Deputy Clerk Amy Bush, and approximately 80 members of the public.

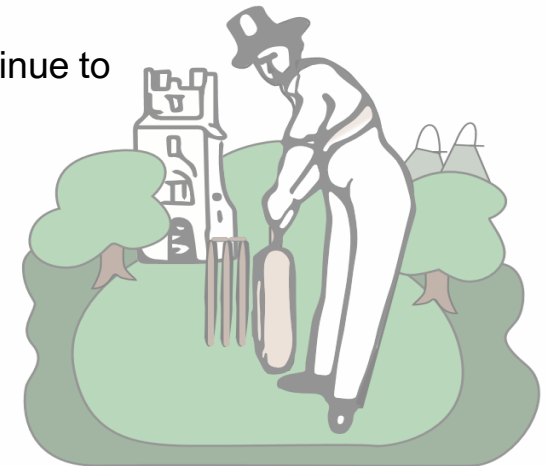
Apologies were received and duly noted for Cllr Clive English





Bearsted Annual Parish Meeting 2025

- ❑ Cllr Hall welcomed the Mayor and members of the public and thanked the Golf Club for hosting the APM.
- ❑ Cllr Hall advised the meeting will be recorded and photographs taken for minuting purposes and to be used on social media. Anyone not wanting to have their images taken and used must inform the Deputy Clerk.
- ❑ Cllr Hall reported that he had stepped down as Chairman of the Council, due to family commitments but will continue to serve the parish as a Councillor. A new Chair will be elected in May.
- ❑ The Councillors introduced themselves.



Your Parish Council



Cllr David Hall



**Vice Chair
Cllr Val Springett**



**Cllr Richard
Ash MBE**



Cllr Pat Catt



**Cllr Clive
English**



**Cllr Neil
Francis**



**Cllr Frank
Jagger**



**Cllr Kapil
Kaushik**



**Cllr Martha
Monday**



**Cllr Jodie
Pottage**



**Cllr Denis
Spooner**



**Cllr Carolyn
Smith**



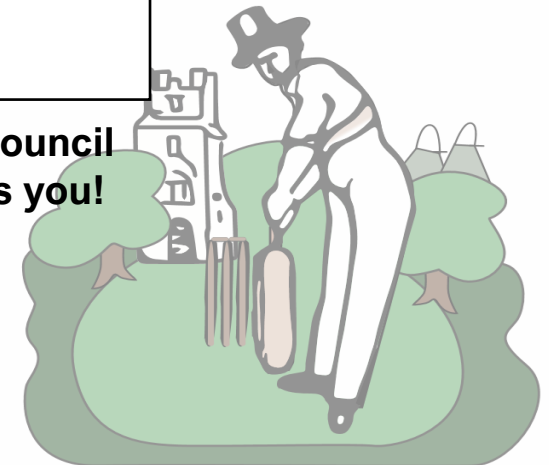
**Cllr Sean
Turner**



**Cllr Chris
Waters**



**The Council
needs you!**

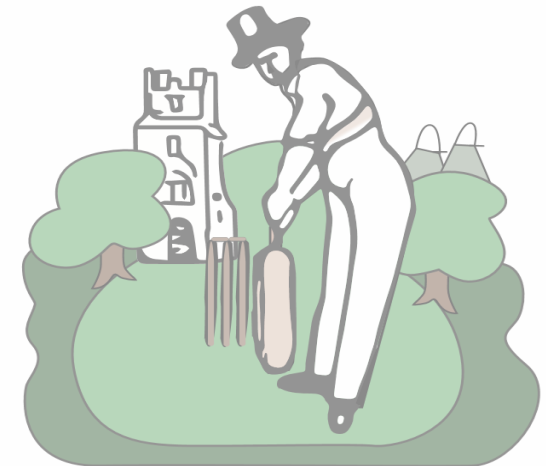


We would like to welcome our newest Councillors Jodie, Neil and Kapil to their first APM.

Achievements 2024/25

ClIr Hall spoke about the Councils achievements over the last 12 months.

- ❑ BPC launched their new website. The new format has made it easier to navigate news and updates.
- ❑ The play area at the Green welcomes a new seesaw with space for more children to play.
- ❑ In conjunction with Goldings Homes, Bearsted Parish Council are pleased to support local sports groups with storing their equipment in a newly provided storage unit at the Elizabeth Harvie Field.
- ❑ New Christmas motifs were purchased to update the festive lighting in Madginford and at The Green.
- ❑ The CPS teams continue to support BPC. This year they have tidied many local footpaths, cleared overgrown areas of the Holy Cross Church and the allotment gardens.



Achievements 2024/25

- ❑ BPC are excited to welcome back Sally Williams as our Community Warden. After the role was pulled by KCC the Parish Council stepped in to fund this important service and Sally will support our residents on a Tuesday, Thursday and Friday going forward.
- ❑ Bearsted Parish Council have been working with Medway Valley Countryside Partnership to make improvements to the village pond and Meadow Bank. The aim is to improve and control the vegetation at the pond to help the wildlife flourish and to turn Meadow Bank into a nature reserve allowing more access for residents to enjoy this natural environment.
- ❑ The Tennis Club lease has been successfully negotiated for another 20 years.
- ❑ A new Grounds Maintenance Contract has been agreed and awarded to Waring's.



Traffic and Transport update

Cllr Ash spoke about the achievements of the Traffic Committee and thanked former Cllr James Day for his contribution to getting the white and yellow lines repainted around the Madginford area.

- ❑ A speed watch initiative has been established with a group of trained volunteers monitoring speeding hotspots around the village. Cllr Ash thanked the volunteers.
- ❑ Double yellow lines have been installed in Cavendish Way, Copsewood Way and Yeoman Way to reduce nuisance parking.
- ❑ Improved signage installed at Otham Lane.
- ❑ A new build out installed on Ware Street. This provides a safer place to cross to the station. It also works as a traffic calming measure, reducing speeding through the village. The cost of over £8,000 for this was later recouped from South East Trains, after Cllr Springett applied for the funding from section 106 monies.



Traffic and Transport update

- ❑ The community shopper bus continues to support Bearsted and Detling residents. A bid for additional funding has been successful allowing the service to continue another 2 years.
- ❑ Double yellow lines have been installed at the junction of Roseacre Lane and the Ashford Road to help reduce inconsiderate parking.
- ❑ Operation Brock update.
- ❑ A Coordinated Parish Traffic Group has been formed consisting of 8 local parishes who are working together to reduce speed on the A20 and improve safety on our rural roads.
- ❑ T&T Councillors will continue to monitor local roads and report issues to the relevant authorities.
- ❑ For next year in our Highway Improvement Plan BPC will look at safety outside Roseacre/Thurnham school, DYL's at Sandy Mount and Manor Close, safety outside Barty House and the Sycamores development and on Church Lane.
- ❑ Cllr Ash thanked Cllr Springett for her support as Vice Chair, her hard work on getting the cost for the Station buildout reimbursed and for her work on the CPTG.



Local events and activities

Cllr Hall talked about the successful events run by or supported by the Parish Council.

- Bearsted Parish Council enjoyed hosting another successful fireworks event in November. The evening was a great success with a fantastic display of fireworks to an Abba v Swift theme. We would like to thank the Scouts and Guides for their support catering for the guests. A huge thank you to Vanessa Flanagan who managed the event for us this year and to Adam Powell for keeping the crowd entertained with his warmup.
- The Playscheme was also a great success welcoming 120 children per day to Roseacre Junior School for a host of fun activities during the school holidays. We thank Amanda and her team for making this possible. Cllr Hall advised that BPC is no longer able to run the summer playscheme as our insurer has changed their coverage policy but that we are supporting other childcare facilities to provide alternative events.
- In the absence of the Christmas market Bearsted Parish Council celebrated the start of December with two events marking the illumination of the Christmas tree lights. The Maidstone Rock Choir and Madginford School choir did a fantastic job entertaining our residents and we hope to expand on this occasion in the coming years.



Local events and activities

Supported by Bearsted Parish Council

- ❑ Other externally run events returned including Classic Cars on the Green and the Bearsted and Thurnham Fayre which we are always so pleased to see succeed.
- ❑ The Cricket Club celebrated its 275 years of Cricket on the Green with a host of activities.
- ❑ A fantastic initiative at The Church Lane allotments was established by Tony Grieve. This community plot has been growing produce for local charities and foodbanks.
- ❑ Market on The Green continues to draw many residents and visitors to the Green each month. We are privileged to have such amazing local produce available and thank Vanessa for her hard work establishing such a loved market.
- ❑ We are pleased local fitness groups continue to use our open spaces offering classes to our residents throughout the year.



Bearsted Parish Council also supports:

The Council also provide support to our Community through our Grants & Donation Policy:



Providing support and guidance to parents of children with SEND needs.

Patient Participation Group – new crash trolley for Bearsted Medical Practice

Classic Cars on the Green – raising money for the Air Ambulance.



Providing free books and encouraging a love of reading.



Seeds and noticeboard at the Station Bank Nature Reserve



Providing a new bug rug & storage



Bearsted & Thurnham Fayre & Carnival.

Raising money for various charities and bringing the community together.



Providing SEND provisions

Questions and Comments

Cllr Hall invited our guests to ask any questions or share any comments.

One member of the public asked for an update on the Bearsted Woodland Trust car park?

A member of the BWT advised that the contract is due to go out to tender soon and the car park is expected to open by the summer.

One member of the public asked about the road crossing patrol outside Roseacre School, it was advised this position is offered by KCC and as of yet no one has applied for the job.

Cllr Sean Turner thanked the guests for attending the APM and invited residents to attend our other Council meetings.

One member of the public noted the inconsiderate and dangerous parking on the Landway and other local roads, around school times. Cllr Val Springett advised that an extreme measure being taken by Medway Council is the 'School Street Scheme', which would see the road closed during school drop off and pick up times. If this is adopted by KCC then this could be a possibility in the future. The Head Teacher from Thurnham School stated they are glad of the support of the Council and believes camera's may be the solution and fears yellow lines will not work. Another resident commented that the lines will only work when there is enforcement. Cllr Springett advised she will request more parking enforcement at the schools from MBC. Another resident mentioned that she works at a school which has adopted this scheme and would speak to Cllr Springett later about it.

A member of Bearsted CAN thanked the Councillors and said their work as volunteers should and is greatly appreciated.



Community Clubs and Groups

Cllr Hall read a short report on behalf of the Bearsted & Thurnham Bowling Club, which was first established in 1983. The club are having a new playing surface laid and currently have 110 members. Membership is affordable and they encourage new members to come to the weekly roll up groups.

<https://www.bearstedandthurnhambowlsclub.co.uk/bowls/>

Graham spoke on behalf of the Bearsted District u3a group, giving some history and information on the topics, groups and events that members can attend. New members are welcome.

<https://bearsted.u3asite.uk/>

Paul spoke about the Bearsted Football Group who through membership and various charities raised an amazing £10,000 in 2024 for the Heart of Kent Hospice.

[Find them on Facebook for more information](#)

Bob spoke about the Bearsted Choral Society who will be performing 'My Fair Lady' for their summer concert and invited residents to come along for their try out session on the 10th May at 2.30pm at St Peters Hall, Button Lane. They are looking for new members to join.

[Find them on Facebook for more information](#)

John spoke about the Bearsted Woodland Trust and thanked Cllr Hall for his leadership over the last few years. The BWT has no external funding and relies on donations and volunteers. Membership is only £10 per year.

<https://www.bearstedwoodlandtrust.org/>

Justin, a dog behaviourist spoke about his work with local vets and runs sessions on the Green, offers free school visits and raises money for Heart of Kent Hospice.

<https://cfba.uk/team-members/justin-gilmore/>

David gave a presentation as Chairman of the Bearsted Cricket Club. Last year they celebrated 275 years of cricket on the Green.

They have many teams, and are increasing their women's and children's teams. The new season starts on the 19th April 2025.

<https://www.bearstedcricketclub.co.uk/contact/>

Cllr Hall read a report on behalf of the Bearsted & District History Society, established in 1936, who have 150 members and meet at the Memorial Hall on the last Friday of each month. The society would like to welcome new members and also suggestions for future talks and good speakers.



The Mynn Awards

Cllr Hall and the Mayor, Cllr Perry, then presented the Awards.



Tony Grieve was awarded a 'Highly Commended' certificate for his Digging for Giving initiative, which grows vegetables on an allotment, which is then donated to local families and the homeless.

Valerie Parker, Erika Wentzel & Mike Cuming were awarded 'Highly Commended' certificates for volunteering on the Speed Watch initiative, helping to reduce speed through the parish, making roads safer for all residents.

Duncan & Sally Edwards were awarded 'Highly Commended' certificates for their environmental & sustainability work through Bearsted CAN, including the repair café and the Bearsted Station Roadside Nature Reserve.

MYNN AWARDS

Amanda Franklin was awarded for running Tiny Tots and the Summer Playscheme for many years.

Stephen Peace was awarded for 30 years contribution to Bearsted Cricket Club.

Christine Hughes was awarded for volunteering at Madginford Library for many years.

Colin Bolt was awarded for 25 years service and commitment to the Bearsted Scouts Group

Joanna Doyle was awarded for 20 years of fund raising and many other contributions to Bearsted FC.

Sharon & Grahame Bishop were awarded for their amazing Christmas decorations that raise money for Kent Air Ambulance.

Megan Stickings was awarded for the Book Bugs, book hunt initiative and encouraging a love of reading for our younger residents.

Feriel Friend was awarded for her 24 years service and commitment to Rainbows and Girl Guiding.



AND FINALLY.....

Cllr David Hall was awarded a Mynn Award for his dedication and leadership of the Parish Council since December 2022.
'One of Bearsted's most passionate advocates'

Cllr Springett then thanked Cllr Hall on behalf of the Council and office staff for his leadership and for getting the Parish Council to a good place. Cllr Springett acknowledged the hard work Cllr Hall did on making the Shopper Bus a reality and cementing further funding for this service to run for a further two years and his continued persistence to improve the train services from Bearsted Station. Cllr Hall was presented with a gift from the Council and some flowers for his 'long suffering' wife Irene.

Cllr Hall then thanked the Mayor, Councillors, office staff and the residents for attending the meeting.

